



## **UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**

**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

### **TITLE**

**IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO, AT “FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO” HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015.**

Thesis as a previous requirement to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Specialization

### **AUTHOR**

**ERIKA LUCÍA GONZÁLEZ CARRIÓN**

### **THESIS ADVISOR**

**DRA.MG CARMEN ENITH DÁVILA VEGA**

**LOJA-ECUADOR**

**2016**

## CERTIFICATION

DRA. MG. CARMEN ENITH DÁVILA VEGA, PROFESSOR OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL DE LOJA,

### CERTIFIES:

The present research work entitled **IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO, AT “FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO” HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015**, under the responsibility of the undergraduate student: ERIKA LUCÍA GONZÁLEZ CARRIÓN has been thoroughly revised and fully analyzed; therefore, I authorize the presentation of the thesis for the pertinent legal aims.

Loja, January 2016



Dra. Mg. Carmen Dávila Vega  
THESIS ADVISOR

## AUTORÍA

Yo, ERIKA LUCÍA GONZÁLEZ CARRIÓN, declaro ser la autora de esta tesis y expresamente eximo a la Universidad Nacional de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales por el contenido de la misma.

Adicionalmente, acepto y autorizo a la Universidad Nacional de Loja, la publicación de mi tesis in el Repositorio Institucional – Biblioteca virtual.

Los resultados del trabajo de investigación, los criterios, análisis, conclusiones y recomendaciones expuestas en la presente tesis, son de exclusiva responsabilidad de la autora. Estos pueden ser usados como un recurso para cualquier tipo de investigación.

**Autora:** Erika Lucía González Carrión

**Firma:** Erika / González / Carrión

**C.I:** 1105820953

**Fecha:** Loja, enero de 2016

**Loja - Ecuador**

**CARTA DE AUTORIZACIÓN DE TESIS POR PARTE DEL AUTOR PARA LA CONSULTA, REPRODUCCIÓN PARCIAL O TOTAL, Y PUBLICACIÓN ELECTRÓNICA DEL TEXTO COMPLETO.**

Yo, Erika Lucía González Carrión declaro ser la autora de este trabajo de tesis titulada: **IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO, AT “FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO” HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015;** como requisito para optar al grado de Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación, mención Idioma Inglés; autorizo al Sistema Bibliotecario de la producción intelectual de la Universidad a través de la visibilidad de su contenido de la siguiente manera con el Repositorio Digital Institucional: Los usuarios pueden consultar el contenido de este trabajo en el RDI, en las redes de información del país y del exterior, con las cuales tenga convenio la Universidad.

La Universidad Nacional de Loja, no se responsabiliza por el plagio o copia de la tesis que realice un tercero.

Para constancia de esta autorización, en la ciudad de Loja a los veintidós días del mes de enero de dos mil dieciséis, firma el autor.

**Firma:** Erika González Carrión

**Autora:** Erika Lucía González Carrión

**Cédula:** 1105820953

**Dirección:** Loja- Bernardo Valdiviezo e Imbabura

**Correo electrónico:** erikalucia@hotmail.es

**Teléfono:** 0993372681

**DATOS COMPLEMENTARIOS**

**Director de tesis:** Dra. Mg. Carmen Dávila Vega

**Tribunal de grado**

Dra. Silvana Isabel Trujillo Ojeda

**PRESIDENTA**

Lcda. Mg. Sc. María Patricia Rodríguez Ludeña **VOCAL**

Lcda. Mg. Sc. Miriam Eucevia Troya Sánchez **VOCAL**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My deepest thanks to the Universidad Nacional de Loja, to the English Language Department, its coordinator and teachers who gave me the opportunity to study and finish my studies.

Similarly to Unidad Educativa “Fernando Suárez Palacio”, its representatives, teachers and students for allowing me, the development of this research work.

Finally, my honest gratitude to Dra. Mg. Carmen Dávila Vega, who has given me all the support as my thesis advisor, thus, I have been able to finish this research work.

**THE AUTHOR**

## **DEDICATION**

I want to dedicate this work to God, to my dear mother Lucía, to my sister Eyllin, to my nephew Juan Carlos, and to my aunts and uncles who were the best supports and who have given me strength to work every moment I needed. They all have offered me the inspiration to finish one of the main goals in my life, to obtain my bachelor's degree.

ERIKA LUCÍA

## MATRIZ DE ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO

ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN											
BIBLIOTECA: Área de la Educación, el Arte y la Comunicación											
TIPO DE DOCUMENTO	AUTOR / NOMBRE DEL DOCUMENTO	FUENTE	FECHA/AÑO	ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO						OTRAS DESAGREGACIONES	OTRAS OBSERVACIONES
				NACIONAL	REGIONAL	PROVINCIA	CANTÓN	PARROQUIA	BARRIOS COMUNIDAD		
TESIS	<b>ERIKA LUCÍA GONZÁLEZ CARRIÓN</b> IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO, AT "FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO" HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015	UNL	2016	ECUADOR	ZONA 7	LOJA	LOJA	EL VALLE	EL CARIGÁN	CD	Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación, mención Idioma Inglés



## THESIS OUTLINE

- i. COVER PAGE
- ii. CERTIFICACIÓN
- iii. AUTORÍA
- iv. CARTA DE AUTORIZACIÓN
- v. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
- vi. DEDICATION
- vii. ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN
- viii. MAPA GEOGRÁFICO Y CROQUIS
- ix. THESIS OUTLINE
  - a. TITLE
  - b. RESUMEN  
ABSTRACT
  - c. INTRODUCTION
  - d. LITERATURE REVIEW
  - e. MATERIALS AND METHODS
  - f. RESULTS
  - g. DISCUSSION
  - h. CONCLUSIONS
  - i. RECOMMENDATIONS
  - j. BIBLIOGRAPHY
  - k. ANNEXES  
INDEX

**a. TITLE**

IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO, AT “FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO” HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015.

## **b. RESUMEN**

El objetivo general de este trabajo de investigación fue mejorar las habilidades de lectura mediante la implementación de materiales auténticos con los estudiantes del 2<sup>do</sup> año de bachillerato de la Unidad Educativa “Fernando Suárez Palacio”, durante el año lectivo 2014-2015. Los métodos científico, descriptivo, analítico-sintético y estadístico sirvieron para realizar el análisis y procesar la información. Se aplicaron pruebas y cuestionarios a veinte y tres estudiantes antes y después del plan de intervención para determinar su nivel de lectura en Inglés y su percepción del uso de materiales auténticos en clase. Los resultados demostraron que los estudiantes incrementaron notablemente su nivel al relacionar palabras con sonidos y asociarlas con imágenes, hacer rimas, resumir e inferir información y leer sin titubear. Como conclusión, la aplicación de materiales auténticos contribuyó a mejorar el nivel de Inglés y motivó a los estudiantes a leer dentro y fuera de clases y en contextos reales efectivamente.

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research work was to improve reading skills through the implementation of authentic materials among 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio”, during the school year 2014-2015. The scientific, the descriptive, the analytic-synthetic and the statistical methods helped to make the analysis and process the information. Tests and questionnaires were applied to twenty-three students at the beginning and at the end of the intervention plan to determine their reading level in English and their perception of the use of authentic materials in the classroom. The results demonstrated that students increased noticeably their level by relating words with sounds and associating them with pictures, making rhymes, summarizing and inferring information and reading without hesitation. As a conclusion, the application of reading authentic materials contributed to improve the reading level in English and motivated students to read inside and outside the classroom and in real contexts effectively.

### **c. INTRODUCTION**

Reading is an essential skill that should be practiced by people all over the world. However, in many educative institutions reading in English is not a done at all by students because it is not a subject of their interest and the classes are developed without innovative or creative materials. Furthermore, students do not feel comfortable reading in the new language, and they are afraid about mispronouncing the different words and become like a foolish in front of the classmates. Students face serious problems in reading aspects like: phonics, in which learners are not able to make connections between sounds and letter symbols; in phonemic awareness they can not make any kind of rhymes or write prefixes or suffixes; in vocabulary, they have difficulties in labeling pictures; in reading comprehension, they have trouble in summarizing or inferring information; and, in fluency, they hesitate when reading a text aloud.

For the reasons mentioned above, it was necessary to determine how does the use of authentic materials improve the reading skill?

This work was chosen in order to improve and motivate students to read in the foreign language, using authentic materials, which provide students a real reading practice and a real contact with the language. When learners study with materials that are of their interest, they pay attention and consequently they learn more than with normal resources.

In order to accomplish with the main objective of this research work, the following specific objectives were stated: to look for the theoretical references

about authentic materials as a resource to improve the reading skill among the students; to diagnose the weaknesses students show in reading written texts in English; to design an intervention plan with a compilation of authentic materials; to apply that compilation of materials as a teaching tool to solve the limitations on English of students; and to evaluate the usefulness that authentic materials had on students' reading skill.

The main methods used in this action research work were: the descriptive method, which was suitable to describe the different phases of this research work and the authentic materials applied. The scientific method, helped to make a basis of the theory about the two variables. The analytic-synthetic method was employed to analyze and interpret the obtained results of the tests and questionnaires. It also helped to draw up the conclusions. Finally, the statistical method permitted to make possible the quantitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the tests and the qualitative data from the questionnaires, observations and the teacher's diary.

The present research work is organized in the following way: at the beginning, there is the *abstract*, in this part it is written a summary of the research, with its main objective, the methods used and the main results and conclusions. Then, it is the *introduction*, which contains the contextualization of the problem, the central problem and the reasons why the theme was chosen, the specific objectives of the study, the used methodology and finally the content of the thesis. After that, there is the *literature review*, which contains detailed information about the two variables that are object of this research. In *materials*

*and methods*, it is included the design of the research, methods used, techniques and instruments, procedures, the population and the resources that were used for the research. The *results* contain the data gathered from the instruments, presented qualitatively and quantitatively in tables, graphics and with a logical analysis. The *discussion* includes the collected data during the intervention plan in the high school. At the end, the *conclusions* reported the main improvements of the intervention plan and the *recommendations* contained some suggestions for future similar studies.

## **d. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Reading**

#### **Definition**

According to Swaffar (2010), three prominent ideas emerge as most critical for understanding what "to read" means:

- Reading is a process undertaken to reduce uncertainty about meanings a text conveys.
- The process results from a negotiation of meaning between the text and its reader.
- The knowledge, expectations, and strategies a reader uses to uncover textual meaning all play decisive roles way the reader negotiates with the text's meaning.

Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text. S. Pang, Muaka, B. Bernhardt, & L. Kamil (2003).

Based on those definitions, reading is not a simple task, as it does not only involve the act of taking a book and reading it. It implies doing a set of activities in our brain and relating symbols and signs to give meaning to a text. Moreover, it

is also related with comprehension and it requires consequently the use of background knowledge.

### **Importance of Reading**

Guthrie (2001), in an article denominated: “*Contexts for Engagement and Motivation in Reading*” explains that reading is a merger of motivation and thoughtfulness. Reading is important because if it engages readers, they seek to understand; they enjoy learning and they believe in their reading abilities. They are mastery oriented, intrinsically motivated, and have self-efficacy.

Guthrie adds in his article that classroom contexts can promote engaged reading. For that reason, (...) teachers create contexts for engagement when they provide prominent knowledge goals, real-world connections to reading, meaningful choices about what, when, and how to read, and interesting texts that are familiar, vivid, important, and relevant.

S. Pang. *et.al* (2003) express in their book that a person reads a text to learn to find out information, to be entertained, to reflect or as religious practice. The purpose for reading is closely connected to a person’s motivation for reading. It will also affect the way a book is read. We read a dictionary in a different way from the way we read a novel. In the classroom, teachers need to be aware of their students’ learning needs, including their motivation for reading and the purpose that reading has in their lives.

Analyzing the concepts before, teachers should motivate students to read in the foreign language by introducing materials and resources based on their needs and interests, thus, learners keep engaged during the learning process.

## **Reading Aspects**

In accordance with Tyner (2012), author of the book “The Literacy Jigsaw Puzzle”, there are five aspects to the process of reading: **phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency**. These five aspects work together to create the reading experience. As children learn to read they must develop skills in all five of these areas in order to become successful readers.

### **Phonics**

Phonics is the connection between sounds and letter symbols. It is also the combination of these sound-symbol connections to create words. Without phonics, words are simply a bunch of squiggles and lines on a page. If you think about it, letters are arbitrary. There is nothing innately bed-like about the written word “bed”. It is simply the collection of letters and corresponding sounds that we agree constitute the word “bed”. Learning to make that connection between the individual sounds that each letter represents and then putting those together is essential to understanding what that funny squiggle means.

There are a number of ways that phonics can be taught because there is a variety of ways to apply this aspect when reading. Each approach allows the reader to use phonics to read and learn new words in a different way. Synthetic phonics builds words from the ground up. In this approach readers are taught to first connect letters to their corresponding phonemes (sound units) and then to blend those together to create a word. Analytic phonics, on the other hand, approaches words from the top down. A word is identified as a whole unit and

then its letter-sound connections are parsed out. Analogy phonics uses familiar parts of words to discover new words. Finally, phonics through spelling focuses on connecting sounds with letters in writing. All of these approaches can be taught and used independently or in combination to help young readers learn to identify new words.

Based on this definition, phonics could be taught by teaching how to connect letters with sounds, in order words not to be only a set of symbols.

### **Phonemic Awareness**

Tyner defines Phonemic awareness as just one aspect of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness is closely related to phonics because both involve the connection between sounds and words. While phonics is the connection between sounds and letters, phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are created from phonemes (small units of sound in language). These may seem like the same thing, but there is a subtle difference in the two. Phonics is used only in written language because it involves letters. Phonemes are sounds only. While they can be represented using letters, they can also be simply the auditory sounds of words. Phonemes are most often learned before a child begins to read because they are centered on the sounds of language rather than written words.

Phonemes are important while reading as they involve more the sounds and the words that are created from phonemes. Thus, this aspect should be practiced in the school setting to have better readers.

## **Vocabulary**

In order to read words we must first know them. It would be really frustrating and unproductive to read a book if all of the words were unfamiliar. As children become stronger, more advanced readers they not only learn to connect their oral vocabularies (the words we know when they are spoken) to their reading vocabularies (the words we know when they are used in print) they also strengthen each of these areas by adding new words to their repertoires. Vocabulary development is an ongoing process that continues throughout one's "reading life".

In accordance with the same author mentioned above, there are two primary ways of teaching and learning new vocabulary words. The first is explicit instruction, which involves someone telling the reader how a word is pronounced and what its meaning is. That "someone" might be a teacher, a dictionary, a vocabulary guide or any other resource offering definitions and pronunciations.

The second one is context clues, which are the "hints" contained in a text that help a reader figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. They include other words in a sentence or paragraph, text features (ie. bold print, italics), illustrations, graphs and charts. Context clues are basically any item in the text that points to the definition of a new word.

Taking into account the given definition, if students have a good knowledge of vocabulary, they would be able to understand a written text by asking for help to another person or by using hints found in the same text.

## **Fluency**

Fluency is a reader's ability to read with speed, accuracy and expression. Thus, it requires the person to combine and use multiple reading skills at the same time. While fluency is most often measured through oral readings, good readers also exhibit this skill when they are reading silently. Consequently, the ability to move through a piece of text at a fluid pace while evoking the meaning and feeling of it demonstrates the readers' fluency.

Fluency is intimately tied to comprehension. A booklover must be able to move quickly enough through a text to develop meaning. If the person is bogged down reading each individual word, then he or she will not be able to create an overall picture in his or her mind of what the text is saying. Even if the reader is able to move rapidly through a text, if he or she cannot master the expression associated with the words, the meaning of it will be lost.

Based on the definition given by Tyner, fluency is a complex activity that requires the use of innovative materials and activities with students, this way, learners read without hesitation or having any doubt.

## **Reading Comprehension**

Comprehension is what most people think reading is. This is because comprehension is the main reason why people read. It is the aspect of reading that all of the others serve to create. Reading comprehension means understanding what a text is all about. It is more than just understanding words in isolation. It is putting them together and using prior knowledge to develop meaning.

Reading comprehension is the most complex aspect of reading. It not only involves all of the other four aspects of reading, it also requires the reader to draw upon general thinking skills. When a reader is actively engaged with a text, he or she is asking and answering questions about the story and summarizing what has been read. Like vocabulary, reading comprehension skills develop and improve over time through instruction and practice.

Based on the given definition, reading comprehension requires the reader to put into practice all the reading aspects and to develop progressively a good critical thinking.

### **How to Teach Reading?**

Tucker (2006), mentions that teaching reading in EFL is different than the way native speakers are taught to read. While vocabulary is an important part of reading, teaching the reading skills of surveying, skimming, scanning, inference, predicting and guessing are just as important, is explained in the site.

It is also mentioned that in accordance with researches that have been carried out, a student's reading skill can be improved by focusing on teaching students skills in the following areas:

### **Vocabulary**

Many languages do not have the word building concepts that English does. In teaching vocabulary, the idea of "root" words and prefixes and suffixes helps students build a larger vocabulary quickly. Affixes (prefixes and suffixes) help us create a variety of words from one base word. When teaching new vocabulary, it

is important to point out these connections and we can quickly help students expand their vocabulary with the base words they already know.

### **Surveying, Scanning, Skimming**

In an academic setting, people rarely read an entire text word for word. More typical is that readers look at the contents of a book, the chapters, headings, subheadings, sidebars, pictures, illustrations, words in italics and bold type and dive in to find the needed information. These are the concepts of surveying, scanning and skimming, moving from the big ideas of a text down to the specific details. These are skills that EFL students don't usually have and must be taught.

