

USE OF EXTENSIVE READING TO ACQUIRE VOCABULARY IN INTERMEDIATE
STUDENTS AT A UNIVERSITY LEVEL

By

ANA MILENA URREA AHUMADA

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of B.A.

Linguistics and Languages Department

English and French program

University Of Nariño

2015

NOTA DE RESPONSABILIDAD

Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en este Trabajo de Grado son Responsabilidad de los autores.

Artículo 1 del Acuerdo No. 324 de octubre 11 de 1966, emanado del honorable Concejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

Nota de Aceptación:

Firma del Presidente del Jurado

Firma del Jurado

Firma del Jurado

San Juan de Pasto, Mayo de 2015.

RESUMEN

Cuando se habla de la lectura extensiva en una configuración de idioma extranjero, se dice que se puede dar a la exposición al alumno al lenguaje y sus beneficios también puede ser reflejada por escrito. Cuando se aplica correctamente, la lectura extensiva también puede aumentar la motivación ya que los alumnos pueden elegir el texto por sí mismos.

ABSTRACT

When talking about extensive reading in a foreign language setting, it is said that it can give the learner exposure to the language and its benefits can also be reflected in writing. When applying correctly, extensive reading can also increase motivation since the learners can choose the text by themselves.

Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
Problem Statement.....	5
Research Objectives.....	5
General Objective.....	6
Specific objectives.....	6
Research Question.....	6
Theoretical Background.....	7
Natural Approach.....	7
Krashen's Monitor Model.....	8
Reading.....	9
Reading Strategies.....	11
Top down Model.....	11
Bottom up Model.....	12
Scanning and Skimming.....	12
Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading.....	12
Extensive Reading.....	12
Stages of Extensive Reading.....	15
Vocabulary.....	16
The role of context in Vocabulary acquisition.....	18
Vocabulary Teaching.....	19
Intermediate Level Students.....	21
Extensive Reading Benefits in Intermediate Students.....	24

Challenges.....	28
Suggestions.....	30
Assumptions.....	34
References.....	36

Introduction.

The purpose of this research paper is to talk about how extensive reading could affect vocabulary acquisition with intermediate students at a university level. Reading Instruction has been the most emphasized skill in foreign language teaching since it is the main source of comprehensible input; it provides variety in linguist competence level, length, and styles.

When talking about extensive reading in a foreign language setting, it is said that it can give the learner exposure to the language and its benefits can also be reflected in writing. When applying correctly, extensive reading can also increase motivation since the learners can choose the text by themselves.

Since the benefits of reading are unlimited as well as in L1 or L2. During the development of this paper it will only be talked about vocabulary benefits on intermediate students. Vocabulary teaching is not about teaching isolated words, learners need to know the meaning of these words in context, their use, formation and grammar (Harmer, 1991).

The success most of the English immersion programs obtain, is due to the natural contact learners of a foreign language have with itself, therefore we could make a relative comparison with extensive reading.

Problem Statement.

Being Vocabulary a sub-skill, its teaching is often disregarded by some teachers whose only focus can be listening, reading, speaking or writing, some teachers assume that vocabulary comes along the way; as of today, many learners could think that the only way to learn new vocabulary is by memorizing, e.g. when teaching the past simple students are required to learn the past form of an irregular verb by heart instead of using the different conjugation of the verbs in a real context.

Intermediate learners (B₂) according to the common European framework of reference for a language are those students who are independent speakers. It is essential that at this level Extensive Reading is developed since intermediate students have the skills to make predictions, infer meaning from the context or guess the meaning of a word without relying on the use of the dictionary as most of the beginner students do.

At the end of this research paper it will be seen if there is an effect on vocabulary if extensive reading is implemented.

Research Question.

How could the use extensive reading affect the vocabulary acquisition of intermediate students at a university level?

Research Objectives.**General Objective.**

To determine the effect of using extensive reading on vocabulary acquisition with intermediate students at a university level.

Specific objectives.

- To analyze the relationship of extensive reading and vocabulary acquisition
- To point out the benefits of extensive reading regarding vocabulary acquisition

Theoretical Background.

In a foreign language setting, input is everything the learner hears or sees in a text, even if it is totally incomprehensible, where the learner cannot separate the stream of speech into words. In this way input is all the foreign language that is offered to the learner whether spoken or written. Due to the lack of naturally spoken English teachers could rely on Reading since it provides exposure to the language; it is a way of input, according to Gass and Selinker (2001).

Many authors have spoken about what input is, per say Krashen and Terrell (1983), proposed the input hypotheses as one of the 5 presented in the Natural Approach.

Natural Approach

Natural approach appears with the work of Krashen and Terrell (1977), where Krashen's theory on second language acquisition has also had a huge impact on education, this approach is grounded on Krashen's theory where first language acquisition is taken into account. It was one of the first approaches that took into account the affective- humanistic factors.

Another important fact in this theory is the focus on "input" rather than practice, resulting in a comprehensible input which is characterized for the understanding of meaning by means of the context or metalinguistic information provided by the teacher. This should be achieved as a focus on message rather than on form. If such input is provided, the learner will automatically learn or acquire the forms and rules.

In this way, Krashen's theory contains features making it important to consider for people who think language pedagogy is more important than usually thought. There an important element, which is all the emphasis, put on the role of meaningful input in the process of language acquisition. However, it has sometimes been disregarded. Krashen's theory offers great guidance to contemporary educators and teachers who are aware of the principle that input must come first

in language learning and this concept will contribute positively in the field of classroom teaching, and will help to improve some applications of new methods and approaches.

