Promoting reading in an EFL classroom as a tool to enhance vocabulary learning

By

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Submitted to the School of Human Sciences in partial

fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of B.A.

Linguistics and Languages Department

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NOTA DE RESPONSABILIDAD

"Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en éste trabajo de grado, son responsabilidad exclusiva de los autores".

Articulo del acuerdo N°. 324 de octubre 11 de 1966, emanada del honorable consejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

NOTA DE ACEPTACIÓN

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Resumen

Este trabajo de investigación presenta lo que la lectura es para un estudiante inglés como lengua extranjera y los beneficios de su aplicación en un contexto, como Pasto. Este trabajo sostiene que promover la lectura en un salon de clase de lengua extranjera es una alternativa para aprender acerca de gente, historia, lenguas, ciencias, matemáticas, etc, como al mismo tiempo, es una manera de aumentar el aprendizaje de vocabulario. los profesores siempre están aprendiendo sobre las nuevas propuestas teóricas, ya que necesitan responder a las necesidades de los sus alumnos, y el promover la lectura como una herramienta, les ayuda a responder a las necesidades actuales en el campo de la educación. Cada vez que un estudiante lee un libro nuevo y lee una página, siempre hay una nueva palabra por aprender.

Esta investigación muestra cómo los procesos de lectura (Bottom up – Top down), la teoría del esquema, la lectura intensiva y extensiva, skimming y scamming ayudan en el aprendizaje de vocabulario.

Palabras claves: significado de lectura para estudiante inglés como lengua extranjera, el proceso de lectura, tipos de lectura, el context de inglés como una lengua extranjera, y el aprendizaje de vocabulario.

Abstract

This research paper presents what reading is for an EFL learner and the benefits of its implementation in a foreign setting like Pasto. This paper supports that promoting reading in a foreign language classroom is an alternative to learn about people, history, languages, science, mathematics, and all other topics, as at the same time, it is a way to increase vocabulary learning. Today, teachers are learning about new theoretical proposals because they need to respond to new learners' needs, and promoting reading as a tool, help them to respond to the actual needs in the educational world. Every time a student reads a new book and reads a page, there is always a new word to learn.

This research shows how reading processes (Bottom up – Top down), schema theory, intensive and extensive reading, skimming and scanning and vocabulary.

Key words: reading for a EFL learner, Reading process, Types of reading, EFL setting, and vocabulary learning.

Promoting reading in an EFL classroom as a tool to enhance vocabulary learning

When Learning English as a foreign language, listening, speaking and writing are all important, but reading is an essential skill as far as learning English is concerned. Reading is one of the main language skills in terms of acquisition and learning because it develops language acquisition and learning (The Qualitative Report Journal, 2009). It is by reading that EFL students learn much of what they need to know for their different contexts. Holden, (2004) cited by The Qualitative Report Journal (2009) states "reading is a very important gateway to personal development, and to social, economic and civic life". By reading all kind of texts is how people have the opportunity to learn about people, history, languages, science, mathematics, and all other topics.

Reading is also an excellent way to activate and reinforce other language aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and writing. Methodologists, linguists, and language teachers have realized that the acquisition of vocabulary is essential for successful foreign language use, and plays an important role in all language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (International Journal of Linguistics, 2012). Nation (1996) cited by Saeedi & Parvaresh (2009) states "Reading has long been seen as a major source of vocabulary growth". Nagy & Herman (1987); Krashen (1984); Grabe, (1991) cited by Antepara (2003) state "The reading of extended passages expands vocabulary, improves writing, and enhances general language competence", in other words reading a text means students are able to practice grammatical structures, to learn new words and see a good model of writing.

Furthermore, according to the Houghton Mifflin Company (1997) quoting Anderson et al., "Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information". Taking into account what reading is, the purpose of this paper is to prepare EFL students, to use strategies that they already have from their reading experiences in their native language. They will need the knowledge they possess to help orient themselves in the dimensions of language implicated in any text.

Reading as a skill

Reading for foreign language learners is not just a basic skill, according to the Houghton Mifflin Company (1997) quoting Wixson, Peters, Weber, & Roeber (1987) states that "reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among: (1) the reader's existing knowledge; (2) the information suggested by the text being read; and (3) the context of the reading situation". In other words, with reading, a FL reader is able to decode symbols in order to comprehend the text (derive meaning); also it can be said , it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is formed by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. This is the way how learners share ideas and acquire language.

Nation (2009) mentions that native speaking children have a large vocabulary when they start learning to read; besides they have a good control of grammatical structures and at home or school many books have been read to them, have interacted with adults about the stories they have heard. At the age of five or six in the school the teacher uses the meaning focused technique where the learner is getting input through listening and reading. The books are interesting, well-

illustrated and contain repetitive vocabulary, so the students can understand and enjoy the story at the same time.

Teachers also combine shared reading, guided reading and independent reading. First, in shared reading, teachers read a story to the students, show them the pictures and words and involve the learners during the reading, asking them about what they think will happen later in the story and getting them to comment about it. In the later readings, teachers expect that the students share their opinions more frequently during the reading and drawing, acting or writing something related to the book that was read could be used as extra activities. Second, in guided reading the teacher and the learner have a discussion about the possible unknown words for the students and they talk about the tittle and the pictures in the story, and make predictions about what could happen in it later, also if the students already have some knowledge about the topic, the ideas can be shared. Third, in independent reading the learner chooses a book to read during the class and the teacher uses this time as a chance for individual learners to come up to read to him/her, and also he/she expects them to read out of class as well.