### **Guessing and Predicting from Context**

Students need to be taught to guess the meanings of words based on the context of the reading and to draw from the reading an ability to predict what might happen in the next paragraph.

It is usually said that if students are encouraged to guess and predict while reading, their brains work harder and they use more skills to read and moreover they develop a critical thinking.

### **Reading techniques (Skimming and scanning)**

Lamb & Johnson (2001), claim that there are different styles of reading for different situations. If readers are exploring or reviewing, they might skim a document. If they're searching for information, they might scan for a particular word. Readers need to adjust their reading speed and technique depending on their purpose.

Web pages, novels, textbooks, manuals, magazines, newspapers, and mails are just a few of the things that people read every day. Effective and efficient readers learn to use many styles of reading for different purposes. Skimming, scanning, and critical reading are different styles of reading and information processing.

Lamb & Johnson (2001), explain both skimming and scanning in the following terms:

**Skimming** is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. When you read the newspaper, you're probably not reading it word-by-word, instead you're scanning the text. Skimming is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading. People often skim when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time.

There are many strategies that can be used when skimming. Some people read the first and last paragraphs using headings, summaries and other organizers that might be included as they move down the page or screen. You might read the title, subtitles, subheading, and illustrations. Consider reading the first sentence of each paragraph. This technique is useful when you're seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. It might be used to review graphs, tables, and charts.

Skimming really important, as it is helpful to find specific information in order not to read big texts. Investigator considers that this concept will fit perfectly in accordance with the students' needs and topics.

**Scanning** is a technique you often use when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. You search for key words or ideas. In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Scanning is also used when you first find a resource to determine whether it will answer your questions. Once you've scanned the document, you might go back and skim it.

When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Sometimes the author will put key ideas in the margin.

Techniques well used could help readers to improve their comprehension of texts, not only in English, but also in any other subject of their interest in any area of study.

### **How to Read Better and Faster?**

Dennis (2013), in an article mentions 5 tips in order to read better and faster in an efficient way.

**Pay attention** when you read and read as if it really matters. Most people read in the same way that they watch television, i.e. in an inattentive, passive way. Reading takes effort and the reader must make the effort. In addition, there are some simple methods that readers can use to pay better attention and get more information about the textbook they are reading.

At first, it is recommended to follow the tips below before reading the whole text:

- take 30 to 60 seconds.
- look over the title of the chapter.
- look at all the headings, subheadings and marked, italic or dark print.
- look at any pictures or illustrations, charts or graphs.
- quickly skim over the passage, reading the first and last paragraph and glancing at the first sentence of every other paragraph.

**Stop talking to yourself when you read.** People talk to themselves in 2 ways, by:

- vocalizing, which is the actual moving of your lips as you read, and
- subvocalizing, which is talking to yourself in your head as you silently read.

Both of these will slow you down to the point in which you find that you can't read any faster than you can speak. Speech is a relatively slow activity; for most, the average speed is about 250 WPM (words per minute).

Reading should be an activity that involves only the eyes and the brain. People should try to read by thinking of reading as if they were looking at a landscape, a panorama of ideas, rather than looking at the rocks at their feet.

**Read in thought groups.** Studies have shown that when we read, our eyes must make small stops along the line. Poor readers make many, many more fixations (eyestops) than good readers. Not only does this slow you down, but it inhibits comprehension because meaning is easier to pull from groups of words rather

than from individual words or even single letters. Try to read in phrases of three or four words, especially in complete clauses and prepositional phrases. Your mind may internalize them as if the whole phrase is like one big meaning-rich word.

**Don't keep re-reading the same phrases.** Poor readers habitually read and re-read the same phrase over and over again. This habit of making "regressions" doubles or triples reading time and often does not result in better comprehension. A single careful, attentive reading may not be enough for full comprehension, but is often more effective than constant regressions in the middle of a reading. It is best to work on paying closer attention the first time through.

**Vary your reading rate** to suit the difficulty and type of writing of the text. Poor readers always read at the same slow rate. An efficient reader speeds up for easier material and slows down for the hard. Some things cannot be read quickly at all. Legal material and very difficult text should be read slowly. Easier material and magazines and newspapers can be read quickly.

All these tips should be practiced everyday not only by students who are learning to read, but also by people in general. Following these tips could allow readers to acquire a lot of worthy knowledge.

### **Reading strategies**

The author Byrnes (2004), in "National Capital Language Resource Center", mentions that instructors can help their students become effective readers by teaching them how to use strategies before, during, and after reading.

**Before reading:** Plan for the reading task:

- Set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for
- Decide if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed
- Determine whether to enter the text from the top down (attend to the overall meaning) or from the bottom up (focus on the words and phrases)

**During and after reading:** Monitor comprehension:

- Verify predictions and check for inaccurate guesses
- Decide what is and is not important to understand
- Reread to check comprehension

**After reading:** Evaluate comprehension and strategy use

- Evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area
- Evaluate overall progress in reading and in particular types of reading tasks
- Decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task.

## **Authentic Materials**

### **Definition:**

Richards (2001) holds that authentic materials refer to the use in teaching of text, photographs, videos selection, and other teaching resource that were not specially prepared for educational purposes, but its use is worthy.

In accordance to a study carried out by Chávez (1998), learners enjoy dealing with authentic materials since they enable them to interact with the real language and its use.

### **Kinds of authentic materials**

Amjad (2004), states that there are some kinds of authentic materials like: newspapers, flyers, schedules, brochures, election materials, among others.

### **Newspapers**

While many workbooks have detailed simulations of newspaper content (e.g., TV schedules, help wanted sections), their use is limited to the pedagogical aim of the lesson. Students cannot use the content of the simulated newspaper.

### **Flyers, brochures and schedules**

Of all the types of informational brochures available, students seem to be most interested in reading the health-related brochures, and also in some classes also reported working with schedules, such as bus schedules. A bus schedule in a workbook may be a good approximation of what students see in their communities, but the actual bus schedule for the bus they take is much more relevant and immediately useful. Items such as bus schedules are available in most large stations or online.

### **Election Materials**

Campaign literature comes in many formats, from bumper stickers and simple handbills to longer statement pieces. These are available from candidates' and party campaign offices. Referendum issues are also useful, though these texts

are often complex and filled with legal jargon. These are very helpful in getting student to understand the structure of the ballot and the process of actually voting.

It is concluded that the sources of authentic materials that can be used in the classroom are infinite, but the most common are newspapers, magazines, TV programs, movies, songs and literature. However, it is important to say that one of the most useful tools to get those materials is the Internet. On the web, both teachers and students have access to several Facebook images, menus of restaurants, tourist guides, song lyrics, and biographies of artists, among many others.

### **Activities to apply with authentic materials**

Charles, Lawrence, Offner, & Vorland (2012) suggest various activities to apply when using authentic materials. Some of these can be used as a supplement to the question handout, or on their own, for variety. Here are four examples of effective activities with brief explanations:

**Word Search:** The students search for parts of speech such as adjectives on a given page or search for certain categories of things. An advantage of this activity is that students do not need identical copies of the authentic material.

**Crosswords:** The teacher prepares a crossword puzzle using words from the handout. The questions for the handout can also be presented as crossword clues. Crossword generating programs found on the Internet make this easy.

**Personalizing:** The students write a list of purchases for an imaginary party using a supermarket handout, plan a trip using a travel brochure or plan a meal with a menu. The students could also be asked to fill out a mail order form with

an imaginary order of purchases for family members, boyfriends, girlfriends, and themselves.

**Pair Practice:** The students ask and answer the printed questions on the handout and are encouraged to ask their own questions. The students can role-play the parts of customer and clerk either following a sample conversation provided by the teacher or making up their own.

All the activities mentioned in the previous lines are really useful and teachers could include them in their teaching process.

### **Purpose of authentic materials**

Jacobson, Degener, & Purcell-Gat (2013), express in their book: *“Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom”* that when selecting an authentic text for use in the classroom, teachers must keep the different purposes for using that text in mind.

The primary purpose for using the text should be the same as it would be outside of the classroom. This can be called the “real world purpose.” For example, if students are working with the Yellow Pages, they should be looking for information that they need, rather than for a list of spelling words chosen by the teacher.

The second purpose for using the text is the instructional purpose, which is typically the concern of the teacher. Many students do not have a lot of experience using the Yellow Pages on their own, and may not understand the structure. Teachers using them in their classrooms must be prepared to help students become more comfortable with the format of the text. This may include classroom

activities that are thought of as traditional, such as alphabetizing. Words in the text may illustrate a point the teacher has been trying to make (such as a spelling rule), and these can be highlighted.

However, the authors mentioned above say that in choosing to work with authentic materials, the “students’ real world purpose” always comes first. The instructional purpose should not drive the lesson, but should be part of the support structure the teacher puts in place to help students meet their primary goal of using the text in the same way they would outside of school. While a certain brochure may have vocabulary in it that a teacher wants to introduce to the class, the text’s pedagogical function must not replace the student’s own reasons for wanting to work with the text, such as answering a question students have about health.

Jacobson *et.al* (2013) add that the goal is to ensure that the text being read or written does serve a purpose or function besides a school-only one.

Based on what has been researched, it could be mentioned that the main purpose of authentic materials is to use the text in the way it is used outside the class, but also it should have an instructional goal, in accordance with students’ level and needs.

### **Advantages of authentic materials**

Berardo (2006), in an article denominated: “*The use of authentic materials in the teaching of reading*” says that the advantages that authentic materials have are immense. For example, an advantage of taking a complete newspaper or

magazine into classroom, rather than photocopies of an article, is that students can actually choose what they want to read.

The more the learner reads, the better reader he/she will become, not only improving his language level but also confidence. If the text interests the learner it can also be related to his own experiences. One of the aims of authentic materials is to help the student react in the same way L1 speakers react in their first language (L1). Learners who live in the target language environment, once outside of the classroom will encounter a variety of situations in which different reading purposes/skills are required.

Berardo adds that the main advantages of using authentic materials in the classroom include:

- Having a positive effect on student motivation;
- Giving authentic cultural information;
- Exposing students to real language;
- Relating more closely to students' needs;
- Supporting a more creative approach to teaching.

Analyzing the advantages suggested by the investigated author, the use of authentic materials inside the classroom ensures good results. Thus, many skills could be improved, not only reading. Some reasons for applying this material is that they engage students; they get students' attention and help them to know about culture abroad.

## **Authentic materials and reading skill**

Bymes (2004), stated that in order students to develop communicative competence in reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble (or be) real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. They must therefore be authentic in three ways.

**The reading material must be authentic:** It must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom.

When selecting texts for student assignments, the difficulty of a reading text is less a function of the language, and more a function of the conceptual difficulty and the task(s) that students are expected to complete. Simplifying a text by changing the language often removes natural redundancy and makes the organization somewhat difficult for students to predict. This actually makes a text more difficult to read than if the original were used.

**The reading purpose must be authentic:** Students must be reading for reasons that make sense and have relevance to them. "Because the teacher assigned it" is not an authentic reason for reading a text.

To identify relevant reading purposes, it is recommended to ask students how they plan to use the language they are learning and what topics they are interested in reading and learning about. Teachers should give students opportunities to choose their reading assignments, and encourage them to use the Internet and foreign language newsstands to find staff they would like to read.

**The reading approach must be authentic:** Students should read the text in a way that matches the reading purpose, the type of text, and the way people normally read. This means that reading aloud will take place only in situations where it would take place outside the classroom, such as reading for pleasure. The majority of students' reading should be done silently.

Based on the relations established between authentic materials and its importance to improve reading skill, it could be said that authentic materials help students to develop this skill and engage learners because of the authenticity and content. Students feel really motivated and enjoy learning to read with these resources.

## **e. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Materials**

In the present research work three kind of resources were used to carry out this work: The human resources were twenty-three students of second year of bachillerato, the researcher, who applied the intervention plan, and the teacher, who helped to monitor students' work. The thesis advisor was who supported by giving suggestions about the application of the intervention plan. In materials, the paper was used to give copies of the activities to students and to print the project,. The technical resources used were the computer, which was helpful to type the information, the printer to reproduce the worksheets and the Internet to research the information.

### **Design of the research**

The Action Research Model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) was the basis of this research work and was employed in order to understand, to evaluate and then to change a situation.

The model mentioned above implicated a self-reflective cycle of identifying a problem, planning a change, acting and observing the processes and consequences. This study was an educational research that permitted the practitioner to study and practice a variety of aspects making use of authentic materials with the purpose to improve the reading skill in the foreign language.

### **Methods**

The following general methods were used along the research:

**The scientific method** was effective to provide information about the two variables: reading skill and authentic materials. The data gathered was useful in order to design the data collection instruments, the plans and in order to interpret the results.

**The descriptive method** was suitable to describe the different phases of the study and the kind of resources used by the researcher. It assisted to explain and analyze how the implementation of authentic materials improved the reading skill.

**The Analytic-synthetic method** was employed to analyze and interpret the obtained results of the tests and questionnaires. It also helped to draw up the conclusions.

**The statistics method** permitted to make possible the quantitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the tests and the qualitative data from the observations and the teacher's diary. It also helped to tabulate the information into tables and figures and applied the formula to obtain the media  $x = \frac{\sum x}{n}$ .

### **Techniques and instruments**

With the aim to collect worthy information for the intervention plan it was necessary to design a pre and a post test, a pre and post questionnaire, observation checklists and a field diary, which were applied at the beginning, during and after intervention.

### **Tests**

Two kinds of tests were applied to the learners. At the beginning, a pre-test, which contained some questions guided to determine students' reading level of comprehension in the foreign language. It was related with the topics that students

have already studied. The same test was used as a post-test at the end of the intervention plan to determine if students have improved the reading skill with the implementation of authentic materials.

### **Observation**

Through the observation sheet, the researcher observed the students' performance during the lesson. It was also used to keep a record of what happened in class. Then, it helped to analyze the findings when the plan ended.

### **Questionnaires**

A questionnaire with five questions: 3 closed questions and 2 multiple-choice questions, was applied to obtain information from students about the development of reading inside the classroom. This instrument was applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention. The post questionnaire was used to collect students' progress about the reading skills developed during the intervention. Both questionnaires were conducted in class, so that the researcher gave a clear explanation to students and clarified the students' questions.

### **Field diary and notes**

The researcher used a diary to record what happened in each lesson. It helped to note down the findings during the intervention, significant events along the observation or particular situations that occurred in the intervention.

### **Population**

The students of second year of Bachillerato were who participated in the development of this action research. The participants of the study were 23 students between boys and girls. They were between sixteen and seventeen years

old. The students received five hours of English per week with a certified teacher.

Their English level was supposed to be A1.

## **f. RESULTS**

This section details how the objectives of the present action research work were accomplished.

Objective one: to look for the theoretical references about authentic materials as a resource to improve the reading skill. This objective was accomplished with the investigation of suitable theoretical references that supported the two variables of this research, which were reading skills and authentic materials taking into account the most useful information some authors provide.

Objective two was fulfilled with the pre test results that are shown below in Table 1 and permitted to diagnose the students' limitations in reading skills.

Objective three was accomplished with the design of the intervention plan, which included eight lessons that were developed during two months with second year students of bachillerato. Moreover, different activities were developed with students, which varied from crosswords, word searches and pair practices.

The fourth objective was accomplished through the application of reading authentic materials and the results gathered from questionnaires, presented in tables and figures 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The fifth objective was verified with the post-test findings that are shown below in table 7.

## Pre-Test Results

### Objective two of the research work.

To diagnose the difficulties that the students have in the categories of reading such as: vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension and fluency with 2nd year students of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school.

#### a. Table 1

*Pre-Test Scores of 2nd Year Students of Bachillerato in Reading Skill.*

Students' Code	P	V	PA	C	F	SCORE
	/2	/2	/2	/2	/2	/10
UEFSP001	0.4	1.6	1.5	1.6	0.5	5.6
UEFSP002	0.4	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.5	3
UEFSP003	0.8	1.2	0.5	1	0.5	4
UEFSP004	1.2	0.8	1	1.6	1	5.6
UEFSP005	0.4	0.8	0	1.2	0	2.4
UEFSP006	0.8	1.2	0	1.2	0.5	3.7
UEFSP007	0	0.8	0	0	0.5	1.3
UEFSP008	1.2	0.4	1.5	0.4	1	4.5
UEFSP009	0.4	1.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	3.4
UEFSP010	0	0.8	1	1.2	0.5	3.5
UEFSP011	1.2	0	1	1.4	0.5	4.1
UEFSP012	0.4	0.4	1	0	1	2.8
UEFSP013	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.4	1	3.9
UEFSP014	1.6	1.2	0	0.8	0.5	4.1
UEFSP015	1.2	1.6	0.5	1.4	0.5	5.2
UEFSP016	1.6	2	1.5	1.6	1	7.7
UEFSP017	0.4	0.8	1.5	0.8	0.5	4
UEFSP018	0.8	0.4	1.5	1.2	0.5	4.4
UEFSP019	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.8	1	5.3
UEFSP020	1.2	1.2	1	0.8	0.5	4.7
UEFSP021	0.4	1.2	1.5	1.2	1	5.3
UEFSP022	0.4	1.6	0.5	1.6	0.5	4.6
UEFSP023	1.2	0.8	1	0.4	1	4.4
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>0.95</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>4.24</b>

Note. UEFSP= Unidad Educativa "Fernando Suárez Palacio"; 001= Students' code; P= Phonics; V= Vocabulary; PA= Phonemic Awareness; C= Comprehension; F= Fluency

#### b. Interpretation and Analysis

It can be seen in table 1 that the total score mean in reading was 4,24 out of ten, which reflects that students have a considerable level in reading skills (see

grading scale p.127), which was below the expected level (8/10). In vocabulary, students got the highest score mean (0.99/2), and the lowest score mean was 0.65/2 for fluency. Those scores demonstrated the quite knowledge students have using isolated words, but not using them in context, that is, when they read a text they are not able to identify neither the correct meaning of words nor the appropriate pronunciation of them.

