



**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO**

**FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN**

**CARRERA DE IDIOMAS**

**MODALIDAD: PRESENCIAL**

Proyecto de Investigación previo a la Obtención del Título de Licenciada en  
Ciencias de la Educación, Mención Inglés

**TOPIC:**

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**“SCHEMA THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH  
READING SKILLS IN THE STUDENTS OF THE SECOND YEAR OF  
BACHILLERATO AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA FRANCISCO FLOR.”**

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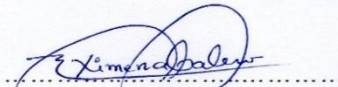
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**AMBATO – ECUADOR**  
**2018**

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.....*Catalina Lozada*.....

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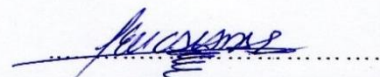
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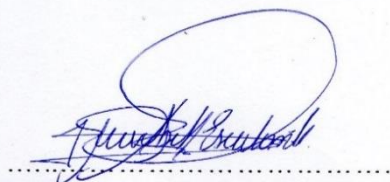
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**TO:**

*God, who has giving me the strength, knowledge and wisdom to overcome the obstacles. I also dedicate it to my mother, Gladys Lliguin, whose love and unconditional support in each moment of my life were crucial for the accomplishment of my goals. Likewise, this investigation is dedicated to my friend Sebastián B. for his encouragement, affection, friendship, support and understanding during this difficult process.*

***Catalina Lozada.***

## **Acknowledgements**

*I want to thank some people, without their help this research would never have been possible:*

*To God for giving the chance of finishing my career successfully. To my mother, who has showed me how important is the perseverance, dedication and hard work to achieve our aims. I am also grateful to my mother since without her love and economic support I wouldn't have been able to develop this research successfully.*

*I would like to thank to the Coordinator Verónica Chicaiza and professors of the Languages Career, who have helped me greatly in my academic training with their guidance, pieces of advice, patience, knowledge and experiences. Special thanks goes to Mg. Ximena Calero for her ongoing collaboration, valuable suggestions, encouragement and support during the development of this research project.*

***Catalina Lozada.***

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**FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN**  
**CARRERA DE IDIOMAS**

**Topic:** “Schema theory and the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.”

**Author:** Gladys Catalina Lozada Lliguin

**Supervisor:** Mg. Ximena Alexandra Calero Sánchez

**Date:** February 27th, 2018

**ABSTRACT**

Reading can be a difficult process as the reader must be able to figure out the meaning of the words, statements, paragraphs, structures, and types of text to comprehend a passage. In order to accomplish it, the readers’ schema (background knowledge concerning linguistics aspects, text structure, and topic familiarity) plays a key role in the reading process as it helps to arouse interest into the topic and improve reading skills and comprehension. Hence, this research aimed to determine the relationship between schema theory and the development of reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato aged between 15 and 18 years at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor. It was conducted by employing a field, bibliographical and social intervention research. Moreover, a qualitative approach was used in this research. Data was collected through a survey that was applied to 118 students and 2 English teachers. The findings revealed that exists a link between schema theory and the development of reading skills as the frequent use of activities and strategies to activate background knowledge enhances learners’ reading skills and comprehension. It was also found that teachers rely more on the use of previewing to activate students’ prior knowledge and they limit their instructional practices to only two post-reading activities, such as vocabulary exercises and presentations.

**Keywords:** reading, schema theory, reading skills and comprehension.

**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO**  
**FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN**  
**CARRERA DE IDIOMAS**

**Tema:** “Teoría de los esquemas y el desarrollo de la destreza lectora del idioma inglés en los estudiantes de segundo año de bachillerato en la Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.”

**Autor:** Gladys Catalina Lozada Lliguin

**Tutora:** Mg. Ximena Alexandra Calero Sánchez

**Fecha:** 27 de Febrero de 2018

**RESUMEN EJECUTIVO**

La lectura puede ser un proceso difícil pues el lector debe ser capaz de entender estructuras, significado de palabras, oraciones, párrafos y tipos de texto para comprender un texto. Para lograrlo, el esquema de los lectores (conocimiento previo relacionado a aspectos lingüísticos, estructura del texto y la familiaridad con el tema) tiene un rol clave en el proceso de la lectura pues ayuda a despertar el interés en el tema y mejorar la destreza y comprensión lectora. Por consiguiente, esta investigación tuvo como objetivo determinar la relación entre la teoría de los esquemas y el desarrollo de la destreza lectora en estudiantes de segundo año de bachillerato con edades entre 15 y 18 años en la Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor. Se llevó a cabo mediante el empleo de una investigación de campo, bibliográfica e intervención social. Además, se utilizó un enfoque cualitativo en esta investigación. Los datos se recopilaron a través de una encuesta, que se aplicó a 118 estudiantes y 2 docentes de inglés. Los hallazgos revelaron que existe un vínculo entre la teoría de esquemas y el desarrollo de la destreza lectora dado que el uso frecuente de actividades y estrategias para activar el conocimiento previo mejora la comprensión y destreza lectora de los alumnos. Igualmente se encontró que los maestros recurren más al uso de previsualizarfebgv2re el texto para activar el conocimiento previo de los estudiantes y limitan sus prácticas a solo dos actividades posteriores a la lectura, tales como ejercicios de vocabulario y presentaciones

**Palabras** claves: lectura, teoría de los esquemas, destreza lectora y comprensión.



## **INTRODUCTION**

The current research project entitled “Schema theory and the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor” intends to determine the link between schema theory and the development of reading skills. Similarly, this research aims to analyze and identify the tasks that teachers promote before, during and after reading to enable learners to bring and use their schema (background knowledge) for enhancing their reading skills as well as their reading comprehension. It also seeks to obtain data which will allow identifying the different strategies that teachers apply with their students while reading in order to help them to deal with different texts by applying such strategies and examine the major factors affecting reading comprehension.

Unfortunately, the survey results indicated that there is a low application of tasks and strategies to activate students’ prior knowledge and past experiences and lead them to gain a better understanding of the content of the passage. This result can be explained due to the limited amount of time for practicing reading skills and lack of reading materials and equipment. This has lead learners to have a passive role, feel demotivated and have problems with their reading skills and comprehension.

This research has been divided into five chapters, as described below:

### **Chapter I: The Problem.**

The first chapter is concerned with the analysis of the research problem at macro, meso, and micro levels. Besides, it describes the reasons why the investigation is conducted in terms of importance, feasibility, beneficiaries, and originality. The objectives must also be stated.

## **Chapter II: Theoretical framework**

Chapter two begins by presenting research studies already done, which are relevant to research topic as they allow us to get familiar with the methods, instruments, and resources that those studies used. Likewise, it presents information concerning the two variables, their key categories as well as main concepts and theories. It is also necessary to point the hypotheses that will be tested later.

## **Chapter III: Methodology**

The third chapter presents the methodology used for this research project. Methods, styles, and types of research must be described. Furthermore, it is necessary to specify the population and sample that will take part in the research. It also comprises the information processing plan as well as the operationalization of variables, which is an important process to determine the concept, items, indicators and instruments for each variable.

## **Chapter IV: Analysis and interpretation of results**

In this chapter, data collected from the survey is translated into graphs in order to analyze and interpret it. Then, the verification of hypotheses is carried out, a process in which those hypotheses are tested using the Chi-square test.

## **Chapter V: Conclusions and recommendations**

The final chapter provides a brief summary of the conclusions and recommendations, which are based on the objectives and research questions and are essential for further studies.

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

#### 1.1 Theme

Schema theory and the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

#### 1.2 Problem Statement

##### 1.2.1 Contextualization

Nowadays, there is an evident necessity of learning English language and the reason for this is that it is a universal language, which is widely used around the world for communication, and it is used in diverse settings such as commerce, tourism, business and politics (Parida, 2010). On the other hand, companies are currently looking for skilled and qualified professionals who can demonstrate mastery in certain areas, for example, English; that is why learning this language has some advantages as it will allow people to have better job opportunities.

People can acquire a language in several ways, for instance, when they listen to music and news, read a book or watch movies and videos. However, reading can greatly facilitate learning of a foreign language as people can enrich their vocabulary, learn about different subjects and cultures and get familiar with the format of different text types, which will help them to enhance their writing and speaking skills.

In **Ecuador**, lack of interest and motivation of students toward learning English is related to the use of traditional teaching methods. As a result, learning is not

meaningful since learners have some difficulties when using English in real situations. Fortunately, the situation has changed gradually because of the actions taken, which have led to a positive change in education, particularly the improvement of the learning process.

The Ministry of Education of Ecuador aware of the importance of English teaching, decreed that the English subject will be taught from the second grade to the third year of Bachillerato in public institutions, with the aim of improving the quality of English teaching and creating opportunities for students to study abroad or find a good job. The government also supports teachers by offering different scholarship programs to study in other countries. As an example, “Go teacher” has helped Ecuadorians teachers by providing dynamic strategies and materials, so that they can apply what they have learned (Andes, 2016).

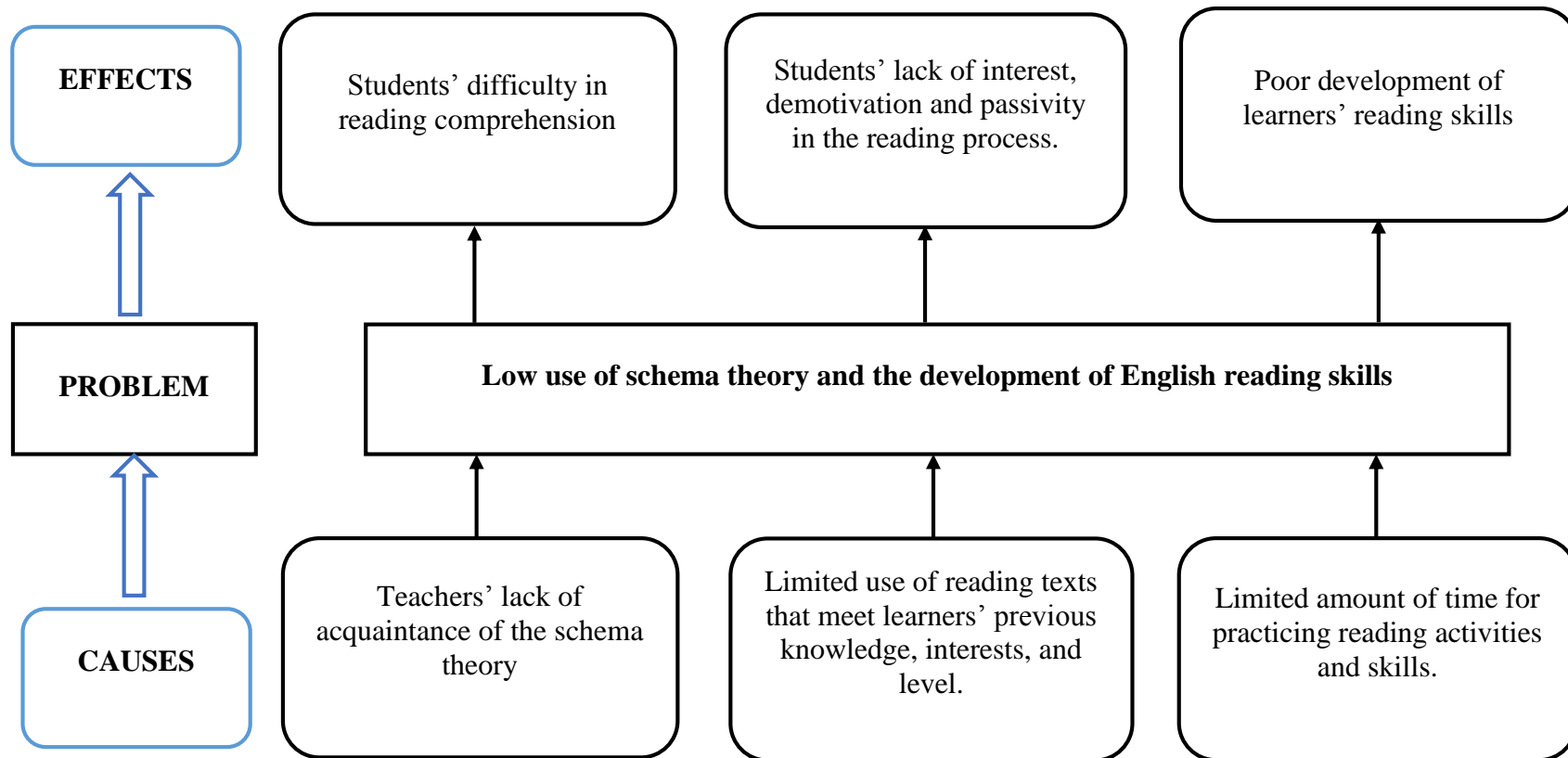
In **Tungurahua** province, it is clear that students have great difficulties in understanding written texts because of the lack of vocabulary, idioms, and useful strategies. Therefore, teachers should provide their pupils with opportunities to develop the four skills. Unfortunately, the use of traditional teaching methods such as grammar translation that affects negatively the development of skills makes it difficult to help students to develop and improve their skills. Regarding the reading instruction, it is significant to point out that students spend less time practicing reading activities. It is so important to cultivate the habit of reading in students as it can help them to acquire knowledge and skills; however, students from this province have shown they have low interest and motivation for reading different texts whether in English or Spanish.

**“Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”** is an institution located in Ambato, which has some shortcomings regarding English teaching due to the passive role students have and limited use of interactive materials and strategies to support students’ learning and promote an atmosphere in which they are involved and feel more motivated. On the other hand, it is necessary to mention that the physical

environment of the institution is not the most appropriate since there is not a variety of reading material (stories, novels or books on various topics) or equipment that promotes the development of reading skills. The physical environment in which there are reading materials, equipment and other facilities (laboratories) can affect the English teaching process in a positive way (Altuna, 2017). Text comprehension is an ability that implies understanding the relationships and connections between words, sentences, and paragraphs due to the fact that they convey the meaning of what is read. That is why teachers' emphasis is to teach learners reading strategies as they will help them to comprehend diverse reading passages and become proficient readers (McNamara, 2012). I agree with the author's point of view since the teacher's role is crucial to help learners to succeed by looking for strategies and materials that motivate and engage them, so that it is essential to identify learners' needs, level, and learning styles. In addition, it is fundamental to promote tasks that integrate the four skills in order to contribute to the development of them.

### 1.2.2 Critical Analysis

Graphic N° 1 Problem tree



Source: Direct research  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

At “Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”, a problem has been identified: low use of schema theory and the development of the English reading skills. There are several reasons which have caused this problem, including the following:

The fact that students have difficulty with their reading comprehension might be explained due to the fact that teachers don't know about the importance of applying schema theory for the development and strengthening of reading skills. In our country, traditional strategies and methods have been used for teaching English, and students have become passive recipients of information. Currently, there is an emphasis on the use of a variety of strategies and aids; however, some educators are reluctant to new didactic alternatives such as schema theory that prioritizes the use of activities to activate learners' previous knowledge, which will allow children and teenagers to develop their English skills and help them to become reflective and critical readers.

The second cause is framed in the limited use of texts that meet learners' needs, interests, level and previous knowledge. As a result, students show disinterest and lack of motivation when developing reading tasks. A possible explanation of this might be that texts and other kinds of reading material are not necessarily designed to suit particular learning needs or interests. Therefore, educators have a crucial role in selecting suitable materials and tasks for the reading lessons. Furthermore, they should use different teaching aids (visuals, videos, etc.) and interactive methodologies to motivate learners and allow them to participate actively in the class.

Another factor that has contributed to this situation is the limited amount of time for practicing reading activities and skills. It could have a serious effect on the development of reading skills. In this context, it is essential to mention that teenagers are expected to reach a B1 level at the end of high school; however, they are only exposed to 5 hours of English a week. As it can be noted, it is a bit difficult for teachers to design and develop different reading activities to enhance

learners' reading skills.

### **1.2.3 Prognosis**

The use of effective techniques, strategies and a variety of reading materials are significant to the teaching-learning process and for the improvement of reading skills. In this sense, it is essential to point out that if the problem identified is not solved, traditional methodologies which do not support learners' needs will continue being used in the classroom. All of this will have a negative impact on students as they will have problems for enhancing their reading skills and become discouraged and disinterested in their learning process; which will not allow them to improve their level of language skills. Similarly, it will be difficult to meet the requirements of the new curriculum; and according to this, students at the end of high school must reach a B1 level in the English skills.

On the other hand, if teachers promote dynamic strategies and use suitable materials, it will be possible to support the development of learners' reading skills and their learning, arouse their interest and get them engaged in the different activities. If learners are motivated, they will succeed in their learning process as well as develop all their English skills. Consequently, they can access the opportunities offered by this language in a variety of areas.

### **1.2.4 Formulation of the problem**

How does schema theory influence the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor?



### **1.2.5 Research questions**

1. What activities are implemented to lead learners to activate their previous knowledge for enhancing their comprehension and reading skills?
2. What are the reading strategies applied at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor for teaching reading skills?
3. What are the factors that influence the reading comprehension and development of reading skills?

### **1.2.6 Delimitation of the research object**

This research will be developed considering the following aspects:

**Field:** Educational

**Area:** English

**Aspect:** Schema theory and the development of reading skills

**Spatial:** The current research was carried out at “Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”, with students of the second year of Bachillerato.

**Temporary:** The work that the researcher conducted was carried out during the school year 2017- 2018.

### **1.3 Justification**

The research topic was of high **importance** since the application of schema theory is intended to support learners to develop their reading skills and English language teaching and learning. Unfortunately, authorities and teachers from some public institutions have not yet understood that everything in the world changes and

evolves, and education is not an exception. Consequently, certain teachers are still using those methods in their lessons in which learners take a passive role and have few opportunities to interact with others. In this sense, it should be stressed that a stimulating strategy is used to make activities more appealing for students as it will help to increase interaction, motivation, and range of vocabulary (Duke & Moses, 2003).

This research also had an **impact** on all those involved in the educational process, that is to say, educators, authorities, and students. Schema theory falls within a cognitive approach, in which reading is viewed as an ability that goes beyond understanding words. According to this approach, reading is an active process in which students' prior knowledge has a relevant role to figure out the meaning of a text and learn in a meaningful way. Therefore, learners' experiences, information and past situations should be seen as part of the language learning and teaching as they can feel encouraged by sharing their ideas and interacting with their peers. Additionally, educators benefit greatly by using this theory in their lessons as it provides a positive environment to learn.

Thanks to this project, the primary **beneficiaries** were students from the institution and the different educational actors such as teachers and authorities since they analyzed schema theory and its importance in the development of reading skills. In this context, schema theory is defined as a way of using a person's prior knowledge, which is crucial for understanding the meaning of a text and learning from it (Rumelhart, as cited in Shuying, 2013). Activating the knowledge that students possess is so essential as it will let students integrate information as well as they will enhance their students' learning by implementing useful strategies.

It was **feasible** as the investigator had the support of authorities from the institution where the research was carried out, which was necessary to collect and use information related to the problem, and this data was quite useful to draw

conclusions based on it. Additionally, financial, human and technological resources needed to carry out this research were available.

## **1.4 Objectives**

### **1.4.1 General**

Analyze schema theory and the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

### **1.4.2 Specific**

- Identify the different tasks that are implemented by the teachers to lead learners to activate their previous knowledge for enhancing their comprehension and reading skills.
- Identify the reading strategies applied at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor for teaching reading skills.
- Analyze the basic factors influencing reading comprehension and development of reading skills.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Research Background

In a research project carried out at Ambato Technical University, a study was conducted to determine the effects of cognitive strategies in the development of comprehensive reading in students of the tenth year of basic education at “Mariano Benítez” School and its methodology involves both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A survey was applied to the chosen population, that is to say, ninety seven students and one teacher, and it let the author conclude that there is a limited use of cognitive strategies which has caused students to feel demotivated and they have poor reading comprehension skills. However, it doesn't make emphasis on the student's prior knowledge which is necessary to understand the content of a text (Aguaguña, 2015).

A study carried out in Oman, in the northern area of Batinah in the scholar year 2009-2010 aimed to investigate three factors related to prior knowledge and reading comprehension, which included the teachers' point of view regarding the role of the previous knowledge in the teaching-learning process, strategies used to activate students' knowledge and the difficulties students have to face when activating it. The population was composed of 217 teachers, 129 boys and girls of the sixth and seventh year of basic education, and some instruments were applied such as a questionnaire, an observation list, and a semi-structured interview. The results allowed concluding that students' previous experiences and knowledge have a crucial role in the teaching-learning process since it lets them understand what they are reading and recall this information (Jahwari & Humaidi, 2015).

Another study was performed at Foreign Languages School at Jinan University, China, to determine if the techniques based on schema theory can be implemented effectively to the teaching of reading. The participants were 100 students and 5 English teachers, and a questionnaire was applied in this study in order to gather accurate data focused on knowing the current situation of reading classes as well as teachers and students' attitudes regarding the application of schema theory. The data obtained through the questionnaires have shown that the application of this theory is effective and feasible in the reading process, but it is essential to implement instructional activities before, during, and after reading a text in order to achieve it.

