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The Effect of the Self-assessment Cycle in the Literal Reading Comprehension of A1 High
School Students

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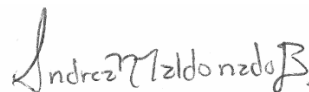
Master in English Language for Self-directed Learning (Online Program)

Chía, 2016

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The Effect of the Self-assessment Cycle in the Literal Reading Comprehension of A1 High
School Students

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master in English Language for Self-directed Learning (Online Program)

Directed by: Prof. Claudia Acero

Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures

Universidad de La Sabana

Chía, 2016

Declaration

We hereby declare that our research report entitled:

The Effect of the Self-assessment Cycle in the Literal Reading Comprehension of A1 High School Students.

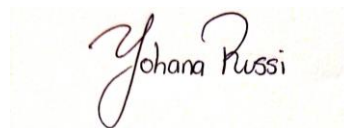
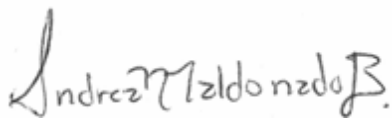
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- complies with the word limits and other requirements stipulated by The Research Subcommittee of the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures;
- has been submitted by or on the required submission date

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Abstract

This research focused on the effect of self-assessment on the literal reading comprehension and self-directed reading of 71 A1 ninth and tenth graders in two public schools in Bogota, Colombia. Teacher-researchers, following the action research approach, carried out ten facilitating sessions where a cycle to promote self-assessment was implemented looking for changes in the learning and teaching practices to improve the levels of literal reading comprehension. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through the development of diagnostic and closing tests, pre and post literal reading comprehension tests, students' journals, teachers' classroom observation, focus groups interviews and students' work samples. The analysis of data revealed that students got familiar with the self-assessment cycle which enhanced students' self-directed reading since it allowed them to be aware of their weaknesses and strengths, set their own reading goals and learn to monitor their own reading process. It was also evident that students showed progress in their reading and reported to have more learning strategies to cope with literal reading tasks.

Key words: literal reading comprehension, self-assessment cycle, self- directedness, setting reading goals, self- monitoring.

Resumen

El objetivo de este proyecto fue determinar el efecto del ciclo de auto-evaluación en la comprensión lectora literal y la lectura auto dirigida en los estudiantes de dos colegios públicos de Bogotá, Colombia. 71 estudiantes de noveno y décimo grado entre 14 y 16 años y cuyo nivel de inglés como lengua extranjera corresponde al nivel A1 según el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas participaron en la investigación. Siguiendo un modelo de investigación acción participación, los investigadores llevaron a cabo diez sesiones donde se implementó el ciclo de auto-evaluación con el propósito de generar cambios en la práctica de enseñanza y aprendizaje del proceso de comprensión de lectura literal. Se recolectaron datos cuantitativos y cualitativos por medio de cuestionarios diagnósticos y finales, pruebas de comprensión de lectura literal inicial y final, diarios de estudiantes, observaciones de clase de los profesores, entrevistas de grupo focalizadas y muestras del trabajo de los estudiantes que incluían pruebas de lectura literal cada sesión. El análisis de los datos reveló que los estudiantes se familiarizaron con el ciclo de autoevaluación el cual promovió la lectura auto dirigida de los participantes ya que les permitió ser conscientes de sus debilidades y fortalezas, establecer sus propias metas de lectura y aprender a monitorearlas en un proceso cíclico. Este además afectó de forma moderada la comprensión de lectura literal considerando que la mayoría de ellos no alcanzó una mejoría significativa, no obstante los estudiantes mostraron progreso y reportaron haber adquirido más herramientas para enfrentarse a tareas de comprensión de lectura literal.

Palabras claves: comprensión de lectura literal, ciclo de autoevaluación, autodirección, objetivos de lectura, auto monitoreo.

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Introduction

“To teach a man how he may learn to grow independently, and for himself, is perhaps the greatest service that one man can do another”.

- Benjamin Jowett

In a global world where time and space boundaries have disappeared, learners need to develop a set of skills that help them break language obstacles, deal with new challenges and take advantage of the growing amount of information. Among those skills, learning English becomes essential for learners, paying special attention to reading comprehension since it is the tool to comprehend the information which citizens of the 21st century are exposed to every day and a way to improve language learning; Mikulecky (2008) points out that “effective reading is essential for success in acquiring a second language” (p.1). In addition, globalization also demands that current education fosters capable learners to participate in their learning process and helps them acquire strategies that facilitate them to become lifelong learners. One way to do it is by developing skills to understand the information changeable sources offer and know how to manage them to benefit their own purposes. In regard to this, Elley refers that “reading ability is necessary for many occupations and a prerequisite for future and lifelong learning” (as cited in Fazeli, 2010, p. 375). So, it is important that language learners, in their role of global readers, become aware of their reading comprehension processes and can take decisions by themselves in order to find the best strategies to understand a text in a foreign language.

In this regard, the Colombian government has also shown interest in the area of communicative skills in Spanish as the mother language and English as a foreign language. The national government has considered these specific skills require particular efforts that allow learners to have the same opportunities to succeed in their personal, academic and professional

fields; for that reason, different programs such as the *National Reading and Writing Plan* (2011) and *COLOMBIA Very Well! 2015 – 2025* have been designed. While the first one attempts to strengthen the institutions in order to educate learners to be able to use reading and writing in a meaningful way to guarantee the access to reading and writing, and to promote the education as autonomous readers and writers; the second one attempts to improve learners' English level to B1 at the end of high school education, with a particular approach to reading comprehension since this is the way to measure learners' language proficiency.

Bearing in mind the important role of English reading comprehension in tackling global and national concerns, the issue of how to help learners better understand texts in foreign languages arises since it is not a naturally developed skill like speaking and listening (Grabe, 2008, p.103) and it comprises a set of skills to reach specific reading goals. Hence, the current report intends to present a research that was carried out with the purpose to implement a self-assessment cycle to influence learners' comprehension and their independence when reading; the study was conducted in two public schools of Bogota, Colombia: Marsella IED¹ and Floridablanca IED, where difficulties at the literal reading comprehension level were discovered. This was a chance to introduce self-assessment, as a cyclical strategy, that allowed learners to be aware of their literal reading comprehension process and helped them move towards independent reading since they had the opportunity to identify their weaknesses and strengths, set their own reading goals, self-monitor, evaluate and restart the self-assessment process. Aebersold and Field (1997) emphasize that “to become better readers, students need to become aware of how they are reading and what they could do to improve comprehension” (p. 95).

¹ IED stands for District Educative Institution.

Along the following chapters, teacher-researchers present in detail the aspects considered to carry out the process and to solve the research question. They include the problem description, the importance of the study, the theoretical support, relevant studies done in the field, specific features of the participants, context, type of study and instruments, the pedagogical stages and the conclusions based on the data analysis.

Statement of the Problem

In 2006, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was adopted as the baseline of the competences that a Colombian foreign language learner should develop during their English instruction at schools to be competitive. The purpose of introducing this languages' framework was to accomplish the goal set in the document *Vision Colombia 2019*, where it is stated that Colombian students in the last grade, before tertiary education, should reach a B1 level that allows them to communicate in the language, acquire new knowledge and use them effectively in real communicative situations. For instance, as it is stated in the *Basic Standards of Competencies in Foreign Language: English* (2006) a general reading standard to be developed in the last level of high school is to understand different kinds of texts about general and academic topics, and to select and apply appropriate reading strategies according to the text and the task (p. 27).

However, Saber 11, the national test that informs the academic community about the basic competences that high school last grade students' have developed during their school life, shows a low performance in English. Since reading comprehension is the tool to evaluate learners' language proficiency, every year English teachers analyze the results and set strategies in their schools annual operational plan to strengthen the reading skill and get better results in the test, but the scores obtained in the Saber 11 keep on a low average year after year. For about four

years (2010-2013), results in Marsella IED and Floridablanca IED schools did not show an improvement in the English language performance. In Marsella IED, there were scores which fluctuated from 45.98 to 50.23 points out of 100 and Floridablanca IED students got scores between 43, 39 and 47, 08 during the same period. The results obtained showed that students had difficulties when reading in English.

Besides, some teachers such as Moreno (2013), Rincón (2013), Mendez, Ortiz & Sánchez, (2014) have focused their interests on reading skill in their graduate program dissertations; they have commonly reported that despite the foreign language instruction, learners present a low reading comprehension level and a lack of independence when developing the reading process. Teacher-researchers in Marsella IED and Floridablanca IED schools also realized the same reading comprehension problems, issue that was confirmed when two questionnaires and a literal reading comprehension test were applied before the pedagogical intervention. The diagnostic questionnaires, which were designed with the aim at obtaining personal data from participants, their needs, reading habits and strategies, revealed that half of the learners from both schools determined their language performance in a basic level. In addition, a quarter of the total group of 71 placed themselves in a low level and the same quantity of learners in a high level. Taking into account what is stated in the *Basic Standards of Competencies in Foreign Language: English* (2006) criteria for the A1 level a low level corresponds to learners who understand and use daily expressions of frequent use and give basic personal information; basic level, to a learner who understands and uses common expressions of frequent use and describes in simple terms past facts; and high level, a learner who understands familiar texts and produces simple texts about their personal interests. Nevertheless, students who chose a basic or high level of English performance argued to have language problems. At the moment to explain that decision,

at least ten students argued to have difficulties when reading a text; therefore there was no relation between their choices on the level and their arguments.

In addition, in the diagnostic questionnaires as it is shown in Figure 1, a high percentage of students (40, 3%) reported to comprehend short and simple texts which contain frequent vocabulary, including a range of international terminology. Nonetheless, the diagnostic questionnaires also showed that 63% of students could hardly identify the main idea of a text. They also mentioned to have difficulties with connectors of cause and effect, but they stated being able to easily recognize connectors of sequence and contrast. The Pre- reading test also confirmed the problem, since most of the participants (72.5%) had a low level of literal reading comprehension in English since they got less than six correct answers; they especially had problems with the main idea, sequence of events, cause and effect and contrast of the facts. It demonstrates in a way, the lack of literal comprehension skills at the moment to read and in relation to the findings reported above, it was concluded that students were not aware of their own and real reading process. They considered having a basic or high level, but the test demonstrated they did not.

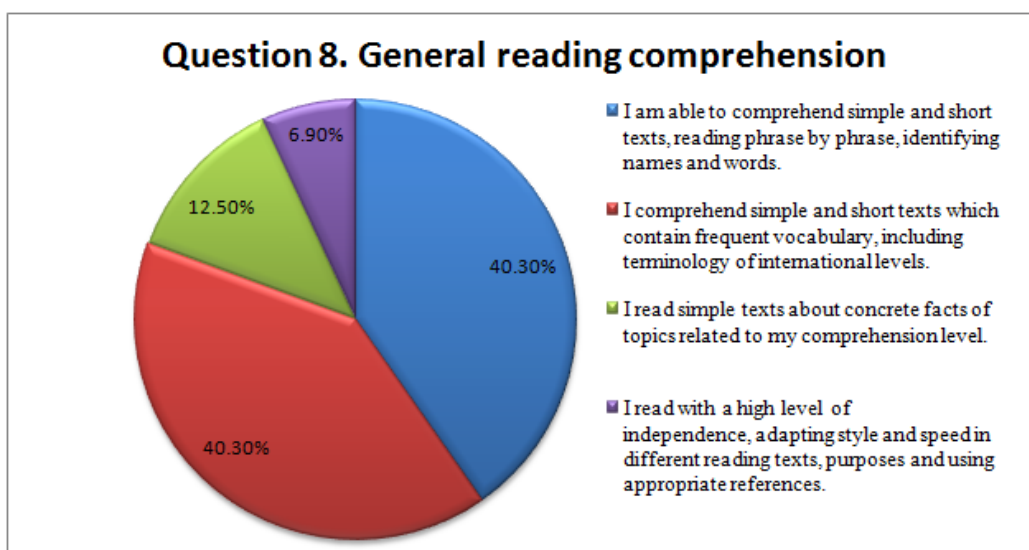


Figure 1. Participants' reading comprehension performance perceptions

The researchers also identified in the analysis of the diagnostic questionnaires that students were not aware of their reading process since they did not have a clear concept and steps to self-assess their reading and have an active role in their learning. It was found that participants had common strategies they applied when reading, such as the use of the dictionary and re-reading; students were also able to mention the actions they carried out to read, but they did not realize their impact in the comprehension process. Moreover, they did not demonstrate knowledge of other kind of strategies and steps to succeed in a literal reading task. The students' lack of knowledge about their reading process affected their levels of literal reading comprehension; that was the reason researchers were concerned about the students' literal reading comprehension level overview and how to facilitate them the necessary strategies to become aware of their reading and play an active role in the process.

Research Question

Therefore, the following question led the current research:

How does a 3-step self-assessment cycle influence A1 students' literal reading comprehension?

Research Objectives

The expected aims to achieve were:

- To determine how a 3-step self-assessment cycle affect the literal reading comprehension performance of A1 high school students.
- To analyze how a 3-step self-assessment cycle enhance self-directed reading.
- To examine to what extent students become more aware of the influence of self-assessment in their reading process.

Rationale

The current research study was conducted considering that the educational contexts of 21st century require teachers and learners assume a different role in the classroom. The teacher-researchers realized that more than transmitting information, they had to identify their learners' needs to tackle specific problems in their English language classroom and look for new ways of teaching but, especially effective strategies for their learners to acquire new knowledge and be participants of the process. These alternatives were a possibility for learners to play an active role in their learning process and be provided with strategies that let them face situations in several contexts in and outside the classroom; in other words, autonomous learners qualified to solve problems. For this reason, the current project was carried out in two public schools where literal reading difficulties were identified in the high school students; teacher-researchers attempted to define strategies to improve this reading area and bring students and teachers the chance to deal with reading tasks from a different perspective.

The reading skill is considered an important source of language input to improve linguistic patterns such as vocabulary, grammar, expressions, syntax, among others; as it is stated by Krashen and McQuillan, “studies confirm students who do L2 reading can read better, write better, spell better, have better grammatical competence, and have larger vocabulary in the target language” (as cited in Splangler and Mazzante, 2015, p. 1). However, in contrast to other language skills like speaking, according to Wren (2000), reading “is not a natural process”, citing as number one in his top ten myths influencing present-day reading instruction the idea that “learning to read is a natural process” (par. 1). On the contrary, it is a process that requires students' determination to succeed and advance in the comprehension being aware of their strengths and weaknesses to set their own goals and strategies taking into account their needs and

letting them assess their performance, assuming these roles they can scaffold their process to become self-directed readers. Usually, most of the learners are not aware of their abilities and potential to work by themselves to enrich their learning process, even though “self-directed learning allows learners to be more effective learners and social beings” (Abdullah, 2001, p.2).

Regarding the identified needs of the participants in the reading skill, the process carried out with ninth and tenth graders was focused on strengthening students’ literal reading skills to let them recognize the information that is required at the moment of performing a reading task; at the same time to develop certain awareness of the reading process itself to achieve and success in comprehension, and foster independent reading processes. Hence, developing literal reading sub-skills in the beginners learners is the basis to start the scaffolding process in the reading comprehension; in literal reading tasks students acknowledged the benefits of locating specific information, identifying main ideas and following sequence events among others, to facilitate learners’ understanding and comprehension, taking into account their own reading pace and performance; it was a way to contribute to the development of inferential and evaluative reading sub-skills as it is mentioned by Flores, Moran & Orzo (2004), “to aid young learners in the inferential comprehension of the text, students are taught to identify key elements in their literal understanding of the text” (p.4).

Moreover, the self-assessment cycle strategy provided students with a set of reading tools and training to facilitate the literal reading comprehension, and boosted self- reflection upon their performance to give students the chance to keep their processes by redefining their reading goals based on their own reading needs, learning styles and pace, as is stated in Afflerbach (2014) “accurate self-assessment gives readers a sense of control and contributes to reading

achievement; both foster high self-efficacy. Students' awareness of past performances and the challenges they overcome lead them to approach reading with a 'can-do' attitude" (p. 30).

The purpose of this research was to promote self-assessment as a strategy that "put students in a good position to control and succeed at reading" (Afflerbach (2014) p.30); therefore, students could play an active role making decisions on their performance and stating their own reading goals. They were also able to assess themselves by reflecting on their own actions and in that way to modify the perception towards reading, and once the process was acquired by students, they could become more self-directed learners and readers as well.

To this regard, English language teachers may implement this strategy to guide their practices in a different direction by using self-assessment to reach and promote better environments for learning. It is an opportunity to give students control of their learning process, and demonstrate how students can be engaged themselves in their learning processes by assuming an independent role. The strategy suggested in this research report could also be seen as an opportunity for schools that want to implement new strategies that take advantage of the learners' difficulties and needs regarding reading in the foreign language; considering self-assessment as a cyclical process could also be an strategy that teachers from other subjects could implement to reinforce reading not only in English as a foreign language but in their mother tongue to improve comprehension and promote language learning autonomy. Furthermore, it can be shared and applied in different contexts with similar features, since just some research about the literal reading comprehension and the use of self-assessment as a cyclical process has been carried out.

Theoretical Framework

The three main constructs that led the current study -literal reading comprehension, self-directed reading and self-assessment- are introduced in this section, highlighting their importance and how they were managed for the purposes of the research. Moreover, the related research literature on the main constructs is further presented and analyzed in order to review what has been studied in the field in the national and international contexts and determine the gap that supports this project.

Reading Comprehension

Reading skill plays an essential role in the foreign language learning process, as a way to facilitate knowledge of the language and develop essential competencies to produce texts. Al-Jawi (2010) mentions that “a rich exposure to listening and reading is required to attain mastery and proficiency in natural production” (p. 2). As defined in Urquhart & Weir (2013), “reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print” (p. 22). However, reading does not only imply to decode a set of symbols; it goes beyond and requires other cognitive process which let learners move towards comprehension. According to Koda (2004) “comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known” (p.4). Additionally, this process also demands from the reader a set of skills which facilitate comprehension of the text, since “comprehension is not a unitary phenomenon, but rather a family of skills and activities” as Kendeou, van den Broek and White (2006, p. 28) concluded from Kintsch and Kintsch, (2005); Rapp and van den Broek, (2005) and van den Broek et al. (2005).

Besides, the action of decoding, reading comprehension is also determined by the reading goals and the kind of activities readers face, how they manage their attitudes and aptitudes towards the comprehension of the text and the accomplishment of specific goals. “Reading comprehension results when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understands how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose” (The National Capital, 2004). Related to this, using the Bloom’s taxonomy as a departure point to explain the different categories or activities that students can carry out in order to comprehend a text, Barrett (as cited in Munro, 2010) proposed five levels of reading: the literal comprehension, reorganization, inferential comprehension, evaluation, and appreciation. Nevertheless, these categories have been reduced in some cases to three levels of comprehension: literal, inferential and evaluative. According to Kintsch “different levels of reading ability, different purposes for reading, and different types of texts (or text genres) being read will also lead to more emphasis (as cited in Grabe, 2008, p.46). Thus, literal reading comprehension may be considered as the starting point for beginner readers to scaffold inferential and evaluative comprehension.

