Universidad Casa Grande

**Perspectives of EFL Students about Reading: A Descriptive Study**

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**Proyectos de Investigación**

Certifico que Segundo Carlos Quishpe Chango han cumplido satisfactoriamente su

investigación descriptiva como pre-requisito de graduación de Magíster en Pedagogía

de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros con Mención en la Enseñanza de Inglés. Su

investigación es parte del proyecto PERSPECTIVES OF EFL STUDENTS TOWARDS

READING cuyo objetivo general es determinar las dificultades que tienen los

estudiantes al leer en inglés como lengua extranjera.

En este proyecto, cada participante reporta los resultados de una encuesta tomada en un

contexto educativo diferente. Las secciones de introducción, literatura y metodología

(instrumentos y análisis de datos) son las mismas.

Particular que comunico para los fines consiguientes.

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## Abstract

The present descriptive study aimed to determine if EFL learners in a technological institute in Quevedo city, Los Rios province apply reading strategies in class. The study obtained the data collected through a specific instrument. The participants were 60 students with different English proficiency levels whose ages ranged from 19 to 54 years. The instrument applied was a survey, divided into two parts. The first is to get demographic information, and the second part is to collect and analyze data about difficulties in the EFL context using reading strategies. Results showed that 60% of participants read. Additionally, most students understand a long text by rereading it, with a mean of 2.30. It means learners comprehend texts by reading more than once. Participants use their prior knowledge with a mean of 2.53. If their knowledge was not enough, they translated all the words with a mean of 2.63. This means that students apply different strategies to understand the activities. Teachers and researchers can consider this study to guide and support learners during their learning process before using it in an actual implementation.

*Keywords:* reading, reading strategies, reading difficulties, EFL, reading vocabulary.

## Resumen

El presente estudio descriptivo tuvo como objetivo determinar si los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en un instituto tecnológico en la ciudad de Quevedo, provincia de los Ríos, aplican estrategias de lectura en clase. El estudio obtuvo los datos recolectados a través de un instrumento específico para comprender las situaciones de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Los participantes fueron 60 estudiantes con diferentes niveles de dominio del inglés cuyas edades oscilaron entre los 19 y los 54 años. El instrumento aplicado fue una encuesta, dividida en dos partes. La primera es obtener información demográfica y la segunda parte es recopilar y analizar datos sobre las dificultades en el contexto del inglés como lengua extranjera utilizando estrategias de lectura. Los resultados mostraron que el 60% de los participantes leyeron. Además, la mayoría de los estudiantes comprenden un texto extenso releyéndolo, con una media de 2,30. Significa que los alumnos comprenden los textos leyendo más de una vez. Los participantes utilizan sus conocimientos previos con una media de 2,53. Si su conocimiento no fue suficiente, tradujeron todas las palabras con una media de 2.63. Esto significa que los estudiantes aplican diferentes estrategias para comprender las actividades. Los docentes e investigadores pueden considerar este estudio para guiar y apoyar a los alumnos durante su proceso de aprendizaje antes de utilizarlo en una implementación real.

*Palabras clave:* Lectura, estrategias de lectura, dificultades de lectura, inglés como lengua extranjera, vocabulario en la lectura.

**Perspectives of EFL Students about Reading: A Descriptive Study**

The effective development of English as a second language requires much training time and effort in practice (Piller, 2018). The author mentioned that learning a language depends on what the learner wants to practice to increase the new languages' different skills. The Ministerio de Educacion (2016a) expressed that the English language is an essential communication tool in today's globalized world, allowing second language learners to communicate beyond their own linguistic and geographical boundaries. For this reason, it is important despite the present limits, the reality of the students regarding their competencies and abilities of the English language can be known.

When learners manage a language fluently, they usually have a high level in all four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Teachers and learners sometimes can have strengths or weaknesses in a specific skill, and in some cases, they can reach higher levels in different ones than in others (Galaczi, 2018). The present study aimed to describe students' reading skills difficulties. Reading skill is a process that usually begins in early childhood before formal education and continues until young adulthood and even beyond; it is a lifelong process (Alexander, 2005).