According to what it has been mentioned before, if teachers take this into account for an EFL setting in a city like Pasto where there are limited number of hours and not enough sources for English language teaching, teachers will have to be creative and use short stories or tales. Making copies of the text to be read is a good idea, if students do not have access to use books; creating a summary of necessary readings with the important vocabulary, pictures from magazines or newspapers and drawings could be used in order to motivate their students to read. Also, in an EFL setting as the University of Nariño teachers could take this into account and one of their key goals should be to support students' vocabulary learning and present to their students books or readings with repetitive words to work inside and outside of the classroom, thus,

students will have the frequent encounters with words in different contexts that lead to true word knowledge and they will be more likely to develop vocabulary more rapidly and be involved in the habit of reading inside and outside of the classroom.

Raemer (1996) cited by The Qualitative Report Journal (2009) underlined that "students who read more will eventually surpass their classmates who have not developed reading habits", on other words, if FL learners read, they will develop autonomous learning, creativity, intelligence, comprehension, communicative competence, literacy development, motivation, and attitudes towards language learning and they will be making sense of a text not just from the words and sentences on the page but also from the ideas, memories and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences. All those activities will help to increase the amount of reading that students are doing, and they inevitably will build vocabulary.

 Furthermore, it is important that EFL teachers select the right material to be read in the classroom (school or university), thus students will keep reading the book or story because they are enjoying it. The Qualitative Report Journal (2009) mentions researchers have said that the amount of vocabulary would increase if recreational reading in EFL classroom is achieved. Due to this, EFL students should not see reading as a purely chore, if students read a book or story that looks interesting for them, they will be willing to read more and of course to learn more.

It needs to be clarified that native speakers already have some knowledge about the language (sounds, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse) they are starting to read and EFL learners do not have that knowledge; although they already know how to read in their first language, that is to say they have preconceptions and attitudes for reading, so they do not need to learn what they can transfer from the L1 (Nation, 2009). Besides, focusing on transfer Koda (1994) cited by Françoise (2009) suggest two perspectives: "the universal one, calling for the

universality of reading processes (Goodman, 1971)", in which there is a relation between the reader and related factors such as such as prior knowledge, age, motivation or attitude, teaching approaches, pedagogic aims, learning settings, etc., and the other one which says that there is a specific reading process for each linguistic code, where the linguistic aspects are different from the cognitive aspects, taking into account that each reader has a diverse linguistic background in order to find out whether there is any appropriate inter-language mechanism to foreign language reading.

Hence, it can be said that in EFL classrooms in a city like Pasto, students would make use of the attitudes and abilities they have in their first language when reading (motivation or attitude, teaching approaches, pedagogic aims, learning settings, etc.), and in this moment the teachers will play an important role providing a variety of interesting reading materials, such as magazines, newspapers, books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other kind of materials that contain content that matches with EFL students' interests; in order to know students' interests, teachers can be make interviews or carry out surveys. Also, teachers must spend time with students helping them to recognize their basic reading skills in order to ease the cognitive process of gaining meaning and enjoyment from EFL reading. This will likely facilitate students' confidence, competence, and positive perceptions about themselves as readers.

 Reading process

Gough & Tunmer (1986) cited by Hersch & Andrews (2012) said successful reading requires both "bottom-up" decoding and "top-down" comprehension processes. Lovrich & Deborah (2007) mention that "bottom-up processing is stimulus-driven processing whereas top-down processing is driven by our knowledge, experience, and intentions, which are relatively voluntary and stimulus independent". If EFL teachers put this in practice in the classroom, first,

with bottom-up, EFL students will use their knowledge of grammatical, syntactic and lexical rules to interpret meaning. In addition, with top-down, students will use their prior knowledge and experience to anticipate, predict, and infer meaning. Due to these processes, in a Colombian EFL classroom students will not just try to figure out the meaning of individual lexical items but will also have clear ideas about the organization of the text.

Stanovich (1990) cited by Jonita (2008) said that in a classroom where the bottom-up view of reading instruction is practiced, the reader constructs meaning by working from letters to words to sentences; also Lovrich & Deborah, (2007) express that during bottom up processing of a word, the orthography and phonology, the arrangements and sounds of letters are noticed in words. It is to say that if EFL teachers make use of this process in the classroom, the readers will decode each individual letter encountered by matching it to the minimal units of meaning in the sound system (the phoneme) to arrive at a meaning of the text.

In teaching reading, teachers make use of different classroom activities such as simplifying the text, building vocabulary, analyzing words and sentences, reading repetitively, and answering comprehension questions in order to encourage bottom-up process (Jonita ,2008). On other words, in a Colombian EFL context, teachers must take into account the activities mentioned before, so, students will be able to combine their ideas into a main idea, and moreover this will help the students to build their own generalizations and opinions about the text or book that was being read. Additionally, EFL teachers need to encourage students to reflect on what they have read, if students integrate new information with prior knowledge, they will gain new insight.