Moreover, it should be stressed that the benefits of this theory were proven since the students had a more active role, showed greater interest in the lesson and their reading speed and comprehension improved. Similarly, it is necessary to mention that it was a descriptive and external study, so the authors suggest that future research should focus on exploring practical strategies regarding this theory in greater depth (Zhao & Zhu, 2012).

Finally, it is mentioned a research study that was developed at University of Science and Technology of China in order to demonstrate the effects of the application of schema theory in reading comprehension of newspapers. Participants in this study were 36 students of second year, who were divided into two groups: A (schema theory was applied) and B. Three news articles were carefully chosen and the activities used included multiple-choice questions on the topic, vocabulary and author's opinion; it is important to emphasize that both groups developed the tasks in the same length of time; however, activities for activating existing knowledge weren't applied in group B.

This study found that schema theory contributed to boost students' reading skills as it could be seen in the improved performance of group A; this is because students were able to give their opinions about the article they read and also

showed interest in the activity while the other group had some problems and showed passivity and disinterest. There were some inadequacies in the study, hence it is recommended to conduct more investigations on the formal schema (previous knowledge on semantics, morphology, text structures) and how it is related to the reading skills (Che, 2014).

## **2.2 Philosophical foundations**

The research project falls within the critical-propositional paradigm. It is critical as it exceeds traditional models that focus on simple explanations of phenomena. This paradigm makes emphasis on the analysis, interpretation, and explanation of social phenomena; it is propositional since it looks for solutions to a problem where the researcher has a proactive role (Herrera, Medina, & Naranjo, 2008).

This paradigm is based on analyzing the causes and effects of the research problem that was identified. Thus, the researcher examines the problem, which focuses on the low level of reading skills that students have and this has led them to have difficulties with their comprehension and reading skills.

In this context, constructivism is described as the process of building knowledge and this is an individual process that takes place in a person's mind where their representations of the world are stored. Learning is, therefore, an internal process that consists of relating the new information into the pre-existing representations, which results in assimilation, modification, reorganization and differentiation of those representations (Piaget, as cited in Serrano & Pons, 2011).

## **2.3 Legal basis**

The legal side of this research study is based on Ecuador's Childhood and Adolescence Code, Constitution and Organic Law of Intercultural Education.

*Según el Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, Capítulo II sobre derechos relacionados con el desarrollo.*

**Art 37.-** *Derecho a la educación, exige de un sistema educativo que:*

- 1. Garantice el acceso y permanencia de todo niño y niña a la educación básica, así como del adolescente hasta el bachillerato o su equivalente;*
- 2. Garantice que los niños, niñas y adolescentes cuenten con docentes, materiales didácticos, laboratorios, locales, instalaciones y recursos adecuados y gocen de un ambiente favorable para el aprendizaje. Este derecho incluye el acceso efectivo a la educación inicial de cero a cinco años, y por lo tanto se desarrollarán programas y proyectos flexibles y abiertos, adecuados a las necesidades culturales de los educandos (Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, 2003).*

*La Constitución de la República del Ecuador en su registro oficial establece los siguientes artículos:*

#### ***Sección quinta, de niñas, niños y adolescentes***

**Art. 44.-** *afirma:*

*El estado, la sociedad y la familia promoverán de forma prioritaria el desarrollo integral de las niñas, niños y adolescentes, y aseguraran el ejercicio pleno de sus derechos; se atenderá el principio de su interés superior y sus derechos prevalecerán sobre los de las demás personas. Las niñas, niños y adolescentes tendrán derecho a su desarrollo integral, entendido como proceso de crecimiento, maduración y despliegue de su intelecto y de sus capacidades, potencialidades y aspiraciones, en un entorno familiar, escolar, social y comunitario de afectividad y seguridad (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2008).*

#### ***Título VII Régimen del Buen Vivir***

**Art. 343. -** *afirma:*

*El sistema nacional de educación tendrá como finalidad el desarrollo de capacidades y potencialidades individuales y colectivas de la población, que posibiliten el aprendizaje, y la generación y utilización de conocimientos, técnicas, saberes, artes y cultura El sistema tendrá como centro al sujeto que aprende, y funcionará de manera flexible y dinámica, incluyente, eficaz y eficiente (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2008).*

This highlights the importance of students as they have the most important role in their learning process, so that schema theory will contribute to this as they will have an active and inclusive role by participating in the different activities and they will contribute with their opinions and experiences.

*Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural (LOEI), Título I de los Principios Generales, Capítulo Único del Ámbito, Principios y Fines.*

**Art. 2.- Principios:**

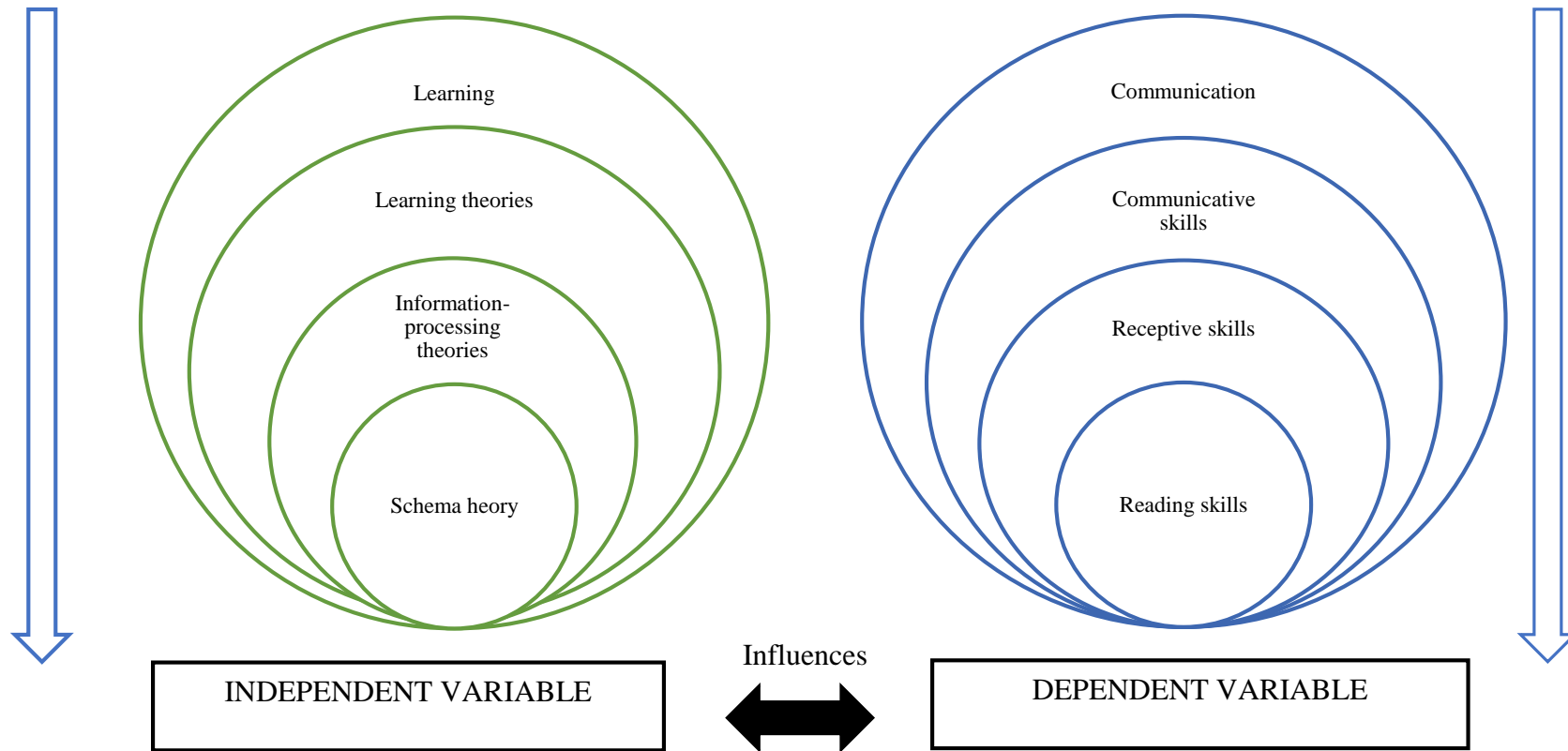
***b. Educación para el cambio.** La educación constituye instrumento de transformación de la sociedad, contribuye a la construcción del país, de los proyectos de vida y de la libertad de sus habitantes, pueblos y nacionalidades; reconoce a las o los seres humanos, en particular a las niñas, niños, y adolescentes, como centro del proceso de aprendizajes y sujetos de derecho; y se organiza sobre la base de los principios fundamentales.*

*Acorde a la Ley orgánica de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (LOEI), instaurada por la Asamblea Nacional, en el Capítulo Cuarto de los derechos y obligaciones de los y las docentes, en el ítem **b** declara que los educadores tienen rol primordial no únicamente en el logro de una educación oportuna y de calidad, sino con los educandos con quienes trabaja. Por otro lado, el ítem **i** pone de manifiesto que la obligación de los docentes radica en brindar apoyo y acompañamiento continuo a los alumnos a fin de ayudarlos a superar cualquier problema que se presente en su aprendizaje o en el proceso de desarrollo de destrezas, habilidades y capacidades (Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural, 2011).*



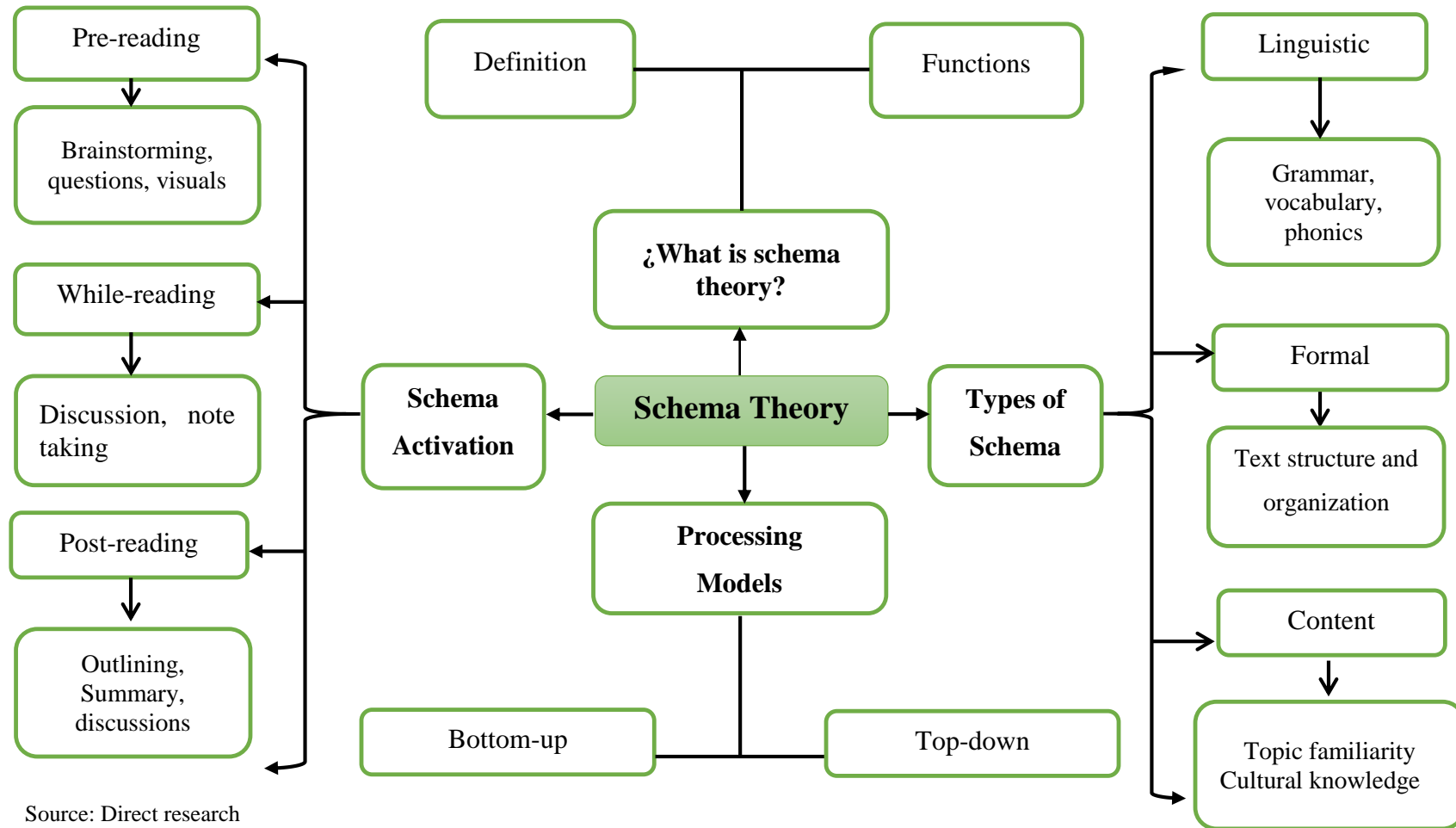
## 2.4 Key Categories

Graphic N° 2 Key Categories



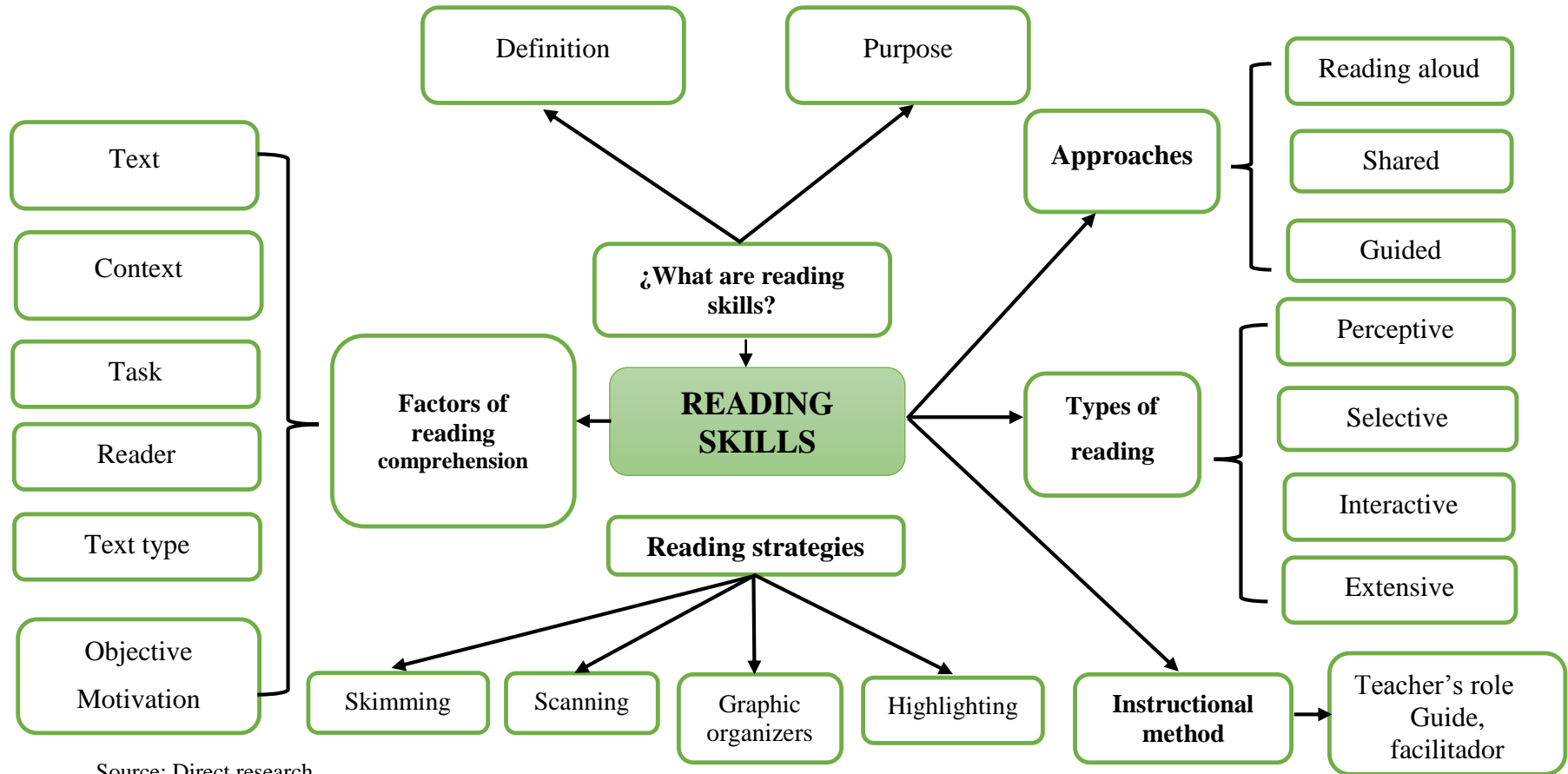
Source: Direct research  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 3** Conceptual Inclusions Network (Independent variable)



Source: Direct research  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic N° 4 Conceptual Inclusions Network (dependent variable)



Source: Direct research  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

## **2.4.1 Independent Variable**

### **LEARNING**

According to Zapata (2011), learning is the process or set of steps to follow in which ideas, skills, abilities, values, ways of thinking, experiences and other characteristics are acquired. Another definition states that learning is a change in people's skills and behavior, and it is acquired through experience and practice (Schunk, 2012, p. 17).

#### **Importance of learning**

From Zapata's point of view (2011), the importance of learning lies in the fact that it is a continuous process throughout life, which lets people increase their ideas and knowledge and has a positive impact as it can be applied to practical situations. On the other hand, Schunk (2012) presents arguments to emphasize that learning has a relevant role because it allows people to obtain knowledge, skills and abilities to do things in a different way. Likewise, an individual can learn from people with whom he or she interacts, and such experiences can contribute significantly to their learning.

#### **Benefits of learning**

Dávila (2007) has highlighted the relevance of designing activities that support a meaningful learning, which means that pupils acquire information that relates to the pre-existing knowledge to ensure that their learning is relevant and meaningful. Furthermore, learners will be able to retain information and use it when they require it, thus it will contribute greatly to the assimilation of new information into the existing one. Similarly, Schunk (2012) argues that the advantages which result from meaningful learning include that people develop skills, strategies, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors as well as cognitive, linguistic,

motor and social skills.

### **Requirements to succeed in learning**

As Dávila (2007) has indicated, in order to achieve a meaningful and effective learning in which the student's role is prioritized, three conditions must be fulfilled, including the following:

**Logical Significance of the material:** The teacher has to present the materials in a well-organized way to give students the opportunity to make connections, which will enhance the assimilation of information into the previous data.

**Psychological significance of the material:** The students must connect the previous knowledge to the new information that is taught to him, that is to say, the knowledge will be stored for a short period of time and the students will understand and be involved in their learning process.

**Favorable attitude of the student:** It is suggested that the teacher must motivate students in order to build knowledge through the use of activities that allow establishing connections.

## **LEARNING THEORIES**

### **Origin of theories**

Current learning theories have their beginnings long ago, and it is vital to address the historical context of the main theories related to knowledge. *Rationalism* is the view that knowledge comes from reason, but the use of senses is excluded given that knowledge is generated from the mind. For empiricism, the experience is an essential factor in generating knowledge, so that external environment factors help to create meaningful knowledge. Structuralism highlighted the study of how

people process information, and made emphasis on analyzing the associations individually. Another theory was functionalism that emphasized aspects of cognition and how processes vary depending on the circumstances (Schunk, 2012).

## **Influential learning theories**

### **Behaviorism**

In her article, Escobar (2001) claims that behaviorists believe that all learning takes place through a process of forming behavior habits, which are acquired through reinforcement and relationships between stimuli from the environment and responses of a person to those stimuli. In the learning of a language, the stimulus is the language to which a learner is exposed, the response is what the student produces and the reinforcement can occur in the form of praise or punishment by an adult, native speaker or teacher. The mastering of a foreign language consists of learning a set of habits, which come from repetition and practice of linguistics models of the target language until the learner can produce them automatically.

In the same vein, Bower (2017) points out that the teacher plays an essential role in determining what students must learn, using stimuli in order to promote certain behaviors and applying appropriate incentives (rewards or punishments) to reinforce desired behaviors. The major advantage of behaviorism is that it makes emphasis on the achievement of clear learning goals. Nonetheless, the learners are viewed as passive receptors of knowledge and they feel encouraged because of the stimuli.

Skinner, one of the most influential behaviorist, was responsible for introducing operant conditioning, which emphasizes that learning is based on the association that is made between a behavior and its consequences. He believed that responses

that are followed by positive or satisfying consequences tend to be repeated, and responses that are followed by unpleasant consequences (punishments) tend to be suppressed. Accordingly, reinforcement is the process that stimulates and increases the frequency of a desired behavior and punishment refers to a process that weakens and decreases the frequency of a behavior (Papalia, Duskin, & Martorell, 2012).

Similarly, Mejia (2011) highlights that Skinner's theory of operant conditioning can have important implications for education since it has identified the principles which help individuals acquire the expected behavior. For example, reinforcement is used in schools and some examples of reinforcers include teacher praise, rewards and exempting students from tasks or tests which tend to be unpleasant for students.