Besides, the process of acquisition is characterized, because language is not focused on grammar but in meaning. It was also designed to help beginners become intermediate and it depends on learner needs. Among the characteristics of the approach there is the assumption that learners start to talk when they have acquired certain linguistic competence, in this way, errors are seen as a natural part of acquisition process.

Krashen's Monitor Model.

This theory had huge influence on second language teaching practice, where five hypotheses were proposed:

Acquisition –Learning hypothesis.

The difference is established between acquisition and learning, the first one is seen as a natural process, in the same way we acquire a native language. Meanwhile learning is defined as a conscious process paying attention to the grammatical rules.

Monitor hypothesis.

The monitor hypothesis is the use of the acquired system is activated when students have to correct or check the accuracy of their production in the target language. The learned system acts as a monitor making minor changes and polishing what the acquired system has produced.

Natural order hypothesis.

The hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1983), says that learners are able to acquire a second language in the same way they learn their native language and it is also argued that the brain is prepared to receive a determined sequence of language elements which would be related to the biological development that theorists of innatism have exposed.

Affective filter hypothesis.

In the Affective filter hypothesis, there is great importance to the motivation of students, allowing them to acquire the language effectively.

Input hypothesis.

The Input hypothesis explains the importance of the comprehensible input to which learners are exposed in order to acquire a language. This acquisition depends on the exposure, amount, time and level of difficulty to what learners are exposed. (i+1 one level of linguistic competence above the level the learners already have.)

As well as listening, reading is also called *receptive skills*, it can provide comprehensible input to the learners, When talking about L2 reading, Krashen and Terrel (1983), state that reading is a meaningful source of input and an important tool to improve competence in an Foreign Language.

Reading.

Generally speaking, reading is perceived as a quiet process, an academic task or even a bored activity depending on the formation or likes and dislikes of each person. What is important to note is that reading is essential in every academic field, indeed for a labor job; you need to at least know how to fill out an application or know how to properly read the instructions of a manufacturer machine.

An important concept to understand what reading encloses is given by Carroll (1986), the term “schema” defined as a set of different stores where semantic memory remains, giving to the reader an expectation of the sequence of events in a story, its structure and content. He also talks about the importance of context, since there are some indications that learners might rely on it for word recognition and prediction.

For Candlin and Hall (2002), a reading definition could be presented in a single-sentence: “Reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately.” However they mention 4 reasons why the previous concept of reading is insufficient and inadequate.

First, the unlimited number of ways to engage reading is not included. A learner can have many possible purposes for reading and each purpose needs a different combination of skills and strategies.

Second, the definition does not include the criteria that emphasize the nature of fluent reading abilities, the skills and the knowledge that interact to create comprehension abilities that are commonly called reading.

Third, it does not explain reading as a cognitive process in order to understand how reading comprehension works for the fluent reading.

Fourth, it does not stress the difference of reading in an L2.

Most of the studies about L2 reading are based on researches about reading in L1; both include describe readings as a socio cognitive process involving 3 relevant elements such as text, a reader and a social context where the activity of reading takes place. (Bernhardt, 1991)

Although L1 and L2 reading have some similar characteristics, like same alphabet, punctuation, direction of reading (from left to right, front to back, top to bottom) they also have significant differences, e.g. when an L1 is reading a text he/she can rely on the words known in the spoken language while a L2 cannot. Besides in our setting a foreign language reader cannot rely on the oral communication because the word is unknown or else, it doesn't have a close representation because English language speakers have a very different culture regarding

Spanish speakers therefore the concept of some words, even if a definition is given, are still going to remain unknown because of cultural background.

Teachers cannot ignore the variables mentioned, they need to address them by assessing the comprehension level of the reader through placement tests, researching their cultural background or by sorting the types of readings offered to the students, it is also important to note that the reading level in L2 is not going to overcome the level the student have in their native language.

As a complement, Hill and Holden (1990), suggest that reading is the most important skill since students can develop the understanding of the text, and get immediate feedback about it.

Having a clear definition of what reading in a foreign language is and what this process implies, some different kinds of reading are going to be presented, since the reading styles depends on the purpose of itself and on the reader.

Reading Strategies.

Bottom up model

During this process learner, reads the texts and stops frequently to translate each word of the text offered, this process was often enhanced when students were though only grammar and translations as a result the result of the process was a very linear translations that were not entirely accurate due to some texts use idiomatical expressions for some abstract ideas, that literally mean a an idea but in the figurative sense the mean something different.

Top down model

This model combines techniques like predictions, inferences, and focusing on meaning rather than text. (Grabe, 1991) During this process learner relies on context and on experience to guess what the general idea of the text is about.

Scanning and Skimming

As stated before, the purpose of the reading demands the use of an accurate reading style, per se, if a reader wants to find the name of a contact through his phone to make a call, this reader will be using the style called scanning. According to Williams (1984), scanning is going through a text very quickly to find specific information that can answer to particular questions.

On the other hand, if someone is flipping the pages of a newspaper to see what are the news in his or her local area this process is called skimming, skimming is when the readers glance quickly through the text to predict its general content.