Literal reading comprehension. Taking into consideration that the reading comprehension process involves several levels of comprehension that correspond to the kind of cognitive skills the learner carries out during reading, it is necessary to consider the initial level which is usually demanded as the first step to scaffold subsequent levels, since “a certain level of literal understanding provides an essential basis for the analytical and cognitive activities that facilitate a higher level of comprehension” (Ismail, Petras, Mohamed & Eng, 2015, p. 47). Literal reading comprehension is the basis in which students identify and develop their initial literal reading sub-skills to facilitate the students’ recognition of information and details that are presented in the text, and help them reach more complex levels of understanding. Based on Barrett's taxonomy,

“Literal comprehension focuses on ideas and information which are explicitly stated in the selection. Purposes for reading and teacher’s questions designed to elicit responses at this level may range from simple to complex. A simple task in literal comprehension may be the recognition or recall of a single fact or incident. A more complex task might be the recognition or recall of a series of facts or the sequencing of incidents in a reading selection” (Munro, 2010).

Literal comprehension requires scaffolding students in a set of literal sub-skills which let them comprehend information from a text such as -specific information, main idea, sequence, comparison, cause and effect- each sub-skill has a different purpose and definition to contribute to literal reading understanding.

Literal Comprehension Sub-skills

Students are required to develop the following sub-skills for literal reading understanding as they are defined by Munro (2010) based on Barrett’s taxonomy:

Specific information. The student is required to locate or identify facts such as the names of the characters, the time of the story, or the place of the story (or only about any other kind of explicit fact or detail requiring literal comprehension.)

Main Idea. The student is asked to locate or identify an explicit statement in or from a selection which is the main idea of a paragraph or a larger portion of the selection.

Sequence of events. The student is required to locate or identify the order of incidents or actions explicitly stated in the selection.

Comparison. Seeing likenesses and differences, seeing relationships, and making comparisons between characters, incidents, and situations are fairly synonymous at these levels.

Cause and effect. The student in this instance is required to locate or identify the explicitly stated reasons for certain happenings or actions in the selection. (Cause and effect are not restricted to motivations and interests. For example, there are cause and effect relationships which are inorganic.)

For the purpose of this study, considering the concepts of reading, reading comprehension and Barrett's taxonomy, the participants' scaffolding was oriented to the practice of the above five literal comprehension sub-skills. Their literal reading comprehension was addressed in terms of accuracy to answer questions which took into account the sub-skills and the average time they spend in the whole reading process.

From Self-Directed Learning to Self-Directed Reading

The concept of self-directedness is a key definition to start explaining the process of involving students in the path of self-directed reading. Some principles are adapted and adopted from the theory of Self-Directed Learning (SDL) to build up a concept that allows students recognize the self-assessment cycle as a meaningful strategy, which implies to set their reading goals and monitor them, for their own independent literal reading comprehension process in and outside the classroom.

Becoming a self-directed learner requires a strategy in which students play an active role in the process of learning and their individualities - learning styles, rhythms of learning and necessities – lead their main objective; they also discover how to achieve and success in learning

English as a foreign language. In the 1970's Malcom Knowles defined Self-directed Learning (SDL) as

“ a process by which individuals take the initiative, with or without the assistance of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identify human and material resources for learning, choosing and implement appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes”(as cited in Smith, 2002, para.36)

and although it was a concept initially developed as part of andragogy (adults education) it has broadened its limits to young learners and many teachers are interested in challenging education by promoting students' awareness about themselves as a strategy to affect their academic outcomes and learning processes. Abdullah (2001) affirms “self-directed learning, which has its roots in adult education, is an approach that has also been tried with learners in elementary and secondary schools” (p.2).

Over years, several authors cited in Beard (2011) like Kasworm,1983; Brockett & Hiemstra,1991; and Gibbons, 2002 have defined the self-directed learning concept, considering it as a complex evolving process where learners assume the main responsibility for the learning experience and where the instructional process as the internal characteristics of the learners play an essential and active role. Thus, taking into account the setting and needs of the population selected for the study, the self-directed learning concept was purposely directed to self-directed reading and it was considered as an opportunity for learners to be trained in a self-assessment cycle that allowed them to be active subjects of the reading process by reflecting about themselves and in which they could discover their own strategies to facilitate their literal reading comprehension.

The self-directed learning model considered for this research to guide learners towards self-directed reading is the one proposed by Grow in 1991. As Table 1 shows, the Grow's self-directed learning model suggests four different stages in which the teachers' role reduces the degrees of authority and support. The students' role moves from being dependent on the teacher to be self-directed. Initially, teachers start the process being the authority; then they delegate more responsibility on the learners during each stage, to the point that students are able to work independently, along the stages student's degrees of independent work appear and teachers' role in terms of support decrease. In terms of this research, the model was adapted considering the sequence of the stages to scaffold self-directed reading in which the attempt was to move participants from dependent reading stages to more self-directed reading and also to affect the teachers' practice in the classroom.

Table 1. *The Staged Self-Directed Learning Model*

Stage	Student	Teacher	Example
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator, Guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitador	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group project.
Stage 4	Self-directed	Consultant, Delegator	Internship, dissertation, individual work or self-directed study-group.

Grow, G. (1991, p. 129).

Becoming a self-directed learner requires a plan in which there is a set stages to follow a sequence, in this process students reflect constantly to become aware of their needs and possible

solutions to succeed in a determined task, Smith (2002) confirms that Self-directed Learning (SDL) is “the opportunity for reflection and exploration” (para. 42). Additionally, authors like Knowles have considered self-directed learning in a linear set of steps, however, others like Danis (1992) Merriam and Caffarella (1999) and Matuszowicz (1996) proposed models that not only include the linear Knowles’ steps towards autonomy but also elements like learning strategies, phases of the learning process, the content, the learner and the instructional design (as cited in Khodabandehlou, Jahandar, Seyedi & Mousavi, 2012, p.5-6). In this regard, one important contribution about self-directed learning, and related to the present study, was done by Victori and Lockhart who consider that self-direction fosters metacognition in a cyclic diagnosis that allows learners to determine their objectives, strategies, and activities according to their own needs (as cited in Khodabandehlou et al., 2012, p.5). It has been considered that thinking about the learning process through metacognitive strategies is one of the successful factors for learners’ independence.

The role of metacognition in this research was considered from a cyclical view where participants were expected to become self-directed readers involving them in a learner- centered classroom where they assumed the main role in the reading process. Based on O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper & Russo’s set of metacognitive strategies, the current research attempted to adopt them as part the self-directed reading through the self-assessment cycle in which students learnt how to plan and set achievable reading goals as well as monitor their process, progress and performance in their literal reading comprehension (as cited in Zare, 2012, p. 164). In this way, the self- directed readers became aware of how they were learning and improving their literal reading comprehension.

Self-assessment. Different views and concepts of assessment, self- assessment and self- grading carry out in learning as a foreign language provides information and clarify about the key construct self- assessment and the cyclical process that address students to promote SD reading and awareness in the literal reading comprehension performance.

Assessment is an essential strategy in the classroom that focuses not only in a grade for a certain task or a final result but also in the process carried out by students from the beginning to the end. It is currently seen from the formative and summative views about students' performance; according to Crooks, assessment is "any process that provides information about the thinking, achievement or progress of students" (2001, par.1), which is contrasted with the traditional assessment practices. Boud (2003) affirms that "assessment was related to experiences of failure, feelings of unfairness when being assessed, increasing doubts about the validity of the judgments of others, and a slow dawning that it was not others whom I should be satisfied in my learning endeavors, but myself" (p.3). Now, having in mind these definitions and the importance of assessment in the academic life, learners should not face it only as the judgments of a particular production in which it may get positive and negative perceptions from others. It is relevant to mention that the focus of this research was to give students voice in the reading assessment process in which they could recognize and overcome difficulties. Thus, learners may realize of playing an active role in the assessment process which did not only involve numbers as a result, but it might affect the way of learning by getting students familiar with the reflective practice upon their own processes, through the self- assessment cycle as a self-directed reading strategy to improve their literal reading comprehension.

Becoming a self-directed reader requires learners to develop awareness of themselves and an important step is boosting reflection on the literal reading performance as the starting point of

self- assessment. Rodríguez (2007) states that “self-assessment practices, hence, should be a space in which reflection becomes the most important aspect to be considered in the hard process of learning English as a foreign language” (p. 231). In terms of reading the concept of self-assessment fosters students’ acknowledgment of their own capabilities to overcome reading difficulties in every reading task with the aim to reach and redefine their reading goals and succeed in the process. Afflerbach (2014) describes that

“Self-assessment involves strategies that put students in a good position to control and succeed at reading. Consider what successful readers do: They plan their reading, set goals, gauge their ongoing progress at constructing meaning, keep an eye out for difficulty and blockages, determine the nature of difficulties when encountered, address and fix them, and get back on track. They continually assess their work in relation to their goals, which includes comprehension and the use of the knowledge they gain from reading” (p.30).

Additional to this, it is important to clarify that self-assessment is not self-grading (although the latter may be part of the former). Self-grading, by allowing students to determine their own grades for some classroom work, purports to encourage students to assume more responsibility for their learning process. But while this has been shown to be true for well-motivated students, McGeever reports that "others are motivated to take it easier and learn less and that these two tendencies pretty well balance one another off in the statistics” (as cited in LeBlanc, Painchaud, 1985, p. 674). From another viewpoint of self-grading, Warne specifies that “self- assessment seems to be a tool well- suited to helping learners to develop appropriate goals and self- regulate or monitor their efforts” (as cited in Meihami & Varmaghani, 2013, p.42) and it is not only being considered just related to numbers or grades.

Based on the foregoing statements, self- assessment is a constant process to promote awareness and achievement in the literal reading development and it is defined as a cycle in which students have the opportunity to create self- assessment routines, which let them make decisions to improve the language learning. For the purposes of this research, the self- assessment cycle was the way to encourage learners to sort out what sub-skills of the literal reading they had developed, and then make adjustments so that their comprehension performance came closer to reach the chosen goals; it also involved that students became familiar with a reflective exercise to succeed in the literal reading comprehension and independent reading. The self-assessment cycle as a strategy was seen by researchers as a way to promote literal reading comprehension determined by some issues which guided the learners to accomplish a specific task. In this case in a reading task, the cycle of self- assessment consisted of learners' scaffolding in discovering their weaknesses and strengths, setting their own reading goals, monitoring their performance during the reading process and assessing their results.

Goal Setting. In this section, it is compulsory to define the importance of setting goals and its influence in the reading tasks. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a goal is: 'the object to which effort or ambition is directed; the destination of a (more or less laborious) journey; an end or result towards which behavior is consciously or unconsciously directed'. Based on research, goal setting in language learning is commonly regarded as one of the strategies that encourage learner's autonomy and it is defined as the process of establishing clear and usable targets, or objectives, for learning (Moeller, Theiller & Wu, 2012, p.153). In the case of the present research, setting goals was a step in the self- assessment cycle, which attempted to focus students on the accomplishment of a literal reading task. Students had to determine their reading

challenges and then reflect on them, then redefine their goals for future reading tasks. The departure point to become a self-directed learner and the first step in the self- assessment cycle is to identify their own learning strengths and weaknesses that later on would lead them to set clear learning goals to succeed in the reading skill and language learning. Collins & Hammond (2004) conclude that “once existing strengths and weaknesses have been identified, learners are ready to draft learning agreements which they will specify what learning must be done to meet the learning needs they have diagnosed” (p.128).

Self-monitoring. The second concept that is important to define is self- monitoring as part of the self- assessment cycle while students read in English. According to Ylvisaker (2006) “Self- monitoring is the process of observing one's behavior and evaluating it in relation to goals” (par. 1), through self-monitoring learners are able to verify what they understand, identify comprehension problems, make appropriate decisions to solve them and evaluate their progress. In the self-assessment cycle, self-monitoring allows learners to check their comprehension, being aware of specific literal reading sub-skills, difficulties that do not allow them to reach the needed comprehension and finding appropriate solutions; therefore, “while they are reading, they might monitor understanding by adjusting their reading speed to fit the difficulty of the text or use their “fix-up” strategies to reread, read ahead, or identify the area of confusion” (Guisinger, 2016). Students reflect upon their performance, taking into account the established reading goal and redefine them for subsequently reading session completing the self-assessment cycle.

Through the self-assessment cycle, students get familiar with their learning and reading processes; it means that in the class students can plan their own goals, set their own goals and monitor their progress in terms of weaknesses and strengths as a cyclical and come and go

process to decide if they move to another level; otherwise, to rethink goals to better accomplish the reading task and thus identify their own pace and strategies to succeed.

Now, that the main constructs that led this research study have been presented in the light of theory, the next section presents how they have been considered in the framework of research developed in the national and international contexts. An analysis of the kind of problems addressed, methodologies and results obtained are described.

State of the Art

Even though, a considerable amount of research literature from national and international researchers is focused on improving the general reading comprehension and its sub-skills as a matter to foster learners' autonomy, little research about literal reading comprehension performance and self-assessment practices has been conducted.

In the national context, the specific topic of self-assessment has not been widely studied in relation to reading comprehension and self-directedness. However, research articles published in languages, applied linguistics and English teachers' journals in Colombia provided literature where the self-assessment was included during different stages and with different purposes. For instance, Torres (2009) included it during the implementation phase looking for improvement of the general language level, Rodríguez (2007) focused it on the improvement of another language skill or like Mendieta et al., (2015) and Lopera, (2015) who used it as a final stage for general reading comprehension development. These studies demonstrated a positive effect of self-assessment on reading comprehension, self-confidence and acquisition of reading strategies (Mendieta et al, 2015, Lopera, 2015), listening comprehension receptive skill (Rodríguez, 2007) and critical thinking skills (Torres, 2009). In relation to self-directed learning, Mendieta et al. (2015), Torres (2009) and Lopera (2015) found that alternative assessment practices like self-

assessment addressed foreign language learners to be aware of the learning process and self-direction stages like identifying their weaknesses and strengths, goal setting and self-monitoring. From another perspective, Muñoz (2009) who carried out a research study with English teachers found there is a teachers' lack of qualitative and alternative assessment practices for facilitating reading comprehension skills and concluded teachers need to introduce them to current EFL reading comprehension programs.

It is also remarkable, the attempts novice researchers have carried out in different private and public contexts to conduct studies promoting learners' self-direction and general reading comprehension as a requirement for their master's programs degree. For instance, students enrolled on the METSDL (Master in English Teaching for Self-directed Learning) have shown a particular interest in the implementation of cognitive reading strategies (Romero, 2013; Moreno, 2013); or the metacognitive ones (Méndez, Ortiz & Sánchez, 2014) through the use of technological resources (Romero, 2013; Moreno, 2013). Their findings showed that these strategies contributed to foster autonomy and to obtain positive effects in the reading comprehension processes. Although, self-directed learning is considered a key goal for these novice researchers, it is only promoted considering some aspects, activities or principles of the self-direction and there are not clear stages to scaffold learners to achieve it. On the other hand, only Romero (2013) considered learners' reflection through the use of students' logs. Nevertheless, self-assessment, that is a key practice to become self-directed learners in the reading process, is not taken into account either as a stage or as a process.

Other studies focused on self-assessment and its impact on reading comprehension has been published in international languages or applied linguistics journals within the last 6 years. Self-assessment strategy has been considered in some of these international studies

(Baniabdelrahman, 2010; Shahrakipour, 2014; Shams and Tavakoli, 2014) to improve reading comprehension. In spite of being considered just at the end of reading activities (Baniabdelrahman, 2010; Shams and Tavakoli, 2014) or in the whole process that involves a cyclical practice (Shahrakipour, 2014), in two of these studies, the researchers found the self-assessment strategy had a positive effect on the improvement of general reading comprehension. In contrast, the results obtained by Shams and Tavakoli (2014) showed just a slight improvement of the reading skill, however according to the researchers' analysis the time of intervention was not enough to completely develop the strategy. From a different perspective, Al-ghazo's (2015) study developed with teachers argues that self-assessment is not a frequent method to assess students' reading comprehension ability as a way to discover needs that strength the reading process and the learners' autonomy.

Taking into account the foregoing national and international research, teacher-researchers identified the positive effects of self-assessment in the general reading comprehension; then, the current research attempted to introduce the self- assessment cycle as a strategy to encourage learners to become more effective and self-directed readers (SDR). For the purpose of this research and in contrast with the previous studies, the concept of self-assessment became a cyclical strategy and not a final and isolated stage in the reading comprehension process.

Considering the theory and the analysis of related research on the topic, decisions made by researchers in relation to specific features of the study are presented and supported in the next section. They introduce the type of research, context, participants and instruments.

Research Design

This section describes the type of research that was considered for this study, the context where the research took place, the participants' characteristics, the researchers' role, ethical considerations, the instruments used to collect data and the procedures to validate data.

Type of study

The section presents the kind of research approach adopted to carry out the current study. This study was conducted under the action research design on account of the advantages it brought for the teacher-researchers due to the fact that teachers usually reflect on their practices looking for new opportunities to improve teaching and learning processes in their classrooms but, as Chamot, Barnhardt & Dirstine (2011) state teachers in constant reflection, unfortunately do not keep a careful and systematic track of those reflections (p.1). Action research was an opportunity for the teachers who carried out this project to reflect about their teaching and their students' learning situations in the language classroom. Besides, it allowed teachers to develop "a systematic documented inquiry ... and to gain understanding of teaching and learning within one's classroom and to use that knowledge to increase teaching efficacy/student learning" (Chamot, Barnhardt & Dirstine, 2011, p.1). That is why, teacher-researchers considered the action research and its principles as the appropriate type of research to tackle the specific difficulties on the literal reading comprehension and participants' self-directed reading.

Other benefit that this kind of research offered to the project was it took place in the real teaching-learning environment and affected it directly, since as Wallace mentions "some of the most beneficial things about teacher action research are that it is small scale, contextualized, localized, and aimed at discovering, developing, or monitoring changes to practice" (as cited in Haley, Midgely, Ortiz, Romano, Ashworth & Seewald, 2005, p.2). This type of research let

teacher-researchers determine through constant reflection appropriate solutions for their real situations in the language classroom to improve the teaching- learning practices which resulted in concrete actions that were implemented in their classrooms, as Haley et al. (2005) suggested.

The action research cyclical process suggests stages that were used to organize and systematize the research experiences. Considering that action research “generally involves inquiring into one's own practice through a process of self- monitoring that generally includes entering a cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting on an issue or problem in order to improve practice” (Farrel, 2007, p. 1), this research was planned, designed and implemented in a continuous monitoring process following the research cycle considering five main stages as follows:

- **Initial stage: identification of the problem.** Teacher-researchers identified a problematic situation in the language classroom and gathered evidence through *characterization of the students* and *self-assessment perceptions* questionnaires.
- **Second stage: development of an action plan.** The problem was refined; then an exhaustive literature revision related to the research focus was carried out in order to identify its status and the strategy that was to be implemented. In addition, a timeline was set to define actions and times. In this stage, a 10-session pedagogical intervention was planned to scaffold the learning of the strategy and to define the periods in which the instruments were to be applied.
- **Third stage: instruments design and data collection.** Five data gathering instruments were designed - diagnostic and closing questionnaires, literal reading tests, students' reading journal, teachers' classroom observation and focus group interview- and their

corresponding protocol to be administered. The instruments were applied in twelve different sessions to obtain quantitative and qualitative data.

