



**Skimming and Scanning Instruction through Blogs to Improve Reading
Comprehension Skills in Intermediate Adult Learners**

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to find out to what extent skimming (reading for gist) and scanning (reading for specific details) instruction through blogs improved participants' reading comprehension and to explore students' perceptions and difficulties in the use of blogs for reading intentions. The present research was conducted at a public institute located in la Troncal, Ecuador. The sample consisted of five adult learners of the fourth semester in the computing career. The study followed an action research design. To collect data, both quantitative and qualitative instruments were used. The researcher applied tests (pre and post), surveys (pre and post) and interviews. Results indicated that skimming and scanning instruction through blogs improve participants' reading comprehension (Cohen's $d = 1.98$). It also showed they had good viewpoints about the use of these tools. Some pitfalls of the study were related to sample size, the pandemic, the duration of the intervention, and institutional issues. This research intended to contribute to the educational realm and be the basis for other teachers to innovate, redefine their practices, and improve their students' English proficiency.

Keywords: skimming, scanning, reading comprehension, blogs

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio fue determinar en qué medida la enseñanza de las técnicas de lectura *skimming* (para identificar las ideas principales) y *scanning* (para encontrar información específica) a través de blogs mejoró la comprensión lectora de los participantes y exploró las percepciones y dificultades que tuvieron los estudiantes en el uso de blogs con fines de lectura. La presente investigación se realizó en un instituto público ubicado en La Troncal, Ecuador. La muestra estuvo compuesta por cinco estudiantes del cuarto semestre de la carrera de informática. Este estudio siguió un diseño de investigación-acción. Para la recolección de datos se utilizaron instrumentos cuantitativos y cualitativos. La investigadora aplicó pruebas (pre y post), encuestas (pre y post) y entrevistas. Los resultados indicaron que la enseñanza de las técnicas *skimming* y *scanning* a través de blogs mejoró la comprensión lectora de los participantes (Cohen $d = 1,98$). También demostró que los participantes tuvieron puntos de vista positivos en el uso de estas herramientas. Algunas de las dificultades del estudio estuvieron relacionadas al tamaño de la muestra, la pandemia por COVID-19, el tiempo de duración de la intervención y problemas institucionales. Esta investigación pretende ser un aporte dentro del campo educativo y se la base para que otros docentes innoven, redefinan sus prácticas y mejoren el nivel de proficiencia de sus estudiantes.

Palabras clave: *skimming*, *scanning*, comprensión lectora, blogs

Skimming and Scanning Instruction through Blogs to Improve Reading Comprehension Skills in Intermediate Adult Learners

Over the last years, English has become the world's common language, which is widely spoken by most of the Earth's population; it has around 375 million native speakers and nearby 750 million non-native talkers (Parupalli, 2019). Undoubtedly, it is a language with high dominance and has been firmly set as the first global lingua franca in different fields (Ekola, 2016). In fact, this language is extensively used as the language of information technology, business, medicine, tourism, entertainment, diplomacy, science, and education, providing people a superior competitive profile in terms of professional, cultural, academic, and economic growth (British Council, 2013). English is widespread in all countries and continents (Parupalli, 2019).

In South America, in spite of many people are having access to learning English as a foreign language (EFL) due to the different policies and programs adopted by governments, statistics pinpointed that English proficiency levels are still not satisfactory. Students have not achieved desired results regarding language production yet. In countries like Chile, Ecuador, and Mexico, teaching English has a legal foundation, it is mandatory in schools. They have designed plans, strategies, and standards for English instruction (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017). But English proficiency index is low (Education First, 2019).

Despite Ecuador through local authorities (Ministerio de Educación, 2016) designed a well-structured EFL curriculum, there is a mismatch between the reality and what it is expected, it “presents vague actions to accomplish the objectives” (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017, p. 27). Students at the end of baccalaureate are supposed to reach a B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

(Ministerio de Educación, 2016). However, results shows they do not reach that expected level at the end of high school (Education First, 2019).

Within the last few years, Ecuador has maintained an alliance with Education First (EF) to measure English proficiency levels (especially in public institutions). EF in its ninth edition of English proficiency index (EPI) ranked Ecuador in 81st position among one hundred of countries and it was the last in Latin America (nineteenth position). It means an extremely low English level (Education First, 2019). To confirm these claims, a study carried out by the British Council (2015) showed that most of English learners evaluated their overall language skills as poor or basic. It is worth to point that this report comprises learners' responses of all levels of education in Ecuador.

Referring to English in higher education, students must mandatorily take English courses as part of their professional program (Castro, 2011). Though, the poor results got during their secondary instruction can be an obstacle during their professionalization. In Castro's view (2011), a majority of tertiary students struggled in their language study mainly due to time management, multi-leveled students, inadequate background, poor reading skills, and a diversity of learning styles in a class.

