



REINFORCING STUDENTS' READING INTERESTS AND READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS BY MEANS OF THE PREDICTING STRATEGY

LUCIMAVER GONZALEZ
YOLIMA PATRICIA APONTE
LAURA SOFIA CUERVO

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Abstract

This study shows the effect of the implementation of Predicting as the main strategy linked with some sub-clusters of strategies such as Imagery, Inference, Transfer and problem-solving on reading comprehension. The purpose of this small-scale research project was to enhance students' reading comprehension from two public and two private schools in Boyacá, through the application of three workshops alighted under CALLA's model. As a conclusion, the implementation of this project raised students' interests and motivation towards reading activities. At the same time, it increased the level of reading comprehension.

Key words: Learning strategies, Predicting, reading comprehension, CALLA model.

Resumen

Este proyecto de investigación muestra el efecto que tuvo la implementación de la estrategia de aprendizaje predicción, unida a algunos sub-grupos de estrategias como imágenes, cognados, inferencia y solución de problemas para mejorar la comprensión lectora. El objetivo de este proyecto fue mejorar la habilidad lectora en estudiantes de dos colegios públicos y dos colegios privados de Boyacá, a través de la aplicación de tres talleres siguiendo el modelo CALLA. La implementación de este proyecto incrementó el interés y la motivación hacia actividades de lectura y al mismo tiempo aumentó la comprensión lectora. Palabras clave: Estrategias de aprendizaje, predicción, imágenes, cognados, solución de problemas, inferencia, comprensión de lectura, modelo calla.

Palabras clave: Estrategias de aprendizaje, predicción, comprensión de lectura y modelo CALLA.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the implementation of strategies in this framework has become both a need and opportunity; as Ellis (1994) says: “The study of learning strategies holds considerable promise, both for language pedagogy and for explaining individual differences in second language learning.” That promise, and the desire to help students to have a better access to written texts, is one of the main reasons we started to develop this work, which was inspired by Calla’s theory by adhering to the phases preparation, presentation, practice and evaluation as suggested by O’Malley and Chamot (1999) in their learning-strategies handbook.

Another reason is to obtain better results in the ICFES exam, since it demands students’ reading comprehension more than other skills. This small-scale research project regards the implementation of workshops that make students aware of strategies in use. The main strategy used in this study is Predicting strategy, but our implementation relates to the link we did with such other strategies as Imagery, Inference, problem-solving and Transfer (cognates).

We started at a diagnostic stage that was developed in each of the researchers’ work places, in which students were tested in the four, communicative skills via four workshops through which we could identify that many students needed reinforcement in the reading comprehension skills and motivation towards that end. Our objective was to enhance learners’ proficiency in reading exercise development; and to promote reading interest by implementing reading comprehension lessons, with

strategies, that occur before, during and after reading activities. After analyzing our students’ abilities, proficiency level and behaviors in the classroom, we chose Predicting because as Vacca (2002), says “readers are in a better position to comprehend what they are reading whenever they use prior knowledge (schemata) to construct meaning.” We believe our students can acquire stronger comprehension if they absorb this knowledge before the development of a task, in this case, reading.

The methodology and instruments used for this study let us see how the use of strategies allows learners to acquire a better understanding of reading activities. Among the different workshops carried out in this study, each one used Predicting as the main strategy. In the first and second workshops, Predicting strategy was linked with an unlike one, in the last workshop all the strategies were applied in concert — Imagery, Inference, Transfer and problem solving with the purpose of giving students more chances to absorb learning strategies and, of course, gain better access and comprehension of a text. After the implementation of each workshop, we noticed the students’ skills were improving and observed they were becoming more interested and absorbed in the interactive reading. This innovative small-scale project was conducted in line with the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) theory (O’Malley and Chamot), who provided selected phases for successfully strategy use.

THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES

As we previously noted, this project’s main

purpose is to enhance students' reading comprehension and their motivation to read. In this context, and to enrich the effort, we believe it's important to adapt and highlight content gained from the work of various researchers and authors. From this theoretical basis, then, we decided to focus on the following topics: Reading, reading strategies, metacognitive skills and, most important for us, learning strategies and prediction. As you'll see, these are the main strategies used here, along with research from the field.

As both a starting and ending point, keep in mind that reading comprehension is the final goal of this project. Therefore, it's necessary to explore the broad definitions of reading and reading comprehension – and the importance of awakening an interest in communicative skills in L2 learners.

It's also important to note that various and different concepts define reading and reading comprehension, and, as well, that applied logic clearly dictates there is no motivation for a reader to attempt to read text they can't comprehend.

Under this premise, different authors we've studied say that reading is an identifiable process, e.g., identification, interpretation and perception of written and printed text. Other scholars say reading is a complex problem-solving process in which the reader makes sense out of a text and not just from the words and sentences. This group also describes reading comprehension as a process that evolves from ideas, experience, memories and pre-existing knowledge evoked by the presented words and sentences.

Historically, the interpretation of reading comprehension has moved from a behavioral perspective to a holistic or interactive approach. Practitioners of this model view reading as a cognitive-developmental and socially-constructed task, one that goes beyond comprehending the meaning of words on a page.