It means students have not been exposed to read materials constantly, in order to connect sounds and letter symbols, and relate them to make words. The little reading practice students were carrying out did not provide them enough tools to make inferences and short summaries, to make rhymes or new words. Consequently, it is inferred that students' reading problems are concerning to vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension and fluency.

Based on what has been said above, Tyner (2012) mentions that there are five aspects in the reading process: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency. As children learn to read, they must develop skills in all five of these areas in order to become successful readers, as all of them together are really important.

## Comparison of the Pre and Post Questionnaires Results

### Objective four of the research work

To apply a compilation of authentic materials as a teaching tool to reduce the lack of interest when reading texts in English among the students of second year of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school.

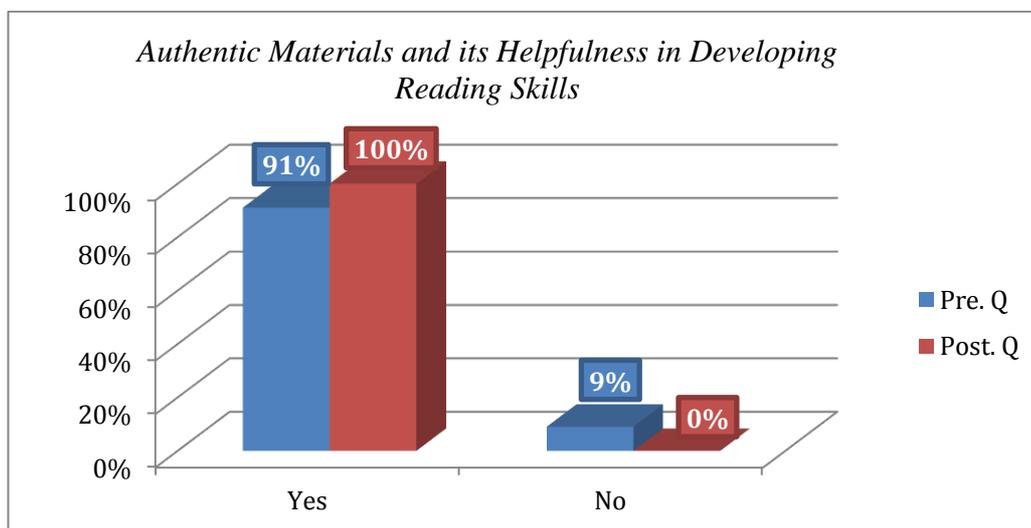
**Question 1:** Do you think that authentic materials help you to develop reading skills?

#### a. Table 2

*Authentic Materials and its Helpfulness in Developing Reading Skills*

	Pre- Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
<b>Yes</b>	21	91	23	100
<b>No</b>	2	9	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>

#### b. Figure 1



#### c. Interpretation and Analysis

The data collected from this question states that most of the students, (91%) considered that authentic materials helped them to improve their reading skill,

while only 9% of learners consider those materials were not helpful. It can be seen that the majority of students are conscious that those resources are worthy to improve reading even if they have not used them before the intervention plan. However, after the application of the materials all the students agreed that authentic materials such as: menus of restaurants, Facebook images, tourist guides, song lyrics, biographies of artists and magazine excerpts are actually helpful to improve their reading, since the teacher incorporated this material as part of the reading development every class. Thus, Berardo (2006), claims that learners who live in the target language environment, once outside of the classroom will encounter a variety of situations in which different reading purposes/skills are required and if they have had previous contact with “real” language they would not have serious difficulties at all.

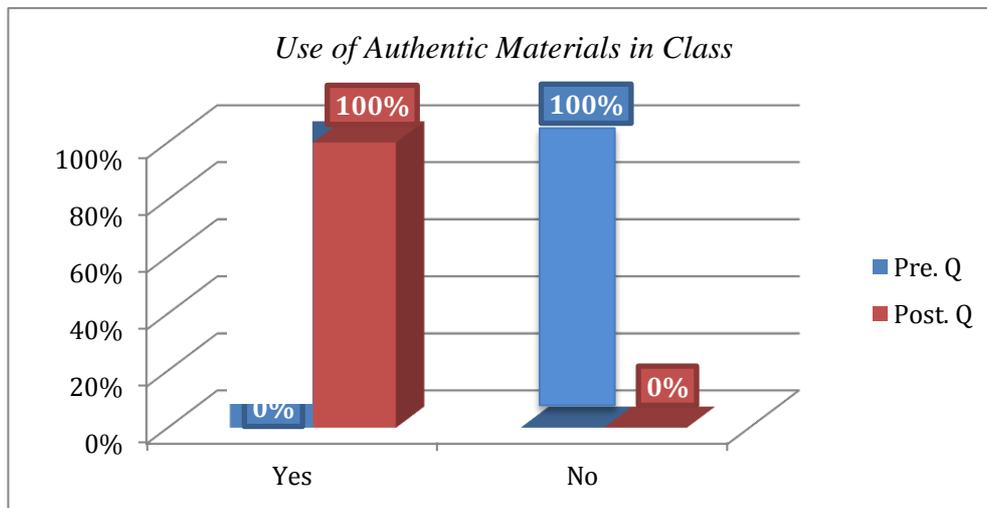
**Question 2:** Does the teacher use authentic materials to work in the English class?

**a. Table 3**

*Use of Authentic Materials in Class.*

	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
<b>Yes</b>	0	0	23	100
<b>No</b>	23	100	0	0
<b>Total</b>	23	100	23	100

**b. Figure 2**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

Based on the data given in the table above, it is evident that authentic materials are not taken into account before the intervention plan. It indicates that teachers only use the reading book provided. This way, students do not have significant opportunities to read other interesting materials in English.

Despite of that, after the intervention all the students claimed that those materials have been used at all by the teacher during the period of application and their interest by reading increased significantly to the 100%. Berardo (2006) claims that the chances to have a contact with “real language” or to know cultural information of countries abroad is reduced if authentic materials are not used in teaching at all.

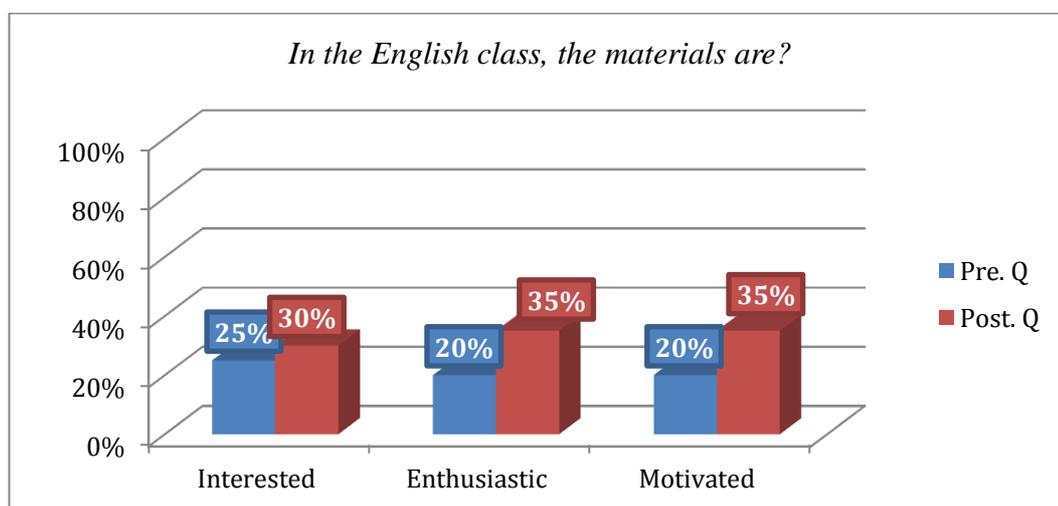
**Question 3:** In the English class, the materials are?

**a. Table 4**

*Motivation of Students Towards the Materials*

	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	F	%	f	%
<b>Interesting</b>	4	17	18	78
<b>Funny</b>	6	26	5	22
<b>Boring</b>	13	57	0	0

**b. Figure 3**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

The information gathered from question 3 is helpful to determine that before the intervention plan more than the half of learners (57%), considered that the materials used in the English class are boring. It seems that their teachers gave less importance to the preparation of innovative materials to get students' attention. However, after implementing the materials among the students, those perceptions changed significantly, since almost all of them considered authentic materials interesting because of the content, the colors contained, the short amount of words and its usefulness. In relation to what has been mentioned,

Jacobson, Degener, & Purcell-Gat (2013), claimed that teachers must be prepared to help students become more comfortable with the format of the text of authentic materials, it may include classroom activities that are thought not always as traditional, they should go further. Words in the text may illustrate a point the teacher has been trying to make (such as a spelling rule), and these can be highlighted in the resource.

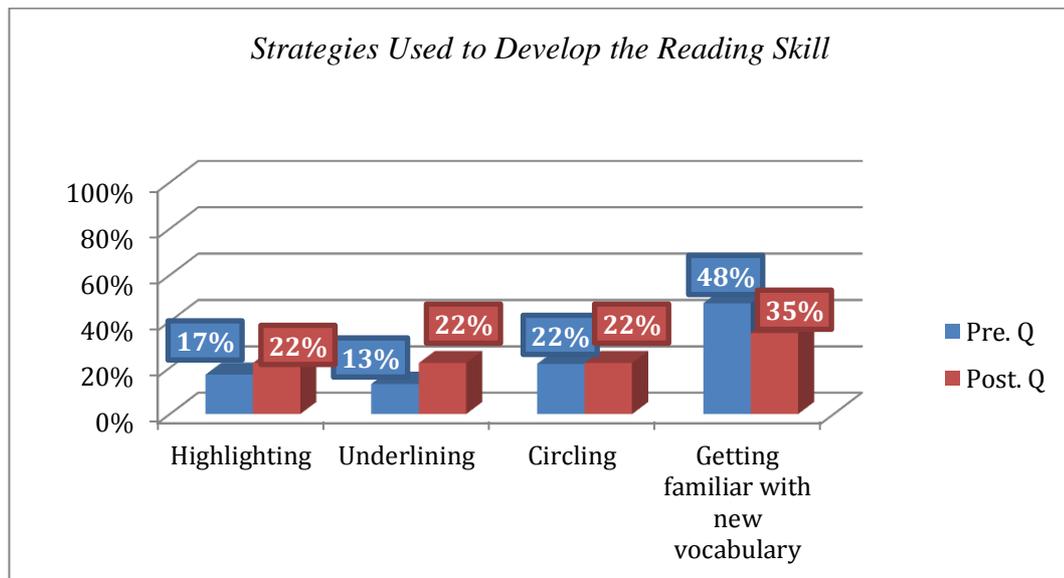
**Question 4:** Which strategies help you to develop the reading skill?

**a. Table 5**

*Strategies Used to Develop the Reading Skill*

	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Highlighting	4	17	5	22
Underlining	3	13	5	22
Circling	5	22	5	22
Getting familiar with new vocabulary	11	48	8	35

**b. Figure 4**



### c. Interpretation and Analysis

Based on the data gathered, it could be mentioned that students were not using enough strategies when reading a text in English. During the pre-intervention plan phase, several students (48%) mentioned they only get familiar with new vocabulary, leaving apart other strategies like highlighting, circling or underlining, reducing the chances to improve reading and read effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, after the intervention plan, the same indicator of the pre questionnaire decreased from 48% to 35% of students. However, other strategies increased in short amounts from the beginning to the end (5-8%). Therefore, Lamb & Johnson, (2001) stated that if reading strategies are used when reading large volumes of information, they may be more practical than reading the whole texts. Effective readers use them and process messages and information of different kinds easily.

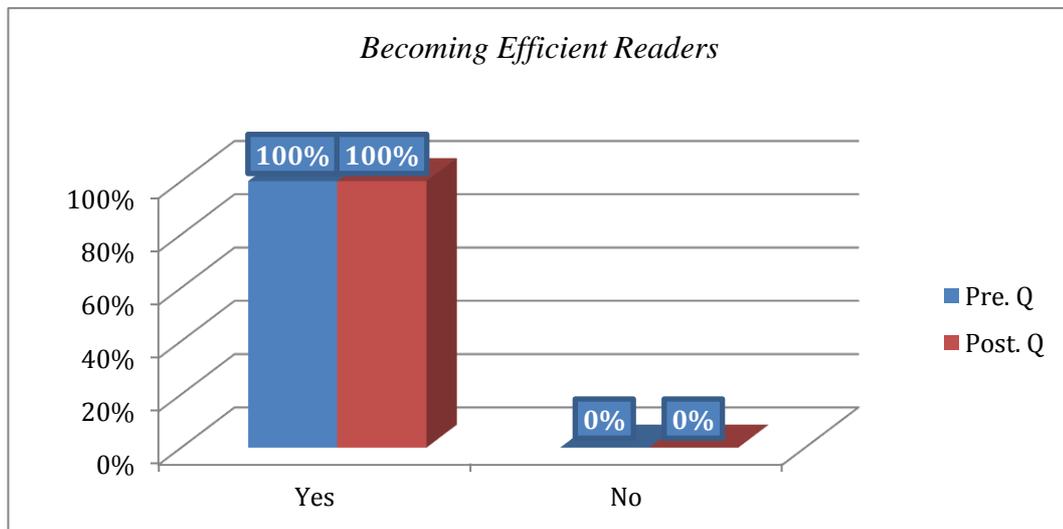
**Question 5:** Would you like to learn to read in English efficiently?

#### a. Table 6

##### *Becoming Efficient Readers*

	Pre-Questionnaire		Post-Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	23	100	23	100
No	0	0	0	0

**b. Figure 5**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

According to the results of the table above, it could be mentioned that before and after the intervention plan, learners mentioned that they wanted to learn to read efficiently. It demonstrates that students are willing to acquire knowledge. They are kind of motivated and that is a good beginning in order to introduce authentic materials. S. Pang. *et.al* (2003) express in their book that a person reads a text to learn to find out information, to be entertained. The purpose for reading is closely connected to a person’s motivation for reading. Teachers need to be aware of their students’ learning needs, including their motivation for reading and the purpose that reading has in their lives.

**Post-Test Results**

**Objective five of the research work.**

To evaluate the usefulness of authentic materials inside the class with students of second year of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school to improve reading skill through formal and informal evaluation.

**a. Table 7**

*Post Test Scores of 2nd Year Students of Bachillerato in Reading Skill*

<b>Student Code</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
	<b>/2</b>	<b>/2</b>	<b>/2</b>	<b>/2</b>	<b>/2</b>	<b>/10</b>
UEFSP001	2	2	1.5	2	1.5	9
UEFSP002	2	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	8.5
UEFSP003	2	2	1.5	2	1.5	9
UEFSP004	2	2	1	2	2	9
UEFSP005	2	2	2	2	2	10
UEFSP006	2	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	8.5
UEFSP007	2	2	2	2	1.5	9.5
UEFSP008	2	2	2	2	2	10
UEFSP009	2	2	1.5	2	2	9.5
UEFSP010	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	9
UEFSP011	2	2	2	2	2	10
UEFSP012	2	2	1.5	2	1.5	9
UEFSP013	2	2	2	2	2	10
UEFSP014	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	9
UEFSP015	2	2	1.5	2	1.5	9
UEFSP016	2	2	1.5	2	2	9.5
UEFSP017	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	9
UEFSP018	2	2	1.5	1.5	2	9
UEFSP019	2	2	2	2	2	10
UEFSP020	2	2	2	2	1.5	9.5
UEFSP021	2	2	1.5	1.5	2	9
UEFSP022	2	2	2	2	1.5	9.5
UEFSP023	2	2	1.5	2	2	9.5
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.72</b>	<b>1.85</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>9.30</b>

Note. UEFSP= Unidad Educativa "Fernando Suárez Palacio"; 001= Students's code; P= Phonics; V= Vocabulary; PA= Phonemic Awareness; C= Comprehension; F= Fluency

**b. Interpretation and Analysis**

As it is seen in table 7, the total score mean students gathered was 9.30 out of ten, which is over the expected level (8/10). They increased their ability to read from 4.24 to 9.30. The highest score means were for phonics and vocabulary (2/2), which indicates that students are in an excellent level (see grading scale, p.127) due to they were able to identify some words, label pictures, make some rhymes, relate words with their prefixes, suffixes or roots and the lowest scores were for phonemic awareness (1.72/2), fluency (1.74/2) and for comprehension (1.85/2). Thus, it is demonstrated that students increased their level in those

reading aspects not in a 100% but their progress was worthy. Consequently, students have reduced the problems concerning to reading because they feel more confident while reading a text, they identify phonemes easily, make syllables and new words and infer or summarize texts. As Guthrie (2001) explains that reading is a merger of motivation and thoughtfulness. Reading is important because if it engages readers, they seek to understand; they enjoy learning and they believe in their reading abilities. They are mastery oriented, intrinsically motivated, and have self-efficacy.

