Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Acquisition in the EFL Classroom

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Enhancing 7th Graders Reading Comprehension in the Colombian Caribbean Coast through Task–Based Activities

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Abstract

In the field of education, teaching is a complex task that requires teachers' effort, since they have to facilitate students' learning by making them feel motivated and willing to learn. The teaching process implies the designing of activities that would grasp the students' attention and engage them in the learning process.

Reading plays a fundamental role when gaining knowledge. Thus, it is of great magnitude to consider reading comprehension as a key factor for oral communication and interaction. Most of the time students are just exposed to speaking and writing activities since it is believed that a person who speaks and writes in a language knows it very well. Through this study the researchers have highlighted the significance of reading comprehension and dealt with how reading comprehension can be enhanced through the use of task–based activities among the 7th graders at La Salle, a private high school in Monteria.

Key Words

Reading comprehension, tasks, student`s needs, standards, Task–based, authentic input, meaningfulness, diagnostic reading test, IRF interaction, outcome, feedback.

1. Objectives

1.1 General Objective

› To identify to what extend reading tasks improve student's reading comprehension skills.

1.2 Specific Objectives

› To improve the level of students' reading comprehension through the use of reading tasks.
› To improve student's lexicon and vocabulary through the implementation of reading tasks.

2. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is both to investigate the effectiveness and implement task – based reading activities to improve the students' level of reading comprehension. The importance of this study lays on the meaningfulness of using task– based activities for learners thus, making the learning process easier.

Furthermore, the implementation of reading tasks will foster students' lexicon and increase their vocabulary use in their daily life situations. This proposal will attempt to design meaningful reading activities involving real–world and local situations focused on developing reading skills to engage students in reading and improving their comprehension.

3. Literature Review

This paper provides a review of literature on Task– Based Activities to enhance reading comprehension and describes aspects, elements, characteristics to be considered when implementing Task– Based Activities in the classroom.

One issue that has emerged with frequency in the literature on Task Based Activities to enhance reading comprehension is the degree to

which the needs, interests and preferences of the students influence reading comprehension. To support this words, it has to be said that the most crucial factors to be taken into account when developing the activities are the kind of language and topics presented to the students. The primordial characteristic they should have is that they might be of students' interests and needs in the English class. According to Kennedy C. and Bolitho (1994) "the kind of English to be taught and the topic and themes will be based on the interests and requirements of the learners." (p. 3). This is, the activities to be developed must be based on the student's essential necessities and interests.

3.1 Students' Needs, Interests and Preferences

Teachers make adjustments to their lessons to meet the needs of different students. Evertson and Emmer (2009) argued that "not being aware of learners' needs might cause students to be reluctant to learning making teaching process unsuccessful." (p. 34). As learners are not involved in reading activities of their interest, they find it tedious and hard to read a text in a foreign language.

Besides, the activities used in class are not appealing. Most of the time, teachers applied the same formats when practicing reading. These kinds of activities consist of filling in the gaps, translating, completing and organizing sentences among others. This situation might cause most of the students to get bored and not pay attention to the teachers' instructions. For these reasons, teachers should select their materials based on learners` preferences to make sense of the learning process.

Also, the way how the input or information is provided to the students is of great importance when providing readings to learners. Anderson (1988) found that "The difficulty of texts is determined by: information organization; familiarity of topics; explicitness and sufficiency of information; referring expressions" (p. 28).

It means the complexity of the task will lead students to failure or success in it. Whether the task is organized appropriately and the steps to follow are clearly stated, learners will go through the task easily, the information given should be as comprehensible as possible and students should feel comfortable with it.

Giving students the opportunity to be exposed to authentic texts engages them in the activity and provides them with interesting and real information which could attract and raise students' motivation. According to Nunan (1999) "Authentic materials help bring content to life, and ultimately make learning and using language more meaningful." (p. 212).

3.2 Standards

Standards, as stated by the Colombian National Ministry of Education, (2006) are "criterios claros y públicos que permiten establecer cuáles son los niveles básicos de calidad a los que tienen derecho los niños y las niñas de todas las regiones de Colombia."(p.6). From this, it may be concluded that standards common criteria that have been established to regulate the quality of the education in Colombia. These standards work as indicators to learners, teachers, school administrators, parents so that they can know what students are expected to achieve during and at the end of any given course and consequently they can improve, reinforce, and keep track of all the education process.