Research (British Council, 2015; Hamza & Nur, 2018; Qarqez & Rashid, 2017) evidences that one of the most common difficulties among young adults is related to reading deficiency, which can result in weak academic performance. This deficiency is also linked to a lack of reading habits. The Regional Center for the Promotion of Books in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLALC, 2014) informed Ecuador has the lowest reading index in Latin America. 39% of people never or almost never read for academic purposes in their mother tongue; it also reflected that an average of three books is read per person in a year. The situation is worse in English, levels of reading in this second language are not

very encouraging. EFL learners admit they do not read English frequently enough or have not studied English for very long (British Council, 2015).

Reading is one of the basic receptive skills, which is essential to acquire information for different purposes, for example, with academic aims or as a lifelong habit. Reading is a process which consists of decoding and comprehending texts to have sense of what is written (Ari, 2017). This process involves the identification and understanding of letters, words, phrases and clauses as well as comprehension (Qismullah, Yunisrina, Burhansyah, & Afla, 2017, p. 45). Undoubtedly, comprehension is one of the most important aspects when reading. It allows readers make meaning and have a general overview about both authors' ideas and basic information within a text.

Although reading has a lot of benefits in second language acquisition, like improvements in vocabulary, spelling, syntax as well as writing (Krashen, 1982), there are some aspects that can affect learners' reading ability. Just to mention, language proficiency, limited vocabulary, unfamiliarity with the text format, and the lack of application of reading strategies which can lead to students' comprehension problems (Zare-ee, 2014). Comprehension problems limit students to recognize main ideas, basic notions of texts, key information without mentioning they have to invest much time trying to figure out writer's intention and message (Khan, Shahbaz, Kumar, & Khan, 2020).

To mitigate reading comprehension problems, recent research in EFL pointed out the implementation of reading strategies instruction which help learners to acquire, store, recall information, and improve comprehension (Zare-ee, 2014). To be specific, literature highlights the effectiveness of training students on using scanning and skimming to enhance learners' reading comprehension and strengthen their overall reading skills (Diaz & Laguado, 2013; Qismullah et al, 2017; Sasmita, 2013; Ulmi, Sundari, & Sukmaantara, 2015).

Skimming refers to a technique which deals with the rapid identification of the gist or main idea of text (Ulmi et. al, 2015). In Diaz and Laguado's view (2013), this technique focused on students try to find key words that allow them to infer and interpret what texts are about. On the other hand, scanning is unlike skimming, students have to focus on specific details or a determined piece of information without wasting time reading the whole text (Quismullah et al, 2017). Both strategies promote efficient time management (Ulmi et al., 2015).

Nowadays, technology offers a plethora of advantages in the educational realm. As a result, it can complement, empower, and motivate EFL learning. Which such advent that technology provides, the means and ways that people read and get information have changed (Hethesua & Gnana, 2020). In that sense, blogs (which are online journals) can support reading by promoting peer-interaction and autonomy at the same time (Said, 2016). These tools are being widely used by teachers and students to facilitate and improve reading. Several authors (Hsu & Shiangwei, 2010; Looi & Yusop, 2011; Said, 2016; Soufi, Saad, & Maureen, 2014; VanEpps, 2012) have shown the usefulness of these online tools to raise students' reading comprehension skills and foster positive attitudes. Kaupmees (2015) reported that participants from his study felt more confident, engaged, and motivated when reading on blogs.

The Ecuadorian English teachers' standards (Ministerio de Educación, 2012) have stipulated to read and carry out classroom research in order to empower educators' teaching practices and improve students learning outcomes. Consequently, an action-research was addressed to five students of the computing career of a public institute in La Troncal whose results from a placement test not only showed they reached an A2 level (according to the CEFR) but also evidenced they got low scores in the reading, especially in those related to comprehension tasks. They presented struggles in the identification of main ideas and

specific details and in the recognition of basic key words. For the aforementioned, it was feasible to conduct a study to overcome those students' reading weaknesses through strategies that included the use of ICTs to provide an alternative solution to this situation. That is why this study attempted to determine to what extent skimming and scanning could improve participants' reading comprehension and how their attitudes toward this innovation were affected.

EFL research is an emerging subject in Ecuador and few researchers have been addressed studies to measure the impact of skimming and scanning instruction through blogs in adult learners' reading comprehension and perspectives. Similar studies have focused on reading using skimming and scanning strategies and ICTs have been done, for instance, Salvador (2010) investigated the impact of extensive reading on students' attitudes toward L2 reading. Llumiyinga (2012) examined the use of graphic organizers to improve reading comprehension finding they were highly positive. Peñafiel (2014) approached reading comprehension among college students as well as critical reading. In the same way, Luguana (2019) reported that skimming and scanning strategies had a high impact on learning. She used Google spreadsheets as ICT components.

In spite of some research has been done in Ecuador, the field is still in need of action-research that tends to improve intermediate learners' reading deficiencies and propose new innovative alternatives. To fill that gap, this study aimed at strengthening students' reading performance and finding out the effectiveness of skimming and scanning instruction using blogs in learners' reading comprehension and perspectives.