In EFL classrooms, when applying the top-down approach, the interaction process between the student and the text will involve the students in activating knowledge of their world,

plus past experiences, expectations and intuitions, to arrive at a meaning of the text. Jonita

(2008) note that reading is perceived as a holistic process by a top-down view in which readers

draw from their background experience, intelligence, and textual clues to build meaning; also,

Goodman (1967); Duffy & Roehler (1986) cited by Jonita (2008) think readers get to the

meaning by making predictions about the text, guessing the meaning of words, defining the

purpose of a text, finding the main ideas, seeing patterns, and interpreting and drawing

inferences. On other words, if these learning strategies are used in an EFL setting in a city like

Pasto, students will be able to react personally to the text and will make sense of it using their

context's prior knowledge and situation and greatly improve their reading comprehension.

      Rogoff (1990) cited by Jonita (2008) states that in a top-down approach students are able

to do more complex tasks in which they can negotiate meaning and work with the teacher or

other classmates to solve problems. In other words, if EFL teachers make use of top down

process in the classroom, students will be learning new information in a relevant context and it

will be related to what the learner already knows.

      Lovrich & Deborah (2007) say when learners process a word using top-down processing,

first they can use their lexical knowledge, and for instance, they identify the incoming word, then

they connect the word to their knowledge, so this word will be related to other words and

concepts. It is to say that EFL students will make a process when they encounter new words

reading the text, they will relate the new word with words that they already know in order to

figure out the meaning. Moreover, Jonita (2008) quoting Barnett (1989); Carrell, Devine &

Eskey (1988) says "second language theorists currently view reading as an interactive process

involving both bottom-up and top-down processing". It is to say, that in an EFL context students

will collect important information about the topic they read and at the same time they will pay

attention to the words, formats, illustrations, etc. in order to comprehend better the text.

Currently, reading is viewed as an interactive model by many researchers in which

readers use both bottom-up and top-down processing in idiosyncratic ways (Carrell, Devine, &

Eskey, 1988; Horiba, 1993). It can be said that applying these processes in a Colombia EFL

classroom, teachers will provide moments for reflection and allow students to use their own

resources, their first language and prior experiences in order to encourage students' ideas. In

addition, EFL students will raise their ability to adjust their thinking productively during problem

solving. If students' comprehension of a text will be viewed as an interaction of the reader and

the text, then it will follow that text characteristics also influence the process. As many

researchers currently view reading as an interactive model in which readers use both bottom-up

and top-down processing in order to aid comprehension. Horiba (1993) cited by Jonita (2008)

say that the reader is an active processor that uses bottom up process in order to get information

from the text, later top down (background knowledge) and schema to make sense of the text and

the words in the text. In other words, if EFL teachers apply bottom-up, top-down processing and

schema, students will be able to understand the text better.

 Jonita (2008) quoting Anderson & Pearson affirmation (1993) in Horiba; Carrell, (1983);

Minsky (1982) in Shrum & Glisan (1994) that states "it is believed that this processing (bottom-

up and top-down) helps students to form schemata that are essential to good reading

comprehension"; as both reading processes have been mentioned before, and now it is important

to mention that schema theory is useful for EFL students, because it is about how the knowledge

is represented, and about how those representations facilitate the use of knowledge in various

ways in order to comprehend the text.

Schema theory

Schemata are important for all English learners. Without comprehension, reading is simply following words on a page and the words have no meaning. The goal is to understand what the writer is trying to say and make use of that information. As Rumelhart (1977) cited by Carrel (n.d.) described comprehension can be completed through an interaction between information provided from the reader's prior knowledge and information that is in the text. Moreover Anderson's research (1994) says the reader's schemata affects the recall of information in a text and explains that "a reader comprehends a message when he brings to mind a schema that gives account of the objects and events described in the message". This is how EFL readers are expected to combine their previous experiences with the text they are reading in the classroom, so they can react personally to the text. Anderson and Pearson (1988) said that comprehension is the interaction between old and new information.

In EFL reading, schema theory is vital to develop comprehension. Anderson et al. in Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) cited by Stott (2001) state "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well". Thus, it represents knowledge about concepts, when EFL students access to their prior knowledge, their comprehension ability is better than it would be without any prior information or motivation to read. By accumulating information and using what the students already know, EFL teachers will be providing students with an input to understand more, what they would not be able to do without unlocking their mental filing cabinets. In other words schema theory is a theory of how knowledge is obtained and processed.

Carrell (1983) cited by Singhal (1998) mentions 'schemata' are divided into two main types: 'content schemata' (background knowledge of the world) and 'formal schemata' (background knowledge of rhetorical structure).

Alderson (2000); Carrell (1987); Carrell & Eisterhold (1983) cited by Razi (n.d.) define formal schema "as knowledge of language and linguistic conventions, containing knowledge of how texts are structured and what the key characteristics of a particular genre of writing are". In the formal schema EFL readers will try to use any information that they have in order to understand and to comprehend the English text that they will be reading at that point of time. As Carrell (1985) says reading comprehension is affected by the reader's formal schemata interacting with the rhetorical organization of a text. It is to say that in a Colombian EFL classroom student will be able to use formal schematic representations of a text to understand information in a new text.