It is necessary to point out that teachers have to be aware that behaviorist theory and operant conditioning are only alternatives that teachers can use in their lessons. They can implement other theories which let them accomplish specific learning goals and support students' learning.

### **Constructivism**

Zapata (2015) maintains that constructivism is based on the idea that learning is an active process. The learners' role is to make sense and build their own knowledge based on experiences, previous ideas, and concepts rather than absorbing and copying information. Consequently, there is a shift in the role of the teacher from being the main source of information to being the one that guides and aids in the constructing meaning process.

Power (2008) in his book holds the view that constructivist instructors look for opportunities which allow them to get familiar with the different experiences that learners bring and use in the teaching process, and the curriculum is designed by

taking into account knowledge students possess. Educators act as guides and facilitators in the teaching-learning process and tasks are related to pupils' previous experiences and knowledge.

The constructivist perspective is related to the theories of Jean Piaget, David Ausubel and Lev Vygotsky.

### **Jean Piaget**

According to Piaget (as cited in Baggini, 2008), an individual constructs knowledge through assimilation and accommodation, which let people interpret and understand information based on what they already know. Learning concerns that the individuals can incorporate, assimilate and acquire knowledge, skills and abilities based on their schemes (existing information).

Papalia, Duskin, and Martorell (2012) mention that Piaget focused on two processes, accommodation, and assimilation. Piaget used the term assimilation to refer to a process that occurs when an individual can understand new information and incorporate it into the existing schemes. On the other hand, accommodation is defined as a process in which existing information is modified, so that new contents can be incorporated.

### **David Ausubel**

Ausubel (as cited in Sousa, Formiga, Oliveira, Costa, & Soares, 2015) suggests that materials must be stimulating and related to learners' previously acquired knowledge to help them to learn new contents. When this new information is linked to their prior ideas, it enables students to build new knowledge. Therefore, meaningful learning occurs when students give meaning to new information based on their past ideas and knowledge. That is why teaching is a process in which



there is a need for creating learning situations which allow promoting meaningful learning.

Viera (2003) notes that for meaningful learning to occur some conditions need to be met, which are mentioned below:

- When the learner has the predisposition to learn, that is, he feels motivated. In this way, he can get his own understanding of the contents he is acquiring.
- When the material to be taught is potentially meaningful, from both the logical structure of the content and the psychological structure of the learner. The logical structures involve that the contents must be clear and organized for the learners. The students' psychological student means that the learners need to have relevant prior knowledge as it is necessary to acquire and integrate new information.

### **Lev Vygotsky**

Lev Vygotsky (as cited in Rascón, Baca, & Tarango, 2016) explained that social interaction plays a key role in the development of cognition. Learning is viewed as a social process and it takes place in two phases: first, on the social level that means learning is created through the interaction between learners and social environment, and the second phase involves the way in which the individual integrates new information.

One of the most important contribution of Vygotsky's theory to education is the concept of zone of proximal development. It is defined as the distance between the actual level of development that refers to the individual's ability to solve a problem independently without any help and the level of potential development which involves solving a problem with assistance of an adult or a more competent partner. Thus, it is essential for teachers to determine what learners can do alone

and what they are able to do and learn with support and guidance of adults, teachers or skillful peers, so that teachers can identify strategies to help learners in their learning process (Zapata, 2015).

### **Benefits of Learning Theories**

In addition, Schunk (2012) claims that learning theories have a crucial role as people benefit greatly, for example, they help students become independent and autonomous, increase their motivation for learning and achieving better results, encourage self-criticism and creativity, contribute to strengthening skills development through the exchange of opinions and debates; however, the major aim of these theories is to promote a relevant learning. Therefore, using those theories can let people grow in different areas such as knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, among other characteristics for the development of individuals.

### **INFORMATION PROCESSING THEORIES**

Shuell (as cited in Schunk, 2012) presents arguments to emphasize that information processing theories stress how people perceive external facts and compile them, then compare this information with previous knowledge, this new information is stored and used when it is required. However, according to this researcher cognitivism places greater emphasis on external situations and the way how the individual responds to them, information processing theories claims that a person selects the information received and relates it to their past knowledge and experiences in order to create new meanings and concepts (Mayer, as cited in Schunk, 2012).

### **Models**

Information processing theories play a significant role in the learning process. Urbina (2013) briefly examines the theoretical models and these include:

### **Development and processing speed: Kail's model**

This model has a relation between the empirical supports that is the increase of the speed in the processing of mental operations.

In the evolutionary changes, there are three important phenomena to consider and those include:

- The speed of information processing is an important factor in aging because there is a decline in the performance of cognitive domains.
- Cognitive development in teenagers is characterized by the emergence of strong reasoning skills associated with formal reasoning.
- Performance quality is affected by slow processing

### **Development and strategies: Siegler's model**

The domain role of this model is the evolution of competence in arithmetic; this subject is considered as a key factor in teaching during the first years at the school. It basically focuses on domains of cognitive functioning and these produce results that can be applied to an optimization of the instruction in those domains.

### **Fuzzy fingerprint theory**

People are able to generate and work with representations in the form of essences, which are considered as diffuse representations and comprise aspects of information or experience. This refers to abstract patterns and levels in different independent representations. Moreover, from the evolutionary point of view, it make emphasis of theory that states that these principles of knowledge that change over time, starting from the cognitive functioning from childhood.

## **Features of Information Processing Theories**

Regarding the features of information processing theories, Urbina's (2013) findings show that those theories give an approach to thinking, mechanisms of change and self-modification.

**Thinking:** It allows to manage and transform the information that is stored in memory, the main purpose of this is to create new concepts, reason and solve problems.

**Change mechanisms:** This feature must meet the four mechanisms of information processing, these include the coding that is the process of incorporating information into memory. Automation is understood as the ability to process information. The choice of strategies is considered as the mechanism of getting information, selecting, and storing it in memory and transferring which mainly refers to the skill of relating what has been learned to the current situation.

## **SCHEMA THEORY**

Schema theory distinguishes that meaning is not included in the text; on the contrary, reading is described as a process in which the interaction between the reader and text is essential for comprehending the content. Thus, the ability of the reader to link the new information from the text to their previous knowledge is required for comprehension (Shuying, 2013).

In this sense, Hedge (as cited in Gamboa, 2017) emphasizes that the reader makes use of different kinds of knowledge, including their knowledge concerning morphological and syntactical aspects, text types, culture, area of the topic and general facts to get the message of the passage. Teachers must be aware of the relevance of learners' background knowledge in the learning process and apply a variety of strategies (before-reading tasks, teaching vocabulary words, visuals,

questions, etc.) in order to help them to bring their past experiences and knowledge (Gamboa, 2017).

The schemes perform essential functions to facilitate the identification and interpretation of the semantic relationships in the text and the elaboration of inferences:

Anderson (as cited in López, n.d.) found that schemes perform the following functions:

- Facilitating the identification of relevant information and relationships between the elements of this information; consequently, the schema that readers have allows them to focus on particular information.
- Enabling the reader to make inferences about the information that is not stated in the passage and analyze connections between ideas and paragraphs in order to extract meaning of the text.
- Facilitating the edition and summary of essential elements as the reader distinguishes primary information from secondary ideas.
- It allows fitting our information and experiences to the information of the text, so that the information can be processed easier (p. 44).

## **Types of Schema**

### **Linguistic schema**

It basically includes the reader's prior knowledge on lexical, grammatical or phonological aspects. In this sense, the authors Carrell and Eisterholden (as cited in Zhao & Zhu, 2012) additionally explain that linguistic knowledge plays a relevant role in the reading process; therefore, if the reader has more information on linguistics aspects, it will be less complicated to interpret the

meaning of a reading passage.

### **Formal schema**

Formal schema refers to knowledge about the structure of different types of text, which embraces the way in which those texts are organized, their lexicon, register and the grammatical structures they use. Therefore, this knowledge about the elements of written texts (essays, articles, poems, among others) is quite fundamental since it facilitates the understanding of them. In this sense, investigations explain that readers can better understand a text when they use the information about the text types, which provides specific details about them (Li, Wu, & Wang, 2007).

### **Content schema**

These schemes include information on culture, that is, previous experiences or how familiar readers are on the subject; the content schema is a central factor since it can help to comprehend a reading passage even though readers don't have knowledge on linguistic aspects. Research works that have been carried out expressed that these types of schemes have great incidence in the understanding of a text; therefore, a reader can access information of the text in order to understand it more easily (Li, Wu, & Wang, 2007).

### **Types of processing models**

#### **Bottom-up processing**

In the bottom-up model, reading involves recognizing and understanding basic units (spelling, words, and phrases) and moving to more complex units (sentences and text). Similarly, comprehension is described as a hierarchical recognition of

linguistic units, which means it is a decoding process (Santiago, Castillo, & Dora, 2007).

According to Oliver and Young (2016), bottom-up reading process concerns with the identification and recall of elements since the readers are involved in different activities such as dividing words into syllables to analyze them, matching synonyms or expressions, employing a dictionary and knowledge on the structure of sentences.

Gamboa (2017) further points out that bottom-up is viewed as a passive processing model in which the readers start with the smallest units such as letters and words and then they analyze statements and paragraphs to interpret the message of what they are reading. It is also defined as a process where the readers get the meaning from the elements and information of the reading passage. Therefore, according to this view, the text provides the clues needed to understand it.

With regard to bottom-up activities, Gladwin and Stepp-Greany (as cited in Haradasht & Baradaran, 2013) explain that there are different activities that focus on the bottom-up model, for instance, analyzing the meaning of words and structures, rereading the text and answering questions. Furthermore, those types of activities are mainly centered on the teacher.

### **Top-down processing**

Top down model indicates that individuals' knowledge is a key aspect in the reading process, so that the reader takes an active role since their knowledge about the topic and world knowledge helps them to comprehend the text easier (Santiago, Castillo, & Dora, 2007).

Oliver and Young (2016) remark that the knowledge the readers possess has a significant role in text comprehension as they can link it to the new information of the passage. World knowledge, skimming, scanning, identifying inferences and structure of the text and predicting are some of the strategies used in this model. Similarly, Liu (2010) comments that reading involves not only the recognition of basic elements, but also it is process in which reader' background knowledge about the topic and language (semantics and syntax) provides them useful clues to identify the meaning of words.

In this processing model, it is essential the implementation of reader's previously acquired knowledge and some strategies including deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words, identifying the text type and how it is structured, identifying main details and ideas from the passages, inferring and making predictions of the information covered in the text (Babashamsi, Bolandifar, & Shakib, 2013).

### **Schema activation**

Prior knowledge can be activated through pre-, while- and post-reading activities.

### **Pre-reading activities**

Sometimes texts do not offer enough information that facilitates or promotes activation of learners' existing knowledge; that is why teachers use pre-reading activities in order to stimulate previous knowledge or create new schemes. At this stage, there are several activities that can be used to achieve this aim, to illustrate, brainstorming, pre-teaching vocabulary, questions or lead a short discussion about the topic before starting reading (Zhao & Zhu, 2012).

Reading for understanding a text requires an active process that involves stages. The activities that can be used before begin reading to lead learners to activate their existing knowledge are listed below (Cohen & Cowen, 2008):



- **Discussion:** is an effective activity as learners contribute with their ideas on the topic and their previous data can be stimulated. Additionally, it offers students the chance to interact and learn from their peers' ideas and experiences. Before reading a text, it also aids teachers to become familiar with their learners' past knowledge.
- **Prequestions and stating objectives,** students can activate the knowledge they possess by telling them the objectives to be achieved and giving them a question before they read.
- **Story previews:** it mainly focuses on looking at and talking about important features of the text such as titles, headings and images and make predictions of the sections and headings of the text.
- **Field trips:** learners are exposed to different environments which allow them to develop their existing knowledge. The best way how some kids who are learning English can enhance their readings skills is by experimenting and doing things. To illustrate this idea, children visited a farm and when they read a book, they found easier to understand it because of the past knowledge they had.
- **Semantic mapping/brainstorming,** another activity to have learners bring what they know about the topic and increase such knowledge is by using this activity. It provides them with the opportunity to express their ideas with others and learn new things.
- **Visual, film/pictures:** there are positive effects of presenting the topic with films or videos as they enable learners to develop their past information. Pictures are also useful to introduce vocabulary words that will be found in the text. Everything that teachers uses to help learners link the text content to their own experiences makes the text clearer; all of this will be helpful for gaining understanding of it.

### **While-reading activities**

The interaction between the reader and the text is essential, and this will be guided and examined by the teacher; so that a helpful activity at this stage is taking notes as it allows learners to gather relevant ideas, vocabulary, definitions or opinions (Villanueva, 2006). Likewise, students will have to infer on the author's attitude or feelings as this is not always explicit in the content. Discussions are helpful activities since they provide learners with opportunities to practice their oral skills, so that they contribute with their ideas when reading a text (Zhao & Zhu, 2012).

Dudeny et al. (2011) indicates that matching passages and headlines of the text, open-ended questions, ordering (paragraphs), multiple choice questions, true-false questions, and edit information in sentences are examples of activities to be implemented in the while-reading stage.

### **Post-reading activities**

The activities that are developed in this last stage are necessary to consolidate pupils' knowledge as these are based on analyzing and reconstructing the meaning of a reading. If students have difficulties in understanding the content and post-reading activities are not developed in the lesson, the teacher will have to help their learners overcome problems after class. There are several techniques that can be used at this stage, such as an outline which lead learners to get the main idea and understand the main elements of the passage, a summary that helps students to identify main and secondary ideas, then the teacher can lead a discussion on the topic, get learners work on some vocabulary tasks (Zhao & Zhu, 2012).

Activities of the post-reading stage make emphasis on some structures of the text, certain grammar points, creating a discussion to exchange ideas on the subject

matter, inferring feelings, guessing the meaning of unknown words and analyzing linking words or phrases and opinions (Dudeny, et al., 2011).

#### **2.4.2 Dependent Variable**

### **COMMUNICATION**

It is described as the process of reception and transmission of ideas, information, and messages. In addition to this, it is defined as a complex process in which two or more individuals are related and the exchange of messages with similar characters let people understand and influence themselves, so that their goals are accepted in the way in which they were said (Fundación de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2011). In this context, Searle (1994) explains that linguistic communication includes acts in which linguistic elements such as sounds, words, sentence, and phrases are produced; therefore, the production of a simple sentence can be also considered as an act of speech.

#### **Communication types**

There are two ways of communication: verbal and nonverbal (Fundación de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2011).

- The author states that verbal communication allows people to access and convey information, share their ideas and experiences, reach agreements or negotiate.
- Non-verbal communication deals with a large number of behaviors and the most relevant include visual contact, facial gestures, arm and hand movements, body language, among others (Fajardo, 2009).

## **Elements of communication**

The major elements involved in communication are listed below (Fundación de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2011).

- **The message.** It consists of different ideas that are transmitted by codes, images, graphics and other representations, allowing the receiver to decode the message.
- **The receiver and the sender.** The sender is the individual who communicates in message, while the receiver can be one person or audience who receives it.
- **The code.** It is the set of symbols, images, language that are used to transmit the message. This is the process that allows the sender gives meaning to the words and symbols and communicate with the receiver.
- **The channel.** It is the medium through which the message is sent.
- **The context.** It is the situation in which communication takes place.
- **Noises.** They are all the transformations of physical origin that occur during the transmission of the message.
- **Filters.** They are defined as the mental barriers that arise from values, knowledge, expectations, prejudices between the sender and receiver.
- **The feedback.** It involves the receiver's response and the reaction of the sender in the communication process, that is, it refers to the content and is related to the behavior of the interlocutors.

## **Communicative skills**

The author illustrates that communicative skills are skills that can be achieved by people through their past experiences and instruction, so that they can communicate in different contexts (Gómez, 2016). According to Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (2011), it is crucial to mention that there is no difference between what the sender wants to say and what the receiver understands in a high-

quality communication. It is important to stress that the receiver's communicative skills can be affected if he does not understand a message or misinterprets it, and the possible cause is that the sender doesn't communicate it clearly. Therefore, the communication must be effective since it will help the senders to communicate his ideas and get the answer they expect.

### **Importance of communicative skills**

According to Cassany, Luna and Sanz (as cited in Monsalve, Franco, Monsalve, Betancurt, & Ramírez, 2009) in the language learning it is crucial to master the communicative skills as they help people to communicate efficiently in different settings. Thus, it is essential to promote the use of strategies and techniques that facilitate the development of the communicative competence. Although communicative skills such as reading, writing, listening and writing are studied independently, the ideal should be to integrate these skills, as this will achieve one of the main purposes in the learning process that is communication.

### **Classification of communicative skills**

Vallverdú (2002) classifies the communicative skills as follows:

#### **Verbal emission skills**

Speaking is considered as the ability of the human being to communicate through articulated sounds. Writing is considered as a complex skill but at the same time allows the individual to create knowledge and develop multiple learning processes.

#### **Reception verbal skills**

Listening is the skill that implies receiving, and it is defined as the ability to feel,

understand the message and know how to respond properly to the interlocutor. Reading is considered as a fundamental skill and competence of individuals. Furthermore, it is used to refer to the ability to interpret a text for mental understanding and human beings are the ones who create their own learning.

### **Nonverbal skills**

They are regarded as those that include body language, in which words are not used, that is to say, it is the art of interpreting symbols or signs through gestures, facial expressions, physical postures, visual contact, among other characteristics.

## **RECEPTIVE SKILLS**

According to Al-Jawi (2010), receptive skills involve both interpreting and understanding the content or message of what we read or hear; so that this kind of processing is mainly applied to reading and aural comprehension. However, the author adds that there are specific ways to teach reading and listening as these skills are different.

On the other hand, Abad and Toledo (2006) hold the position that receptive skills such as listening and reading were considered as passive; however, this concept has changed since they are receptive skills and this is due to the active role and multiple components that they have, which facilitate the understanding of the message.

### **Types of receptive skills**

#### **Reading skills**

Reading is a receptive skill that involves a process that begins with the comprehension of a text, so that it requires the ability to understand linguistic

elements to be able to decode the meaning of what is being read. Consequently, the author proposes two approaches that are central to interpretation of the message of a text; in the synthetic approach the reader begins with the understanding of the meaning of words, sentences and the relations between them to get the meaning; while the analytic approach concerns crucial factors like comprehension of the title, main and secondary ideas of the passage (Clouet, 2010).

### **Listening skills**

It is thought by some theorists, for example, Spratt, Pulverness, and Williams (2012), listening is a receptive ability consisting of a number of aspects such as distinguishing sounds, understanding vocabulary and grammar, using knowledge on language to understand or interpret meaning of what is heard. The way we listen basically depends on the purpose or reason we have, to illustrate this idea, we can listen to identify the main idea, specific information or details, make inferences of the content or the author's feelings. Listening skills is a process in which the listener is able to apply their knowledge on different types of text, language, strategies, subskills, accents and aspects of spoken language.

### **Sub-skills of reading and listening skills**

Al-Jawi (2010) indicates that receptive skills can be divided into sub-skills which will be used depending on the reader's or listener's reasons for listening or reading a text.

- **Identifying the topic:** the listener and reader can find the meaning of a text more quickly and effectively by using their past ideas as they facilitate understanding and retention of information.
- **Predicting an guessing:** listeners and readers try to predict what an oral or written text is about, for that reason they make assumptions about the content of the text and when reading their initial predictions can be proven.

- **General understanding:** encouraging a quick reading of a text helps learners to get a general idea about it, but it is not necessary for the reader or listener to focus on specific details of the text.
- **Recognizing specific information:** this sub-skill focuses on identifying particular details of a text, so when listening or reading a text, it is crucial to pay attention to everything said or written in order to find the information we are looking for.
- **Recognizing detailed information:** it is about a more complete reading or listening because it aims to locate and understand details and ideas. To illustrate, when someone gives us their address and other data, we tend to write the more details we can.
- **Interpreting the text:** given that the information we look for is not expressed directly in the text, a key skill is to recognize and use clues to try deducing the message of what was read.

## READING SKILLS

Reading is an important process in which the reader and the text interact, and the reader is the one who decodes, interprets and gives meaning to the texts. This definition does not focus on the text itself; in contrast, it emphasizes the reader's active role in his reading process as he creates meaning or gives meaning to a reading passage by incorporating his previous knowledge and experiences (Calderón & Quijano, 2010).

### Purpose of reading

Haque and Sultana (2010) highlight the relevance of setting a purpose before starting any reading. When the reader doesn't have a reading purpose, he can get bored and demotivated easily. In this context, it is essential to mention that text comprehension is closely related to learners' purpose and interests; therefore, a reader might read for enjoyment or for finding specific details.



Williams (as cited in Haque & Sultana, 2010) classifies the reading purpose as follows:

- a) Reading to get a general idea of the passage.
- b) Reading to look for specific details.
- c) Reading for enjoyment and interest.

On the other hand, Rivers and Temperley (as cited in Haque & Sultana, 2010) provide some reasons that the individuals have when reading:

- Get information for a particular goal and readers
- Obtain information of a reading text that the reader finds it interesting and appealing.
- Get guidelines to carry out daily life activities and tasks of our job.
- Get familiar with the date and place of an event.
- Keep up to date with the different facts (newspapers reports, articles, TV news, etc.)