The English skills help learners become autonomous learners aware of identifying their needs and goals to develop their communicative competence in the teaching and learning process (Hossain, 2015). Reading helps build and develop writing, speaking, and listening skills since learners first years of education (Haupt, 2015). Through the integration of the linguistic functions, these skills will be framed

within the international standards of the Common European Framework for Language Reference (CEFR), guided by and assessed according to the "Can do" statements associated with each proficiency level (Ministerio de Educación, 2016b).

When learners are children, they love stories. Stories are the window to their world of fantasy. They do not want to read just any storybook; they want to read books that are engaging and that are connected to their souls (Matute, 2014). That is how reading skill in L1 has become very important for people, and its development is aligned to their childhood, and it is connected to the current time in which learners live. Barreiro (2019) mentioned that reading has become an essential skill for every learner to acquire due to the fundamental cognitive and linguistic component skills.

Learners cannot learn to read effectively; their second language knowledge is much reduced. Additionally, if there are a few or no reading materials to read, learners who feel engaged and motivated could not improve this skill. Many learners struggle with reading (Peterson & Irving, 2008). A similar situation happens in the institution where the investigation took place. Learners are adults who are not used to read, and many of them do not feel motivated to acquire a second language. The most challenging situation began when the pandemic of COVID-19 came to our reality. The lack of technological knowledge and management, plus the internet connection difficulties, made the reading language skill farther to obtain.

Previous studies have been revised to understand how the learning issues affect students in their reading learning and development. About reading fluency in a Middle and Secondary school in India, Paige and Magpuri-Lavell (2014) found the specifics of reading fluency and provide suggestions for identifying when reading is fluent and when it is not. The results focused on the relationship between fluency and

comprehension. They concluded their study promoting a syllabic and morphemic analysis strategies with a discussion. These strategies aid readers in the development of word automaticity and encourage the development of fluent reading.

As it has been demonstrated, the implementation of effective strategies can improve the reading skills, which can give better language comprehension and understanding to learners (Gómez & Ávila, 2009). Reading strategies provide important tools to help learners to understand any text much more quickly. For regulating this learning and improvements, Ecuadorian law establishes that English learning is determinant for university or college learners to obtain the B1 level as independent users; nevertheless, a significant quantity of learners fail with this requirement (Obiajulu, 2017).

This investigation is a descriptive study that pretended to know learners' current situation about their English knowledge, possible difficulties in their learning, and reading skills development. The instrument to collect the data was a reading survey sent to 60 students of an adult technological institute who freely participated in the investigation. Outcomes related to lack of word recognition, skimming and scanning uses, summarizing, decoding, and encoding; they were impressive to know and necessary to comprehend their second language and establish some guidelines aligned to the education system for further research.

**Literature Review**

This section shows the main concepts and theories from primary authors. The researchers have worked on investigations related to reading comprehension and its

components. Additionally, some reading strategies are presented that can help students to improve their difficulties in developing reading skills.

**Reading Components**

Reading is an essential activity in our lives for searching for information or knowledge beyond textbooks, articles, or magazines written in English. Thus, the students should have good reading skills to help them in academic studies (Asmawati, 2015). Linguistic comprehension and reading fluency are associated with reading comprehension in all groups of learners (Marx et al., 2015). There is a close relationship between reading skills components and reading comprehension. The main components are vocabulary and grammar. Wilkins (1972) mentioned that without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.

**Vocabulary.**

The learner's primary concern in the earliest stages is the L2 acquisition (Ellis, 2008). The author mentioned that growing lexicon is essential for acquiring efficient communication in the language. Vocabulary is knowledge. The knowledge of a word refers to a definition and implies how that word fits into the specific space (Stahl, 2005 as cited in Rhalmi, 2017). In other terms, knowing a word means knowing its structure, its meaning, its connotations, how it collocates with different words, and how it fits within a whole network of substances.