In order to improve the quality in language teaching, and taking into account the importance that reading in a second language bears, the *Estándares de Competencia en Lengua Extranjera: Inglés* were created.". These standards were adopted from the Common European Framework due to the acknowledgement of the necessity to establish a level in language teaching that could be comparable internationally. Besides, these standards were adopted because the Colombian National Ministry of Education is aware that learning a second language is an ability that is of an outstanding meaningfulness since it contributes to academic and professional life of people. Also it makes a society more competitive and gives access to a great number of knowledge that is out of our reach and influences the country's economy and development.

3.3 Task– Based Activities

3.3.1 What is a Task?

As Skehan stated that a task is "An activity in which: meaning is primary; there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task com-

pletion has some priority; and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome" (Skehan, 2003 cited in Ellis, 2005, p. 67). Providing students with tasks foster them to produce meaning inside the classroom since the main focus of a task is on meaning and allows students to interact in a spontaneous exchange of meaning. However, form should not be left apart. Both meaning and form might be together to increase students' abilities to produce meaning and accurate sentences or grammatical structures in the target language. When developing a task, completion plays an important part in the learning process as it makes the task significant enough to be graded or checked by the teacher. It must go together with the outcome. It means how students performed in the task and how successfully they constructed meaning to communicate.

"During a task students are required to do something in response to what they hear that will demonstrate their understanding" (Ur, 2003, p. 25). It must, therefore, be recognized that reading activities through tasks are quite helpful because those tasks urge students to present an outcome and finish the task, which leads them to the development of their reading skills.

It is important to highlight some distinctive qualities of a task which make it different and outstanding compared with a common reading comprehension question activity.

Firstly, the task is to focus primarily on meaning rather than form giving a sense of priority to comprehension and understanding as well. Reading should not be separated from speaking since it gives learners the chance to use the language received from a text. Using tasks to develop reading comprehension might allow teachers to do meaningful activities with the information they get from the reading. For instance, learners can have a discussion based on the topic they read to develop critical thinking.

Secondly, tasks involve real-world processes, which allow learners to make use of their previous knowledge to achieve the purpose of the task. Students should be involved in activities they find similar to the real world. The language they produce will be used in daily life situations and mirror the real life.

Finally, Tasks have a clear outcome; it gives more sense to the activities since learners construct and use the language to achieve an outcome and it might be encouraging for them. As (Bachman and Palmer quoted in Willis and Willis, 2007) defined "a language use task is an activity that involves individuals in using language for the purpose of achieving a particular goal or outcome in a particular situation." (p. 12). In this way the outcome of a task is relevant in task. If there is not an outcome preceded by a series of activities, it is not a task but just an activity.

Based on our research, we observed that in theory very little has been said about reading comprehension in Colombia. Thus, the research group has decided to conduct this study to develop reading through the use of tasks in the classroom.

It is important to talk about the Task- based Approach considering the importance and the usefulness of applying tasks in the classroom to develop reading comprehension.

When providing students with reading activities, it is essential to elicit students to do something with the information they obtain from the text to make it a productive learning in which students build the language and use the information.

According to West (1994) "More effective than traditional comprehension questions is the current practice of providing a task where learners do something with the information they have extracted from the text." (p. 4). From this, it can be said that the lack of attention and motivation of learners in the English classes is due to the implementation of non-attractive materials and activities to develop reading comprehension. For this reason, it is important to expose students to various types of reading activities to be in contact with the language, giving learners the chance to cope with a diversity of interesting reading material.

Also, it is essential to say that the input used to design reading materials should be as authentic as possible; the material should be very familiar to the students. They should be able to understand the input itself to obtain satisfactory results since authentic materials engage students spontaneously as they conform to their real life.

Tomlinson (1999) found that "ideally materials at all levels should provide frequent exposure to authentic input which is rich and varied" (p.13). It is clear, that authenticity is a synonym of variety enrichment in language learning process as learners are given the opportunity to be exposed different materials and reading activities related to their context and real life.

In addition, it has been considered that reading tasks are more helpful than doing a simple comprehension question practice since reading tasks can involve many things and can be developed in different ways. Moreover, one of the benefits of implementing reading tasks is that learners can get more information in less time. It means, they can avoid reading extensive texts and have them reduced to a minimum in a reading activity.

Enhancing reading comprehension constructed around a task is our main concern and proposal in this project. Having learners deal with a task gives a sense of meaningfulness and innovation in this field.