Another important concept is reading comprehension. As He Ji Sheng (2000) says, the understanding of the meaning of written material involves conscious strategies that lead to understanding. According to (Bormuth 1969), comprehension is an increase in information as a consequence of reading. Kucer (2005) affirms this point. He says comprehension exists when readers have understood a text and are able to give a coherent account of various aspects of it, as, for example, required in the ICFES exam. In short, we can say that comprehension is the fabric of one's understanding and, in reading, it is the result of the reading process, for which it is necessary to use some strategies.

Hence, it becomes necessary to talk about strategy use. According to Barnett (1989), the reading strategies – the lines of attack — are “conscious techniques and unconscious processes employed by readers when they attempt to make sense of a written text.” There are different reading strategies that can be integrated by implementing the CALLA model proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1999), through which we gain satisfactory results.

The strategy implemented in this study was *Predicting*, through which we could use prior knowledge (exposed to the readers) to help them understand a topic. Through such a

system, the learner generates a hypothesis about the type, purpose or scope of a text and this transaction provides a framework with the text, to help them obtain comprehension.

The development of this project was accomplished by methodically following CALLA, which is a notable, instructional model for second- and foreign-language learners. CALLA is based on cognitive theory and research. It integrates instruction in priority topics from the content curriculum, development of the language skills needed for learning in school, and explicit instruction in using learning strategies for academic tasks, in this case to develop a communicative skill (reading).

CALLA's goals of are for students to learn essential, academic content and language – and, to become independent and self-regulated learners by increasing their command of various, learning strategies for and make such students become cognizant, aware, and also to learn the importance of applying learning strategies.

Apart from the supporting theories we've outlined hereon, other, cogent and associated research data helped us see the need for continued work in this field. For example, existing research suggests many high-school students lack Metacognitive skills. Baker's intervention studies (1985) reflect that high-school students can learn to monitor their text-comprehension level by employing various reading strategies. According to Pressley (2006), students, on their own, will eventually develop stronger reading comprehension skills — if the teacher gives them practical mental tools for comprehending texts.

Strategies refer to the tactics or actions teachers train students to implement, so the learners can effectively approach and make sense of a reading text (Sasson, 2007). Unfortunately, a quantity of students is not conversant with the reading comprehension strategies they apply, and, even more, if those strategies are effective in their learning process.

Additionally, our studies revealed other research reports that have foundations in learning strategies and these, too, helped us understand such strategies impact on students learning a foreign language. Zabala (2002) wrote a study that explored how teachers incorporate learning strategies, their reasons to incorporate them, the frequency of working with reading strategies, and the contribution of those strategies to a students' reading competence.

He found that the strategies used by student to comprehend reading were studying vocabulary and analyzing the main idea. He said they used a dictionary and imagination, plus prediction, translation and Inference to make sense of what they read. He also found some difficulties in the student's reading processes, such as handling implicit information, making outlines and identifying the main ideas.

We wish to emphasize that our students did not implement as many strategies as Zabala did, however, our students also received good exploration and comprehension of vocabulary procedures, to explore the text via images and teacher orientation.

Another study was carried out by Poole (2009) which was aimed to discover whether

female and male students significantly varied in their utilization of reading strategies. The study looked at Colombian university students with low to intermediate grades. His study revealed that female students are more active strategy users than males. Both utilized all strategies in a moderate to high frequency, but, when considering problem-solving and support strategies, females scored significantly higher than males.

The males' overall strategy use was moderate, as was their use of nearly half of their strategies and, as revealed, the females' overall strategy use was significantly higher than males. Most researcher focuses on the influence of strategies when learning a foreign language, which is the case of Echeverri and McNulty (2009) and their "Reading strategies to develop higher thinking skills for reading comprehension" report. They concluded that participants – students — thought strategies and interactive reading tasks improved reading comprehension. The four applied strategies were: predictions, questions, graphic organizers and prior knowledge. Based on those studies, our small-scale research emphasized the importance of students' learning strategies and their influence in developing reading skills.

EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

According to the commonly-accepted European framework, students at Colombia's private or public schools must be able to find particular and predictable information in such everyday documents as advertisements, magazines, menus, personal letters, news stories and short

texts. However, as we observed in the diagnosis, most of our students do not have such abilities.

Attending to our own classroom issues, the population for this application involves two different populations, e.g., two, rural, public schools located in Otanche and Buenavista towns; and, two private-urban schools located in Tunja city. As researchers-teachers working with ninth, tenth and eleventh grades — we decided to work with students whose ages range between 14 and 16 years that studied in the four schools. In total, we took a sample of 30 students from the four schools.

Based on our experiences and work as teachers, we determined that some students from Otanche and Buenavista did not have the same English level as the students from the two, studied, private schools, despite the teacher's effort being the same. However, all students (both private and public schools) are required to take the same test (ICFES) when they finish high school. This test does not evaluate the four communicative skills, but only the students' reading comprehension ability. It doesn't evaluate the educational context, but does, interestingly, measure both teachers and students' performance and proficiency in the academic field.

That existing circumstance, and our diagnosis, helped us to define the strategy we should apply: Predicting strategy for enhancing students' reading comprehension and interest towards it. In the following paragraphs we will explain the methodology used for this pedagogical intervention in the different schools.