Intensive Reading

Some years ago, when the English teaching was focused only on grammar, most of the activities to develop were translations, when translating a learner needs to know the meaning of each word and its function related with the next word and then, the function of the whole sentence in relation with the whole paragraph. To accomplish an accurate translation, learners had to do an Intensive reading of the text, since during this the process the reader goes through every detail to certify everything in the text, going through many levels of the words, sentences and paragraphs ending with the analysis of the whole text.

Extensive Reading.

In contrast to Intensive reading we have those readers that read just for pleasure, outside the classroom, this is called Extensive reading.

Krashen explains that research demonstrates that learners who do more pleasure reading are better readers, better writers and have a greater vocabulary and grammatical competence. He also states that a significant way of improving reading ability, vocabulary and grammatical competence could be "free voluntary reading". Further he also emphasizes that through extensive reading, the vocabulary and the grammatical competence, can be more developed than in traditional instructional reading, since they are encouraged to read text about topics they are interested in, also called "self-selected reading".

Extensive reading gives learners the opportunity to adopt and adapt new strategies, manage their own time and to have control; these previous elements are key characteristics of a self-directed process since it is encouraging independent learning. Hedge (1985).

Generally speaking, a self-direction can be defined as a process:

... in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. Knowles (1975)

Knowles compares two kinds of learners regarding the role taken in learning. Reactive Learners are the ones, which wait passively for teacher's instruction; these kinds of students are more likely to experience anxiety, frustration and a high rate of failure. Proactive learners are the ones that take the first step in learning, being the former the ones that learn more things and learn them better.

Celce-Murcia (2001), defines extensive reading as the practice of reading large amounts of text for extended periods of time. To implement Extensive reading inside the classroom, an adequate definition of the exact quantity of reading is needed for this instruction since it varies

on teacher and students perceptions, therefore she advises giving students from 10 to 15 minutes of silent reading time, during this time the teacher can circulate around the classroom to offer assistance or the teacher can serve as a role model of an engaged reader by reading silently throughout the sustained silent reading (SSR) period.

She also suggests a set of ideal conditions for extensive reading to succeed, some of these conditions are: To provide students with time for extended silent reading in all the classes, opportunities for all types of reading should be created, searching what students are interested in, choose interesting, attractive and level appropriate reading materials, encourage the students to share and recommend reading materials to classmates and seek group sets of texts that students can read and discuss in small groups of same reading preferences.

In accordance with Celce-Murcia, Krashen states that during "free voluntary reading" students are encouraged to read whatever they want, and they shouldn't be asked to keep a book report, or teacher follow up. Krashen concludes that learners who have been part of this program for some period of time develop a higher reading comprehension and vocabulary development, compared to the students who were instructed in the traditional way where they are only asked to follow their course book.

Supporting Krasen's conclusion, Hedge (1985) states that extensive reading is important since it is a self-directed process that encourages independent learning. She also suggests that Extensive reading can lead the learner to read for general meaning, and to develop the ability of deciphering meanings of unknown words or phrases based on context without the need to stop and look up at every single word in the dictionary. She concludes that those learners who practice extensive reading may improve their vocabulary.

Finally Hill and Holden (1990), pointed out that those learners who read for pleasure are better readers and have a greater advanced vocabulary since "free voluntary reading" is comprehensible input in a low anxiety situation.

Stages of Extensive Reading.

When each student is allowed to read their own book, at their own pace, this kind of reading is called individualized reading or self-selected reading and often called Sustained Silent Reading.

In some cases, students are asked to read the same book in class or at home, in these cases the teacher prepares some pre-reading activities such as predicting the content, guessing the end, analyzing the title of the book or explaining some key words. This reading could be followed by comprehension questions, debates and other activities.

To consider a reading "extensive", students must be reading quickly, comprehending most of the reading without the use of dictionary. According to the guide provided in Extensive Reading foundation students should be reading at an appropriate difficulty level and at a good speed around 150-200 words per minute in order to benefit from their Extensive Reading. Some research indicates that if readers know approximately 98% of the words on a page, they will read it faster without making any stops and obtaining high levels of comprehension. When the percentages go below 90, meaning that one word will be unknown for every group of ten words, the reading process will become frustrating, requiring many stops to make use of the dictionary, as a result there will be lack of comprehensions and the reader will suffer frustration. When the student understands between 90% and 98% of the words on a page, it is called an instructional level, in this level they will have an adequate comprehension but there will be a need of use of the dictionary if they want to understand the text better. When the student know 98% or more of

the words in the text, they are expected to be in the “sweet spot” and can read at an adequate speed, since there is not any issue with an unknown word that is slowing them down, as a result they will truthfully enjoy the reading. Depending on what the expectations of the teacher are, instructional level is offered when there is a wish to learn new things, or keep the reader at the sweet spot when the aim is to build reading speed and fluency.

Vocabulary.

As mentioned previously extensive reading provides a context for vocabulary acquisition. Some techniques for vocabulary acquisition suggest that students should learn a list of fifty words “by heart”, this practice however does not take into account one of the main features of vocabulary use, that is that words occur in context either their spelling or pronunciation. Words are to be taught in meaning and in use, together with other words. Students need to create an awareness of the harmony of word with other word and how they depend upon each other. When students find the words they need to know in context they will have much greater chance to remember them than if they learnt them “by heart”. Harmer (1991)

Harmer (1991), defines vocabulary as the vital organs and the flesh of language. He denotes the importance of the correct use of a word for communication purposes even when there is no structural accuracy at all. He also points out that competent speakers of English know the lexis of the language; however that knowledge may vary depending on their education and occupation. These competent speakers know what words mean both literally and metaphorically, they also know how words operate in a grammatical order and that they are sensitive to change in word value.