In this project the research group found it important to mention and define an important issue which is IRF interaction. According to McCarthy: In both display and reference questions teachers provide feedback to the pupils' responses, usually on form, which also does not occur in natural adult-to-adult communication. In real world exchanges, feedback occurs after the purpose of the exchange has been achieved (1991).

IRF interaction refers to teachers giving input to the learners expecting a response and providing feedback to achieve the purpose of the lesson. Reading tasks reflect in some way this kind of interaction among the class giving learners the opportunity to exchange some information following a pattern given or information already learnt.

This project is proposed to improve reading comprehension by going through the stages of a task to increase student's comprehension of a text. Each stage should have different activities which all together lead the learners to complete an outcome. Following all the stages a task might improve their comprehension as they manipulate the text as much as they can.

4. Method

As this study is concerned with students' behaviour which is a primary factor in this research, this process is based on all the components which turn around the learner, such as knowledge, thoughts, beliefs, feelings, attitudes and emotions from which many answers can be found to the inquiries of our research project through the use of data collection techniques.

This research is an objective research which presents only the information and the results gathered from the investigation. It means that it does not include or add the researcher's point of view, just the findings. A qualitative research involves a variety of features such as: identifying a research problem, describing, and understanding, analysing the data and reporting the results or sharing findings.

> According to Elliot (1992) *objectivity refers to a method or procedure through which we acquire information: an objective test is an example of such a procedure. In common discourse, to be objective or to have an objective view is to see things the way they are.*

Besides, objective research includes collecting and analysing information and it focuses on giving the results obtained in this process. This is reflected in our research project because it is necessary to gather and analyse the outcomes related to students' reading process and how effective tasks are when developing students' reading skill. Finally, it is a tool that would help future researches to focus on developing the reading skill through the use of tasks.

4.1 Participants

The participants of this project are a group of 38 seventh grade students from La Salle School, of Monteria. Students' ages ranged between 12 and 13 years. It was a very enthusiastic group, full of energy and willing to learn.

When dealing with reading activities, they are very reluctant to read because they do not find it interesting. This attitude is shown every time they have to read something, especially in English. The teacher

involved in this research is a twenty-eight years old teacher with six years of experience in private and public schools.

4.2 Research Phases

4.2.1 Initial Findings Phase

This section is one of the most important stages of the research since it allows the research group to identify student's difficulties in reading comprehension and their reading level proficiency. In this phase, all the necessary information is collected through different instruments to determine the course to follow in this research project. Besides, it provides the necessary patterns to design appropriate reading tasks. The instruments used in this research project were: an interview, a questionnaire, observations, recordings, diaries, portfolios and reading tests.

The data collection techniques applied in this phase were:

›   Interview:

Maguire (1998) stated that "an interview is a conversation such as one between a reporter and another person for the purpose of getting information." (p. 472)

This tool was used with the purpose of collecting information about the teacher perception regarding the level of the students' reading comprehension and how it can be improved. From this, reading tasks in the classroom can be designed and applied to enhance learners' reading comprehension skills.

›   Observation:

As Maguire (1998) pointed out "Observation is the act of noticing and recording a specific type of information with instruments." (p. 600). The purpose of using observations is to notice how frequent the use of reading activities in the classroom and the level of English comprehension is. Also it can be observed learners 'attitude towards

the development of reading tasks among other expected results such as: the improvement in their comprehension level and their attention in the reading tasks.

› Questionnaire:

Gillard (2003) defined a questionnaire as a "List of questions that a number of people are asked so that information can be collected about something"p.1020 This data technique is one of the most important data collections tool in this research project, as the learners were asked to answer some questions in a closed format. This information was taken into account for the development of the next stage. These kinds of questionnaires tend to be reliable and almost exact because the learners felt free when they answered the questions and expressed their thoughts and expectations.

The questions formulated in the questionnaire were easy and contained simple language, in order for students not to feel uncomfortable trying to understand them. They were yes, no questions. For instance: Do you like English? Do you like reading in English? And multiple choice like: what kind of reading do you like? A) Comics. B) Science. C) mystery.

The purpose of the use of this technique was to identify and recognize the common likes and dislikes among the population as this instrument will provide us with all the necessary information to design and implement suitable reading task for the learners.