Methodological framework

Needs analysis

Diagnosis was one of the first steps we developed for getting into an authentic and meaningful situation for this analysis and report. We started by exploring how our students were developing the four communicative skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), what strategies they are using to overcome each one of the four skills in the different tasks they were asked to do and how we could help them improve and become competent in real-life communicative situations.

In that order of ideas, we developed four activities; the first related to listening and the practice was that students had to listen to a news interview and correctly select (from an pair) the related picture that explained the story's main event. Following this activity, they listened to selected sentences and marked them as true or false, according to the speakers content. Before accomplishing this activity, we asked students if they had listened or seen anything related to that particular news subject, and, after hearing comments made by various students and teachers to clarifying the topic, the students listened to the interview in order to get familiar with the topic. They then wrote a list of words they listened to. Finally, they listened to the interview again and developed the activity proposed. (See annex No. 1).

The second session involved oral production, which is talking about life choices. In groups of four, students received a scenario (description) about a state of

affairs and, then, they were to develop a role play and act it out in front of the class (see annex No. 2). Before the role play, the teacher explained the activity by giving students a scenario, and helped them organize the conversation according to the given situation. In this activity part, most of the students participated actively by telling their classmates some relative and useful expressions.

The third activity related to writing. Initially, the students chose a Colombia location where they would like to vacation. After choosing their preferred place, they wrote simple questions about basic information they'd like to know. For example, "what is the weather like?" and "What touristic attractions are there?"

Next, the teacher read them a short letter in which a girl requested information about San Andres Island. The teachers explained how to write such a letter by activating a background-knowledge strategy (think about and use what you already know, to help accomplish the task) necessary for planning and completing the letter.

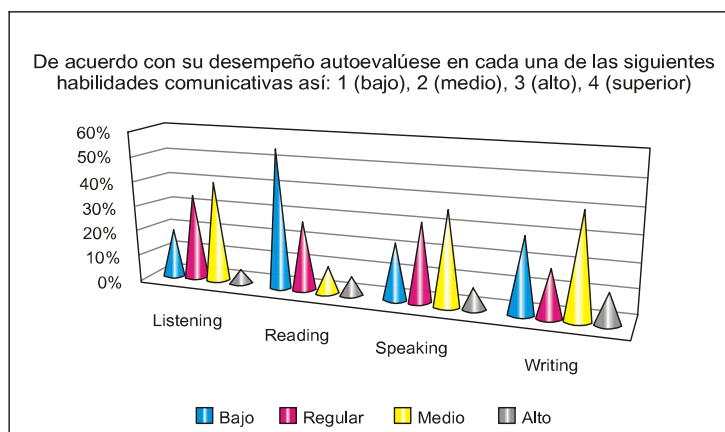
Then, students were asked to do the next activity where they were to plan a trip to New York City, but, first, they need to know basic information about the city. In this activity, they had to write a short letter to an American student, asking for help. (See annex No. 3).

The remaining activity was to help us analyze the students' reading skills. For this goal, students read a short essay and answered 10 questions (See annex No. 4). From our gathered field notes, one of the instruments used to get the information

needed, and from the students' responses in this diagnostic stage, we could infer that:

- The students were struggling with new vocabulary and pronunciation of some specific English phonemes, and the past tense of some verbs during listening activities
- During the interactive activity, most of the students took an active role, were engaged in the situation and performed in each group. Despite most of the students' lack of fluency, the conversations were understandable.
- For the writing exercise, the students used previous knowledge, such as: vocabulary, name of places, adjectives as a foundation and then wrote a short letter — some with more minor errors than others — but, in general, the letters were understandable.
- In the reading activity, most of the students did not complete the entire task because they did not understand how the words were to fit into each sentence. They understood certain words and sentences, but failed to understand the relationship between the sentences and the meaning of the text as a whole. What we noticed is that they lacked the different strategies that are useful to accomplish the task, and, of course, could not apply any of these that would be helpful to comprehend the reading. Other students were unaware that reading requires such enormous amount of mental activity, and that there are ways of improving their performance in this area. Additionally, a few students misbehaved in the development of the activity, when they felt they did not understand the given texts.

DIAGNOSIS STAGE



After conducting our diagnosis, we realized that learners have lots of comprehension difficulties. For that reason, our biggest concerns as English teachers concerned

reading comprehension, because students were close to the ICFES exam date. This test evaluates the student's comprehensive performance more than grammar knowledge.

Because these students lack reading strategies, we wanted to implement those which might help them overcome those difficulties and, as well, enhance their ability to comprehend. Our goal was to help them catch up and get ahead in reading. First of all we need to make students aware of strategy use and then, show and teach them the different steps that allow them to successfully use such strategies, depending on the task they want to accomplish, and by using the CALLA model.

OUR PROPOSAL

To implement and reinforce the reading skills strategy, we decided to use Predicting Strategy, implemented through the application of three workshops.

