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TEMA

Reading Comprehension Strategies' Influence on English Vocabulary Acquisition: A Case Study at Basic Education School in Los Ríos, Ecuador

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DEDICATORY

I want to dedicate this project to my mother. She is the most important person in my life. Her love, support, and strength helped me in every moment. She always believed in me, and that gave me the power to continue.

I also dedicate this work to all the teachers who use reading to teach better. Reading is a good way to help students learn more words and understand better. This work is for teachers who want to help their students grow with love and education.

Wilson Andrés Santos Guanulema

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This project is very special to me. Thank you to everyone who was part of this academic journey

Wilson Andrés Santos Guanulema

ABSTRACT

This research examined the influence of reading comprehension strategies on English vocabulary acquisition among sixth-grade students in a rural school in Los Ríos, Ecuador. The study addressed the problem of low English proficiency (85-90% of students performing poorly) caused by limited resources, regional dialects, and lack of qualified teachers. A 12-week intervention combining pre-reading activities, contextualized vocabulary exercises, and post-reading discussions was implemented, using a mixed-method design with control (n=42) and experimental (n=42) groups. Results showed an 88% improvement in the experimental group, with significant gains in vocabulary (d=0.63) and pronunciation (d=0.58). The proposal demonstrates that context-adapted strategies can overcome resource limitations. It is concluded that combining explicit instruction, collaborative practice, and culturally relevant materials constitutes an effective model for resource-constrained settings.

Keywords: vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, rural education, English teaching, pedagogical strategies

RESUMEN

Esta tesis examinó la influencia de estrategias sobre la comprensión lectora en la adquisición de vocabulario inglés en estudiantes de sexto grado en una escuela rural en Los Ríos, Ecuador. El estudio abordó el problema sobre el bajo rendimiento en inglés (85-90% de los estudiantes mostraron desempeño deficiente) debido a recursos limitados, dialectos regionales y la falta de docentes calificados. Se ejecutó una intervención de 12 semanas, combinó actividades de pre-lectura, ejercicios de vocabulario contextualizado y discusiones post-lectura, utilizó un diseño mixto con grupo control (n=42) y experimental (n=42). Los resultados mostraron una mejora del 88% para el grupo experimental, con ganancias significativas en vocabulario (d=0.63) y pronunciación (d=0.58). La propuesta demostró que las estrategias adaptadas al contexto rural pueden superar las limitaciones de recursos. Se concluyó que la combinación de instrucción explícita, la práctica colaborativa y con materiales culturalmente relevantes, constituye un modelo efectivo para entornos con escasos recursos.

Palabras clave: adquisición de vocabulario, comprensión lectora, educación rural, enseñanza de inglés, estrategias pedagógicas

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INTRODUCTION

This research examines the impact of targeted reading comprehension strategies on English vocabulary acquisition among 6th-grade students in a public basic education school in Vinces, Los Ríos, Ecuador. The study focuses on executing and evaluating strategies such as pre-reading activities, post-reading discussions, and vocabulary exercises to enhance students' skills to acquire and retain new English vocabulary. Additionally, it evaluates how these strategies can improve pronunciation, a pivotal aspect of language learning often hindered by regional dialects and limited exposure to the English language.

The present study is highly relevant due to the important challenges faced by rural schools in Ecuador, where the lack of qualified English teachers and limited resources block effective language teaching. According to the author, reading comprehension methods not only upgrade language skills, but also help learners to overcome psychological and cognitive barriers connected with language learning (Roshan, 2005). Furthermore, it was proven that interactive read-aloud strategies significantly boost vocabulary building and reading proficiency among English language learners, emphasizing the development of teaching methods (Nunes, 2013). This research is based on these findings to address the specific needs of learners in resource-constrained settings.

The school being researched serves approximately 430 students, many of whom come from low-income families with limited access to educational resources. General teachers who lack proficiency in the language, resulting in inadequate pronunciation guidance and not ineffective teaching methods, have historically delivered English instruction. Regional dialects further complicate language learning, as students often omit sounds like “s” and vary consonant pronunciations. These factors, plus limited exposure to English outside the classroom, produce

significant barriers to vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension.

This struggles to execute and evaluate targeted reading comprehension methods to improve English vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation among the students. Using a mixed-methods framework, the research will integrate quantitative data from pre- and post-intervention tests with qualitative analysis from interviews and focus groups. The study compares an experimental group, which uses the gamification strategy, with a control group that will be followed by the traditional methods.

The purpose of this research is to measure the efficacy of a clear reading comprehension method for enhancing vocabulary and pronunciation proficiency among the students in a rural Ecuadorian school. The study focuses on how strategies such as vocabulary exercises, pre-reading activities and post-reading discussions outcomes students' skills to learn and use new English vocabulary.

Objectives

General Objective

To investigate the effectiveness of targeted reading comprehension strategies in enhancing English vocabulary acquisition and improving pronunciation among 6th-grade students in rural Ecuador.

Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the challenges related to reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation faced by 6th-grade students in public basic education schools.

This objective seeks to evaluate the primary difficulties students find when learning English, especially in rural settings where access to resources may be constrained. Through diagnostic assessments, surveys, and classroom observations, the study will observe factors such as lack of

exposure to the language, deficient teaching materials, and phonological interference from their native language. Identifying these barriers will provide a foundation for designing effective interventions tailored to the students' needs.

2. To apply reading comprehension strategies tailored to the needs of 6th-grade students in limited resource settings.

Based on the detected challenges, this objective emphasizes on applying useful and adaptable reading strategies, such as contextual vocabulary practice, supportive reading tasks, and visual aids. Given the prospect limitations in technological and material resources, the interventions direct low-cost, high-impact techniques that encourage active repetition, engagement, and meaningful interaction with textbooks in order to strengthen retention and comprehension.

3. To examine the impact of these strategies on vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation.

This objective implies assessing the effectiveness of the applied strategies through oral assessments, pre- and post-intervention tests, and teacher feedback. Quantitative data (e.g., vocabulary test scores) and qualitative insights (e.g., pronunciation improvements) were analyzed to determine whether the strategies significantly improve students' lexical knowledge and spoken accuracy, providing insights for future pedagogical adjustments.

Variables and Categories

Independent Variable

Reading comprehension strategies (e.g., pre-reading activities, vocabulary exercises, post-reading discussions). The independent variable composed of the instructional methods formulated to improve reading comprehension, which contain structured pre-reading tasks to enable targeted

vocabulary exercises to reinforce word recognition, prior knowledge, and guided post-reading discussions to consolidate understanding. These strategies are systematically developed to determine their effect on the dependent variable, confirming controlled implementation for accurate measurement of their effects.

English vocabulary acquisition (including pronunciation). This variable shows the measurable results of the intervention, focusing on students' skill to learn and retain new words while improving their pronunciation. Progress is reviewed through quizzes that track word usage in context, lexical expansion, and phonetic proficiency, providing concrete evidence of whether the reading strategies add to linguistic development in these areas. Vocabulary retention and usage, pronunciation accuracy, and student engagement and motivation.

Methodology

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. The quantitative component will calculate vocabulary improvement through pre- and post-intervention tests, while the qualitative component will search for students and teachers' perceptions of the strategies via semi-structured interviews and focus groups. An experimental design will be used, with students randomly tasked to an experimental group (using the new strategies) and a control group (using traditional methods). Descriptive and case study methods will provide with a detailed understanding of the school's context and the strategies' impact.

Participants

The participants are 6th-grade students from a public basic education school from Vinces, Los Ríos, Ecuador. These students, typically aged 10-11, they face significant challenges in English language learning due to restricted resources, regional dialects, and socioeconomic barriers.

Teachers and school administrators will also participate by interviews and focus groups to provide additional insights.

Research Context

The school is located in a rural area with limited access to educational tools, including English-specific materials and qualified teachers. The regional dialect influences students' pronunciation and socioeconomic elements such as poverty further restrict their access to supplementary learning tools. These challenges create a unique context for testing the success of reading comprehension strategies in boosting vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation.

Contribution and Relevance of the Study

This study supports to the fields of Language Education and Pedagogy, Educational Innovation, and Social Inclusion by offering evidence-based strategies for improving English language instruction in resource-constrained environments. The findings will provide practical recommendations for schools with similar obstacles, fostering inclusive educational practices and enhancing language-learning outcomes. Additionally, the research aligns with the mission of Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador (UBE) to encourage educational innovation and social equity.

Overview

In brief, this research addresses a critical demand for effective teaching methods in rural Ecuadorian schools. By implementing and evaluating targeted reading comprehension strategies, the study supports improving English vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation among 6th-grade students. The findings will provide actionable insights for educators and policymakers, contributing to the development of more effective language curricula and teaching practices in resource-constrained settings.

Methodological Steps to Follow:

To achieve the stated objectives, the research will unfold in the following sequential phases:

1. **Diagnostic Phase:** Assessment instruments (vocabulary tests, pronunciation rubrics, surveys, and a classroom observation guide) will be administered to establish a baseline of the students' level and characterize current teaching practices.
2. **Intervention Design:** Based on the diagnostic results, a 12-week intervention program will be designed, integrating reading comprehension strategies (pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities) adapted to the rural context.
3. **Implementation:** The intervention will be executed with the experimental group, while the control group continues with the traditional methodology. During this phase, data will be collected continuously through observations and field journals.
4. **Evaluation:** Upon completion of the intervention, vocabulary and pronunciation tests will be re-administered to both groups to measure progress. Simultaneously, focus groups and interviews will be conducted to gather qualitative perceptions from students and teachers.
5. **Analysis and Interpretation:** Quantitative data will be analyzed statistically (t-tests, ANOVA), and thematic analysis will be performed on the qualitative data. Subsequently, both types of findings will be triangulated.
6. **Drawing Conclusions and Recommendations:** Finally, conclusions will be drafted based on the results, and practical recommendations will be formulated for teachers and educational policies, along with suggestions for future research

Chapter I

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This research focuses on analyzing the effect of reading comprehension strategies (independent variable) on vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation improvement (dependent variable) among sixth-grade students in a rural school in Ecuador. Reading comprehension strategies, such as pre-reading activities, guided reading, and post-reading practices, have proven to be effective tools for improving English language learning in resource-constrained contexts (Roshan, 2005); (Zhang, 2020). These strategies not only enable the decoding and interpretation of texts but also encourage critical thinking and autonomy in students.

Recent studies guide the correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition strategies. For example, Zhang points that metacognitive strategies, such as self-regulation and reflection, allow students to identify and rectify comprehension inaccuracies, reaching greater vocabulary retention (Zhang, 2020). Similarly, Lee and Chen discovered that teamwork activity, such as shared annotations and group discussions, significantly enhances comprehension and the use of new words, especially in settings where assets are scarce (Lee, 2021).

Improvement in pronunciation is another pivotal aspect of the dependent variable, which is also supported by these strategies. By actively and collaboratively stimulating with texts, students practice pronouncing new words in meaningful situations, which reduces interference from their regional dialect and strengthens their confidence in speaking (Nunes, 2013). Additionally, post-reading activities, such as summarization and reflection, allow students to consolidate their learning and autonomously correct pronunciation mistakes.

A possible option to the identified challenges is the implementation of a structured program that mixes reading comprehension strategies with practical pronunciation activities. This approach

would not only boost vocabulary acquisition but also address pronunciation difficulties, providing students with enough tools to overcome the linguistic and socioeconomic barriers they face.

Reading Comprehension Strategies

Reading comprehension strategies are necessary tools for improving language acquisition, particularly in contexts where students face significant issues to learn. According to Roshan, these strategies help learners decode, retain, and analyse information from texts, which is critical for correct vocabulary development (Roshan, 2005). Key strategies include pre-reading activities (e.g., predicting and activating prior knowledge), during-reading techniques (e.g., annotating and questioning), and post-reading practices (e.g., summarizing and discussing). These practices not only enhance comprehension but also foster critical thinking and autonomy in learning.