› Diagnostic Reading Test:

Diagnostic tests have been widely used by teachers in their classroom to learn about students' abilities and have a general view of learners' skills and knowledge of a subject. It has been considered that teachers should know and take into account students' English knowledge level, capabilities and skills to know what the starting point is. The reading diagnostic test was designed by the research group and applied during the English class. Students were asked to sit and behave properly because they were going to be evaluated. They were really worried. They expressed they had not studied for an exam; but after the teacher's explained the main objective of the test, they distressed and relaxed. The reading compre-

hension test dealt with a short reading comprehension and a vocabulary part. The purpose of the implementation of this technique was to find out learners' reading comprehension level by testing them through one simple reading activity. The reading diagnostic tests helped the research group to observe students' attitude during reading activities.

4.2.2 Findings

The research group carried out the interviews, observations, questionnaires and diagnostic reading tests in order to classify the population's English level and a way to find out the difficulties they face when reading a text. These instruments played a significant and fruitful role in this project as they unveiled the students' level of understanding while reading and based on this, the activities were designed to promote and reinforce reading comprehension among students.

Throughout the pre-implementation stage it was found that students were used to translating every word they found in the readings.

The diagnostic reading test helped out the research group to find student's difficulties when facing a reading activity. Firstly, it was found that learners' had poor reading comprehension skills and lack of motivation to carry out the reading tasks. Secondly, students were not able to grasp the information at the given time. It seemed students were not used to doing those kinds of reading activities. The graph 1 displays the level in which students were when they took the diagnosis reading.

Graph 1 Diagnostic reading

6,16 %   5,13%

27,71%

■ a. Alto
■ b. Medio
■ c. Bajo
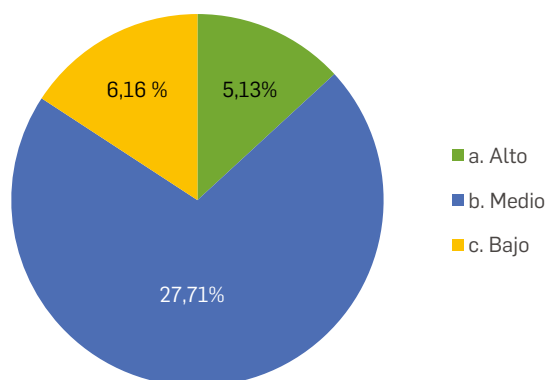
The results show that 71% percent of the sample (27 students) fall into the medium level category of reading comprehension. The research group did not expect the subjects to be in a medium level due to the lack of motivation and reading strategies found during previous observations and according to the results of the diagnostic test. Besides, surprisingly just 16% percent of the students (6 students) were found to be in a lower level. It was expected that most of the students would be in the low level range as they were not able to complete the reading activity.

Only 13% of the students (5 students) showed high level of reading comprehension. It means that only five did the activity satisfactorily and exhibited a better performance than the rest of their classmates. Therefore, it was meaningless to judge the students' level of reading comprehension just based on a single activity since there are many components, such as attitude, motivation and also affective filter that influence learner's performance. Since they did not expect to be evaluated, they were stressed even though they were told to be relaxed as they were not going to be graded.

Besides, a questionnaire technique was used to determine essential aspects about students' learning and preferences such as: students' interest, likes, dislikes, opinions, preferences and attitude during the English class. Moreover, the research group found it important to identify the kind of activities and the topics students would like to learn during their English classes with the main purpose of making the class an enjoyable and meaningful for the students.

The topics and the information which students like and prefer to deal with are influential factors that would help the process since learners might be more interested in reading a topic of their preference and learning about these topics It is fundamental to know what kind of topics they like or not to make learning process more interesting and build a little more confidence in reading activities. If learners are exposed to reading activities which engage in topics of their interest, it may affect learning in a positive way as learners might feel a connection between their daily life and English classes.

Moreover, in the questionnaire students had the opportunity to choose the topics they felt comfortable with. When students were asked about

the topics to be implemented during the reading activities in the class, they chose daily situations of life and entertainment as the most interesting ones, followed in order by sports, history and news (Graph 2). This question was important because through this the research group could have a guide when selecting the topics for the reading they were going to applied in the next stage.