The Calla Model Application

After choosing this strategy, we developed a preparation stage that brought our students into a reflection on their own language in the learning processes by identifying learning strategies, especially for reading. The main steps we followed in the development of this stage were:

- Students and teacher's responsibilities were established. The students developed wrote some of their own (annex 5).
- Teachers did some analogies in relation to the application of strategies into real and academic life. For example, in an orchestra there is a director who directs the musicians while they, the musicians, play the instruments according to what the director says. Only if the musicians are engaged and share the same desire

with the director to produce good music, they will do their best to accomplish what they all want. It is the same when learning a language. If the teachers and students are led in the same direction, with the same purpose, learning the language will be successful and meaningful.

Students wrote some conclusions on their learning, self-awareness reflections (annex 5). Students, with our help, wrote goals (annex 5). Students reflected about their own learning process (annex 5).

Students thought about their self- efficacy for language by checking some options given (annex 5).

Identification of existing learning strategies (reading "A Day like No Other") (annex 6). Students were given a reading exercise, where they had to read the text and answer eight questions based on the text. When finishing the exercise, students were asked about the steps they followed to complete the task. Some underlined key words and others researched unknown words in the dictionary. Despite their use of a few basic strategies, the students could not understand the text and they did not get good result in the test.

Following these activities, we introduced a discussion that regarded the importance of using strategies.

During the development of the preparation stage, 80% of our students said they had never been asked about their learning strategies, and for that reason, they were not aware of the processes. The remaining 20 % said they had encountered teachers that taught them something concerning strategies, but they were not explained, which indicates that strategy training was not

explicit. These students only realized that such strategies existed when we explained them.

Through classroom interviews, we could determine that few of them are interested in doing extra class activities and most of the students exhibited concern for learning to more fully read and comprehend a text.

After the initial introductions, we began the practice sessions — three workshops in which the students would use their imagination and, hopefully, activate their previous knowledge to gain a better understanding of the text. As we mentioned before, we applied three workshops see (annexes 7, 8), all of them focused on Predicting strategy. However, as an innovation on strategy use, we decided to link some sub-clusters by using Imagery, Inference, Transfer, and problem solving in the workshops application.

Although we implemented three workshops, for the written presentations of this work we will only explain one in depth, and the differences of the other two related to the first. However, it is important to highlight that our procedure was based on the CALLA model. In the first workshop we followed these steps:

- 1) The strategy: Imagery
- 2) Presentation phase
 - Modeling: the teacher explained Imagery strategy by means of different pictures about the story and, concurrently, defined the word while showing them the picture.
 - Name the strategy: after completing the exercise, the teacher identified and qualified the strategy name (Imagery).
 - Explain and define the strategy: the teacher

explained the Imagery name (“...because we relate the word with the image presented”).

- Telling the importance of the strategy: by using Imagery, we are able to use that which helps us to activate the memory and create meaningful, visual support, to get ideas of what the story content.

- Telling when to use the strategy. Visualize a Scenario: When you go to a hospital and you see a graphic image about “no smoking”, you understand that you cannot smoke in that place.

- The teacher explained to the students how they can use this strategy in a real context. Then, asked them when they may have used it. What we perceived from this preparation stage was that students were engaged and motivated with the activity due to the colorful pictures and the memory activity (in which students had to match the picture with the corresponding, written word related to the vocabulary from the text (the doctor in Trozosland). This activity was developed in order to mechanize the vocabulary. Interestingly, while explaining that the activity was a strategy called Imagery, we learned that they thought the use of strategies was a very complex process.

After giving students setups that suggested where they might use this strategy in real life, they became familiar with the strategy and began to comment about different situations in which they could use Imagery strategy, such as traffic signals, and printed advertisements.

Practice phase

Predicting and Imagery strategies that lead towards reading comprehension.

- The teacher showed the students the first image of the story and tells the part of the story corresponding to the image, which is the first part.
 - Students who were already using Imagery by making the relation between what the teacher was telling with the image they were seeing, predicted what was going to happen in the second part of the story, based on what they had seen and listened to.
 - The teacher showed the image of the third part, without telling what was happening.
 - The student had to infer what was happening in the third part of the story,
- and predict what was going to happen in the next part.
 - The teacher showed images that related to the last part of the story and students had to deduce the end of it.
 - Students had to read the story they envisioned, based on the images they saw and their predictions.
 - The teacher told the original story by showing all the images again.
 - Students checked if their predictions were right or not.

These are the images:



After finishing this activity, we realized that the students were highly motivated when they saw the images because viewing them helped them visualize what the writer is telling the reader. An interesting aside is that because visual materials keep the eyes busy and therefore the brain to become more alert and active to new information. Student also became engaged in the reading activity and their curiosity went, now, beyond the images.

We could see that students created their own inner dialogue, based on the information they received. Following this activity, the teacher told students the first part of the story: "Once upon a time there was a doctor who was wandering everywhere. One day, he arrived to a town called Trozosland where he....."

Student 3, in a written exercise for the second part of the story, wrote:

“He started a consulting room, [and,] in that he attended to all the people of the town. One day two persons arrive at the room and said to the doctor that one woman was sick and [asked] if [he] could attend she.”

Through this process, it became evident that they accepted Predicting what will come next in a story. To evaluate this activity, we asked students the following question, “From one to five, what was your level of comprehension of the story?”