- **Fourth stage: data analysis.** Qualitative and quantitative data were digitized and organized in digital files to facilitate the analysis; due to the amount of information collected, strict records were kept in matrices. The researchers analyzed the data collected keeping in mind the research question and objectives previously set. Once the data were digitized, the researchers used codes to classify and categorize the data gathered to look for patterns and relationships within the collection of data. Then a number of categories was defined and data was organized in order to design graphical representations. The data allowed researcher to compare and contrast the findings in both schools.
- **Fifth stage: setting conclusions.** After analyzing the data, researchers reflected on the influence of the strategy implemented on the students' literal reading comprehension. Based on the results obtained from the data analysis, the researchers stated the conclusions. They were organized and presented around each research objective. The final report was consolidated to present the findings.

From the beginning of the process, teacher-researchers constantly revised and adjust the action plan according to the needs and situations that emerged.

Figure 2 shows the stages of the cycle considered to carry out this study:

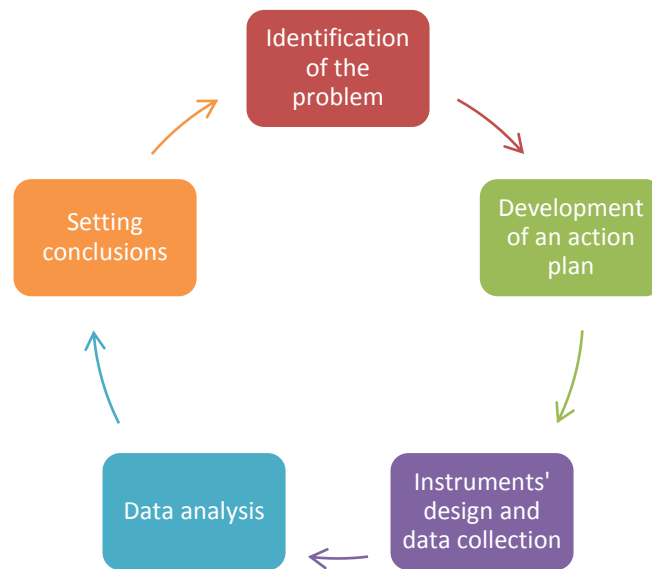


Figure 2. Diagram of the Action Research Cycle adapted from Kolk, M. (2016).

Taking into account that action research demands a constant cyclical reflection process, the researchers determined that not only quantitative data collected through questionnaires, pre and post-reading tests and students' work could support the expected results of this research. Therefore, teacher-researchers considered necessary to obtain information from the students and the teachers during the process through several collection instruments like questionnaires, focus group interviews, teachers' class observation, and students' journals. It means, this action research used a mixed method for data collection and analysis which according to Dornyei "involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study with some attempts to integrate the two approaches at one or more stages of the research process" (as cited in Nunan & Bailey, 2008, p. 439).

Context

This research was carried out in two public schools in Bogota, Colombia: Marsella (School 1) and Floridablanca (School 2). Both schools tend to students from kindergarten to eleventh grade (K-11) and they have two shifts: morning (6:00 A.M. -12:00 P.M.) and afternoon (12:30-6:30

P.M) in which different students and teachers attend. They have approximately 1500 students each one. In relation to the foreign language instruction, learners in these schools take four hours of English Foreign Language per week. The language curriculum is based on grammar and topics are taught considering some principles of the Communicative approach. Other conditions which are common for both schools are: the number of students per class, forty to forty-five students. Technology available: smart TVs, computers, tablets and internet connection; though, having access to them is very difficult since they are not enough for the whole population.

Marsella IED

This school is located in Marsella neighborhood, west part of Bogota. It was founded in 1967, its academic activities started with four classes of Primary school , secondary education was established some years later and pre-school was opened in 2015. This school educational project “Humanistic training and research skills development” is focused in the construction of the learners’ life project through humanism, the science and the research.

Floridablanca IED

This school is located in the North West side of the city. It has three headquarters: Rafael Pombo, Floridablanca I and Floridablanca II. This school was founded in 1991 and initially, it started with some grades of secondary school. Later in 1997, the other headquarters were added and the primary and secondary education was completed. Its institutional educational project is oriented to develop learners’ values and three specific subjects: accounting, information technology and English.

Participants

The groups selected for this study were students from tenth and ninth grade; their ages range between fourteen and sixteen years. Researchers took the decision to work with the whole

population as a personal interest to follow the process of those students who presented a high and low level and to get an overall result in the heterogeneous group. Besides, considering the type of research carried out which looked for improving teaching and learning practices, teacher-researchers determined to take into account the different features and needs of the public school students. Initially, it was considered to carry out the study with classes conformed by 40 students each one. However, due to the absence of some students during the application of diagnostic questionnaires, pre-reading test or final gathering sessions, the first group was reduced to 35 and the second to 36 for the data analysis. The whole group was composed of 27 boys (38, 4%) and 44 girls (61.6%). Among the groups, there are students with different language proficiency levels that vary from very limited to poor knowledge of language; that according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages are considered in A1 level. The diagnostic questionnaire revealed that a great percentage of the students placed themselves at a low (20, 5%) or basic (52, 1%) level of language despite most of the learners have received English Foreign Language instruction during the elementary school, at least one hour per week. Only 15% of the learners have attended English lessons at private language institutions.

Regarding students' reading comprehension in both schools, 74 % of them agreed that reading in English is a very important skill to succeed in their academic life. However, they were asked about their English reading comprehension level and most of them (41.1%) considered that they are in the lowest reading comprehension level; it means they can read short texts, sentence by sentence and identify names, words, and phrases. Only 6, 8% of the group considered themselves at the highest reading comprehension level because they read in English with a high independence grade adapting the reading style and speed to different kind of texts.

Researchers' role

In the context of this project, teacher-researchers assumed roles from two perspectives: the one of the researcher guided by the Action research approach, and the one of teacher oriented by the Self-directed learning model.

Action research, as Mingucci states, demands that teacher-researchers, “to fully embrace the principles and philosophy of action research, need to begin by reinventing themselves” (as cited in Nunan & Bailey, 2008, p.227); thus, they must assume a critical position towards their contexts and the situations or areas they want to change, modify or improve. Bearing this in mind and the Action research stages, in this study the teacher-researchers assumed the role of observers, planners and reflective practitioners. Looking for determining problematic situation students faced in the language learning classrooms, teacher- researchers became careful observers of the situations, learning processes and outcomes of the learners. Besides, teacher-researchers also acted the role of planners when they determined a suitable strategy and its implementation to tackle the observed problematic situation and selected the instruments to collect relevant data, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy. Along the research process, they had to be in constant reflection and analysis of the gathered data.

From the pedagogical perspective, the teachers' role was adapted considering the Grow's (1991) Self-Directed Learning Model in which, teachers moved from being coaches to become facilitators of the learners' process. In that sense, teachers participating in this study helped students get familiar with the self-assessment cycle through the planning and design of sequential and coherent lesson plans. Teachers looked for opportunities to guide students towards the construction of knowledge and the discovery of key concepts to introduce the self-

assessment cycle. They also consolidated actions that allowed students to become more independent each session and let teachers help them in their literal reading process as facilitators.

Ethical considerations

Research carried out with human subjects requires following ethical procedures that guarantee the participants' welfare. Parsons (2015) states that "educational research should never cause harm to participants" (p.14). Consequently, teacher-researchers avoiding deceptive practices explained to the chosen group of students the purpose of the study and how it would be part of the regular classroom sessions during the second school term in 2016. Besides, students knew the implications and limitations of the study for their academic results. They were informed that the process would be developed during regular class sessions and their participation would be considered in the second term grades taking into account the work developed inside and outside the classroom.

Additionally, considering the participants were under the Colombian legal age to make decisions on their own and the intervention took place at an educational institution, both parents and institutions' principal received a consent letter where they were informed about the significance of this kind of project for the learning-teaching practices of a foreign language, the research objectives and methods, the kind of instruments that were going to be used, the expected outcomes and the management of time and methods.

Moreover, the respect for the identity and confidentiality of the learners' as a key ethical issue in research was considered. The management of their personal information and the data collected through the questionnaires, reading tests, journals or photographs was informed to the participants and researchers guarantying their anonymity. As Doyle mentions "anonymity is only one aspect of ensuring confidentiality. It involves using a fictional or no name at all rather

than the participant's real name" (2007, p.81); that is why, teacher-researchers kept the names of participants anonymous by giving them a code S1, S2, S3 ...S71 starting by students from school 1 and then students from school 2, using personal information in a general manner and protecting students' face on visual data collected.

Data collection instruments and procedures

Action research, as stated by Kemmis and Henry, "is systematic and involves collecting evidence on which to base rigorous reflection" (as cited in Nunan and Bailey, 2008, p. 230).

Thus, the current research was carefully planned, designed and implemented in both contexts following the same procedures and stages by the teacher-researchers.

Data collection instruments. The mixed method approach was chosen to collect quantitative and qualitative data. It allowed the researchers gathered information from the students' personal reflections and perceptions before and after the pedagogical implementation and also to track the students' performance in the different literal reading tests in terms of scores and time. Table 2 shows the instruments applied in the process of the self- assessment in the literal reading comprehension to gather appropriate data that help answer the research question. Each instrument is mentioned and located in a specific objective, and in this way, the researchers focused on the purpose of each instrument and the kind of information that had to be gathered to support the research objectives.

Table 2. *Data Collection Instruments*

		Instruments				
Research question	Research objectives	Literal reading test (pre-during and post)	Diagnostic and closing questionnaires	Students' reading journal	Teachers' classroom observation	Focus group interviews
How does a 3-step self-assessment cycle influence A1 students' literal reading comprehension?	To determine how a 3-step self-assessment cycle affect the literal reading comprehension performance of A1 high school students.	X	X	X	X	
	To analyze how a 3-step self-assessment cycle enhances self-directed reading.		X	X	X	X
	To examine to what extent students become more aware of influence of self-assessment in their reading process		X	X		X

Questionnaires. Diagnostic and closing questionnaires were applied to students in their native language to collect previous and final students' perceptions about the main concepts of the

research, as it is defined by Brown questionnaires are “any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react, either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers” (2001, p.6). They were carried out at the beginning of the research process and after the pedagogical intervention. The first questionnaire entitled Students’ Characterization was used to collect participants’ information, language experience and reading comprehension skills; it comprises 12 closed and 2 open-ended questions. The second questionnaire entitled Self-assessment Perceptions was focused on students’ actions before, during and after reading, reading habits, concept about self-assessment and their experience with it during the reading process. Students had to answer 12 close and 5 open questions. Besides, both of them were adapted and implemented after the pedagogical intervention process in order to compare how students’ conceptions, experiences, and skills changed (see Appendix A and Appendix B).

Literal reading tests. Pre and post- reading multiple choice tests were designed to identify learners’ literal reading comprehension level before and after the intervention. They were according to Airasian “primarily used to assess learning outcomes at the recall and comprehension levels” (as cited in Marmah & Impraim, 2013, p.2). The tests comprised ten multiple choice questions to measure the literal comprehension sub-skills: identifying main idea, following sequences of events, contrasting and comparing information and locating specific information. They also allowed the teacher-researchers to determine which sub-skills were the strongest and the weakest ones, and then to verify the effect of the training in the literal reading comprehension process and the self-assessment cycle during the pedagogical intervention. Besides, similar tests were administered during the modeling, controlled, free and independent practice. The readings were chosen considering students’ background knowledge, the grammar

already worked in class, and similar length and difficulty level difficulty (see Appendix C and Appendix D).

Focus group interviews. Focus group interviews were applied to know participants' perceptions about their processes and their progress. These kinds of interviews are defined by Morgan as "a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher" (as cited in Nunan and Bailey, 2008, p. 314). Taking into account the number of participants in this research study, six interviews in each school were administered in groups of 6 participants during the last stage of the research process. They were conducted in an approximate time of twenty to thirty minutes per group in which five pre-designed questions in their native language were established to make learners clearly understand the questions and feel confident to participate spontaneously based on their own processes. The questions addressed the kind of information researchers wanted to obtain from students, considering "the term focus highlights that the fact that the researcher guides and focuses the discussion rather than letting informants take the interview in any intervention they wish" (Nunan and Bailey, 2008, p.314). The teacher- researchers designed questions about the main constructs of the research, such the literal reading, self- assessment and independent reading, but important issues like effects of the strategy on students and performance arouse and it was necessary to focus on them (see Appendix E).

Teachers' classroom observation. The purpose of the classroom observation, understood as "a family of related procedures for gathering data during actual language lessons or tutorial sessions, primarily by watching, listening, and recording (rather than by asking)" (Nunan & Bailey, 2008, p.258), was to register relevant aspects in respect of the research question and objectives. A classroom observation format was designed considering the research objectives; it

was carried out along the ten sessions of the research process and provided qualitative data from the teachers' perspective in general comments and a constant reflection during and after each session. The format considered aspects from the independent behaviors, the kind of support needed in class and relevant aspects to highlight (see Appendix E).

Students' reading journal. A students' reading journal was designed to recall the students' reflection upon their experiences and actions in the different sessions. These kind of introspective methods looked for gathering personal perceptions, since as Bailey and Oschner (1983) mention it "allows participants to report on affective factors, language learning strategies, and their own perceptions, facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer" (p. 189). The instrument was applied at the end of each session and students had 5 minutes to write down their reflections which were guided by 5 questions that addressed their thoughts and ideas in terms their goals and achievements, the strategies used in the reading process and the needed goal for the next task (see Appendix G).

Validation Procedures

Validity and reliability are concepts that are considered in both qualitative and quantitative research as quality control issues, Sykes states that "reliability and validity refer, respectively, to the consistency and meaningfulness of research results" (as cited in Harris, 2006, p, 3). Thus , considering that the designed and implemented instruments gathered quantitative and qualitative data, a set of procedures was considered in order to guarantee that the collection and analysis of data is reliable and valid. Quantitative data collection instruments such as questionnaires and reading tests were previously piloted with three colleagues from each school, the research counselor and subsequently with a different group of students with similar characteristics to the research participants. The piloting process helped teacher-researchers to determine the time

students spent on the questionnaires and tests and to identify language problems or other constraints that could interfere with the participants' answers and thus the validity of the gathered data. Besides, quantitative instruments like the reading tests were designed considering equal measurement scales: same number of questions in each session, same kind of items, similar reading passages in terms of extension and complexity taking into account language level of the learners. Likewise, qualitative instruments that were focused on processes, perceptions, and evaluation of the intervention effect were checked by the research counselor and the researchers several times in order to locate any unclear items, confusing instructions, biased answers, language issues, format problems and so on.

Regarding the data analysis, once the results were organized the mixed method approach used to collect data allowed researchers to contrast and validate data from the instruments and different perspectives to be triangulated. According to Creswell and Plano (2006) "this design is used when a researcher wants to directly compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings or to validate or expand quantitative results with qualitative data" (p.62).

Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

This chapter presents in detail the process of planning and implementation of the pedagogical strategy, including its stages and lesson plans description. The main aim of the pedagogical intervention was to enhance a more self-directed reading process following the steps of the Self-Assessment Cycle (SAC) as the strategy that could facilitate students' literal reading comprehension.

Instructional Design

The implementation was planned in ten sessions which were organized taking into account time issues and the different stages to scaffold students in the process of reading as stated in the timeline presented in Appendix F. Teacher-researchers considered five stages to carry out the implementation of the SAC strategy to improve students' literal reading process as follows: 1. *Towards an understanding of the learners*, 2. *Introducing literal reading and self-assessment cycle strategy*, 3. *Starting to self-assess literal reading*, 4. *Getting familiar with self-directed reading*, 5. *The self-assessment cycle and the improvement of the literal reading process* (see Table 3).

Stage 1: Towards an understanding of the learners. The starting point for this stage was a session devoted to presenting and explaining the importance of reading in English as a foreign language and motivating students to participate in a process to improve their reading comprehension and become more self-directed readers. Students participated in the design of the Reading Corner with different posters which contained the title of the last book they read, and a drawing of it with the purpose to engage them in the discussion and promote awareness of the importance of reading. They also set their own learning goals, and reflected on their own performance during the class as part of the class routine. Once students got involved in the

reading reflection, the process began with the training in which teachers explained and modeled the steps to self-assess their literal reading; in the controlled practice the teacher guided and facilitated the strategy; in the free practice students practiced on their own the Self-assessment cycle strategy while reading and the final gathering evidenced the acquisition of the strategy.

Table 3. *Stages to carry out the Implementation of the SAC strategy to Improve Students' Literal Reading Process.*

PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION STAGES	PURPOSE	N° OF LESSONS	DESCRIPTION
Towards an understanding of the learners	Exploration and motivation	1	Students were introduced to the main topic of the research and motivated to participate in the process.
Introducing literal reading and self-assessment cycle strategy	Training of the SAC strategy	3	Students were guided to discover and understand the main steps of the strategy setting goals, self-monitoring and later directed by the teacher to develop the reading test and implementation of setting goals, self-monitor their performance and reflect on their process.
Starting to self-assess literal reading	Controlled practice of the SAC strategy	2	Students worked by themselves in the process of developing the reading task, following a protocol to apply what they learnt in the previous lessons.
Getting familiar with self-directed reading	Free practice of the SAC	2	
The self-assessment cycle and the improvement of the literal reading process	Final gathering SAC strategy	1	A final activity to conclude the process in terms of achievement or non-achievement of the goals was administered. Closing questionnaires.

Stage 2: Introducing literal reading and self-assessment cycle strategy. This stage was designed in order to introduce the self- assessment cycle to participants. It consisted on explaining the concepts, including literal reading, which let the participants self-assess their reading process. The steps to facilitate the development of the strategy were: Setting Reading Goals, Self- monitoring and Self- assessment as a cyclical process (see Figure 3). These stages allowed the teachers to facilitate the reading process, scaffold students by means of sessions of controlled practice. It took four sessions.