## **TYPES OF READING**

Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) argue that there are four types of reading, which have their own assessment tasks and are listed below:

- **Perceptive reading** includes activities closely related to basic components such as letters, words, symbols, and phrases; that's why this type of reading is associated with the bottom-up process.
- **Selective reading** involves the identification of linguistic aspects of language (lexis, grammar, speech). Multiple-choice, match-up questions, true/false questions are activities that can be used.
- **Interactive reading** emphasizes the interaction between the reader and the text, for that reason the reader uses their schemas in order to the meaning

and the top-down processing model is used. In addition, anecdotes, stories, descriptions, recipes are examples of the texts that allow such interaction.

- **Extensive reading** comprises long reading passages like essays, reports, stories and book. It makes use of the top-down process to gain the meaning of the text. Skimming, summarizing, note taking and outlining are activities implemented in this type of reading (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

### **Reading strategies**

Strategies commonly referred to as planned and clear actions which help readers to extract the message of the passage. There are some strategies that are useful for enhancing learners' decoding and comprehension skills; therefore, those strategies may help beginners, English learners and readers who are experimenting problems with comprehension (Reading horizons, 2006).

On the other hand, the author points out that during the reading process some strategies are used, which must meet conditions such as self-direction (existence of a goal), self-control (monitoring and evaluation of one's behavior in terms of the objectives to be achieved) and (flexibility possibility of modifying the behavior when needed) (Peña, 2000). It can be noted that the implementation of strategies, use of prior knowledge and experiences and linguistic competence allow the reader to construct meaning.

There are different ways how the strategies can be classified, for example, the author makes emphasis on some strategies employed by the reader and those include sampling, prediction, inferring, confirmation and correction (Peña, 2000).

In this context, Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) remark that strategies has an important implication in the reading instruction; therefore, beginners need to be provided with particular strategies to decode new words and understand the message. Once learners have learned them, teachers must introduce more complex

strategies such as making inferences, finding main ideas and details and summarizing.

**Chart N° 1 Reading strategies**

<b>READING STRATEGIES</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Skimming	Quick reading of the text in order to determine the main idea of it.
Scanning	Reading to search for specific information in a written text.
Confirmation and correction	Confirming or rejecting previous conclusions after reading a passage.
Graphic organizers	A way of representing chief concepts and ideas visually.
Highlighting	Highlighting the main ideas of the text to support reading tasks.
Inferring to understand referents	Identifying referents in the text, for example, the reader uses pronouns to identify the subject in a statement.
Drawing conclusions	After reading a text, you can reach a conclusion, extract lessons from the content and compare texts.

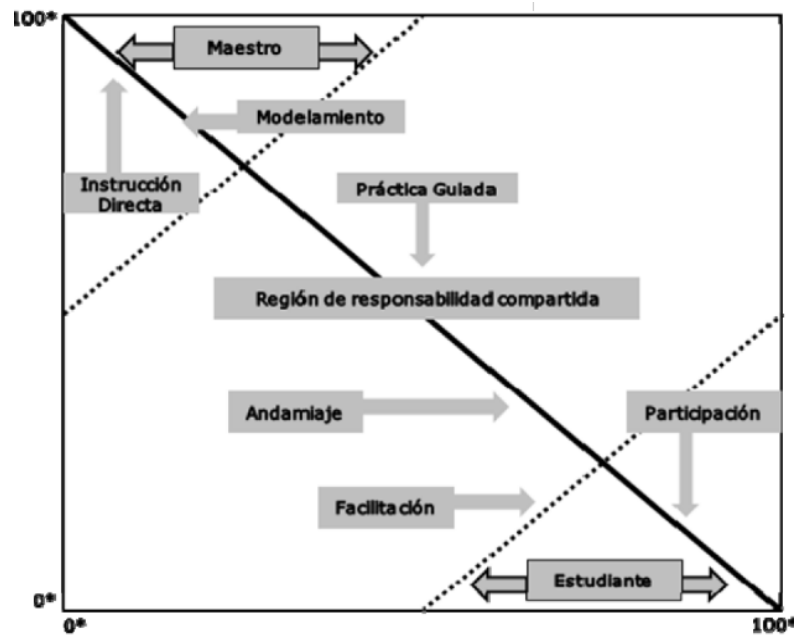
Source: Direct research  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Instructional method of reading comprehension (Teacher's role)**

Pearson and Gallagher (as cited in Gutierrez & Salmerón, 2012) explain that the teacher assumes a variety of roles in the three phases of the reading instruction. In the first stage, the teacher has the full responsibility of leading the tasks and helping students to know how, when and why to use learning strategies, which means he uses direct instruction. In the second phase, the educator uses guided practice and scaffolding to facilitate shared responsibility. Finally, the teacher

promotes processes of participation and facilitation so that the student acquires and assumes progressively greater responsibility and a more active and autonomous role in their learning.

Graphic N° 5. Pearson and Gallagher's Model



Source: From “Estrategias de comprensión lectora: enseñanza y evaluación en Educación Primaria,” by C. Gutierrez and H. Salmerón, 2012, Revista de currículum y formación del profesorado, 16, p. 192.

### Factors that influence reading comprehension

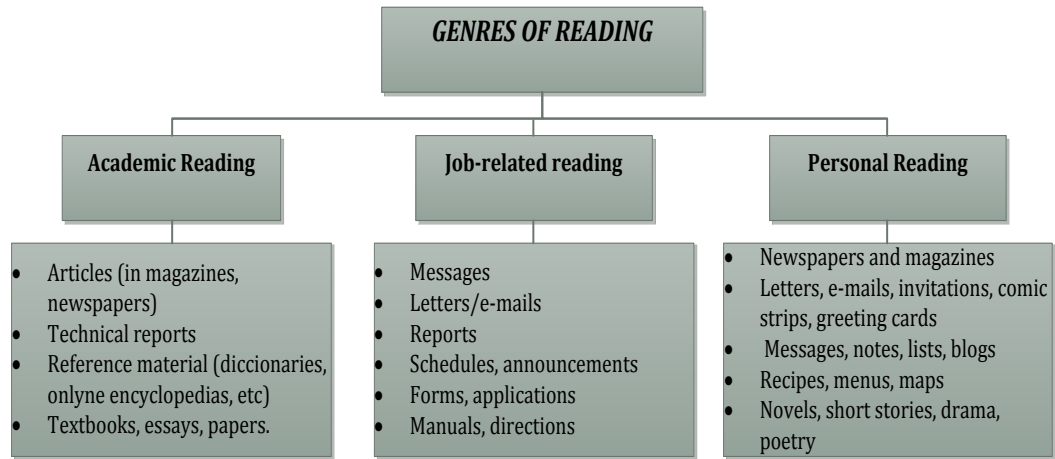
It is essential to take into account the basic factors of reading comprehension since they are decisive for an effective reading. Readers gain understanding from the text from a constructive perspective. Paraskevi (2010) suggests that the following factors need to be considered in the reading instruction:

- **Text:** Each text type has its own characteristic for layout, language, organization (macro and microstructure) and reflects a particular culture. In order to choose the most suitable materials, teachers need to focus on the reading purpose. If the goal is to have learners practice grammatical or lexical aspects, the teacher must ensure that learners are given reading material that matches the desired learning goal.

- **Context:** The classroom is the first context in which the reading is developed and practiced (González, 2000).
- **Task:** The activity to be used plays a fundamental role as it actually determines reading comprehension difficulties. If we take out parts from the texts as they can cause reading problems, we deny students the chance of experimenting with the authentic language.
- **Reader.** The readers are active agents who use their past knowledge and reading skills strategically in order to construct meaning of the reading passages.  
Jiménez (2007) highlights how important is for educators to be aware that reader's prior knowledge is as essential aspect; consequently, the lack of it might cause more reading problems that complex vocabulary or language of the text.
- **Text types:** The text to be used in the classroom is another factor to be considered by teachers when planning their lessons. Teachers need to provide students access to a variety of genres, allowing them to use diverse strategies and get familiar with the features, purpose, layout and language that the texts have. We must not forget that the reader's previous knowledge is activated and stimulated when they are provided with familiar reading passages. To illustrate this idea, it is easier for a professional to read an article in L2 about his area of specialty since the knowledge he possesses will boost his comprehension.

On the matter of genres of reading, Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) additionally explain that each genre has its own features, so the readers must be able to anticipate them as it contribute to process the text in an easy and effective way.

**Graphic N° 6. Genres of reading**



Source: From Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices, p. 225-226, by H. Brown and P. Abeywickrama, 2010, California: Pearson Education.

- **Objective:** The reasons each individual has for reading a text determines the way how they read it and helps to think what to look for when they read. When individuals start to read any text, there is a goal which guides them: reading to learn, revise, analyze, and so on. The objectives determine the way how the strategies will be employed by the reader as well as they allow readers to apply strategies to cope with comprehension problems.
- **Expectations and motivation:** It means that a motivating reading is the one that connects to individual's interests. Students' motivation is a central factor in reading that can be achieved by carefully planning the tasks and materials, making decisions on the before-reading strategies and activities to help learners to read more fluently and with greater engagement.

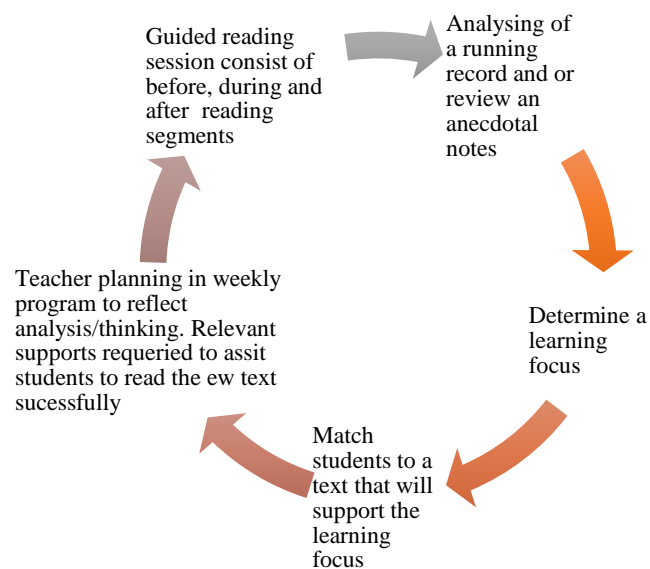
## Reading Approaches

**Reading aloud (Modelled Reading):** It occurs when the teacher reads a passage and learners listen to, so that the teacher models the appropriate use of vocabulary, fluency, visual and comprehension. It is an essential part of the reading instruction since it allows students to develop comprehension as features of the texts and structures are introduced and discussed in the class.

**Shared reading:** It is when both teacher and learners read a text and the educator can promote confidence and pleasure and demonstrate strategies for interpreting and understanding the content.

**Guided reading:** It is based on the idea that the reader needs support from the teacher or a skilled person to help them develop strategies to apply independently. Therefore, the instructor scaffolds their pupils and offers opportunities to develop useful strategies which are useful to interpret the message of what they are reading. The way how the teachers support is by emphasizing key elements of the text, teaching new vocabulary items and stimulating some levels of comprehension (State Government of Victoria, 2017).

**Graphic N° 7** Guided reading



Source: From Teaching Practices for Reading and Viewing, by State Government of Victoria, 2017, Retrieved from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/English/literacy/readingviewing/Pages/teachigpracguided.aspx>.

## **2.5 Hypothesis**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Schema theory doesn't influence in the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Schema theory does influence in the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

## **2.6 Determining of variables**

### **2.6.1 Independent Variable:**

- Schema theory

### **2.6.2 Dependent Variable:**

- English reading skills



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Basic method of research

This research study has both a quantitative and qualitative approach, it is qualitative since an educational and social reality is analyzed with the help of the theoretical framework, and it is quantitative because the numerical results obtained will be summarized in graphs to perform a statistical analysis.

The research has adopted the following basic methods:

- **Bibliographical – documentary research:** the research was based on information compiled from diverse sources such as books, journal articles, modules, newspapers, and magazines. All of them from different authors, whose aim is basically to analyze and describe concepts and theories that are relevant to the topic of this research.
- **Field research:** The research takes place in real settings, in this case with second-year students of B.G.U. from Unidad Educativa “Francisco Flor” with the aim of analyzing the problem that has been identified and collecting essential data. A visit to the high school was carried out in order to observe the participants’ environment and gain a better understanding of the research problem.

#### 3.2 Level or types of research

The research levels used in the development of this project include:

- **Exploratory:** this level is used since an analysis of the topic research was done and contextualized within the macro, meso, and micro level for

having a better understanding of the topic.

- **Correlational:** This level is intended to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.
- **Descriptive Level:** Describe causes and problems of the topic research to be investigated. The field research was crucial to examine the participants' features. This work was conducted in order to determine the influence of the use of schema theory in the students' reading performance and comprehension. Consequently, data was collected through surveys.

### 3.3 Population and sample

#### 3.3.1 Population

All the subjects for this research were 118 students of the second year of Bachillerato (age range of 15-18 years) and 2 English teachers from “Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”.

**Table N° 1 Population**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students of Second Year of Bachillerato “A”	29	24%
Students of Second Year of Bachillerato “B”	32	27%
Students of Second Year of Bachillerato “C”	33	28%
Students of Second Year of Bachillerato “D”	24	20%
English teachers	2	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Institution  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

#### 3.3.2 Sample

In this research project, the sample was basically composed of 120 subjects.

### 3.4 Operationalization of variables

#### 3.4.1 Independent variable: Schema theory

Chart N° 2 Independent Variable

CONCEPT	CATEGORIES	INDICATORS	ITEMS	TECHNIQUES INSTRUMENTS
<p>Schema theory basically refers to systematic model which combines learner's prior knowledge (schema) with the information that is presented in a text, which occurs in a <u>bottom-up</u> and <u>top-down</u> process. The different <u>types of schema</u> can be activated through some <u>activities</u>.</p>	<p>1 Processes</p>	<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Top down</b></li> <li>• Identifying inferences and structure of the text</li> <li>• Predicting</li> <li>• <b>Bottom up</b></li> <li>• Matching synonyms, identifying the meaning of words, rereading</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>Does your English teacher promote the practice of activities such as inferring or recognizing the text structure and to facilitate comprehension of texts?</p> <p>Does your teacher ask you to develop activities such as identifying words and their meaning, matching synonyms and rereading the text to find clues to improve reading comprehension?</p>	<p><b>Technique:</b> Survey to be applied to teachers and students</p> <p><b>Instrument:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> </ul>

	2 Types of schema	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Formal</b></li> <li>• Text organization and structure, level of formality</li> <li>• <b>Content</b></li> <li>• Topic familiarity</li> <li>• <b>Linguistic</b></li> <li>• Vocabulary, grammar, phonics</li> </ul>	2 ¿Do you use your prior knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, knowledge about the area of the reading text) when reading a text?	
	3 Activities to activate schema	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pre-reading activities</b> (brainstorming, questions, visuals)</li> </ul>	3 Before developing a reading task, does your teacher encourage you to read the headings and look at the images for predicting the text content?  How often does your teacher use photographs, videos or movies to present information related to the text topic?	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>While-reading activities</b> (Note taking, discussions, multiple choice questions, true/false questions, ordering,)</li> <li>• <b>Post-reading activities</b> (outlining, summary, discussions, vocabulary exercises)</li> </ul>	<p>Does your teacher use brainstorming to motivate you to share your ideas on the topic before reading a text?</p> <p>How often does your teacher involve you in the development of activities such as open-ended, multiple choice and true/false questions, ordering paragraphs, taking notes or group discussions to help you develop their reading skills?</p> <p>After reading a text, what activities does your teacher develop to help you to understand what was read?</p>	
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Source: Theoretical Framework  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### 3.4.2 Dependent variable: Reading skills

Chart N° 3 Dependent Variable

CONCEPT	CATEGORIES	INDICATORS	ITEMS	TECHNIQUES INSTRUMENTS
Reading can be described as an interactive process between the text and the reader, in which the use of different <u>strategies</u> and <u>approaches</u> is crucial for helping to develop reading <u>comprehension</u> .	1 Strategies	1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skimming</li> <li>• Scanning</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> <li>• Highlighting main ideas and details</li> </ul>	1 What reading strategies do you apply with your teacher to understand a text?	<b>Technique:</b> Survey to be applied to teachers and students.  <b>Instrument:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> </ul>
	2 Approaches	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided</li> <li>• Independent reading</li> <li>• Choral</li> <li>• Shared</li> </ul>	2 At the moment of developing reading activities, does your teacher apply reading approaches such as guided, choral, shared independent reading and reading aloud?	

	<p>3</p> <p>Comprehension</p>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Factors</b></li> <li>• Text, context, reader, text type, motivation, expectations.</li> <li>• <b>Instructional method</b> (teacher's role)</li> </ul>	<p>3</p> <p>Does your teacher implement different literary genres such as newspapers, magazines, maps, novels, stories, letters, menus or recipes for developing reading tasks?</p> <p>Does the reading material that your teacher uses meet your interests, needs, level and is related to your prior knowledge or past experiences?</p> <p>Does your teacher provide you with the necessary guidance when doing a reading task?</p> <p>Do you believe that your classroom is a good place to practice reading tasks?</p>	
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Source: Theoretical Framework  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### 3.5 Information collection plan

This research work has the purpose of emphasizing the results that were obtained through a survey and the questionnaire as an instrument.

In order to summarize the description of this plan, the following questions must be answered:

**Chart N° 4** Information collection plan

<b>BASIC QUESTIONS</b>	<b>EXPLANATION</b>
¿What for?	To reach the research goals that were set up at the beginning of the research.
What people?	Students of the second year of Bachillerato (aged between 15 and 18 years) from Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.
What aspects?	Schema theory and its impact on the development of the English reading skills.
Who?	Researcher: Gladys Catalina Lozada Lliguin
When?	Period: school year 2017-2018
Where?	“Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”, located in Ambato, Ecuador.
¿How many times?	Once
What collection techniques?	Survey
¿With what?	Semi-structured questionnaire
What situations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In situations in which educational community benefits.</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Authorities availability</li> </ul>

Source: Direct research  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)



### **3.6 Information processing plan**

The results obtained through the survey that was applied to teachers and learners facilitated the validation of the research hypothesis. The information gathered was presented through statistical graphs and an analysis was done; all this information was fundamental for the elaboration of the proposal.

The principal steps for the application of the surveys are the following:

- Identification of the target population to be investigated
- Selection of techniques and instruments to be used
- Elaboration of the questionnaire
- Determination of the place, date and time for applying the survey
- Survey application to students and teachers

In order to carry out an orderly investigation, it was necessary to follow the steps that were mentioned above since they let the researcher get relevant data. Based on the information collected, it was possible to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

### **3.7 Reliability of the instrument**

A questionnaire was the instrument employed for data collection in this research, which consisted of 14 questions, including 3-point Likert-type questions (1. Always, 2. Sometimes, 3. Never). A pilot sample with 20 students was used in order to determine the validity of the instrument. Once the results were recollected, Cronbach's alpha was the measure used to determine the reliability of this questionnaire. It basically revealed an acceptable result ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ).

**Table N° 2 Cronbach's Alpha**

	Where always = 1; sometimes = 2; never= 3												
Students	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 9	Item 10	Item 11	Item 12	Total
1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	13
2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	18
3	2	1	1	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	15
4	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	15
5	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	23
6	1	3	2	1	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	21
7	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	23
8	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
9	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	1	20
10	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	3	2	2	3	2	21
11	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	16
12	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	2	2	20
13	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	3	1	1	1	2	14
14	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	11
15	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	14
16	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	14
17	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	13
18	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	13
19	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	15
20	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	19
<b>VARIA NCE</b>	<b>0,228</b>	<b>0,69</b>	<b>0,44</b>	<b>0,24</b>	<b>0,41</b>	<b>0,53</b>	<b>0,25</b>	<b>0,41</b>	<b>0,56</b>	<b>0,24</b>	<b>0,63</b>	<b>0,36</b>	<b>14,64</b>

Source: Student's survey  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Table N° 3** Cronbach's coefficient alpha

<b>Variables</b>	
K (number of items)	12
$\Sigma v_i$	4,98
Vt	14,64
Section 1	1,09
Section2	0,66
Absolute Value	0,66
<b><math>\alpha</math> (Alfa Cronbach)</b>	<b>0,720</b>

Source: Cronbach's Alpha  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Analysis of the results**

First of all, a questionnaire which consisted of 14 questions, was applied to 118 students of the second year of Bachillerato (age range 15 -18 years) from Unidad Educativa “Francisco Flor”, located in Ambato, Tungurahua province. Likewise, the questionnaire was applied to two English teachers in order to analyze their perceptions about reading strategies and activities to activate learners’ prior knowledge and develop reading skills.

Then, the data collected from 118 high school students and two teachers were summarized in tables and pie charts, they were fundamental as they revealed concise and clear results.

Finally, these results lead the researcher to analyze, interpret the information concerning the 14 questions in order to draw conclusions related to the research problem.

##### **4.1.1 Survey addressed to students**

A survey was administered to second-year students of B.G.U (aged between 15 and 18 years) from Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor, a public institution located in Ambato, Tungurahua province. It was conducted in order to collect information concerning the use of schema theory and the development of the English reading skills.