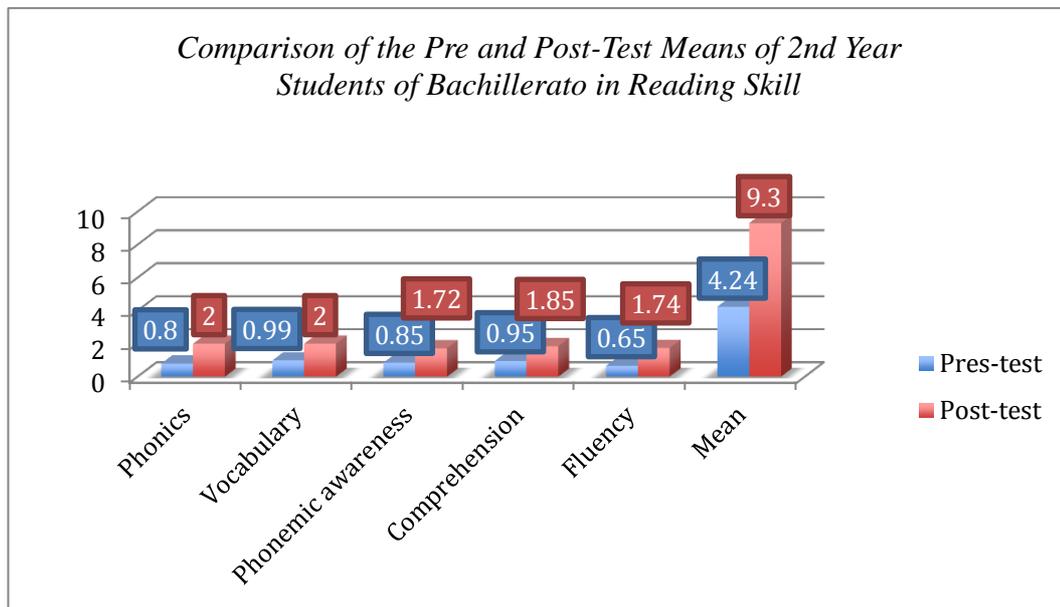
### **Comparing Pre-Post Test Means**

#### **a. Table 8**

*Comparison of the Pre and Post-Test Means of Second Year Students of Bachillerato in Reading Skill*

Aspects	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Phonics	0.80	2
Vocabulary	0.99	2
Phonemic awareness	0.85	1.72
Comprehension	0.95	1.85
Fluency	0.65	1.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4.24</b>	<b>9.30</b>

**b. Figure 6**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

The findings in table 8 demonstrate that students got a high improvement in almost all the aspects. They increased their ability to read from 4.24 to 9.30. Each reading aspect overcame the expected score (8/10). It was corroborated by the means obtained by students. Thus, it is demonstrated that the materials implemented during the development of this work had a great impact on the improvement of the reading skills.

## **g. DISCUSSION**

Based on the findings of the research, results show that implementing authentic materials as a resource had a meaningful impact on improving student's reading skill. This improvement is revealed in the findings of the pre and post test which were applied to 2nd year students of bachillerato at "Fernando Suárez Palacio" high school, those results demonstrated that there was a significant change on students' performance while reading in the foreign language. The findings in the pre and post questionnaire, the researcher field diary and the observation sheet, also showed the positive impact that this resource caused on students' reading skill. The results were related with the literature, which according to Berardo (2006), the chances to have a contact with "real language" or to know cultural information of countries abroad is incremented if authentic materials are used in teaching. The application of the intervention based on authentic materials allowed learners to achieve meaningful improvement on reading. This improvement is reflected in the significant increase of the students' mean from the pretest that was 4.24/10 and in the post-test mean, which was 9.30/10.

The pretest indicated that most of the students had problems in all aspects evaluated. Thus, in phonics, they were not able to relate words with sounds or unscramble letters; in phonemic awareness, learners could not make any kind of rhymes with words without identifying either roots, prefixes or suffixes; in vocabulary, it was difficult for students to label pictures or identify the meaning of new words in a reading; in reading comprehension, they could not either infer

or summarize the information and in fluency, students read with hesitation and were afraid of mispronouncing words. In the post-test after the intervention, the results showed that students improved their knowledge in reading skill in all its aspects in a considerable way, being able to relate new words with sounds and pictures, making short summaries, reading by pronouncing properly and most of them lost their nervousness to speak in public. This way, the results were excellent and even overcame the expected level (8/10).

Meanwhile the intervention was executed, the learner's attitude towards the implementation of authentic materials was gradual, taking into account the problems that students faced at the beginning in some reading aspects. The learners' improvement was slow in the first stages, but then, students progressively showed an improvement due to the fact that they were able to read and comprehend from short lines until understanding a paragraph. At the end, all learners felt satisfied and enthusiastic about the application of authentic materials.

Furthermore, this research had some strengths and limitations while the intervention was applied, that enriched and affected the development of reading skills. Some of the seen strengths in the application were that learners felt motivated when using authentic materials, they paid attention all the time and even wanted to continue practicing with more similar materials, they felt really engaged in class with the different activities as bingo games, flash cards and crosswords. Despite of that facts, the time assigned in order to work with students was not enough due to learners sometimes were asked to go to conferences, sports or meetings, making it complicated the development of the teaching process.

However, at the end all the planned activities were developed thanks to the help given by people in school.

The application of authentic materials contributed to improve the reading skill among the learners. Students felt really engaged and motivated, they worked actively either alone, in pairs or groups with the activities proposed as word searches, crosswords or analyzing vocabulary and they were really encouraged to read in English thanks to the content, color, size, and utility of the authentic materials provided.

## **h. CONCLUSIONS**

- The difficulties that limited the improvement of reading skill of second year students of bachillerato were related to vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension and fluency. In vocabulary, students did not identify words, label pictures or say some meanings of words. In phonics, they were not able to relate words with sounds, make rhymes, or relate sounds with their roots or suffixes. In phonemic awareness, they could not divide words into syllables or recognize phonemes. In comprehension, they had problems in summarizing information and in fluency they hesitated and mispronounced most of the words in a short text. Another issue was that students did not like to read neither in English nor in Spanish and they did not feel confidence doing it.
- The implementation of authentic materials as an innovative resource in the classroom reduced the students' limitations in the reading skill meaningfully. Students participated actively while the activities were carried out. They read short lines by understanding words, relating them, summarizing texts and reading without hesitating as at the beginning.
- The use of authentic materials in the classroom was effective; due to students at the end of the intervention plan were more comfortable while reading in English. They demonstrated improvement in the aspects considered in this skill. Their motivation to read in another language increased highly not only inside the classroom but also in real contexts.

## **i. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Teachers should identify the weaknesses that students have in the English language learning and specifically in the reading skill, in order to plan activities based on students' needs and reading problems to overcome them objectively, In addition to that, teachers should monitor students' work by using observation sheets and keeping a record of students' scores to determine if learners are improving in the reading aspects as it is expected. Thus, Shank (2015) mentions that it is important to determine students' strengths and weaknesses at the outset to help them know what goals will be realistic and how to proceed with a plan of study.
- Teachers should apply interesting materials and activities in order to get students' attention while they are reading. The resources implemented should be colorful, with short lines, funny and not so difficult to understand. Based on that fact, Berardo (2006) mentions that the more the learner reads, the better reader he/she will become, not only improving his/her language level but also confidence. If the text interests the learner it can have a positive effect on student motivation.
- Teachers should try to work most of the time with authentic materials in order to develop students' reading skills appropriately. These materials are easy to find on the Internet, are colorful and its content is interesting. This way, students practice the language that is commonly used in English speaking countries. This fact is substantiated by Jacobson, Degener &

Prcell-Gat (2013), who mention that authentic materials should reach a primary purpose which is called a “real world purpose”, which means that the text being read or written should also have function besides school.

## j. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Amjad, R. (2014). "Knowledge Inn". Retrieved from: <http://kninn.blogspot.com/2014/10/explain-different-activities-based-on.html> [04-05-2015]
- Berardo, S. (2006). "The use of authentic materials in the teaching of reading". In *Reading Matrix*. Retrieved from: <http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/berardo/article.pdf> [07-05-2015]
- Byrnes, H. (2004). "Teaching reading". In *National Capital Language Resource Center*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/reading/reindex.htm> [07-05-2015]
- Charles, K., Lawrence, K., Offner, M., & Vorland, B. "Effective Ways to Use Authentic Materials". In *The Internet TESL Journal*. Retrieved from: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kelly-Authentic.html> [07-05-2015]
- Dennis, D. (2013). "Glendale Community College". In *Reading better and faster*. Retrieved from: <http://english.glendale.cc.ca.us/speed1.html> [07-05-2015]
- Guariento, W., & Morley. (2001). *Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom*. *ELT Journal*.
- Guthrie, J. (2001). "Contexts for engagement and motivation in reading" In *Reading Online*. Retrieved from: [http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art\\_index.asp?HREF=/articles/handbook/guthrie/index.html](http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=/articles/handbook/guthrie/index.html) [02-05-2015]
- Jacobson, E., Degener, S., & Purcell-Gat, V. (2013). *Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom*. NCSALL .
- Lamb, A., & Johnson, L. (2001). "Skimming and scanning". In *42 explore*. Retrieved from: <http://42explore.com/skim.htm> [02-05-2015]
- Swaffar, J. (2010). "Foreign Language Teaching Methods". In *What is reading?* Retrieved from: <http://coerll.utexas.edu/methods/modules/reading/01/> [01-05-2015]
- S. Pang, E., Muaka, A., B. Bernhardt, E., & L. Kamil, M. (2003). *Teaching reading*. Brussels, Belgium: Educational Practices Series.
- Shank, C. (2015). "Identifying strenghts and weaknesses". In *WVA Adulted Instructor Handbook*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/peb6lm6>
- Tyner, B. (2012). *Identifying the Critical Pieces of Literacy Instruction- The Literacy Jigsaw Puzzle* . Newark: International Reading Association.

k. ANNEXES



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**

ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA  
COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

**THEME**

**IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO AT “FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO” HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015.**

Thesis project as a previous requirement to obtain the Bachelors' Degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Specialization

**AUTHOR**

**ERIKA LUCÍA GONZÁLEZ CARRIÓN**

**LOJA-ECUADOR**

2015

51

**a.    THEME**

IMPROVEMENT    OF    READING    SKILL    THROUGH    THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AMONG 2ND YEAR  
STUDENTS OF BACHILLERATO, AT “FERNANDO SUÁREZ PALACIO”  
HIGH SCHOOL IN LOJA CITY, CARIGÁN NEIGHBORHOOD, DURING  
THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015.

## **b. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **Background**

This research work will be carried out at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school. It is located in El Carigán neighborhood, El Valle parish, in Loja city. It was created in 1986. On October of the same year it started its activities thanks to the hard labor of families of surrounding towns, who asked the local authorities for the creation of an educative institution in this sub-urban town

The first school principal was Lic. José Miguel Mora Palacio, who started to work with one class of 16 students in 8<sup>th</sup> year of basic education. Those students were from several urban and suburban towns of Loja: El Carigán, Motupe Alto, Las Pitas, Bolacache, among others. At the beginning this high school worked in the afternoon section and had around 5 people working there between teachers and administratives.

In the year 2006, thanks to a Ministry Resolution, it was denominated as *Unidad Educativa “Fernando Suárez Palacio”*, and offers education service from initial up to bachillerato in the morning section.

Since the year 2011, Lic. Teresa Herrera has been working as the school principal of this institution. It is conformed by 26 people between teachers, administratives and service people (janitors) and about 450 students. All of them have made such a good effort to make this a well-known educative institution and continue progressing for the development of Loja and the South Region of Ecuador.

### **Current situation of the research problem**

Reading is an essential part of language instruction at every level because it supports learning in multiple ways. So, it is important to know what is happening with the reading skill around the world. Are people reading enough or not? A new study by the World Culture Score Index compiled some responses of 1,600 individuals in 30 countries around the world and has determined that India is the country where people are reading the most, while in Ecuador according to a study carried out by UNESCO, each person reads 0,5 books per year, that is equivalent to only the half of a book each year. In addition to that, INEC (National Statistics Institute) reported that 27% of Ecuadorians do not have the reading habit, from which percentage, 56,8% are not interested in reading at all and 31,7% do not do it because they do not have enough time to fulfill that task.<sup>1</sup>

Since this work will be developed in Loja city, it's necessary to know what is the context in which this research will be carried out. Loja city is considered as a cultural place, rich in literacy and of people who love arts and letters. Despite of that fact, we can not say that all the people in this city read a lot in a high grade because there are not recent studies that certify that statement.

It is also important to mention that many educative institutions in Loja have started to make campaigns and to develop reading contests in order to motivate students to read for pleasure. Thus, they will acquire a lot of vocabulary and knowledge of the culture. Moreover, the habit of reading will be seen as a

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.andes.info.ec/es/noticias/dia-mundial-libro-ecuador-mantiene-bajo-habito-lectura.html>

pleasure, as a task in which the word boring doesn't fit, but where the word enjoyment by learning exists.

In the same way that has occurred in the city, authorities in different centers of studies in Loja city have made an effort to motivate students to develop reading skill. For example, authorities at "Fernando Suárez Palacio" high school have tried to implement in students the reading habits, however they haven't achieved their goal at all due to students do not feel satisfied when reading a book because it is not of their interest; In fact, they rather look for interesting things on the internet than reading "boring books" that teachers ask them to read at home.

Also, the researcher has observed the English classes at this center of studies and could noticed that students of second year of bachillerato do not read properly in English because it is not a subject of their interest at all, due to the classes are developed without innovative or creative materials. Furthermore, students do not feel comfortable reading in the new language, and they are afraid about mispronouncing the different words and become like a foolish in front of the classmates.

In addition, at "Fernando Suárez Palacio" high school students have not acquired the reading habit neither in Spanish nor in English. In informal conversations established with students of second year of bachillerato, in this high school, they have claimed that if they were given pieces of interesting readings, based on their interests and needs, they would read with happiness and enthusiasm.

In addition to the problems mentioned above, there are some aspects of reading in which students of second year of bachillerato show difficulty, because reading is more than the act of choosing a book and sitting down with it. Reading also involves: *phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency*. These five aspects work together to create the reading experience, but unfortunately learners have not developed these skills neither in Spanish nor in English at all.

Therefore, this research work pretends to contribute increasing the students' reading skill in a high level through the implementation of authentic materials, which are a good resource inside the classroom.

### **Research problem**

How does the use of authentic materials improve the reading skill?

### **Delimitation of the research:**

#### **Temporal:**

This research will be carried out during the academic period September 2014- July 2015

#### **Spatial:**

This research work will be developed at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school.

#### **Observation Units:**

The observation units in this research will be both teachers and students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato.

**Subproblems:**

- What is the existing theoretical reference about authentic materials as a resource to improve the reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at Unidad Educativa “Fernando Suárez Palacio” during the academic period 2014-2015?
- What are the difficulties that limit the students’ improvement of reading skill of, 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato?
- What kind of resources could be helpful to contribute to improve the reading skill in English with the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato?
- Which authentic materials are implemented to improve the reading skill in English among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato?
- What was the effect that authentic materials had on the improvement of the reading skill with students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato?

### **c. JUSTIFICATION**

The purpose of this research work is to *implement authentic materials to improve the reading skills among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the 2014-2015 academic period*”. These kinds of resources contain language without modifications and are interesting and understandable for learners.

This research work is rather important because it may motivate learners to read in the foreign language in a different way, that is, through the use of colorful, exciting and thought-provoking authentic materials, with information of their interest that will be worthy for their complete formation in high school. Furthermore, this kind of materials will make students develop their tasks in a learning environment in which students will be able to acquire not only the language, but also a deeper knowledge of the culture.

This research will be valuable for the researcher because it will help the investigator to achieve a good and meaningful experience as a professional of the teaching field. In addition, this research is relevant and important because the more experience and knowledge teachers have; the better they are able to teach.

It is essential to develop this research work because it is a fundamental requisite that will allow the researcher to complete her Bachelor’s Degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Specialization, likewise the accreditation of the subject. The investigator is able to carry out this work because

she has enough theoretical knowledge and necessary resources to develop it in a proper and successful way.

## **d. OBJECTIVES**

### **General Objective:**

- To improve reading skill through the implementation of authentic materials among 2ND year students of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the school year 2014-2015.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To look for the theoretical references about authentic materials as a resource to improve the reading skill among the students of 2nd year of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the school year 2014-2015.
- To diagnose the weaknesses students show in reading written texts in English.
- To design an intervention plan with a compilation of authentic materials of different topics as part of the classroom activities.
- To apply a compilation of authentic materials as a teaching tool to solve the limitations on English of 2ND year students of bachillerato.
- To evaluate the usefulness that authentic materials had on the students’ reading skill through formal and informal evaluation

## e. THEORETICAL FRAME

### Reading Skill

#### Definition

*Reading is a basic life skill. It is a basis for a child's success in school, and, indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost. (...)*

#### *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*

Richard Anderson and the Commission on Reading define reading as the process of constructing meaning from written texts. Among the many definitions of reading that have arisen in recent decades, three prominent ideas emerge as most critical for understanding what "learning to read" means:

- Reading is a process undertaken to reduce uncertainty about meanings a text conveys.
- The process results from a negotiation of meaning between the text and its reader.
- The knowledge, expectations, and strategies a reader uses to uncover textual meaning all play decisive roles way the reader negotiates with the text's meaning.