Penny (1996), states that vocabulary also known as lexis, are the items that we teach in foreign language. She includes the term items instead of word since a set of words used as idioms or in a metaphor cannot mean the same as it says in the dictionary.

Harmer (1991), also states that it is important for learner to know meaning, some vocabulary items can have more than a meaning and also these same words can mean totally different as noun or verb, which is why it is important to look the word into context to try to decipher its meaning. Sometimes the meaning of a word can be altered in relation to other words, e.g. synonyms, antonyms, and family categories. That is why it is important for learners to know about meaning in context and they also need to know about sense relations.

Word Use, The way a word is used can affect its meaning. Metaphors and idioms are perfect examples of stretching word meaning. Word meaning can be also ruled by collocation that is which words go with each other. Depending on the social and topical context we tend to use different words, this is ruled by the style and register we are in. There exist neutral and informal versions of different words, when the speaker does not know them some expression would certainly seem rude to listener in certain context. On the other hand the register in which two professionals speakers talk may be different of a conversation between a professional and a person who does not have the same study level.

Word formation, Words change their writing, most of the verbs change their writing when the grammatical tense used is different, words can change their grammatical value too in order to fit different grammatical contexts, they can change from verb to adjective or noun therefore the importance of teach our students the correct use of suffixes and prefixes.

Word grammar, the use of certain words can generate the use of some grammatical patterns. Students need to know how words behave when followed or preceded by a word that

can affect the grammar structure. This is why Teachers need to stress the importance of phrasal verbs, order of adjectives, and adverbs.

With the previous aspects of vocabulary explained we can then conclude that knowing a word is not knowing one meaning by heart only but knowing its use, behavioral context, in general and in certain aspects.

The role of context in Vocabulary acquisition.

Schmitt and McCarty (1997), most readers pick up a big percentage of their vocabulary knowledge from context, apart from explicit instruction. The amount of vocabulary acquired can be attributed to picking up words from context and how much is the result of instruction, depends on one's estimate of the total number of words a person learns.

Implicit learning.

Decarrico, cited in Celce-Murcia (2001), points out that incidental vocabulary learning is learning that happens when the learner focus his/her attention elsewhere like understanding a text or using language for communicative purposes. Commonly vocabulary learning is more likely to be implicit, where some words are learned incidentally through reading or listening.

When students lack of exposure to the language they face problems when facing language learning, she suggests that a good way to combat this issue is to expose learners to extensive reading which is also sometimes called 'blood flood approach' where reading is done periodically and if applied in beginner students it will probably give a large amount of comprehensible input. She adds that this kind of exposure is very important because when readers meet a word in different context they are able to expand the knowledge about it, this natural exposure to the language also helps to consolidate memory.

Strategies when learning vocabulary helps learners to discover the meaning of a new word. Guessing meaning from context is an strategy often used when reading a text, therefore teacher help is crucial since this help can make easier and more efficient the process of recognition the clues to guess word meaning from context. This strategy is a key vocabulary learning skill since it helps learners to deal with low frequency vocabulary and especially when reading authentic text as it is the case of extensive reading. However some texts do not offer enough contexts in order to find out the clues (such as punctuation, word category, reference words) that can help the learner to guess a word's meaning, in this cases background of knowledge about the topic and the culture have strong influence since they provide a framework also referred as 'schema'.

Clarke and Nation (1980), cited in Celce-Murcia (2001), propose a strategy to guess meaning from context, the first step is to get the learner to look at the unknown word, then look at its context, and then to take a bigger view of how the clause containing the word is related to the other clauses, sentences, or paragraphs. They focus this strategy on context rather than analyzing the word and its parts.

According to their experience they conclude that using affixes and roots by themselves is not a reliable system to guess and that once the strategy is mastered, readers can skip some of the basic steps and start using the strategy automatically.

Vocabulary Teaching.

When talking about vocabulary acquisition in an EFL setting, the role of instruction is very essential to talk about vocabulary teaching that clearly it is not about just presenting students new words and asking them to memorize them.

Harmer (1991), explains three elements that teacher will find on their way to teach vocabulary.

Active and passive vocabulary.

Students know different words better than others; however there is not any proof that demonstrated that these words are the words that teachers have taught them, especially at higher levels. These set of words could have been presented and used in the classroom or appeared in the reading texts students read. Other words could be those that learners have looked up because they needed to use them or they can be just words that learners have met and somehow liked.

Active vocabulary refers to all the vocabulary students are taught and expected to learn and they are likely be able to use, on the other hand passive vocabulary are the words students will recognize when the read them but they will not be able to reproduce them since they had not had the need to use it.

When students are presented a new set of words and these word are used constantly practiced, the will be considered as active vocabulary, however a word that has been active thanks to constant use may go back into the passive set if it is not used. On the contrary a word that has remain in the passive set of words could become active if the situation provokes its use. As a conclusion we could say that the status of a word is not permanent, since it depends on the use and setting the learner is. The distinction then between active and passive vocabulary becomes somehow unclear considering what knowing a word means and the way students acquire new words.

Interaction with words.

Some of the words that are presented to students can have personal meaning for them, it can be predicted that students will remember for a long time, however if not used can be easily

forgotten. Interaction with words such as changing them to mean their opposites, making a noun and adjective or putting word together give great advantage to students. By getting students to do thing with words they will become suitably comfortable with them and they will have a deep experience that vocabulary learning needs.