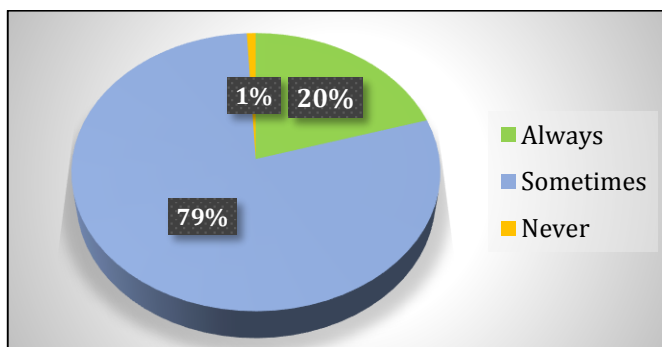
**Question 1:** Do you use your prior knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, knowledge about the area of the reading text) when reading a text?

**Table N° 4** Use of prior knowledge

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	24	20%
1.2	Sometimes	93	79%
1.3	Never	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 8** Use of prior knowledge



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

As it can be seen from the graphic above, 93 respondents (79%) stated that they sometimes use their past experiences and knowledge when they read English texts, while only 24 participants (20%) indicated that they always apply such background knowledge to make sense of the text .

Overall, these results indicate that a large majority of students tend to use their previously acquired knowledge concerning grammar, vocabulary, text structure, the field of the topic to understand what they read. Learner’s prior knowledge plays a significant role in developing comprehension, engagement, and motivation to learn.

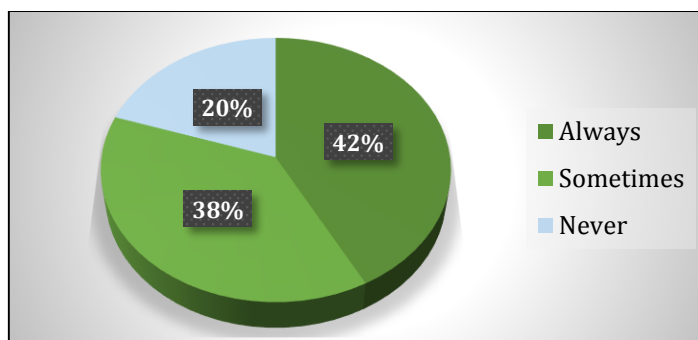
**Question 2:** Does your English teacher promote the practice of activities such as inferring or recognizing the text structure to facilitate comprehension of texts?

**Table N° 5** Top -down process

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	50	42%
1.2	Sometimes	45	38%
1.3	Never	23	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 9** Top down process



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation:**

Of the 118 participants, 50 representing 42% of the respondents said that their English teacher always promotes the practice of activities such as inferring and recognizing the text structure to facilitate text comprehension. On the other hand, 45 representing 38% of all respondents indicated that this kind of activities are sometimes used by the teacher, and only 23 of participants representing 20% mentioned that their teacher never asks them to do such activities in class.

In general, these results show that activities like inferring and identifying text structures, which require learners to activate their previous knowledge and experiences are often applied in the reading classes at “Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”.

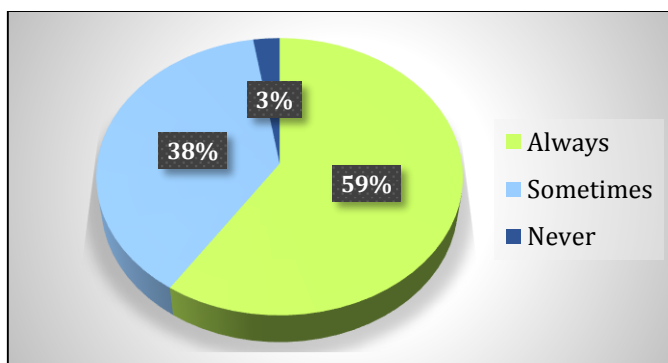
**Question 3:** Does your teacher ask you to develop activities such as identifying words and their meaning, matching synonyms and rereading the text to find clues to improve reading comprehension?

**Table N° 6** Bottom-up process

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	70	59%
1.2	Sometimes	45	38%
1.3	Never	3	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 10** Bottom-up process



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation:**

In relation to the data collected, 70 students (59%) of the study population commented that identifying words, matching synonyms and rereading a text to find clues are activities they always practice in class, and 45 students representing 38% said they are involved in these activities on some occasions.

The results revealed that most of the time the teacher gives learners opportunities to practice essential tasks concerning vocabulary, syntax, phonology which are crucial for text comprehension. It is necessary to point out that those activities lie within the bottom-up model in which the readers start analyzing words, then sentences and passages to make it easier to get the message of the text.

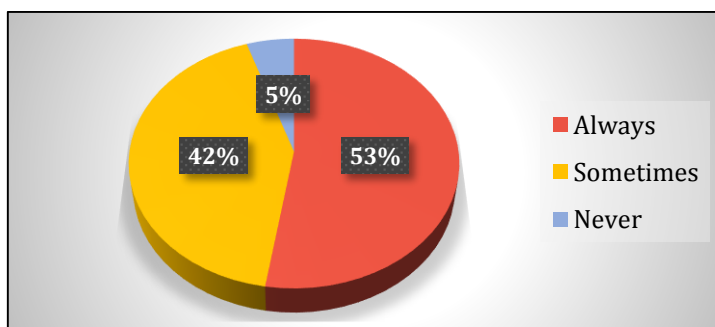
**Question 4:** Before developing a reading task, does your teacher encourage you to read the headings and look at the images for predicting the text content?

**Table N° 7** Use of Previewing

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	62	53%
1.2	Sometimes	50	42%
1.3	Never	6	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 11** Use of Previewing



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

Once the data has been analyzed, it was found that 62 learners corresponding to 53% said that their teacher always asks them to examine images and headings from the text to make predictions about its content. Meanwhile, 50 students, who represent the 42% of the population expressed they sometimes use key parts of the text for becoming familiar with its content.

Thus, learners often review and discuss the text features including pictures and headings before reading, so that they figure out an idea of what they will read. Consequently, it is recommended the application of the previewing activity as it lets learners activate their previous knowledge in the discussion lead by the teacher, and this enables them to feel motivated in the lesson.



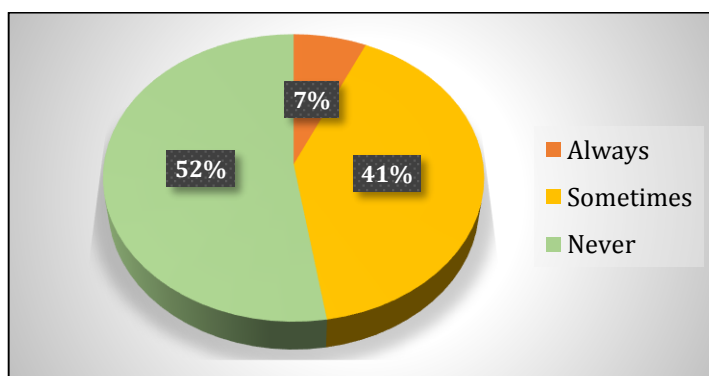
**Question 5:** Does your teacher use brainstorming to motivate you to share your ideas on the topic before reading a text?

**Table N° 8** Brainstorming activity

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	8	7%
1.2	Sometimes	48	41%
1.3	Never	62	52%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 12** Brainstorming activity



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation:**

The findings reveal that 62 students who represent 52% indicated that they never participate in a brainstorming activity in the classroom. However, 48 learners, who correspond to 41% affirmed that the teacher sometimes motivates them to share their ideas and experiences on the topic by using brainstorming before they start reading.

It is evident that a large number of students replied that their teacher never brainstorms different words, phrases or ideas related to the topic, and that might be caused because of the teacher’s lack of time and interest in implementing dynamic and engaging activities and strategies that enable learners to bring what they know and use it to facilitate the reading process.

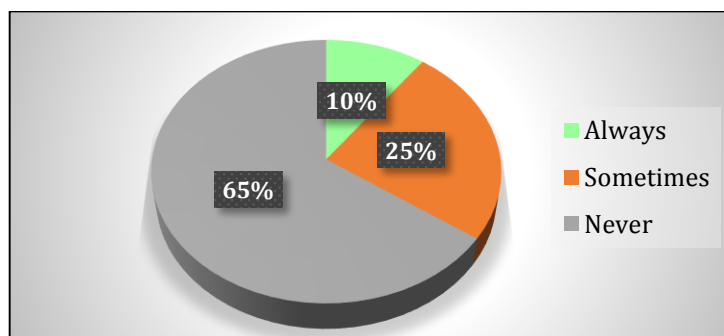
**Question 6:** How often does your teacher use photographs, videos or movies to present information related to the text topic?

**Table N° 9** Use of pictures, videos and films

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	12	10%
1.2	Sometimes	29	25%
1.3	Never	77	65%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 13** Use of pictures, videos and films



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation:**

The graphic above shows that out of the 118 respondents, 77 (65%) of them said that the teacher never uses pictures, videos or films to introduce information on the topic of the text. Meanwhile, 29 students representing 25% informed becoming familiarized with the content since on some occasions their teacher provides them visual material.

To put it briefly, teaching aids such as visuals, videos and films are not used regularly to attract learners’ attention to the topic, enhance and facilitate comprehension of the passages. This might be due to the lack of resources, equipment, and other facilities (laboratories), which can cause the learners to feel demotivated since they learn meaningfully when they see and listen.

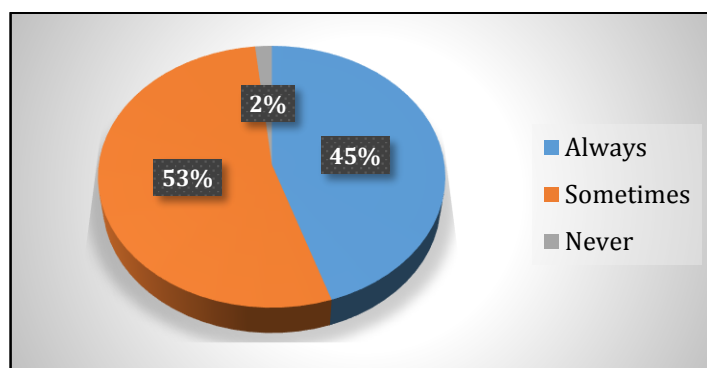
**Question 7:** How often does your teacher involve you in the development of activities such as open-ended, multiple choice and true/false questions, ordering paragraphs, taking notes or group discussions to help you develop their reading skills?

**Table N° 10** While-reading activities

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	53	45%
1.2	Sometimes	63	53%
1.3	Never	2	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 14** While-reading activities



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

From this data, it is clear that 63 respondents (53%) mentioned that their teacher sometimes stimulates the development of diverse while-reading tasks in class. On the other hand, it was found that 53 learners (45%) indicated that the teacher always employs such activities.

A significant number of learners replied being involved in the development of diverse tasks aimed at enhancing their reading skills. Even though a variety of tasks are promoted, learners commented group discussions and note taking are not commonly promoted in class.

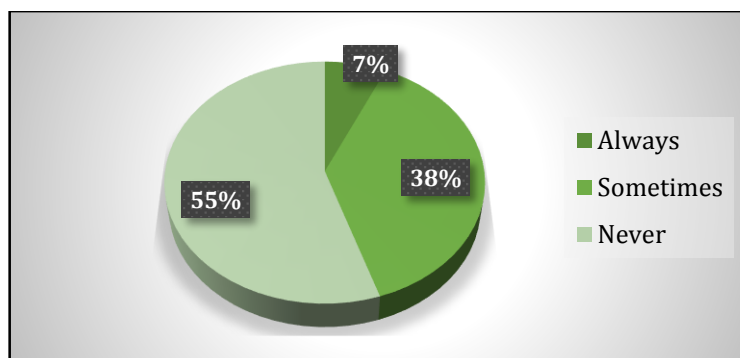
**Question 8:** Does your teacher implement different literary genres such as newspapers, magazines, maps, novels, stories, letters, menus or recipes for developing reading tasks?

**Table N° 11** Reading genres

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	8	7%
1.2	Sometimes	45	38%
1.3	Never	65	55%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 15** Reading genres



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation:**

According to the data obtained, 65 students representing 55% stated their teacher never exposes them to texts of different reading genres. Nevertheless, 45 learners who are 38% of the respondents commented that they sometimes read a variety of text types and develop various activities by using them.

Teachers must be aware of the importance of using diverse reading genres to help their pupils to get familiar with the particular features of texts, increase their range of vocabulary and develop reading strategies which they can apply when reading any text. Unfortunately, the vast majority of students claimed they seldom read different genres.

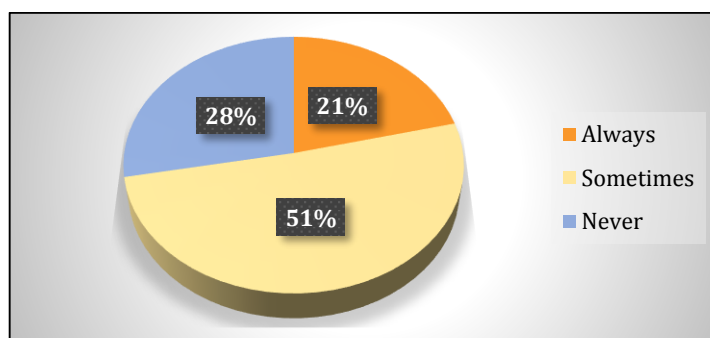
**Question 9:** Does the reading material that your teacher uses meet your interests, needs, level and is related to your prior knowledge or past experiences?

**Table N° 12** Factors for text selection

	<b>Alternatives</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage Frequency</b>
1.1	Always	25	21%
1.2	Sometimes	60	51%
1.3	Never	33	28%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 16** Factors for text selection



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

Out of the total of 118 students, 60 representing 51% of the respondents reported having access to different texts that meet their needs and are related to their prior knowledge on some occasions. 33 learners representing 28% indicated that the texts are not suitable for their expectations and interests while 25 of respondents that represent 21% said they are always provided with reading material that suits their needs, interests, and level.

The survey results reveals that most of the time the texts used for practicing reading don't meet learners' needs, level, interests and prior knowledge, which might lead to lack of interest of students in the texts they are reading and they become passive readers.

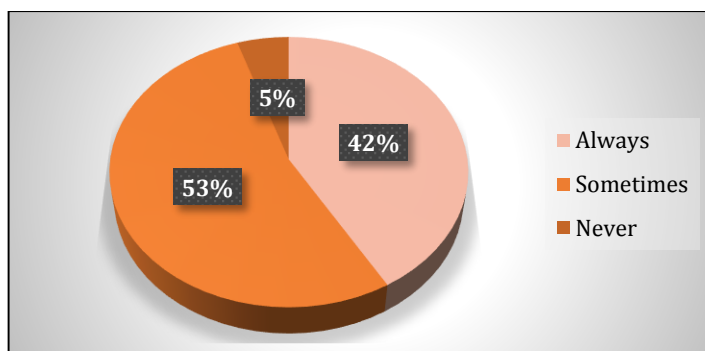
**Question 10:** At the moment of developing reading activities, does your teacher apply reading models such as guided, choral, shared and repetitive reading and reading aloud?

**Table N° 13** Ways of reading a text

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	49	42%
1.2	Sometimes	63	53%
1.3	Never	6	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 17** Ways of reading a text



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation:**

From this graphic, it is clear that 63 students (53%) of the 118 participants who took part in the survey claimed that different reading models are occasionally applied in order to enhance their comprehension as well as their reading skills. On the other hand, 49 students (42%) commented that the teacher always incorporates various models into the classroom to facilitate teaching-learning process.

Choral, shared and guided reading and reading aloud are not frequently used by the teacher as a way of improving their fluency, confidence, and strategies. However, teachers need to take into account that those different ways of reading a text should be practiced in class and the teacher also should encourage their pupils to apply them when reading any text, so that they will read in an effective way.

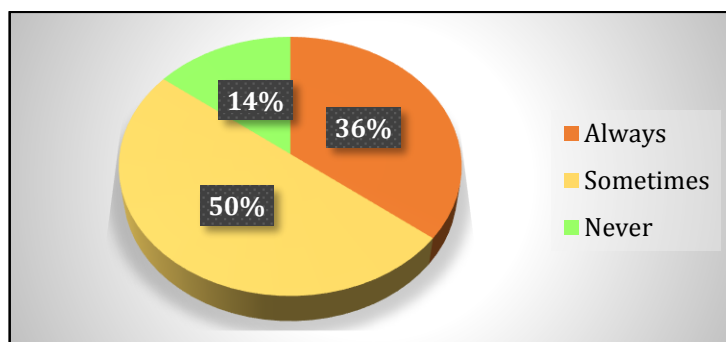
**Question 11:** Does your teacher provide you with the necessary guidance when doing a reading task?

**Table N° 14** Teacher's support

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	42	36%
1.2	Sometimes	59	50%
1.3	Never	17	14%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 18** Teacher's support



Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

According to the above table, 59 respondents representing 50% indicated that they sometimes receive support from the teacher when reading. This number is followed by 42 students (36%), who said that their English teacher always offers them guidance needed for the development of reading tasks and only 17 students (14%) expressed an opposite point of view.

Students are occasionally supported by the teacher as they read, that is, he models the reading and guides them to discuss some ideas of the text. There is a strong need for teachers to act as guides and facilitators to help learners acquire strategies and develop their reading skills to become more effective and confident readers.

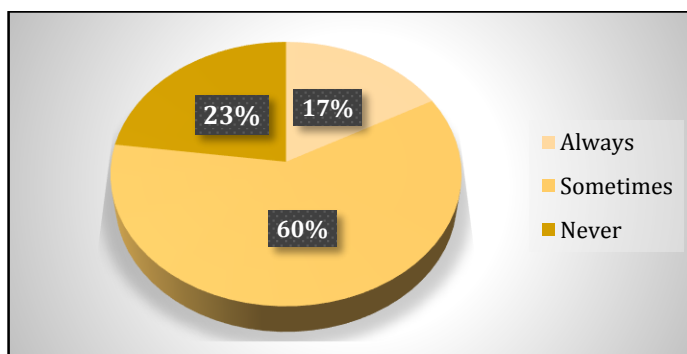
**Question 12:** Do you believe that your classroom is a good place to practice reading tasks?

**Table N° 15** Factors that affect reading comprehension

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	20	17%
1.2	Sometimes	71	60%
1.3	Never	27	23%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 19** Factors that affect reading comprehension



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

It is apparent from this graphic that 71 learners who represent 60% of the population said that their classroom is sometimes an appropriate place where they can practice reading tasks. Nonetheless, 27 students representing 23% replied that it is not a place that encourages them to read and only 20 students who correspond to 17% had the opposite opinion.

Context, which refers to the place where students practice their reading skills with different activities, is an important factor to be taken into account as it can help to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning process. Unfortunately, the physical environment of the class is not good enough as there aren't reading materials and equipment needed for supporting the learning process.



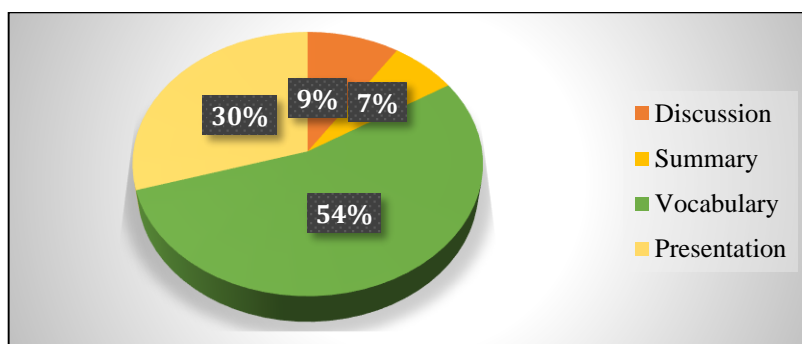
**Question 13:** After reading a text, what activities does your teacher develop to help you to understand what was read?

**Table N° 16** Post-reading activities

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Discussion on the topic	11	9%
1.2	Summary	8	7%
1.3	Vocabulary exercises	64	54%
1.4	Presentation	35	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 20** Post-reading activities



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

This question required participants to give information on the post-reading activities, 64 of them (54%) indicated that vocabulary exercises are the most commonly used tasks in the post-reading stage, 35 learners (30%) said that the teacher asks them to prepare a presentation at this stage. On the other hand, 19 students (16%) reported that discussions on the topic and summaries are rarely employed by the teacher to help them comprehend the information that was learned.

The main activities used to help learners summarize and reflect what they have just read involve vocabulary exercises and presentations.

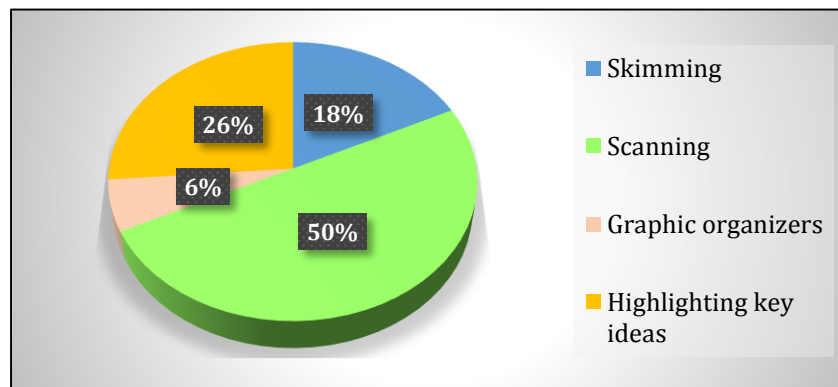
**Question 14:** What reading strategies do you apply with your teacher to understand a text?