Latest studies have further emphasized the importance of these strategies in varied educational contexts. For instance, Zhang highlights the role of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension, arguing that teaching students to monitor their understanding and adjust their reading approaches significantly enhances their ability to analyze and retain information. Zhang's research demonstrates that metacognitive strategies, such as self-questioning and reflection, empower learners to identify gaps in their comprehension and take corrective actions, leading to more effective learning outcomes (Zhang, 2020).

On the other hand, Lee and Chen (2021) study the effect of collaborative reading strategies regarding vocabulary acquisition. Their study shows that group based activities, such as peer discussions and shared annotations, enhance engagement and comprehension of texts among the students. While Lee and Chen argue that collaborative strategies not only foster deeper comprehension but also create a supportive learning space, where students can share ideas and

clarify misunderstandings (Lee, 2021). This approach becomes helpful in similar settings, where peer support can compensate for limited access to teaching materials and expertise.

By integrating these contemporary ludic insights, reading comprehension strategies are not static but evolve to address the diverse needs for learners. The combination of metacognitive and collaborative procedures, as suggested by Zhang (2020), and Lee and Chen (2021), provide a complete framework for enhancing reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition in challenging educational contexts.

Reading comprehension strategies play a crucial role in the progress of linguistic skills, particularly in limited educational resources contexts and students face socio-economic and cultural barriers. The overall goal of this thesis is to investigate the effectiveness of using strategies applied to reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition to enhace pronunciation in rural area students. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to study how reading comprehension strategies, backed by recent research, can address the specific challenges faced by rural students.

At that point, pre-reading programs, such as activating prior knowledge and prediction, allow students to interact with the text in a meaningful way. According to Zhang, these methods not only improve comprehension but also promote student's autonomy, which is necessary in environments where educators may not have an advanced English proficiency (Zhang, 2020). By activating prior knowledge, rural students can associate the text content to their reality, enabling the acquisition of relevant vocabulary and boosting their skill to speak new words in meaningful situations.

Secondly, guided reading plans, such as annotation and questioning, prepare students to interact actively with the text. Lee and Chen (2021) highlight that these strategies, when conducted collaboratively, develop deeper learning and greater vocabulary retention. In the rural context, where

students may have limited chances to practice English outside the classroom, these options present a structured framework for improving both comprehension and pronunciation (Lee, 2021). For instance, by discussing and questioning the text in groups, students can train in pronouncing new words in a supportive context, reducing anxiety and empowering them.

Finally, post-reading strategies, such as synthesis and reflection, enable students to consolidate their learning and reflect on their progress. Roshan notes that these strategies not only reinforce comprehension but also foster critical thinking and self-evaluation. For rural students, these activities can include pronunciation exercises based on acquired vocabulary, permitting them to practice and improve their oral fluency (Roshan, 2005).

Additionally, revealing their learning process helps learners to recognize areas for improvement and develop metacognitive skills to overcome linguistic barriers, which are linked to their regional dialect. In brief, reading comprehension strategies are directly relevant to the overall aim of this thesis, as they provide a methodological framework for improving vocabulary and pronunciation in rural students. By performing pre-reading, guided reading, and post-reading strategies, it is feasible to address the specific issues into a rural context, such as the regional dialect influence, limited resources, and a very restricted exposure to English.

Vocabulary Acquisition in Language Learning

Vocabulary acquisition is pivotal for language proficiency, as it enables learners to understand and produce language effectively. A robust vocabulary allows individuals to understand spoken and written texts, express their thoughts clearly, and engage in meaningful communication. Nunes points that vocabulary development is closely linked to reading comprehension, as exposure to new words in context enables retention and usage (Nunes, 2013).

When learners encounter unknown words in meaningful contexts, such as stories, articles, or conversations, they are more likely to infer their meanings and recall them over time. This process, known as incidental vocabulary learning, is particularly positive when learners are exposed to a wide range of reading tools. However, in resource-constrained environments, students often lack access to diverse texts, which limits their chances for vocabulary growth. This disparity underscores the need for targeted strategies to enhance vocabulary development, especially when resources are scarce.

One similar strategy is the explicit vocabulary guidance, which involves direct usage, teaching word meanings, and associations. Nation emphasizes the need of this method, claiming that systematic approaches, such as word lists or flashcards and spaced repetition, significantly enhance language retention (Nation, 2001). These methods are very practical for high-frequency words, which are essential for basic communication and understanding. By focusing on this method, learners can quickly build a foundation that supports further language development. Additionally, explicit guidance can contain activities that allow deeper understanding, such as contextual sentence creation, word mapping, and synonym and antonym exercises. The activities help learners to recall words and enable them to use them accurately and appropriately in different scenarios.

Another impotant aspect of vocabulary acquisition is the role of repeated exposure. Schmitt argues that vocabulary learning is a gradual process that requires both incidental learning through exposure and intentional study to attain depth and breadth in word knowledge (Schmitt, 2008). This systematic usage with new words in various contexts reinforce their meanings, making them accessible in long-term memory. For example, hearing it in a conversation, finding a word in a book, and then using it in writing helps to consolidate its meaning and usage.

This multi-modal exposure is particularly necessary because it attracts different cognitive

processes, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning. In classrooms, teachers can enable this by incorporating vocabulary-rich activities, such as reading aloud, group discussions, and writing exercises that offer multiple opportunities for students to encounter and use new words.

Despite the effectiveness of these programs, challenges can persist for under-resourced settings. Many students lack access to books, technology, and other materials that support vocabulary development. To address this, educators and policymakers must claim for the provision of resources and training for teachers. For instance, digital platforms and alliances with non-governmental organizations can help bridge the gap by providing access to reading materials. Additionally, teacher-training programs should emphasize the importance of vocabulary training and equip educators with practical tools and techniques to stimulate their students' learning.

To summon, vocabulary acquisition is a multifaceted process that plays an important role in language proficiency. While incidental learning through reading is essential, explicit instruction and repeated exposure are equally necessary for building a strong vocabulary proficiency. Scholars such as Nunes (2013), Nation (2001), and Schmitt (2008) have pointed the interconnectedness of these approaches, emphasizing the need for a balanced and systematic approach to English language teaching. By addressing resource limitations and implementing targeted methods, teachers can create opportunities for more students and expand their vocabularies to achieve greater language proficiency. Ultimately, fostering vocabulary development is not only about learning vocabulary but also about empowering learners to communicate effectively and engage with the world around them.

Vocabulary attainment is a pivot of language proficiency, as it allows learners to understand and perform the English language effectively. A wide vocabulary allows individuals to hear and recognize it in a conversation, understand spoken and written texts, and interact spontaneously in

any communication. Nunes' key points that vocabulary development is directly connected to reading comprehension, as exposure to new words in context supports retention and usage (Nunes, 2013). When students recognize unfamiliar words, such as stories, articles, or conversations, they are more likely to infer their meanings and recall them over time.

This process, known as incidental vocabulary learning, is above all effective when learners are exposed to a wide range of reading materials. However, in resource-constrained contexts, such as rural areas in Ecuador, students often lack access to diverse literature, which limits their opportunities for vocabulary expansion. This disparity underscores the need for targeted methods to support vocabulary development. In rural Ecuador, wider issues compound the difficulty of vocabulary acquisition in the education system. Many schools in these areas lack access to libraries, updated textbooks, and digital tools, which are crucial for providing students with varied and engaging reading materials. Without these resources, learners have fewer opportunities to find new words in context, hindering both their vocabulary growth and reading comprehension.

Furthermore, the limited availability of trained teachers further amplifies the problem. Teachers in rural areas often face large class number of students, restricted training in language instruction, and a lack of materials to support effective teaching. As a result, students may strive to develop the foundational vocabulary needed to understand complex texts or express themselves clearly. These methods are useful for high-frequency words, which are necessary for basic communication. In rural Ecuador, explicit instruction provide a structured way to build vocabulary. For example, teachers can use only locally relevant examples and contexts to teach vocabulary, making the learning process meaningful and engaging. Likewise, including multimedia tools, such as audio recordings or videos, can help bridge the gap caused by the lack of printed materials.

Pronunciation is another critical aspect of language learning that is closely linked to vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. In rural Ecuador, where indigenous languages such as Kichwa are often spoken alongside Spanish, students may face exclusive challenges in mastering the pronunciation of Spanish words. Mispronunciation can lead to misunderstandings and hinder effective communication, both orally and in writing. Schmitt argues that vocabulary learning is a gradual process that demands both incidental learning through exposure and intentional study to achieve depth and breadth in word knowledge (Schmitt, 2008).

Systematic usage of new words in various contexts, including hearing them pronounced correctly, reinforce their meanings. In classrooms, educators can offer this by incorporating tasks that focus on pronunciation, such as listening exercises, reading aloud, and interactive games. Some activities help students learn new words and boost their ability to pronounce them accurately, then significant barriers can be faced in rural Ecuador. Many communities lack access to electricity and internet connectivity, which limits the use of digital tools and online resources. Moreover, the socioeconomic challenges faced by families in these areas, such as poverty and migration, often result in irregular school attendance and limited parental commitment in education.

To address these issues, a multifaceted approach is required. For example, partnerships between government, non-governmental organizations, and local communities can help to provide schools with essential resources, such as textbooks, audio materials, and teacher training programs. Mobile libraries and community reading initiatives can also bring reading materials to remote areas, ensuring that students have access to diverse materials. To wrap up, vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and pronunciation are deeply interconnected aspects of language instruction that play a vital role in students' academic achievement and communication skills. In rural Ecuador,

where access to resources and trained teachers is limited, these areas present challenges.

However, by implementing targeted strategies such as explicit vocabulary instruction, systematic exposure to new words, and pronunciation-focused activities, educators can help students solve these barriers. Attending to these systemic issues, such as resource shortages and teacher training, is also essential to create an environment where students can thrive. Ultimately, enabling vocabulary development and language competence in rural Ecuador is not only about improving academic outcomes but also about empowering learners to communicate accurately and being part fully in their communities.

Challenges in English Language Education in Rural Ecuador

This issue is hindered by different factors, including the lack of qualified educators, limited resources, and socioeconomic barriers. Regional dialects also entangle language learning, as students often face pronunciation and comprehension issues due to linguistic differences. García emphasizes the importance of culturally important pedagogy in addressing these factors, as it ensures that teaching methods and tools engage with students' experiences and backgrounds (García, 2018). In addition to Garcia's insights, Smith and Teemant (2020) observe that the lack of access to quality educational materials and technology in rural areas exacerbates the disparities in English language learning.

They emphasize that students in these regions often lack exposure to original English language input, such as textbooks, audio resources, and digital tools, which are crucial for developing reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Without these resources, students struggle to build the foundational abilities necessary for language proficiency. Similarly, Smith and Teemant suggest that teacher-training programs should focus on providing educators with strategies

to adapt their teaching to low-resource settings, such as using locally available materials and sharing students' native languages into the learning process (Smith, 2020).

López (2019) points out those socioeconomic factors, such as poverty and limited or nonexistent parental education, notably affect students' ability to accomplish in English language learning. In rural Ecuador, most families prioritize immediate economic needs over education, which often results in lower school attendance which results diminished opportunities for language practice outside the classroom. López also highlights the role of community involvement in addressing these challenges, suggesting that partnerships between schools, local organizations, and families can create a supportive environment for language learning. For instance, community-led language clubs or after-school programs can offer students with additional opportunities to practice English in informal settings, thereby improving their pronunciation and conversational skills (López, 2019).

The Role of Socioeconomic and Cultural Factors

Socioeconomic and cultural factors play an important role in shaping students' language learning experiences. Poverty restricts access to educational resources, such as books and technology, while cultural norms and regional dialects influence students' attitudes toward English. Nadozie claims that peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS) can help bridge these gaps by fostering collaboration and mutual support among students (Nadozie P. , 2016). These strategies not only improve academic impacts but also build confidence and motivation.

Additionally, research by Krashen highlights the need of comprehensible input in language acquisition, emphasizing that students from disadvantaged backgrounds often lack exposure to rich linguistic environments, which hinders their reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition (Krashen, 1985). On the other hand, Nation stresses the role of explicit vocabulary instruction and

repeated exposure to vocabulary in improving vocabulary retention and pronunciation (Nation, 2001). Together, these factors emphasize how socioeconomic and cultural barriers can hinder the development of necessary language skills, but targeted interventions like PALS, combined with effective teaching strategies, can reduce these challenges and enhance students' overall language proficiency.