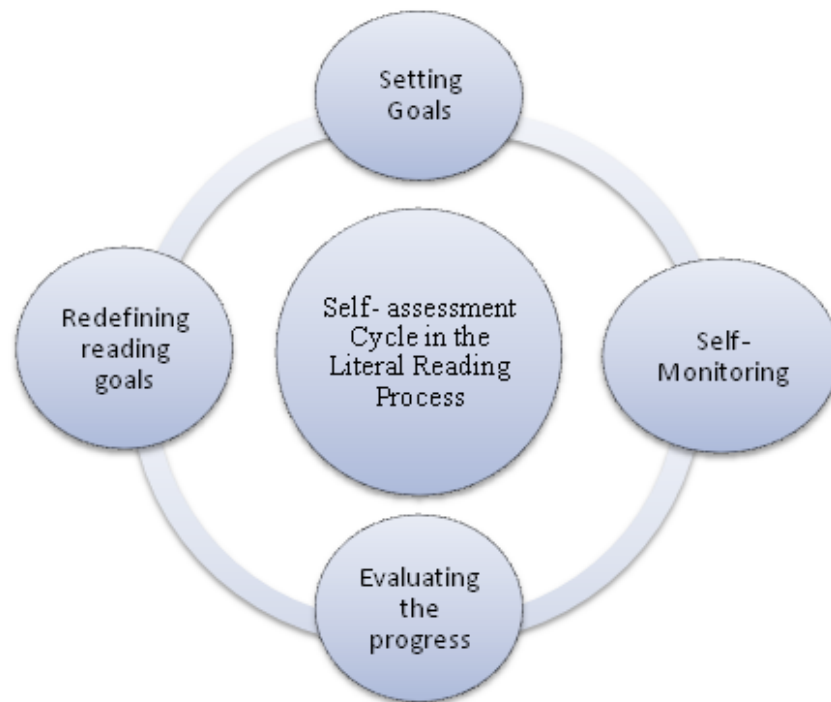


Figure 3. Self- assessment cycle to become self- directed readers

In this stage, students got familiar with the concept of self-assessment by using a mirror to make an analogy between students' physical description and the parts of a text. First, they looked at their faces then they put the mirror in front of the text and described what they could see, with the exercise participants identified different characteristics from the text such title, characters,

main idea and images. Besides, participants were guided through questions to comprehend it and obtain specific information.

The concept of *setting goals* was highlighted in lesson 4 and the main objective was to demonstrate it, scaffold students' understanding and having them practice it. Until this moment students set learning goals in general; for purposes of the intervention and the knowledge acquired students were asked to reflect upon their own strengths and weaknesses while reading in English, and then think of their needs to achieve a reading task. Then, the Self- assessment Protocol (SAP) was introduced highlighting the *Before Starting Reading* section which helped students internalize a reading routine. In this first part students found the starting time, then questions related to the title and images as part of comprehension and finally options to set students' own reading goals (see Appendix G). After explaining the concept of Setting goals, the reading "A day in the life of Paula Radcliffe - Marathon Runner" was used to model this part of the Self-assessment cycle strategy.

Self- monitoring lesson was introduced by asking questions to students in the case they had difficulties to comprehend a text; group discussion was allowed to let students share different solutions to face reading difficulties. After socializing the different ideas teacher-researchers presented a poster with a list of reading strategies to reinforce and add extra information about the topic. The same reading and the SAP were used to model the practice step by step. In lesson 5, students used color faces stickers to self-monitor their literal reading comprehension. While students read, they stuck red faces in the text to indicate difficulty and yellow faces to indicate understanding. The SAP template was explained to focus on *During Reading* section in which students read the steps to carry out the self-monitoring and the list of the reading strategies was included; hence, while they read their text, they self-monitored their reading taking into account

the SAP. Then they completed the ten questions reading test and solved the last part of the SAP, *After reading* section, where participants evaluated their progress in a checklist based on their results and performance during the reading.

Lessons in this stage considered the 3 different moments: *Getting ready*, *Building knowledge* and *Overall reflection*. During the *getting ready*, a warming up activity introduced the topic of the session by reviewing previous knowledge, reflecting and setting their own learning objectives on the students' reading journals. During the *Building knowledge* moment participants throughout elicitation questions, group discussion, and analysis, used their background knowledge to understand the main concepts of the sessions mentioned above and build their own ideas. At the end, they reflected on the learning during the session answering specific questions on their students' reading journals, teacher concluded about the topic and independent work was assigned (see Appendix H). A brochure was designed and shared with learners to provide key concepts of this stage. Teachers kept the record during the sessions on their classroom observation about relevant aspects of the students' processes during the strategy training, their literal reading performance and level of autonomy.

Stage 3: Starting to self-assess literal reading. This stage was planned and designed to practice the self-assessment cycle in 4 sessions, this practice was divided into two sub-stages that corresponded to a controlled and free- practice. The controlled practice was carried out in lessons 6 and 7 in which participants still needed the teacher- researchers' guidance to solve questions, and the free practice in lessons 8 and 9, in which students solved the reading tasks following the Self-assessment cycle strategy and self- assessment protocol without teachers' support. Throughout the controlled and free practice, students read following the three sections

that corresponded to the SAP: *Before starting the reading, During the reading and After reading* which were previously presented in the SAC training stage.

Stage 4: Getting familiar with self- directed reading. This section was designed to account for the students' independent reading performance outside the class, as a way to extend the reading practice and to reinforce what they learnt during the English lessons. A set of nine independent readings was designed via Google Drive forms² in which they followed the different stages and self-assessment protocol to guide their own literal reading comprehension. Besides they kept record via their Independent Reading Record after finishing the reading task to keep evidence of their process. This stage was carried out throughout the implementation in order to check the way learners read on their own and their commitment to this independent work.

Stage 5: The self-assessment cycle and the improvement of the literal reading process. Teacher-researchers planned a session whose main objective was to allow students be aware of the effect of the self-assessment cycle in terms of speed and accuracy in reading. It was a final reading task (post- reading test). During this last session students were not allowed to use the dictionary and a limit of time was set to solve the test.

In conclusion, all the stages for this study were planned, designed, and guided to fulfill the aims of the project to scaffold participants in the reading process and to foster self – directed readers. All in all, this section has described the pedagogical intervention and the description of the activities and the process indeed. The next section will present the data analysis.

²<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BwXCJ5Pk3RtY054RGtUUXN3ajg>

Data analysis and findings

This chapter describes the collection and analysis procedures followed by the teacher-researchers in the framework of the mixed method approach chosen for the study. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed following appropriate techniques for each case. Quantitative data was collected from a set of literal reading comprehension tests which included a diagnostic test (pre-test), five ongoing tests (students' work) and a final test (post-test). Additionally, the diagnostic and closing questionnaires were applied. Qualitative data was gathered by different instruments such as students' reading journals, teachers' classroom observation, focus groups interviews and open-ended questions from the diagnostic and closing questionnaires. For analysis purposes, researchers decided to set three main categories: *Literal reading comprehension*, *Self-assessment* and *Self-directed reading* in which both kinds of data were considered and integrated in order to support each other. Initially, teacher-researchers decided to do a separate analysis of the results obtained in each school in the literal reading comprehension category and later, the results from both schools were integrated in this and subsequent categories.

Data Management Procedures

During data collection, researchers agreed on procedures of data management to facilitate subsequent analysis. Initially, to manage quantitative data, researchers from School 1 and School 2 created a Google drive Excel spreadsheet, since it offered the possibility to have different pages according to the needs of the researchers and easily handle the data as is presented in Appendix L. They transcribed and organized data gathered from the tests done during the diagnostic session and lessons 6 to 10 in a set of six sessions in this spreadsheet. The items taken into account were session number, date, participants' codes assigned by teacher-

researchers as follows S1, S2, S3 and so on, the number of correct answers, correct answers per literal reading skill, the number of absent students and a comments column was included to keep the record on relevant events. Data gathered from close questions in the diagnostic and closing questionnaires were automatically available in an Excel spreadsheet. Teacher-researchers joined School 1 and School 2 results recorded in the spreadsheets to be analyzed.

Consequently, to manage qualitative data, researchers transcribed the nine sessions of students' reading journals in Google Drive Excel spreadsheets. Items considered were session number, date, the same participant's code assigned by teacher-researchers mentioned above and the students' answers to the five questions proposed in this instrument. The teachers' classroom observation was registered on the instrument designed; later on researchers classified the relevant information. Data collected from open questions in the diagnostic and closing questionnaires were organized in tables, taking into account the frequency of answers. Finally, focus group interviews were taped recorded and later entirely transcribed in the Google Drive Excel spreadsheet. In the next section, the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data is presented in detail.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected from the reading tests and the close-ended questions in the diagnostic and closing questionnaires were analyzed following specific procedures for each one looking for significant findings related to the research question and objectives. It is relevant to inform that 71 students participated in the research process and were considered as the population for the data analysis; however ten of them from School 2 did not send the closing questionnaire which affected the comparison with the diagnostic questionnaire and therefore the final results.

On one hand, literal reading comprehension tests were independently analyzed as a way to have specific results for each school and researchers' subsequent pedagogical action plans, and lately these tests were joined to determine the effect of the strategy in the whole population. As stated by Nunan and Bailey (2008), researchers used descriptive statistics to obtain the mean of the tests in each school and later of tests scores from the whole population in order to describe and compare the obtained results. Nunan and Bailey (2008) state the following:

“when we think about representing a group of people through quantitative data, we can use the measures of central tendency (the mean, the mode, and median) ...These measures are called descriptive statistics because they describe the group in terms of the variables that have been measured or counted” (p. 372).

Besides, researchers considered a t-Test as the appropriate technique in order to compare the pre and post-tests scores and validate results obtained through the descriptive statistics (mean); in this regard Bailey and Nunan (2008) mention that , “t-Tests are usually used to compare only two sets of data” (p. 389). Additionally, for the analysis of the results, the researchers also considered percentages of the students' correct answers to find differences throughout the implementation. They agreed on establishing scores between zero to five correct answers as a low progress and six to ten as a significant progress since students were never evaluated considering a grade for their results. They took into account this procedure considering that “quantitative data can be analyzed and displayed in many different ways. Some familiar ways of reporting numerical data include percentages and proportions” (Nunan and Bailey, 2008, p.372). On the other hand, considering that close-ended questions in the diagnostic and closing questionnaires provided answers that were easily measurable, researchers decided to include them in the quantitative data analysis. Answers which were already organized

in a Google Drive Excel spreadsheet , were used to elaborate pie graphs and through them to determine the percentages of each answer in order to compare initial and final students' perceptions on the study and support the self-assessment cycle on the literal reading process.

Qualitative Data Analysis

For the analysis of data collected from students' journals, teachers' class observation, focus group interviews and open-ended questions, researchers agreed the Grounded theory was the most suitable method for qualitative analysis. Considering that there was a great quantity of qualitative data, this theory helped researchers look for categories that emerged from the data collected in order to arrive at theory through inductive reasoning. According to Engward (2013), "it is a means of systematically collecting and analyzing data to generate theory about patterns of human behavior in social contexts" (p. 37). So, considering its features and advantages for the analysis of data gathered, the analysis was conducted bearing in mind the research question and objectives in order to set codes, subcategories, and main categories.

Initially, an open coding process was carried out because it is the initial stage proposed in Grounded theory and which is considered a fundamental analytic process for subsequent stages (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 12). Data collected from the instruments was separately read, broke down and analyzed to find out patterns on different issues reported by the learners and teachers and an indicator was assigned to each one. During the analysis, teacher- researchers agreed on examples for each indicator, as the exceptions for them. Then a revision of both analyses was compared and the indicators were adjusted to proceed to the axial coding phase. Table 4 shows the final 24 indicators which were located out of the four mentioned instruments during the analysis process.

Table 4. *Codes Obtained from the Open Coding Phase.*

INDICATORS
Awareness of reading comprehension
Awareness of reading
Reading comprehension process
Vocabulary
Reading comprehension
Speed
Literal Reading Concept
Literal reading skills
Awareness of the reading strategies
Self-monitoring awareness
Acquired learning
Goal setting
Goal achievement
Strengths and weaknesses awareness
Self-assessment
Motivation
Reading Challenges
Personal Challenges
Independent Reading
Independent Learning
Independence
Identification of solutions
Feelings
Interest

Later, researchers developed an axial coding phase where “categories are related to their subcategories, and the relationships tested against data” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p.12). During the process, researchers decided what indicators were more relevant to tackle the research question and objectives, and grouped them following the main concepts of the theoretical framework. Then, with the information gathered from the School 1 and School 2, the researchers set the subcategories and established the relationships among them to finally obtain the main categories that lead this analysis. In Figure 4 the main categories, the subcategories and the codes found by the researchers can be observed. The abbreviations included were used during data analysis. They were divided in three main categories: literal reading comprehension, self-

directed reading and an unexpected category entitled other findings. Data obtained related to literal reading comprehension, in which we can find reading comprehension definition and performance; self-directed reading established by the active role in reading and self-assessment supported by setting reading goals and self-monitoring reading, and other findings such as vocabulary needs to read and motivation to read.

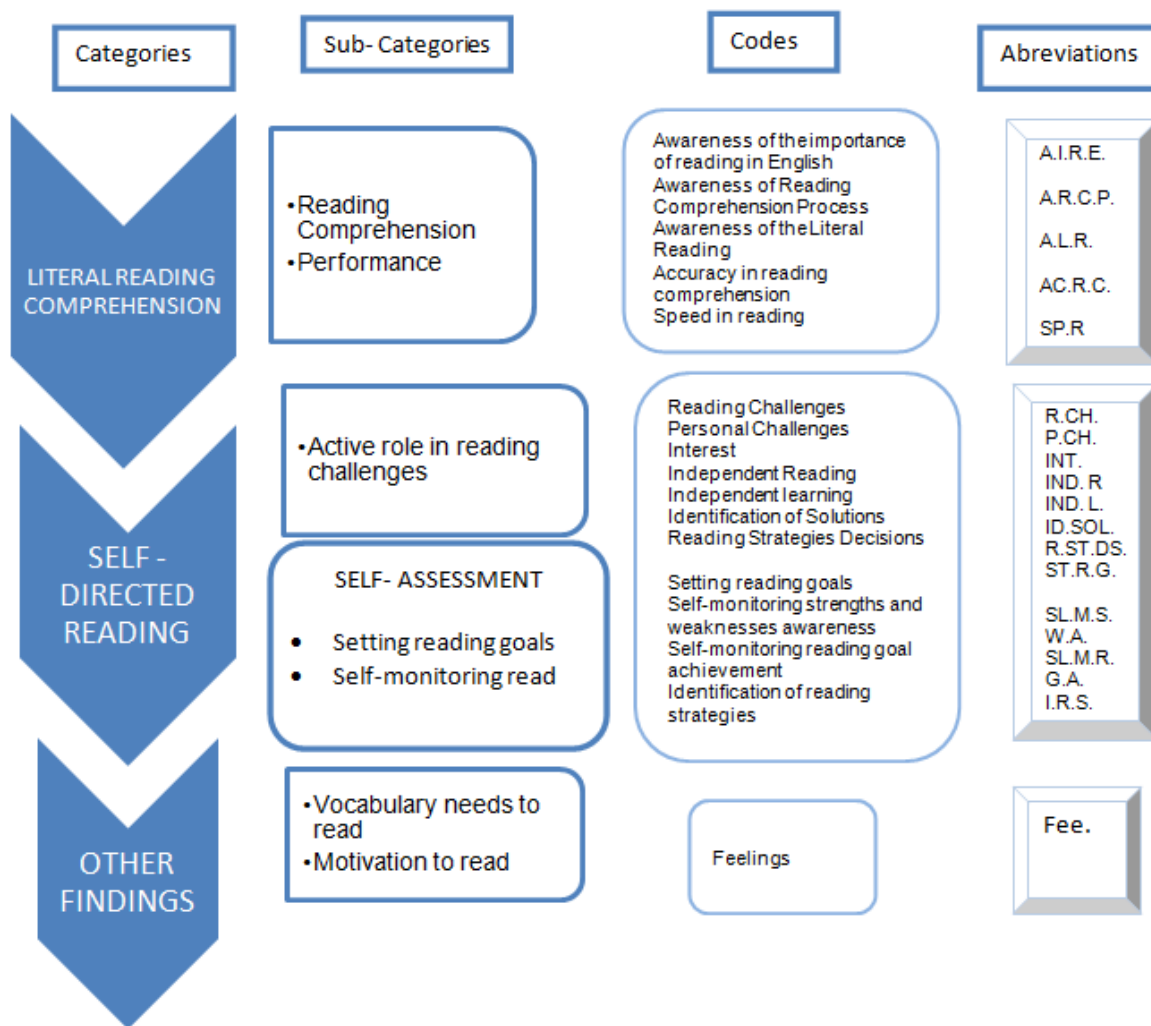


Figure 4. Categories and subcategories after axial coding process.

Data Interpretation

In regard to the purpose of this report and the research question “*How does a 3-step self-assessment cycle influence A1 students’ literal reading comprehension?*” researchers considered to present the data interpretation following the two main categories found during qualitative data analysis: literal reading comprehension, self-directed reading and their subcategories. An additional category was considered in the interpretation since the findings were recurring during the analysis. However, both quantitative and qualitative data results were included taking into account their advisability for each category and were supported in different ways. Tables and figures were used to explain the findings of quantitative data, while excerpts taken from the participants were presented in their native language - Spanish- and purposely translated to English by the teachers- researchers, and the teachers’ observations were used to support the qualitative data presented.

Category 1 Literal Reading Comprehension. This category provided data which contributed to support the research objective “*To determine how a 3-step self-assessment cycle affect the literal reading comprehension performance of A1 high school students*”. Literal reading comprehension category emerged from the qualitative data and was analyzed considering two main subcategories: reading comprehension and performance. In the first subcategory students’ perceptions about reading comprehension, its importance and literal reading comprehension concept, sub-skills and their progress in these aspects were presented. The second subcategory, performance took into account the students’ accuracy in the literal reading comprehension level and also the analysis of the student’s time when developing a literal reading task. Analysis included both quantitative and qualitative data collected through literal

reading tests, diagnostic and closing questionnaires, students' reading journals and teachers' classroom observation which supported the findings in this category.

Reading Comprehension. Data gathered related to this subcategory was only analyzed from the qualitative perspective. Quantitative data collected about it could not be reported, since there was an inconsistency from the qualitative and quantitative answers. Students reported to have a basic or high reading comprehension level, but at the same time they argued they had several difficulties when reading. From qualitative data collected from questionnaires and students' reading journals, there was evidence of the importance of language and specifically reading for their academic life and future projects. The students' data collected presented here in the following excerpts demonstrated they recognized English as one of the most important languages in the world. Specially, some of them were aware of reading importance for their short term goals at school, while others considered it a way to broad their knowledge in different fields.

“Cuando se lee en inglés no solo se desarrollan nuevas habilidades, si no también se aprende un nuevo idioma de una manera más fácil”. S12, Diagnostic questionnaire, Q17.

*“When one **reads in English**, not only new skills are developed, but also **a new language is learnt in an easier way**” (Author's translation).*

“Considero que es muy importante leer en inglés en especial para mi futuro ya que es el idioma universal y es fundamental en cualquier ámbito de la vida tanto personal como laboral”. S22, diagnostic questionnaire, Q17.

*“I consider that reading in English is **very important especially for my future**, since it is the universal language and it is **fundamental** in any scope of your **personal and professional life**” (Author's translation).*

Besides, taking into account the definition of reading comprehension stated by Grabe (2008), students also recognized that reading comprehension involves cognitive processes- decoding and comprehension-, several stages – pre, during and after reading- and time to be developed

“Aprendí que la lectura se encuentra separada entre leer y comprender”. S39, Students’ journal, Entry 1

“I learnt that reading is divided in reading and comprehension” (Author’s translation).

“Que la lectura es más que solo leer por leer, sino comprender y entender, y que leer en inglés es importante para la vida” S67, Students’ journal, Entry 1.

*“The reading is **not only decoding, but understanding** and reading in English is important for life” (Author’s translation).*

“...de hoy aprendí que nadie nace leyendo sino que eso se adquiere con práctica y que toca practicar para tener una buena comprensión” S25, Students’ journal, Entry 1.