Intermediate Level Students

The population chosen for this research meets the 3 key elements for Extensive reading to work. First, intermediate students, having a B2 level in English they have a wide range of grammar and vocabulary basis to sort out the struggling and frustrating stage a learner faces when he or she doesn't know the meaning of more than 5% words of the text. Second they are at a university level, this means they have an average level of literacy, where the comprehension process is not required to be excellent but is an element where the teacher can have a basis to start working only in the L2 reading process and Third, most of them are more likely to be adults or at least they are young adults.

In Colombia, as mentioned before, beginner students at a university level had had some level of foreign language instruction during high school which is normally 6 years. These students have some knowledge of English mostly in grammar and translation skills, they are expected to be at least B1, but they have not developed the linguistic competence in productive skills such as speaking and writing.

<i>Table 1</i>	<i>Visual Reception: Reading.</i>
OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION	Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms
READING	Can read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and

CORRESPONDENCE	readily grasp the essential meaning
READING FOR ORIENTATION	Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details. B2 Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.
READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT	Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialized sources within his/her field. B2 Can understand specialized articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology. Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.
READING INSTRUCTIONS	Can understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.

According to the Common European Framework of reference for languages, Table 1.

Shows in detail what is expected in students who perform reading at an intermediate level B1 level is defined as an independent learner who may have some issues when defining very technical words but who is able to make him or herself understand by explaining with examples or different words the desired meaning.

As stated before, students at a University Level are more likely to be young adults, they tend to be shy when developing speaking activities since the way they learned English was in an explicit way. Also because their brains have lost their plasticity to learn another language. Lennneberg (1967).

However adult learners have ,more experience to relate what they are reading, their thinking process is more mature, and they a bigger cognitive development, their ability to think and understand what they are reading is more attached to the sense of the text they are experiencing. (Lucas and Katz 1994)

Table 2. *Lexical competence*

	VOCABULARY RANGE	VOCABULARY CONTROL
C1	Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies. Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms	Occasional minor slips, but no significant vocabulary errors
B2	Has a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to his/her field and most general topics. Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition, but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution.	Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication.

Moreover, adults are able to discuss the strategies, techniques or learning styles they desire to develop; something that children or teenagers will not be able to since they are not aware of the strategies to be used (Cohen, 1998). Every learner, his/her strategies or interest can vary in a wide range, which is why they are required to read at their own pace. Adults like to try new strategies and their concentration gap is longer than teenagers or kids. Students are encouraged to read freely in their own time, whenever and wherever they want to do it.

Therefore the use of extensive reading would be a significant tool to improve their vocabulary since it offers them a safe environment for error and trial and also time and space

they can also manage to try and adapt new techniques that aim to the next desired level in vocabulary as showed in Table 2.

Extensive reading benefits.

Krashen (1982), quoted by Bell (2002) argued that extensive reading improves language acquisition, as always as certain conditions such as, adequate exposure to the language, interesting material and a relaxed atmosphere, are met.

Once all the level for students is chose properly, Timothy Bell, Day and Philip Prowse (2002), point out that extensive reading in language learning will develop some benefits. Contributing with this compilation of advantages that Extensive reading offers Maley (2008) added a comprehensive way to deal with ER.

All the contributions made by the authors mentioned are in the next summary.

1. It can provide 'comprehensible input'

In Colombia, English is not taught as a second language but as a foreign language, students don't have many options regarding the sources to learn languages, most of the time English is taught focusing on grammar, vocabulary and some pronunciation since most students are required to present "Pruebas Saber 11" according to the decree 869 of March 2010 stablished by "Colombian Institute of evaluation for the education ICFES".

2. It can enhance learners' general language competence

Grabe (1991) and Paran (1996), cited by Bell (2002) pointed out the significance of extensive reading in providing learners with practice in a well-known bottom-up process.

3. Students read a lot and read often.

The value of exposure to language that students face is perceived as significant to their abilities to acquire new forms from the language. Reading by itself provides different benefits in very different skills. After some observations of different studies regarding reading on children between six and twelve years old, Elley states: there was a "spread of effect from reading competence to other language skills - writing, speaking and control over syntax," (Elley, 1991).

4. It can lead to improvement in writing

Stotsky (1983) and Krashen (1984) reviewed a number of L1 studies that appear to show the positive effect of reading on subjects' writing skills, indicating that students who are prolific readers in their pre-college years become better writers when they enter college. L2 studies by Hafiz & Tudor (1989) in the UK and Pakistan, and Robb & Susser (1989) in Japan, revealed more significant improvement in subjects' written work than in other language skills. These results again support the case for an input-based, acquisition-oriented reading program based on extensive reading as an effective means of fostering improvements in students writing. The exact process of how the more we read can contribute to better writing is not yet understood but it is always taken as a main advantage of reading extensively. (Kroll 2003)

5. Interesting, and engaging texts can motivate learners to read.

Reading material selected for extensive reading programs should address students' needs, tastes and interests, so as to energize and motivate them to read the books. In the Yemen, this was achieved through the use of familiar material and popular titles reflecting the local culture (e.g., Aladdin and His Lamp). Bell & Campbell (1996, 1997) explore the issue in a South East Asian context, presenting various ways to motivate learners to read and explaining the role of extensive reading and regular use of libraries in advancing the reading habit.