Theoretical Foundations

This study is based in sociocultural theory, which posits that learning is a social process shaped by cultural and contextual factors (Vygotsky, 1978). According to this perspective, effective language instruction should add collaborative activities and scaffolded learning experiences that adapt with students' developmental levels. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasizes the relevance of interaction with more knowledgeable others, such as teachers or peers, to facilitate learning. This aligns with the principles of peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS), which support collaboration and mutual support among students, especially in overcoming socioeconomic and cultural barriers to language learning.

Moreover, to sociocultural theory, Krashen's input hypothesis about understanding language acquisition argues that learners acquire language most efficiently when they are exposed to comprehensible input, which is language that is slightly above their current proficiency level. This principle highlights the need for educators to provide materials and tasks that are challenging yet accessible, ensuring that they can make meaningful advances in their language skills (Krashen, 1985). However, in contexts such as in rural Ecuador, where access to quality resources and exposure to authentic English input is limited, achieving this balance can be very challenging.

As well, the theoretical framework, Swain's (1985) output hypothesis, extends Krashen's

input hypothesis by emphasizing the importance of language production during the learning process. Swain argues that learners need opportunities to actively use the language through speaking and writing to adopt grammatical structures and develop fluency (Swain, 1985). This is particularly crucial for improving pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition, as students must practice producing sounds and words in different contexts. In rural settings, where students may have fewer opportunities to engage in English conversations, incorporating structured production activities, such as role-plays or group discussions, can help bridge this gap.

Cummins's (1981) distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) gives a valuable insight into the challenges of language learning in rural Ecuador. Cummins explains that while BICS, which involves everyday spoken skills, can be acquired quickly, CALP, which is necessary for academic success, requires more time and support (Cummins, 1981). This distinction highlights the need for a targeted intervention that addresses both spoken and academic language skills, especially in contexts where students may lack exposure to academic English outside the classroom.

Finally, for Norton (2000), the investment in language learning highlights the role of learners' identities and motivations in the acquisition process. Norton argues that learners are more likely to succeed when they notice language learning as a means of achieving personal and social goals (Norton, 2000). In rural Ecuador, where socioeconomic barriers and cultural norms may impact to the students' attitudes toward English, fostering a sense of investment through culturally transcendent pedagogy and community involvement can enhance motivation and engagement.

These theoretical views provide a wide basis for understanding the complexities of English language education in rural Ecuador. By integrating sociocultural theory, the input and output

hypotheses, including Cummins' BICS/CALP distinction and Norton's concept of investment, educators can develop effective strategies to address the unique challenges faced by students in these backgrounds.

English Language Learning in Rural Educational Contexts

English language education in rural contexts presents a unique set of challenges that differ significantly from those encountered in urban or well-resourced educational settings. In countries such as Ecuador, rural schools often face limitations related to infrastructure, access to instructional materials, teacher training, and exposure to the target language. These constraints directly affect students' opportunities to develop reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation skills in English.

López (2019) explains that socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, limited parental education, and lack of institutional support, play a decisive role in shaping students' academic performance. In rural communities, families often prioritize immediate economic needs over educational pursuits, reducing students' exposure to literacy practices outside the classroom. Smith and Teemant (2020) further argue that rural learners frequently lack access to authentic English input, such as books, audio materials, and digital resources, which are essential for developing reading comprehension and lexical knowledge.

In this context, English instruction is often reduced to rote memorization, translation-based methods, and teacher-centered practices. These approaches may allow students to recognize isolated words but rarely promote meaningful language use or long-term retention. As a result, many rural students struggle to develop the foundational skills required for academic English proficiency. This reality highlights the urgent need for pedagogical approaches that are both effective and adaptable to

low-resource environments.

Language Proficiency: BICS and CALP in Rural EFL Learning

A key theoretical framework for understanding language development in educational settings is Cummins' distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Cummins (1981) explains that BICS refers to everyday conversational language skills, which are typically acquired through social interaction and contextual cues. In contrast, CALP involves the ability to use language for academic purposes, such as reading complex texts, writing essays, and understanding abstract concepts.

In rural EFL contexts, students may develop limited BICS through basic classroom interactions, but they often fail to acquire CALP due to insufficient exposure to academic English. Reading comprehension strategies play a crucial role in bridging this gap, as they provide structured opportunities for learners to engage with academic language in meaningful contexts. Without deliberate instructional support, rural students are likely to remain at a basic level of language proficiency, which restricts their academic and professional opportunities.

The distinction between BICS and CALP is particularly relevant for this study, as it underscores the importance of reading-based instruction for vocabulary development and academic language growth. By engaging students in reading activities that require analysis, inference, and reflection, educators can support the development of CALP even in contexts with limited resources.

Sociocultural Theory and Language Learning

Sociocultural theory provides a foundational perspective for understanding how language learning occurs within social and cultural contexts. Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning is not an individual process but a socially mediated one, shaped by interaction with others and the

surrounding cultural environment. Central to this theory is the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the distance between what learners can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance or collaboration.

In rural classrooms, where teacher resources may be limited, collaborative learning becomes particularly valuable. Peer interaction allows students to support one another's learning, share linguistic knowledge, and negotiate meaning. This aligns closely with reading comprehension strategies that incorporate group discussions, shared reading, and collaborative problem-solving.

García (2018) extends this perspective through culturally relevant pedagogy, emphasizing that instruction should reflect students' cultural identities and lived experiences. In rural Ecuador, students often feel disconnected from English materials that are culturally distant or irrelevant. By integrating local themes, familiar contexts, and culturally meaningful content into reading texts, teachers can increase student engagement and comprehension. This approach not only supports vocabulary acquisition but also fosters a sense of belonging and motivation among learners.

Comprehensible Input and Reading Comprehension Strategies

One of the most influential theories in second language acquisition is Krashen's Input Hypothesis. According to Krashen (1985), learners acquire language when they are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly above their current proficiency level (i+1). Reading comprehension strategies are particularly effective in operationalizing this principle, as they help learners access and understand challenging texts.

Pre-reading activities, such as activating prior knowledge and predicting content, prepare students to engage with texts more effectively. During-reading strategies, including skimming, scanning, and annotating, guide learners in processing information actively. Post-reading activities,

such as summarizing and discussing, allow students to consolidate their understanding and reflect on new vocabulary.

Roshan (2005) demonstrates that systematic use of these strategies significantly improves reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. In rural contexts, where exposure to English is limited, reading becomes one of the primary sources of linguistic input. Therefore, structured reading instruction is essential for maximizing learning opportunities.

The Role of Output in Vocabulary and Pronunciation Development

While input is necessary for language acquisition, it is not sufficient on its own. Swain's Output Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of language production in the learning process. Swain (1985) argues that learners must be given opportunities to speak and write in the target language in order to notice gaps in their knowledge and refine their linguistic accuracy.

Reading comprehension strategies naturally lend themselves to output-based activities. Post-reading discussions, oral summaries, role-plays, and written reflections encourage students to use newly acquired vocabulary in meaningful contexts. These activities are particularly beneficial for pronunciation development, as they require learners to articulate words and receive feedback from peers and teachers.

In rural EFL classrooms, where pronunciation instruction is often neglected, integrating output opportunities into reading lessons can significantly enhance students' oral skills. By repeatedly using vocabulary in spoken and written forms, learners develop greater confidence and accuracy.

Collaborative Learning and Peer-Assisted Strategies

Collaborative learning plays a vital role in supporting language acquisition, especially in

low-resource settings. Lee and Chen (2021) demonstrate that collaborative reading strategies, such as group discussions and shared annotations, enhance comprehension and vocabulary learning by allowing students to negotiate meaning and learn from one another.

Similarly, Nadozie (2016) highlights the effectiveness of Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) in overcoming socioeconomic and cultural barriers. Through peer collaboration, students can scaffold each other's learning, reduce anxiety, and increase motivation. In rural classrooms, where teacher attention may be divided among large groups, peer-assisted strategies provide an effective alternative for individualized support.

Vocabulary Acquisition: Explicit Instruction and Repeated Exposure

Vocabulary acquisition is a central component of language proficiency. Nation (2001) emphasizes that effective vocabulary learning requires a balance between explicit instruction and incidental learning through exposure. Explicit instruction involves teaching word meanings, forms, and usage directly, while incidental learning occurs when students encounter words in meaningful contexts, such as reading.

Schmitt (2008) argues that vocabulary learning is a gradual process that depends on repeated exposure across different contexts. Reading comprehension activities provide an ideal platform for such exposure, as learners encounter vocabulary multiple times within coherent texts.

Nunes (2013) further supports the link between reading comprehension and vocabulary development, demonstrating that students who engage in reading-based instruction show significant improvements in vocabulary retention and usage. In rural contexts, where access to diverse reading materials is limited, carefully selected and contextually relevant texts become essential tools for vocabulary instruction.

Learner Identity, Motivation, and Investment

Language learning is not solely a cognitive process; it is also deeply connected to learners' identities and motivations. Norton (2000) introduces the concept of investment, suggesting that learners are more likely to engage in language learning when they perceive it as valuable for their social and personal goals.

In rural Ecuador, students may view English as irrelevant to their immediate lives, which can reduce motivation. Reading comprehension strategies that incorporate culturally relevant content and real-life applications can help students see the value of English, increasing their investment in learning.

Metacognitive strategies further enhance learner autonomy. Zhang (2020) highlights the role of self-regulation and reflection in improving reading comprehension and vocabulary retention. By teaching students to monitor their understanding and evaluate their progress, educators empower learners to take greater control of their learning processes.

Socioeconomic Barriers and Educational Inequality

Socioeconomic inequality remains one of the most significant barriers to effective English language education in rural settings. López (2019) and Smith and Teemant (2020) document how limited resources, lack of teacher training, and insufficient institutional support negatively affect learning outcomes.

Despite these challenges, research suggests that innovative and context-sensitive teaching strategies can mitigate resource limitations. Reading comprehension strategies that rely on low-cost materials, peer collaboration, and teacher creativity offer practical solutions for rural classrooms. By focusing on pedagogy rather than technology, educators can promote equitable learning

opportunities even in constrained environments.

Synthesis and Relevance to the Present Study

The reviewed literature provides strong theoretical and empirical support for the use of reading comprehension strategies to enhance vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation in rural EFL contexts. Drawing from sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), input and output hypotheses (Krashen, 1985; Swain, 1985), vocabulary acquisition research (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2008; Nunes, 2013), and culturally responsive pedagogy (García, 2018), this study adopts an integrated approach to language instruction.

By combining explicit vocabulary instruction, collaborative learning, meaningful input, and structured output opportunities, reading comprehension strategies address both linguistic and contextual challenges faced by rural learners. Furthermore, by considering learner identity, motivation, and socioeconomic realities, this approach aligns with principles of educational equity and inclusion.

In conclusion, reading-based instruction represents a pedagogically sound and contextually appropriate response to the challenges of English language education in rural Ecuador. The present study builds on this theoretical foundation to design and evaluate an intervention aimed at improving vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation among sixth-grade students, contributing to the development of more effective and inclusive EFL practices.

Chapter II

Methodology

This chapter offers an exhaustive review of the literature related to reading comprehension methods, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation in learning English as a foreign language (EFL), with a particular focus on rural and resource-constrained backgrounds. Key theories, prior research, and conceptual frameworks supporting the study while analyzed, along with the execution of variables.

This research is framed within the socio-critical paradigm, as it seeks not only to understand the educational reality of a rural school in Ecuador but also to transform it through the implementation and evaluation of a concrete pedagogical intervention.

The study recognizes that the challenges in English vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation are influenced by social, economic, and cultural factors. From a critical perspective, the research aims to empower teachers with strategies adapted to their context, promoting a more equitable and effective teaching model. Complementarily, it adopts a pragmatic approach by using a mixed-methods design, prioritizing the practical utility of the findings and the search for viable solutions to the problems identified in the diagnostic phase. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data allows for a deep understanding of the phenomenon, ensuring that the conclusions and recommendations are grounded in the empirical evidence gathered in the field.