**Table N° 17** Reading strategies

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Skimming	21	18%
1.2	Scanning	59	50%
1.3	Graphic organizers	7	6%
1.4	Highlighting key ideas	31	26%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 21** Reading strategies



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

The results, as shown in Table 17, indicate that 59 learners (50%) said they use scanning while reading. This number is followed by 31 (26%) students, who mentioned that highlighting is the strategy they apply with teacher’s assistance. Whilst 21 students (18%) expressed they use skimming and only 7 of the total participants (6%) reported their teachers use graphic organizer as a strategy to enable them to organize and comprehend new information.

Based on those results, learners are familiar with strategies such as scanning and highlighting as they apply them with their teacher.

#### 4.1.2 Survey addressed to teachers

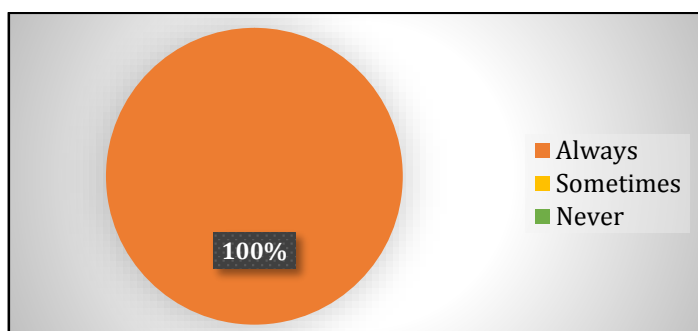
**Question 1:** Do you encourage your students to use their prior knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, knowledge about the area of the reading text) when reading a text?

**Table N° 18** Use of learners' prior knowledge

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	2	100%
1.2	Sometimes		
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 22** Use of learners' prior knowledge



Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

#### **Analysis and interpretation:**

When the teachers were asked about the use of background knowledge for helping learners to understand English texts, both educators representing hundred percent commented that they continually encourage students to bring their past experiences and information to support their learning.

Thus, teachers lead students to think what they know about the topic; consequently, the teacher's role is central to the teaching reading as he is responsible to look for suitable tasks to relate what they already know to the passage they are reading.

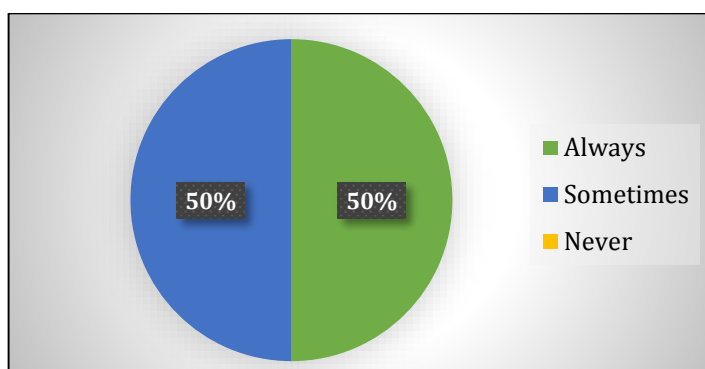
**Question 2:** Do you promote the practice of activities such as inferring or recognizing the text structure and to facilitate comprehension of texts?

**Table N° 19** Top-down process

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	1	50%
1.2	Sometimes	1	50%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated By Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 23** Top-down process



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated By Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis and interpretation**

One teacher who represents 50% of the total respondents indicated that always supports their students to enhance their understanding of the text through fundamental tasks such as inferring and recognizing the way how a text is structured. In contrast, another teacher representing the remaining 50% said that those tasks are sometimes implemented.

The most remarkable result from this data is that the implementation of those activities involving a top-down process, which requires readers use the information they already know, contribute greatly to get the meaning of what is read.

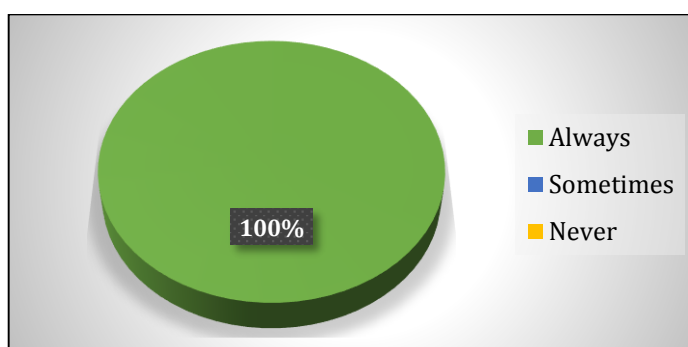
**Question 3:** Do you ask your students to develop activities such as identifying words and their meaning, matching synonyms and rereading the text to find clues to improve reading comprehension?

**Table N° 20** Bottom-up process

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	2	100%
1.2	Sometimes		
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 24** Bottom-up process



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### **Analysis an interpretation:**

Both teachers representing 100% stated that they usually incorporate bottom-up tasks in the reading classes, allowing learners to focus on components of the language such as words, structures, and syntax for gaining the message of the reading passage.

Based on these results, it is fundamental to stress that those activities involving a bottom-up process, in which learners are required to identify the meaning of words, phrases, sentences to be able to get the meaning of the reading are commonly implemented in the classroom.

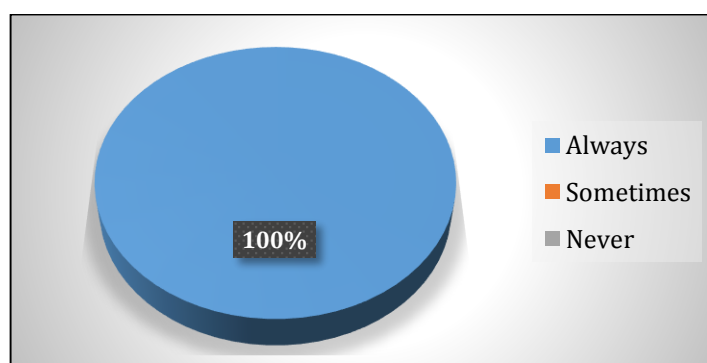
**Question 4:** Before developing a reading task, do you stimulate learners to read the headings and look at the images for predicting the text content?

**Table N° 21** Use of previewing

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	2	100%
1.2	Sometimes		
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 25** Use of previewing



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

It can be seen from the data in Table 21 that 2 educators who represent 100% of the population claimed that teenagers are always invited to make predictions about text by using the major text features such as photographs, headings, charts, and graphs.

The survey results have led me to conclude that English teachers from this institution incorporate previewing as preparation for doing the reading activities. This underlines how important is for teachers to apply pre-reading tasks to make the lesson an enjoyable experience.

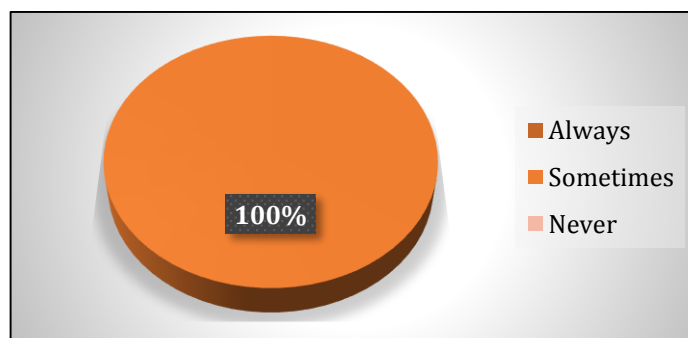
**Question 5:** Do you use brainstorming as a way to motivate your students to share their ideas on the topic before reading a text?

**Table N° 22** Brainstorming activity

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always		
1.2	Sometimes	2	100%
1.3	Never		
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated By: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 26** Brainstorming activity



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

After examining the findings on this question, it was found that two teachers representing 100% replied that they occasionally help their learners to be prepared for doing the reading exercises by having them brainstorm on the subject matter.

In general, brainstorming is a powerful way to generate and share ideas about a particular subject, so that learners are encouraged to learn by actively sharing information, opinions, and experiences. Even though it is a useful way to promote engagement in the lesson, teachers don't use it regularly.

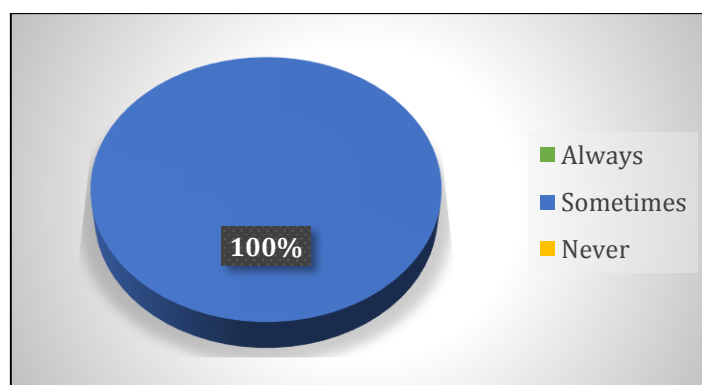
**Question 6:** How often do you use photographs, videos or movies to present information related to the text topic?

**Table N° 23** Use of pictures, videos, films

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always		
1.2	Sometimes	2	100%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 27** Use of pictures, videos and films



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

In response to question 6, two teachers representing 100% of the study population indicated that they sometimes reinforce the learning process by using diverse teaching aids (videos, pictures, films, etc.).

The results demonstrate that at times English teachers present information and key concepts of a text through some teaching materials. It is vital to take into account that the use of visuals and other teaching aids are helpful in the English teaching process since learners can easily understand concepts and recall information.



**Question 7:** How often do you involve your students in the development of activities such as open-ended, multiple choice and true/false questions, ordering paragraphs, taking notes or group discussion to help them to develop their reading skills?

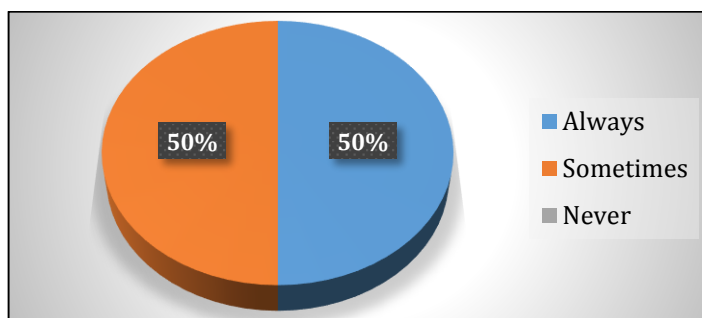
**Table N° 24** While- reading activities

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	1	50%
1.2	Sometimes	1	50%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School

Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 28** While- reading activities



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School

Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

The collected data clearly indicates that one teacher (50%) mentioned that different reading activities are used regularly in the classroom to help learners to develop basic reading skills and strategies, while another teacher corresponding to 50% reported that students sometimes develop a variety of activities.

The findings demonstrated that teachers lead their students to develop different tasks; however, they provide a limited range of them, so that students have few opportunities to participate in a group discussion or take notes.

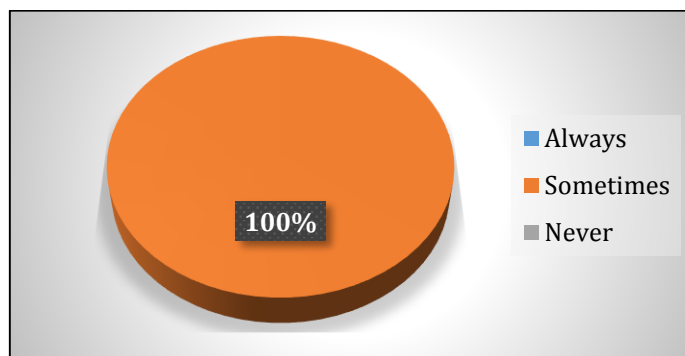
**Question 8:** Do you use different reading genres such as newspapers, magazines, maps, novels, stories, letters, menus or recipes for developing reading tasks?

**Table N° 25** Reading genres

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always		
1.2	Sometimes	2	100%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 29** Reading genres



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

According to the data obtained, 2 teachers who represent 100% expressed they sometimes encourage learners to read varied genres in the classroom, including stories, menus, recipes, letters, newspapers, and magazines.

From these results, it is clear that on some occasions students read English text of diverse genres, which can result in bored and dissatisfied learners. Hence, young learners need to be provided with a varied reading material to increase their enthusiasm and become active participants in their learning process.

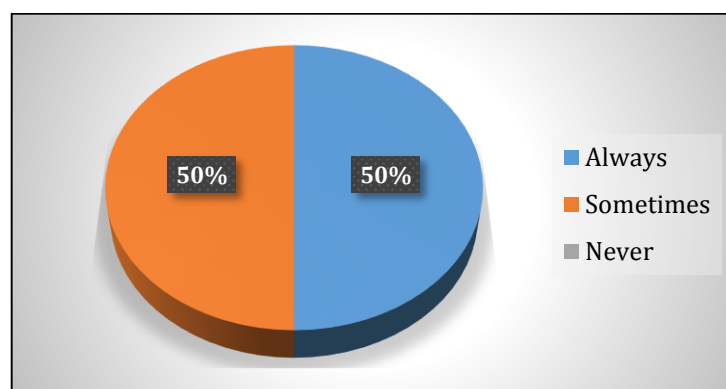
**Questions 9:** Does the reading material that you use meet your learners' interests, needs, level and is related to their prior knowledge or past experiences?

**Table N° 26** Factors of text selection

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	1	50%
1.2	Sometimes	1	50%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 29** Factors of text selection



Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

The findings in Graphic 29 above show that one teacher (50%) reported taking into account learning needs, level and interests of her learners when selecting texts and activities for reading, while the other educator, who represents the remaining 50%, replied that the texts are sometimes chosen by analyzing those aspects.

It is crucial to make emphasis on how important is to analyze factors closely related to the learners such as level, interests, prior knowledge, needs to provide them with suitable materials.

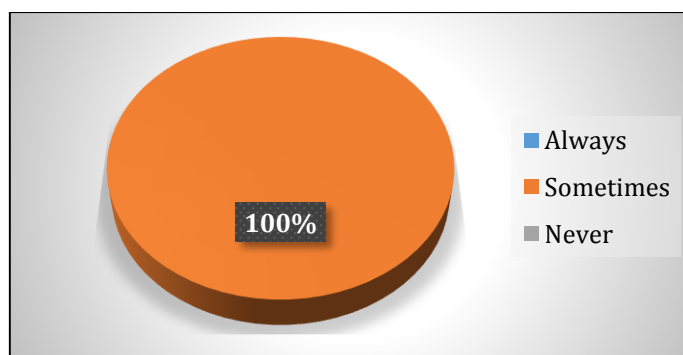
**Questions 10:** At the moment of developing reading activities, do you apply reading models such as guided, choral, shared and repetitive reading and reading aloud?

**Table N° 27** Ways of reading a text

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always		
1.2	Sometimes	2	100%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 30** Ways of reading a text



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
 Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

Once the results about the implementation of reading models were analyzed, it can be seen that 2 teachers representing 100% stated that different ways of reading are occasionally used for enhancing the learning-teaching process as well as reading skills.

This implies that teachers don't always use inclusive and interactive strategies to let learners read in different ways, interact with the teacher and their peers.

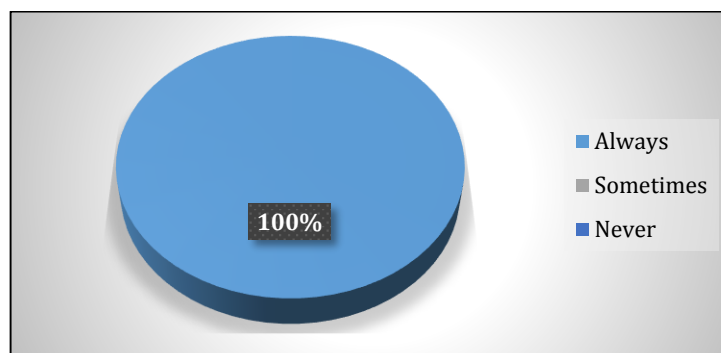
**Question 11:** Do you provide your learners with the necessary guidance when they do a reading task?

**Table N° 28** Teacher's support

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	2	100%
1.2	Sometimes		
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 31** Teacher's support



Source: "Francisco Flor" High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

Of the two teachers who took part in the survey, 100% claimed that they frequently offer guidance, support, and practice needed for making reading lessons interesting and effective for both teachers and learners.

The results emphasize that the teachers play a key role in strengthening students' reading skills and supporting their learning. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers provide guidance by giving lots of opportunities to develop reading strategies and abilities.

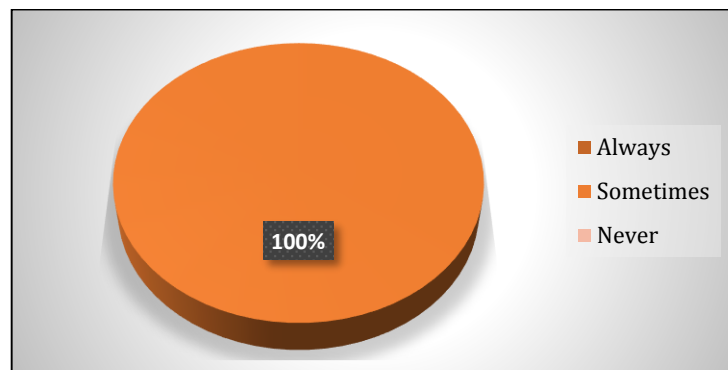
**Question 12:** Do you consider that the classroom is a proper place for students to practice reading tasks?

**Table N° 29** Factors that affect reading comprehension

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always		
1.2	Sometimes	2	100%
1.3	Never		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 32** Factors that affect reading comprehension



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

The table above illustrates that 2 teachers who represent 100% of the total respondents commented that at times the classroom is a suitable environment where learners can successfully develop their reading skills.

Thus, the physical environment is also crucial for developing learners’ abilities that is why a classroom where reading material and other devices are available benefits learners as they can feel motivated for practicing reading.

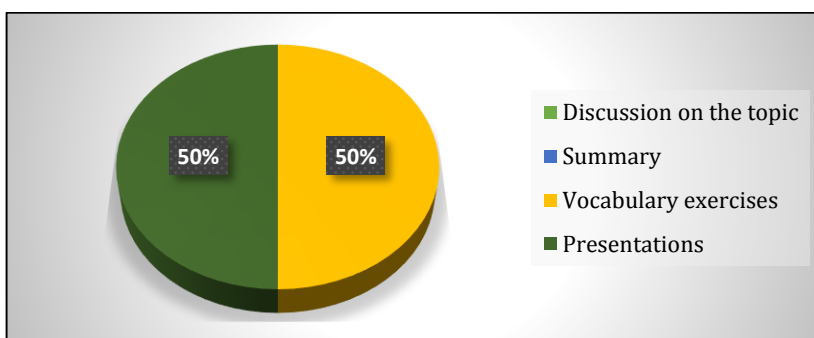
**Question 13:** After reading a text, what activities do you develop to help learners to understand what was read?

**Table N° 30** Post-reading activities

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Discussion on the topic		
1.2	Summary		
1.3	Vocabulary exercises	1	50%
1.4	Presentations	1	50%
<b>TOTAL</b>		2	100%

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 33** Post-reading tasks



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

Of the 2 teachers who responded to this question, one of them, 50%, mentioned that vocabulary exercises are the most frequently used post-reading activities to reinforce what students have learned. Meanwhile, the other teacher corresponding to 50% expressed that students are asked to prepare presentations after reading the text to check their understanding.

Therefore, the way how teachers from the institution help their learners to comprehend in the post-reading stage is thought presentations and vocabulary exercises.

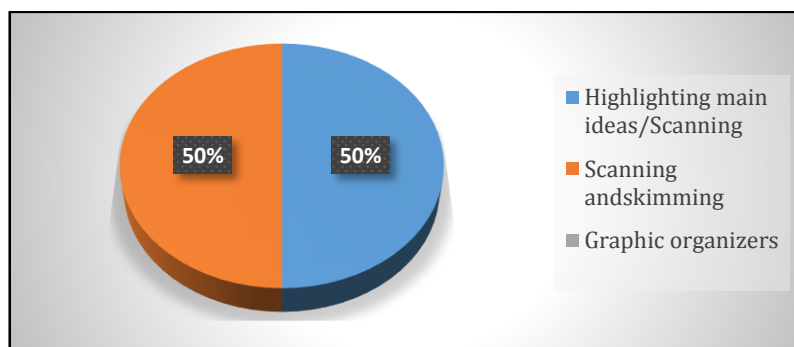
**Question 14:** What reading strategies do you apply with your students to understand a text?