Around 80% of the students were able to make connections between the images and the teacher’s reading. They had a clear understanding of the story. However, 20% of the students failed. They could not understand the entire story due to such factors as their concentration level during

the activity being too low. Also, when students became frustrated because of unknown words, they lost interest in the exercise and, subsequently, their reading comprehension ability decreased.

After giving the students the opportunity to practice the Predicting strategy, as linked with Imagery, we continued with the evaluation stage.

Did we get it?

For the development of this activity, we considered the primary source of information as the student’s and our own evaluation. As a starting point, we asked them to solve a dilemma, we are going to explain the results and, at the same time, reflect about their answers.

Students answered the following survey in order to evaluate the strategy

¿Al ver imágenes las relaciona con lo que se está hablando?	
Mucho	90%
Poco	2 %
Muy poco	8%
nada	0%

¿Al ver imágenes las relaciona con lo que se está hablando?	
Mucho	90%
Poco	2 %
Muy poco	8%
nada	0%

¿Las imágenes utilizadas para contar el texto le ayudan a asimilar e interpretar vocabulario?	
Mucho	85%
Poco	9%
Muy poco	4%
nada	2%

¿Pudo predecir lo que va pasar en la historia después de saber una parte de ella con ayuda de dibujos?	
Mucho	73%
Poco	15%
Muy poco	9%
nada	3%
¿Fue fácil para usted inferirlo que pasa en el texto a partir de las imágenes mostradas?	
Mucho	85%
Poco	12%
Muy poco	3%
nada	0%
¿Cree que la estrategia "imagery" unida con "predicting" le ayudaron a tener una mejor comprensión textual?	
Mucho	85%
Poco	12%
Muy poco	3%
nada	0%

Obviously, most of the students realized that seeing the image allowed them to relate it to what was the text content. This trend was demonstrated with student 3, mentioned previously, and we could see that she gained a brief idea about the story topic and the characters and the place.

In response to the second question, 85% of the students said that images were helpful to acquire and interpret the vocabulary because they successfully associated the relation between the images and the text.

Accordingly, they said the drawings helped for Predicting the story itself. After learning a short part of it, the students said that the process was not difficult because they could predict what will happen next in the story, based on the information gained from the visuals.

Students surmised that the images were a good tool, one that helped them to guess

the following part of the story. The last student question asked about the relation between Imagery and Predicting strategies and how well they worked in reading comprehension. In reply, the students it was easier for them to understand the text through the strategies used.

As a conclusion of the evaluation stage, and according to the students' perception, we can say that Predicting strategy linked with Imagery strategy worked for the students. They liked it and, by practicing the methods, got closer to the comprehension of the text. However, we would like to share our analysis of this workshop and the other two, associated predictions — Inference and Transfer strategies.

In the second workshop, we linked Prediction and Transfer as a combined strategies and saw that student's encountered problems in the development of it, because they confused

the name of the strategies. However, upon completing the activities and final reading comprehension test, they scored better than in the first workshops.

The third workshop, where students actively participated, covered Predicting, Inference, Imagery and problem solving strategies. However, some of their guesses were not accurate or related to the main text idea. The miscalculations could have happened because of student's not having attention or because the images could have a different connotation for them. The latter observation takes into account that rural students were less accurate when relating drawings and story.

In addition, and important to this workshop analysis was that students remained interested on the development of the activities, so, we easily saw that their motivation for reading increased.

Our analysis is that as students become engaged with the strategies if they're taught about the reading and the vocabulary, but when they did not know a word definition, they became easily frustrated and stopped working on it. Further, a few of them assumed a rude attitude in relation to the activity, especially the rural-area students.

GENERAL DATA ANALYSIS

After conducting the three workshops, we noticed different student reactions, and different evolution processes gained via the workshops. In that order, we organized our accumulated data in categories based on student patterns established in accordance to their responses and our observations.

According to the strategy implementation

- Students who identified their own reading strategies. At the beginning of the strategies applications, we noticed that some students were not aware of the use of strategies; they did not know the strategies names and most of them had never applied them for academic purposes.

- Students who became aware of Predicting strategy use. After finishing the workshops, students called the strategies by their names and reflected on the importance of them in the classroom and reading comprehension exercises. This was especially evidenced when, at the end of the workshops, they realized that they could read and become more engaged with the text when they were willing to utilize content comprehension strategies. As a group, they agreed that it is important that the writer consider the reader in forming the title, and that they felt important, or better readers, when they discovered some of their guesses in the text.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Bringing this kind of strategies into the classroom can produce some of the following advantages:

The teacher assumes different roles as researcher, observer, facilitator and creator.

Learning processes will be based on specific tasks,

Flexibility — teachers should have different options for developing a class teaching process, and for helping students develop reading skills.

Cooperation and team work is necessary.

Although not all of the strategies were worked by the student groups, we saw that by working as small teams, the students have the opportunity to share predictions and prove those predictions by means of group conventions.

Reading comprehension development. Students have the opportunity to develop their reading comprehension skill by means of the strategies used and shown in the development of this project.

Variety – the CALLA model is not only a way and a goal for teaching reading comprehension strategies into the classroom, but, used in conjunction with this project, it helped produce innovative ideas for the classroom, in a sometimes different, but useful form.