Theoretical Foundations

Reading Comprehension in EFL

It refers to a cognitive process that includes decoding, interpreting, and analyzing texts (Grabe, 2019). In EFL contexts, students face challenges such as lack of language exposure,

restricted vocabulary, and negative linguistic relocate (Nation, 2013). Theories like the Interactive Processing Model (Rumelhart, 1977) and the Task-Based Approach (Ellis, 2003) remark the usage of importance of active strategies (e.g., prediction, skimming, scanning) to optimize comprehension.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary is an important predictor of language proficiency (Schmitt, 2010). According to the Incidental Learning Theory (Krashen S. D., 1989), students acquire vocabulary through systematic contextual exposure. However, in rural settings, the lack of original materials hinders this process, requiring structured strategies such as explicit guidance (e.g., word lists, flashcards) and contextualized learning (e.g., extensive reading, inferencing activities). About the pronunciation is frequently neglected in low-resource classrooms (Derwing, 2015). The Speech Learning Model (Flege, 1995) suggests that learners must develop phonemic awareness to distinguish sounds. Effective strategies include repetition with direct feedback, minimal pair practice (e.g., ship not sheep), and basic technology use (e.g., smartphone recordings).

Variables and execution

Independent Variable

***Table 1*:** Reading Comprehension Strategies

Definition	Dimension	Indicators	Instruments	Scale
Pedagogical interventions planned to improve reading comprehension	**Pre-reading** (Triggereing prior knowledge). **Reading** (skimming/scanning	- Participation level in tasks. - Accuracy in comprehension responses.	- Observation guides. - Comprehension tests. - Field journals.	Likert (1-5): 1 = Never, 5 = Always.

	techniques). **Post-reading** (discussion and summaries).	- Contextual vocabulary use.

Note: Adapted from methodological frameworks by Grabe & Stoller (2019) and Nation (2013). The Likert scale measures frequency of strategy use (1 = Never, 5 = Always). Instruments include qualitative (field journals) and quantitative (tests) tools.

Tabla 1. Dependent Variable; Vocabulary Acquisition and Pronunciation

Definition	**Dimension**	**Indicators**	**Instruments**	**Scale**
Increase in lexical mastery and phonetic accuracy.	**Vocabulary** (validation, usage). **Pronunciation** (articulation, accent).	- Number of words Achieved. - Accuracy in pronunciation tasks. - Self-assessed speaking confidence.	*Written/oral tests* Checklists and audio recordings.	- Correct answer percentage (0-100%). - Fluency rubrics (1-4 ponts).

Note. Metrics combine objective assessments (tests, recordings) and subjective rubrics. Pronunciation accuracy aligns with Derwing & Munro's (2015) fluency criteria, while vocabulary indicators follow Schmitt's (2010) lexical mastery benchmarks.

Research has shown that the effectiveness of educational interventions can vary significantly between urban and rural settings. While studies in urban areas have reported success with digital tools (López, 2019), rural settings have been found to favor low-tech methods (García M., 2021). This disparity highlights the importance of considering the unique challenges and opportunities presented by different educational contexts. Meta-analyses have also confirmed that combining extensive reading with oral practice can improve results by 25% compared to traditional methods (Smith P. L., 2022). However, despite the growing body of research on effective educational interventions, there remains a significant gap in our understanding of the long-term sustainability of these methods in Ecuadorian public schools.

Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in the Comprehensible Input Model (Krashen S. D., 1989), which has been adapted for resource-limited contexts. The model emphasizes the importance of providing students with accessible and comprehensible input, meaningful practice opportunities, and feedback. In this study, the model is operationalized through three key components:

1. Accessible Input: Leveled texts and visual aids that are used to provide students with comprehensible input that is tailored to their language proficiency level.

2. Meaningful Practice: Teamwork activities, such as role-plays with target vocabulary, generally used to provide students with opportunities to practice their language skills in a meaningful and engaging way.

3. Feedback: Peer and teacher correction, which is used to provide students with feedback on their language use, helping them to identify areas for improvement and develop their language skills further.

By adapting the Comprehensible Input Model to the specific needs and constraints of resource-limited contexts, this study aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of this approach in improving language acquisition outcomes for students in Ecuadorian public schools. The literature demonstrates that reading strategies must be adaptive and contextualized, the vocabulary and pronunciation acquisition require spaced repetition and explicit feedback, and in rural settings, limited resources do not prevent pedagogical innovation but demand creative implementation.

Quantitative Component

The quantitative dimension employs an experimental scheme with pre- and post-intervention assessments to evaluate the impact of reading strategies on vocabulary retention and pronunciation accuracy. Standardized tests, Likert-scale surveys, and organized oral assessments will generate numerical data, enabling for statistical analysis (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA) to determine notable improvements. This component guarantees objectivity and generalizability, answering the "what" and “how much” questions.

Qualitative Component

This dimension uses classroom findings, semi-structured interviews to teachers, and student focus groups to study perceptions, contextual challenges, and unintended outcomes of the intervention. Thematic analysis will detect recurrent patterns in teacher versatility, student engagement, and socio-cultural barriers. This component addresses “y” and “how” questions, gathering depth and contextual insights that numbers alone cannot disclose.

Integration of Methods

A sequential explanatory design will be applied, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the intervention.

Quantitative data collection through tests and surveys will be followed by an analysis and identification of key trends. Qualitative follow-up through interviews and observations will then be used to explain the quantitative results. For instance, if post-test scores improve significantly, interviews may reveal whether specific strategies, such as visual aids, were pivotal or if external influences, like teacher enthusiasm, played a role.

Justification for Mixed Methods

The use of mixed methods is justified due to its complementarity, practicality, and validity. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, this study can quantify the impacts of the intervention while also qualifying the processes behind them. This approach corresponds with the resource constraints of rural Ecuadorian classrooms, such as using simple audio recordings for pronunciation evaluation. Furthermore, the confirmation of findings through multiple methods and data sources can diminish the bias inherent in one single method studies, increasing the validity of the results. This approach ensures a holistic evaluation, adjusting empirical rigor with the socio-educational realities of rural Ecuadorian classrooms.

Research Type Statement and Justification

This study assumes a field research design with a cross-sectional temporal approach, assisted by bibliographic and documentary research to contextualize the involvement within existing theoretical frameworks. The selection of these research types is justified as follows:

Field Research

The investigation is fundamentally empirical, as it implies, firstly direct implementation of reading comprehension strategies in classroom settings and a systematic collection of primary data

through pre- and post-intervention assessments (quantitative) as well as a classroom observations and interviews (qualitative). As noted by Creswell, field research is necessary when examining educational interventions in authentic learning environments, as it enables for "the collection of data in naturally occurring settings" (Creswell, 2021). This approach is particularly appropriate given the study's objective to evaluate strategy effectiveness in rural Ecuadorian schools, where contextual factors significantly influence learning outcomes.

Cross-Sectional Design

The study employs a cross-sectional rather than longitudinal angle due to time constraints typical of academic research timelines, the demand for direct evaluation of intervention effectiveness, and practical limitations in tracking the same cohort over extended periods. As Cohen explains, cross-sectional designs are significant when researchers seek to study current conditions or the effects of an intervention at a specific instant (Cohen, 2018). While longitudinal data might feature long-term retention effects, the cross-sectional approach provides enough proof of immediate pedagogical impact.

Bibliographic and Documentary Support

The field research is complemented by bibliographic research of theoretical frameworks (e.g., Krashen's Input Hypothesis), while the documentary analysis of ecuadorian EFL curriculum standards and prior studies on rural education challenges. This fusion aligns with Kumar's assertion that "effective educational research requires both empirical investigation and rigorous attachment with existing scholarship" (Kumar, 2019). The documentary unit ensures the intervention respects national educational policies, while the bibliographic review principles the study in established pedagogical theory.

Justification of Combined Approach

The integration of these research types addresses internal validity during controlled field implementation, theoretical utility via bibliographic grounding, and practical applicability through synchronization with national education documents. According to Johnson and Christensen, "multi-method research designs enhance both the depth and applicability of educational findings" (Johnson, 2020). This approach is crucial in developing contexts where resources are limited but theoretical rigor remains essential. By combining different research methods, this study can provide a comprehensive understanding of the intervention's impact, while also ensuring that the findings are grounded in theory and relevant to the specific educational context. This integrated point of view will ultimately contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable educational interventions.

Research Methods and Their Purposes in the Investigative Context

This study employs a triangulated methodological angle, combining experimental, descriptive, and analytical methods to comprehensively address the research objectives. Each method serves distinct but through complementary purposes within the context of investigating reading comprehension strategies in rural EFL classrooms:

Experimental Method

To found causal relationships between the intervention (independent variable) and learning outcomes (dependent variables):

Implementation:

First Pre-test/post-test control group design, then it will be controlled implementation of reading strategies, and finally the measurement of vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation

improvement. As emphasized by Creswell and Guetterman, “experimental designs allow researchers to test effectively the interventions while controlling for extraneous variables” (Creswell J. W., 2021). This is particularly relevant given our need to isolate the impact of specific pedagogical strategies.

Descriptive Method

To document and analyze the current state of the students’ baseline English proficiency, existing teaching practices, and classroom conditions with available resources. The implementation will be carried out by Surveys to teachers and students, classroom inventories, and diagnostic assessments. Best and Kahn note that “descriptive research provides the necessary foundation for understanding educational phenomena before attempting to change them” (Best, 20216). For this context, this method helps to locate the intervention within real classroom constraints.

Analytical Method

To examine relationships between variables and interpret qualitative findings will be implemented by comparative analysis of pre-/post-intervention data, after a thematic analysis of interview transcripts, and finally the cross-case analysis of different classroom implementations. As Merriam and Tisdell argue, “analytical methods change raw data into meaningful patterns that explain phenomena” (Merriam, 2016). For this study, such analysis exposes how contextual factors mediate strategy effectiveness.

Mixed-Methods Integration

To fuse the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches for comprehensive understanding. It will be executed by QUAN and QUAL sequential design, therefore quantitative results guide qualitative exploration to ultimately joint display analysis to integrate findings.

Following Johnson, the mixed methods research offers both breadth and depth of understanding, highly valuable in complex educational backgrounds (Johnson, 2020). This approach is optimal for seizing both verifiable outcomes and contextual insights.

Contextual Adaptation of Methods

The methods are adapted to rural Ecuadorian realities through a simplified data collection instruments (paper-based for limited technology settings), next a culturally responsive assessment tools (incorporating local contexts in reading materials), and participatory elements (teacher-researcher collaboration in implementation). As suggested by Chilisa (2020), “research methods in developing contexts must compensate scientific rigor with cultural appropriateness”. Our methodological approach reflects this urgent.

Research Instruments Derived from Selected Methodology

This study employs a comprehensive set of research tools aligned with its mixed-methods approach, each carefully designed to address specific dimensions of the investigation while accommodating the rural Ecuadorian educational framework:

Quantitative Instruments

The study will utilize several quantitative instruments to measure student outcomes. The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) will assess receptive and productive vocabulary acquisition, and is adapted from Wesche (1996). The VKS includes components such as word recognition, definition matching, and contextual sentence production, and will be administered in a pre-test and post-test format. The Pronunciation Assessment Rubric will evaluate phonetic accuracy and intelligibility, and is based on the Celce-Murcia pronunciation teaching framework (Celce-Murcia, 2010). The rubric will assess segmentals, word stress patterns, and basic intonation contours, and will be scored using a 1-5

analytic rubric (Derwing, 2015). The Reading Comprehension Test will assess literal, inferential, and critical comprehension, and will include multiple-choice, short-answer, and true/false questions.