Graph 2 Preference questionaire

a. Noticias ■ b.Farándula ■ c. Deportes ■ d. Historia ■ e. Situaciones cotidianas
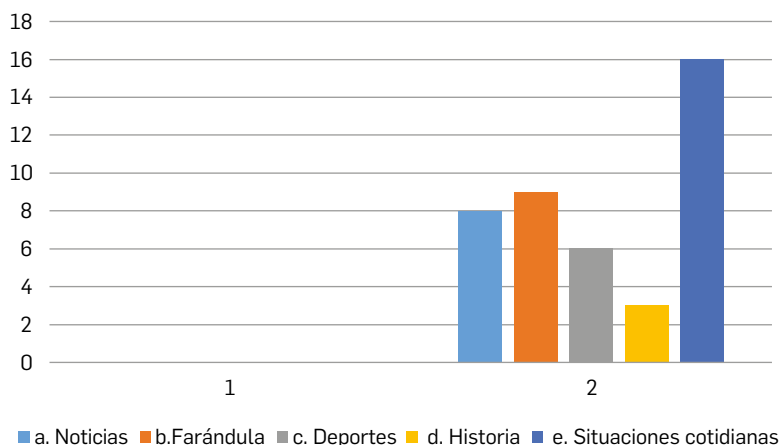
Students showed preference by two topics (daily situations and entertainment).This information was crucial for the designing of the reading activities which assured in some way the effectiveness of the tasks. Besides, those were influential factors which determined the course to follow in this project.

Taking into account other questions in the questionnaire, half of the students answered that they liked to work in groups (50% of the students). It has to be mentioned that during the observation stage, the students always displayed the desire to work in groups in the class activities. However, the other half of the learners cannot be left apart. Students who affirmed they liked to work individually or in pairs, which is the other 50% percent, developed their activities in the classroom in the way they preferred to work. In this way, the research group satisfied the student's likes and needs at that time. The way students interact in the activities was very important for the designing of the reading activities. This information is relevant to the course of

this research project since they will determine the success or failure of it. As students showed they liked and enjoyed working in groups, the researchers took advantage of this and put them to work in groups and included a cooperative and collaborative approach to develop the reading tasks.

Graph 3 Working style

a. Individual, 8, 22%

c. En grupos, 18, 50%

b. En parejas, 10, 28%

■ a. Individual   ■ b. En pareja   ■ c. En grupos
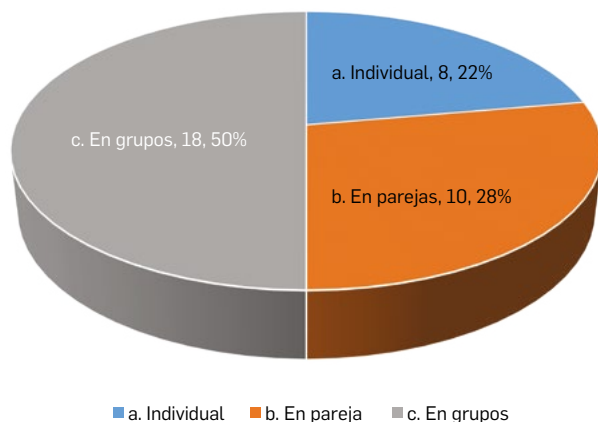
4.2.3 Implementation Phase

In this stage, the information received from the data collection techniques helped the researchers to have a standard reading activity. This is an example of a reading activity based on the students' needs and likes to be implemented during the process. This might in some help the learners to improve their reading comprehension in foreign language.

One of the objectives of this research project is to improve reading comprehension through the use of tasks. Thus, the reading activities were designed taking into account students' preferences and level of reading.

Another important aspect in this section is the implementation of the stages in a task. It was essential to implement each of the reading stages to help students get more involved in the activities and promote their comprehension through it. As it might be more useful for them to go through a reading activity following a series of stages which

allow them to activate their knowledge and achieve the purpose of the reading. This is, not just giving the learners a simple reading, but giving them different tasks to do with the reading. For example, a pre-reading activity to activate their knowledge, during the activity and a post- reading activity were carried out to achieve our goals which are improving learner's comprehension and vocabulary.

Reading tasks were designed, refined and applied with the purpose of having learners going beyond the text. It means that students were not only asked to read a text, but they also had to do something with the information they got from the text as it was stated in the theoretical framework and as supported by West, (1994) who assures that tasks are a meaningful tool for having learners manipulate the language extracted from a text.

The tasks implemented were a real display of authentic input since all the topics involved in them were of learners' interest and involved meaningful and varied information as pointed out by Tomlinson (1999), who stated that class activities should be "rich and varied." Topics such as Michael Jackson's life and Colombian food gave a sense of having a variety and rich information of students' interest.