Reading is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text.

### **Types of Reading**

Donald Hall in "Four Kinds of Reading" identifies four types of Reading:

#### **Reading for Information**

The first kind of reading Hall identifies is reading for information. Materials like newspapers are designed in order to be read quickly in order to find facts. Most newspaper sentences are no more than fifteen words; paragraphs, no longer than three sentences. The text appears in narrow columns so the reader's eye can quickly move down the page. Typically, readers do not read every word, but skim the page for key facts. Hall describes reading for information as “. . . *reading to learn about a trade, or politics, or how to accomplish something. We read a newspaper this way, or most textbooks, or directions on how to assemble a bicycle. With most of this sort of material, the reader can learn to scan the page quickly, coming up with what he needs and ignoring what is irrelevant to him, like the rhythm of the sentence, or the play of metaphor. Courses in speed reading can help us read for this purpose, training the eye to jump quickly across the page . . . Quick eye-reading is a necessity to anyone who wants to keep up with what's happening, or learn much of what has happened in the past*”. (Hall 164)

## **Reading for Ideas**

Unlike reading for information, reading for ideas is slow, and sometimes torturous. Ideas require careful thought in order to be understood. While students can scan for information, ideas have to be appropriated which requires careful reflection. Students may need to re-read the material, take notes, spend time thinking about what was written, define words, research background and context, or discuss the material with a teacher or friend in order to comprehend complex ideas.

Furthermore, when reading complex material, students will need to jot down key nouns and then translate the original material into words the student understands. Sometimes it helps to summarize key ideas, sentence-by-sentence or paragraph-by-paragraph. The goal is to "digest" the material in order to understand it. Unfortunately, students often take the illegitimate shortcut of "cutting and pasting" ideas from the original source without filtering the ideas through their own consciousness. If a student cannot explain something he or she has read, the student cannot use it as source material.

The reader's goal in reading literature is to "feel" something, to connect to the writing on a visceral level.

## **Reading to Escape**

Most people read novels to escape. What is sometimes called genre fiction or sometimes "pulp" fiction includes inexpensive and mass produced works of entertainment that people read to while away their time or ease their stress. While there is nothing wrong with some relaxing reading for pleasure, this type of

reading seldom comes into play in the academic world. Hall describes escape reading as "narcotic reading" (Hall 165)

*"(...) The automated daydream, the mild trip of the housewife and the tired businessman, interested not in experience and feeling but in turning off the possibilities of experience and feeling (Hall 165) . . . The reader is in control: once the characters reach into the reader's feelings, he is able to stop reading, or glance away, or superimpose his own daydreams. (Hall 166)*

Occasionally, an instructor might ask students to write a book review or personal reaction to a favorite book. When taking notes for this kind of assignment, students should focus on personal reactions to the reading and provide a summary of the plot. However, instructors will seldom expect students to read or write about literature in this way.

### **Reading to Engage**

Unlike escape fiction, literature is meant to engage the reader in lived experience, so that readers battle with the emotional dilemmas that characters face. Hall suggests that:

*"If we read a work of literature properly, we read slowly, and we hear all the words. If our lips do not actually move, it's only laziness. The muscles in our throats move, and come together when we see the word "squeeze." We hear the sounds so accurately that if a syllable is missing in a line of poetry we hear the lack, though we may not know what we are lacking. In prose we accept the rhythms, and hear the adjacent sounds. We*

*also register a track of feeling through the metaphors and associations of words . . .*

*The great writers reward this attention. Only by the full exercise of our powers to receive language can we absorb their intelligence and their imagination. This kind of reading goes through the ear--though the eye takes in the print, and decodes it into sound--to the throat and the understanding, and it can never be quick. It is slow and sensual, a deep pleasure that begins with touch and ends with the sort of comprehension that we associate with dream . . . To read literature is to be intimately involved with the words on the page, and never to think of them as the embodiments of ideas which can be expressed in other terms . . . Great literature, if we read it well, opens us up to the world, and makes us more sensitive to it, as if we acquired eyes that could see through things and ears that could hear smaller sounds." (Hall 164-5)*

Unlike escape literature, which though enjoyable and sometimes even intellectually stimulating, is often written quickly and following a formula, great works of literature are carefully and artistically crafted, linking sound to sense.

When writing about a work of literature, students should attempt to find the emotional center of the work (what is at stake). Students should note literary conventions, repetitions, and related ideas. It is often useful to identify things that seem confusing or strange because these often lie at the heart of the work's meaning. Again, it is often useful for students to summarize or paraphrase the

whole work before beginning a detailed study of the interconnections between the parts of the work.

### **Basic Aspects of Reading**

Reading is a remarkably complex cognitive process, because our brains are actually engaging in a number of tasks simultaneously. In accordance with the web page about Reading Instruction Resources, based on the author Beverly Tayner of the book “The Literacy Jigsaw Puzzle” (2012), there are five aspects to the process of reading: **phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency.** These five aspects work together to create the reading experience. As children learn to read they must develop skills in all five of these areas in order to become successful readers.

### **Phonics**

Phonics is the connection between sounds and letter symbols. It is also the combination of these sound-symbol connections to create words. Without phonics, words are simply a bunch of squiggles and lines on a page. If you think about it, letters are arbitrary. There is nothing innately bed-like about the written word “bed”. It is simply the collection of letters and corresponding sounds that we agree constitute the word “bed”. Learning to make that connection between the individual sounds that each letter represents and then putting those together is essential to understanding what that funny squiggle means.

There are a number of ways that phonics can be taught because there is a variety of ways to apply this aspect when reading. Each approach allows the

reader to use phonics to read and learn new words in a different way. Synthetic phonics builds words from the ground up. In this approach readers are taught to first connect letters to their corresponding phonemes (sound units) and then to blend those together to create a word. Analytic phonics, on the other hand, approaches words from the top down. A word is identified as a whole unit and then its letter-sound connections are parsed out. Analogy phonics uses familiar parts of words to discover new words. Finally, phonics through spelling focuses on connecting sounds with letters in writing. All of these approaches can be taught and used independently or in combination to help young readers learn to identify new words.

### **Phonemic Awareness**

Phonemic awareness is closely related to phonics because both involve the connection between sounds and words. While phonics is the connection between sounds and letters, phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are created from phonemes (small units of sound in language). These may seem like the same thing, but there is a subtle difference in the two. Phonics is used only in written language because it involves letters. Phonemes are sounds only. While they can be represented using letters, they can also be simply the auditory sounds of words. Phonemes are most often learned before a child begins to read because they are centered on the sounds of language rather than written words.

Just like phonics, phonemic awareness can be taught and used in a number of ways. Phoneme isolation involves the reader parsing out the individual sounds in a word in order to determine its meaning. Similarly, phoneme segmentation asks

the reader to break words into their corresponding phonemes (which may involve one or more individual sounds) to figure out the new word. Both of these approaches are very similar to synthetic phonics. Phoneme identification relies on the reader's general knowledge of phonemes (usually developed through speaking) to identify sound patterns in words. For example a reader would identify the phoneme /d/ he knows from the words "dog" and "dad" to help him learn how to read a new word "doctor". Finally, phoneme blending requires the reader to connect a series of phonemes together to create a word. This strategy is always used in conjunction with one of the others.

### **Vocabulary**

In order to read words we must first know them. Imagine how frustrating and fruitless it would be to read this article if all of the words were unfamiliar to you. As children become stronger, more advanced readers they not only learn to connect their oral vocabularies (the words we know when they are spoken) to their reading vocabularies (the words we know when they are used in print) they also strengthen each of these areas by adding new words to their repertoires. Vocabulary development is an ongoing process that continues throughout one's "reading life".

There are two primary ways of teaching and learning new vocabulary words. The first is explicit instruction. This involves someone telling you how a word is pronounced and what its meaning is. That "someone" might be a teacher, a dictionary, a vocabulary guide or any other resource offering definitions and pronunciations. Context clues provide another method for discovering new words.

Context clues are the “hints” contained in a text that help a reader figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. They include other words in a sentence or paragraph, text features (ie. bold print, italics), illustrations, graphs and charts. Context clues are basically any item in the text that points to the definition of a new word.

### **Fluency**

Fluency is a reader’s ability to read with speed, accuracy and expression. Thus it requires him to combine and use multiple reading skills at the same time. While fluency is most often measured through oral readings, good readers also exhibit this skill when they are reading silently. Think about the way a book “sounds” in your mind when you are reading silently. You “hear” the characters “speak” with expression. Even passages that are not written in dialogue “sound” as if the words fit the meaning. A particularly suspenseful action sequence moves quickly through your mind creating a palpable sense of tension. Your ability to move through a piece of text at a fluid pace while evoking the meaning and feeling of it demonstrates your fluency.

Fluency is intimately tied to comprehension. A reader must be able to move quickly enough through a text to develop meaning. If he is bogged down reading each individual word, he is not able to create an overall picture in his mind of what the text is saying. Even if the reader is able to move rapidly through a text, if she cannot master the expression associated with the words, the meaning of it will be lost.

## **Reading Comprehension**

Comprehension is what most people think reading is. This is because comprehension is the main reason why we read. It is the aspect of reading that all of the others serve to create. Reading comprehension means understanding what a text is all about. It is more than just understanding words in isolation. It is putting them together and using prior knowledge to develop meaning.

Reading comprehension is the most complex aspect of reading. It not only involves all of the other four aspects of reading, it also requires the reader to draw upon general thinking skills. When a reader is actively engaged with a text, she is asking and answering questions about the story and summarizing what she has read. Like vocabulary, reading comprehension skills develop and improve over time through instruction and practice.

## **Importance of reading**

Reading is such a wonderful task, fulfilled by a lot of people around the world. Glenn Davis, in the year 2003 wrote an interesting article in which he describes the importance of Reading. The article mentioned that:

- Reading is fundamental to function in today's society. There are many adults who cannot read well enough to understand the instructions on a medicine bottle. That is a scary thought - especially for their children. Filling out applications becomes impossible without help. Reading road or warning signs is difficult. Even following a map becomes a chore. Day-to-

day activities that many people take for granted become a source of frustration, anger and fear.

- Reading is a vital skill in finding a good job. Many well-paying jobs require reading as a part of job performance. There are reports and memos that must be read and responded to. Poor reading skills increase the amount of time it takes to absorb and react in the workplace. A person is limited in what they can accomplish without good reading and comprehension skills.
- Reading is important because it develops the mind. The mind is a muscle. It needs exercise. Understanding the written word is one way the mind grows in its ability. Teaching young children to read helps them develop their language skills. It also helps them learn to listen. Everybody wants to talk, but few can really listen. Lack of listening skills can result in major misunderstandings which can lead to job loss, marriage breakup, and other disasters - small and great. Reading helps children [and adults] focus on what someone else is communicating.
- Through reading is how we discover new things. Books, magazines and even the Internet are great learning tools, which require the ability to read and understand what is read. A person who knows how to read can educate himself or herself in any area of life they are interested in. We live in an age where we overflow with information, but reading is the main way to take advantage of it.

- Reading develops the imagination. TV and computer games have their place, but they are more like amusement. Amusement is non-thinking activities. With reading, a person can go anywhere in the world...or even out of it! They can be a king, or an adventurer, or a princess, or... The possibilities are endless. Non-readers never experience these joys to the same extent.
- In line with the above, reading develops the creative side of people. When reading to children, stop every once in awhile and ask them what they think is going to happen next. Get them thinking about the story. When it is finished, ask if they could think of a better ending or anything that would have improved it. If they really liked the story, encourage them to illustrate it with their own drawings or to make up a different story with the same characters. Get the creative juices flowing!
- Reading is fundamental in developing a good self-image. Nonreaders or poor readers often have low opinions of themselves and their abilities. Many times they feel as if the world is against them. They feel isolated [everybody else can read - which isn't true] and behavior problems can surface. They can perform poorly in other subjects because they cannot read and understand the material and so tend to "give up."
- Good reading skills, especially in a phonics reading program, improve spelling. As students learn to sound out letters and words, spelling comes easier. Also, reading helps to expand the vocabulary. Reading new words puts them in their mind for later use. Seeing how words are used in

different contexts can give a better understanding of the word usage and definitions than the cold facts of a dictionary.

- There is an old saying, "The pen is mightier than the sword." Ideas written down have changed the destiny of men and nations for better or worse. The flow of ideas cannot be stopped. We need to read and research to build on the good ideas and expose the bad ideas before they bring destruction. Only by reading can we be armed in this never-ending, life-and-death struggle.
- The fact of the power of written ideas communicated through reading is a foundational reason why some governments oppose free and honest communication. Illiterate people are easier to control and manipulate. They cannot do their own research and thinking. They must rely on what they are told and how their emotions are swayed. There is a good possibility that this is one of the main reasons phonics was removed from the schools about 100 years ago.
- Finally Reading is important because words - spoken and written - are the building blocks of life. You are, right now, the result of words that you have heard or read AND believed about yourself. What you become in the future will depend on the words you believe about yourself now. People, families, relationships, and even nations are built from words.

## **Teaching reading**

Traditionally, the purpose of learning to read in a language has been to have access to the literature written in that language. In language instruction, reading materials have traditionally been chosen from literary texts that represent "higher" forms of culture.

This approach assumes that students learn to read a language by studying its vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, not by actually reading it. In this approach, lower level learners read only sentences and paragraphs generated by textbook writers and instructors. The reading of authentic materials is limited to the works of great authors and reserved for upper level students who have developed the language skills needed to read them.

The communicative approach to language teaching has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction. When the goal of instruction is communicative competence, everyday materials such as train schedules, newspaper articles, and travel and tourism Web sites become appropriate classroom materials, because reading them is one way in which communicative competence could be developed. Instruction in reading and reading practice thus become essential parts of language teaching at every level.

## **Reading purpose and reading comprehension**

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or

writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purpose(s) for reading guide the reader's selection of texts.

The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. A person who needs to know whether she can afford to eat at a particular restaurant needs to comprehend the pricing information provided on the menu, but does not need to recognize the name of every appetizer listed. A person reading poetry for enjoyment needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together, but does not need to identify main idea and supporting details. However, a person using a scientific article to support an opinion needs to know the vocabulary that is used, understand the facts and cause-effect sequences that are presented, and recognize ideas that are presented as hypotheses and givens. Reading research shows that good readers:

- Read extensively
- Integrate information in the text with existing knowledge
- Have a flexible reading style, depending on what they are reading
- Are motivated
- Rely on different skills interacting: perceptual processing, phonemic processing, recall
- Read for a purpose; reading serves a function

The purpose(s) for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve comprehension. Reading comprehension is thus much more than decoding.

Reading comprehension results when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understand how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose.

### **How to teach reading?**

Reading is an essential part of language instruction at every level because it supports learning in multiple ways.

- Reading to learn the language: Reading material is language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, instructors provide multiple opportunities for students to absorb vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts. Students thus gain a more complete picture of the ways in which the elements of the language work together to convey meaning.
- Reading for content information: Students' purpose for reading in their native language is often to obtain information about a subject they are studying, and this purpose can be useful in the language learning classroom as well. Reading for content information in the language classroom gives students both authentic reading material and an authentic purpose for reading.
- Reading for cultural knowledge and awareness: Reading everyday materials that are designed for native speakers can give students insight into the lifestyles and worldviews of the people whose language they are studying. When students have access to newspapers, magazines, and Web

sites, they are exposed to culture in all its variety, and monolithic cultural stereotypes begin to break down.

When reading to learn, students need to follow four basic steps:

- Figure out the purpose for reading. Activate background knowledge of the topic in order to predict or anticipate content and identify appropriate reading strategies.
- Attend to the parts of the text that are relevant to the identified purpose and ignore the rest. This selectivity enables students to focus on specific items in the input and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short-term memory.
- Select strategies that are appropriate to the reading task and use them flexibly and interactively. Students' comprehension improves and their confidence increases when they use top-down and bottom-up skills simultaneously to construct meaning.
- Check comprehension while reading and when the reading task is completed. Monitoring comprehension helps students detect inconsistencies and comprehension failures, helping them learn to use alternate strategies.

### **Strategies to teach reading**

Instruction in reading strategies is not an add-on, but rather an integral part of the use of reading activities in the language classroom. Instructors can help their

students become effective readers by teaching them how to use strategies before, during, and after reading.

**Before reading: Plan for the reading task**

- Set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for.
- Decide if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed.
- Determine whether to enter the text from the top down (attend to the overall meaning) or from the bottom up (focus on the words and phrases).

**During and after reading: Monitor comprehension**

- Verify predictions and check for inaccurate guesses.
- Decide what is and is not important to understand.
- Reread to check comprehension.
- Ask for help.

**After reading: Evaluate comprehension and strategy use**

- Evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area.
- Evaluate overall progress in reading and in particular types of reading tasks.
- Decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task.
- Modify strategies if necessary.

**Techniques to teach reading**

The most common techniques to teach reading are:

### ***Skimming***

It is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. When you read the newspaper, you're probably not reading it word-by-word, instead you're scanning the text. Skimming is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading. People often skim when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time. Use skimming when you want to see if an article may be of interest in your research.

There are many strategies that can be used when skimming. Some people read the first and last paragraphs using headings, summaries and other organizers as they move down the page or screen. You might read the title, subtitles, subheading, and illustrations. Consider reading the first sentence of each paragraph. This technique is useful when you're seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. It might be used to review graphs, tables, and charts.