It is important to consider the frequency and usefulness of the vocabulary words selected for the specific lessons (Alahmadi & Foltz, 2020). The authors expressed that words that have a variety of domains, for instance, the applied in different sessions or stages of the class, can be taught more to obtain a more significant benefit in each

student's acquisition of the language to read. It helps students to connect vocabulary terms and organize information more efficiently while they read.

**Grammar.**

Regardless of the language to be learned, successful reading comprehension depends on the reader's grammar. Grammar plays a significant role in understanding texts, both for the first language (L1) and the other languages (L2 or L3; Grabe, 2009). Once L1 has been acquired, it is assumed that a person who is able to produce a grammar structure is also able to comprehend it, and vice versa (Hendriks & Koster, 2010). In his study, Lee (1986) mentioned that L2 readers applied background knowledge to a great degree when engaging in a prior knowledge task. "The need for teaching reading as a skill rather than to limit the role of reading to reinforcing grammar and vocabulary is evident" (p. 353).

**Reading Skills**

Reading is an essential skill for formal learning and success in and out of the academic stages. The capacity of a proficient reading is highly related to how a learner can reach in his/her professional life (Block & Israel, 2005). Generally, reading is about understanding of written texts. It is a challeging activity that involves both perceptions and thought: word recognition and comprehension. There are different reading skills, they mainly include skimming, scanning, extensive and intensive reading that can make significant improvements with the most appropriate reading style for the function (Yang, 2014).

The effective applying of different skills in a reading environment enables the reader to understand the text. The success of the reading process is committed by

components such as reading attitude, reading purpose, prior knowledge, textual

structure, vocabulary knowledge, and comprehension related to the interaction between

the reader and the text, as stated by Yıldırım (2010, as cited in Akyol et al., 2014).

**Skimming and scanning.**

Harmer (2001) mentioned that skimming is defined as a technique that looks for

a text to obtain a fast idea or gist of a text. On his part, Brown (2004) mentioned that

skimming is a rapid coverage of the reading process that determines the gist or primary

idea. On the other hand, the scanning strategy is known for finding the specific

information in a text, ignoring the other different parts (Brown, 2001). On his part,

Maxwell (1972) said that scanning is the ability to find specific facts and details

quickly.

Arundel (1999 as cited in Patmawati, 2015) mentioned that some steps in

applying skimming are:

1. Read the title.

2. Read the introduction of the lead paragraph and subheadings.

3. Read the first sentence of each section.

4. Dip into the text to look for clues, nouns, unusual words, and enumeration,

   among others

5. Read the final paragraph completely.

The author also commented that for applying scanning, the learners have to:

1. Keep in mind what are they are searching.

2. Anticipate in what form the information is likely to appear numbers, or nouns.

3. Analyze the organization of the content before starting to scan. If the material is brief, scan it entirely. Besides this, determine which parts to scan if it is long.

4. Let your eyes run rapidly over several lines of print at a time.

5. Read the entire sentence that has the information learners seek.

**Summarizing.**

Summarizing is defined as identifying the main idea and most essential facts, then writing a brief overview that includes only the specific ideas and details. Summarizing is a significant and important skill for learners, but many students find it challenging to pick out the important facts without some keys to analyze (Bales, 2020). The author said that a good summary is short and goes to the point. Hacker (2008 as cited in Demir et al., 2012) explained that summarizing involves stating a work's thesis and principal ideas in a simple, briefly, and accurate form. Cassaza (1993 as cited in Wahyu & Fitriana, 2018) said that good readers could distinguish the most important concepts in a passage and summarize them according to an appropriate organizational pattern. Furthermore, the author expressed that teaching students to summarize increases their comprehension to report text.