Carrell and Eisterhold (1983); Carrell (1987); Alptekin (1993; 2002; 2003); Singhal (1998); Stott (2001) cited by Razi (n.d.) define "content schema as background knowledge of the subject matter that a reader brings to a text". In the content schema EFL readers will be using the information or background knowledge on the topic that is being read. In other words, content schema is referred to the familiarity of the subject matter of the text that readers can have about the topic of the text to interpret it. While language is not only the combination of vocabulary or grammar; it also involves the culture of the language. Using content schema in an EFL classroom, students can comprehend texts and be able to put aside any ambiguities and irrelevant words or sentences in the texts.

Ketchum (2006) cited by Jonita (2008) states if teachers want to assist comprehension, they can help students to prepare an appropriate schemata (mental organizational structures)

using linguistically challenging texts to integrate background knowledge with new knowledge, in

this way is how the comprehension will be assisted. Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) cited by Razi

(n.d.) "state that second language readers try to provide schemas to make sense texts". Due to

this, it is important that teachers should be more reasonable to reading process and able to

provide their learners with different kind of texts that evoke their schemata in EFL classroom,

thus student will be exposed to learn something new every time they read.

The Schema Theory indeed helps the students to comprehend the English texts that they

are reading. However, there are types of reading to take into consideration when it is being

promoted in an EFL classroom.

Intensive and extensive reading

Hafiz and Tudor (1989) cited by Alyousef (2005) make a difference between extensive and

intensive reading: "In intensive reading learners are exposed to short texts which are used either

to exemplify specific aspects of the lexical, syntactic or discoursal system of the language in

learning, or to provide the basis for targeted reading strategy practice; the goal of extensive

reading, on the other hand, is to 'flood' learners with large quantities of L2 input with few or

possibly no specific tasks to perform on this material".

Intensive reading

MacLeod (n.d.) quoted Brown's affirmation (1989) which basically explains that intensive

reading "calls attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure

details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships,

and the like". It is to say, if teachers put in practice intensive reading in a Colombian EFL

classroom, students will focus on the linguistic or semantic details in order to get the literal

meaning of the text. Nation (2009) says that by intensive reading learners are able to increase

their knowledge of the language features and their control of reading strategies. Moreover, it is known that the classic method for intensive reading is the grammar translation approach, and this is the way how students can understand a text, on other words, when EFL students use their first language to get to the meaning of the text, sentence by sentence in order to understand it.

According to Bamford and Day (1997) cited by Social Behavior and Personality Journal (2009) "Intensive reading often refers to the careful reading (or translation) of shorter, more difficult foreign language texts with the goal of complete and detailed understanding". In an EFL context, teaching intensive reading will also be associated with reading's component skills, where students will be studying texts intensively in order to introduce and practice their reading skills such as distinguishing the main idea of a text, finding pronoun referents, or guessing the meaning of unknown words. It is to say that students will use intensive reading skills to get the details of a specific situation in shorter texts, thus, readers will be able to understand each word, number or fact in the text; Nation (2001) states that the objective of intensive reading is students understand the text and pay the necessary attention to the vocabulary, grammar and speech of the text. On other words, implementing intensive reading in an EFL classroom in Pasto, students will be able to see more samples of grammar and it is the fastest way to build vocabulary. Intensive reading involves translation and thus comprehension of the text (Nation, 2009) and when the learners translate, teachers can make sure the learners have comprehended the text.

Intensive reading allows EFL teachers to determine what language features will be developed with the text, as each text can have a different purpose during the class. When intensive reading is focused on vocabulary, the learner's attention can be centered to useful words, and the meaning and use of these words can be explained at the moment or for a later study (Nation, 2009). In order words, when teachers implement intensive reading in the

classroom, in a city like Pasto, they will have the opportunity to find the right text to work with

their students, the text that will have the vocabulary they need to learn, so it is important that in

order to develop EFL students' vocabulary, teachers must encourage curiosity about the meaning

and use of unfamiliar words and promote the use of strategies that will help students find the

meaning of unfamiliar words, Nation (2009) mentions learners can practice the steps in guessing

from the context, using a dictionary, simplifying difficult sentences and taking notes. It is to say

that EFL students will try to figure out the meaning of the words, first using the context in which

the text is developed, and then if the words are too difficult for them they will use the dictionary

and taking notes and simplifying difficult sentences will help them to memorize new words and

to understand the text.

Nation (2009) says a good intensive reading exercise has as a purpose that students learn

things to use with all kind of texts, thus this will help them to understand tomorrow's reading

text, also a good reading exercise can give to the teachers useful information about how the

learners perform on the exercise, teacher will know if students were successful or not on some

parts of the exercise, this is important in order to reinforce and improve those parts with another

text. In this case, if EFL teachers in Pasto implement intensive reading in the classroom, they

will have the possibility to choose the texts to be read, according to the learners' needs and

teacher's aim will be to help learners to develop their vocabulary knowledge and its conventions

of use, and strategies, so that they can successfully read and understand any text that they may

meet later.

Applying intensive reading in EFL settings, learners will be able to work on high or low

frequency words and teachers will have to use strategies in vocabulary learning, such as,

guessing from context, analyzing words, using words parts, and dictionary use. First, to work on

high frequency vocabulary, teachers should teach a small amount of vocabulary from the passage before reading it, and explain meaning, use, word parts and different sense of the words; also after the text is being read, teachers should work with activities that include completing word family patterns, matching words and meanings, classifying collocational patterns, and working out core meanings, besides this, build a glossary will help the learners to learn words.