5. Results

The data obtained from this project were basically based on the instruments and techniques used to gather the information.

Each instrument had a purpose to collect and extract information starting from the diagnosis, the implementation and finally to the evaluation of the results.

The main objective of this research is to improve students' reading comprehension and motivation towards reading activities through the use of Tasks. Thus, the data collection techniques helped the research group to find ways to provide students with all the resources they need to increase their motivation towards reading.

To talk about the results, three categories were selected and they are the following:

5.1 The usefulness of tasks to develop learners' comprehension in reading activities

Different tasks were implemented to reach the objectives proposed at the beginning of this project to show the usefulness of using tasks in improving students' level of comprehension and motivation towards reading activities. All of the tasks were designed taking into account several aspects, such as parameters of the tasks, students' needs and expectations. All the information gathered in the questionnaire applied to the students. Moreover, it was taken into consideration the sequence of a task or the task cycle; the pre-task, during task and post- task to help students enhance their reading comprehension towards reading activities while learning. It is relevant to know that all the tasks designed and implemented were based on what students are able to do taking as a guide the National Standards.

The research group found many benefits from using Tasks to increase their interest towards reading: those benefits aim at many influential aspects in reading and learning a language. Tasks promote motivation, creativity, interest and oral language skills. Those aspects will be discussed below.

One of the tasks which reflected and supported the benefits of using reading Tasks mentioned above is the task "a good menu". As learners expressed in the questionnaire their preferences towards talking about topics related to their context. The tasks was about Colombian food; the most relevant aspects observed during the implementation of the task is described below.

During the mentioned activity "a good menu", learners were more interested in participating and sharing their likes and preferences about food. They paid close attention to the pictures shown and the vocabulary presented. Also, they asked for extra information regarding the vocabulary. It was perceived that the students were concentrated and most of them were participating, mentioning the different kind of food and paying attention to the explanation given by the teacher. At the

beginning they asked the teacher questions in Spanish, then they used the vocabulary learned to express their likes. For instance:

> Student: Teacher ¿Cómo se dice sopa de queso en inglés?
> Teacher: cheese soup
> After that the students shared their likes among themselves using the new vocabulary.

As it can be seen in the chart (Appendix #5) given to the students to do the reading activity; there were two customers and each one asked something different to eat.Students had to identify the food and circle it. During the task a listening activity about the topic was included to reinforce the reading and the vocabulary input. In the listening activity students had to select and circle some information about it. It was a little bit difficult for students to identify the specific aspects and they circled all the words they heard in the conversation. They could not understand what they were asked. The research group stopped the activity and helped students to focus on the details needed.

Learners seemed to be confused. The lack of vocabulary was evident and they found it hard to fill the chart. Later on, the teacher explained them one of the strategies to use when reading. They were told to use the inference strategy and shown with an example how to guess the meaning of some words without looking at the dictionary.

Also, students' attitude towards the tasks was quite positive. When students had to write and create a menu, it was observed that they were interested and asked for new vocabulary of food. Also, their resourcefulness played an important part during this task since they created their menus using many colours and their creativity.

In the second task, Michael Jackson's biography, during the pre-task the teacher started talking about the most important events of Michael`s life and shared some rumors about his career supported by pictures. The students paid close attention to the activity and they participated in the comments about Michael Jackson's life and death. The pictures shown helped them to be concentrated and willing to pay attention. As Michael Jackson's life was controversial, it helped us to have them participate in the activity. However, it was difficult

for them to talk in English. In the activity they had to organize some pictures and sentences according to their previous knowledge about Michael Jackson`s life.

They organized the pictures in the correct order and were concentrated in what they were doing. As the topic chose was of interest to the students they were able to express their opinion and what they knew about Michael Jackson's life. Also, the implementation of the pre-task helped the research group since it provided the students with the information about Michael Jackson's life and important events of his career.

The implementation of reading tasks gives learners the chance to manipulate and interact with the language not only answering or completing information. Learners were urged to analyze and interact with different readings in the tasks. As it may be observed throughout the development of the tasks, students developed a better reading comprehension level.