Literature Review

This section provides a brief overview of the reading skill and the use of blogs as a technological tool to support skimming and scanning in order to improve reading comprehension skills. The first topic addressed in this section is *reading*, it provides a short overview of what reading is, its dimensions, how reading comprehension occurs, and the benefits of skimming and scanning instruction. The second issue considered is *blogging* and how blogs can be implemented as an innovative resource to facilitate reading instruction and provide solutions to common learning problems. The final section describe how *reading can be facilitated through blogs*.

Reading

Reading is a receptive skill in which learners can obtain information from a variety of literacy aimed at different purposes, for instance, people can read for pleasure as well as for cultural, professional, or academic issues. In general terms, reading consists of making associations, meaning, and visual recognition of the different elements implied in a text (Ari, 2017) requiring the interaction of abilities, strategies, and specific background (Berregui & Boulaachab, 2017) to have understanding of what is being read (Qismullah et al., 2017). Within the EFL instruction, reading is focused on two complex dimensions: decodification and comprehension (Ari, 2017). In that sense, reading intends readers to understand the implicit and explicit writers' messages involving both conscious and unconscious processes (Berregui & Boulaachab, 2017).

Reading comprehension.

Reading is the foundation of knowledge and comprehension is the "*heart of reading*" (Looi & Yusop, 2011). Reading comprehension can broadly be defined as a process in which readers have a general understanding of a text in order to guess, infer, discuss, and

identify the writers' ideas (Qismullah et. al., 2017). For Berregui and Boulaachab (2017), comprehension occurs when readers grasp the author's intention using their experience and prior knowledge in order to make meaning of what is being read. In Krashen's view (1982), when people comprehend what they read language acquisition happens.

Reading strategy instruction: skimming and scanning.

Janzen (2002) defined reading strategies as "*plans*" used for constructing meaning. They can help learners become more proficient readers. Moreover, she affirmed these strategies can be taught. Teachers can explain where, when, and how to use them but also provide modeling and feedback. She also suggested that these strategies should be practiced repeatedly in new texts in the long term as well.

Similarly, Zare-ee (2014) reported that reading strategies can assist learners to acquire, store, recall information, and improve comprehension. Aziza and Razali (2019), after reviewing 27 articles on reading strategies instruction, found that reading training might comprise diverse approaches and techniques. They remarked the role of cognitive (predicting, scanning, asking questions, among other) and metacognitive (planning, monitoring, and evaluation) strategies to scaffold EFL students to comprehend written texts and motivate them to read.

Experts have always emphasized the benefits of scanning and skimming instruction. Some of them including to overcome language barriers, bolster reading comprehension, promote efficient reading, and develop confidence (Al Raqqad, Y., Ismail, H., & Al Raqqad, K., 2019). Another issue to consider is time, students can save time because they learn not to read the whole text just to find information needed (Ulmi et al., 2015). This is especially for test taking due to the fact that they help readers to have a quick view of a text

guaranteeing optimal time management (Aritognang et.al, 2018; Darmawan, 2016; Diaz & Laguado, 2013; Qismullah et.al., 2017; Sasmita, 2013).

Skimming refers to fast reading for gist, in other words, people read quickly to figure out the main idea of a text. It also helps to know how the text is organized and what the author's tone and purpose is. To skim students do not need to read the whole text, they have to get only target aspects (Qismullah et al, 2017). Skimming process includes:

- Top-down reading for clues and points that lead readers to take out a general overview (Marliasari, 2017).
- Reading the first and last sentence of paragraphs to identify keywords of phrases (Abdelrahman & Bsharah, 2014).
- Reading titles and/or the first paragraph completely.
- Dipping into the text to find key words, and reading the final paragraph completely (Asmawati, 2015).

On the contrary, people scan texts in order to quickly find out specific details or pieces of information (names, dates, time, location, among others) (Díaz & Laguado, 2013). Its purpose is the extraction of key information without having to read every single word (Qismullah et al, 2017). The process of scanning can comprise some steps such as:

- Remembering what readers are looking for.
- Anticipating some information.
- Analyzing how the content is organized.
- Determining what information to scan, and
- Reading the whole statement with the information in it (Asmawati, 2015).

Opposite points of view highlighted that one limitation of these strategies relies on the fact that students need high levels of concentration and practice which sometimes results to be

hard for them (Hamza & Nur, 2018). Similarly, according to Qismullah et al (2017), they can omit important information from the texts. In Setyo's view (2017), two disadvantages of these techniques rely on determining how much time students need to accomplish reading activities and the fact that teacher needs to invest more time in students with severe reading deficiencies.

In brief, these strategies are useful for students with comprehension difficulties. As mentioned before, most recent research stated reading strategies instruction is fruitful to mitigate comprehension pitfalls which are related to limited vocabulary knowledge, text complexity, complex grammatical structures, inappropriate learning environments, anxiety, lack of motivation, and concentration (Anjomshoa & Zamanian, 2014; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Hamza & Nur, 2018; Nuttall, 2000).