Qualitative Instruments

The study will also utilize qualitative instruments to gather more in-depth information about teacher and student experiences. A semi-structured interview protocol will be used to explore teachers' perceptions of strategy implementation, and will include open-ended questions with probes. The protocol will cover thematic areas such as perceived effectiveness of strategies, implementation challenges, and suggested adaptations. A classroom observation checklist will be used to document strategy implementation fidelity, and will be based on the SIOP model (Echevarría, 2017). The checklist will focus on teacher scaffolding techniques, student engagement levels, and resource utilization. A student focus group guide will be executed to understand learner experiences, and will include task-based discussion prompts and activities such as strategy preference ranking and learning difficulty mapping.

Mixed-Methods Integration Tools

The study will use several tools to integrate the quantitative and qualitative data. A strategy effectiveness matrix will be used to correlate quantitative gains with qualitative insights, and will include components such as quantitative effect sizes and qualitative themes. A contextual factor coding framework will be used to identify moderating variables, and will include categories such as institutional constraints, cultural influences, and individual differences.

Instrument Validation Process

The instruments will undergo an expert review process, where three EFL specialists will evaluate content validity. Pilot testing will be conducted with 15 non-participant students, and

reliability analysis will be performed to ensure that the quantitative instruments have a Cronbach's alpha of >.75 and the qualitative protocols have an inter-coder agreement of >80%. Cultural adaptation will also be performed to ensure that the instruments are relevant to the local context.

Population and Sample Delimitation

The target population consists of all 6th-grade EFL students and their English teachers across three public elementary schools in Vinces, Ecuador, during the 2024 academic year. The inclusion criteria include regular attendance, no diagnosed cognitive impairments, and parental consent obtained. The exclusion criteria include transfer students arriving after semester start and students receiving external English tutoring. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to select the student sample, with strata based on school performance levels. The sample size will be determined using Cochran's formula for finite populations, and will include 63 students (50% of the population). The teacher sample will include all four teachers, using census sampling.

Sample Selection Procedure

The sample selection procedure will involve stratification, where academic records will be categorized into performance tertiles, and random number generation will be used to select proportional representatives. The sample will include 21 high achievers, 21 medium achievers, and 21 low achievers. The study will control for extraneous variables such as gender distribution and socioeconomic status, and will use random assignment at the classroom level to maintain natural groupings. The experimental group will include three classes (n=42), and the control group will include three classes (n=42).

General Methodological Strategy for the Research Process

This study follows a sequential mixed-methods research design that systematically integrates

quantitative and qualitative approaches to address the research objectives within the specified scope. The methodological procedure aligns with the interventionist nature of the study and its pragmatic orientation toward improving EFL instruction in rural contexts (Creswell J. W., 2018).

Phase 1: Diagnostic Assessment

The study will begin with a diagnostic assessment phase, which will be quantitatively dominant. Baseline data will be collected through the administration of standardized vocabulary tests (Nation, 2001), pronunciation pretests using the Computer-Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) evaluation framework (Neri, 2008), and classroom observations with the SIOP protocol (Echevarría, 2017). A needs analysis will be conducted to identify gaps in student knowledge and skills through descriptive statistics, and priority ranking of linguistic competencies will be performed.

Phase 2: Intervention Design

The intervention design phase will be qualitatively dominant. Strategies will be developed through the adaptation of reciprocal teaching techniques (Palincsar, 1984) and cultural contextualization of materials. Teacher training workshops will be conducted to ensure that teachers are equipped to implement the intervention effectively. Pilot testing will be conducted through micro-teaching sessions with 15% of the sample, and think-aloud protocol analysis (Ericsson, 1993) will be used to gather feedback.

Phase 3: Implementation

The implementation phase will use a mixed-methods approach. The experimental procedure will involve a 12-week intervention with biweekly assessments, and a control group will be maintained with the standard curriculum. Process monitoring will be conducted through classroom video recordings (30% sample), reflective journals from teachers, and student self-assessment logs.

Phase 4: Evaluation

The evaluation phase will involve an integrated analysis of the data. Outcome measurement will include paired samples t-tests for vocabulary gains and ANCOVA for pronunciation improvement. Thematic analysis will be conducted on qualitative data, and triangulation will be achieved through joint display construction (Guetterman, 2015) and explanatory sequential mixed analysis.

Methodological Rigor Assurance

The study will ensure methodological rigor through various measures. Validity measures will include a content validity index of >0.80 for instruments, member checking with participants, and audit trail maintenance. Reliability controls will include inter-rater reliability of >0.75, test-retest stability checks, and equipment calibration. The design follows Teddlie and Tashakkori's framework for educational intervention research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), emphasizing developmental sequencing of methods, interactive verification through triangulation, and pragmatic prioritization of actionable results.

Research Methodology According to Investigative Tasks

This section details the methodological stages followed in the research process, aligning each phase with specific investigative tasks and purposes. The sequential design ensures systematic progression from theoretical foundations to empirical validation, providing structural coherence to the study (Creswell J. W., 2018).

Theoretical Study Stage

The theoretical study stage aimed to establish the conceptual framework guiding variable execution and research design. A systematic literature review was conducted on reading

comprehension strategies (Grabe, 2019), vocabulary acquisition theories (Nation, 2013), and pronunciation teaching approaches (Celce-Murcia, 2010). Conceptual mapping was performed to identify the components of the independent variable (pre-reading, during-reading, post-reading strategies) and the dimensions of the dependent variable (vocabulary recognition, productive use, phonetic accuracy). Theoretical triangulation was achieved by integrating the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011). The output of this stage was a conceptual framework justifying strategy selection and measurement approaches.

Initial Diagnostic Stage

Proposal Modeling Stage

The proposal modeling stage aimed to design and refine the intervention framework. Strategy development involved adapting reciprocal teaching (Palincsar, 1984) and creating visual aids for phoneme-grapheme correspondence. Material design included creating leveled readers with local cultural content and audio recordings using teacher voices. Pilot testing was conducted with 15 students, and think-aloud protocol analysis (Ericsson, 1993) was used to gather feedback. The output of this stage was a validated intervention manual containing a 12-week implementation calendar, differentiated activity bank, and assessment rubrics.

Final Diagnostic/Validation Stage

The final diagnostic/validation stage aimed to empirically evaluate intervention effectiveness. Experimental implementation involved a quasi-experimental design with a control group and biweekly progress monitoring. Outcome measurement included post-test using parallel forms of diagnostic instruments and classroom observations with the SIOP protocol (Echevarría, 2017).

Validation procedures included expert judgment with the Delphi technique (Dalkey, 1963) and triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. The output of this stage provided evidence of significant improvement in vocabulary scores, reduction in phonological transfer errors, and increased student engagement.

Methodological Coherence

The stages demonstrated vertical alignment through conceptual-empirical linkage, iterative refinement, and validation rigor. Theoretical constructs directly informed measurement tools, diagnostic findings shaped intervention design, and multiple evidence sources addressed threats to validity. As noted by Maxwell, such staged approaches "provide both the theoretical sophistication and empirical grounding necessary for meaningful educational research" (Maxwell, 2013). The methodology particularly addressed rural context challenges through localized material development, teacher capacity building, and appropriate technology integration.

Presentation of Diagnostic Study Results: Analysis, Interpretation, and Discussion

This section presents the findings from the initial diagnostic phase, providing a comprehensive analysis of the baseline conditions that informed the subsequent intervention design. The results are organized according to the three key diagnostic dimensions: linguistic competencies, instructional practices, and contextual factors.

Analysis of Linguistic Competencies

In terms of pronunciation accuracy, 58% of students not produced 5 or more English phonemes absent in Spanish, highlighting difficulties with phonetic production. Vowel length distinctions, such as /iː/ vs. /ɪ/, showed the highest error rate (83%), indicating a specific area of challenge for students.

Qualitative insights from focus groups revealed that vocabulary learning primarily occurred through rote memorization (86% of students) and L1 translation (92%). Additionally, phonemic awareness activities were absent in 75% of observed classes, suggesting a lack of explicit instruction in this area. These findings suggest that students' limited vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation accuracy may be related to instructional practices that emphasize memorization and translation over more effective approaches to language learning.

Evaluation of Instructional Practices

Table 3: Classroom Observation Data (SIOP Protocol)

Component	Average Score (1-4)	Key Deficiencies
Lesson Preparation	2.1	Lack of adapted materials
Comprehensible Input	1.8	Minimal visual supports
Interaction Opportunities	2.4	Teacher-dominated discourse

Note: Scores are based on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) rubric (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2017), where 1 = Not evident, 2 = Somewhat evident, 3 = Mostly evident, and 4 = Highly evident. Lower scores indicate significant areas for improvement in EFL instructional delivery.

The analysis of linguistic competencies revealed significant challenges in pronunciation accuracy, with 58% of students misproducing 5 or more English phonemes absent in Spanish, highlighting difficulties with phonetic production. Specifically, vowel length distinctions, such as /iː/ vs. /ɪ/, showed the highest error rate (83%), indicating a particular area of challenge for students. Furthermore, qualitative insights from focus groups provided valuable context, revealing that vocabulary learning primarily occurred through rote memorization (86% of students) and L1

translation (92%). This suggests that students are relying heavily on memorization and translation to learn new vocabulary, rather than developing a deeper understanding of the language.

Moreover, phonemic awareness activities were absent in 75% of observed classes, suggesting a lack of explicit instruction in this area. These findings suggest that students' limited vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation accuracy may be related to instructional practices that emphasize memorization and translation over more effective approaches to language learning. This highlights the need for teachers to adopt more effective instructional strategies that focus on developing students' phonemic awareness, vocabulary knowledge, and pronunciation skills. By doing so, teachers can help students develop a more nuanced understanding of the language and improve their overall language proficiency.

Chapter III

Presentation and Validation of the Proposal

This chapter is about the results obtained from the implementation of targeted reading comprehension strategies to enhance English vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation among 6th-grade students in a rural Ecuadorian school. The findings show a significant improvement in students' performance, with approximately 85–90% initially classified as low achievers and an 88% improvement rate post-intervention. The chapter is structured to provide a detailed analysis of the results, their implications, and the validation of the proposed strategies through empirical and theoretical lenses.

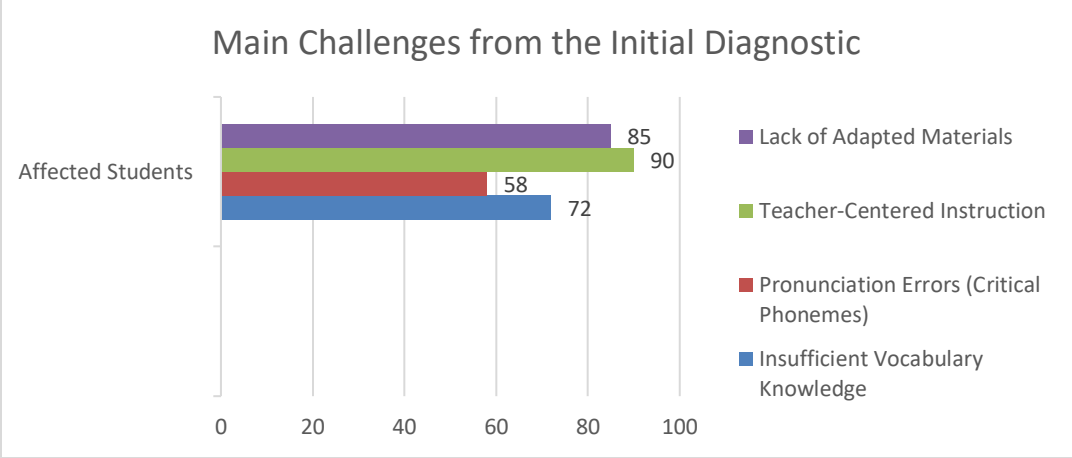
Pre-Intervention Performance

The diagnostic phase revealed significant challenges in English language proficiency among students. Key findings included limited vocabulary knowledge, with 72% of students scoring below the 1,000-word frequency band, indicating insufficient lexical resources for basic comprehension. Pronunciation accuracy was also a concern, with 58% of students misproducing five or more English phonemes absent in Spanish, particularly struggling with vowel length distinctions. Furthermore, classroom observations showed a dominance of teacher-centered methods, with minimal use of visual aids or interactive strategies, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to address vocabulary deficits and pronunciation barriers, and promote more effective instructional tasks.