**Table N° 31** Reading strategies

Alternatives		Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Highlighting main ideas/Scanning	1	50%
1.2	Scanning and skimming	1	50%
1.3	Graphic organizers		
<b>TOTAL</b>		2	100%

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Graphic N° 34** Reading strategies



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Analysis and interpretation:**

Of the study population, 1 teacher corresponding to 50% of survey respondents reported applying strategies like highlighting main ideas and scanning with their students when reading. Nonetheless, the remaining 50% (one educator) commented that scanning and skimming are the activities used in class.

These results show that scanning, skimming, and highlighting are the strategies teachers use with learners.



## 4.2 Verification of the hypotheses

The current research study entitled “Schema theory and the development of the English Reading skills in students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor” will use the chi-square test as a method to test the relation between the two variables. The calculation of the Chi-square was developed through an analysis of the questions of the questionnaire.

The following steps were followed to calculate the chi-square value:

### a) Define the Null and Alternate Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Schema theory doesn't influence the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Schema theory does influence the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

### b) Significance level

For the current research project, the significance level is set at 0,05 (5%).

### c) Determine the degrees of freedom

In order to determine the degrees of freedom, the formula used is:

**Table N° 32** Degrees of freedom

Degrees of freedom = (#rows-1) (#columns - 1)	
<b>Rows = 2</b>	<b>Columns = 3</b>
df =	(2-1)(3-1)
df =	(1)(2)
df =	2
Chi square: confidence level of 0,95 and significance level of 0,05 :	Critical square value = 5,991

Source: Surveys

Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Table N° 33** Chi –Square( $X^2$ ) distribution table

<b>Df</b>	<b>Probability of a larger value of <math>x^2</math></b>							
	.995	.99	.975	.95	.90	.1	.05	.025
1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	2.71	3.84	5.02
2	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.10	0.02	4.61	<b>5.99</b>	7.38
3	0.07	0.11	0.22	0.35	0.21	6.25	7.81	9.35
4	0.21	0.30	0.48	0.71	0.58	7.78	9.49	11.14
5	0.41	0.55	0.83	1.15	1.06	9.24	11.07	12.83
6	0.68	0.87	1.24	1.64	1.61	10.64	12.59	14.45
7	0.99	1.24	1.69	2.17	2.20	12.02	14.07	16.01
8	1.34	1.65	2.18	2.73	2.83	13.36	15.51	17.53
9	1.73	2.09	2.70	3.33	3.49	14.68	16.92	19.02
10	2.16	2.56	3.25	3.94	4.17	15.99	18.31	20.48

Source:[https://people.smp.uq.edu.au/YoniNazarathy/stat\\_models\\_B\\_course\\_spring\\_07/distributions/chisqtab.pdf](https://people.smp.uq.edu.au/YoniNazarathy/stat_models_B_course_spring_07/distributions/chisqtab.pdf)

**d) Decision rule**

- If the  $X^2$  (critical) is less than the  $X^2$  (obtained), we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ).
- If the  $X^2$  (critical) is higher than the  $X^2$  (obtained), we accept the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and reject the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ).

**e) Calculate Test Statistic**

The formula for calculating the chi square value is:

$$X^2 (obtained) = \sum \left( \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \right)$$

**Were:**

$X^2$  = Chi-Square

$\Sigma$  = the “sum of”

O = the frequencies observed

E = the frequencies expected

**Observed Frequencies**

**Table N° 34** Observed frequencies

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
SCHEMA THEORY Do you use you prior Knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, Topic Knowledge) when reading a text?	24	93	1	118
READING SKILLS Does the Reading material that you teacher uses meet your interests, needs, level and is related to your prior knowledge and past experiences?	25	60	33	118
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>236</b>

Source: Surveys

Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

## Expected Frequencies

First, we need to calculate our expected values

**Table N° 35** Expected frequencies

Variables	Always	Sometimes	Never	TOTAL
<b>SCHEMA THEORY</b> Do you use you prior Knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, Topic Knowledge) when reading a text?	24,5	76,5	17	118
<b>READING SKILLS</b> Does the Reading material that you teacher uses meet your interests, needs, level and is related to your prior knowledge and past experiences?	24,5	76,5	17	118
<b>TOTAL</b>	49	153	34	<b>236</b>

Source: Surveys

Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

### Contingency table

Then, the Chi-Square is calculated by comparing observed frequencies to expected ones.

**Table N° 36** Chi –Square Table

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>OBSERVED</b>	<b>EXPECTED</b>	<b>O - E</b>	<b>(O -E) 2</b>	<b>(O -E) 2 / E</b>
<b>SCHEMA THEORY</b>	24	24,5	-0,5	0,25	0,0102041
Do you use you prior Knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, Topic Knowledge) when reading a text?	93	76,5	16,5	272,25	3,5588235
	1	17	-16	256	15,058824
<b>READING SKILLS</b>	25	24,5	0,5	0,25	0,0102041
Does the Reading material that you teacher uses meet your interests, needs, level and is related to your prior knowledge and past experiences?	60	76,5	-16,5	272,25	3,5588235
	33	17	16	256	15,058824
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1057</b>	<b>37,255702</b>

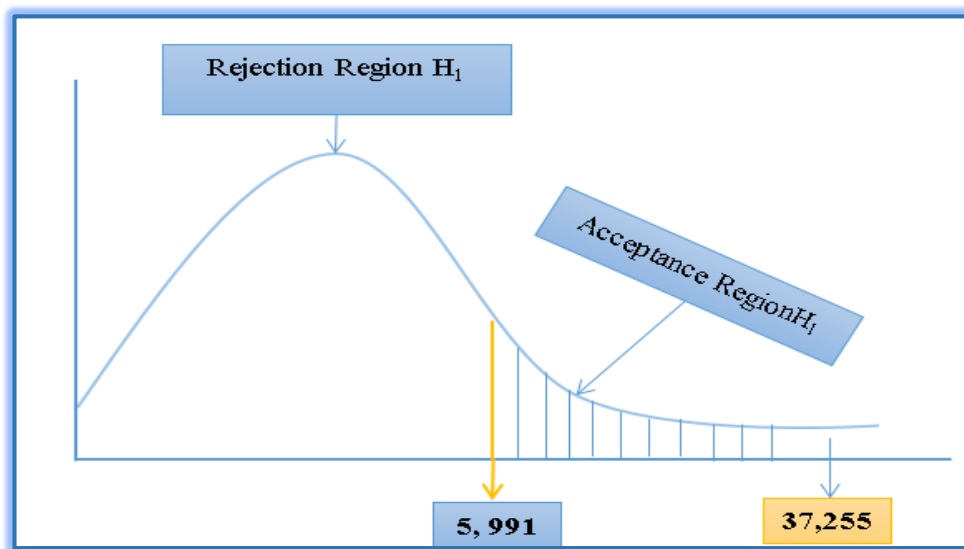
Source: Surveys

Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

**Interpretation:** The  $X^2$  (obtained) value is **37,255**

**f) Graphic (Rejection Region-Acceptance Region)**

**Graphic N° 35** Rejection Region-Acceptance Region



Source: Surveys  
Elaborated by: Lozada, C. (2018)

**Decision:**

*If  $x^2$  (obtained) is greater than 5,991, reject  $H_0$*

**Conclusion:**

Since the  $x^2$  statistic (37,255) exceeded the critical value with a significance level of 0,05 and confidence level 0,95 (5,991), the null hypothesis that says “Schema theory does not influence the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor is rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis which states that schema theory does influence the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor is accepted.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusions

- There is a link between schema theory and the development of reading skills, this is due to the frequent use of effective activities and strategies to encourage students use their previous knowledge and experience to facilitate their understanding and increase their interest while carrying out reading activities. It is clear that there is a significant relationship between those variables; however, both variables are not practiced frequently at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.
- Previous knowledge plays a key role in teaching reading as it helps to get learners engaged in the topic and understand the meaning of the text. Teachers can lead students to activate and use the knowledge they possess by using pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks. However, the survey results showed that previewing is the activity commonly used to help students to activate their background knowledge and the teachers rarely apply other pre-reading such as brainstorming, visual aids or questioning. It was also found that most of the time teachers get learners involved in the development of diverse while-reading tasks aimed at enhancing their reading skills. Regarding the post-reading tasks, it can be concluded from the previous data that the chief activities implemented in the last stage of the reading process comprise presentations and vocabulary exercises.
- Skimming and scanning are the primary reading strategies employed by the teachers with students aged between 15 and 18 years. Highlighting key ideas details is another strategy that they sometimes implement while

reading with their students. However, English teachers don't provide their pupils with other effective strategies such as creating graphic organizers or drawing conclusions of what they read. This might affect learners' comprehension performance and the development of their reading skills.

- Theoretical support and data obtained from the survey concerning the key factors for an effective reading instruction revealed that factors such as text, reader, context (place) activity and motivation are decisive for helping learners to succeed in their learning process. Unfortunately, the teacher takes into account factors related to the students (prior knowledge, interests, level, etc.) and text itself (genres or level of difficulty) just on certain occasions.

### **Recommendations**

- To frequently encourage learners to use their past knowledge concerning vocabulary, grammar, text structures and knowledge about the area of the passage when reading any text. They can benefit greatly from using it as it can lead them to understand better the passage.
- To help learners to be prepared and they can accomplish this by designing and implementing appropriate and stimulating activities before, during and after reading, in which they can bring their experiences and knowledge and relate them to the new information of the text. All of this will contribute greatly in increasing students' attention and interest and leading them to become better readers. Besides that, educators need to be provided with training on interactive and engaging activities and methodologies aimed to enhance reading skills and activate knowledge learners possess and how to integrate them into their teaching.



- To support students by providing them with various effective strategies for reading such as scanning, skimming, creating graphic organizers, highlighting main ideas and details, leading them to draw conclusions. By implementing these strategies, they are giving students the necessary tools that can help them succeed in their learning process and become proficient readers. In this sense, the different ways of how a text can be read (choral reading, guided reading, repetitive reading) need to be used continually in reading classes since they offer opportunities to discuss with others, use prior knowledge, improve their comprehension, fluency, vocabulary and strategies.
- To carefully select reading materials by considering learners' needs, level and interests to provide suitable texts, expose learners to English texts of different genres, make students work in pairs, group and individually; all these aspects will aid educators to raise learners' motivation, so that they can learn in a meaningful way.

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# ANNEXES



## Annex 1. Paper

### SCHEMA THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH READING SKILLS

### TEORÍA DE LOS ESQUEMAS Y EL DESARROLLO DE LA DESTREZA LECTORA DEL IDIOMAS INGLÈS

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#### ABSTRACT

The application of schema theory in teaching reading increases learners' interest and enhances their comprehension. However, the low use of this theory in the reading instruction in Ecuadorian schools may be the explanation of students' poor reading skills. The major aim of this research has therefore been to determine the relationship between schema theory and the development of reading skills of high school students aged between 15 and 18 years at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor, which is located in Ambato, Ecuador. Data for this study was collected using a survey that was applied to a population of 118 students and 2 English teachers. Overall, the results suggest that there is a link between those variables. The research also revealed that the implementation of schema theory through activities in the pre-, while- and post reading stages helps to arise learners' interest in the reading tasks and enhance their comprehension and reading skills.

**Keywords:** schema theory, reading skills, activities, comprehension

#### RESUMEN

La aplicación de la teoría de los esquemas en la enseñanza de la destreza lectora incrementa el interés y mejora la comprensión lectora. Sin embargo, el bajo uso de esta teoría en la instrucción de la lectura en escuelas ecuatorianas puede ser la explicación de las deficientes habilidades de lectura de los estudiantes. Por lo tanto, el principal objetivo de esta investigación es determinar la relación entre la teoría de los esquemas y el desarrollo de la destreza lectora de los estudiantes de secundaria con edades comprendidas entre 15 y 18 años en la Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor, ubicada en Ambato, Ecuador. Los datos para este estudio se recolectados mediante una encuesta que se aplicó a una población conformada de 118 estudiantes y 2 docentes de inglés. En general, los resultados sugieren que existe un nexo entre estas dos variables. La investigación también reveló que la implementación de la teoría de esquemas a través de las actividades antes, durante y después de la lectura ayuda a despertar el interés de los estudiantes en las tareas de lectura y mejorar su comprensión y habilidades de lectura.

**Palabras claves:** teoría de los esquemas, destreza lectora, actividades, comprensión.

## I. Introduction

Education has always been evolving in its theories and the way of how students should be taught and evaluated. As we know teaching reading skills is a difficult task for teachers since reading is a complex process which implicates predicting, verifying and identifying information of the reading material. In order to achieve this, learners' background knowledge, experiences, and information of the text must be employed. Consequently, the reader can use information from the text and data that involves knowledge concerning language aspects, text structure and content area of the text. Besides that, it is necessary to implement techniques, methods and stimulating activities which facilitate the comprehension of any text.

Currently, there are increasing demands concerning the application of new theories and improvement of teaching process within the educational system, that is why the implementation of schema theory is necessary for enhancing learners'

skills. First of all, the definition of reading is provided. Heit (2012) indicates that "*La lectura es el medio básico para aprender y enseñar, su importancia en la educación se impone naturalmente y gran parte de los científicos ven en ella la clave de las dificultades en el aprendizaje*" (p. 80). Thus, when difficulties arise in the learning-teaching process, it is essential to apply schema theory, which lets learners improve their abilities and comprehension of different text types.

Now, a variety of definitions of "schema theory" are introduced. According to a definition provided by Canadian Academy of Oriental and Occidental Culture (2016), schema theory makes emphasis on the way individuals try to comprehend information, so that they relate it to their own experiences and knowledge to gain a better understanding of the message (p. 35). In her study of Reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language Setting, Gamboa (2017) explains that schema theory is based on how the reader's previous

knowledge can be activated to support them during the reading process. That is why this theory defines text comprehension as the process in which the knowledge the reader possesses interacts with the text. In this sense, the author suggests that teachers have a significant role in helping learners to bring their past knowledge and experiences through effective strategies such as visuals, pre-reading, teaching vocabulary and questioning (p. 165).

On the other hand, Sánchez (2013) uses the term “reading” to refer to the ability to make sense of the meaning of written texts. Consequently, reading comprehension depends on the ability that the reader has to recognize the meaning of words and set of words to figure out the meaning of the message (p. 22).

A further definition is given by Pérez (2005) who describes reading as the set of phases involved in processes that have to do with the formation, elaboration and integration of

information and knowledge (p. 22). Therefore, by implementing schema theory, reading skills and comprehension can be improved and learners can build their own knowledge in a meaningful way. There are some strategies that can be used in order to help learners bring such knowledge and improve their reading skills at the same time, and those include:

- The reader must construct a model of meaning for a text, that is, he makes a summary in his mind to retain information of what he is reading.
- The reader must build a schema to structure his knowledge by applying graph-phonetic, syntactic, semantic strategies.
- It is necessary to establish a list of vocabulary for the application of schema theory.
- The progress of the process of text compression must be monitored and self-controlled.
- Highlighting the importance of content, so that the reader has information and can build their background knowledge (Pérez, 2005).

In his article “Reading comprehension assessment: difficulties and limitations”, Pérez (2005) suggests that some steps must be followed in order to develop reading skills:

- Literal comprehension
- Reorganization of information
- Inferential comprehension
- Critical reading (evaluative judgment)
- Reading appreciation
- Evaluation of reading skills
- Free Memory
- Application of questionnaires closed, true/false, multiple choice, and open questions. (pp. 123-129).

The major objectives of this research study include:

Analyze schema theory and the development of the English reading skills in students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

Identify the different tasks that are implemented by the teachers to lead learners to activate their previous for

enhancing the comprehension of texts and their frequency

Identify the reading strategies applied at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor for teaching reading skills

Analyze the basic factors influencing reading comprehension and development of reading skills.

## **II. Literature Review**

The scheme refers to an organized and systemic model of behavior and thought of an individual. People use these scheme to organize their knowledge, which is a fundamental reference for the understanding of information (Zhao & Zhu, 2012).

Schema theory distinguishes that meaning is not included in the text; on the contrary, reading is an active process of interaction between the text and the reader; so that his or her ability to look at a text and its content and relates it to the existing knowledge is required (Shuying, 2013) .

## **Types of scheme**

### a) Linguistic schema

Type of scheme that includes the reader's knowledge on lexical, grammatical or phonological aspects. In this sense, the authors Carrell and Eisterholden (as cited in Zhao & Zhu, 2012) additionally explains that linguistic knowledge plays a relevant role in the reading process; therefore, if the reader has more information on linguistics aspects, he will be able to interpret the meaning of a text faster.

### b) Formal schema

Formal schema refers to knowledge about the structure of different text types, which embraces the way in which those texts are organized, the lexicon, level of formality and the grammatical structures they use. Hence, this knowledge about the elements of written texts like essays, articles, poems, and novels is quite fundamental since it facilitates the understanding of them. In this sense, studies explain that readers can better understand a text when they use the information about the text

types, which provides specific details about them (Li, Wu, & Wang, 2007).

### c) Content schema

These schemes include information on culture, that is, previous experiences or how familiar readers are on the subject; the content schema is a central factor since it can help individuals to understand texts even though they don't have knowledge on linguistic aspects (Li, Wu, & Wang, 2007).

## **Schema activation**

Prior knowledge can be activated by using before, while and post-reading tasks.

## **Pre-reading tasks**

The activities that can be used before begin reading and will let learners activate their existing knowledge are listed below (Cohen & Cowen, 2008):

- **Discussion:** is an effective activity as learners contribute with their ideas on the topic and their previous data can be stimulated.

- **Prequestions and stating objectives,** students can activate the existing knowledge by telling them the objectives to be achieved and giving them a question before they read.
- **Story previews:** it focuses on looking at and talking about important features of the text such as titles, headings, images and make predictions of them.
- **Field trips:** learners are exposed to different environments that allow them to develop the existing knowledge.
- **Brainstorming:** another way to have learners bring what they know about the subject matter and increase such knowledge is by using this activity. It provides them with the opportunity to express their ideas with others and learn new things.
- **Visuals, films/ videos:** there are positive effects of presenting the topic with films or videos as they enable pupils to develop their past

information. Pictures are also helpful to introduce vocabulary words that will be found in the text

### **While-reading tasks**

The interaction between the reader and the text is significant, and this will be guided and examined by the teacher; so that a useful activity at this stage is taking notes as it allows learners to gather relevant ideas, vocabulary, definitions or opinions (Villanueva, 2006).

### **Post-reading tasks**

The activities that are developed in this last stage are necessary to consolidate pupils' knowledge as these are based on analyzing and reconstructing the meaning of a reading. There are several techniques that can be used at this stage, such as an outline, which allow students to get the general idea of the text, a summary that helps to identify main and secondary ideas, get learners work on some vocabulary exercises and then teacher can lead a discussion on the topic and (Zhao & Zhu, 2012).

### **Reading skills**

Reading is an important process in which the reader and the text interact, and the reader is the one who decodes, interprets and gives meaning to the texts. This definition does not focus on the text itself; on the other hand, it emphasizes the reader's active role in his reading process as he creates meaning or gives meaning to a reading by incorporating his previous knowledge and experiences (Calderón & Quijano, 2010).

### **Reading strategies**

In this context, Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) remark that strategies have an important implication in the reading instruction; therefore, beginners need to be provided with particular strategies to decode new words and understand the message.

Once learners have learned them, teachers must introduce more complex strategies such as making inferences, finding main ideas and details and summarizing.

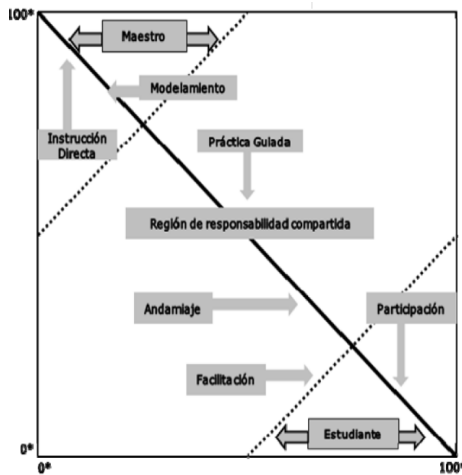
### **Instructional method (Teacher' role)**

Pearson and Gallagher (as cited in Gutierrez & Salmerón, 2012) explain that the teacher assumes a variety of roles in the three phases of the reading instruction.

**In the first stage**, the teacher has the full responsibility of leading the tasks and helping students to know how, when and why to use learning strategies, which means he uses direct instruction.

**In the second phase**, the educator uses guided practice and scaffolding to facilitate shared responsibility.

**In the last stage**, the teacher promotes processes of participation and facilitation so that the student acquires and assuming progressively greater responsibility and a more active and autonomous role in their learning.



Graphic 1. Pearson and Gallagher's Model. (Cited in Salmerón & Gutiérrez, 2012)

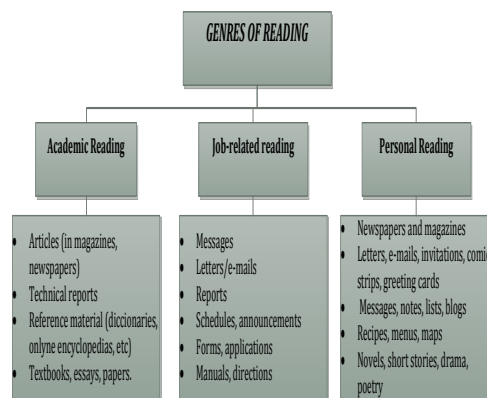
### Factors that influence Reading comprehension

Paraskevi (2010) suggests that the following factors need to be considered in the reading instruction.