### ***Scanning***

It is a technique you often use when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. You search for key words or ideas. In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Scanning is also used when you first find a resource to determine whether it will answer your questions. Once you've scanned the document, you might go back and skim it.

When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Sometimes the author will put key ideas in the margin.

Reading off a computer screen has become a growing concern. Research shows that people have more difficulty reading off a computer screen than off paper. Although they can read and comprehend at the same rate as paper, skimming on the computer is much slower than on paper.

## **Authentic Materials**

### **Definition**

Authentic materials are a kind of materials. In accordance with some authors: Wallace (1992: 145) defines authentic text as "...real-life text, not written for pedagogic purposes." It is used for native speakers and contains real language. Richards (2001) holds that authentic materials refer to the use in teaching of text, photographs, videos selection, and other teaching recourse that were not specially prepared for educational purposes.

Since authentic materials are resources used by teachers, it is rather necessary to mention that in accordance to Guariento & Morley (2001) "(...) at post-intermediate level, the use of authentic materials is available for use in classroom."

This fact could be said in the spirit that at this level, a good number of learners already master a considerable range of vocabulary and some structures in the target language. Moreover, the authors mentioned above also remark that at lower levels, the use of these resources may cause students feel discouraged and frustrated since they realize the lack of knowledge about lexis and grammar structures in the foreign language.

However, in accordance to a study carried out by Chávez (1998), “(...) learners enjoy dealing with authentic materials since they enable them to interact with the real language and its use.” Furthermore, learners do not consider authentic situations or materials difficult, but in fact, they need support provided by the teacher in order to understand those materials successfully. But, we have to know what the role of authentic materials in the classroom is? McGregor (2007) thinks that:

*“(...) Text types make sense if they exist in a cultural context because they are the cultural forms of beliefs and social practices. When we learn a language, the real assumption in that language is culture. For example, English speaking people might believe that bargaining is very difficult in a country where bargaining is quite acceptable and a part of the social life (p: 7). Hence, the class activities and materials need to be organized by the teacher according to students’ needs and their cultural variety.”*

Little and Singleton (1988, 1) of Trinity College Dublin suggest that the rise of authentic texts is associated with the development of communicative approaches to language teaching. They also claim that learners find such materials more

interesting than course books prepared by the teachers as there are broad varieties of materials such as a computer, video, DVD player and even different materials from all around the world in public libraries for writing, speaking, listening and reading tasks.

The sources of authentic materials are infinite. We can find them on magazines, TV programs, movies and on Internet too.

### **Kinds of authentic materials and its importance in education**

#### **Newspapers**

While many workbooks have detailed simulations of newspaper content (e.g., TV schedules, help wanted sections), their use is limited to the pedagogical aim of the lesson. Students cannot use the content of the simulated newspaper.

Students who interact with real newspapers, however, can look for an actual job, or find the TV program that they want to watch that evening. For this reason, many teachers and students use newspapers in the classroom. The easiest way to provide the class with newspapers is to subscribe. While the cost may seem prohibitive, many publishers have programs designed to get newspapers into classroom for free or at a reduced price.

Many newspapers also have Internet editions that are nearly complete, so students who can go online can also access them in that way.

#### **Flyers, brochures and schedules**

Many students and teachers in the LPALS report using a variety of short texts, such as flyers and brochures. These texts usually focus on one issue, and contain

helpful advice and important contact information. Of all the types of informational brochures available, students in the study seemed to be most interested in reading the health-related brochures, they find at their doctor's offices or health clinics. Some classes also reported working with schedules, such as bus schedules. A bus Schedule in a workbook may be a good approximation of what students see in their communities, but the actual bus schedule for the bus they take is much more relevant and immediately useful. If students don't bring these materials in themselves, the only way to gather them is to get out of the classroom and into the neighborhood. One of the authors of this book is an ESOL teacher, and he is on an eternal scavenger hunt, grabbing a few copies of texts he encounters in his daily travels. Items such as bus schedules are available in most large stations or online. As with applications, some social service or employment agencies may be committed to working with the populations from which the students come. Local health centers may have outreach teams that are happy to come to class to walk students through informational handouts. They usually do not have a way to contact teachers, so teachers who take the initiative to contact them get results.

### **Election materials**

Many students note that class activities help them to register to vote and to become informed about the issues and the candidates running for office. One student remarked, "Before, when I first started voting, I wasn't reading up on the people who were running. I was just, you know, like voting for one person because I thought I liked them. Now I go read about them, find out what they're all about." Campaign literature comes in many formats, from bumper stickers and

simple handbills to longer statement pieces. These are available from candidates' and party campaign offices. Referendum issues are also useful, though these texts are often complex and filled with legal jargon. However, voter organizations such as the League of Women Voters typically publish materials that compare and contrast candidates or ballot questions in ways that are accessible to the general population. The local election commission should have sample ballots that can be brought into class. These are very helpful in getting student to understand the structure of the ballot and the process of actually voting. Some classes have taken this process to its next logical step: inviting candidates to speak in classrooms. When these invitations are accepted, students can really find out what the candidates "are all about."

### **Purpose of authentic materials**

When selecting an authentic text for use in the classroom, teachers must keep the different purposes for using that text in mind. The primary purpose for using the text should be the same as it would be outside of the classroom. This can be called the "real world purpose." For example, if students are working with the Yellow Pages, they should be looking for information that they need, rather than for a list of spelling words chosen by the teacher.

The second purpose for using the text is the instructional purpose, which is typically the concern of the teacher. Many students do not have a lot of experience using the Yellow Pages on their own, and may not understand the structure. Teachers using them in their classrooms must be prepared to help students

become more comfortable with the format of the text. This may include classroom activities that are thought of as traditional, such as alphabetizing. Words in the text may illustrate a point the teacher has been trying to make (such as a spelling rule), and these can be highlighted.

However, in choosing to work with authentic materials, the “students’ real world purpose” always comes first. The instructional purpose should not drive the lesson, but should be part of the support structure the teacher puts in place to help students meet their primary goal of using the text in the same way they would outside of school. While a certain brochure may have vocabulary in it that a teacher wants to introduce to the class, the text’s pedagogical function must not replace the student’s own reasons for wanting to work with the text, such as answering a question students have about health.

Halliday’s functions of language is a framework that can be used to examine the purpose for creating or interacting with a text. It is not the only way to think about the ways language is used in society, but it is a helpful starting point. The goal is to ensure that the text being read or written does serve a purpose or function besides a school-only one.

To do that, teachers can ask themselves the following questions:

Does this text help my student get something they want? (Instrumental)

Does this text inform my student about the rules he must follow?  
(Regulatory)

Does this text help my student maintain or establish a personal relationship with someone? (Interactional)

Does this text help my student express their personal thoughts? (Personal)

Does this text help my student explore the world? (Heuristic)

Does this text help my student express or create for someone else an imaginative world? (Imaginative)

Does this text provide information my student wants or needs? (Informative)

As an example, we examine the first four sample text types noted above (newspapers, applications, brochures, and school assessments) to see how they can be utilized to fulfill one (or more) of these seven functions.

Newspapers can be used in many ways. When reading a newspaper to find out about an upcoming concert, the students' activity is an example of the informative function of language. Newspapers can also be read in a more open-ended way. Students who begin by reading an article about an environmental summit may finish with information about their own role in climate change. Because newspapers can be read for information in many ways, teachers and students in the LPALS view them as valuable tools. Students can keep up with current events, access information they need, and be introduced to new subjects and ideas via newspapers.

In completing applications and similar forms, students are involved in two different functions of language. The first is the regulator and the second function.

Applications themselves work to regulate the behavior of individuals. For example, cars must be insured before being driven. The insurance application forms have rules governing how they must be completed.

From the perspective of the student, filling out these forms is an instrumental use of language. It is language being used to get something that they want, such as a car or insurance. School assessment reports also include several functions of language.

They provide information about a student's progress, but they are also part of a system that regulates student movement and placement. More personal notifications from schools, such as letters from teachers to parents, are examples of the interactional function of language. They are attempts by teachers to connect with parents.

The suggestions above are by no means definitive. A student could use a report card in a heuristic fashion, for example, or a letter sent to the editorial page of the newspaper could be used by a student to help define himself (i.e., the personal function of language). What is important is the real-life language purpose the student has in mind.

By focusing on the function of the text, it may also be easier to consider what can be done to extend the lesson, or how one text can be linked to another. For example, after using the phone book to locate a business they wish to contact, students may be able to work with a text that the business provides, such as a menu. This enables class work to become a series of connected, rather than isolated, lessons. Teachers and students can ask themselves, "What other texts is this first text connected to?" and "What other texts would somebody need to use to complete the task at hand?"

### **Advantages of authentic materials**

There are many advantages that authentic materials have nowadays, because they don't constitute only a source of grammar and vocabulary, but they also help students to have a good input about culture of countries abroad, with which most of the times they have limited contact. However, when giving students some pieces of authentic materials, it is important to find a balance, as Jane Crawford (1995) mentions, it is impossible to understand the real meaning of any interaction without knowing who the participants are or their social distance from the event referred to. For example, a video drama needs to assist language in a meaningful way. Thus, the teacher is responsible for the balance achieved between input and reapplication (p: 28).

In addition to that, language development requires learner commitment with the purpose of use of the language, this is, one of the most important parts of input and output is that if students are studying certain grammatical structures, authentic materials show us how to use language forms in a meaningful context. The teacher's role is to decide the materials that are suitable for learners and which can be used for students in the future. The gist is that language should be realistic because it's hard to find accurate resources, which could fit perfectly to satisfy learner's, needs.

A good number of learners think those materials will be the model for a specific topic in their future education. Materials need to be elastic for students in order to develop new skills and strategies as well. Those strategies need to be applicable in other contexts too.

Students will be challenged to integrate their knowledge from the language they have learnt before. In addition, teachers need to take extra care about students' background and learning abilities in class activities therefore they adapt materials to the context in which learning takes place. There must be an open interaction between students and teachers to understand the cultural values of both teachers and students.

Daniel Linder has written an article about similar issues. Linder (December 1999/January 2000) states “ (...) authentic materials are used as teaching tools effective in classrooms because authentic materials seem more complementary to the lesson content and more understandable for students”. (p: 17).

The author develops a method for using authentic material containing five ingredients. The first one of those ingredients is the authentic texts for input. Authentic texts serve as texts in their own right. The authentic menus are analyzed first as texts then they are used as output models for writing exercises (p: 17). His second view is tasks for text analysis. The author's point is that classroom tasks must be organized for classroom use according to students' ages, interests and levels (p: 17). The third important point according to the author is the tasks for language practice such as vocabulary, grammatical structures and pronunciation. In his article, Linder recommends that first the teacher needs to select language features for the practice task and then the teacher needs to select appropriate grammatical items such as countable and uncountable nouns (p: 17). The output task is the fourth one which is a role-play. The teacher's responsibility is to give clear instructions for the output task making the task suitable for students' age,

interests and so on (p: 17). The last point is the students' output as input, which is an exercise where student output is used for an additional exercise. The author gives an example. He says the content recognition exercises could be repeated with the student generated texts and those texts could be used for display or exchange with other classes (p: 17).

Authentic materials are mostly accepted as beneficial in language learning. Ruth E.Larimer and Leigh Schleicher (1999) focus on the advantages of authentic materials as below:

*“Learning is enhanced by the use of texts of particular interest to a class. There will be an increase in variety and spontaneity in classes that introduce authentic materials. Exposure to a variety of vocabulary and structures will occur. Students will capitalize on their prior cultural and schematic knowledge to contrast target situations and genres with those of their own culture.”*

The authors also point out about newspapers and magazines. As they explain, these materials are ideal sources for students to discuss current issues while broadening their vocabulary limits (p: 52).

Other documents such as maps, mail and brochures can be used as authentic materials in the classroom. These materials let students understand the language of materials written for tourists (p: 102). In addition, not only the use of authentic materials is important but also it is necessary to focus on work sheets, overhead projectors and transparencies at undergraduate level, as they are vital for those who take courses in a foreign language.

Here, the authors advise that international students misunderstand native speakers of English when information is exchanged therefore both authors believe international students need to be able to questioning sequences for salient information (p: 148). These problems do not only exist between students but also between lecturers and students.

Teachers' major concerns are to identify how much their students understand the given data. Here, as described by the editors, students misunderstand what a teacher looks for in the exchange of information so the main aim should be to focus on vital information in questioning sequences. Work sheets, overhead projector and transparencies help students comprehending a subject better (p: 158, 166). One of the academics from the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Erica Garvey (2007) illustrates the importance of authentic materials in language teaching in her lecture notes. She points out that:

*"(...) The first advantage of teacher-made materials is that they may be customized with a particular group of students in mind (p: 2). According to the lecturer, the second advantage of those materials is their effect on student motivation (p: 2). She also accepts that those materials provide a model of handwriting and layout so students can evaluate their own work (p: 2)."*

### **Use of authentic materials inside the classroom**

When we first began using authentic materials, we handed out materials to each student and had them work individually. However, experience has shown that having students work in pairs is a better approach because they tend to be

more enthusiastic and work harder. We give each pair the authentic material and a question handout. Interestingly, the student with the stronger command of English is not necessarily the one who is able to extract the most information from the material. Students of different abilities tend to complement one another and, as a result, do not get bogged down easily. Students tend to contribute individual strengths to the completion of the task. We usually tell students that question handouts will be collected since this keeps them more focused on the completion of the exercise. The teacher's personal anecdotes and other background information should be shared before the students begin concentrating on the material.

After the authentic material has been distributed, we give a brief explanation and point out, for example, the importance of the table of contents in a pamphlet or the legend in a map. We point out small print and other parts of the material that are easily missed. We have found that pointing out Japanese words and products raises the level of interest in the material. This is a good time for the teacher to explain measures, abbreviations, and difficult words and expressions.

While the students are working on the assignment, we help them by answering questions and commenting on their work. This is also a good chance to give hints to those who are stuck on a particular question.

Once the allotted time is up, we collect the material along with the question handout and go over the difficult questions with the class. If the handouts are to be factored into the students' grades, it is a good idea to make sure they have a chance to work with various partners over the course of the semester.

For the authentic materials to be effective, the questions must be well constructed to (a) give the students the opportunity to practice English, (b) help the students gain confidence in their English ability, (c) expose the students to cultural differences and customs, and (d) help the students develop their ability to find pertinent information quickly.

### **Tour questions**

The first part of the question handout should contain easy multiple choice or fill-in factual questions. This question gives the students a ‘tour’ of the material and exposes them to a variety of question types. The students gain an overview of the material as they answer these initial easy questions and this makes them feel confident enough to tackle more difficult questions later.

### **Cultural and personal choice questions**

The second part of the handout should contain questions that can be used to bring attention to cultural differences in packaging, sizes, and pricing. Authentic materials often contain references to cultural events such as holidays, and questions can be used to bring these to the students' attention. Questions, which require one word or written answers, could be used at this stage. Furthermore, students are familiar enough with the material at this point to answer personal choice questions. These questions usually require the students to choose items from the material or a course of action based on personal preference. These often lead to lively discussion because students must agree on what answer to write.

### **Challenging questions**

The third part should have questions that are more challenging and time consuming. Because of the differences in abilities (and sometimes luck), the time it takes students to complete a question handout can vary considerably. The more challenging questions at the end of the handout tend to work as 'equalizers' and slow down faster students so slower students can catch up. Questions can involve reading the small print, be especially detailed, or involve deductive reasoning. When students are working on the challenging questions they often begin to compare their progress to that of their neighbors'. Deliberately misleading 'red herring' questions add to the competitiveness while developing the students' critical thinking.

### **Activities to apply with authentic materials**

There are other methods of using authentic materials. Some of these can be used as a supplement to the question handout, or on their own, for variety. Here are four examples of effective activities with brief explanations.

#### **Word search**

The students search for parts of speech such as adjectives on a given page or search for certain categories of things. An advantage of this activity is that students do not need identical copies of the authentic material.

### **Crosswords**

The teacher prepares a crossword puzzle using words from the handout. The questions for the handout can also be presented as crossword clues. Crossword generating programs found on the Internet make this easy.

### **Personalizing**

The students write a list of purchases for an imaginary party using a supermarket handout, plan a trip using a travel brochure or plan a meal with a menu. The students could also be asked to fill out a mail order form with an imaginary order of purchases for family members, boyfriends, girlfriends, and themselves.

### **Pair Practice**

The students ask and answer the printed questions on the handout and are encouraged to ask their own questions. The students can role-play the parts of customer and clerk either following a sample conversation provided by the teacher or making up their own.

### **When and where to use authentic materials**

There are many sources where to find authentic materials, but specifically reading authentic resources like menus of local restaurants, biographies, tourist guides, and phone numbers from the telephone guide, among others.

Despite of that, we must take into account some factors in choosing those materials as:

### **Important factors in choosing authentic reading material**

Suitability of Content	<p>Does the text interest the student?</p> <p>Is it relevant to the student's needs?</p> <p>Does it represent the type of material that the student will use outside of the classroom?</p>
Exploitability	<p>Can the text be exploited for teaching purposes?</p> <p>For what purpose should the text be exploited?</p> <p>What skills/strategies can be developed exploiting the text?</p>
Readability	<p>Is the text too easy/difficult for the student?</p> <p>Is it structurally too demanding/complex?</p> <p>How much new vocabulary does it contain? Is it relevant?</p>
Presentation	<p>Does it "look" authentic?</p> <p>Is it "attractive"?</p> <p>Does it grab the student's attention?</p> <p>Does it make him want to read more?</p>

Authentic materials that could potentially be used in second language classes are everywhere: books, newspapers, magazines, videos, etc. Their abundance is one of their most attractive features. While a small bookshelf can probably hold all of the textbooks that a typical teacher could find for a given course, an ordinary school library could not begin to find room for all of the authentic materials that might be used.