*“...today I learnt that nobody born reading. That is acquired with **practice** and you need to practice **to have a good comprehension**” (Author’s translation).*

Looking specifically to literal reading comprehension students’ answers demonstrated they were aware of the concept which was close to the definition provided by Munro (2010) about literal reading. Besides, they were able to recognize that it has different sub-skills and noticed their importance as part of the reading comprehension process. Participants also highlighted the reading comprehension process as key to understanding a text.

*“I’ve learned **two important methods (skimming and scanning)** that helps me in the moment to understand a reading in its literal part”. S26, Students’ journal, Entry 2. (Originally written in English)*

“aprendí que cuando la información del texto se puede señalar es literal reading y que de este hay una estructura la cual uno realiza paso a paso por intuición” S30, Students’ journal, Entry 2.

*“I learnt that information that can be identified in the text belongs **to literal reading** and there is a structure that you develop **step by step** by intuition” (Author’s translation).*

“yo al principio no tenía las bases para comenzar una lectura y ya con el paso de los días de la sesiones fui construyendo como una estructura para poder seguir esos pasos que me sirvieron y al final reflexionar y darme cuenta de los que me van a servir para poder entender una lectura y poder obtener un puntaje más alto”. S52, Focus group interview 4, Q3

*“At the beginning, I had the basis to start a reading but along the sessions I built a **structure** to follow the steps which helped me and at the end **to reflect** and realize which of them are **useful to understand a reading** and obtain a **higher score**” (Author’s translation).*

Students reported to become aware of the literal reading sub- skills and that they facilitated their comprehension and understanding of different kind of questions on the tests, most of the sub-skills listed in Barrett’s taxonomy were appropriated and mentioned in participants’ reflections.

“Entonces al tener ya practica en estos textos identificar información específica Ideas principales secuencias y yo creo que esto más bien fue como una práctica para poder por fin llegar a comprender un texto ya que prácticamente nunca hemos leído así textos completamente en inglés”.S5, Focus group interview, Q1.

*“So, when you have practiced in these texts identify **specific information, main ideas, sequences** and I think that it was like a practice to finally be able to **comprehend a text**, since we have never read whole texts in English” (Author’s translation).*

“Hoy mejore porque pude identificar información específica del texto que era lo que más se me dificultaba”. S65, Students’ journal entry 8.

*“Today I improve because I could **identify specific information** from the text; it was the most difficult for me” (Author’s translation).*

Participants also reported on the final questionnaire an improvement related to each literal reading comprehension skill and the register kept by teachers of a number of correct answers per literal reading skill demonstrated how students’ improved them session by session. Initially, questions related to specific information in the text were the easiest to answer from the test and little by little they got better scores because they were able to answer correctly the questions which contrasted or compared information from the text, related sequence of events or identified the main idea. Table 5 represents one of the questions posed to students about their performance in the specific sub-skills of literal reading during the diagnostic and closing questionnaires and it is highlighted how the percentage of students who considered they were

usually able to identify the main idea increased from 39,7 % to 57,6% while 13,7% of students who considered they rarely obtained the main idea decreased to 0%.

Table 5. *Comparative Percentages of Q4 during Diagnostic and Closing Questionnaires*

	1	2	3	4	5
Questionnaire	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Diagnostic	0%	13,7%	23,3%	39,7%	23,3%
Closing	0%	0%	16,9%	57,6%	25,4%

Q4: I'm able to obtain general information (main topic and overview without too much detail) from a short text and written in a simple language. (Author's translation)

Performance. Results obtained from quantitative data collection instruments revealed a difference in students' literal reading comprehension performance which included the accuracy of participants when answering specific questions related to this level of comprehension and the time spent for the whole reading process from the beginning to the end of the pedagogical intervention. Analysis of the pre and post - tests in School 1 and School 2 shown in Table 6 demonstrated that the means rose after the pedagogical intervention. School's 1 mean varied from 4,9 to 8,1 and School 2 from 4,2 to 5,5. In addition, t-Test statistically confirmed the validity of means between pre and post-tests, since the p- values obtained after comparing means are under 0,05 which indicated that the difference between them was statistically significant.

Likewise, regarding the percentages obtained from the results of each school, Table 7 shows that students who obtained a lower score decreased while students who obtained high scores increased. It is important to highlight that from a population of 35 in School 1, 20 more students obtained a score over six correct answers on the final test. On the other hand, from a population

of 36 students in School 2, ten students raised their scores above the passing number of correct answers. The variation in School 1 was very significant, but it was slight in School 2.

Table 6. *Literal Reading Comprehension Test, Descriptive Statistics*

	School 1		School 2	
	Pre- test	Post-test	Pre- test	Post-test
Mean	4,9428	8,1142	4,2702	5,5675
t- Test	0,000000000053			0,001152
More than 6 correct answers	35,3 %	91,40%	21.6%	51.3%

Although there has only been presented initial and final results, researchers considered important to highlight the students' literal reading comprehension performance in the five sessions that correspond to the controlled and free practice. During the literal reading comprehension practice, some students were absent. The highest number of absences in a reading session was 3 students and it is reported since it affected the current percentages. Table 7 presents how in Schools 1 and 2, according to the mean, a great number of students started with less than six correct answers, but it also demonstrated a clear difference between School 1 where ten students achieved six or more correct answers while in School 2, one student achieved it. Throughout the five sessions in each school, there was a tendency to rise; however, it was not constant as it is clear in session 3 where mean and percentage dropped in relation with previous and subsequent data. Results in session 5 showed that in School 1, 15 more participants achieved a score above six correct answers and eight students from School 2 did it.

Table 7. *Ongoing Literal Reading Test. Descriptive statistics*

	Reading 1		Reading 2		Reading 3		Reading 4		Reading 5	
	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2
Median	4,48	2,57	5,85	3,17	5,45	4,91	5,6	4,86	6,8	4,97
More than 6 correct answers	28, 7%	2,7%	54,3%	8,1%	51,4%	29,7%	54,3%	43,2%	71,3%	24,3%
	10	1							25	9

Despite the results obtained from School 1 and School 2 varied, from a general analysis of the population, findings showed progress. In Table 8, it can be observed that from 71 participants, 31 students showed progress that represented around 43 % of the complete population. In regard to the number of correct answers, Table 9 shows that in the diagnostic test, there were students who got 0 or 1 correct answers and none who got ten. On the contrary, during the final tests, none obtained 0 or 1 correct answers and students with ten correct answers increased to seven. In general, there was a moderate progress on the general population.

Table 8. *Final Literal Reading Results*

	Less than 6 correct answers	More than 6 correct answers
	Diagnostic Test	72.5%
Final Test	29.2%	70.9%

Table 9. *Pre and Post-tests Percentages per Correct Items*

Number of correct answers	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Diagnostic Test	1.4%	2.7%	8.2%	13.7%	20.5%	26%	12.3%	11%	2.7%	1.4%	0%
Final Test	0%	0%	1.4%	4.2%	8.3%	15.3%	18.1%	12.5%	12.5%	18.1%	9.7%

Finally, regarding the issue of reading speed as part of the literal reading comprehension concept, the pre-test and post- tests were compared. It is relevant to mention that the average time spent on the test raised. In Table 10 and Figure 5, it can be observed the initial time spent by students during the pre-test and how it increased from reading two to five while students started to apply the self-assessment cycle as part of their reading process and became more independent and confident with the use of the SAP. In the post-test, the time decreased in relation to readings two to five since participants were not allowed to use their dictionaries, the self-assessment cycle had already been taken in and they did not have to complete the self-assessment protocol. On the other hand, in relation to the pre-test, time in the post-test increased since students were aware of the reading process and the self-assessment cycle which implied they took more time to self-assess their reading following the stages proposed in the strategy. Reading number one was not reported, since it was part of two training sessions carried out in different days. Besides, the process during this stage was slower and an exact amount of time could not be recorded.

Table 10. *Reading Time Records*

	Pre- test	Reading 2	Reading 3	Reading 4	Reading 5	Post –test
School 1	12 min	35 min	38 min	35 min	31 min	27 min
School 2	21 min	38 min	31 min	29 min	31 min	24 min

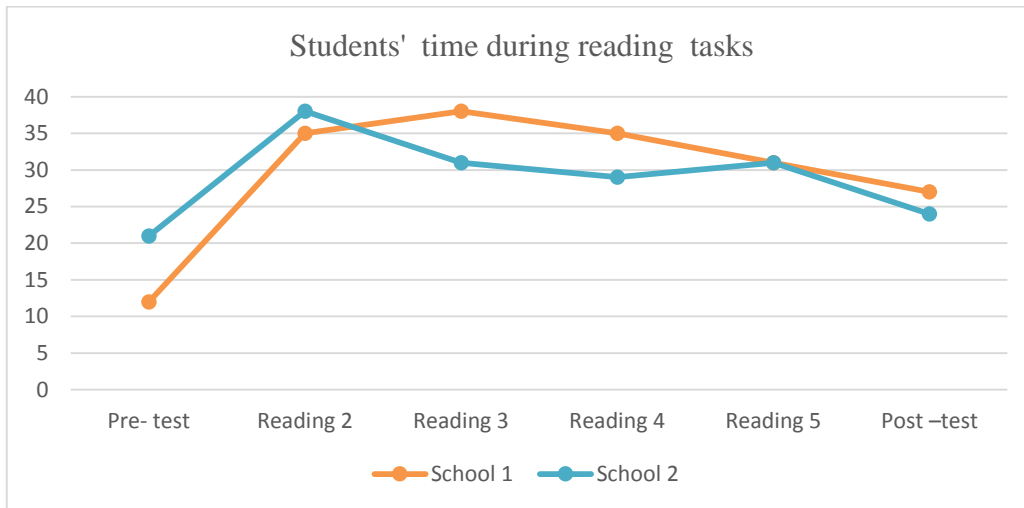


Figure 5. Students' reading times.

Even though time results from post-reading tests increased in relation to initial tests, participants reported they optimized their times. In this regard, it could be concluded that students assessed their reading speed improvement as the departure point and they considered that they were skillful in the reading process, SAP and students' journal management during the implementation after a constant reading practice.

"...que tengo que tomarme más tiempo o me ira mal". S61, Students' journal, Entry 6

*"That I have to **take more time** or I won't success" (Author's translation).*

"...y mejoré mis tiempos sí porque al principio me demoraba bastante tenía que volver a releer y después se me facilitó más" S10, Focus group Interview, Q1.

*"... and I **improved my time**, because at the beginning I took much time, I had to reread and then it was easier for me" (Author's translation).*

*“There are students who **spent less time** than the others; it depends on the use of the instruments, the reading comprehension process, their ability with vocabulary and use of reading strategies. There are 6 students who haven’t finish it was necessary to add 6 minutes more”. Teacher’s classroom observation, Entry 8.*

Although, there was not a total success on the results expected on performance, participants changed their perceptions about reading comprehension in English, they realized that reading had a purpose and they needed a process and a set of strategies to facilitate their reading comprehension.

Category 2 Self-directed reading. The analysis of the category self-directed reading was carried out considering two main subcategories: active role in reading and self- assessment, bearing in mind the last one was a concept that along the process acquired a significant value beyond the strategy per se, since the results showed how the participants’ perceptions about self-assessment substantially changed after its implementation. Moreover, the subcategories brought relevant data for two of the research objectives: to analyze how a 3 step self-assessment cycle enhances self-directed reading and to examine to what extent students become more aware of influence of self-assessment in their reading process. The data collected from students’ journals, teachers’ classroom observation, diagnostic and closing questionnaires and focus group interviews were used as the support for the subcategories presented. Students reported in their comments how their perceptions about their role and interest towards independent reading were modified after the implementation of the strategy, in which sense their dependency from teacher varied and how they became aware of the influence of the self-assessment cycle in their literal reading comprehension and how it helped them start a process to become self-directed readers.

Active role in reading. At the end of the implementation, participants showed to have assumed a different role in their reading process. They considered themselves as the engine to improve their reading comprehension as it was mentioned by Knowles in 1970 in his definition of the self-directed learner where students take initiatives by themselves and the reading tasks became a challenge more than just an academic task. Beyond reading comprehension, they also related it to other issues that could let them improve their general language level. Some excerpts show how participants' perceptions towards reading changed and motivated them to continue reading on their own, besides teachers' observation supported students comments:

"... y que uno tiene que mejorar esa fue mi idea de hacer todas las lecturas me puse ese propósito pues me gustó mucho y por mí yo seguiría haciendo esas lecturas me gustaría buscar lecturas por mi cuenta". S54, Focus group interview, Q5

*"...and that you have to **improve**, that was my idea when doing all the readings, I set that objective because I like it a lot, I would continue doing these readings. I'd like to **look for readings by myself**" (Author's translation).*

"me pareció que como que esto de verdad despertaba más interés al saber que en esta lectura usted no entendió un pedazo y le parece interesante... entonces usted quiere investigar sobre ese pedazo pues entonces así creo que serán en todo se lo que no entiendo en otro idioma entonces usted va a investigar qué significa o que está escrito al fin" S5, Focus group interview, Q5

"It seemed to me that it awaken more interest when you know that in this reading you did not understand a section and you are interested ... then you want to search about it, so I think that it will be the same in everything I do not understand, so you are going to search what it means or what is finally written" (Author's translation).

“seguir aprendiendo cosas nuevas” S4, Students’ journal, Entry 8

“Keep learning new things” (Author’s translation).

“Students are very interested in their reading comprehension performance; they keep in mind their results to improve next class. They express their desire to get better scores in their tests” Teachers’ classroom observation, Entry 8

Additionally, as part of this active role to become self-directed readers, interest was an issue that emerged from qualitative data. During the intervention, some students were never interested in the reading activities, but many students expressed a strong change on their interest towards reading. At the beginning, they reported that reading was not very interesting for them because it was difficult to understand, but at the end of the process students reported to have changed their minds. Some excerpts confirm they were more interested in the reading process:

“...pues al principio no me gustaba leer en inglés y lo veía como una obligación pues yo vi que me servía a mí como futuro y le empecé a poner empeño y empecé a escribir todo, qué estrategias me servían”. S54, Focus group interview, Q1

*“so, at the beginning **I didn’t like to read in English** I saw it as an obligation, then **I saw it was useful for me and my future** and I started to put effort and started to write all, what **strategies** were useful for me” (Author’s translation).*

“pues al principio no tenía mucho interés por el inglés por esto pero con este proceso y todo me ayudó a incentivar para así mejorar y pronto en este idioma leer cosas en inglés” S4, Focus group interview, Q1

“so at the beginning I didn’t have too much interest for English but this process and helped me improve and soon read in English as a foreign language” (Author’s translation).

Regarding independent reading and how learners engaged in reading activities outside the classroom, Table 15 presents how in the diagnostic questionnaire a great percentage of participants (54, 8%) affirmed they hardly ever or never read in English in their free time; in contrast, at the end of implementation the percentage diminished to 29, 8%. Nevertheless, there was not a significant percentage of students who read in English in their spare time.

Table 11. *Self- directed Reading Done by Students.*

Questionnaire	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Diagnostic	0%	8,2%	37%	32,9%	21,9%
Final	3,5%	21,1%	45,6%	17,5%	12,3%

Q: I do additional readings in English during my spare time that allow me to reinforce or practice what I have learnt in class.

These results can be contrasted with the students’ reading record which demonstrated that most of the students were constantly on the independent reading process. From 71 students, 51 of them started their independent reading process and after the implementation, there were six more students who participated in this activity. Seven students were not constant in their independent work; they did some readings and not others and finally, seven students who never got engaged in the independent process. Moreover, Figure 6 shows that in the closing questionnaire 51 students affirmed to be independent when reading a text after the pedagogical intervention, 12 considered they were very independent and eight that still needed some support which was an

expected finding considering the Grow's (1991) Self-direction Model in which learners move from dependent to independent learners. In spite of the fact results did not show that every student considered himself as very independent, statistics revealed participants reached a certain level of independence in relation to their initial situation.

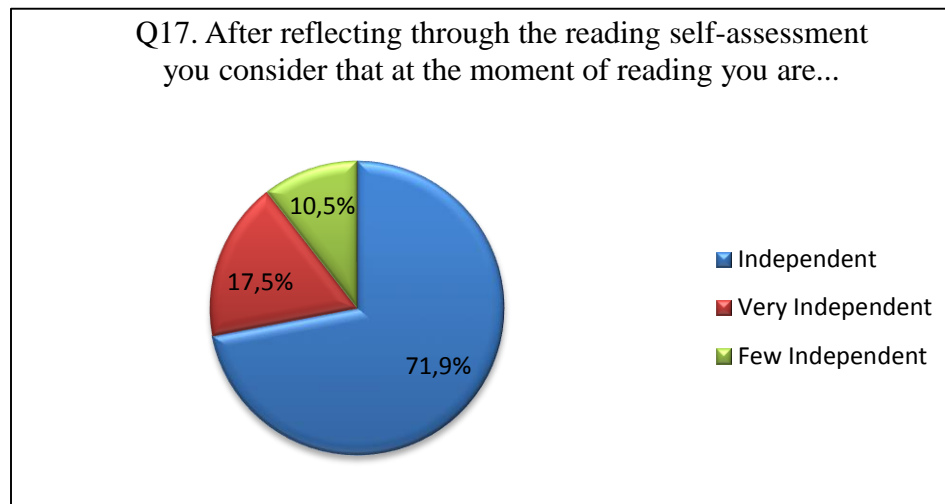


Figure 6. Students' perceptions about themselves as independent readers

In addition, independent reading understood as the ability of learners to read on their own, displayed an obvious modification on participants' attitude towards reading. They expressed to be more confident after the pedagogical intervention and especially after the independent reading process. At the beginning they needed support from teachers and other classmates, but at the end almost the whole population worked with no support, the teacher acted as a consultant as it is proposed in Grow's (1991) model. As the following excerpts show, they recognized the reading process, the self-assessment protocol, the journals and the most appropriate strategies to deal with comprehension problems.

“A mí me gustó hacer las lecturas independientes, porque uno no necesitaba el apoyo y la profesora para que me explicara, si no lo bueno era que uno lo podía hacer sólo, lo

podía hacer a conciencia y que si le salía mal, no sabía que no iba estar la profesora”

S54, Focus group interview, Q5

*“I liked to do the **independent readings**, because **I did not need the support** from the teacher to explain me, if not the good point was that **I could do it by myself** and realized that if it was wrong the teacher was not there” (Author’s translation).*

“pues empecé a utilizar todas las estrategias y cada vez que avanzaba ya no usaba ni diccionario ni llamaba la profesora ya lo hacía por mí mismo en la última lectura me fue mal pero me sirvió para mucho, demasiado”. S50, Focus group interview, Q1

*“so, I started to use all the strategies and each time I advance, I did not use the dictionary nor call to the teacher, **I did it on my own**, in the last reading it was wrong but it was very useful for me” (Author’s translation).*

“aprendí...que soy capaz de leer y comprender sin ayuda” S67, Students’ journal, Entry

9

*“I learnt... that **I’m able to read and understand without help**” (Author’s translation).*

To sum up, in spite of not reading a lot outside of the classroom, most of the students considered they were more independent when reading because they were aware of their active role in the reading process, they were able to set their own strategies and they needed less support from others to achieve their reading goals inside and outside of the classroom.