**Decoding.**

Word decoding is known as converting the orthography into the phonetic code (Durgunoğlu & Verhoeven, 2013). The automatization of word decoding skills is essential for developing reading comprehension skills (Schaars et al., 2019). Therefore, once efficient word decoding skills are obtained, reading comprehension skills development is noticeable. Word decoding skills typically grow in a self-teaching manner, and gradually the mental representations become more precise, redundant, and

efficient (Tucker et al., 2016). In other words, typically developing children become more accurate and more fluent in word reading over time. The decoding skills abilities are more coherent when orthography, phonology, and semantics are connected (Plaut et al., 1996).

**Encoding.**

The encoding technique is the process where learners use letters or sound knowledge to write. Encoding instruction is related to teaching spelling patterns and memorization skills (Weiser & Mathes, 2019). Encoding also includes explicitly teaching beginning readers and spellers to write words according to their phoneme-grapheme correspondences, build words using manipulatives, and learn to manipulate the new terms. Moats (2010) mentioned that students who are adapted to apply the encoding technique spell well and have learned to use their phonemic awareness and phoneme-grapheme correspondences to turn speech into print texts.

**Prior Knowledge when Reading**

Prior or previous knowledge refers to all of the experiences readers have had throughout their lives, including information they have learned elsewhere (Bailey, 2019). This knowledge is used to bring the written word to life and to make it more relevant in the reader's mind. Moreover, the author also mentioned that just as the understanding about the subject can lead to further understanding, misconceptions that it is accepted also added to the learner understanding, or misunderstanding as it has been read.

**Purpose for Reading**

One of the functions is accomplished when the teacher and learners catch the material in the process of direct communication during the reading activity (Sangia, 2018). The actual purpose in reading is to develop from this point, the communication to somewhere that could be spread worldwide. Soodla et al. (2017) mentioned that every type of reader must have a different purpose. When learners read a novel or magazine, they do it usually for pleasure, but when they read academic texts, it is usually done for accomplishment the academic requirements. Soodla et al., (2017) additionally, mentioned that the final objective for both is to get some information, such facts or data; to understand ideas or theories; and author's viewpoints supported by the use of citations.

**Organization of Texts**

Text organization talks about how a text can be organized to help readers follow and comprehend the information presented. Several standard forms help text organization when writing (Beare, 2019). This text organization guide will help readers through the text. The text structure instruction and organization improves reading comprehension of informational texts, including for students with or at risk for learning disabilities, and those with emotional or behavioral difficulties (Hatton, & Bowman-Perrott, 2015 as cited in Zimmermann et al., 2018). The text structure is the way an author organizes information to achieve a purpose. By explicitly teaching students the characteristics of specific text structures and providing them with targeted practice opportunities, students' comprehension of texts may improve (Williams et al., 2016).

**Methodology**

**Design**

The current study is focused on a methodology where the data collected in a reading survey that students previously fulfilled are shown by the researcher. The results display the actual facts that participants live in the institution where the study took place. The data obtained are quantitative and qualitative because the descriptive study applied combined both methods in the same study.

The term descriptive study refers to the type of research question, design, and data analysis applied to a given topic. Descriptive study tells the audience what it is, and the type of questions asked by the researcher will ultimately determine the type of approach necessary to complete an accurate assessment of the topic at hand (Edgarb & Manz, 2017). It can be either quantitative or qualitative according to the needed requirements (Nassaji, 2015). Descriptive studies, primarily concerned with finding out what, where, or when rather than why.

**Research Questions:**

    1.- Do participants read in English?

    2.- Do they use reading strategies?

    3.- What are their perspectives towards reading in English?

    4.- What are their perspectives towards vocabulary?

**Participants**

The participants of this study are all adults whose ages are between 19 to 54 years. Sixty people who want to improve their lower English competencies. The gender of participants was 37(62%) that represented to females and 23(38%) that represented males. The institution where the study took place is a public educative center focused on the education for adult learners. Concerning to the English language, students take some

English courses by modules divided in eight weeks. These modules encourage students

to improve their second language acquisition, but according to a test taken previously,

results showed that their English proficiency was in the range of A1 to low B1. These

participants were from the same institution, but from different levels of study.