Blogs

In modern society, it has been evident a huge growth of technology and its application in pedagogical innovations. Emerging gadgets, software, and the internet can provide people new means for learning English (Hethesua & Gnana, 2020). In the 21st century, the new generation is undoubtedly connected to virtual learning environments and online communication where they can read, write, listen, and talk to others providing chances to practice a foreign language (Soufi et. al., 2014).

Nowadays blogging is being widely used in the educational realm to contribute to language acquisition, motivation, and autonomy (Hsu & Shiangwei, 2010; Looi & Yusop, 2011; Said, 2016; Soufi et. al., 2014; VanEpps, 2012). As a pedagogical tool, blogs cannot only foster collaboration and interaction among teachers and students but also serve as a means for the development of English competences and skills (Miftachudin, 2017; Mutmainna, 2016).

Kaupmees (2015) defined blogs as updateable online journals where users can write and read entries, make comments, and communicate asynchronously. Most blogs are easy to manage and free of charge, such as for example WordPress or Bloggers. Regarding blogs in school practices, Kochoska and Petrovski (2017) established four blog functions. These functions included classroom management, collaboration, discussions, and e-portfolios. Lujan-Mora and Juana-Espinoza (2006) also stated that blogs can be used in different ways by both teachers and students. For instance, teachers had the potential of creating online courses and students could use them as learning logs/diary to record, report, and reflect on their progress. Furthermore, it is important that students are taught about how to make quality posts and comments, safety rules, and key terminology (Kochoska & Petrovski, 2017). To measure quality of students' post, Morgan (2015) suggested the use of rubrics adapted to students' needs and blogging purpose.

In spite of blogs seemed to be suitable for learning, they had some obstacles. Many experts have contended and established some barriers. Huang (2016) mentioned that grading blogs, correcting errors, and providing feedback can be more time-consuming for teachers. Da Silva and Duarte (2017) mentioned that other challenges for teachers were related to schedule and curriculum constraints, excessive flow of information, and students, teachers, and authorities' resistance. Other disadvantages comprise difficulty in students' assessment, misunderstanding of teacher's direction, lack of accessibility to technology, and privacy and security issues in public posts (Kaupmees, 2015; Lujan-Mora & Juana-Espinoza, 2006).

Blogging and Reading Comprehension

In the context of reading, blogs facilitate the learning process and the development of reading skills (Hethesia & Gnana, 2020; Korovina et al., 2016). Miftachudin (2017), in his

reviewed of past studies, concluded that students agreed that blogs facilitated reading tasks and led them to read more. Blogs also promotes autonomous reading, questioning, discussion, and collaborative learning in the target language. It is possible for teachers to monitor and provide feedback and boost peer-feedback too (Looi & Yusop, 2011).

Authentic texts can be displayed to help students succeed in reading comprehension by reading prompts, answering questions, and replying post (Hethesia & Gnana, 2020).

Another advantage of using blogs is that they are versatile and can be easily implemented in both face-to-face and remote classes (Miftachudin, 2017).

Another key aspect to take into account is learners' viewpoints. Generally speaking, students' perspectives toward blogs are positive, to exemplify, they mentioned that blogs allow peer-communication; they are able to read independently and freely; blogs promote teamwork, interaction, a sense of community, and engagement (Kaupmees, 2015).

According to Diaz and Laguado (2013), skimming and scanning also help learners to change their beliefs about it is not necessary to know the meaning of every single word to comprehend a text and succeed on reading comprehension tasks.

Yunus, Nordin, Salehi, Hui Sun, and Amin (2013), in their study highlighted specific cons of using blogs in reading activities. First, learners can adopt an apathetic attitude by not taking the work seriously. Second, the reading action while scrolling the screen can be done fast, superficial, and imprecise to understand the text. Similarly, Qismullah et al. (2017) highlighted other setbacks in the implementation of blogs for skimming and scanning. Students needed high levels of concentration when working on a computer, if they distracted, they could omit important information. Most importantly, when students applied these techniques they read superficially and do not go in-depth in the texts.

To sum up all mentioned above, literature pointed out the use of skimming and scanning as helpful and effective reading techniques to improve students' reading comprehension. In this technological era, teachers should innovate and mediate learning using ICT. For the purpose of the present research, blogs seemed to have the enough pedagogical potential to facilitate reading instruction and practice. They are practical and suitable for presenting reading materials online and record students' responses.

Research Questions

Given that skimming and scanning techniques combined with the use of blogs can be used to improve reading comprehension, this research aimed at answering the following questions:

1. To what extent did skimming and scanning instruction using blogs improve learners' reading comprehension?
2. What were students' perspectives towards the use of blogs to improve students' reading comprehension?
3. What were students' difficulties in the use of skimming and scanning through blogs to improve their reading comprehension?