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan 1985), which referred to the source of the influence, whether within oneself or perceived as being from the outside;

Covington's (1998) self-worth theory emphasizes the importance of the beliefs learners hold about themselves, and therefore their level of aspiration and the kinds of strategies they operate or can be taught to adopt, to achieve what they want for themselves.

6. It can consolidate previously learned language

Children and adults have the potential for reinforcing and recombining language learned in the classroom. Graded readers have a controlled grammatical and lexical load, and provide regular and sufficient repetition of new language forms (Wodinsky & Nation 1988). Therefore, students automatically receive the necessary reinforcement and recycling of language required to ensure that new input is retained and made available for spoken and written production.

7. It helps to build confidence with extended texts

Much classroom reading work has traditionally focused on the exploitation of short texts, either for presenting lexical and grammatical points or for providing students with limited practice in various reading skills and strategies. However, a large number of students in the EFL/ESL world require reading for academic purposes, and therefore need training in study skills and strategies for reading longer texts and books. Kembo (1993) points to the value of extensive reading in developing student's confidence and ability in facing these longer texts.

8. It encourages the exploitation of textual redundancy

Insights from cognitive psychology have informed our understanding of the way the brain functions in reading. It is now generally understood that slow, word-by-word reading, which is common in classrooms, impedes comprehension by transferring an excess of visual signals to the brain. This leads to overload because only a fraction of these signals need to be processed for the

reader to successfully interpret the message. Kalb (1986) refers to redundancy as an important means of processing, and to extensive reading as the means of recognizing and dealing with redundant elements in texts.

9. It facilitates the development of prediction skills

One of the currently accepted perspectives on the reading process is that it involves the exploitation of background knowledge. Such knowledge is seen as providing a platform for readers to predict the content of a text on the basis of a pre-existing schema. When students read, these schema are activated and help the reader to decode and interpret the message beyond the printed words. These processes presuppose that readers predict, sample, hypothesize and reorganize their understanding of the message as it unfolds while reading (Nunan 1991: 65-66).

Besides all the advantages, it can be said that Extensive reading implementation would encourage students to read for pleasure, in and outside the classroom, to read for meaning, and to easily get involved in sustained silent reading. Such activities could give to the learner a reading independence and autonomy. (Bell, 1998)

10. It can increase knowledge of vocabulary

Nagy & Herman (1987) claimed that children between grades three and twelve (US grade levels) learn up to 3000 words a year. It is assumed that only a low percentage of such learning is due to direct vocabulary instruction, the remainder being due to acquisition of words from reading. This suggests that traditional approaches to the teaching of vocabulary, in which the number of new words taught in each class was carefully controlled (words often being presented in related sets), is much less effective in promoting vocabulary growth than simply getting students to spend time on silent reading of interesting books.

Nagy & Herman (1987), cited by Timothy Bell (2002), stated that only a small percentage of the 3000 words that students between grades 3 and 12 learn belong to the words that were taught in traditional approaches where words were controlled and presented in related sets. As a result it can be more effective to promote vocabulary improvement by simply getting students to read interesting books in their silent reading time.

Harmer (2007), talks about how important Extensive Reading is since it helps the development of students' word recognition. He also highlights the importance of reading materials, guidance, tasks and facilities.

A research conducted at Yadim library in 1994, demonstrated that those student given individualized instruction in reading English texts outside the classroom, improved their vocabulary range and they scored high grades in the reading and writing tests as well. The researchers provided 3 main reasons that can underline the result. First, students were provided at the beginning of the experimental period. Second, teachers gave more emphasis to assign the book report sheets. Finally it looked like teachers paid more attention to extensive reading since they claimed that they believed that students would improve their vocabulary competences if they were given separate attention.

Conclusions

Through the develop of this research paper , the theoretical background of extensive reading was presented, reading was presented through the natural approach since, it is considered a great source of natural language, also the different readings strategies were detailed until we encountered extensive reading. Vocabulary was defined in theory and conceptually, regarding the CEF outlines for the receptive skills and also a description of the learners was determined, it is important to outline that a strong emphasis was made for the population to be an adult

audience in order to support the reason why extensive reading will affect vocabulary on adults with a B2 level. As mentioned, extensive reading has many benefits that are gained subconsciously when applied correctly; however there are some variables that can be found in an EFL setting such as Colombia.

a. Regarding the amount of time, it can be inferred that it is not sufficient when trying to implement this at school but at a university level students are committed to full time of study, according to National Education Ministry, students have to work independently 2 hours per each hour they assist to a class. However time is not enough when talking about the other professional careers offered since all of them are in Spanish and they only go to English classes 4 to 6 hours a week. The perfect setting suggested to implement Extensive Reading is in the careers where at least 2 or 3 subjects are taught in English and students are required to read this subjects information in texts written in English.

b. The expenses and availability of the reading material. Books, magazines or newspapers written in a foreign language may not be easy to find. Nowadays most of people can have access to internet and find written materials of different kinds and filter them according to their personal or professional interests.

c. Extensive Reading is not supposed to be graded since students are reading at their own pace; Usually Extensive reading is not followed by comprehension questions. The main objective is the reader's experience and joy of reading. What teacher could do is prepare follow-up activities focused on how the experience of reading was rather than comprehension or as suggested before teacher could group students by interest and program a short discussion on how their reading is progressing or what students like and dislike about the chosen genre.