Furthermore, most of the materials that ordinary people seek for entertainment and enlightenment are authentic. People enjoy authentic materials and eagerly devote hours of their time to reading or viewing them. They provide a depth of interest and a breadth of variety that cannot be found in even the most outstanding textbook series.

Valdeón (1995: 234) suggests that “once we have tried to establish a new classification of the material used in the teaching of English, or any other languages for the matter”, we should “focus on authentic material and the various processes that it can undergo to be adapted to suit the needs of our students”. That adaptation of given material responds to the need of individualizing it to focus on one or various aspects of the language. However, some authors, focusing their attention on the communicative trend, have rejected any alteration to the authentic material, without considering that the priorities of teachers and students may vary and change. As a consequence, there are some relevant **reasons** why we might decide to adapt some material before using it in the classroom:

- Grammar points included in the material are not clear enough or do not correspond to the level of our class.
- The text includes a number of examples of structures which have been studied in class, but we might find it helpful to supply the original text with further examples.
- We might decide to avoid certain grammatical points altogether if we are more interested in the material as a starting point for a debate or to introduce new vocabulary.
- Too much emphasis on the communicative aspect of the material, not allowing the students to understand the message. We might start by presenting some grammatical structures.

The vocabulary included is too complex or there are too many unknown words.

- The text might be appealing, but it could be too easy. We need to use supplementary material to introduce new language points.
- The text is too difficult. So, we might delete certain parts, although we must make sure that the main ideas remain and the students can follow it easily.
- Some texts are too formal, and the students are not likely to read them or use them.
- If the material is to be used as part of an exam, we should adapt it to suit the level the students have reached when they sit the exam, not the level we had expected them to reach.

- The text might offend our students.

### **Ways in which authentic materials could be used**

There are different **ways** whereby we can adapt authentic material to suit the needs of our students: **adding, deleting, modifying, simplifying** and **reordering**.

- **Adding**: Whenever we want our students to practice certain grammatical structures, items of vocabulary or minimal pairs that are not found in their L1, and the authentic material we want to use does not provide enough examples, we can supply the text with further examples of any of these linguistic exponents.
- **Deleting**: Textbooks are prepared for an international public with various needs. We must not feel guilty if we have to omit two or three exercises in one unit, if we feel that they are not relevant, or even the whole unit, if our students will not learn anything from it.
- **Modifying**: There are two main techniques to modify a text: rewrite it and restructure it. Furthermore, we can also adapt a text for our students to read aloud or for us to dictate it to the students, if we want them to practice certain features.
- **Simplifying**: This technique is also useful, but can lead to a distortion of natural speech or written English if we are not especially careful when we simplify grammar or certain features of speech. In many cases it would be worthwhile keeping those grammatical points, which will certainly require further practice, rather than simplifying them.

Simplification can be mainly applied to texts rather than audiovisual material and affects the sentence structure, the lexical content and the grammatical structures. But as we mentioned before everyone of these processes must be carried out very carefully so that we do not turn authentic material into artificial language, and finally, **reordering**.

### **Areas of application**

For students to develop communicative competence in reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble (or be) real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. They must therefore be authentic in three ways.

The reading material must be authentic: It must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom.

When selecting texts for student assignments, remember that the difficulty of a reading text is less a function of the language, and more a function of the conceptual difficulty and the task(s) that students are expected to complete. Simplifying a text by changing the language often removes natural redundancy and makes the organization somewhat difficult for students to predict. This actually makes a text more difficult to read than if the original were used.

Rather than simplifying a text by changing its language, make it more approachable by eliciting students' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, reviewing new vocabulary before reading, and asking students to perform tasks

that are within their competence, such as skimming to get the main idea or scanning for specific information, before they begin intensive reading.

The reading purpose must be authentic: Students must be reading for reasons that make sense and have relevance to them. "Because the teacher assigned it" is not an authentic reason for reading a text.

To identify relevant reading purposes, ask students how they plan to use the language they are learning and what topics they are interested in reading and learning about. Give them opportunities to choose their reading assignments, and encourage them to use the library, the Internet, and foreign language newsstands and bookstores to find other things they would like to read.

The reading approach must be authentic: Students should read the text in a way that matches the reading purpose, the type of text, and the way people normally read. This means that reading aloud will take place only in situations where it would take place outside the classroom, such as reading for pleasure. The majority of students' reading should be done silently.

However, some claim that authentic materials help students to develop not only the reading skill, but also the other language skills like listening, writing, speaking, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar as there are many kinds of those resources, the opportunities to learn are immense.

## **f. METHODOLOGY**

### **Design of the Research**

The present research work is based on the Action Research as a constructive enquiry, which is carried out in order to understand, to evaluate and then to change a situation, at the time the research is conducting and improve educational practice. This study is an educational research that will allow the practitioner to study and practice a variety of aspects making use of authentic materials with the purpose to improve the reading skill in the foreign language.

### **Methods, Techniques and Instruments**

#### **Methods**

The following general methods will be applied along the Research:

**The scientific method** will facilitate the study of appropriate resources to improve the reading skill. Also, it will help in the observations done before and during the intervention. This one will support with gathering data to make relevant predictions about the possible solutions.

**The descriptive method** will be useful to describe the different stages of the study and the kind of resources used by the researcher. It will serve to explain and analyze the object of investigation.

**The Analytic-synthetic method** will be used to analyze and interpret the obtained results through the tests. It also will help to draw up the conclusions.

**The statistics method** will be used to make the quantitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the tests and the qualitative data from the observations and the teacher's diary.

This research work also will follow the process of an action research which includes planning, acting, observing and reflecting suggests, proposed by (Kemmis, 2000). Action research is "learning by doing", in this model, a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if not satisfied, try again. Moreover, there is an emphasis on scientific study, which is to say that the researcher studies the problem systematically and ensures that the intervention is informed by theoretical considerations.

This process will help the researcher to see if any necessary modification or amendment would be necessary to improve student's pronunciation learning.

The process of the research will be carried out systematically, by collecting data on one's everyday practice, analyzing it in order to draw conclusions about how future practice should be.

## **Techniques and instruments**

### **Data collection**

To collect the data, tests, observations and diary will be design and applied at the beginning, during and after the application of intervention plan.

## **Tests**

Two kinds of tests will be used. At the beginning, a pre-test will contain some questions guided to determine students' reading level of comprehension in the foreign language. It will be related with the topics that students have already studied. The same test will be used as a post-test at the end of the intervention plan in order to know if students have improved the reading skill with the implementation of authentic materials.

## **Observation**

Through the observation sheet the researcher will observe the students' performance during the lesson. It also will be used to determine what has happened in class and then analyze and reflect upon the findings when the plan ends.

## **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire with five questions: 3 yes/ no questions and 2 multiple-choice questions, will be applied to obtain information from students about the development of reading inside the classroom. This instrument will be applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention. The post questionnaire will be used to collect students' progress about the reading skills developed during the intervention. The tests will be conducted in class, so that the researcher will give a clear explanation to students and clarify the students' inquiries.

### **Field diary and notes**

The researcher will use a diary to record what happens in each lesson. It will help to write up the findings during the intervention, relevant vents during the observation or particular situations that happen.

### **Procedures**

The action researcher work process will involve the following stages:

The intervention plan will start and end with the application of a pre test, which will be written. The first one will be applied at the beginning of the study to collect data from students. And the other one will be applied at the end to verify if students improve or not their reading skill.

During the development of the lesson a variety of activities will be introduced to practice and improve students' reading skill. Likewise, the observation checklist and diary will be used to record particular situations and to observe students' performance.

The findings before and after the intervention plan will be compared and analyze to draw up conclusions about the research work.

### **Tabulation**

The tabulation of data will be done with the results obtained in the tests. A logical analysis will be done with the information received.

## **Organization**

The researcher will organize the work based on the information received in all the strategies applied to compare and analyze the impact of the intervention plan. A report of the intervention will be disseminated with the findings and ideas among the teachers, partners and the school.

## **Description**

The obtained data will be described in graphics considering the information pre and post intervention. The description of each question will be completed to facilitate the interpretation of the information shown, and also do the logical analysis of the data received.

## **Population**

The students of second year of Bachillerato, are who will participate in the development of this action research. The participants of the study are 22 students between boy and girls. They are between sixteen and seventeen years old. The students receive 5 hours of English per week with a certified teacher.

## **Intervention and observation plan**

### **Alternative:**

The implementation of a compilation of authentic materials to improve the reading skill.

### **Objectives:**

To improve the reading skill with the implementation of a compilation of authentic materials among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school in Loja city during the academic period 2014-2015

### **Introduction:**

The intervention plan is a two month program that will prepare students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, to read and comprehend texts in English easily through the reading of a compilation of authentic materials.

The goal of the intervention plan is to motivate students to improve their reading skill through:

- Readings of interesting authentic materials that will include: Facebook images, menus of local restaurants, artists’ biographies, song lyrics, magazine excerpts and tourist guides, which will get students attention easily.
- Reading topics according to students’ interests and needs.

Also, it includes eight lessons with a set of authentic materials, which are based on the topics students are studying. Each lesson will be developed

following the ESA lesson sequences proposed by Jeremy Harmer in the book *How to teach English?* Those sequences could be described in the following way:

**Engage:**

It is used to get students to think and talk in English and also a way to ease into a lesson. An introduction of the teacher and student gets everyone involved in the lesson and inspires confidence in students as well for the teachers.

This phase is done through games, warm ups and discussions about preferences, music, stories or pictures, related to the topics that learners are studying and by introducing authentic materials, too. This phase is used for getting the students to think and talk in English and is also a good way to ease into a lesson.

**Study:**

This phase is generally the bulk of the lesson and focuses on the lesson point. It contains some activities for learners to develop.

This phase is developed listening and reading the materials silently. In some classes, learners will be asked to work either individually or in groups. In the study phase, some activities are developed. They are usually worksheet activities ranging from a few specific words to practice of verb tense, sounds and spelling (word search and crosswords). Before handing out the activities the researcher will start with a process called “*demonstrate, elicit and give out.*” (D.E.G.O), in which, the researcher will have to explain students certain activity. Then, confirm

students' understanding of the explanation and finally give them some tasks to solve and monitors their work.

**Activate:**

It is the phase used to encourage students to use their skills, to put into practice what they have learned, by interacting with others and consequently generating a lot of student talking time.

This phase is developed with the generation of a lot of student talk time, getting them to use the lesson point and all of their other skills to date. The activate activities are: charades, storytelling, putting sentences together, role-plays, questions and answers and communication games. Learners will be asked to read the materials aloud, by making emphasis on aspects as phonics, fluency and intonation. At the end of the activate phase, the researcher will get the students to give a feedback to the class individually.

**Period:**

This intervention plan will be carried into effect throughout the months of April and May during the academic period 2014 – 2015.

**INTERVENTION AND OBSERVATION PLAN**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Pre-test, questionnaire.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
WEEK ONE (2 hours)	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Answer the questionnaire and the pre test questions about the five aspects of reading: <i>phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pre-test (Readings about Units 1-3 and previous knowledge)</li> <li>-Questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher presents the test to evaluate reading.</li> <li>• The researcher gives the instructions about it and the learners develop the test.</li> <li>• The researcher monitors students and clarify any doubt.</li> </ul>	<p>Pre- test Questionnaire</p>

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, parallel "A" at "Fernando Suárez Palacio" high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Observation sheet, Field diary.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
WEEK TWO (2 hours)	Students will be able to: Distinguish food items in menus of restaurants and to use their new vocabulary correctly.	<i>Unit 3: Are there any chips left?</i>  <i>Food items</i>	<b>AUTHENTIC MATERIAL:</b> Menu of restaurant <b>Engage:</b> Researcher presents students a guessing game about food items and restaurants. Students have to guess what food item the researcher is thinking about based on the characteristics that she gives. <b>Study:</b> Researcher <i>presents</i> students a menu of a restaurant in English and provides learners with enough information about new phrases and vocabulary. <i>Researcher reads the material aloud and students follow the reading silently.</i> Through a <b>word search</b> , students work in groups to distinguish the vocabulary contained in the analyzed menu. <b>Activate:</b> Students read the materials aloud by using proper intonation. Researcher asks learners questions related to the topic and learners have to apply all their skills to solve them. At the end, students give a feedback about the class.	Authentic materials (menu of local restaurant)  Word search

**SUPPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Observation sheet, Field diary.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
WEEK THREE (2 hours)	Students will be able to: -Identify in Facebook images <i>consonant and alphabet sounds</i> and to develop their phonics and phonemic awareness.	Unit 3: Are there any chips left?	<p><b>AUTHENTIC MATERIAL:</b> Facebook images</p> <p><b>Engage:</b> Researcher presents students a bingo game that contains some vocabulary words of the last class, about food items. Then, researcher starts a discussion about: What do you like/about Facebook? in order to introduce the topic easily.</p> <p><b>Study:</b> Researcher presents students some consonant and alphabet sounds in order to guide them with different readings. Students receive some Facebook images in English with their vocabulary, and the researcher reads aloud and learners follow the reading silently. In the given material, students underline words with certain sounds given by the researcher.</p> <p><b>Activate:</b> The learners read the material aloud and they have to say words with the same ending or that rhyme correctly. At the end of the class, all the students give a <i>feedback</i> of the class.</p>	Authentic material (Facebook images).

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**.OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Observation sheet, Field diary.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
<b>WEEK FOUR (2 hours)</b>	Students will be able to: -Answer different questions based on a reading to improve their reading comprehension.	<i>Unit 3: Are there any chips left?</i>  <i>Reading: Thailand's Floating Markets</i>	<b>AUTHENTIC MATERIAL:</b> Tourist guide  <b>Engage:</b> Researcher presents students a memory game with touristic places to remember the different alphabet sounds learned last classes. It contains some pictures that they have to memorize in order to win.  <b>Study:</b> The researcher presents students some strategies for effective reading comprehension. Researcher gives students a tourist guide of Loja city in English with its vocabulary. The researcher reads the material aloud and learners follow it silently. Then, they complete a crossword with information about the tourist guide that can be completed if they have comprehended the text at all.  <b>Activate:</b> Students read the material aloud and answer some comprehension questions about the resource, based on the presentation and helped with their previous knowledge. At the end of the class, all the students give a feedback of the class.	Authentic material (Tourist guide) Crossword

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Observation sheet, Field diary.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
<b>WEEK FIVE (2 hours)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to:</li> </ul> <p>-Read a song with fluency, by developing that aspect of reading.</p>	<p><i>Unit 4:</i> <i>How often do you go rock climbing?</i> <i>Dialogue</i></p>	<p><b>AUTHENTIC MATERIAL:</b> Song lyrics</p> <p><b>Engage:</b> Researcher presents students a guessing game in which they have to guess some facts about a famous singer.</p> <p><b>Study:</b> The researcher presents students some tips to have a fluent reading in English. Researcher gives students some song lyrics in English with its vocabulary. Researcher reads the material aloud and students follow it silently. Students work in groups to solve some worksheets based on the topic of the class.</p> <p><b>Activate:</b> Learners read the material aloud, applying the taught tips about fluency. Students work on a communication game in which they have to ask their classmates some questions about the class. At the end they have to report their findings, by putting in practice their skills.</p>	<p>Authentic materials <i>Song lyrics</i> <i>Speakers</i></p>

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Observation sheet, Field diary.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
<b>WEEK SIX (2 hours)</b>	Students will be able to: -Identify the use of adverbs of frequency in a biography of a famous person and to use the reading strategies: highlighting, note taking and looking for key words while reading.	<i>Unit 4: How often do you go rock climbing? Adverbs of frequency</i>	<b>AUTHENTIC MATERIAL:</b> Biography of an artist. <b>Engage:</b> Researcher presents students a <i>speaking game in which students have to describe a picture related to an artist.</i> <b>Study:</b> The researcher presents students some effective reading strategies: highlighting, note taking, looking for key words. Researcher gives students the biography of an artist in English with its vocabulary. Researcher reads the material aloud and students follow the reading silently. In the given biography, students use any of the taught strategies while reading the resource, and they have to circle all the adverbs of frequency that they find. <b>Activate:</b> Learners read the material aloud, applying the taught tips about fluency and the other aspects of reading. Students put some words together to make sentences related to the topic and they have to read them aloud. At the end, learners give a <i>feedback</i> of the class.	Authentic material (Biography of an artist.)

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Observation sheet, Field diary.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
WEEK SEVEN (2 hours)	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Read a text, demonstrating comprehension, fluency, phonemic awareness and vocabulary domain while doing the task.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unit 4:</b> <b>How often do you go rock climbing?</b> <b>Boxing is for boys; dancing is for girls.</b></p>	<p><b>AUTHENTIC MATERIAL:</b> Magazine excerpt</p> <p><b>Engage:</b> Researcher presents students a True or False game about their likes and dislikes. They have to tell those facts aloud, and the other students have to guess if the information is either true or false.</p> <p><b>Study:</b> The researcher presents students a review about all the aspects related to effective reading that students have learned the last classes. Researcher gives students a magazine excerpt with its vocabulary about boys and girls and its differences. Researcher reads the material aloud and learners follow the reading silently.</p> <p><b>Activate:</b> Learners read the material aloud, applying the taught aspects for effective reading and they have the chance to read it as many times as they want, comprehending it at all. Students have to answer any question asked by the researcher about either comprehension or vocabulary.</p>	<p>Authentic material (Magazine excerpt.)</p>

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM:** How does the implementation of authentic materials improve reading skill among the students of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school, during the academic period 2014-2015?