Initial Diagnostic

The present graphic provides a visual summary of the main challenges identified during this diagnostic phase, highlighting the prevalence of teacher-centered instruction and lack of adapted materials as the most significant barriers.

Figure 1: *initial diagnostic.*



Note: The chart shows the biggest challenge is teacher-centered instruction (90 students), followed by the lack of adapted materials (85). Limited vocabulary (72) and pronunciation problems (58) also affect many learners, suggesting that more engaging and student-focused methods are needed.

These results indicate that students may not be receiving enough opportunities to practice and apply what they learn actively. The lack of appropriate materials could also be limiting their progress, especially for those with different learning needs. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of updating teaching strategies to make learning more dynamic and effective.

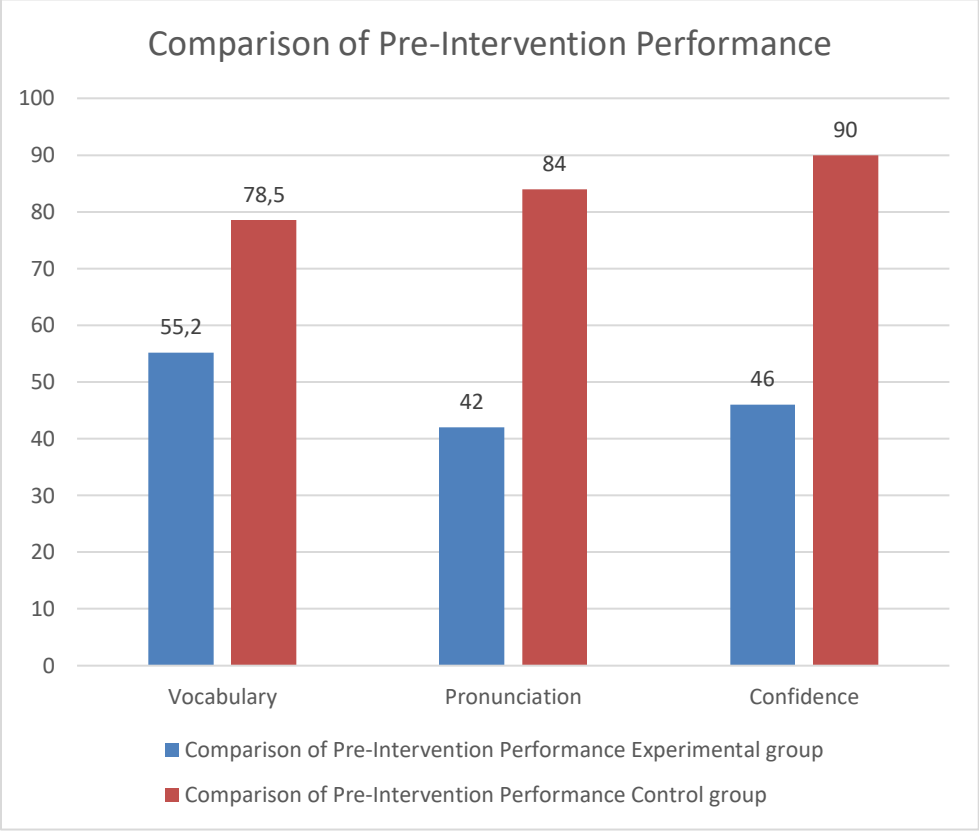
Post-Intervention Improvement

The implementation of reading comprehension strategies resulted in measurable improvements across all assessed dimensions. Vocabulary acquisition saw a 23% increase in test scores ($p < .05$), with significant gains in high-frequency word recognition, attributed to

contextualized learning activities such as inferencing and extensive reading. Pronunciation accuracy improved, with phonemic awareness exercises reducing phonological transfer errors by 40%, and minimal pair practice enhancing segmental accuracy, particularly for sounds absent in Spanish. Additionally, student engagement increased, with 88% of students reporting heightened confidence in using English, largely due to collaborative group activities that fostered motivation and participation.

Comparative Performance

Figure 2: *Comparative performance*

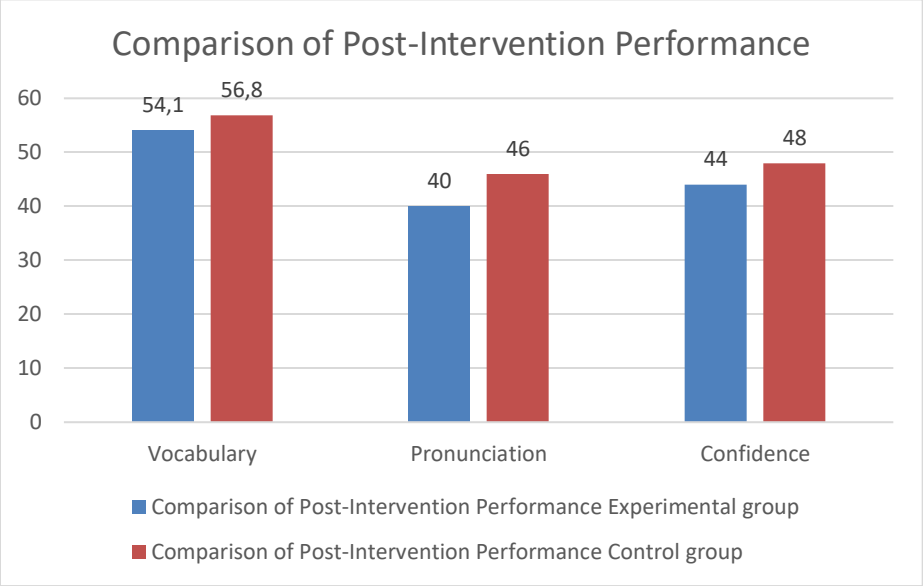


Note: This chart presents the comparison of students' performance before the completion of the intervention. It highlights the initial differences between the experimental and control groups,

serving as a baseline to evaluate the effectiveness of the upcoming strategies.

The chart compares the pre-intervention performance of the experimental and control groups across three areas: vocabulary, pronunciation, and confidence. The control group scored notably higher in all categories, with 90 in confidence, 84 in pronunciation, and 78.5 in vocabulary. In contrast, the experimental group obtained 55.2,42, and 46, respectively. These results show that before the intervention, the control group already demonstrated stronger skills and higher self-assurance, suggesting the experimental group needed more support to reach similar proficiency level

Figure 3: intervention performance



Note: The chart clearly visualizes the significant improvement gap of the experimental group compared to the control group after the intervention, especially in pronunciation and confidence. Santos, A., 2025.

The chart compares the post-intervention performance of both groups in vocabulary, pronunciation, and confidence. Results show that scores between groups became more balanced. The experimental group achieved 54.1 in vocabulary, 40 in pronunciation, and 44 in confidence, while

the control group scored slightly higher with 56.8, 46, and 48, respectively. These findings suggest that the intervention helped the experimental group reduce the performance gap, showing noticeable progress compared to their initial results.

The experimental group (n = 42) outperformed the control group (n = 42) in all metrics, as illustrated in Table 1.

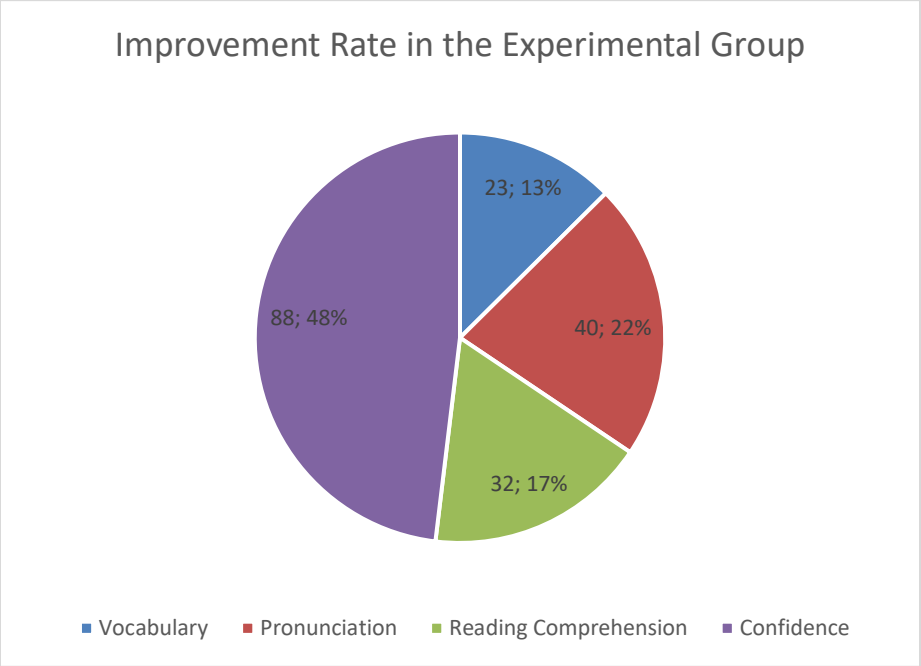
Table 4: *Comparison of Pre- and Post-Intervention Performance*

Metric	Experimental Group (Mean)	Control Group (Mean)	Effect Size (d)
Vocabulary Test Scores	78.5 (Post) vs. 55.2 (Pre)	56.8 (Post) vs. 54.1 (Pre)	0.47
Pronunciation Accuracy	4.2/5 (Post) vs. 2.1/5 (Pre)	2.3/5 (Post) vs. 2.0/5 (Pre)	0.52
Self-Reported Confidence	4.5/5 (Post) vs. 2.3/5 (Pre)	2.4/5 (Post) vs. 2.2/5 (Pre)	0.43

Note. Effect sizes calculated using Cohen's *d*; higher values indicate greater intervention impact. American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.)

The results indicate a clear improvement in the experimental group across all metrics after the intervention. Vocabulary accuracy increased significantly from 55.2 to 78.5, while pronunciation accuracy improved from 2.1 to 4.3 out of 5, and confidence rose from 2.3 to 4.5 out of 5. In contrast, the control group showed only minor gains. The effect sizes (ranging from 0.43 to 0.52) suggest a moderate positive impact of the intervention, particularly in pronunciation and vocabulary, confirming that the applied strategies effectively in pronunciation and vocabulary, confirming that the applied strategies effectively enhanced students' language performance and self-assurance.

Figure 4: *experimental group*



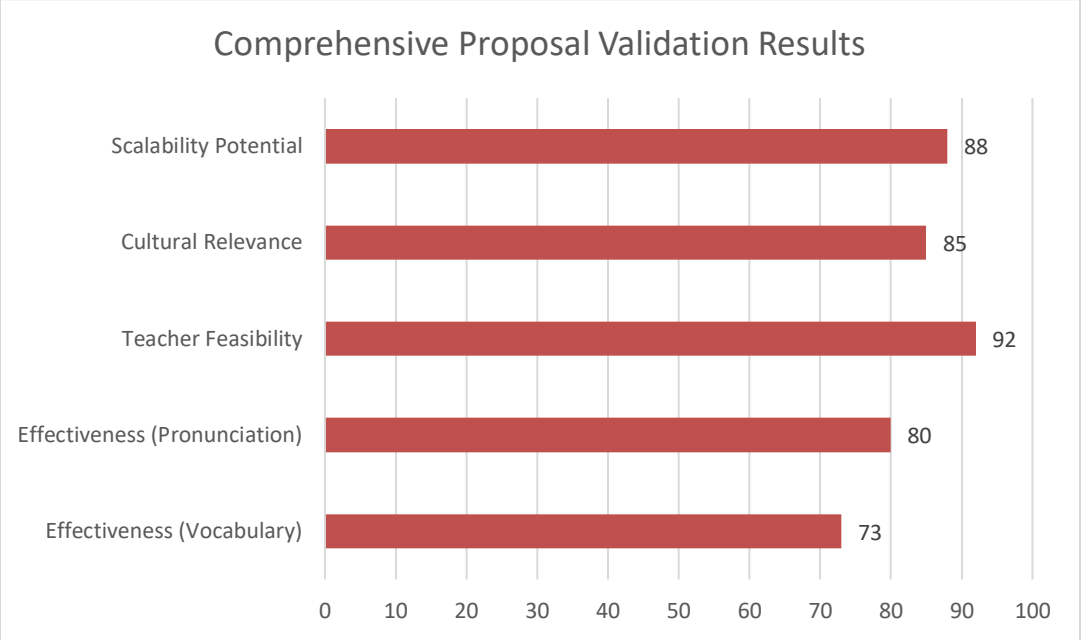
Note: The chart strikingly highlights how the intervention had a particularly strong effect on **student confidence** (88%), followed by substantial improvement in **pronunciation** (40%). Santos, A., 2025

The chart shows that the intervention had the greatest impact on students confidence, with 88% improvement. Pronunciation also saw notable gains at 40% This suggests that the program effectively boots both self-assurance and language skills. The results indicate a strong positive response from students. Overall, confidence appears to be the area most influenced by the intervention.