Some teachers may find an issue with this because they focus more on the output that in

this case would be the grade, than in the learning process itself. This attitude could be also compared to the resistance some English teachers show when they find impossible to stop teaching the way they have been teaching for years and to implement new strategies that allow learning to take place.

d. The popular perception of extensive reading is inaccurate in view of people see it as a process without guidance and monitoring or control of the teacher. Below there is a list of basic principles to adapt when applying extensive reading if set properly the benefits will be countless, it all depends the elements the mentor teacher wants to focus on. Complementing the principles, the teacher need to be active, since students are reading what they like, they are not reading the same texts at once, teacher should encourage students to report back what the read to the class by keeping a reading diary, a reading journal, record charts or a short book of reviews. All of this ways of report what students are reading are helpful because they keep the learner reading as much as often as possible.

e. Educational factors. Extensive reading brings benefits when it comes in big quantities. However in a country like Colombia, Reading has not been a habit, a research supported by Richard Arum, who at the moment was a teacher of the university of new york, during the “IV Seminario Internacional de Investigación en Calidad de la Educción” organized by the Icfes, in Bogota, shows that 32% of students at a university level, do not take the classes that requires them to read more than 40 pages of Reading per week. When it comes to Extensive reading in an English course this issue would be a challenge, therefore much effort is needed to accomplish all these principles, always emphasizing that the more the students read the more benefits they can get.

Recommendations.

As stated before some issues may arise when a new strategy is being implemented, these issues can be social, economic, educational, cultural or even professional. There are some principles that frame the implementations of extensive reading to avoid some misconceptions.

Consequently all educational plans need to be adapted according to the setting they are going to be placed in. Extensive reading is not the exception of the rule, in order for it to succeed it is important to meet some requirements to achieve the goals of this strategy.

Bamford and Day (2004), emphasized some basic principles for Extensive Reading to succeed, it is understood that its achievement does not only depend on the teacher but in the harmonic placement of all the variables that affect the process.

Extensive reading Materials.

The level of the reading must be chosen correctly, so the learner can read with ease and confidence; if the learner is struggling to get the general idea of the text, it is unlikely that they met the goal of the instruction that is reading for pleasure. Students should read the material that faces them with very few items of vocabulary and grammar. According to their suggestion the text shouldn't be more than two unknown vocabulary or grammar items per page for beginners and in our case, no more than five for intermediate learners. Liu Na and Nation (1985) pointed out that the unknown vocabulary shouldn't be more than 4%; If many unknown items are to be found learners will not succeed since they will feel frustrated with difficult material, losing the interest of the reading since it is placing them in a situation of anxiety. Therefore the importance of our learner to be adults since the more experience they have to rely on, the more variety of texts options to choose.

Regarding another important aspect of materials it is strongly advised, that a variety of materials is presented to the students so they can choose a topic they really like. This principle encloses the “reading for pleasure” term, once students choose something within their interest they will get engaged with the task easily. Since the text will automatically be linked to their “schemata”. Selecting creative material enhances the learner engagement in the task. (Hill 1997)

It will be important for students to know that whenever they want to change the text due to level or subject of interest, there will always be a library, the creation of a library is crucial for any reading program. It is costly but the money will be well invested. Once the books are in the library teacher should carefully organize them by level and genre so students can easily identify them. Nevertheless, is known and experienced by teachers and students that in Colombia the resources for public education are limited. Regarding foreign language education and reading materials there is no any considerable amount of sources that can provide variety in genres and levels. Nowadays, websites offer a wide range of sources to find interesting reading.

<http://www.eslflow.com/readinglessonplans.html> this website offers countless ways to teach reading since it has reading collections filtered by topics, age, length and a wide source of pdf worksheets and another interesting website is

<http://esl.about.com/od/vocabularylessonplan1/>

This web page is a source where teacher can find lessons plans for a esl setting however they can be easily adaptable to a foreign language setting, most of the lesson plans suggested to improve vocabulary have an interesting reading activity, therefore learner will acquire vocabulary instead of memorizing words.

Teacher's role.

Teacher needs to promote reading, serve as guidance and as a role model. Most students will not read, unless they are asked to do so by the teachers. Once students know the reading benefits, teacher can organize a reading program always emphasizing that students can make their own choice of what to read.

The role of the teacher should be regarded as a guide. Teacher's role is very important for students at the beginning of the program, since the teacher will be the one showing learners how to choose the texts. He/she should be familiarized with the student's likes, what benefits or improvements they are getting from reading. In those periods given to students to read, teacher should be doing exactly the same. He/she needs to know the reading material so he/she can make appropriate recommendations to students. In this way, they will be sharing a pleasant experience when sharing their opinions instead of formally grading reading comprehension.

Breaking with the schema of a traditional classroom, where teacher used to choose the reading material, a new term 'self-selection' puts learners in a different role. According to Alexander and Murphy, (2000) when learners feel a sense of power during their instruction among other elements such as personal involvement and intrinsic motivation, there will be a bigger probability of more learning and a higher achievement in school. As pointed before students are encouraged to stop reading anything they dislike or that is not easy to read.

Taking into account that the material previously chosen is easily understandable for students, and then their reading is fluent the use of dictionary is discouraged since it interrupts reading fluency. On the contrary students are encouraged to guess the meaning from context and continue the reading, in order to accomplish the purpose of reading being sufficient understanding or getting a general idea of the text, unlike intensive reading.

Harmer (2007), points out that most of the previous procedures are time consuming, but students can also help with the setting and administration of the scheme. School administration also plays an important role since they can provide the money or the ways to get it.