As their background information, all the participants are Ecuadorian and speak

Spanish at home. They consider themselves as mestizo with the exception of two

participants that consider themselves, one as indigenous and the other as white person.

Their religion is varied, the 59% are Catholic; the 8% are Evangelists; the 7% are

Christians; the 3% are Mormons; other 3% are Believers; and a 20% do not have any

religion. Their economic status is also varied. Twenty-seven participants who represent

the 45% seen themselves as low-income people, and the other 33(55%) consider

themselves as middle class.

**Instruments**

**Reading survey.**

A reading survey was prepared and sent from Casa Grande University to

implement it in the study. The instrument applied was a survey that had two

components to do the data collection better. The first component was the demographic

part (Appendix A) to know students´ background and actual situations. The second

component was the reading survey (Appendix B) prepared to answer the research

questions.

The survey was a Google drive document that students received in their

WhatsApp groups for fulfillment. The information was sent in both languages (English

and Spanish) to have better idea about what to do in each stage of the survey. Despite

explaining the directions for completing the survey, there were some students who were a little confused about the total understanding of the instrument.

**Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed in an excel spreadsheet table, where students responses were generated after answering the questions presented in the survey. Then, with the SPSS software, the researcher ran the descriptive statistics. After that, all the responses were generated to finally, show the results, means and percentages of their answers.

**Ethical Considerations**

The researcher sent a letter (Appendix C) to the institute expressing the desire to apply the descriptive study. Next, the institute agreed with the idea to know students' difficulties when reading in English. Finally, it was not required to send or receive any consent letter to parents due to learners were adults and they decided for the free participation.

## Results

The current section presents the results obtained after checking and analyzing the data collected through the tables. The research questions were: Do participants read in English? Do they use reading strategies? What are their perspectives towards reading in English? What are their perspectives towards vocabulary? The results are displayed in the next tables.

**Research question 1. Do Participants Read In English?** Table 1 presents the outcomes obtained through analyzing the students' responses. The answers are essential to understand the base of the study.

Table 1.

*Results about if participants read in English.*

| I read in English | Frequency | Percentage |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Yes | 36 | 60% |
| No | 18 | 30% |
| I try to | 4 | 7% |
| A few | 2 | 3% |
| Total | 60 | 100% |

Results displayed in Table 1 show that 36 participants that represents the 60% of the sample, read in English. Some student expressed that *"reading is attractive for me because it allows to travel everywhere."* Another student mentioned that *"reading in English is important to learn the second language efficiently."* Finally, one of the answers expressed by one student, said that *"I do not like reading in English, but it is necessary for my academic knowledge."* These results demonstrate that a 30% of the participants do not read in English in anytime.

**Research question 2. Do they use reading strategies?** The codification for the Table 2 is the following: From 1 to 1.99 (To a great extent), from 2 to 2.99 (Most of it), from 3 to 3.99 (Some), from 4 to 4.99 (A little bit), and finally from 5 to 5.99 (None).

Table 2.

*Results about the use of reading strategies.*

| Items | Frequency | Mean |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I can understand a long, complex text. | 60 | 2.97 |
| I understand single phrases at a time. | 60 | 2.95 |
| **I understand a long text with the first reading.** | **60** | **3.05** |
| **I understand a long text by rereading it.** | **60** | **2.30** |
| I can Skim. | 60 | 2.85 |
| **I can Scan.** | **60** | **2.65** |
| I know the elements of a summary. | 60 | 2.73 |
| **When I read I translate all the words.** | **60** | **2.63** |
| I identify the type of texts I read. | 60 | 2.97 |
| I know the organization of the text. | 60 | 2.87 |
| **I use my prior knowledge when I read.** | **60** | **2.53** |
| I can classify words of a reading | 60 | 2.83 |
| **When I read, I observe punctuation pauses.** | **60** | **2.63** |
| Punctuation helps me understand the text. | 60 | 2.71 |

As a global perspective, the researcher could identify that learners have some valuable knowledge in the use of reading strategies. Then, the most significant results have been highlighted to make these results more explicit.