Innovation

This section presents a brief overview of the pedagogical innovation which consisted of using blogs to facilitate skimming and scanning instruction in order to improve students' reading comprehension and promote positive attitudes on them. A total of five tertiary students were part of this project.

Due to the pandemic situation, it was applied via online through the Moodle of the institute. The treatment lasted three weeks in total. Instruction blended synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Regarding synchronous instruction, it involved thirteen class

periods of 60 minutes each. On the other hand, participants had thirteen hours for autonomous work which focused on reading short texts and answering simple reading comprehension task.

Reading material was selected and aligned to students' career involving them in authentic readings related to information and communication technologies (ICT). Due to the fact that the instructor (that was also their teacher) had to create her own material, all passages were taken from the webpage English 4 IT (<https://www.english4it.com/>). This was a specialized page with reading material for IT and computing students. All readings were chosen considering students' proficiency level (A2).

In the implementation of the innovation, the reading techniques were introduced during the first week. Participants were taught the definition of skimming and scanning, their use, and the process to apply them step by step. Students were also familiarized with blog management on the WordPress webpage. Each participant had to create their own blog for reading purposes.

In the following weeks, participants had guided practices (eight in total) on blogs focusing on applying skimming and scanning reading techniques to accomplish reading comprehension tasks. They developed different activities both individually and in groups. Exercises included answering open-ended and multiple-choice questions, finding key words, filling the blanks, completion, and true or false. In the same way, the researcher created spaces for students to reflect, discuss, and share their reading experiences.

The facilitator monitored participants' progress during the whole practices. At the end of each practice, she provided feedback for participants to make corrections and improve their responses. To value quality on students' replies on reading comprehension posts a rubric created by the researcher was used (Appendix A).

As part of complementary activities, participants also received guidelines on how to write brief reviews (about applications or website) and simple comprehension questions for their classmates to answer and apply skimming and scanning. At the end of the innovation, students wrote a review about a website or an application and post their own comprehension questions on the blog for the class to answer them. A different rubric, also develop by the researcher, was applied to assess participants' reviews (Appendix B).

Methodology

The methodology of this study is outlined in this section. This followed an action research design which consisted of a systematic process to collect and analyze data addressed to improve the quality of educational practices and solve significant concerns in classrooms and schools overall (Hine, 2013). In order to investigate and get information to answer the research questions, mixed methods were used. Both quantitative and qualitative instruments were utilized to gather information. Data was collected by tests, surveys, and interview. Ethical issues are also described in this part as well as the procedures applied for data analysis and sampling.

Participants

The study was implemented in an experimental group at a night Technological Institute located in La Troncal. This institute offers different technical careers to adult learners who want to get a professional degree. Due to the pandemic, it had to adapt to the new changes and now is promoting online instruction using an institutional Moodle, as a virtual learning environment (VLE), and zoom for synchronous communication. But this new modality was not accepted by students and the institutional population has decreased enormously. This is the reason why only five EFL students, two men and three women, participated in this study. Their average age was 20 years-old. All the participants were in

the fourth semester of the Computing career. English is studied as a mandatory subject included in their curriculum. After applying a placement test, results showed they had an A2 level according to the common European framework of reference (CEFR). Regarding connectivity, all participants reported to have internet and computer access, and the conditions required to get involved in this project.

Instruments

In this study, the researcher conducted three different instruments to gather the data from beginning to end of the intervention. Instruments included pre- and post-tests, pre- and post-surveys, and direct interviews.

Pre-test and post-test.

A pre and post-test were applied to students at the beginning and at the end of the intervention, respectively. The readings were taken from an internet site (es.islcollective.com) that offers free open ESL resources for teacher. The pre and post-test consisted of three reading passages (two at students' level and one with a higher level of complexity) with 15 questions in total (Appendix D). The test included multiple – choice questions, true or false tasks, finding key words, underlining, and matching activities.

To validate tests, it was previously piloted and two researcher's colleges cross-referred and evaluated their appropriateness. In the same way, tests were scored by two different English teachers to reduce bias. Tests were supplied via online through the Moodle platform. These instruments answered the research question 1: *To what extent did skimming and scanning instruction using blogs improve learners' reading comprehension?*

Survey.

The researcher created a survey which was applied to explore students' perceptions of the use of skimming and scanning instruction through blogs in order to improve their reading

comprehension. It contained ten items and offered the following scales: *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neutral*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* (See Appendix E). It was administered to all the participants at the beginning and the end of the intervention using Google Forms. It was targeted to respond research question 2: *What were students' perspectives towards the use of blogs to improve their reading comprehension?*

Interview.