Participants moved from a strong dependence from the teacher and classmates to take an active role in their process by applying the self-assessment cycle and understanding its benefits as it is explained in the next subcategory.

Self-assessment. Taking into account the self-assessment is a strategy to promote self-direction, it becomes an opportunity for learners to reflect on their reading processes as Smith (2002) cites. Based on the results obtained from questionnaires, journals and interviews used to support the self- assessment cycle effect, researchers realized that the students' perception about the strategy before the pedagogical intervention was related to a final stage during the learning process or an extra grade at the end of a period and not to a constant process in the literal reading comprehension which according to McGeever can become an obstacle in their learning process (as cited in LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985, p. 674). Through questionnaires teacher-researchers gathered the information about the concept of self- assessment, its importance and impact in the process of learning and literal reading.

In relation to the concept of self - assessment the 81.9% of the students assumed they knew about it, and a 15.3% of students did not know clearly its purpose, function and process in their academic life. At the beginning of the implementation, most of the students reported that self-assessment involved self- grading their performance, in a specific task or just as a final grade in the term. On the other hand, around 10 % of students mentioned that self-assessment was not only a self- grade, but also a reflection on their performance in terms of strengths and difficulties in learning English as a foreign language. Finally, few students had a close concept of self-assessment as a process when learning. The following excerpts show students' previous concepts:

“porque tendríamos la opción de dar una nota adicional respecto como nos fue en el periodo. Con esta nota tal vez nos ayudaría a pasar la materia... poner a prueba nuestra honestidad”. S56, Diagnostic questionnaire, Q18

“...because we would have the option to give an additional grade about our result during the term... this grade maybe would help us pass the subject... prove our honesty”

(Author’s translation)

“1.Porque en la autoevaluación los estudiantes pueden reflexionar acerca de su desempeño. 2. se hace el ejercicio de evaluarse a uno mismo. 3. Es una nota que será válida”. S10, Diagnostic questionnaire, Q18

“1.Because in the self-assessment students can reflect on their performance 2. You can do the exercise to assess oneself. 3. it’s a valid grade” (Author’s translation).

“Es importante tener momentos de auto-evaluación ya que:- Me doy cuenta en qué estoy fallando.- Sirve para corregir estos fallos.- Me ayuda a ver mis puntos fuertes y débiles en la materia”. S26, Diagnostic questionnaire, Q18

“It is important to have self-assessment moments since: -I realized what I am doing wrong.-It helps me correct my mistakes. - It helps me identify my strengths and weaknesses in the subject” (Author’s translation)

This kind of perception was redefined throughout the implementation when the final questionnaire was applied and students reported self-assessment aspects focused on the literal reading comprehension process and the impact on their academic life. In addition, when the implementation started most of the students commented in their journals they did not learn anything in the class because they did not study grammar or write sentences. Session by session they became aware of the process of literal reading and the SAC and comprehended the relevant

aspects to self- assess their progress. The following excerpt supports the acquired concept of self-assessment after intervention:

“para mí, la auto- evaluación es importante ya que me ayuda a evaluar mi aprendizaje, si no hubiera tenido esta oportunidad de trabajar en este proceso no sabría que en serio estoy mejorando constantemente en la lengua y he cumplido mis objetivos de aprendizaje, por eso es importante, además de que cumples las metas, te estimula para seguir aprendiendo”. S13, Closing questionnaire, Q16

“for me, self-assessment is important since it helps me evaluate my learning, if I would not have had this opportunity to work in this process I would not realize that I’m constantly improving in the language and I have achieved my learning goals, that is why it is important, besides you accomplish your goals and it encourages you to continue learning” (Author’s translation)

In this student’ excerpt it is evident that participants already considered the self-assessment cycle as a process which included other relevant strategies as setting goals and self-monitoring which helped them keep their interest and motivated them to continue in a “can-do” attitude (Afflerbach, 2014).

Setting reading goals. As part of the self-assessment cycle, identifying weaknesses and strengths became the departure and ending stage of the process and the best way to guide students to set their own goals. A remarkable aspect found about the importance of self-assessment was letting participants be aware of their weaknesses. Participants reported in their journals and the focus group interviews how the facts of identifying their difficulties helped them find solutions to overcome them:

“aprendí y reconocí mis errores que cometo al leer en inglés”. S54, Students’ journal, Entry 4

*“I learnt and **identified my mistakes** when reading in English” (Author’s translation).*

“Como que mirar que estoy haciendo bien y que estoy haciendo mal para seguir mejorando” S18, Focus group interview, Q2

*“I identify **what I am doing fine** and **what I am doing wrong** to keep improving” (Author’s translation).*

“cómo hacer una autocrítica mirar por ejemplo los puntos buenos que uno tiene y los malos tratar de mejorarlos y seguir las recomendaciones que la profe nos da digamos que cada uno plantea su propio objetivo para poder lograr hacer y otro objetivo o meta para nuestro proceso de lectura” S41, Focus group interview, Q2

*It is like to do a self-criticism for instance the **good points** that you have and try to **improve the bad ones** you have and follow the recommendations that the teacher gives us. Let say that each one **sets the goal** to reach it and other objective or goal for our **reading process**” (Author’s translation).*

Regarding setting reading goals as part of the self-assessment cycle, the diagnostic questionnaires reported that participants did not see goals as part of their reading process. Table 11 presents that a few percentage (18, 1 %) of participants from School 1 and School 2 always set a goal before reading in English. Likewise, Table 12 shows the highest percentage of students (48, 9%) answered they sometimes identified actions to accomplish their goals. Students understood that self-assessment let them know themselves better in the reading process and through the use of the self-assessment protocol, where the steps to become successful in the

literal reading process were summarized and organized; they were given the opportunity to set their own literal reading goals to accomplish during the reading process. They realized and internalized the importance of setting “clear and usable targets, or objectives” (Moeller, Theiller & Wu, 2012, p.153) as part of their literal reading comprehension; it was confirmed by 61,4% of the students who at the end of the process reported they always set a reading goal and 56,4% who affirmed they usually set actions to accomplish their goals.

Table 12. *Setting reading goals*

Questionnaire	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Diagnostic	18,1%	33,3%	37,5%	6,9%	4,2%
Closing	61,4%	28,1%	10,5%	0%	0%

Q: When I read a text in English I set a goal

Table 13. *Awareness to set reading goals*

Questionnaire	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Diagnostic	12.5%	29.7%	48.4%	9.4%	0%
Closing	27.3%	56.4%	16.4%	0%	0%

Q: I identify the actions which will help me reach my reading goal.

In that sense, participants also recognized the process helped them to have better goals and the importance for their literal reading process. Excerpts from students' journals and interview exemplify these statements:

*“a que siempre debo poner un objetivo para mejorar y superarme cada vez más.” S30,
Students' journal, Entry 3.*

“I must always set a goal to improve and surpassed myself more every time” (Author’s translation).

“el objetivo fue una de las mayores facetas que se pudo ver los textos porque cuando yo tenía mi objetivo general que digamos que era comprender la idea principal la secuencia de los textos uno se centraba en lo que tenía que sacar del texto y entonces yo me di cuenta que cuando sacaba mi objetivo antes de responder las preguntas pues me iba muchísimo mejor porque ya tenía una idea clara que era el texto y ya me podía guiar por lo que yo reflexioné por lo que leí y por las preguntas” S53, Focus group interview, Q4

“ the goal was one of the greatest aspects that you could see in the texts, because when I had my general goal for example to comprehend the main idea of the text or to follow the sequence of events, I focused on the information I had to extract from the text and so, I realized that when I set my goal before answering the questions it went better because I had a clearer idea about the text and I could be guided by my previous reflections, by the reading and the questions” (Author’s translation).

“al plantearnos un objetivo es como lo principal para comprender una lectura y así ir identificando nuestros errores “S19, Focus group interview, Q4

“When we set a goal, it is the most important to understand a reading and it helps us identify our mistakes” (Author’s translation).

Self-monitoring. Self - monitoring helped students verify their understanding by identifying comprehension problems and finding appropriate solutions during the reading task using the self- assessment protocol (Guisinger, 2016). Self- monitoring aimed to provide

students with a plan at the moment to read, considering the before, while and after reading stages, also during reading they read the strategies in order to have them in mind and solve the reading task using as many reading strategies they considered useful in their individual processes. Indeed, at the beginning participants did not have a clear idea about the process of reading, they read because it was a task. Participants reported their comprehension of the monitoring process as it is observed in the next excerpts:

“a mí me parece que la autoevaluación de lectura tiene que ver con el auto monitoreo que es cuando uno se da cuenta más o menos las falencias que tiene para mejorarlas en la lectura y por medio de esta evaluación que uno puede darse cuenta en qué está mal y corregirlo en la próxima lectura que uno vaya a realizar” S6, Focus group interview, Q2

*“ I think that the reading self-assessment is related to the **self-monitoring** that is when you realize about the lacks you have in order to improve them in the reading and through this evaluation that you can notice if **you are wrong and fix it up** during next reading you are going to develop” (Author’s translation).*

“...porque aprendí que es auto monitoreo: es ir leyendo y donde hay un problema de comprensión marcar y utilizar una estrategia” S30, Students’ journal, Entry 4

*“...because I learnt that **self-monitoring** is reading and where you find a **comprehension problem**, you highlight and use a **strategy**” (Author’s translation).*

“seguir instrucciones del auto monitoreo y esto me ayudó a comprender un poco más el texto” S1, Students’ journal, Entry 5.

*“Follow **self-monitoring** instructions and this **helped me** understand a little bit more the text” (Author’s translation).*

Regarding different issues that make part of the self -monitoring reading process the diagnostic and closing questionnaires displayed findings on specific strategies used by the participants to solve their difficulties when understanding the text. One of them is related to stop when reading to verify text comprehension. In both questionnaires, a considerable amount of students reported using this self - monitoring strategy; however, a considerable change was evident in the percentage (8, 3%) of students who never or hardly ever stop reading to verify their understanding. Table 13 shows how these indicators decrease to 1.8% at the end of the implementation and students who always stopped to verify comprehension increase from 30, 6% to 50, 9 %.

Table 14. *Self-monitoring Actions to Verify Understanding*

Questionnaire	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Diagnostic	30.6%	40.3%	22.8%	6.9%	1.4%
Closing	50.9%	29.8%	17.5%	0%	1.8%

Other key issue related to the self-monitoring process was being aware of the reading strategies used to fix up comprehension problems. Table 14 shows how before the pedagogical intervention, few students (32, 1 %) reported to take always or usually some time after reading to reflect about the strategies they used. On the other hand, at the end of the pedagogical intervention, a higher percentage of students (71, 9%) reported to check their strategies after reading. Students were certainly more conscious of the strategies they used.

Table 15. *Reading Strategies Awareness*

Questionnaire	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Diagnostic	8,3%	23,8%	40,3%	23,3%	2,8%
Final	17,5%	54,4%	26,3%	1,8%	0%

Q: Before Reading a text in English, I stop to think about the strategies I have used.

At the same time, participants also reported the most common actions to solve comprehension difficulties such as search for unknown words in the dictionary, look at images for information and make clear ideas, read slowly and underline specific information. It gave account of the fact that learners were more aware of the reading strategies and discovered new ones. The actions mentioned were reported during the implementation in the journals and in the focus interview as it is shown in the following excerpts:

“Digamos con lo del auto monitoreo me fijaba en las imágenes y subrayaba lo que se me complicaba o a veces no sabía qué era esto y lo buscaba por el diccionario, eso también sirvió mucho”. S27 Focus group interview, Q2

*“Let’s say that with **self-monitoring**, I paid attention to the images and I underlined difficult things or when I did not understand and I looked in the dictionary, it was very **useful**”* (Author’s translation).

“Para comprenderlo releo varias veces observo imágenes me ayudo con el diccionario y verificó que mientras leo voy entendiendo”. S46, Students’ journal, Entry 6.

*“To understand it, I reread several times, I observe, I imagine, I make use of the dictionary and **verify that I comprehend** while I’m reading”* (Author’s translation).

The self- monitoring process also encouraged students to evaluate their goals' achievement since learners self-assessment also involved to observe their actions and results in order to contrast them with the goals set (Ylvisaker, 2006). At the beginning of the process participants objectives were not clearly focused on the research topic, as it is evident on the following excerpts, participants became more oriented to set realistic and specific reading goals and they assumed new personal or reading challenges.

“alcance mi objetivo que es encontrar el tema principal de una lectura más fácil, de que no necesite mirar las imágenes si no que la primera vez que leo lo encontré más fácilmente”.

S47, Students' journal, Entry 4.

“I reached my goal that was to find easily the main idea of the text, I did not have to look at the images but I found it easily in the first reading” (Author's translation).

“alcance mi objetivo en especial la parte de identificar la información específica y pude establecer relaciones de causa y efecto”. S22, Students' journal, Entry 7

“I reached my goal specially the part of identifying specific information in the text and I could set relations of cause and effect” (Author's translation).

Other Findings. Some unexpected issues emerged from qualitative data during the analysis process which was taken from students' journals and focus groups interviews. During the strategy implementation, the vocabulary was an issue that appeared from different perspectives from the beginning to the end of the process. First, it was reported as a necessity because of the lack of understanding while reading. This necessity in some students became a strength, as they discovered their own path to overcome the literal reading comprehension through different strategies and at the same time they were able to solve vocabulary needs by

making relations among words or taking into account their previous knowledge. Throughout the implementation, vocabulary issues turned from a constant constraint to a strength to solve the assigned reading task and this fact confirms what is stated by Krashen and McQuillan (as cited in Splangler and Mazzante, 2015, p. 1) in relation to the benefits of the reading skill in the acquisition of larger vocabulary. Excerpts below show how student's vocabulary difficulties were overcome along the process:

"I need to improve my vocabulary to understand better the text". S26, Students' journal, Entry 3 (originally written in English)

"Porque no entendía muchas palabras aun, pero medio comprendí el texto". S60, Students' journal, Entry 2

"...because I did not understand many words, but I understood a little the text" (Author's translation).

"Este proceso me ayudó a mejorar mi vocabulario". S6, Focus group interview, Q1

"This process help me improve my vocabulary" (Author's translation).

During the pedagogical intervention, motivation and how it changed over time was another remarkable issue students reported. Due to the lack of comprehension, some of the students reported negative perceptions about their performance along the first sessions. Otherwise, after finishing the process, participants expressed feelings of confidence, satisfaction and engagement which motivates them to continue reading and learning.

“Quería poder comprender y poder participar, pues varias veces me he sentido devastado porque no entiendo frases, oraciones o textos” S60, Students’ journal, Entry 1

*“I wanted to comprehend and be able to participate; well many times I have **felt devastated** because I don’t understand phrases, sentences or texts” (Author’s translation).*

“Al principio también era un poco como inseguro porque también pensaba que no podía seguir los pasos”. S52, Focus group interview, Q1

*“At the beginning I also was **a bit confident** because, I thought that **I was not able** to follow the steps” (Author’s translation).*

“sentí que puedo hacer una lectura tranquila y con seguridad”. S41, Students’ journal, Entry 3

*“I felt I can do a calm reading and **I’m confident**” (Author’s translation).*

“ser crítico con mi lectura, ser crítico con que aprendí, y sobre todo en lo que no porque es una motivación más para seguir, lo tomo como una motivación para seguir mejorando y no quedarme estancado” S18, Focus group interview, Q2

*“**Be critical** with my reading; be critical with what I learnt, and above everything in that I did not learn, because it is **a motivation to continue**. It’s a motivation to improve and not to be stuck” (Author’s translation).*

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Conclusions

The study confirmed that the implementation of a strategy based on self-assessment affected the students' performance on the literal reading comprehension, the awareness of the self-assessment strategy and the self-directed reading process.

The project, which attempted to tackle specific reading and autonomy difficulties among students in both schools, allowed the researchers to implement the concept of self-assessment that has been usually misunderstood in the classrooms, in a cyclical process that let teachers innovate in their teaching practice and students assume an active role in their reading process. Teachers had the opportunity to get closer to the real needs and interests of their students and to scaffold their learning process by providing them a set of steps and strategies involved in the self-assessment cycle to deal with problems that arise during reading which is frequently seen as a skill that is naturally developed. Furthermore, the students considered it was an enriching experience, since they could take control of their learning process during the reading tasks and acquired strategies that promoted their independence and comprehension of the texts. The findings on the specific effects of the self-assessment strategy are reported from the perspective of the literal reading comprehension, the self-assessment and self-directed reading, which are the main concepts that led the research objectives.

Students' literal reading comprehension was affected by the self-assessment cycle in terms of accuracy and speed. Students became more aware of the importance of reading and the different benefits it brought to their personal and academic fields. Moreover, the concept of reading in a foreign language was broadened, since students acquired a set of literal reading sub-skills that

helped them face a reading task taking into account their own needs and tread with a purpose and strategy to understand. Although, students discovered the way to comprehend a reading text, the different tests showed that their literal reading accuracy was slightly affected throughout the process. Additionally, reading speed was an issue that demonstrated the participants' awareness about the self-assessment cycle, but it may be reported as an inner and individual factor of the reading that is not directly related to the literal reading comprehension accuracy. In spite of the results, there was a low progression and it was demonstrated that reading is a slow process which requires more time to practice in order to get better results.

The strategy also fostered self- directed reading inside and outside the classroom. Through the self-assessment cycle, participants assumed a more active role and in a way became more independent readers, as they did not have the necessity to be supported by classmates or the teacher while reading in English. They could also find strategies to overcome with reading problems. Students' independent reading outside the classroom represented a significant participation as they had to follow the same routine of the class, performing the literal reading tasks and reflecting upon their achievements. They were interested in reading, expanding their knowledge and changing their attitudes towards reading. At the same time, they felt the need to assume new challenges for the next reading tests.

Finally, students became more aware of the influence of self-assessment in their reading process. The strategy allowed them to create a routine to start their reading comprehension process as they did not know how to face a reading task; they were provided by a scaffolding in which they could internalize a plan for reading. They got familiar with the self- assessment cycle and it triggered students to identify their own weaknesses and strengths so that they were able to set their own goals as a departure point in the reading process. Furthermore, self- monitoring was

a novelty for students, because they could realize their progress in terms of goals as they had to self-evaluate what they had achieved during each session and then to redefine their goals to set new ones to face the next reading task. As part of self-monitoring, they had the choice to discover by themselves the strategies that were useful to fix comprehension problems. These stages facilitated participants' literal reading comprehension.

In conclusion, the implementation of the self- assessment cycle affected the processes in the literal reading comprehension performance and fostered self- directed reading in the group of participants being more conscious about their own reading process and the impact of the strategy in their academic life and future expectations.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of this research project, the self- assessment cycle as a strategy can be effectively implemented in the language classrooms, taking into account it will produce a positive effect in the learning process and promote self- directedness. To include self - assessment cycle involves that learners become more engaged to the process, constantly monitor their progress by reflecting and challenging themselves.