With a mean of 2.30, results show that students understand a long text by rereading; this means that most students have to read the text more than once to understand the information. With a mean of 2.53, it is noticeable that most students use their prior knowledge when they read. This means that students recall their previous knowledge to connect it with the words that they read. With a mean of 2.63, there are two items. The first one shows when students read, they translate all the words. This is related to the students' lack of vocabulary knowledge in their second language for understanding texts. The second item is the one when students read; they observe punctuation pauses. It could be related to the desire to look for the information

carefully, which is related to the item about if students can scan with a mean of 2.65. On the other hand, the item with the lowest mean (3.05) is the one if students understand a long text with the first reading, which correlates the results with the first item mentioned in this section.

**Research question 3. What are their perspectives towards reading in English?** Students' perspectives, percentages, and means are considered to answer this question which is necessary to know how learners adapt themselves to the reading skills and strategies through their activities and practices. The items involved in this question were question in the survey: If students see an English passage, they feel…, and the other item is if students can skim and scan.

Table 3.

*Results about perspectives towards reading in English.*

| If students see an English passage, they feel… | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| **I see a reading in English and I feel anxious not to understand.** | **13** | **22%** |
| I feel okay reading a passage. | 7 | 12% |
| **I get bored because I have to translate the words.** | **8** | **13%** |
| I like to learn English. | 10 | 17% |
| I do not read. | 6 | 10% |
| I feel nervous for the lack of knowledge. | 5 | 8% |
| **I do it better with the teacher help.** | **11** | **18%** |
| Total | 60 | 100% |
| **If students can skim and scan** | **Frequency** | **%** |
| **Most of the times, I can skim and scan.** | **26** | **43%** |
| Sometimes, I can skim and scan. | 10 | 17% |
| A few times, I can skim and scan. | 10 | 17% |

| No, I cannot skim and scan. | 14 | 23% |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 60 | 100% |

The outcomes show students' frequency and percentages in Table 3. Their perspectives are crucial to understanding this part of the results. A student said: *"I feel anxious because there are some words that I do not understand."* The lack of understanding provokes anxiety in learners. Another student expressed: *"I get bored because I need to translate every single word.* Since anxiety and boredom determine students' attitudes, it is required to establish some activities with effective materials to enhance students' involvement in the curricular tasks for their second language improvement. On the other hand, there are some students who learn better with the teacher support. A student said: *"The teacher helps me to understand some significant words to learn better."*

It is valuable to know that twenty-six participants who represent the 43% of the study, can apply the skimming and scanning strategies. Some students mentioned that in many cases, they had to read more than once, but it was worthy. There was a student who mentioned that *"It is necessary to read more than once to understand the tasks better."* Also students explained how they understood the skimming and scanning techniques process. One participant said: *"Reading the titles help me to get a general idea about the paragraph."* Another participant mentioned that *"I read the text fast to have a general idea of the text. Then, I look for specific words to translate and understand them."* Another student told "*It is a good resource that takes me some time, but it helps me to understand titles and headlines better."* Finally, there were 14 participants that represent the 23%, cannot find the main ideas or specific facts in the texts. Many students feel boring, or simply do not practice because their lack of

knowledge, which is very low. Some learner said that *"It is difficult for me since I do not understand or I need to search for unknown words, but my vocabulary is too much reduced."*

**Research question 4. What are their perspectives towards vocabulary?** The means, percentages and perspectives are considered to answer this question which is necessary to know how learners understand the reading and passages applied in the school activities. The items involved in this question were question in the survey: I feel my knowledge of vocabulary in English is…, and the other item is I think learning vocabulary is complex.

Table 4.