A semi-structured interview was designed by the researcher and conducted through the synchronous Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) Zoom software. While the interview was holding, the conversation was automatically recorded and all five participants were interviewed. Researcher wanted to explore participants' struggles in reading tasks done in the blogs during the project. The questionnaire consisted of five open-ended questions that were asked during the online interview (See Appendix F). These insights were addressed to answer the third research question: 3. *What were students' difficulties in the use of skimming and scanning through blogs to improve their reading comprehension*

Data Analysis

Concerning quantitative instruments, data from tests (*to answer question one*) and surveys (*to answer question two*) were entered into an excel spreadsheet and uploaded to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program to get tables with descriptive statistics including mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation. Then, the researcher calculated the effect size (Cohen's *d*). This was computed through an online calculator (<https://lbecker.uccs.edu/>), it helped to determine the impact of the treatment. Data were presented in the form of tables and were analyzed according to the order of the questions.

On the other hand, the interviews were recorded and done in the students' mother tongue to assure the accuracy of data. Thus, the data was not only transcribed but also translated into English for its analysis. Qualitative data was presented in form of brief descriptions to answer question three. Repeated words, fillers and idioms were excluded.

Ethical Standards

Before carrying out the study, institutional permission was asked. The institute director gave his approval. After the authorization was granted, participants' consent was also requested and conceded. Students were informed in detail about the project. Researcher explained the objective of the innovation, its duration, the methodology, and its relevance to the educational field. Students decided if they participated or not. Ethical considerations such as permission to record videos and take photographs were also needed. Confidentiality was guaranteed during the whole process. Students' names were not required, all participants maintained anonymity. Data was gathered only for academic purposes.

Results

The results of the treatment were outline in this section. This section is organized according to each research question. First, results from pre- and post-test was presented to know the impact of skimming and scanning instruction through blogs on participants' reading comprehension. Second, results obtained in pre- and post-surveys are displayed to identify students' points of view towards the use of blogs to improve reading skills. Finally, the third part described participants' responses of the interview apply to determine their difficulties during the project.

1. *To what extent did skimming and scanning instruction using blogs improve learners' reading comprehension?*

To answer this question, tests were applied. A pretest at the beginning and a posttest at the end of the innovation were administered to participants in order to determine the impact of skimming and scanning through blogs on participants' reading comprehension. Descriptive statistics was necessary to calculate the effect size of the treatment. Results are displayed in the following table.

Table 1.

Pre and Posttest results

	N	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic	Cohen's <i>d</i>
PRE-Test	5	2.0	4.0	3.000	1.0000	
POST-Test	5	4.0	5.0	4.600	0.5477	1.98
N	5					

Table 1 pinpointed a significant difference between these two results. First, it can be observed that the lowest score obtained in the pre-test was 2/5 and the highest 4/5. On the other hand, after treatment the lowest score was 4/4 and the highest 5/5. The comparison between the mean scores of the pre and posttest, respectively, demonstrated a gain of 1.6 points which represents 32% of improvement. Regarding the effect size, after computing this using an online calculator, results indicated a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.98$). This insight confirmed that this innovation had an important impact in learning. Participants improved their reading comprehension skills after three weeks of skimming and scanning strategies training and guided practices on blogs. A change of students' reading habits (skim-scan) helped them to perform better and comprehend more when reading.

2. *What were students' perspectives towards the use of blogs to improve students' reading comprehension?*

To know students' perspectives towards the use of blogs to improve students' reading comprehension, the researcher applied a survey. It was administered before and after the intervention to explore participants' opinions about the use of blogs to improve reading comprehension. It had ten items and five scales [Strongly agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), Strongly disagree (5)]. Results of pre- and post-surveys are presented in *Table 2*.

Table 2.

Pre- and post-Survey Results

	MEAN	
	PRE	POST
1) I feel confident when I use blogs for reading.	2.6	2.2
2) I am very interested in learning reading strategies to improve my comprehension skills.	1.8	1.2
3) It is important for me to learn how to find the main idea when I read	1.8	1.2
4) It is important for me to learn how to identify specific details when I read.	2.0	1.2
5) Reading blogs improve my reading skills	2.0	1.4
6) I like to make guided reading practice on blogs.	2.6	2.0
7) I can perform better in reading activities with the use of reading techniques.	2.0	1.6
8) I find more efficient and effective identify the main idea to improve my reading comprehension skills.	1.6	1.4
9) I find more efficient and effective find specific information to improve your reading skills.	4.0	1.6
10) I get motivated when I practice reading on blogs	2.0	1.8

Table 2 demonstrated there were not found significant differences in respondents' perspectives, there were no remarkable changes in means in most of the items. In general, participants strongly agreed (1) and agreed (2) in each criterion. This table is revealing that they coincided in the importance of using these reading strategies as well as that blogs are beneficial tools to assist reading and promote motivation, confidence, and positive attitudes overall. However, it is necessary to mention that only on statement nine "*I find more efficient and effective find specific information to improve your reading comprehension skills*" was a high significant change after the intervention, before the intervention participants believed scanning was not as effective and efficient than skimming to improve reading comprehension skills. As expected, at the end of the intervention they changed their perspectives. Using blogs to improve reading abilities showed clearly had advantages over students' attitudes.