- **Text:** Each text type has its own characteristics for layout, language, organization (macro and microstructure) and reflects a particular culture.
- **Context:** The classroom is the first context in which the reading is developed and practiced
- **Task:** The activity to be used plays a fundamental role as it actually determines reading comprehension difficulties.
- **Reader:** The readers are active agents who use their past

knowledge and reading skills strategically in order to construct meaning of the reading passages.

- **Text types:** Teachers need to provide students access to a variety of genres, allowing them to use diverse strategies and get familiar with the features, purpose, layout and language that the texts have.



Graphic 2. Genres of reading. (Cited in Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010)

- **Objective:** The reasons each individual has for reading a text determines the way how they read it and helps to think what to look for when they read. When individuals start to read any text, there is a goal which guides them: reading to learn, revise, analyze, and so on.



- **Expectations and motivation:** It means that a motivating reading is the one that connects to individual's interests. Students' motivation is a central factor in reading that can be achieved by carefully planning the tasks and materials, making decisions on the before-reading strategies and activities to support students' learning.

### III. METHOD

In order to conduct this research project, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to analyze the data collected from the surveys. It means that this information helped the researcher to focus on analyzing the difficulties that students are having to develop their reading skills, this may be explained by the fact that schema theory is being implemented inefficiently.

Furthermore, a field research was employed as the work that the

researcher conducted took place in the participants' environment (Unidad Educativa "Francisco Flor"). The bibliographical research was developed since it was necessary to access information from primary and secondary sources such as books, journal articles, modules, newspapers, and magazines. Finally, social intervention was used as the research facilitated the formulation of an alternative to solve the problem identified.

The research was conducted at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor, which is a public high school located in Ambato. The studied population comprised 118 students of the second year of Bachillerato (age range 15 - 18 years) and two English teachers.

A questionnaire was the instrument employed for data collection in this research, which consisted of 14 questions, including 3-point Likert-type questions (1. Always, 2. Sometimes, 3. Never). *Cronbach's alpha* was the measure used to determine the reliability of this questionnaire. It basically revealed

an acceptable result ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ).

The Chi-square test was used in order to test the hypotheses. Since the  $\chi^2$  statistic (37,255) exceeded the critical value with significance level of 0,05 and confidence level 0,95 (5,991), the alternative hypothesis which states that schema *does influence* in the development of the English reading skills in the students of the second year of Bachillerato at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor is accepted.

#### IV. RESULTS

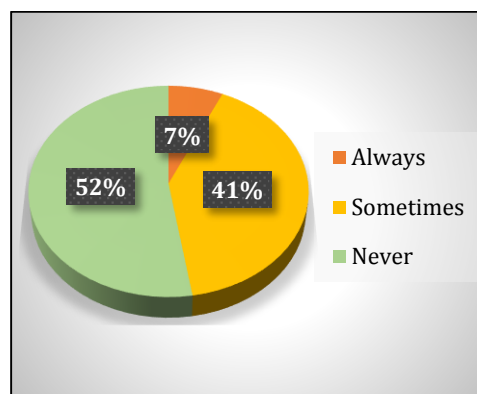
Once the surveys were applied to high school students and English teachers, data collected was analyzed, translated into graphs and interpreted. The results of this analysis include:

Table N° 1 Brainstorming activity

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	8	7%
1.2	Sometimes	48	41%
1.3	Never	62	52%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic N° 3 Brainstorming activity



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by Lozada, G. (2018)

The results show that the teacher never brainstorms diverse words, phrases or ideas related to the topic, and that might be caused because of the teacher’s lack of time and interest in implementing dynamic and engaging activities and strategies that enable learners to bring what they know and use it to facilitate the reading process.

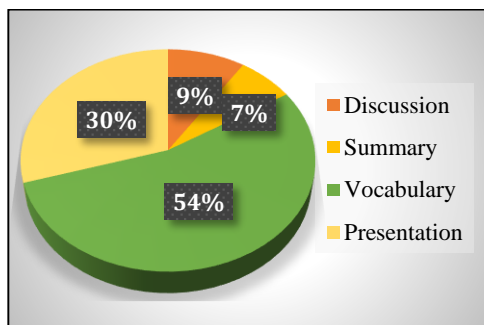
According to Alhaisoni (2017), brainstorming is an effective activity to improve student’s reading comprehension since it enables them to bring their prior ideas and opinions on a particular topic and offers the chance to interact.

Table N° 2 Post-reading activities

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1 Discussion on the topic	11	9%
1.2 Summary	8	7%
1.3 Vocabulary exercises	64	54%
1.4 Presentation	35	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic N° 4 Post-reading activities



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

From these results, it becomes clear that teachers use some activities to reinforce and expand learners’ schema (prior knowledge). The main activities that the educators promote to facilitate students’ comprehension include vocabulary exercises and presentations.

On the other hand, discussions on the topic and summaries are rarely employed by the teacher. This result might be explained by the fact that teachers may have limited training

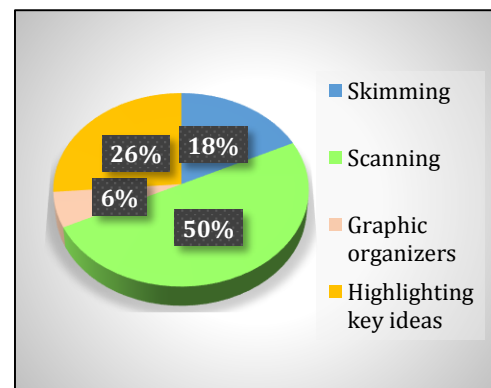
on engaging activates that lead students to use their previous knowledge and experiences, so that they only rely on one or two activates such as vocabulary exercises and presentations.

Table N°3 Reading strategies

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1 Skimming	21	18%
1.2 Scanning	59	50%
1.3 Graphic organizers	7	6%
1.4 Highlighting key ideas	31	26%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic N° 5 Reading strategies



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

With regard to the strategies that are used by teachers to help students understand a text, the findings in Graphic 3 indicate that the most frequently used strategy is

“scanning”, followed by “highlighting key ideas” with (26%).

Overall, these results reveal that teachers rely on the use of scanning and highlighting. Nevertheless, teachers should employ other strategies such as graphic organizers since they can help readers to facilitate comprehension of the text they are reading.

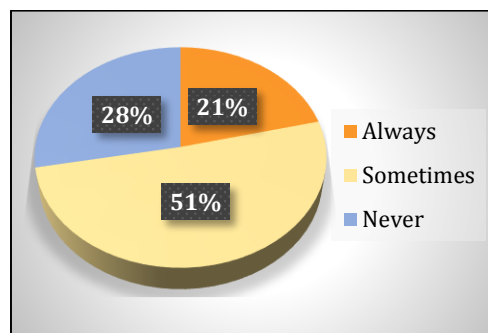
Law (as cited in Kashani, Nikoo, & Bonyadi, 2013) stresses that graphic organizers are helpful tools to collect, organize, synthesize and recall information. When students are trained on using graphic organizers, they can improve their vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Table N° 4 Factors for text selection

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
1.1	Always	25	21%
1.2	Sometimes	60	51%
1.3	Never	33	28%
	TOTAL	118	100%

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic N° 6 Factors for text selection



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic 6 shows the results about the factors for text selection. The findings reveal that most of the time the texts used for practicing reading don’t meet learners’ needs, level, interests and prior knowledge, which might lead to lack of interest of students in the text they are reading and they become passive readers.

It is crucial to make emphasis on how important is to analyze factors closely related to the learners such as level, interests, prior knowledge and needs to provide them with suitable materials.

The teachers’ role is central to the teaching reading as they can create an appropriate environment that arouses their interest in the reading

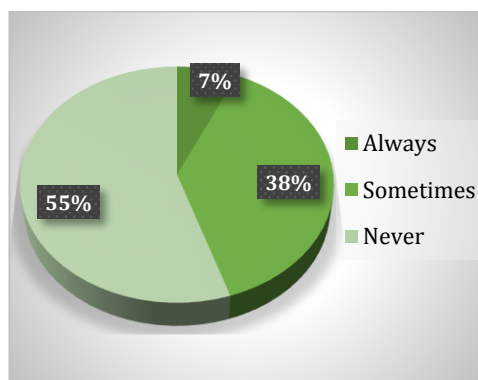
lessons and encourage them to use their previous information.

Table N° 5 Reading genres

	Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
1.1	Always	8	7%
1.2	Sometimes	45	38%
1.3	Never	65	55%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graphic N° 7 Reading genres



Source: “Francisco Flor” High School  
Elaborated by: Lozada, G. (2018)

Graph 7 indicates that the vast majority of students claimed they seldom read different genres such as stories, magazines, newspapers, recipes, menus and so on.

Teachers must be aware of the importance of using diverse reading genres to help their pupils get familiar with the particular features of texts, increase their range of vocabulary and develop reading

strategies which they can apply when reading any text.

## Discussion

Once the research has been completed, valid and consistent results were obtained that contribute to the improvement of learners’ reading skills and comprehension. These results revealed that teachers rely more on the use of previewing to activate students’ prior knowledge while activities such as brainstorming, use of visual aids and questioning are rarely employed. In the post-reading stage, educators limit their practices to only two activities, such as vocabulary exercises and presentations.

Another finding was that there is a strong link between schema theory and the development of reading skills. The implementation of this theory through the pre-, while- and post-reading activities lead students to activate and use their previous knowledge and experiences, arouse learners’ interest in the reading lessons and help them to enhance

their reading skills and text comprehension.

One study developed by Gamboa (2017) in Bogotá was useful to support the results of this research. The action research aimed to examine the reading comprehension processes of six grade students. Findings showed that schemata helped students greatly as they could make predictions about the story to figure out a general idea and the connections they made with their experiences enabled them to gain understanding on the elements of the story. Another significant finding was that students were able to get the words' meaning since they used their prior knowledge and context clues. Moreover, students felt confident as they had the opportunity to express their opinions about the story and share their experiences.

Another study conducted by Zhao and Zhu (2012) also found that the application of schema theory is effective and feasible in the reading process; however, it is crucial using activities before, during and after

reading a text in order to achieve it. Furthermore, the benefits of this theory were proven since college students were engaged and participated more in reading classes in which the teacher applied diverse activities based on schema theory. Likewise, those students took a more active role, showed greater interest in the lesson as well as their reading speed and comprehension improved.

Furthermore, a study developed by Che (2014) at School of Foreign Languages at Qingdao University, China supports the results of this research. Its major objective was to analyze the effects of the application of schema theory in reading comprehension of newspapers. The experiment results revealed that the application of schema theory played a crucial role as it improved the students' reading comprehension and aroused their interest in the text they were reading. When the results of the experimental group (B) were compared with those of the control group (A), it was found an improved performance of group A as college students were able to give their

opinions about the article they read and also showed interest in the activity. On the other hand, group B had some problems and showed passivity and disinterest.

Similarly, Alhaisoni (2017) carried out a research study at University of Ha'il, Saudi Arabia to examine the strategies employed for activating previous information, EFL teacher's points of view about background knowledge and the problems they face when activating such knowledge. The results indicated that teachers expressed that prior knowledge has a great impact on the students' performance since it helps them to recall information and better understand a text. Teachers' role is crucial in teaching reading as they can lead students to enhance their reading performance and comprehension by activating students' past knowledge and experiences. Another important finding was that audiovisual aids and questioning were the commonly used strategies. The results also revealed that the teachers haven't got enough training to develop a better

understanding of schema theory and the strategies that can be implemented to help students bring and use their prior knowledge.

A study by Kashani, Nikoo, and Bonyadi (2013) examined the efficacy of activation of background knowledge on enhancing the reading comprehension of Irian learners. The findings showed that the activation of background knowledge has a positive impact on reading comprehension. Students who were exposed to strategies to activate their background knowledge demonstrated a better reading performance and felt motivated. In their view, these results may be explained by the fact activating background knowledge is a useful method in which makes emphasis on the active role the readers has, which means that the readers interact with the text by predicting and interpreting the message of the passage.

Overall, the present findings seem to be consistent with a great deal of research work which found that the application of schema theory

contributes greatly to the improvement of the learner's reading performance.

The current educational system requires tools and teaching reading strategies to help learners to strengthen their reading skills. Hence, teachers should be familiar with the different approaches, methodologies, and activities concerning reading instruction, which are fundamental for the development of readings skills. Therefore, the implementation of schema theory through pre-, while and post-reading activities can benefit both teachers and students as it will enhance learners' reading level.

### **Conclusions**

- There is a link between schema theory and the development of reading skills, this is due to the frequent use of effective activities and strategies to encourage students use their previous knowledge and

experience to facilitate their understanding and increase their interest while carrying out reading activities. It is clear that there is a significant relationship between those variables; however, both variables are not practiced frequently at Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor.

- Previous knowledge plays a key role in teaching reading as it helps to get learners engaged in the topic and understand the meaning of the text. Teachers can lead students to activate and use the knowledge they possess by using pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks. However, the survey results showed that previewing is the activity commonly used to help students to activate their background knowledge and the teachers rarely apply other pre-reading such as brainstorming, visual aids or questioning. It was also found that most of the time teachers



get learners involved in the development of diverse while-reading tasks aimed at enhancing their reading skills. Regarding the post-reading tasks, it can be concluded from the previous data that the chief activities implemented in the last stage of the reading process comprise presentations and vocabulary exercises.

- Skimming and scanning are the primary reading strategies employed by the teachers with students aged between 15 and 18 years. Highlighting key ideas details is another strategy that they sometimes implement while reading with their students. However, English teachers don't provide their pupils with other effective strategies such as creating graphic organizers or drawing conclusions of what they read. This might affect learners' comprehension performance and the

development of their reading skills.

- Theoretical support and data obtained from the survey concerning the key factors for an effective reading instruction revealed that factors such as text, reader, context (place) activity and motivation are decisive for helping learners to succeed in their learning process. Unfortunately, the teacher takes into account factors related to the students (prior knowledge, interests, level, etc.) and text itself (genres or level of difficulty) just on certain occasions.

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**Annex 2. Survey addressed to students**



**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO  
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA  
EDUCACIÓN  
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS**



**Survey addressed to students of the second year of Bachillerato of “Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”**

<b>Date:</b> __/__/__	<b>Gender:</b> Male__ Female__	<b>Age:</b> _____
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**Objective:** To collect information concerning the use of schema theory and the development of the English reading skills.

**General instructions:**

- The survey is anonymous, so that you can feel confident to answer it.
- Please answer the questions honestly as the information gained will let me carry out an authentic research project.

**A. Instruction:** Please read each question carefully, and mark with an “X” the answer that most closely fits your opinion.

**1. Do you use your prior knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, knowledge about the area of the reading text) when reading a text?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**2. Does your English teacher promote the practice of activities such as inferring or recognizing the text structure and to facilitate comprehension of texts?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**3. Does your teacher ask you to develop activities such as identifying words and their meaning, matching synonyms and rereading the text to find clues to improve reading comprehension?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**4. Before developing a reading task, does your teacher encourage you to read the headings and look at the images for predicting the text content?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**5. Does your teacher use brainstorming to motivate you to share your ideas on the topic before reading a text?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**6. How often does your teacher use photographs, videos or movies to present information related to the text topic?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**7. How often does your teacher involve you in the development of activities such as open-ended, multiple choice and true/false questions, ordering paragraphs, matching paragraphs with their headings, taking notes or group discussions to help you develop their reading skills?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**8. Does your teacher implement different literary genres such as newspapers, magazines, maps, novels, stories, letters, menus or recipes for developing reading tasks?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**9. Does the reading material that your teacher uses meet your interests, needs, level and is related to your prior knowledge or past experiences?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**10. At the moment of developing reading activities, does your teacher apply reading approaches such as guided, choral, shared and repetitive reading and reading aloud?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**11. Does your teacher provide you with the necessary guidance when doing a reading task?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**12. Do you believe that your classroom is a good place to practice reading tasks?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**B. Instruction: Mark with an “X” the options that best fits your opinion.**

**13. After reading a text, what activities does your teacher develop to help you to understand what was read?**

- Discussion on the topic
- Summary
- Vocabulary exercises
- Presentations
- Other(Specify).....  
.....

**14. What reading strategies do you apply with your teacher to understand a text?**

- Reading to get the general of the text (Skimming)
- Reading to get specific information of the text (Scanning)
- Creating graphic organizers
- Highlighting main ideas and details
- Other(Specify).....  
.....

*Thank you very much for your help!*

**Annex 3. Survey addressed to teachers**



**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO  
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA  
EDUCACIÓN  
CARRERA DE IDIOMA**



**Survey addressed to teachers of the second year of Bachillerato of “Unidad Educativa Francisco Flor”**

**Date:**.....

**Objective:** Analyze and identify the activities, strategies and the procedure applied by teachers to activate learners’ prior knowledge and develop reading skills.

**General instructions:**

- The survey is anonymous, so that you can feel confident to answer it.
- Please answer the questions honestly as the information gained will let me carry out an authentic research project.

**A. Instruction:** Please read each question carefully, and mark with an “X” the answer that most closely fits your opinion.

**1. Do you encourage your students to use their prior knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, text structure, knowledge about the area of the reading text) when reading a text?**

Always                       Sometimes                       Never

**2. Do you promote the practice of activities such as inferring or recognizing the text structure and to facilitate comprehension of texts?**

Always                       Sometimes                       Never

**3. Do you ask your students to develop activities such as identifying words and their meaning, matching synonyms and rereading the text to find clues to improve reading comprehension?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**4. Before developing a reading task, do you stimulate learners to read the headings and look at the images for predicting the text content?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**5. Do you use brainstorming as a way to motivate your students to share their ideas on the topic before reading a text?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**6. How often do you use photographs, videos or movies to present information related to the text topic?**

Always Sometimes Never

**7. How often do you involve your students in the development of activities such as open-ended, multiple choice and true/false questions, ordering paragraphs, matching paragraphs with their headings, taking notes or group discussions to help them to develop their reading skills?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**8. Do you use different reading genres such as newspapers, magazines, maps, novels, stories, letters, menus or recipes for developing reading tasks?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**9. Does the reading material that you use meet your learners' interests, needs, level and is related to their prior knowledge or past experiences?**

Always  Sometimes  Never



**10. At the moment of developing reading activities, do you apply reading approaches such as guided, choral, shared and repetitive reading and reading aloud?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**11. Do you provide your learners with the necessary guidance when they do a reading task?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**12. Do you consider that the classroom is a proper place for students to practice reading tasks?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**B. Instruction: Mark with an “X” the options that best fits your opinion.**

**13. After reading a text, what activities do you develop to help learners to understand what was read?**

- Discussion on the topic
- Summary
- Vocabulary exercises
- Presentations
- Other(Specify).....  
.....

**14. What reading strategies do you apply with your students to understand a text?**

- Reading to get the general of the text (Skimming)
- Reading to get specific information of the text (Scanning)
- Creating graphic organizers
- Highlighting main ideas and details
- Other(Specify).....  
.....

*Thank you very much for your help!*

## Annex 4: Authorization for the surveys application



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO  
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN  
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS  
Av. Los Chasquis y Río Guayllabamba/Campus Huachi/Teléfono 032410189 Ext. 120/Ambato-Ecuador

Memorando Nro. UTA-FCHE-CI-2017-451-M  
Ambato, 09 de noviembre de 2017

**PARA:** Licenciado Diego Barreno  
**RECTOR**  
**UNIDAD EDUCATIVA "FRANCISCO FLOR"**

**ASUNTO:** Encuestas para Proyecto de Investigación

Por medio de la presente y a través de un cordial saludo de la coordinación de la Carrera de Idiomas me permito solicitar a usted muy comedidamente se sirva autorizar a la señorita **GLADYS CATALINA LOZADA LLIGUIN**, con Cc: 1804245775 estudiante de Décimo nivel de la Carrera de Idiomas, modalidad Presencial de la Universidad de Técnica de Ambato, a realizar las encuestas para su Proyecto de Investigación con el tema : "SCHEMA THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH READING SKILLS IN THE STUDENTS OF THE SECOND YEAR OF BACHILLERATO FROM "FRANCISCO FLOR" HIGH SCHOOL OF AMBATO, TUNGURAHUA PROVINCE " previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés.

Atentamente,

  
Ph.D. Verónica Chicaiza Redín  
COORDINADORA

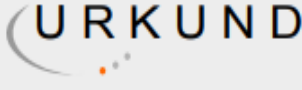


c.- Carpeta Estudiantil  
VCH/di.

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FRANCISCO FLOR - GUSTAVO EGÜEZ

RECIBIDO: 09-11-2017 / J. J. J. J.  
G. E. G. E.

## Annex 5: Urkund Report



### Urkund Analysis Result

**Analysed Document:** Tesis\_Gladys\_Catalina Lozada Lliguin2.docx (D33711663)  
**Submitted:** 12/13/2017 12:09:00 AM  
**Submitted By:** xcalero@uta.edu.ec  
**Significance:** 3 %

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