Additionally, to work on low frequency vocabulary, EFL teachers can ignore the word or give to their students a quickly meaning of the word by using a translation, a picture, a diagram, and demonstration. Also, if teachers replace a word in the text that is going to be read with a more useful high or low frequency word before the learners work on the text, in this way the text will be more accessible and easier to understand for the learners, besides to make a glossary will help the learners too.

Nation (2009) states that the guessing from context strategy has five steps: first, it is to decide what part of speech the word is in the passage, second exercise with the word, that means to see if the word could be an adjective verb, adverb etc., third, see if the word is involved in any conjunction relationship, fourth, guess the meaning of the word and fifth check if the guess by seeing that it is the same part of speech as the word in the passage, by checking for any prefixes, roots, or suffixes that will confirm if the guess is correct or that might cause to guess again. If these strategies of guessing, word parts and dictionary use are implemented by teachers in an EFL classroom in Pasto, as a result, learners will try to relate the meaning of words and guess from their context the words they do not know in the text, plus the use of dictionary will give them the speech of the word so that word in the text will make more sense for them, thus, students will comprehend the text better and learn new vocabulary.

Extensive reading

International Journal of English Studies (2009) says "extensive reading has been defined in several ways". First, Grabe and Stoller (2002) cited by International Journal of English Studies (2009) define extensive reading as an "approach to the teaching and learning of reading in which learners read large quantities of material that is within their linguistic competence". If EFL teachers can make good use of extensive reading, that means students will be involved in reading long texts for general understanding, with the intention of enjoying the texts. In this case, students will be given freedom to choose their own topic which they think are interested to be discussed, moreover students will also have the chance to find articles related to the topic in order to give them background knowledge, so that they will know more about the topic they have chosen. Likewise, Chun & Plass (1996); Day, Omura, & Hiramatsu (1991); Hulstijn, Hollander & Greidanus (1996); Knight, 1994; Zimmerman (1997) cited by Saeedi & Parvaresh (2009) say "Extensive reading is verifiably a major source of incidental learning and a number of studies have clinched the positive effects of extensive reading activities on vocabulary growth". On other words with extensive reading, EFL students will be led to improve their own vocabulary and the previously learned words will be consolidated. Furthermore, Decarrico (1998) cited by Saeedi & Parvaresh (2009) says in learning a foreign language the most vocabulary is learned implicitly. Thus, it is by extensive reading how EFL students will increase knowledge of previously learned vocabulary, also learners will view and review unknown words in specific context, this will allow them to infer the word's meaning, and thus to learn unknown words. If EFL teachers in Pasto apply extensive reading inside and outside the classroom, students will discover that this is the only way that they will become good readers and good spellers. Nation (2001) confirms that learners incidentally gain some small amounts of vocabulary knowledge but it is necessary that the learning of words is reinforced soon; otherwise the learning will be lost.

Additionally, Saeedi & Parvaresh (2009) mentions that if extensive reading is accompanied with large quantities of suitably graded input (different genres and topics), and if it is supported by some language-focused activities, it will be an essential, worthwhile strand of a language learning course. Besides, Woodinsky & Nation (1988) cited by Saeedi & Parvaresh (2009) say extensive reading or sometimes called book flood is a useful strategy to expose students for incidental learning and this is the way how learners will be able to learn new words incidentally. It is to say that EFL teachers in Pasto need to make a good selection of texts for extensive reading, texts that can be capable to provide students an authentic samples of the language is being learn, in this case English. Literary texts can be a rich source, as Saeedi and Parvaresh (2009) quoting Krashen (1989) who state "literary texts help students build up lexical knowledge because they make for more comprehensible input". If teachers use inside and outside of the classrooms in Pasto good activities to foster students' new knowledge and also students have large selection of books, thus they have the possibility to choose them at the level they are reading at the moment. Here, EFL teachers will be able to use of graded readers, on other words, books which have been written specifically for EFL/ESL students or which have been adapted from authentic texts. Taking into account that in a city like Pasto, the public schools do not have enough sources; teachers must be creative and use short stories, work with copies and find sources in order to work with students in class. If universitary teachers implement extensive reading in an EFL classroom, students can be benefited, they will have the opportunity to learn vocabulary across different proficiency levels and teachers could present a material in the form of graded readers; in this way student's vocabulary knowledge could be built gradually; Coady & Huckin (1997) cited by Saeedi and Parvaresh (2009) "Low-proficiency learners can draw on graded readers in order to expose themselves to a large amount of high-frequency input".

Moreover, Schmitt (2000) cited by Saeedi & Parvaresh (2009) suggests that intermediate learners should read a variety of authentic texts about the same topic because in those texts they could find repeated vocabulary throughout. And advanced learners should read a wide range of authentic texts in order to encounter words they already know in different contexts, and their vocabulary could be expanded. As well in an EFL context like the University of Nariño, teachers can work with books that are appropriate for EFL students, besides this university counts with a library (resources center), which has books that are specialized for learning English as a foreign language, so teachers should motivate students to borrow books to work in class and to take home.

Social Behavior and Personality Journal (2009) says when learners read extensively, learners have the choice to read large amounts of material that interest them and that is within their level of comprehension. Therefore, Social Behavior and Personality Journal (2009) quoting Meng (2009) states " teachers should ensure that students have opportunities to read extensively at their level, on topics they select, without reading for tests, homework, or other measures of learning". On other words, it can be said that schools or universities in a city like Pasto, the texts they have available must be interesting to the students, thus, they will be far more likely to want to read them and teachers must provide books at a level appropriate to students' reading ability; the texts should not be too difficult so students do not experience the frustration of not being able to understand the books, the books or readings must be at their level of comprehension.