3. What were students' difficulties in the use of skimming and scanning through blogs to improve their reading comprehension?

An interview was done after the intervention to find out the difficulties faced by the participants in the project. When the subjects were asked, they mentioned that one problem they encountered at the beginning of the treatment was related to blogs. They found difficult to create and use blogs on WordPress. But they overcame that problem through practice. Regarding the use of the reading techniques, they mentioned having some inconveniences too. For instance, new words, grammar, and writing complex sentences were the major barriers. One participant said "*I had problems with vocabulary; while I was reading, I found a lot of new words*". On the other hand, expressing their ideas in English to answer open-ended comprehension questions was difficult for them when completing the

reading tasks on blogs. One respondent mentioned “*I could not write what I wanted when I had to answer the comprehension questions*”. Similarly, applying correct grammar was another challenge for them. They mentioned did not feel confident enough applying sentence structure and tenses correctly.

In summary, it can be seen from the outcomes above that there was an important improvement in participants’ reading comprehension after they were taught the used of skimming and scanning to find information and answer comprehension tasks. Contrary to expectations, the analysis did not reveal statistically significant difference between results obtained at the beginning and end of the intervention. Generally speaking, positive perspectives remained almost the same during the intervention. Surveys also evidenced participants agreed the use of blogs improved their reading skills. Besides that, students had some difficulties related to blog management and language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and writing patterns.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the use of reading strategies instruction administered through blogs to figure out how they impacted on participants’ reading comprehension and on their perspectives. Students skimmed and scanned text to find gist, specific details, and answer diverse types of comprehension questions during guided practice on blogs. They also participated in surveys and interviews to explore their opinions about the project. In this section, the outcomes found in this research are correlated with the findings of past investigations found by other authors.

1. To what extent did skimming and scanning instruction using blogs improve learners' reading comprehension?

According to the results gathered from the pre- and post-tests, skimming and scanning instruction contributed in somewhat (32%) to the enhancement of participants' reading comprehension after the treatment. The impact ($d = 1.98$) of this innovation is evident. Studies on this field (Aritongang et. al, 2018; Darmawan, 2016; Diaz & Laguado, 2013; Qismullah et.al., 2017; Sasmita, 2013; Ulmi et. al., 2015) corroborated results obtained. As recent research suggests, reading strategies instruction can strengthen reading comprehension deficiencies. In Razali's view (2019), reading strategies scaffold EFL students to comprehend written texts through the application of diverse approaches and techniques. During the intervention, participants applied skimming and scanning which helped them to increase their ability to comprehend written texts. Quismullah et al. (2017) in their study had similar outcomes. Skimming and scanning succeeded in assisting their participants to improve reading comprehension. Same results tie well with previous Diaz and Laguado (2013) study wherein results obtained after treatment were significant. They also found that continuous practice was key to had good results.

Nowadays, it is essential to adopt technology in teaching English language to create an interactive and innovative atmosphere within the classrooms. Blogs are being implemented as pedagogical tools to facilitate language acquisition in a meaningful and authentic way. It has been demonstrated that blogs can assist reading (Hethesia & Gnana, 2020; Korovina et al., 2016; Looi & Yusop, 2011) due to its multiple advantages such as facility to display a plenty of activities and adaptability to diverse learning scenarios (physical classrooms, online learning, and blended learning) (Miftachudin, 2017). Blogs have been implemented in previous studies in which results have been as positive as those

found in the present study. Similar results were reached by Miftachudin (2017) who after reviewing past studies concluded that blogs can perfectly assist reading. It was proven the usefulness of skimming and scanning instructions through the use of blogs to enhance learners' reading capabilities.

2. What were students' perspectives towards the use of blogs to improve students' reading comprehension?

Literature and finding after the innovation showed that blogs are not only practical to assist reading (Hethesia & Gnana, 2020; Korovina et al., 2016; Miftachudin, 2017) but also to foster better attitudes toward learning (Kaupmees, 2015). After applying pre- and post-surveys, participants responded positively to the blogging experience for reading before and after the intervention. Overall, these findings were in accordance with findings reported by Kaupmees (2015). In line with his ideas, upshots showed respondents liked practicing reading on blogs and strongly believed they felt more confident, engaged, and motivated using them for reading due to the variety of activities that can be displayed there. The selection of material also provided participants' a sense of engagement as mentioned by Hethesia and Gnana (2020) in their study.

Likewise, participants reported using skimming and scanning techniques on blogs could improve their reading skills, as a result, they could perform better on reading tasks identifying the gist and specific details from a text to accomplish different reading task. This matches what Diaz and Laguado (2013) stated that these techniques help to change learners' perceptions when reading. Contrary to the findings of Yunus et al. (2013), outcomes demonstrated a high level of participants' acceptance and predisposition to the use of blogs for reading aims.

3. What were students' difficulties in the use of skimming and scanning through blogs to improve their reading comprehension?