Teacher-researchers suggest that promoting learners-centered classrooms; the self- assessment cycle becomes a useful tool since it allows learners to determine their own needs, focus their efforts and make their own decisions towards the accomplishment of their goals. Being aware of their weaknesses and strengths learners will develop self-directed learning skills and the learning environment will change as they will be able by themselves to discover and set actions to success in their English tasks. In addition to the findings on the effect of the strategy on the literal reading comprehension performance, teacher-researchers consider this self- assessment cycle may be implemented looking for facilitating other language skills and other areas of knowledge.

Limitations

The main constraints faced during the implementation of this research were related to time constraints, schools' environment and participants' attendance that affected students' inner process at the moment to read and data collection.

The first limitation that teacher-researchers had to manage during the research process was related to the time planned for the pedagogical intervention. Initially, it was planned for ten weeks, but due to the nature of the context of public school there were some activities that affected the regular development of the pedagogical intervention and the collection of data. For this reason, extra class time was required in order to accomplish the objectives of the pedagogical intervention; it was a decision that teacher-researchers had to consider since students needed to have more time to learn the strategy, and as teachers more time requested to scaffold the assessment cycle to improve literal reading comprehension.

It is also worth mentioning that implementing a process requires time. The implementation of a strategy like the self-assessment demanded a considerable amount of time to scaffold students' learning of the strategy; besides, it implied to offer learners the opportunity to move forward in the process through sessions of guided and independent practice. That's why, initially teacher-researchers had considered carrying out a set of 14 sessions, however due to the school activities and the time constraints above mentioned, the sessions were reduced to ten. The researchers considered that having more time for the strategy implementation could have helped obtain better results especially in the literal reading comprehension performance.

The second constraint was related to the schools' environment in which the interventions took place in School 2. Unfortunately, and though the efforts of the teachers researchers for keeping the same conditions for both schools, School 2 environment affected the research. While participants in School 1 were scaffold to learn the strategy implemented and solved their reading tasks on a quiet classroom with few interruptions; students in School 2 were placed in a classroom with big windows towards the sports courtyard where other learners were doing different activities and noise, that as commented by the students in the interviews, was a situation that did not allow them to concentrate on the proposed reading tasks. This factor could have had a negative impact on the School 2 results in comparison with those of School 1.

Finally, a constraint related to participant's attendance was an important factor that affected the research. The whole population of 80 students was reduced to a group of 71 due to the constant absence of some of them and others who did not participate in the initial or closing sessions when relevant data were collected. Besides, during most of the classes there was at least one absent student along the different research stages. It made difficult to monitor and keep a record of the personal reflections and reading performance during the corresponding session. In the analysis of data it was an aspect to have in mind to report in terms of percentages.

Further Research

The current study focused on the effect of self-assessment cycle on the literal reading comprehension performance and self-directed reading. Since it was implemented with ninth and tenth graders, it would be interesting to carry out a similar research with younger learners that start their language learning process and in a longer period of implementation that allows demonstrating the improvement in term of results in the language tasks.

Additionally, as it was focused in one level of the reading comprehension, inferential and evaluative reading are still levels of the reading comprehension that can be affected by the strategy in which the students can learn more vocabulary and also develop required skills related to these levels considered as a target of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and also support the learning by reading in different fields of knowledge, promoting different thinking processes.

Going further, future research could be done around the self-assessment cycle on other language skills as listening, speaking and writing, since students could discover by themselves their own learning pace, their weaknesses and strengths to work on them, challenges to improve their language level, and to foster study habits; and in this way to foster learners in the process of being self-directed learners.

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Appendixes

Appendix A (1 of 6) Students' Characterization Questionnaire



Cuestionario de Caracterización de estudiantes -Part 1-

Apreciado Estudiante:

Con este instrumento pretendo recolectar la siguiente información para conocer algunos aspectos relacionados con su aprendizaje del idioma inglés, con el fin de identificar oportunidades de mejoramiento del proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés en nuestra aula de clase.

La información que busco se encuentra dividida en tres áreas:

1. su información personal
2. experiencia con el aprendizaje del inglés
3. habilidad lectora en inglés

Lea cuidadosamente cada pregunta, las posibles respuestas e instrucciones adicionales que aparezcan en cada una de ellas. Siéntase libre de responder con honestidad ya que este cuestionario no tendrá ninguna incidencia en la evaluación de nuestra clase de inglés. Su nombre completo no será utilizado con ningún otro fin diferente al de ayudarlo a mejorar su proceso de aprendizaje; para propósitos de la investigación, sus nombres se mantendrán en anonimato.

El tiempo que tendrá para realizar el cuestionario es aproximadamente 20 minutos.

Agradezco su colaboración.

Su Profesora de Inglés

*Obligatorio

IDENTIFICACION DE LA POBLACION

1. APELLIDOS Y NOMBRES COMPLETOS *

Escriba sus apellidos y nombres completos. Ejemplo: Gutierrez Cardona Juan Carlos

Appendix A (2 of 6)

2. GRADO *

Escoja el grado que cursa actualmente

- Noveno
- Decimo

3. EDAD *

- 13 años
- 14 años
- 15 años
- 16 Años
- 17 Años
- 18 Años
- Otro:

4. GENERO *

- Femenino
- Masculino

SU EXPERIENCIA CON EL INGLÉS

5. Durante su vida escolar en el colegio (incluyendo preescolar y primaria), ha tenido clases de inglés *

- de 3 a 5 años
- de 6 a 10 años
- de 11 a 15 años
- Otro:

6. ¿Ha tomado cursos de inglés fuera de su colegio? *

- No
- Si

Si su respuesta fue SI , el nombre de la institución donde estudió inglés es:

¿Cuántos niveles o cursos tomó?

Appendix A (3 of 6)

7. En su clase de inglés , considera su desempeño en un nivel *

- Superior: entiendo textos complejos y puedo expresar ideas de temas variados con fluidez y naturalidad.
- Alto: Comprendo textos que me son conocidos y produzco textos sencillos sobre temas de interés personal.
- Básico: comprendo y utilizo expresiones cotidianas de uso frecuente y describo en términos sencillos aspectos del pasado.
- Bajo: comprendo y utilizo expresiones cotidianas de uso frecuente y doy información básica personal.

Explico en 3 líneas por qué considero que mi nivel es el marcado en la pregunta 7 *

HABILIDAD LECTORA EN INGLÉS

Escoja el indicador que más se ajuste a su realidad

8. COMPRENSIÓN GENERAL *

- I am able to comprehend simple and short texts, reading phrase by phrase, identifying names, words and phrases.
- Comprendo textos breves y sencillos que contienen vocabulario muy frecuente, incluyendo una buena parte de términos de vocabulario compartidos a nivel internacional.
- Leo textos sencillos sobre hechos concretos que tratan sobre temas relacionados con mi especialidad con un nivel de comprensión satisfactorio.
- Leo con un alto grado de independencia, adaptando el estilo y la velocidad de lectura a distintos textos y finalidades y utilizando fuentes de referencia apropiadas de forma selectiva. Tiene un amplio vocabulario activo de lectura, pero puede tener alguna dificultad con modismos poco frecuentes.

HABILIDADES ESPECIFICAS *

9. Soy capaz de extraer información general (tema central y visión general sin demasiado detalle) de un texto corto y escrito en un lenguaje sencillo.

1 2 3 4 5

Nunca Siempre

Appendix A (4 of 6)

10. Puedo obtener información específica (fechas, nombres, lugares, estadísticas) de un texto corto y escrito en un lenguaje sencillo.

1 2 3 4 5

Nunca Siempre

*

11. Uso el diccionario para identificar el significado adecuado de las palabras desconocidas según el contexto de la lectura.

1 2 3 4 5

Nunca Siempre

*

12. Comprendo relaciones establecidas por palabras como "and" , "but" "first, second..." en enunciados sencillos.

SI

NO

and

but

first, second, then

or

because

*

13. Relaciono el significado de palabras y expresiones en textos que tratan temas que me son conocidos.

1 2 3 4 5

Nunca Siempre

Appendix A (5 of 6)

14. Cuando leo, reconozco si el texto es

	SI	NO
Descriptivo (define las características de un ser animado o inanimado)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Narrativo (relata acontecimientos reales o imaginarios de unos personajes en un lugar y tiempo determinados)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expositivo (presenta hechos de interés general par un publico que no conoce sobre le tema)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Argumentativo (presenta opiniones que buscan persuadir al lector)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Cuando leo un texto en inglés, para comprenderlo *
(puede seleccionar una o varias opciones)

- utilizo mi conocimiento previo sobre el tema
- utilizo imágenes como ayuda para predecir el tema del texto
- reviso los titulos y/o subtítulo para tener una idea sobre el texto
- leo el texto rápidamente para tener una idea general
- realizo un lectura detallada para comprender la idea del texto
- leo varias veces el texto
- utilizo el diccionario para encontrar el significado de palabras relevantes
- subrayo o resalto ideas o conceptos que considera claves
- tomo notas
- utilizo gráficos (mapas mentales, tablas, diagramas, lineas del tiempo)
- traduzco el texto con el diccionario
- traduzco el texto con el traductor de internet


16.Considero que leer en inglés es *

1 2 3 4 5

Muy importante Poco importante

Explico mi elección *

Appendix B (1 of 5) Self-assessment Perceptions Questionnaire



Cuestionario sobre procesos de reflexión durante la lectura en inglés

Apreciado Estudiante:

Con este instrumento pretendo recolectar información para conocer algunas de sus necesidades para mejorar el aprendizaje del idioma inglés en nuestra aula de clase.

La información que busco está relacionada con la experiencia que ha tenido con la auto evaluación, su definición y la manera como desarrolla la lectura en inglés.

Lea cuidadosamente cada pregunta, las posibles respuestas e instrucciones adicionales que aparezcan en cada una de ellas. Siéntase libre de responder con honestidad ya que este cuestionario no tendrá ninguna incidencia en la evaluación de nuestra clase de inglés. Su nombre completo no será utilizado con ningún otro fin diferente al de ayudarlo a mejorar su proceso de aprendizaje; para propósitos de la investigación, sus nombres se mantendrán en anonimato.

El tiempo que tendrá para realizar el cuestionario es aproximadamente 20 minutos.

Agradezco su colaboración.

Su Profesora de Inglés

***Obligatorio**

APELLIDOS Y NOMBRES COMPLETOS *

Escriba sus apellidos y nombres completos. Ejemplo: Gutierrez Cardona Juan Carlos

Appendix B (2 of 5)

DESARROLLO DE LA LECTURA EN INGLES

¿Qué acciones desarrollo antes, durante y después de leer un texto en inglés?
Escojo una opción de acuerdo a mi realidad cuando leo siguiendo la escala presentada para cada aspecto.

Antes de iniciar la lectura

1. Las siguientes son 3 acciones que realizo antes de iniciar una lectura en inglés.



2. **Cuando leo un texto en inglés, me fijo una meta u objetivo. ***

2. Cuando leo un texto en inglés, me fijo una meta u objetivo.

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

Si su respuesta fue NUNCA, continúe en la pregunta 5

3. Identifico las acciones que me ayudarán a alcanzar mi meta u objetivo de lectura

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

Appendix B (3 of 5)

4. Determino posibles materiales o recursos que utilizaré cuando tengo que leer un texto en inglés. Ejemplo: diccionario, otros libros, internet, etc.

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

Durante la lectura *

5. Realizo pausas para verificar lo que he entendido

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

6. Cuando leo, verifico qué tanto estoy entendiendo y qué tanto entendí de un texto en inglés. *

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

7. Las siguientes son 3 acciones que realizo para medir qué tanto entiendo o entendí de una lectura *

8. Estas son las 3 acciones que realizo mientras leo para comprender mejor el texto *

Appendix B (4 of 5)

Después de la lectura, *

9. Escribo tres acciones que realizo al finalizar la lectura

10. Luego de leer un texto en inglés, reflexiono sobre el proceso que hice para entenderlo. *

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

11. Luego de leer un texto en inglés, me detengo un poco a pensar en qué hice para entender el texto. *

- Siempre
- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

12. Sólo sé que entendí una lectura en inglés hasta que *

	Casi siempre	Algunas veces	Casi nunca	Nunca
Mi profesora me da las respuestas correctas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obtengo los resultados de una evaluación y son buenos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Verifico mis respuestas con un compañero.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Verifico mis respuestas con una hoja de respuestas o el libro.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix B (5 of 5)

13. Realizo lecturas adicionales en inglés en mi tiempo libre que me permiten reforzar o practicar lo trabajado en clase (tema , vocabulario, estrategias) *

- Casi siempre
- Algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

AUTOEVALUACION

14. Dentro de mi rutina escolar (fuera y dentro del colegio), tengo momentos en los cuales analizo mis acciones para aprender el idioma inglés *

- Casi siempre
- algunas veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

15. Conozco el termino "autoevaluar mi aprendizaje" *

- SI lo conozco
- NO sé qué es
- Sé cómo funciona
- Lo he oido, pero no sé qué me implicaría hacer

16. De acuerdo a mi experiencia, auto evaluación es: (Puede escoger una o varias opciones) *

- dar mi nota al final de un periodo escolar teniendo en cuenta su desempeño
- dar mi nota de un trabajo en particular
- reflexionar de forma permanente sobre mi aprendizaje
- revisar si estoy cumpliendo los objetivos propuestos para la clase
- reflexionar sobre mi desempeño en la clase al final del periodo académico

17. Considero que la "auto-evaluación", entendida como la acción de reflexionar sobre como aprendo, es: (siendo 1 poco importante y 5 muy importante) *

- Importante para mi aprendizaje del inglés.
- Más o menos importante para mi aprendizaje del inglés.
- No me parece importante para mi aprendizaje del inglés.

18. ¿Por qué sería importante tener momentos de "auto-valoración"?. Escribo 3 ideas *

Appendix C (1 of 2) Pre-literal Reading Test

Objective: I will assess my literal reading comprehension from a text including my performance and speed.

PARTICIPANT'S NAME:		LEVEL:
DATE:		Starting time:
LESSON:	SESSION:	Finish Time:

The Future of Humankind

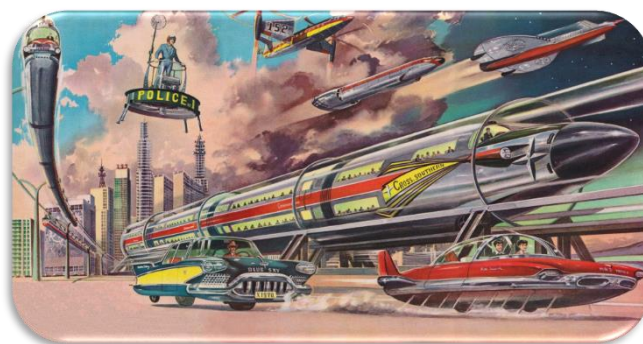


Neoteo. (2016). TOP 10 Ciudades del futuro. Retrieved from www.neoteo.com

Scientific research and inventions have changed people's lives. Technological advances like aero transportation or exchanging information around the world within a few seconds were considered impossible a hundred years ago. Now, it's not an easy task to predict what challenges scientists still have, what necessities people need to cover, what advances society of 21st Century will demand. Transportation and communications are the most revolutionary aspects in recent history because they have been changing too fast for the last 100 years. How will they continue changing? Here we have some ideas.

Transport

Advances in transportation have always tried to cover two main necessities: going faster and going farther. Although, for more than 4.000 years, people used horses to travel long distances, since the creation of fuel powered engine things have changed really fast. But what's the future of transportation? Scientist are developing new source of energy for vehicles based on electricity and a system to obtain more electricity in shorter time based on hydrogen. They already have tested hydrogen powered vehicles within 15 to 20 years. These advances will make things like flouting trains, which can reach a speed of 500 km/h, popular even in developing countries.



[Image of transport in the future] Retrieved from noticias.coches.com

Communications

Communications around the world have always been connected to transportation. If someone wanted to send a message, they sent other people to carry the message personally. Nowadays, you can send an e-mail to any destination in the world in a few seconds without moving from home? So, what's next for communications? Experts say that technology will make communication so fast. Virtual will be more real than we ever thought.

Taken from Mendoza, Rodríguez & Rodríguez (2012). Easy English 9. Student's book and workbook. Bogota, D.C., Colombia: Editorial Altiva

Appendix C (2 of 2)

Choose the correct answer according to the text:

1. The main idea of the text is:
 - a. Scientists have many challenges.
 - b. Scientific research and inventions have changed human lives.
 - c. The most important changes have been in transportation and communication.
 - d. Communications around the world have always be connected to transportation.
2. Something that was considered impossible a century ago was:
 - a. Have hydrogen cars
 - b. Communicate with others through video
 - c. Have internet
 - d. Aero transportation
3. How much time will take to have a large production of hydrogen vehicles?
 - a. 4000 years
 - b. 15 -20 years
 - c. 100 years
 - d. 500 years
4. Advances on transportation try to cover vehicle's
 - a. Price and distance
 - b. Designs and speed
 - c. Speed and distance
 - d. Color and price
5. Why do transport and communications are considered revolutionary aspects in the last century? Because of...
 - a. Researchers' love towards technology.
 - b. New sources of energy for engines.
 - c. People's lives transformation.
 - d. their fast evolution
6. What do scientists are developing?
 - a. Communications around the world
 - b. Flouting trains
 - c. A source based on electricity for vehicles
 - d. Advances in transportation
7. According to the reading "the most revolutionary aspects in recent times are":
 - a. Scientific research and inventions
 - b. Necessities and advances
 - c. transport and communication
 - d. History and the century
8. Advances in transportation mentions the following sequence.
 - a. hydrogen cars, flouting trains and horses
 - b. horses, powered engines and electrical cars.
 - c. powered engines, flouting trains and hydrogen cars.
 - d. horses, hydrogen cars and electrical cars.
9. Similar changes on transport and communication during the last century are:
 - a. materials and researchers
 - b. virtuality and speed
 - c. speed and time
 - d. energy and connections
10. In the sentence, "transportations and communications are the most revolutionary aspects in recent history because they have been changing too fast for the last 100 years". The underlined pronoun "they" refers to
 - a. Transportations and history
 - b. Aspects and transportations
 - c. History and communication
 - d. Communications and transportations

Appendix D (1 of 2) Post- literal Reading Test

PARTICIPANT'S NAME:	LEVEL:
DATE:	Starting time:
LESSON:	Finish Time:

Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany on June 12, 1929. Her older sister, Margot was three years older than her. In 1933 Anne, Margot, her father (Otto Frank) and her mother (Edith Frank) moved to Amsterdam.



On Anne Frank's thirteenth birthday she received a diary, she named it "Kitty" which she liked the best out of all her presents. She loved to write in "Kitty." By her thirteenth birthday Nazis were taking over Amsterdam and making anti-Jewish rules, and she was Jewish! She hated these rules. She went to a Montessori school. Then because of the anti-Jewish laws, she moved to a Jewish Lyceum where she quickly started to adjust. Then when World War II started her father, Otto Frank and some other clients where he worked created a hiding place in an annex to the office. The family moved into the hiding place as soon as possible.

One day in August 1944, a little after two years of hiding, the Frank family was found and put into a concentration camp. Anne died in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp of typhus and so did her sister Margot. Her mother died of starvation and her father was the only one (out of that family) who survived.