*Results about perspectives towards vocabulary.*

| I feel my knowledge of vocabulary in English is… | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| Lower/Basic | 22 | 37% |
| Intermediate/Average | 27 | 45% |
| Higher/Advanced | 11 | 18% |
| Total | 60 | 100% |
| **I think learning vocabulary is complex…** | **Frequency** | **%** |
| I think learning English vocabulary is difficult due to the lack of speaking practice | 9 | 15% |
| I think learning English vocabulary is difficult due to the lack of reading and writing practice | 12 | 20% |
| I think learning English vocabulary is difficult due to the lack of strategies to learn English. | 7 | 12% |
| I think learning English vocabulary is difficult due to the lack of good teachers. | 7 | 12% |
| I think learning English vocabulary is difficult due to the lack of students' commitment. | 11 | 18% |

| I think learning English vocabulary is difficult due to the lack of interesting materials to develop the activities. | 14 | 23% |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 60 | 100% |

Results demonstrate that according to learners' responses, vocabulary knowledge varies in three remarkable phases. A 37% of learners have a basic vocabulary. The 45% has an intermediate vocabulary knowledge, and finally, the 18%, answered they have an advanced vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, students believe their vocabulary is very important and necessary. *"It is very useful for understand better the second language everywhere."* However, an inappropriate vocabulary learning can be affected for useless learning resources, and also for the absence of good teachers who can give a support and feedback to their learners. A student said that *"In some cases, teachers do not prepare their class and just improvise during the class session."* Finally, in some cases, students get bored for having a boring curricular system. A participant mentioned that *"Activities in class tent to be bored and they are not meaningful for my improvement."* Activities in some cases, do not provide students enough opportunities to practice for developing and improving their second language competencies, also the students' motivation and predisposition to learn is impressive to reach their learning goals. A student said that *"the only moment when I open the English text is at the class time."* It is a big issue to work on it.

**Discussion**

This study results revealed students' experience related to their reading skills and reading comprehension which are described in each question. **The first question: Do participants read in English?** Demonstrates that a 60% of learners read. They are not so much adapted, but they do it for their classes. Meanwhile there is a 30% who do

not read. Additionally, there is a 10% of learners who are in the debate about read a little bit, or do not know how to read. They are still confused and need a little motivation for giving themselves an opportunity to learn. Peterson and Irving (2008), mentioned that some of the students cannot learn to read effectively due to the lack of vocabulary; however, if they feel engaged and motivated can improve the reading skill. More than this, the implementation of effective strategies can improve the reading skills, which can give better language comprehension and understanding to learners (Gómez & Ávila, 2009).

**The second question: Do they use reading strategies?** Results have demonstrated that students implement reading strategies in their classes. Although these strategies are not developed at the same level, it is noticeable that learners are immersed in the learning process. Asmawati (2015) stated that students should have good reading skills to help them in academic studies. Additionally, the highest mean obtained was if students understand a long text by rereading it. Students got better results after rereading the passage, encoding the information reading and writing better. Weiser and Mathes (2019) mentioned that the encoding technique is when learners use letters or sound knowledge to read, understand and also for writing. It is related to teaching spelling patterns and memorization skills.

Moreover, students answered that adequate prior knowledge is helpful to connect what students know with the new incomes. Bailey (2019) expressed that previous knowledge refers to all of the experiences readers have had throughout their lives, including information they have learned elsewhere. Finally, it was demonstrated that some students could manage the scanning better than skimming. Harmer (2001) mentioned that skimming is defined as a technique that looks for a text to obtain a fast

idea or gist of a text. Learners could follow some steps to improve skimming, like

reading the title and the introduction of the lead paragraph and subheadings, or read the

final paragraph completely as stated by Arundel (1999 as cited in Patmawati, 2015).