CONCLUSIONS

In the different schools where we implemented this project, students are not accustomed to implementing reading strategies in their learning process. For that reason, this study's findings indicated the linking of Predicting with Imagery, Transfer, Inference and problem solving did enhance students' reading comprehension and their motivation toward applying such strategies. Further, such strategies encourage students to remain interested and engaged in the reading process.

Most of our students became aware of the importance of reading strategies and were able to use them for specific tasks, such as,

solving reading comprehension tests, the inference of information from images, transfer basic vocabulary from cognates, and other teacher suggestions implemented in the three workshops.

This practice also accentuated that teachers need to keep up the implementation of new learning strategies in their daily teaching practice, and encourage students to become conscious of those strategies and their influence in the learning process. In order to make such strategies effective, the teachers must provide interesting readings based on student's interests, needs, and language ability.

Through the implementation of the Predicting strategy when linked to Imagery, Inference and Transfer, we raised students' interests and motivation towards absorbing reading activities, therefore reading was considered less as a punishment because the learners took an active role in helping themselves to recognize they were understanding reading materials better, plus learning more, developing language and increasing their reading comprehension. The result was better performance and vocabulary enrichment, as we evidenced in the third workshop test (See annex No. 10).

The following graphic shows the improvement in reading comprehension in the two tests done prior to, and after, the application of the learning strategies. After comparing the results from the two reading tests, we constructed the following conclusions:

Student's performance	A day like not other	The Bracelet
Could get the main idea of the text.	20%	60%
Could infer and predict the information from the life.	10%	75%
Answered accurately the questions from the text.	20%	80%
Understood the content by using transfer strategy.	25%	70%
Identified clearly; characters, settings, and the different events in the text.	30%	85%

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THE AUTHORS:

LUCIMAVER GONZÁLEZ ROBAYO, holds a B.A in Modern Languages from Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia. She was an AMITY Exchange teacher for six years in Cincinnati Ohio, USA. She is currently an M.A candidate of the Language Teaching Master Program at Uptc. She is a full time English teacher at Colegio de la presentación de Tunja.

YOLIMA PATRICIA APONTE, holds a B.A in Foreign Languages from Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia. She is currently an M.A candidate of the Language Teaching Master Program at Uptc. She is an English teacher at Institución Educativa José María Silva Salazar, Buenavista, Boyacá

LAURA SOFÍA CUERVO LÓPEZ, holds a B.A in Modern Languages from Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia. She is currently an M.A candidate of the Language Teaching Master Program at Uptc. She is an English teacher at Colegio Los Angeles in Tunja, Boyacá.

Annex No. 1

Diagnosis stage

4 activities, 4 skills

LISTENING

1. Listen and choose the correct picture in each pair. Explain the main events in the story.



2. Listen again. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false ones.

The woman knew it was 7 p. m. because she had just looked at her watch. _____

The woman's house is on a curve in the road. _____

The driver was not very experienced. _____

The driver immediately started to get out of his car. _____

The driver wasn't wearing a seat belt. _____

The police came with the firefighter. _____

Annex No. 2

SPEAKING

Read the following scenario and come up with a role play and prepare to act it out in front of the class. This activity will be videotaped.

Indications:

1. time: three minutes.
2. Not less than two characters,
3. No reading is allowed
4. Preparation time: five minutes
 1. Neighbor complains about a loud music.
 2. You are lost in a city and find a policeman.
 3. You are persuading your parents about letting you go to a party.
 4. You have problems and you go to a psychologist to get advice.
 5. You are telling your best friend about celebrating your girlfriend 15ths.
 6. You are a reporter and you are interviewing a famous singer.
 7. You are explaining math to a friend.
 8. You travel abroad and you have to check in a hotel.
 9. You're in a restaurant and you are serving to the Colombian president.
 10. Your best friend got lost in an island and he gives you a call.
 11. Your favorite band is going to perform in town.
 12. Being an exchange student and you are at your first day at school.
 13. You won a lottery and you bought a Ferrari.
 14. You're having your first flying experience.

Por favor, Revisar detenidamente, fue digitado

Annex No. 3

WRITING

Student's name: _____ School: _____

Suppose you are planning a trip to New York, but you need to know basic information about the city. Write a short letter to an American student asking for help. What would you ask?

	_____

Annex N° 4

READING COMPREHENSION

DRAMA SCHOOL

Read the text and answer the questions below, using information from the text.

DRAMA SCHOOL

Some teenagers complain that they have to study too much. However, imagine balancing school with a busy work schedule. Leading actors Drew Barrymore, Leonardo DiCaprio and Toby Mcgire all started out as child actors. It is easy to imagine that this is a glamorous life, posing for photographers and singing autographs. However, child actors must also go to school, which means they are often snowed under with the dual demands of work and study.

Last week I spoke to the parents of Kevin, a child actor, about a typical day in Kevin's professional and school life. Providing it is not a Saturday or Sunday, Kevin gets up early. He arrives in a good time for a morning lesson. This might be interrupted by a makeup artist preparing Kevin for his shot. Then a second lesson that is interrupted by the director to shoot a scene. In L.A., where there are many child actors, children are required to do at least three hours of lessons per day. So when the director finally shouts "cut" Kevin resumes his history lesson. If he does not successfully complete his schoolwork, he may even be fired.