5.2 Importance of using the stages of a task to improve reading comprehension

The use of stages of a task played an important role in the course of this research project since learners encountered with the language at a more extensive way. As each stage of a task has its own purpose it helped students to be more involved and better prepared to deal with the task and achieve the goals. At the beginning of the implementation of the tasks it was observed that learners were not accustomed to these kind of tasks and they thought it was enough to do just one activity about the topic. The implementation of the second stage, the target task, helped us to recognize and identify students' abilities and to know what they were able to do with the language they got from the reading. The last stage of the task was of a great importance because it provided us with useful information about students' feelings, perceptions, weaknesses and strengths in reading comprehension. For instance in the task on Michael Jackson, based on the input the teacher gave the students about the artist life, the students were able to develop the "during task" and the "post tasks". If the students had not been exposed to an input in the pre-task, they would not have been able to carry out any of the other activities. It is very important to highlight the positive effects of

developing these three stages for each task. Thanks to this the students were able to develop the whole task in a meaningful way.

5.3 How reading task promoted oral interaction among the students?

This category emerged from all the results obtained at the last stage of this work. This category is an additional benefit from initial expected results. This is an emergent category which came out after the planning and the implementation of this project and took an important place in this paper for its valuable and significant contribution to the learning and teaching process.

One of the main features of the task is to promote oral interaction among learners since it provides with all the input and conditions to communicate and exchange information. The tasks designed by the research group gave students the possibility to interact using the target language. This type of interaction observed during the tasks is called (IRF) Initiation – Response – Feedback, Ellis Rod (1999). Interaction in which the learners had to follow a pattern. In IRF interaction the teacher initiates the conversation and the pupil gives the response, then the teacher gives a feedback. Even though IRF interaction is considered as a method which limits learners thinking, the research group truly believes it is a significant starting point to help learners improve reading and oral skills. In the tasks short conversations were observed between the students and the teacher in which they had the opportunity to answer some questions about the texts; the teacher asked a question and the pupil answered, then feedback was given if it was necessary. For instance during task #1: A good menu, at the moment of giving the students the input for the activity which was the vocabulary about food, the teacher showed the students some flash cards of different types of food, while doing this she asked the students simple questions, for example:

Teacher: Do you like Ajiaco?
Student 1: Yes, I do.
Teacher: Do you like avocado?

Student 2: No I don't.   These students followed the pattern among them and the teacher walked around the class giving feedback when necessary. For instance:

Teacher: Do you like sour cream?
Student 3: No I do.

In this case, the teacher told the students the correct answer.

Seeing seventh graders at La Salle School interacting and using the target language in some way represents for us a great advance in improving reading skills. It is important to highlight the influence of motivating pupils to participate in the tasks and achieve goals which help them to interact within the class.

Tasks were not just raising motivation tool; they were also a way of promoting interaction and improving students reading comprehension through the use of the language in a meaningful and creative way.

6. Conclusions

Carrying out a research study leading to the implementation of reading task has been quite enlightening, rewarding and satisfactory. We, as teachers, found it rewarding to be involved in these processes which enrich our professional development, and lead us to acquire knowledge and experiences in the classroom and support for a deeper understanding of different events in teaching and learning process. It also gave us some clues of how to design attractive materials and tasks to enrich our teaching process every day. Apart from that, it gave us the experience to be active researchers in the classroom for finding a possible answer to all of our inquiries regarding teaching. Eventually, it may take us to a higher level of our professional development as teachers.

It can be said that seven-graders of La Salle School needed the implementation of reading tasks, besides the research group, found it necessary to enhance their reading comprehension skills and motivation towards reading activities. Therefore, the reading tasks reading tasks were designed to suit the requirements of these demands and they

suited perfectly. This reflects that teachers should pay more careful attention to all the aspects that might influence their performance and makes the teaching process more valuable and significant.

Besides, reading tasks helped learners to improve their vocabulary skills and increase their lexicon. It gave them the chance to encounter the language and learned many words and expressions of different and relevant topics which could be used in other settings such as academic situations.

Moreover, the results demonstrated that the use of interesting and attractive topics motivated the students to engage in the reading tasks as a great support to the comprehension process.

Using tasks to raise motivation was a significant option to deal with the phenomenon found as this implementation had some additional benefits to the development of reading comprehension; learners enhanced not only their reading comprehension skills, but also their vocabulary and motivation towards reading comprehension activities.

Also, using tasks provides one more benefit which is the improvement of oral interaction in the classroom. During the analysis of the results the research group found an emergent category which took a part in this work; It reflected how tasks improve oral interaction through (IRF) interaction in the classroom and learner`s pronunciation as well. Thus, Tasks provided teachers with many tools to foster students` motivation not only to listening activities but also to interact and use the target language.

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