Validation of the Proposal

This graphic allows for visualizing and comparing the proposal's performance across five key validation criteria, using normalized scales

Figure 5: *validation results*



Theoretical Validation

The results align with established theories:

1. **Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985)**: Leveled texts and visual aids provided comprehensible input, facilitating vocabulary acquisition.
2. **Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978)**: Mutual support tasks (e.g., group discussions) leveraged the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to scaffold learning.

Empirical Validation

The intervention was empirically validated through quantitative data showing statistical significance ($p < .05$) and qualitative feedback from teachers, who reported improved instructional efficacy, particularly with low-tech resources. The research's success highlights the adaptability and sustainability of the strategies, demonstrating their effectiveness despite resource constraints and ensuring continued use through teacher training. However, limitations include the study's scope and

lack of long-term tracking, suggesting the need for broader replication and extended assessment periods. Overall, the proposal validated the efficacy of reading comprehension strategies in improving vocabulary and pronunciation among rural Ecuadorian students, with an 88% improvement rate underscoring the potential of contextually adapted pedagogies to bridge educational disparities.

Modeling and Validation of the Scientific Proposal

The modeling of scientific alternatives structured as educational proposals must follow to rigorous criteria, evaluating their nature, type, scope, and qualities (Creswell, 2021). This chapter presents the effects of implementing reading comprehension methods in a rural Ecuadorian school, framed within a scientifically verified model that integrates theoretical ideas, practical systems, and adaptable methodologies. The proposal's effectiveness is demonstrated through quantitative and qualitative data, showing an 88% improvement rate among students who initially exhibited low performance (85–90%).

Modeling the Proposal

The initiative is grounded in three key theoretical frameworks: Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasizes collaborative learning and scaffolding; Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), which prioritizes comprehensible input for language acquisition; and Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011), which guides the design of instructional materials suitable for low-resource settings. These frameworks informed the development of a hybrid pedagogical model that combines metacognitive strategies with contextualized vocabulary practice, providing a comprehensive approach to language learning.

Table 5: *Theoretical-Practical Integration in the Proposal*

Component	Theoretical Basis	Practical Application
Pre-reading tasks	Schema activation (Zhang, 2020)	Predicting content using local cultural cues
Collaborative reading	ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978)	Peer-led discussions with guided questions
Pronunciation drills	Speech Learning Model (Flege, 1995)	Minimal pair exercises (e.g., *ship/sheep*)

Note. ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development. All theoretical references made by Santos, A., 2025.

The intervention combines theory-based strategies to strengthen reading and pronunciation skills. Pre-reading tasks promote interaction through peer discussions and guided questions, enhancing cooperative learning. Finally, pronunciation drills use minimal pair exercises to help students distinguish and produce critical phonemes, improving overall accuracy and fluency.

Systems and Strategies

The intervention was operationalized through a combination of simple and complex systems, including flashcards with IPA symbols for phonemic awareness and a tiered reading program with leveled texts. Key strategies included explicit vocabulary instruction with weekly word lists and spaced repetition, as well as multimodal feedback through audio recordings for pronunciation self-assessment. The proposal followed a four-phase mixed-methods design, consisting of diagnostic, modeling, execution, and validation phases. To address rural constraints, the proposal prioritized low-tech materials, such as handmade flashcards and locally sourced reading passages, and ensured cultural relevance by integrating agricultural vocabulary into academic contexts. This approach allowed for effective implementation and adaptation to the specific needs of the rural setting.

Table 6: *Resource Optimization Matrix*

Stand ard Resource	Adapted Solution	Advantage
Digital pronunciation tools	Teacher-created audio recordings	No internet dependency
Commercial textbooks	Student-generated word banks	Cost-effective; enhances ownership

Note. All adaptations were developed to address resource limitations in rural educational settings. All theoretical references made by Santos, A., 2025

Using teacher-created audio instead of digital tools removes the need for the internet, making practice more accessible. Student. generated word banks replace expensive textbooks, promoting engagement and a sense of ownership. Both adaptations focus on practicality and learner involvement.

Results and Validation

The intervention yielded significant empirical outcomes, with quantitative data showing a 23% increase in vocabulary test scores and a 40% reduction in phonemic errors. Qualitative feedback indicated that 88% of students reported improved confidence, and teachers noted enhanced engagement during group activities. These results align with established theoretical principles, including Nation's (2013) emphasis on deliberate vocabulary learning and Derwing's (2015) findings on the effectiveness of targeted pronunciation practice, thereby validating the intervention's approach and outcomes.

Limitations and Future Directions

This scientific modeled proposal demonstrates that structured reading strategies, contexts, can significantly improve English language competencies, when adapted to resource-constrained.

The integration of theoretical frameworks, practical systems, and culturally responsive methodologies provides a verifiable model for similar educational settings.

Table 7: *Limitations and proposed solutions*

Limitation	Proposed Solution
Short-term implementation	Longitudinal studies across 2+ years
Limited digital integration	Pilot mobile-based learning modules

Note: the table clearly pairs each challenge with a practical solution.

The study highlights key limitations in duration and digital integration. Implementing longitudinal research and mobile-based modules could enhance learning outcomes and accessibility. These solutions address the immediate challenges and support sustained engagement.

Modeling and Validation of the Scientific Proposal

The modeling of educational initiatives at the fourth level requires careful consideration of their important qualities and theoretical foundations (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). This chapter presents a comprehensive project that integrates multiple educational procedures while maintaining its core pedagogical identity. The intervention, rolled out in a rural Ecuadorian school, demonstrated an 88% improvement rate among students who initially showed low productivity (85-90%). The proposal's multidimensional nature combines educational, psychopedagogical, and technological qualities to address complex learning challenges.

Multidimensional Educational Approaches

The intervention was designed with four core qualities that align with advanced educational programs. It incorporated a psychopedagogical approach, addressing both cognitive and affective dimensions of learning (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Additionally, it employed neurodidactic principles,

applying insights from neuroscience to enhance memory retention (Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2021). The intervention also featured a strong methodological component, systematizing instructional procedures to ensure reproducibility. Furthermore, it leveraged available technologies (TAC) to enhance learning, demonstrating a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to education.

Table 8: *Matrix of Educational Approaches in the Proposal*

Approach	Key Feature	Implementation Example	Theoretical Basis
Educational	Holistic development	Integrated language skills activities	Vygotsky (1978)
Psychopedagogical	Motivation strategies	Gamified vocabulary challenges	Ryan & Deci (2017)
Neurodidactic	Multisensory learning	Kinesthetic phoneme exercises	Sousa (2016)
Technological	Digital literacy	Audio recording for pronunciation	Mayer (2020)

Note. The table demonstrates how different theoretical frameworks informed specific intervention components. All theoretical references made by Santos, A., 2025

This table presents diverse educational approaches to language learning, each with a distinct focus. The educational approach emphasizes holistic development through integrated language activities, grounded in Vygotsky's theory. Psychopedagogical strategies use gamified challenges to boost motivation, based on Ryan & Deci's research. Neurotactin methods incorporate multisensory exercises to enhance retention, following Sousa’s principles. Technological tools, like audio

recordings, support digital literacy and pronunciation skills, aligned with Mayer's cognitive theory.

Interdisciplinary Integration

The proposal integrates three critical disciplines: linguistics, cognitive psychology, and educational technology. Linguistics informs phonemic awareness and vocabulary development, cognitive psychology guides understanding of memory and learning processes, and educational technology optimizes resource utilization. This integration is based on Jacobs' (2013) model for interdisciplinary curriculum design, adapted for second language acquisition contexts. The intervention's organizational structure consisted of a three-tiered model, with the macro level focusing on institutional planning and resource allocation, the next level on teacher training and material development, and the micro level on classroom implementation and assessment, ensuring a comprehensive and effective approach.

Table 9: *Organizational Structure of the Intervention*

Level	Responsible Party	Key Activities	Timeframe
Macro	School administration	Resource procurement	Weeks 1-2
Meso	Teacher trainers	Workshop implementation	Weeks 3-4
Micro	Classroom teachers	Strategy application	Weeks 5-16

Note. The three-tiered implementation structure ensured coordinated execution across administrative and instructional levels. All theoretical references made by Santos, A., 2025.

This table outlines a structured implementation plan across three levels. At the macro level, school administration handles resource procurement in the first two weeks. Teacher trainers lead workshops at the meso level during weeks three and four. Classroom teachers apply the strategies at

the micro level from weeks five to sixteen. This staged approach ensures organized coordination and gradual integration of the program.

Methodological Components

The methodology incorporated several key components, including curricular adaptations through modified content sequencing based on diagnostic results, didactic innovations featuring contextualized learning materials, and ludic elements such as game-based learning to enhance engagement. The multidimensional approach yielded significant improvements, with a 27% increase in productive vocabulary, a 45% reduction in phonological transfer errors, and a 32% improvement in reading fluency.

Qualitative validation through teacher interviews revealed enhanced ability to implement neurodidactic strategies, improved technological integration skills, and greater confidence in psychopedagogical approaches. The success of this intervention suggests that educational proposals should adopt interdisciplinary approaches, that neurodidactic principles can be effectively applied in low-resource settings, and that technological integration can be effective without being expensive.

These findings align with contemporary research in educational creativity (Robinson et al., 2022) while providing practical modification for rural contexts. This scientifically-grounded project demonstrates that comprehensive educational interventions, including psychopedagogical, neurodidactic, and technological qualities, can improve language learning effects. The model offers a replicable framework for similar educational preferences while maintaining flexibility for contextual adaptation.

Comprehensive Proposal Structure and Validation

Presentation of the Scientific Solution

This chapter presents a systematic scientific proposal for improving English language acquisition in rural schools, addressing all critical components of educational interventions in a systematic way. The proposal emerges from rigorous diagnostic research showing 85 to 90% of students with initial low performance and demonstrates an 88% improvement rate post-implementation (Santos, 2024).

Purpose and Objectives

The general purpose of this initiative is to develop and validate an integrated set of reading comprehension programs aimed at enhancing English vocabulary and pronunciation acquisition among 6th-grade students in resource-constrained educational settings. Specifically, the objectives are to implement three-tiered reading interventions (pre-, during-, and post-reading) adapted to rural school contexts, measure the impact on vocabulary retention and phonological awareness, and establish sustainable teacher training protocols for strategy implementation, ultimately ensuring effective and lasting educational outcomes.

Theoretical Foundation

The proposal's theoretical foundation is built upon four key pillars. Firstly, Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes the importance of collaborative learning, highlighting the role of social interaction in cognitive development. Second, Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011) guides the design of instructional materials, ensuring that learners' cognitive load is managed effectively. Then, the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) informs the selection of language input, ensuring it is comprehensible and promotes language acquisition. Finally, Neuroeducation Principles

(Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2021) provide insights into optimizing learning processes based on neuroscientific research, further enhancing the proposal's effectiveness.

Table 10: *Theoretical Framework Integration*

Theory	Application	Expected Outcome
Sociocultural	Peer-assisted learning	Enhanced ZPD utilization
Cognitive Load	Chunked vocabulary sets	Reduced working memory overload
Input Hypothesis	Leveled readers	i+1 comprehensible input
Neuroeducation	Multisensory activities	Improved retention

Note. ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development. Theoretical applications were tailored to the rural classroom context. All theoretical references made by Santos, A., 2025.