This scenario does not just exist in Hollywood. Recently there has been a rise in the demand for child actors in Spain. Two thousand work permits were issued in Madrid for child actors in 2006, whereas in 1993 only 40 were issued. It is thought that some young actors are working long shifts and missing out on school. Not only could this effect how they do on exams, it could also cause psychological damage. Many think the government should crack down on any producers who exploit young actors.

Most of us only think on the perks involved in working with famous actors and directors. But, as any child actor surely knows, it is a job which demands discipline and dedication, especially if you want to get a good education, too.

Child actors have too much work to do. Which information in the text tell us this?

1. Name two famous stars that started as children.

2. Do children actors in Hollywood have to study?

3. What will happen if Kevin does not do well in school?

4. Are all child actors in Spain going to school regularly?

5. Which words in the text mean:
 - a. to protest about something? Paragraph 1 _____
 - b. looking cool and important while someone takes your picture? Paragraph 1:

 - c. early or punctually? Paragraph 2: _____
 - d. periods of time when someone works? Paragraph 3: _____
 - e. become stricter with lawbreakers? Paragraph 3: _____
 - f. benefits you are given because of your job? Paragraph 4: _____

Annex No. 5

Annex No. 5		PREPARACIÓN																																																																																																	
<p>1. Mis responsabilidades para la clase...</p> <p>→ Respetar el turno de mis compañeros y la palabra de la profesora.</p> <p>→ Realizar las actividades completas y prestar atención a las actividades y explicaciones de las mismas.</p>																																																																																																			
<p>2. ¿Por qué es importante para mí aprender a leer en inglés?</p> <p>→ Porque queremos obtener un buen resultado en las pruebas PCEP.</p> <p>→ Porque tendrémos más acceso a la información.</p> <p>→ Porque nos podemos comunicar con las demás a través de medios escritos.</p>																																																																																																			
<p>3. ¿Qué estrategias empleo para mejorar mi habilidad lectora en inglés?</p> <p>→ Veo películas con subtítulos en inglés.</p> <p>→ Leo cuentos en inglés.</p> <p>→ Trato de traducir manuales e informaciones de los empleos.</p>			<p>4. Que metas me propongo al aprender a leer en inglés ...</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Profesionales:</p> <p>→ Tener más oportunidades y opciones para ingresar en buenas universidades, y lograr obtener un mejor trabajo.</p> <p>Sociales:</p> <p>→ Poder tener contacto y conocer más personas al rededor del mundo.</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Educativas:</p> <p>→ Conseguir una buena carrera que me permita salir al extranjero y estudiar más allá.</p> <p>Personales:</p> <p>→ Sobresalir como persona a nivel nacional como internacional.</p> </td> </tr> </table>			<p>Profesionales:</p> <p>→ Tener más oportunidades y opciones para ingresar en buenas universidades, y lograr obtener un mejor trabajo.</p> <p>Sociales:</p> <p>→ Poder tener contacto y conocer más personas al rededor del mundo.</p>	<p>Educativas:</p> <p>→ Conseguir una buena carrera que me permita salir al extranjero y estudiar más allá.</p> <p>Personales:</p> <p>→ Sobresalir como persona a nivel nacional como internacional.</p>																																																																																												
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Annex No. 6

"A Day Like No Other"

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.

Frank Wilcox has been chief of police in Lansett County for 25 years. He had just turned 30 when he took the job. He has seen murders. He has seen robberies. He has seen cats stuck in trees. He has found missing children. Today would be like no other. It is 11:00 at night. Chief Wilcox begins putting together his things. He is tired. He wants to go home. "Chief Wilcox," calls an officer walking quickly into his office. It is Officer Simpson. He looks nervous. He looks like he would like to be anywhere else but there. "What is it, Simpson? Asks the Chief. "Holman's Grocery was just held up at gun point.", Simpson says. His voice is shaky. He coughs to clear his throat. "Was anyone hurt?" asks Chief. Lansett is a very small county. The Chief knows just about everyone who lives there. If anyone was hurt, there is a good chance he knows who it was. Maybe that's why Officer Simpson looks nervous. " No one was hurt," says Simpson. "But we caught the suspect." "Ah, well, Simpson. You guys can take care of that. I'm," Chief Wilcox stops in mid-sentence. He understands what is wrong. From behind Officer Simpson, the Chief sees his youngest daughter, Devon. She is in handcuffs. Chief Wilcox gets a lump in his throat. He is in disbelief. "How could it be?" he thinks. "Devon, will you please tell me what is going on?" the Chief demands. Devon does not look at him. The Chief can feel anger growing inside of him. He refuses to let that anger show.

"Take her back for questioning," the Chief says to Officer Simpson in a calm voice.

"Devon, whatever you do, tell the truth," the Chief says. "I'm your dad. I love you".

We will figure this out.

Questions:

- 1) What is the main problem in this story?
 - A. Devon won't look at her dad.
 - B. Officer Simpson is nervous.
 - C. The Chief's daughter has been arrested.
 - D. The Chief is tired and wants to go home.

2. How long has Wilcox been Chief?

A. _____

3) What can the reader tell about Chief Wilcox?

- A. He has seen a lot in this job.
- B. He wants the truth.
- C. He is 30-years-old.
- D. He can stay calm even when he is angry.