Maija MacLeod (n.d.) mentions Krashen (1984) who supported extensive reading, saying it gives a rise to writing competence. In 1993, he termed it "free voluntary reading" that means reading because you want to. Furthermore, Krashen (1996) cited by Whitehead Nicol (2004)

states that "vocabulary is acquired more efficiently by free reading than from direct teacher

instruction of vocabulary". So, if teachers in Pasto apply extensive reading in the classrooms,

EFL students will be allowed to choose the books they want to read depending on their interests;

in this way students will be encouraged to read for pleasure and should become better readers

and learn new words in their second language.

Smith (1983) cited by International Journal of English Studies (2009) states "students

learn to read by reading". And the objective of an extensive reading program in an EFL context

is to encourage reading fluency, so EFL students should not be stopping every time they

encounter a word they do not know. However, students should not read too easy books, as this

may well demotivate students, because they will feel they are getting nothing out of the books.

Hence, International Journal of English Studies (2009) says that extensive reading "involves (a)

the reading of large amounts of L2 written material, (b) for pleasure, (c) with the purpose of

learning to read by reading, and (c) graded books appear to be the basic materials on which most

programs are based". This means students will be reading large amounts of texts at their level in

their target language by pleasure; they will be reading for the content of the texts and teachers

will be able to ask students about the books they are reading informally.

Taking into account what has been said about intensive and extensive reading, in an EFL

setting like Pasto, first, those types of reading could be implemented in the University of Nariño

and supported by the Linguistics and Languages Department; students of this university could be

the participants who approve and attend to these short courses (credits) or it could be a

mandatory or elective subject during the semester. Students will get grades during this course

and those credits could be valid to complete the requirements to finish the professional carrier, of

course according to the policies established by this university. Second, it could be implemented

in schools and high schools in Pasto; although it is known that some teachers follow traditional

methods and students do not have many hours for foreign language instruction, so it is time for

teachers to leave their traditional methods, so the classes could be more practical than theoretical.

Teachers should present to their students innovative and short readings that motivate them, texts

that can be easy to understand and focused on increasing their vocabulary. Thus, students will be

able to participate actively and enjoy the English class. This is a good opportunity to establish

something new that will help students to increase their vocabulary and be better readers.

Skimming and scanning

Student's reading success in a foreign language depends on their ability to understand

and use the information in the texts. "Skimming and scanning are sometimes referred to as types

of reading and at other times, as skills" (Maija MacLeod, n.d.).

According to Cotter (n.d.) for EFL learners skimming and scanning should always be

encouraged. When students have vocabulary knowledge and they know how to use these skills

means that they will not be forced by the text, during the reading and comprehension speed.

Skimming

Nuttall (1996) cited by Floris & Divina (2009) states "Skimming is glancing rapidly

through a text to determine its gist or main idea", also Boboli (2012) say the skimming strategies

are used to get an overall picture and to ascertain the genre and field of the text. On other words

skimming is used to identify the main ideas of a text or to seek the most important information.

In an EFL classroom; Boboli (2012) mentions that when a teacher shows the text to the

students. Firstly, he exemplifies skimming strategies to support the readers, and then the teacher

asks some questions, such as:

* What is the text about?

* How do we know about the topic of the text?

* What is the purpose of this type of text? (i.e. to provide information, to recount an event, to explain?).

* How is the text organized? (Identify major stages such as background events, sources).

Next, the teacher asks the students to skim through the text and discuss the above questions in groups.

In an EFL context, teachers should implement it, organizing the class to work in peers and at this point they might be able to provide general information about the topic and structure of the text, and the students might be able to predict further what the text is about. It is important to say, this technique will be useful when students are seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. For students, it is not essential to understand each word when they are skimming. The students' goal must be to obtain an impression of the whole text and to learn the main points in a larger selection of writing rather than answer one specific question. So, students should be able to identify the major themes throughout the passage. Students should also pay attention to italicized or bold words, headings and subheadings.

After skimming a passage, then students can decide whether to go back and read the entire selection or to scan for particular information.

Scanning

On the other hand, there is scanning. Macleod (2005) cited by Floris & Divina (2009) define scanning as "a quick reading, focusing on locating specific information". Scanning is seeking specific words and phrases. It is used to find just the information the student wants or needs. If teachers in Pasto apply scanning in the classroom, students will look over the selection quickly to locate the particular piece of information they needs and carefully read only that

information. In other words scanning will also be used when students first find a resource to determine whether it will answer their questions. Boboli (2012) says if a teacher applies scanning is his/her class, EFL learner will be allowed to analyze more careful in each section to obtain specific information more closely, combine information of the sections, and understand the main idea of the text.

To conclude, skimming and scanning work in tandem. For English learners, both techniques should always be encouraged because, with practice, students notice that every new word doesn't need to be read and completely understood. When EFL learners get to develop good skimming and scanning skills, that means they will not be bound by the text and they will gather and synthesize the information effectively and quickly.