In 1959, a movie was filmed about her diary. In her short life she was able to writing short stories and some short fables. She is remembered most for her diary that has been published in over 30 languages. Many children all over America read the "Diary of Anne Frank" in school.

Some interesting facts about Anne Frank are, her full name is Annelies Marie Frank, she called her diary Kitty, her father was one of the many few people who survived and escaped the concentration camp and made a book about her diary. Anne Frank never got married. She died too young. She died at fifteen years of age.

Anne Frank is remembered in many ways. There have been books written about her, and plays and movies to tell her story. While she was hiding she kept her diary because she wanted to be educated. Her father Otto kept her diary and two years after she died, in 1947, her father published it unchanged.

Appendix D (2 of 2)

1. The main idea of the text is

- a. how the Jewish were persecuted during the world war II
- b. the lifestyle of Jewish during world war II
- c. the anti-Jewish rules established by Germans
- d. the life of a young girl during world war II

2. Anne's family hid

- a. At home of a dentist.
- b. In a section of her father's office.
- c. In a tunnel under the office.
- d. In a hidden place in the school.

3. At the age of 15 years old,

- a. Anne and her sister went to Montessori school.
- b. Anne started to write in her diary.
- c. Anne was taken to the concentration camps.
- d. She was living in a hidden place.

4. The name of the camp, where Anne was taken, was

- a. Bergen-Belsen
- b. Amsterdam
- c. Mainz
- d. Frankfurt

5. Anne and her sister died of

- a. Starvation
- b. Assassination
- c. Depression
- d. Sickness

6. Anne and her family were hidden for about

- a. Three years
- b. One year and a half
- c. Two years
- d. Two years and a half

7. Her mother Edith died because

- a. She was depressed.
- b. She could not sleep.
- c. She was worried.
- d. She didn't eat well.

8. The correct sequence of some events in Anne's short life is

- a. Nazi persecution, school changes, life in a hidden place and sickness in a camp.
- b. Her birth, her favorite diary, life in the hidden office and Montessori and Jewish school.
- c. The II world war, the hidden office and mother's death, her desire to be educated
- d. Her childhood, writing on her diary, father's publication and the education desire.

9. Anne Frank died, but

- a. She kept her diary with her
- b. Her father published her diary
- c. She sent her diary to a publisher
- d. Her father wrote a diary about her

10. Anne hated the anti-Jewish rules, however

- a. she had classes at a Jewish Lyceum
- b. she stayed at the Montessori school
- c. she preferred to have classes at home
- d. she had to be educated by her father

Appendix E. Focus Group Interview Questions

OBJECTIVE: to obtain final information about the self-assessment strategy usefulness and confirm findings obtained with other instruments.

Date:		Focus group interview	
Stage: Final Gathering		# of questions 5	
Grade:	# of students per group: 6		
Starting Time: _____: _____		Finish Time: ____: _____	

Saludo

Objetivo

Instrucciones generales

QUESTIONS

1. Después de las diferentes sesiones de lectura en las que participaste ¿De qué manera ha cambiado tu comprensión de lectura literal? Teniendo en cuenta el tiempo empleado y los resultados obtenidos.
2. ¿Qué entiendes en este momento por autoevaluación de tu lectura?
3. ¿De qué forma el proceso de autoevaluación influyó en los resultados de comprensión obtenidos en las diferentes pruebas de lectura literal?
4. Explica brevemente como la autoevaluación en la lectura promueve tu interés por leer de forma independiente.
5. ¿De qué forma las lecturas extra clase realizadas por cada uno de ustedes influyó en querer leer más de manera independiente?

Appendix F. Teachers' Classroom Observation

TEACHERS' CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

OBJECTIVE: to observe and record relevant aspects of students' development each research session taking into account the research objectives.

RESEARCHER'S NAME:	
DATE: May 17 th 2016	PLACE: Classroom 302
LESSON: 6	SESSION: 7

<p>To determine the effect that self - assessment cycle (setting goals and self-monitoring) has on a group of A1 EFL learners' literal reading comprehension performance (time and accuracy) and their self- directed reading in two public schools.</p>	
<p>To demonstrate how self-assessment cycle facilitate A1 learners to improve their literal reading comprehension performance.</p>	<p>(students' reflections, how they use the protocol, how they behave in the process of self- assessment, previous ideas, interaction in the group work, questions during the lessons) Instruments (protocol SA + journals (learners and teachers) + interview + diagnostic and final questionnaires)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are still some students who ask their classmates help. • Students present their records of the independent tasks, it shows they are interested in the readings. • During the process, students work following the self-assessment protocol, they set their goals, monitor their comprehension and at the end evaluate their performance. • They have clearer ideas to complete their students' journals. They are focused on the literal reading comprehension.
<p>To assess the effectiveness of self-assessment cycle on A1 learners' literal reading comprehension in terms of speed, accuracy and independent reading.</p>	<p>(the kind of question during the SA process, the information provided from the groups, how independent they are (teacher guide), the routine in the lesson and stages, analysis about times) Instruments: pre /post reading tests + controlled and free practice tests + independent reading record + SAP (protocol) + teachers journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students take much time to solve their literal reading task. • There are still problems with sequence of events and cause-effect questions. • When they check their progress, some of them express they're happy since they obtained more correct answers.
<p>GENERAL COMMENTS</p>	<p>(Additional issues like interruptions, technological issues, relevant opinions, behaviors, absent, others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students are tired since the class is during the last 2 hours, • student 10 and 23 receive the last session to work to develop it independently because they were absent. • student 24 brought last session (#6) work done independently because of his absence.

Appendix G. Students' Reading Journal

PARTICIPANT'S NAME: _____ SESSION: 9 DATE 25 / 05 / 2016

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN TODAY? (¿Qué quiero aprender hoy?)

My Learning goal today is: (Mi objetivo de aprendizaje es):
Encontrar la información específica en el texto y establecer las relaciones de causa y efecto

IN 5 MINUTES, I REFLECT ON... (En 5 minutos reflexiono sobre)

1. What did I learn today that helps me improve my reading comprehension? (¿Qué aprendí hoy que me ayude a mejorar mi comprensión de lectura?)
El automonitoreo y a identificar las folias que tengo
2. Did I achieve my initial class goal? Explain. (¿Alcance mi objetivo(s) inicial (es)? Explique)
Si, alcance mi objetivo en especial la parte de identificar la información específica ✓
3. What did I do to understand the reading? And did it help you improve your reading comprehension? (¿Qué hice para comprender el texto? ¿Me sirvió para mejorar mi comprensión?)
Buscar palabras desconocidas, asociar palabras con el español y leer el texto despacio
4. What, that I have learnt makes me feel more confident to read by myself? Explain (¿Qué de lo que aprendí me hizo sentir más seguro para leer de forma independiente? Explique.)
El automonitoreo y aprender a identificar mis falencias
5. What do I need to do to improve my reading comprehension? (¿Qué necesito hacer para mejorar mi comprensión?)
Escuchar música en inglés, leer más y así aprender más vocabulario

Appendix H. Research Timeline

YEAR / MONTH	2015					2016								
	July	August	September	October	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
Literature Review	█	█	█	█	█									
Research question				█	█									
Writing the abstract										█				
Piloting instruments							█	█	█					
Pedagogical intervention chapter						█	█							
Consent letter permission							█							
Population and instruments					█	█								
Planning reading tests							█	█						
Towards an understanding of learners									█	█				
Introducing the strategy										█	█			
Self-assessing reading CP											█			
Self-assessing reading FP											█			
Independent Reading									█	█	█	█		
Final test											█			
Interview											█	█		
Data analysis									█	█	█	█	█	
Introduction												█		
Limitations conclusion												█		
Bibliography	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Handing the final version												█	█	█

Appendix I (1 of 3) Lesson Plan Sample

LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE FOR INTERVENTION

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

Name of co- researcher:	
University Code Number:	
Institution: Marsella IED Y Floridablanca IED	
Date of Class: /April/2016	Time of Class:
Week No. 1	Length of class: 1 hour and 30 minutes
	Time Frame: 1 session
Class/grade: 1001/901	Room: 302/ Risaralda
Number of students: 72	
Level of students: A1	
Lesson Number	
1	2 X
3	4
5	6
7	8
Class Objective Students will identify the literal reading comprehension features.	
Language Goal To identify the literal reading features in a text by discussing in groups using simple present tense	
Learning to Learn Goal To agree on the features of literal reading through interacting with others and establishing conclusions about it.	

Identify a topic for the lesson Literal Reading Features.**Materials and Resources**

Material 1: Mirror	Rationale: to make an analogy to reflect on the physical characteristics of each student and the comparison with the reading appearance.	Annex 9
Material 2: Group work roles and functions poster	Rationale: to highlight the functions of students' role in the group work.	Annex 2
Material 3: Reading Passage "Sara Robbins' daily life" photocopy	Rationale: to have the text to look at and describe the text. Then students focus on getting specific information.	Annex 10
Material 4: Literal reading PowerPoint presentation.	Rationale: to demonstrate the issues of literal reading	Annex 11
Material 5: Brochure, literal reading features.	Rationale: to synthesize and make clear the aspects of literal reading in a text.	Annex 4
Material 6: Learners' journal "my reading journal"	Rationale: This instrument will allow learners to set their learning objective and reflect at the end of the session about their performance.	Annex 6
Material 7: Independent Reading N° 2.	Rationale: to foster the initial independent reading process.	Annex 7
Material 8: Independent Reading Record format.	Rationale: to keep record of the students independent reading	Annex 8

Teacher's role	Stage	Aim	Procedure Teacher and students' actions	Inter-action	Time		
Encourager	GETTING READY	Students will identify the literal reading Comprehension features	<p>1. Students are asked to give ideas about the last session.</p> <p>2. Learners look at the mirror and follow the instruction: "Look at your face, focus on your eyes, focus on your lips, focus on your nose" They answer in the questions: Who am I? Why do you usually see at the mirror? What for do you look at the mirror?</p> <p>3. Teacher invites students to reflect on their own learning objectives for this session and write it in Spanish on their journals.</p>	SS SS SS	5 min 10 min 5 min		
		Facilitator	EXPLORING	Students will discover literal information in a text.	<p>4. Students have a reading text and put the reading in front of the mirror. While they look at the mirror, they answer the question: what can you see? After some ideas (5 students) , an analogy with previous exercise is done (parts of the face with literal reading)</p> <p>5. The same groups of 4 students are conformed and a different role is assigned to each member. A poster is displayed on the wall with the different functions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Secretary • a Timekeeper • a Controller • a Reporter <p>The reading "Sara Robbin's daily life" is displayed on the screen; every student has his own reading photocopy. In their groups, they discuss the question: "what kind of information should I get to comprehend the text?" The secretary takes notes and concludes in a piece of paper and the reporter presents their conclusion.</p> <p>Students should find in the text and underline literal information following the</p>	T- SS SS-T SS	5 min 15 min 25 min

			<p>prompts presented in the power point document.</p> <p>*The main idea of the text is... * The main characters of the text are... * The first event in the morning of Lisa is... * The last event during Lisa’s day is... * Important places in Lisa’s routine are... * The funniest moment of Lisa’s routine is... The answer is presented after each question and learners’ intervention.</p> <p>7. Teacher introduces the issue of literal reading through a mind map (skimming, scanning, recalling specific information, locate information, compare and contrast, follow sequences).</p>	T- SS	10 min
	THINKING ABOUT...	Students will reflect about the activities and learning during the session.	<p>8. Learners fill the learners’ journal “My reading mirror says...”</p> <p>9. Conclusion: teacher congratulates students on their excellent work and ideas.</p> <p>10. Teacher introduces the activities for next session. -Independent work: reading assignment 2.</p>	SS	5 min
				T-SS	5 min
				T- SS	5 min

Assumed knowledge

Students recognize and use basic vocabulary and structures in simple present.

Anticipated problems and planned solutions

- Students could feel afraid or shy to express their ideas during the activities, so teacher will encourage them to initially work in groups to support each other.
- The activities could take longer time than expected due to external factors during the class, so the teacher will try to manage the time according to the plan to fulfill the lesson.

Appendix J (1 of 2) Self-Assessment Protocol

SELF-ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

Objective: I get familiar with steps to follow a self-assessment reading process towards a better understanding of literal information of a text.

PARTICIPANT'S NAME:	
DATE:	LEVEL:
LESSON:	SESSION:

READING EXERCISE N° _____

TITLE OF THE TEXT:

1. Before starting the reading

• My starting time to read: _____ HOUR _____ MINUTES AM PM

• I read the title of the text. Do I understand what the text is about? YES _____ NO _____

• If you answered YES, What do I think the reading is about?

• I concentrate on the pictures, diagrams and other visual support (charts, maps, subtitles, etc.). Do they give me additional information? YES _____ NO _____

What additional information do they give me?

• I set my reading goal

For this reading session I will be able to.... (Choose one goal from the list)

• find the main idea of the text

• establish the sequence of the events

• find specific information of the text (people, dates, places, characteristics)


• make relations of cause and effect

• compare and contrast information

• identify secondary ideas



Appendix J (2 of 2)

2. During the reading 


- I read text once to get an overall idea.
- I read again following these steps to monitor my comprehension:
 - I stop when I don't understand,
 - I highlight it (icon)
 - I choose strategies to solve it: (mark with a cross (X) which of these strategies you use)

I reread	
I read aloud	
I slow down and reread	
I create a picture on my mind of what is going on...	
I look at images and titles to help my understanding.	
I look for unknown words in the dictionary.	
I get meaning of unknown words from the reading context.	
I ask someone to solve the problem.	
I confirm what I understand while reading.	
I underline relevant information (characters, event, dates, places, percentages, etc.)	
I associate words with words in Spanish	
I take into account my previous knowledge about the reading topic.	

- Read the questions in the test and go back to the text and locate the specific information to solve them.

I finish reading at: _____ HOUR _____ MINUTES AM PM

Total time spend on reading and task _____ HOURS _____ MINUTES

3. After reading and task. 


- Peer evaluation

I evaluate my progress:
 According to the results from the text, read the following items and report what you could achieve. Mark a cross (X) on YES or NO

	YES	NO
I identified the main information of the text (characters, events, dates, places, percentages, roles, feelings, physical and psychological features of the characters)	_____	_____
I could understand the main idea	_____	_____
I could set the sequence of text	_____	_____
I established relations between words.	_____	_____
I improve my time of reading	_____	_____

- How many answer did I do well in this reading session? _____

Appendix K (1 of 2) Independent Reading Work



Independent Reading No. 5

*Obligatorio


NAME *
Ex. Rodríguez Pérez Juan Carlos

SCHOOL NAME *

Marsella IED

Floridablanca IED

The amazing life of the emperor penguin



Starting time *

Ejemplo: 11:00 a.m.

Appendix K (2 of 2)

The chicks hatch in July. Antarctica is one of the coldest and most inhospitable places in the world. In the middle of winter it has temperatures of -70° C and there is no food and no shelter. But it has one important advantage: it is the safest place in the world for emperor penguins to breed as there are not predators. The emperor penguin is the only animal in the world that can survive such low temperatures. Their only enemy is the cold and the males and the chicks stand close together in big groups to protect themselves from the icy winds and storms.

When the chicks hatch, the males have not eaten for over two months. Even so the male finds some food in his stomach to feed the chick. He has to keep the chick alive until the weather improves and the female returns from the sea with food. In March the males weighed around 46 kilos, but now they only weigh 16 kilos. The smaller female emperor penguin would not have survived for so long without food.

After the females return in early August, the males walk 150 kilometres back to the sea for a short "holiday" before returning with food. The male and the female then take it in turns to return to the sea for food. In the late spring, when the chicks are big and strong enough, the emperor penguin families return to the sea. The adults then have just the three summer months in the sea before returning to the breeding grounds once more.



1. The main idea of the text is *

- The long trip emperor penguins should do for having a family
- The challenges the emperor penguins live to birth an egg
- The food necessities they have when the chick is born
- The description of the weather conditions for emperor penguins

2. The biggest enemy for the penguins is... *

- The lack of food
- Loneliness in the South Pole
- The cold weather
- The predators

Appendix L (1 of 2) Qualitative and quantitative data management spreadsheet sample

LEARNERS' NEEDS ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE Formulario sin título (Responses)

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Form Add-ons Help All changes saved in Drive

fx

	H	I	J	K	L	M	O	P
1	Si su respuesta fue SI , el nombre de la institución donde estudió inglés es:	¿Cuántos niveles o cursos tomó?	7.En su clase de inglés , considera su desempeño en un nivel	Explico en 3 líneas por qué considero que mi nivel es el marcado en la pregunta 7	8. COMPRENSIÓN GENERAL	HABILIDADES ESPECIFICAS	Puedo obtener informacion especifica	Uso el diccionario para identificar el significado adecuado de palabras desconocidas
7			Básico: comprendo y utilizo expresiones cotidianas de uso frecuente y describo en términos sencillos aspectos del pasado.	Mi nivel es básico, ya que no tengo una comprensión total de textos, me hace falta conocer mas vocabulario y saber un poco de gramática. Quizás no seré la mejor en ingles, pero me esfuerzo y tengo todas las ganas por aprender.	Soy capaz de comprender textos muy breves y sencillos, leyendo frase por frase, identificando nombres, palabras y frases.	3	5	3 SI
8			Bajo: comprendo y utilizo expresiones cotidianas de uso frecuente y doy información básica personal.	se me dificulta mucho el ingles y hay veces que no lo entiendo y pido ayuda , pero hay temas que si puedo entender pero son muy pocos	Soy capaz de comprender textos muy breves y sencillos, leyendo frase por frase, identificando nombres, palabras y frases. Comprendo textos breves y sencillos que	2	5	1 SI

Form Responses 1 Chart1 Sheet2

Appendix L (2 of 2) Qualitative and quantitative data management spreadsheet sample

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
170	CODE ASSIGNED	STUDENTS' NAME	TEST SCORE	MAIN IDEA Q1	SPECIFIC INFORMATION Q3, Q4, Q6, Q9, Q10	CAUSE AND EFFECT Q5, Q8	SEQUENCE OF EVENTS Q2	CONTRASTS AND DIFFERENCE Q7
171	# 1		4	1	2	1	0	0
172	#2		6	1	3	1	0	1
173	#3		8	1	3	1	1	1
174	#4		8	1	4	2	1	0
175	#5		3	1	1	0	1	0
176	#6		5	1	1	2	0	1
177	#7		3	1	1	1	0	0
178	#8		2	0	2	0	0	0
179	#9		4	1	2	0	1	0
180	#10		4	0	2	1	0	1
181	#11		5	1	2	1	0	1
182	#12		7	1	4	1	0	1
183	#13		9	1	4	2	1	1
184	#14		8	1	3	2	1	1
185	#15		9	1	4	2	1	1
186	#16		4	0	3	1	0	0
187	#17		10	1	5	2	1	1
188	#18		6	0	4	1	1	0
189	#19		7	1	3	2	1	0
190	#20		4	1	2	1	0	0
191	#21		6	1	4	0	1	0
192	#22		7	0	5	1	1	0
193	#23		3	0	3	0	0	0
194	#24		8	1	4	1	1	1

3 PRESENCIAL | Hoja 8 | JOURNAL | PROTOCOL | INDEPENDENT | QUALITATIVE DATA | QUAN