Outcomes from the interview showed that participants did not face major difficulties during the treatment. These results differ from some published by Hamza and Nur (2018) and Qismullah et. al. (2017) in which reported concentration and omission of information problems. Regarding the use of blogs, at the beginning of the innovation they struggled in the creation and use of blogs, but it was solved with the continuous guided practice. Similar problems were reported by Kaupmees (2015) and Lujan-Mora and Juana-Espinoza (2006).

Contrary to expectations, they pointed out they had problems with vocabulary, grammar, and writing issues. Authors like Anjomshoa and Zamanian, (2014), Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), and Hamza and Nur (2018) pointed out the same pitfalls in their studies. Limited vocabulary, grammar, and structuring complex grammatical statements can hinder comprehension.

Conclusions

Nowadays education demands to rethink of and reshape teachers' practices and integrate new methodologies and TICs to empower the process of English language teaching and learning within the educational system in all its levels. This article dealt with the use of skimming and scanning instruction to improve learners' reading comprehension using blogs as a technological tool. It also explored participants' points of view and what difficulties they had using blogs for reading.

Regarding question one, the margin of participants' reading comprehension improvement due to the use of skimming and scanning instruction through blogs was significant (Cohen's $d = 1.98$). Findings indicated an increase of 32% in students' scores in the final tests with respect to the pretest. Integrating blogs for reading strategies instruction

added extra benefits in students' learning. The treatment impacted productively on their reading comprehension by looking for the gist and specific details within an efficient time use. Continuous guided practices on blogs were indispensable to apply these techniques to answer different kind of exercises in class and help them to improve their reading skills and start being strategic readers.

Concerning second question, about participants' viewpoints, all respondents appreciated this kind of activities and agreed the same good perceptions of using blogs to improve reading comprehension. Result from pre- and post-survey showed a change of points of view. They perceived blogs as an appropriate mechanism to practice reading and expand their reading skills. Most importantly, participants coincided that blogs provided an environment that motivated and engaged them to read. Apart from motivation, blogging promoted participants' self-confidence to participate, communicate, and interact with their classmates.

With respect to question three, despite using skimming and scanning through blogs was not too difficult for them, they evidenced struggles with vocabulary, writing, and grammar. First, limited vocabulary did not allow them comprehend texts in their whole. Second, when they had to write and answer questions on blogs they could not organize and express their ideas using the proper words they expected. Third, applying correct grammar continue being a concern among learners' community.

To conclude, the theoretical framework and the results of this research demonstrated that after training participants on how to use skimming and scanning they could identify main ideas of texts and specific details to answer comprehension question easily and fast. Subsequently, they improved their learning experience and reading capabilities. Likewise, it also showed using blogs for educational purposes is convenient, they are effective to

support reading comprehension and foster positive attitudes. On the other hand, it also revealed students' deficiencies in vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills.

Limitations

In spite of getting positive results, this study had some drawbacks. Some of them were related to sample size, Covid-19 pandemic, time, and institutional issues. To start with, the most notable limitation lied in the reduced sample size. The current pandemic affected the population of the institute, decreasing the number of students in more than 50%. Only five students participated in this study limiting the representativeness of findings.

Second, the time allotted to implement the innovation was restricted. The treatment lasted only three weeks. Instruction sessions were limited to only thirteen class periods of sixty minutes each one. Hence, there were not enough guided practices to obtain representative results. Finally, another shortcoming was related to institutional issues. There was authority's pressure to cover the syllabus content. This minimized the opportunity to apply extra-curricular activities for additional practice and take advantage of learners' potential.

Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study, there were some recommendations for further research. First of all, a bigger group of participants should be included. A small sample size reduces the potential of the study and increases its margin of error. To ensure more precise results, it is suggested a bigger sample size. Perhaps, this study may be replicated combining both experimental and control groups, with the participation of students from different semesters and majors.

Second, the innovation should be implemented during a longer period of time; for example, a whole semester at least. Prolonged time for guided practice is required for students to familiarize and master skimming and scanning techniques in such a way can make easier comprehend texts. Hence, if the treatment is applied during much time the percentage of improvement will be better.

Third, other ways of assessment could be implemented, for instance, participants could choose and talk about a text and present a summary which comprises both the main idea and the most important details. Similarly, it could be included peer-assessment and the give of peer feedback as well. Lastly, it is also highly recommended carrying out future studies on reading that help students to boost their vocabulary, writing skills, and grammar due to they reported having problems on these areas during the project. Further research on skimming and scanning could use to determine the improvements on reading fluency, similarly, extra research on blogs could explore their effectiveness to facilitate learners' vocabulary growth and the development of writing skills.

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Appendix A

Rubric for blog entries

Available upon request.

Appendix B

Rubric for the website or application review

Available upon request.

Appendix C

Lesson plan

Available upon request.

Appendix D

Pre-test and Post - test

Available upon request.

Appendix E

Survey

Available upon request.

Appendix F

Interview

Available upon request.