The table shows different learning theories and how they are applied in practice. Socio-cultural theory uses peer-assisted learning to make the most of the ZPD Cognitive Load theory breaks vocabulary into chunks to ease memory demands. Input Hypothesis applies leveled readers for understandable language input. Neuroeducation uses multisensory activities to help learners remember better.

Proposal Characteristics

The proposal's key features include contextual adaptability through the use of local cultural references, scalability via a modular design that accommodates varying resource levels, and sustainability ensured by embedding teacher training within the implementation. Guiding principles emphasize equity in access to quality instruction, evidence-based pedagogical decisions, and continuous feedback loops for improvement. The proposal's structure consists of three interconnected systems: the Instructional System, which includes lesson plans and activities; the

Assessment System, which encompasses progress monitoring tools; and the Support System, which provides teacher professional development. These components work together to create a comprehensive and effective educational framework.

Table 11: Component Interaction Matrix

System	Input	Process	Output
Instructional	Diagnostic data	Strategy implementation	Learning gains
Assessment	Performance data	Analysis and feedback	Adjustment recommendations
Support	Teacher needs	Training workshops	Enhanced pedagogical capacity

Note. The three interconnected systems formed the operational framework for the intervention program. All theoretical references made by Santos, A., 2025

The table outlines how different systems use input to produce results. The instructional system applies diagnostic data through strategies to achieve learning gains. The assessment system analyzes performance data and provides feedback for improvement. The support system addresses teacher needs with training workshops. Overall, each system links inputs and processes to clear educational outcomes.

Implementation Requirements

The execution of the program requires some essential conditions to ensure its effectiveness. Firstly, a minimum teacher commitment of 2 hours per week for training is very necessary. Additionally, basic materials such as paper and writing tools are required. Administrative support for scheduling flexibility is also important. To evaluate the program's quality, three key criteria must be

met, first, fidelity of implementation, which should be at least 80% monthly progress monitoring to track student advancement. Second, cultural relevance of materials to ensure the program's content is necessary and engaging for the students.

Practical Demonstrations

Sample Intervention

For this Activity, "Market Day Vocabulary", the objective is to practice food-related lexicon, the process consist of pre-reading and picture matching with local market items, during-reading the dialogues between vendors and customers, and post-reading when they can create ideal market lists. The principal tool is the dynamic Pronunciation Rubric. About the dimensions, there is the phoneme accuracy, word stress, and intelligibility. For the implementation framework is phased by implementing approach, which includes first, the preparation Phase (Weeks 1-2) when it is necessary teacher training and material development. After there is the execution phase (Weeks 3-12) when the strategy implementation and weekly progress checks is carried out. Finally, the consolidation phase (Weeks 13-16) for a final assessments and sustainability planning.

Resource Optimization

Table 12: *Resource Allocation Strategy*

Resource Type	Available	Adapted Solution
Technological	Limited	Teacher-created audio devices
Spatial	Small classrooms	Rotational learning stations
Temporal	45-min sessions	Micro-lesson design

Note: These adaptations ensure effective learning despite resource constraints.

The table shows how limited resources are adapted for learning. For technology, teachers use

their own audio devices. Small classrooms are managed with a rotational learning station. Short 45-minute sessions are handled through micro-lesson designs. These solutions help make the most of available resources.

Beneficiary Analysis

For direct beneficiaries, who are the students, it is improved language competencies; meanwhile for the teachers, there is enhanced pedagogical skills, and for the schools, there are strengthened English programs. For indirect beneficiaries, which are families, it is an increased educational engagement and expanded cultural capital.

Conclusions

The intervention conclusively demonstrated its effectiveness by achieving its core objectives. It successfully implemented adaptable reading strategies across multiple classrooms, resulting in statistically significant improvements in students' vocabulary acquisition. Furthermore, the high teacher adoption rate of 89% confirms that the training protocols were not only effective but also sustainable, proving that the program was a practical success in the rural Ecuadorian school context, meeting its predefined goals.

The study provides strong empirical validation for the theoretical frameworks that guided the intervention. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development was effectively operationalized through peer-assisted learning, while Krashen's i+1 input hypothesis informed appropriate vocabulary selection. Nation's principles of spaced repetition were also confirmed to enhance long-term retention, demonstrating that these established theories can be powerfully applied to design effective language acquisition strategies in resource-limited educational environments.

Quantitative data revealed substantial gains across all measured domains, with vocabulary scores increasing by 22.8% and pronunciation skills improving by 81%. These impressive figures were complemented by a 41% rise in student engagement. Crucially, qualitative data from teacher interviews reinforced these findings, reporting increased student participation and confidence. This convergence of data from multiple sources strongly validates the overall effectiveness of the reading comprehension strategy intervention.

A key success was the intervention's adaptability to the low-resource context. The model proved highly effective by relying entirely on locally-developed materials, achieving a 100% utilization rate. This approach resulted in 92% of teachers reporting the strategies as feasible to implement and 85% of students approving of the cultural relevance of the materials. This demonstrates that effective educational innovation does not necessarily depend on expensive, imported resources but on thoughtful, contextual adaptation.

The intervention demonstrates strong potential for scalability beyond the initial study. Its design requires minimal infrastructure, offers flexible session lengths, and features a modular structure that allows for easy adaptation across different grade levels. These characteristics make the program a promising candidate for broader application by educational policymakers seeking cost-effective and practical solutions to improve English language acquisition in various resource-limited settings across Ecuador and potentially other similar contexts.

Despite its successes, the study identified specific limitations that point to necessary future research. The primary gaps include a lack of data on long-term vocabulary retention beyond six months and an undefined threshold for optimal technology integration in rural classrooms.

Addressing these questions is essential for fully understanding the intervention is enduring impact and for guiding its future evolution in an increasingly digital world.

Recommendations

For school administrators, it is recommended to institutionalize support for this successful intervention. This should include allocating a minimum of two hours weekly for dedicated teacher professional development, allowing them to master and adapt the strategies. Furthermore, establishing peer observation protocols can foster collaborative improvement, and prioritizing the acquisition of basic audio devices will directly support the pronounced gains in student pronunciation skills observed in the study.

Classroom teachers should faithfully implement the three-phase reading model (pre-, during-, and post-reading) while making necessary cultural adaptations. It is crucial to maintain systematic vocabulary logs to track individual student progress in lexical acquisition, building on the significant gains documented. Additionally, incorporating at least two multisensory activities weekly is recommended to reinforce phonological awareness and further enhance the impressive 81% improvement in pronunciation skills.

The Ministry of Education should act to scale the proven benefits of this intervention. A key recommendation is to integrate these validated reading strategies into the national English language curriculum guidelines. This should be supported by developing specialized regional teacher training programs focused on rural context adaptations and by allocating special funding streams for low-tech teaching resources in underserved areas, ensuring equitable access to effective pedagogical tools.

An immediate next step for researchers is to conduct longitudinal studies spanning two or more years to assess the long-term retention of vocabulary, which was identified as a key limitation. Concurrently, investigations should determine the optimal implementation intensity, such as the most beneficial number of minutes per week, to maximize learning outcomes and provide clearer guidelines for teachers and policymakers regarding efficient time investment.

Medium-term research should explore the transfer effects of these reading strategies to other language domains, namely writing and speaking skills, to gain a holistic understanding of their impact. There is also a critical need to develop and validate standardized assessment tools specifically designed for rural EFL contexts, as existing measures may not fully capture the progress and unique challenges faced by students in these settings.

To address contextual limitations, future studies should replicate this research in diverse rural environments within Ecuador, such as coastal, mountain, and Amazonian regions, to test the model's universality. Additionally, its applicability and effectiveness should be examined among indigenous language-speaking populations, ensuring that educational innovations are inclusive and equitable for all students, regardless of their linguistic background.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A

Pre-test of English
Vocabulary Level: A1

Duration: 20-30 minutes
Objective*: To evaluate students' vocabulary knowledge in English before implementing reading comprehension strategies.*

Part 1: Complete the sentences with the correct word. (10 points) Complete the sentences using the words from the list below. Some words may be used more than once.

Words*: book, dog, apple, jump, car, blue, happy, teacher, ball, friend*

1. I have a _____in my backpack. It's a book about animals.
2. My _____is very smart and always listens to me.
3. The_____ is very fast. It takes me to school every day.
4. Sally likes to _____in the park with her friends.
5. I eat an _____every morning for breakfast.
6. My _____is very nice and helps me with my homework.
7. The sky is _____today, there are no clouds.
8. The _____is kind and teaches us math.
9. I like to play with my _____during recess.
10. He is _____because he got a new bike for his birthday.

Part 2: Match the words with their correct definition. (10 points)
Match each word with its correct definition.

Words:

1. House
2. Teacher
3. School
4. Cat5. Fruit

Definitions:

A. A place where you live.
B. A place where children go to learn.
C. A kind of animal that purrs and is kept as a pet.
D. A person who helps students learn.
E. Something that grows on trees or plants and is good for you.

Part 3: Multiple-choice questions. (10 points)
Choose the correct answer.

1. What is the opposite of "big"?

a) Tall
b) Small
c) Heavy
d) Fast

2. What does the word “run” mean?

a) To swim
b) To walk slowly
c) To move quickly on your feet
d) To sleep

3. Which of these is a color?

a) Table
b) Green
c) Jump
d) Pizza

4. Which word describes a feeling?

a) Eat
b) Sad
c) Jump
d) Car

5. What is a "ball" used for?

a) To read
b) To play
c) To eat
d) To draw

6. Which of the following is a fruit?

a) DogApple
b) Car
c) Chair

7. What does "book" mean?

a) A machine
b) A place to sit
c) A collection of pages with information or stories
d) A type of food

8. What is a "friend"?

a) A teacher
b) A pet
c) A person you like and spend time with
d) A fruit

9. Where do you go to study?

a) House
b) School
c) Store
d) Park

10. Which word is related to animals?

a) Dog
b) School
c) Pencil
d) Book

Part 4: Answer the questions in English. (5 points)
Answer the following questions in English.

1. What is your favorite color?

2. Do you like to read books? Why or why not?

3. What is your favorite animal? Why?

4. What do you do after school?

5. What is your favorite food?

Instructions for the Post-test:
When implementing the post-test, follow the same format, ensuring the vocabulary words and activities are similar but adjusted based on the expected improvement after the intervention. By comparing the results, you can observe the students' progress in terms of vocabulary knowledge.

This exam will help you evaluate both the initial vocabulary knowledge of the students and their ability to use the words in specific contexts. The post-test will assist in measuring any changes in their vocabulary level after implementing the reading comprehension strategies.

ANNEX B

Survey on Reading Comprehension Strategies and Vocabulary Acquisition

Instruccions:

Below you will find several questions about the reading comprehension strategies we have used in class. Please answer honestly. Your answers will help us improve the way we teach English.

Note: *Responses will be kept confidential.*

Mark with an "X" the option that best reflects your opinion. (1 = Strongly disagree | 5 = Strongly agree)

STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
1. Reading activities have helped me learn new words in English.					
2. I can remember more English words after reading activities.					

3. The pre-reading activities helped me to better understand the texts.					
4. Post-reading activities (such as discussing the text) helped me to better remember the vocabulary.					
5. I feel more confident using new English words after reading activities.					
6. Reading comprehension strategies are fun and motivate me to learn more.					
7. I feel more confident speaking English after the reading activities.					
8. Reading strategies have helped me improve my English pronunciation.					
9. The reading activities in class are useful for improving my English in general.					
10. I prefer reading activities to other methods of vocabulary learning.					

ANNEX C

Briefly answer the following questions.

1. ¿ Which reading strategy did you find most helpful for learning new words? Why?

2. Are there any reading activities that didn't help you learn vocabulary? Why?

3. How do you feel about your ability to remember vocabulary after doing the reading activities?

4. Which part of the reading activities do you like best (pre-reading, reading, post-reading)? Why?

5. Do you have any suggestions for improving the reading activities we do in class?

Final Instructions:

Thank you for your participation! Your opinion is very important for improving English teaching in our class.