All the elements mentioned before need to be placed adequately,

Independent learning, autonomous learning or self-directed process, all of them aimed to one objective, lead the learner to experience once and again different strategies giving them the freedom to acquire any technique they find useful, regarding vocabulary, the implicit learning of the meaning of a word facilitate the reader to start using one of the easiest strategies in vocabulary learning.

As a conclusion it might be said that whilst there is not any method to know the exact date or fashion in which an exact word was learned, or registers that show exactly how many words and to what extent the reader learnt its meaning and its function (unless the way in which the learner realized its meaning was strongly attached to an emotional schema, he/she will remember why the meaning of that word is significant for him or her) it is known by fact that the use extensive reading does affect vocabulary acquisition since it gives the learner a field of context when reading, complementing the idea that, it is not only about knowing the meaning of a word, it is also about learning it, its uses, changes, collocations and its correspondence with the other words next to it. Extensive reading also gives the student a field for error and trial, with immediate feedback to implement, adapt and discard any strategy involving vocabulary acquisition.

References.

- Alexander, P., & Murphy, P. (2000). The research base for APA's learner-centered psychological principles. In N. Lambert, & B. McCombs (Eds.), *How students learn* (pp. 25-60). Washington, D.D.: American Psychological Association.
- Bell, T. (1998). Extensive reading: Why? and how? *The Internet TESL Journal*, 4(12). Retrieved on June 15, 2014, from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Bell-Reading.html>.
- Bernhardt, Elizabeth B. 1991. "A psycholinguistic perspective on second language literacy." In Hulstijn and Matter (1991). 31-44.
- Candlin, C., & Hall, D. (2002). *Teaching and researching Reading*. England: Pearson Education.
- Carroll, D.W. (1986). *Psychology of Language*. Pacific Grove, C.A: Braaks/Cole Publishing Co.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Third edition. Los Angeles: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- Cohen, A.D., 1998: *Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language*. Essex, U.K.: Longman.
- Common European Framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching and assessment. Retrieved January 21, 2015. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf
- Covington, M. W. 1998. *The Will to Learn: A Guide for Motivating Young People*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Day, Richard, R. (2002) 'Top Ten Principles for teaching extensive reading.' *Reading in a Foreign Language*. 14 (2)
- Day, Richard, R , Omura, Carole, Hiramatsu, Motoo. (1991) 'Incidental EFL vocabulary learning and reading.' *Reading in a Foreign Language*. 7 (2)

Day, Richard, R and Bamford, Julian.(1998) Extensive Reading in the Second

El Pais. Expertos analizan por qué estudiantes en Colombia no tienen hábitos de lectura.

Retrieved February 2. (2015) <http://www.elpais.com.co/elpais/california/noticias/expertos-analizan-por-estudiantes-colombia-tienen-habitos-lectura>

Gass, S. & Selinker, L. (2001). *Second language acquisition: an introductory course*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Grabe, W. (1991). "Current Developments in Second Language Reading Research." TESOL Quarterly 25(3), 375-406.

Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching*. Essex: Pearson Longman.

Hedge, T. (1985). *Using readers in language teaching*. London: Macmillan.

Hill, D., and Holden, S. (Eds). (1995), *Language Teaching: 1988 Milan Conference Organized by The British Council*.

Hill, D.(1997) Survey review: graded readers. ELT journal. Pages 51 (1) pages 57-81

Instituto Colombiano para la evaluación de la educación ICFES. Retrieved on February 2, 2015.
<http://www.icfes.gov.co/informacion-institucional/marco-legal>

Knowles, M. S. (1975) *Self-Directed Learning. A guide for learners and teachers*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall/Cambridge.

Lenneberg, E. (1967). *Biological Foundations of Language*. New York: John Wiley.

Liu Na & Nation. I.S.P (1985) Factors affecting guessing vocabulary in context. RELC Journal, 16 (1) pages 33-42

Lucas, T. and A. Katz. 1994. 'Refraining the debate: The roles of native languages in English-only programs for language minority students'. TESOL Quarterly 28 /4: 537-62.

- Krashen, S. D., & Terrell, T. D. (1983). *The Natural Approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Hayward, CA: Alemany Press.
- Krashen, S.D. (1982). *Principles and practice in Second Language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Kroll, B. (Ed.). (2003). *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing*. Cambridge University Press.
- Maley, Alan (2008) 'Extensive Reading: Maid in Waiting' in B. Tomlinson (ed) *English Language Learning Materials: a critical review*. London/New York: Continuum pp133-156.
- Ministerio de educacion Nacional, Sistema de creditos, retrieved January 26 (2015)
<http://www.mineduacion.gov.co/1621/article-87727.html>
- Prowse, P. (2002) 'Top ten principles for teaching extensive reading: a response.' *Reading in a Foreign Language*. 14 (2)
- Schmitt & McCarthy (1997). *Vocabulary description, acquisition and pedagogy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- The extensive reading foundation's : Guide to extensive reading. Retrieved January 28 (2015)
http://erfoundation.org/ERF_Guide.pdf
- Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Waring, Rob. "Graded and Extensive Reading – Questions and Answers". *The LanguageTeacher Online*. 7 May 2007.

Williams, E. (1984). *Reading in The Language Classroom*. London: Macmillan Publishers

Ltd. Bamford, Julian and Richard R. Day. Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching

Language. Cambridge: CUP, 2004.