Vocabulary

After mentioning different types of readings and the abilities involved, vocabulary also has to be considered. In learning English as a foreign language by reading is how students learn new vocabulary that they need in order to comprehend a text. Shanahan (2005) states "Vocabulary is the knowledge of word meanings". When EFL students are exposed to read, they will learn new vocabulary and understand the meaning of the words in the text, at the same time the students will need to pay close attention to words they do not know and try to figure out their meanings from their context and prior knowledge. Also, Journal of Adult Teaching (2011) quoted Krashen's statement (1989) "proficient L2 learners appear to acquire much of their vocabulary through reading"; therefore if incidental vocabulary learning happens during reading and that encountering a word in many contexts is a favorable factor, thus EFL teachers should assign more reading to their students on their reading level.

Meng, Guo-hua (2010) mentions that in EFL teaching, cognitive theories have been effective to help EFL learners to dominate many English words. Meng, Guo-hua (2010) believes that "vocabulary acquisition is defined as learners' correctly extract a learnt word's meaning meanwhile properly use the word in a specific context". In EFL settings, when students encounter a new word, every time something new is likely to be learned about the identification and meaning of words; Wu & Wang (1998) cited by Meng, Guo-hua (2010) thinks that "the acquisition of a word includes a mastery of its pronunciation, spelling, grammatical usages, collocation and its connotation and denotation", on other words, if EFL teacher take this into account, students will master the new words they find in the text in terms of their form, meaning, syntax and grammar, then they will be able to remember them easily.

Journal of Adult Teaching (2011) named Lu Mei-Fang (2008) who suggests that teachers should:

 "(a) help students with word knowledge (e.g., word meaning, word use, word formation, word grammar); (b)select vocabulary to be learned; (c) facilitate students' incorporation of new words into language that is already known; (d)provide opportunities for student interaction with words; (e) incorporate tasks which require mental processing; (f)avoid teaching similar words at the same time; and (g)teach strategies for self-learning (e.g., guess in context, use glossaries for specific jargon, use bilingual and monolingual dictionaries)".

If teachers in Pasto implement what has been mentioned before in the classroom, students will have more opportunities to encounter new words and old words in different contexts, Hiebert & Kamil (2005) state that "wide reading is the primary engine that drives vocabulary growth for older and more able readers", it is to say that vocabulary learning requires that students read different texts all the time, so teachers will be able to get to know students' skills

and they can suggest appropriate texts according to students' level, in this way students will find pleasure in reading and it will become a habit, also if teachers make use of the right activities to support that learning, as a result, students will be more independent at the moment of reading a new text. Hesham Alyousef cited Orasanu (1986) that states "the knowledge a reader brings to a text is a principal determiner of how that text will be comprehended, and what may be learned and remembered".

Parvaresh (2011) says teachers should present to their students literary and nonliterary texts in order to make students learn all kinds of materials. Moreover, it is important to take into account that learning vocabulary through context should be emphasized, so EFL students will be able to learn word meanings, and the new and old vocabulary they learn by reading must be reinforced with exercises. Gass's (1988) cited by Nation (2001) mentions five levels in learning:

1. Basic level is called 'apperceived input' or noticing. It is affected by repetition, salience, and prior knowledge. Some vocabulary exercises that make use of selective attention are listing words, highlighting in the text (underlining, italics, bolding, and asterisks).

2. Next is 'comprehended input' or recognition. Vocabulary activities involve matching words (synonyms, definitions or pictures).

3. This level is called 'intake'. Vocabulary activities involve morphological analyses of words and forming those adding suffixes.

4. Next level is called 'interpretation' and involves activities like guessing from context, matching synonyms.

5. Last level is called 'output' that involves recall of the target word form to match them with definitions given after the read text.

As language learning involves the acquisition of thousands of words, teachers must know how vocabulary learning can be fostered, especially in EFL settings. It should be supplemented by pre-reading, while reading and post-reading activities to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge. First, Boboli (2012) says pre- reading activities help to give and share background knowledge; if teachers implement this activity in a classroom in a city like Pasto, they will say the title of the text or show pictures about the topic if those are available and ask some questions to the students to get an idea about the topic; during this activity there will be an active participation of the students which will be to encourage students to help them to comprehend better the text, taking into account the previous questions, prior knowledge, and the title of the text.

Second, Hesham Alyousef (2005) says "the aim of while-reading stage (or interactive process) is to develop students' ability in tackling texts by developing their linguistic and schematic knowledge"; in this stage students check their comprehension as they read and try to infere the meaning of the words. Ryder & Graves (1998) mention that while reading activities help to focus the student's attention and to relate their prior knowledge with information in the text. Furthermore, Boboli (2012) says that this activity helps the students see how the text is structured to achieve its genre. In other words, in an EFL context, teachers will discuss the features of the text; the genre of the text, the social purpose and as result students will be able to expand and relate their current knowledge and gain new knowledge of the text.

Third, after reading activities will be used to help EFL students to think about the texts they have read. Thus, students will be able to organize and record information (vocabulary) and to analyze concepts for a deeper understanding which they might use later. Boboli (2012) says when the teacher uses post reading activities can generate questions, make summaries, predict

and clarify the text with the whole class in order to activate background knowledge again, and also to evaluate content and make conclusions. Besides this, teachers will have the possibility to observe how the students perform during the activity and see if they have learned to use new vocabulary, can express their ideas and concepts better.