    **The third question: What are their perspectives towards reading in**

**English?** Results show students' perspectives throughout the implementation of the

reading skills in their school activities. A significant 22% of participants expressed they

feel anxious for not understanding what they read. Moreover, there is 31% of

participants get bored, feel nervous about the lack of knowledge, and do not read. Marx

et al (2015), expressed that there is a close relationship between reading skills

andreading comprehension. An 18% of participants mentioned that they learn better

when teacher constantly support their learning. Sangia (2018) said that when the teacher

and learners catch the material in direct communication during the reading activity, the

reading purpose is accomplished. When teachers and learners work in any specific

activity together, students tend to learn better, also establishing a kind of confidence

between the teacher and the students.

    Related to using the skimming and scanning strategies, forty-three percentage of

participants can adequately apply these strategies. Some of them a piece of better

knowledge and motivation than others. One student mentioned that reading the titles

helps him/her to know a general idea about the paragraph. Similar ideas stated Arundel

(1999 as cited in Patmawati, 2015), who expressed that reading the titles or first

sections of each paragraph is helpful for learners. Another student talked about using

both strategies. First, reading the passages and having a general idea, as Brown (2004)

mentioned, skimming is a rapid coverage of the reading process that determines the gist

or primary idea. And second, the student looked for specific words to obtain the needed

requirement. Brown (2001) said that scanning is known for finding the specific information in a text.

**The fourth question: What are their perspectives towards vocabulary?** Results display that learning vocabulary is essential for learners and also for teachers to develop English classes effectively. Stahl (2005, as cited in Rhalmi, 2017) mentioned that vocabulary is knowledge. The knowledge of a word refers to a definition and implies how that word fits into the specific space. Besides this, results demonstrate that the vocabulary knowledge varies significantly in the group of students who participated in the study. Students consider vocabulary as very valuable. Wilkins (1972) mentioned that without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.

Additionally, findings demonstrate that learners can apply the vocabulary according to their own knowledge and the opportunities to be exposed to the second language to obtain meaningful results. Alahmadi and Foltz (2020) stated that it is important to consider the frequency and usefulness of the vocabulary words selected for the specific lessons. When students are adapted themselves to work on their vocabulary learning, they can find the required information in texts faster. Cassaza (1993, as cited in Wahyu & Fitriana, 2018) said that learners could distinguish the most important concepts in a passage; or find specific facts and details quickly (Maxwell, 1972).

## Conclusions

Students are not so much adapted to read, but they do it for the necessity to learn and develop their reading skills. Students apply activities in their classes. Although according to their responses, the activities in classroom are very basic and need a little

improvement to enhance learners to do a better performance in their preparation.

Besides this, students express clearly their emotions and perspectives when it has been

required. Their learning improves when the teacher monitors their progress and does the

activities with the students. Their vocabulary is limited and it is necessary the use of a

dictionary, which in some cases, help students do a faster work, but in other cases, the

constant use of the dictionary demotivate learners who finally quit and stop their tasks.

Finally, it is concluded that this investigation is valuable to check students' knowledge

and understanding of classes, and also students self-learning of every activity

implemented.

**Limitations**

The extreme knowledge difference among learners can be considered as the

main limitation. At the moment to develop any activity, it takes longer time to be

explained for the teacher, and understood by students. The lack of knowledge provokes

anxiety, this makes students to feel nervous and distracted for the learning. Another

limitation is the lack of technology that some students present. Their current situation

has changed due to the pandemic situation. Many learners have changed their priorities

and have left their studies apart.

**Recommendations**

It is recommendable for teachers, researchers, and language learners to consider

this type of study to know the participants' current situation to adapt the learning

activities to the specific level and establishing some guidelines for subsequent

investigations. It is also recommendable, to complete the survey in one or two

synchronic sessions for avoiding errors and misunderstanding in the survey fulfillment

process. Finally, it is recommendable to spread these types of studies to the educative

community for improving the learning competencies in the educative system.

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**Appendixes**

**Appendix A**

**Demographic Survey**

Available upon request.

**Appendix B**

**Reading Survey.**

Available upon request.

**Appendix C.**

**Letter to the Institution**

Available upon request.