**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:** Post – test.

	LEARNING OUTCOMES	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	RESOURCES
<b>WEEK EIGHT (2 hours)</b>	Students will be able to: -Answer the questionnaire and the post-test questions about the five aspects about reading: <i>phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency.</i>	<i>Post-test (Readings about Units 1-3 and previous knowledge)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher presents the test to evaluate reading.</li> <li>• The researcher gives the instructions about it and the learners develop the test.</li> <li>• The researcher monitors students and clarify any doubt.</li> </ul>	Post-test

**SUPPORT:** Coaching and guidance from the university professor.

**OBSERVATION NOTES:**

## **Organization and management of the research**

### **Resources**

#### **Human**

- The resources that will be part of this project are:
- The researcher authoress Erika Lucía González Carrión.
- The students of second year of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school.

#### **Material**

The material resources that we will be used are:

- Paper
- Authentic materials

#### **Technical**

- Computer
- Flash memory
- Scanner
- Printer
- Internet

**g. TIME LINE**

PHASES	ACTIVITIES	2015											2016			
		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	De	Jan	Feb	Mar	
PROJECT	Project presentation.	x														
	Appointment of the teacher advisor		x													
	Project approval		x													
	Appointment of thesis advisor		x													
INTERVENTION/ ACTION	Application of the instruments		x													
	Act-observe			xxxx	xxxx											
THESIS PROCESS	data organization and tabulation.					xx										
	Interpreting and reflecting					xx										
	Writing up and reporting						xx									
	Presenting the thesis report						x									
	Thesis revision.						x									
	Submission of the folder								xxxx	xxxx	xxxx					
	Thesis presentation.											xxxx				
	Private review and thesis approval												xxxx			
	Corrections													xxxx		
	Public presentation and incorporation															xxxx

## **h. BUDGET AND FINANCING**

### **Budget**

<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>COST</b>
<b>Internet</b>	<b>\$100,00</b>
<b>Print of the project</b>	<b>\$100,00</b>
<b>Print of the reports</b>	<b>\$80,00</b>
<b>Print of final report and thesis</b>	<b>\$300,00</b>
<b>Others</b>	<b>\$50,00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$630,00</b>

The financing of the expenses derived from the present research work will be assumed by the research author.

All expenses related to the present research work will be assumed entirely by the researcher conducting the investigation.

## i. BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Adams, T. (1995). What Makes Materials Authentic? (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 391389).
- Berardo, S. (2006) *The Use of Authentic Materials in the Teaching of Reading*. The Reading Matrix. Vol. 6, No. 2
- Breen, M. (1985). Authenticity in the language classroom. *Applied Linguistics* 6, 60-70.
- Bravo Wendy Lorena.(2012) *The Use of Supplementary Materials for Teaching Children in EFL Classes*. MACHALA. Thesis project.
- Flores Escarraga, Angel Guillermo .*The use of supplementary material for teaching children in IFL classes*. QUITO. 2012. UTPL (Thesis project)
- Garzón Peña, Verónica Catalina/ Guamán Sarmiento, Sonia Karolina .*The use of supplementary materials for teaching children in EFL classes*. Cuenca . 2012. UTPL (Thesis project)
- Garvey, E. (2007). National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Guariento, W., & Morley. (2001). Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal*, 55 (4), 347 - 353.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and Learning in the language Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, W. (1995). Authenticity revisited: text authenticity and learner authenticity. *ELT Journal*, 49 (4), 323-328.
- LeLoup, J. W., & Ponterio, R. (2000). Creating standards-based activities integrating authentic materials from the WWW”, in Wm. Heller, Ed., ABC to PhD: Foreign Language Proficiency for ALL, Annual Meeting Series No. 17, 13-20; Schenectady, NY: New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers.
- Macdonald, M., Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). The real thing?: authenticity and academic listening. *English for Specific Purposes*, 9, 253-267.
- McNeill, A. (1994). *What Makes Authentic Materials Different? The Case of English Language Materials for Educational Television*. Papers presented at the Annual International Language in Education Conference, Hong Kong.
- Mendoza, M. *The use of the didactic material and the classroom language in the learning of English with the students of 8th, 9th, and 10th years of basic*

education at "27 de Febrero" high school, academic year 2009-2010. Loja. 2010. UNL (Thesis project)

Miller, L. (2003). *Developing listening skills with authentic materials*. *ESL Magazine*, 6 (1), 16-19.

Miller, M. (2005). *Improving aural comprehension skills in EFL, using authentic materials: an experiment with university students in Nigata, Japan*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Surrey, Australia.

Torregrosa, G & Sánchez-Reyes, P (2006). *Encuentro 20*. Encuentro 20, **2011**, ISSN 1989-0796, pp. 89-94.

### Web Sites

Akgun Ali, M. (2004). *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. X, No. 7. Retrieved from: <http://iteslj.org/>

Adams, T. (1995). *What Makes Materials Authentic?* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 391389). Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/od8xadz>

Alijani, S (2014). *The Effect of Authentic vs. Non-authentic Materials on Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension Ability*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/oj4hgv7>

Biskup, L. (s.f.) *English fluency now*. Retrieved from: <http://englishfluency.com/>

Larry, M. (2007). *Materials in the classroom*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/metvssu>

Lansford, L. (2014). *Authentic materials in the classroom: the advantages*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/lqdoawo>

Zchuqing, C. (2003) *Authentic materials\_ advantages and drawbacks*. Retrieved from: <http://www.math.mun.ca/~yliang/authentic.htm>

Hastings, A & Murphy, B (2011). *Focal Skills*. Retrieved from: <http://focalskills.info/sevenmyths/>

Heitler, D. (2005). *Teaching with authentic materials*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/mk9mmnx>

Kagan, O. (2013). *HL Instruction: Using Authentic Materials and Authentic Tasks*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/q9lwhhs>

Kagan, O. (2014). *Authentic Tasks*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/npvyueq>

Kilickaya, F. (2004). *Authentic materials and cultural content in EFL classrooms*. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 10 (7). Retrieved November 1, 2006 from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kilickaya-AuthenticMaterial.html>

Melvin, B & Stout, D. (2002). *Motivating language learners through authentic materials*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/mwmgv>

Kilickaya, F. (2004) *Authentic materials and cultural content in EFL classrooms*. Retrieved from: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kilickaya-AuthenticMaterial.html>

Ma, G. (2012). *Using authentic materials*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/p7gposp>

Martinez, A. (2002). *Authentic Materials*. M.A., Mexico City. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/ooktmla>

Shepherd, S. (2004). *Using authentic materials*. Retrieved from: <http://tinyurl.com/poarbky>

## **ANNEXES**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**  
**Pre - Test**

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_

**Dear student:**

**Develop the following test by answering each question honestly. If you don't understand a question ask directly to the researcher. In case those you don't know an answer leave the space. GOOD LUCK!**

*Phonics and vocabulary domain: (2 points)*

**1. Reorder the following letters in order to make a word with them:**

- **RLAPOUP**                    (.....)
- **LEJLY**                        (.....)
- **TAF**                            (.....)
- **OAWNM**                    (.....)
- **OMTTOEA**                 (.....)

**2. Write each of the words under each picture: (2 points)**



.....

*Phonemic awareness (2 points)*

**3. Write as many words as you can that rhyme with the following words:**

- FRIENDLY:** \_\_\_\_\_
- MOTHER:** \_\_\_\_\_
- FACEBOOK:** \_\_\_\_\_
- MILK:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reading Comprehension (2 points)**

**4. Read the following text and answer the following questions:**

**Miami- A great place to be!**

**Miami, located in Florida is one of the most amazing places to visit in the world. There are many places to visit in Miami. There is the Metrozoo, the Seaquarium, the Planetarium, the Venetian Pool and the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. There are beautiful parks there too.**

**South of Miami there's a place called Coconut Grove. If you love shopping or if you enjoy the theater and the arts, Coconut Grove is the place for you. You can go to shows, visit museums or shopping at expensive stores, go to dance clubs or eat at fabulous restaurants delicious food as: fruit's salad, fish, mushrooms, etc.**

**And of course, there are some great beaches in Miami, where you can hang out and meet new people; you can start conversations with them with simple questions as: What is your name? What is your favorite color? How many brothers or sister do you have? You can know about their interests, hobbies, likes and dislikes. Moreover, you have the opportunity relax in the sun, or go for a swim in the ocean or bay.**

**Where is Miami located?**

Miami is located in \_\_\_\_\_

**What are some places that we can visit in Miami?**

In Miami, we can visit \_\_\_\_\_

**What could you find in Coconut Grove?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What could you do in Miami?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Would you like to visit Miami? Why?**

**Fluency: (2 points in accordance with the rubric)**

**5. Read this excerpt of the text above for the researcher:**

*There are some great beaches in Miami, where you can hang out and meet new people; you can start conversations with them with simple questions as: What is your name? What is your favorite color? How many brothers or sister do you have? You can know about their interests, hobbies, likes and dislikes.*

**THANK YOU**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGNATURE**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA  
 ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN  
 ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**Grading scale for reading**

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>GRADING SCALE FOR READING</b>			
	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Considerable</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Phonics</b>	2	1,5	1	0,5
<b>Vocabulary domain</b>	2	1,5	1	0,5
<b>Phonemic Awareness</b>	2	1,5	1	0,5
<b>Reading comprehension</b>	2	1,5	1	0,5
<b>Reading fluency</b>	2	1,5	1	0,5

**Elaboration:** *The researcher*

*\*(8/10) Expected level before and after the intervention plan.*



## QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME:.....

As an undergraduate of the English Language Department, the researcher is doing an action research about authentic materials. This study will help you to improve your reading skill in English. For this reason, I ask you to answer the following questions:

**1. Do you think that authentic materials help you to develop reading skills?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Does the teacher use authentic materials to work in the English class?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**3. In the English class, the materials are?**

- Interesting ( )
- Funny ( )
- Boring ( )

**4. Which strategies help you to develop the reading skill?**

- Highlighting ( ) Underlining ( )
- Circling ( ) Getting familiar with new vocabulary ( )

**5. Would you like to learn to read in English efficiently?**

Yes ( ) No ( )

**Thanks for your collaboration.**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

<b>OBSERVATION SHEET</b>				
<b>OBSERVER:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>			
<b>THINGS TO BE OBSERVED</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
Have all students a good confidence in themselves when they read?				
Do students feel motivated with the reading of authentic materials in English?				
Were the objectives for the activities accomplished?				
Do students feel good when reading an authentic material and cooperate actively in the tasks development?				



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA**  
**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**FIELD DIARY**

Lesson						
Activity						
Objective:						
Materials:						
Timing						
Procedure						
Grouping						
Do students like it?	Yes		For a while		Not really	
Are they bored?	Yes		No			
Do they make an effort?						
Comments						

**RUBRIC TO EVALUATE READING FLUENCY**

Name: ..... Grade:..... Date:..... Total score:.....

<i>Score</i>	<i>2/2</i>	<i>1,5/2</i>	<i>1/2</i>	<i>0,5/2</i>
<b>READING FLUENCY</b>	<i>Flowed faster or slower depending on the paragraph moods.</i>	<i>Smooth like a river. Knowledge of words.</i>	<i>Stopped now and then to work in a word.</i>	<i>Discontinuous, needed to stop and figure out words.</i>
	<i>Comfortable, speaking for experience.</i>	<i>Confidence is shown in moments of enthusiasm</i>	<i>Limited confidence, timid.</i>	<i>No confidence yet.</i>
	<i>Smooth, natural, rhythmic, no awkward moments- pauses are consistently where they should be.</i>	<i>Reading is often fluid and meaningful, but some pauses occur unnecessarily.</i>	<i>Reading is sometimes stopped- sometimes the reader does not pause effectively at sentence ends, or commas.</i>	<i>Reading is hard to follow, with many stops and starts- requires rereading to gain meaning.</i>
	<i>Nice inflection in voice- keeps listener engaged.</i>	<i>Voice has inflection as necessary, but has monotonous spots.</i>	<i>Voice has sometimes inflection, but at times it is monotonous.</i>	<i>Revision needed for expressive Reading. Voice is always monotone.</i>

**MATRIX**

**THEME:** Improvement of reading skill through the implementation of authentic materials among 2ND year students of bachillerato, at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” High School In Loja City, Carigán Neighborhood, during the school year 2014-2015.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Theoretical Frame</b>	<b>Methodological Design (Action Research)</b>	<b>Instruments</b>
<p><b>Main Research Problem</b></p> <p><b>How does the use of authentic materials improve the reading skill among 2ND year students of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the school year 2014-2015?</b></p>	<p><b>General</b></p> <p>To improve the reading skill through the implementation of authentic materials among 2ND year students of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the school year 2014- 2015.</p>	<p><b>Reading Skill</b></p> <p>Definition</p> <p>Basic aspects of reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Types of reading</p> <p>Learning and teaching reading</p> <p>How to teach reading in English?</p>	<p><b>Preliminary investigation</b></p> <p>Observing of the English classes.</p> <p>Stating the background of problem.</p> <p>Describing the current situation</p>	<p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Tests</p> <p>Diary</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>Sheet</p>

<b>SUB PROBLEMS</b>	<b>SPECIFIC</b>			
<p>What is the existing theoretical reference about authentic materials as a resource to improve the reading skill among the students of 2ND year students of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the school year 2014- 2015?</p>	<p>To look for the theoretical references about authentic materials as a resource to improve the reading skill among the students of 2ND year students of bachillerato at “Fernando Suárez Palacio” high school during the school year 2014- 2015.</p>	<p>Aspects of reading Reading strategies and techniques ESA Method <b>Authentic Materials</b> Definition Kinds of authentic materials Importance of authentic materials in education Purpose of authentic materials Advantages and</p>	<p>Locating and reviewing the literature. Creating a methodological framework for the research. Preparing an intervention plan. <b>Presentation of Research findings</b> Reflecting, analyzing and</p>	
<p>What are the difficulties that limit the students’ improvement of reading skill of 2ND year of</p>	<p>To diagnose the weaknesses and difficulties that students show when they read written</p>			

<p>bachillerato?</p> <p>What kind of resources could be helpful to contribute to improve the reading skill in English with the students of 2ND year of bachillerato?</p> <p>Which authentic materials are implemented to improve the reading skill in English among the students of 2ND year of bachillerato?</p>	<p>texts in English.</p> <p>To design a compilation of authentic materials of different topics inside the class as a resource to improve students' reading skill.</p> <p>To apply a compilation of authentic materials as a teaching tool to reduce students' lack of interest when reading in English.</p>	<p>disadvantages of authentic materials.</p> <p>Use of authentic materials inside the classroom.</p> <p>Activities to apply with authentic materials</p> <p>When and where to use authentic materials</p> <p>Ways in which authentic materials could be used.</p>	<p>answering the proposed inquiries.</p> <p>Organizing the final report.</p>	
---	---	---	--	--

<p>What was the effect that authentic materials had on the improvement of the reading skill with students of 2ND year of bachillerato?</p>	<p>To evaluate the usefulness of authentic materials inside the class to improve reading skill through formal and informal evaluation</p>			
--	---	--	--	--

## INDEX

COVER PAGE.....	i
CERTIFICATION.....	ii
AUTORÍA .....	iii
CARTA DE AUTORIZACIÓN.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
DEDICATION .....	vi
MAPA GEOGRÁFICO Y CROQUIS .....	viii
UBICACIÓN GEOGRÁFICA DEL CANTÓN LOJA.....	viii
CROQUIS DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN .....	viii
THESIS OUTLINE.....	ix
a. TITLE.....	1
b. RESUMEN .....	2
ABSTRACT.....	3
c. INTRODUCTION.....	4
d. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
Reading.....	7
Definition.....	7
Reading Aspects.....	9
How to Teach Reading? .....	13
How to Read Better and Faster? .....	16
Reading strategies .....	18
Authentic Materials.....	19
Definition:.....	19
Kinds of authentic materials .....	20
Activities to apply with authentic materials .....	21
Purpose of authentic materials .....	22
Advantages of authentic materials .....	23
Authentic materials and reading skill.....	25

e.	<b>MATERIALS AND METHODS</b> .....	27
f.	<b>RESULTS</b> .....	31
g.	<b>DISCUSSION</b> .....	44
h.	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	47
i.	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	48
j.	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY:</b> .....	50
k.	<b>ANNEXES</b> .....	51
	PROJECT.....	51
a.	<b>THEME</b> .....	52
b.	<b>PROBLEM STATEMENT</b> .....	53
c.	<b>JUSTIFICATION</b> .....	58
d.	<b>OBJECTIVES</b> .....	60
e.	<b>THEORETICAL FRAME</b> .....	61
f.	<b>METHODOLOGY</b> .....	102
g.	<b>TIME LINE</b> .....	119
h.	<b>BUDGET AND FINANCING</b> .....	120
i.	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	121
	<b>ANNEXES</b> .....	124
	<b>INDEX</b> .....	136