Parvaresh (2011) thinks that teachers must present, explain and include vocabulary in all kinds of activities and be aware of the teaching techniques they could use in the classroom; it is to say that teachers in Pasto have the responsibility to motivate and promote reading and vocabulary learning by selecting the appropriate materials and activities to develop in class. Also, it is important to activate students' prior knowledge of a topic, so they will be able to consciously use it as they read their text. Besides to pre-teaching new vocabulary words include words that ELLs already know, as Boboli (2012) mentions that teaching new and important words for reading comprehension is necessary; especially if the teacher introduces and explain the language features of the text, the students will be able to increase and relate their current knowledge and gain new knowledge of the genre. Taking this into account for an EFL setting like Pasto, students will have the opportunity to prepare and acquire the new vocabulary or terminology which would be necessary and useful before starting the reading practice, although some words can be guessed from the context, and others can be essential or less important to understand the text.

International Journal of Linguistics (2012) says EFL learners try to get the unknown word's meaning from a dictionary, although it depends on how important is the word in text and number of unknown words; taking into account this for an EFL classroom, it is known that the use of dictionary involves a number of learning strategies from basic reference skills (alphabetical order as the most basic) to advanced reading skills. Indeed, if teachers in Pasto train

and encourage their students in the habit of using a monolingual dictionary, it would seem to be an essential component of current classroom practice. This training could be focus on a number of aspects, from interpreting symbols and understanding abbreviations (e.g. adj., adv.), understanding phonemic transcriptions and stress marks, to quickly finding a specific meaning of an item of vocabulary. McVey (2007) cited by Journal of Adult Teaching (2011) thinks when teachers teach vocabulary in a specific context; EFL learners should make use of monolingual English dictionaries in order to promote students to review and use new vocabulary, thus language teachers are able to reinforce students' word knowledge, teaching various forms of a new word such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Although, Nuttall (1982) cited by International Journal of Linguistics (2012) points out the use of dictionary should be restricted, only for those words that are unguessable and obstruct learner's understanding; also International Journal of Linguistics (2012) cited Scholfield (1982a, 1999) and Nation (1990) who proposes that learners need to guess from the context before drawing on the dictionary use to get the appropriate meaning; it is to say that if students look up every word in the dictionary and they will not pay attention to what is going on in the reading and they will miss the main idea of the text and might have to read again the text.

Also, it is important to mention that if teachers in Pasto during EFL reading, implement guessing from context and use of dictionary as strategies to be practiced, this will help to students to comprehend better the text. International Journal of Linguistics (2012) says foreign language learners and native speakers make use of guessing from context when they encounter new words while reading. So, it is by contextualization that readers will try to figure out the meaning of a word, because they will use the hints and clues of the other words and sentences; they also will be able to look for synonyms or definitions or an antonym clue within the text and

try reread and rephrase it in their minds. International Journal of Linguistics (2012) cited Nation

and Coady (1988) who claim that there are two types of contexts: "one within the text, which

includes morphological, semantic, and syntactic information in a specific text, and a second in

the general context, or non-textual context, which is the background knowledge the reader has

about the subjects being read". In other words, the context has relevance to the lives of the

learners; it is an essential prerequisite since it helps in both engaging the attention of the learners

and naturally generating the target vocabulary. If teachers make sure of the language surrounding

the context is easy to comprehend, learners will understand the meaning of it in a better way, and

this will help them remember and recall the vocabulary taught. International Journal of

Linguistics (2012) named O'Malley (1985) who says this strategy is mostly used by intermediate

and advanced level students more than beginners, since they already have some level of

proficiency and it requires a prior training in basic vocabulary, word recognition, and knowledge

of the subject matter in order to see the clues that are available in the text.

　　　Sedita (2005) quoted Chall & Jacobs' affirmation (2003) that says students' word

knowledge is linked strongly to academic success because students who have a large vocabulary

can understand new ideas and concepts more quickly than students with limited vocabularies. In

other words, EFL students who are usually good readers, have a large vocabulary. They will be

able to understand the individual sentences and the organizational structure of a piece of writing.

They will comprehend ideas, follow arguments, and detect implications. They will know most of

the words in the text already, but they can also determine the meaning of many of the unfamiliar

words from the context. Peter Tze-Ming Chou (2011) cited Alderson (2000); Joshi (2005); Qian

(2002); Ricketts et al., view points' (2007) that consider vocabulary knowledge to be an

important variable that affects reading comprehension in both first and second language learning.

Without enough vocabulary knowledge the possibilities of understanding a text are less. English foreign language learners need to know the meaning of the new vocabulary in the text in order to comprehend it.

      To conclude, it is necessary to bear in mind that in an EFL classroom, when teachers present to students different types of texts for, in creative ways in order to motivate students, the activities, strategies, enthusiasm and commitment will be a plus that will help students to create interest in reading for a vocabulary development. Listening, speaking, and writing are all very important for an EFL student, but the skill of reading by far is the most imperative of these four skills. Reading allows a student to comprehend different contexts providing a "gateway" to personal development. Finally, it will serve as a useful contrivance to enhance vocabulary learning. Without reading a prime focus for the EFL student, success will not be achieved as easily. Reading lays groundwork that is imperative to the full comprehension of language building vocabulary, personal development and motivation to keep learning.

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