4) Why does Chief want to go home?

- A. He is hungry.
- B. He is tired.
- C. He does not want to see Devon.
- D. He is worried about his family.

5) Why is Officer Simpson nervous?

- A. He is scared of Chief Wilcox.
- B. He has just been held up at gun point.
- C. He has just arrested Chief's daughter.
- D. He has just found an important piece of evidence in a new case.

6) Choose all that are correct. What does it mean to be shaky?

- A. To be loud.
- B. To be hard to hear.
- C. To be unsure and unsteady.
- D. To be strong and uncontrollable.

7) When does Chief know what is wrong with Officer Simpson?

- A. When he sees the gun.
- B. When he stands up.
- C. When Officer Simpson tells him.
- D. When he sees his daughter.

8) "He refuses to let that anger show". Which sentence below means the same thing?

- A. He is forced to let that anger show.
- B. He is about to let that anger show.
- C. He wants to let that anger show.
- D. He decides not to let that anger show.

Annex N°7

Workshop # 2

The strategy: prediction and Transfer (sub strategy)

- Modeling: first teacher explains that cognates are words that have similar spelling, pronunciation and meaning in the mother tongue and English and give some examples. Then, the teacher model the strategy by reading a small text and making a list of cognates that were found in the reading and explains that they help us to comprehend the reading
- Name the strategy: teacher tells students that the strategy he/she is using is named transfer.
- Explain the strategy: this strategy is named transfer because we transfer the words that are similar to our language to get a better understanding of the reading.
- Telling the importance of the strategy: transfer strategy is very useful in reading comprehension because we use the mother tongue as a resource for understanding any text.
- Telling when to use the strategy. Give a Scenario: always when you read any text, you try to understand the reading by translating the words that are similar in Spanish.
- Teacher will explain to the students how they can use this strategy in a real context. Later, teacher will ask them when they have used it.

Practice

Prediction strategy: (Transfer)

- The teacher will show an article on an overhead projector or on a big T.V.
- Students will look at the article for one minute and make a list of the cognates they could see in the reading.
- After that, students will give each word a meaning in Spanish.
- Students will predict what the article is about by using the list of cognates they did.
- Teacher will show the article again.
- Students will read the article aloud and check if the cognates they have written were really in the reading and check if their predictions have something to do with the text.
- Finally, students will read the complete article and tell what it is about.

Teacher will write his/her perception of the strategy use in a notebook taking into account the following items.

Workshop # 2 Evaluation
(Based on teachers observations)

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Items	All of them	Almost all	Few of them
Students recognize the words that are similar in Spanish.		☺	
Students are able to make the list of cognates from the text after looking at it for a minute.		☺	
After making the list of cognates, students were able to predict what the reading was about.			☺
When reading the complete text, students could understand it successfully thanks to the transfer strategy		☺	

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Items	All of them	Almost all	Few of them
Students recognize the words that are similar in Spanish.		☺	
Students are able to make the list of cognates from the text after looking at it for a minute.			☺
After making the list of cognates, students were able to predict what the reading was about.			☺
When reading the complete text, students could understand it successfully thanks to the transfer strategy.		☺	

Annex N°8

Workshop # 3

Predicting with 3 sub strategies:

Presentation:

(The strategy prediction)

- Explanation of the strategy = prediction
- Modeling: a situation will be given to the students (weather conditions are getting worse every time); teacher show the consequences of future situations s/he thinks are going to happen in the future related to this situation.
- Name the strategy: This strategy is named predicting
- Explain the strategy: this strategy is named predicting because students are expected to predict what is going to happen next in the text.
- Teachers will show an image of a city full of smoke, the teacher will ask students to imagine what would be the possible future of this city. Later she will tell students how they are predicting.
- Telling the importance of the strategy: we are predicting and it is useful because it helps me to anticipate information about what a text is about.
- Telling when to use the strategy. Give a Scenario: A student has failed in a subject, she asks the teacher not to tell her parents and the teacher does so, but in the next period he fails again... what do you think is going to happen? What are the teacher, mother and students will do?
- Teacher will explain to the students how they can use this strategy in a real context. Later, teacher will ask them when they have used it.

THE BRACELET

By Elizabeth Ballard

On the first day of school, Jean Thompson told her students, "Boys and girls, I love you all the same. I have no favorites."

Of course, she wasn't being completely truthful. Teachers do have favorites and, what is worse, most teachers have students that they just don't like.

Teddy Stallard was a boy that Miss Thompson just didn't like. He didn't seem interested in school. There was a deadpan, blank expression on his face and his eyes had a glassy, unfocused appearance. When she spoke to Teddy, he always answered in monosyllables. His clothes were musty and his hair was unkempt. He wasn't an attractive boy and he certainly wasn't likable.

Teachers have records. And Jean Thompson had Teddy's. First grade: Teddy shows promise with his work and attitude, but poor home situation."

"Second grade: Teddy could do better. Mother is seriously ill. He receives little help at home."

"Third grade: Teddy is a good boy, but too serious. He is a slow learner. His mother died this year."

"Fourth grade: Teddy is very slow, but well behaved. His father shows no interest."

Christmas came, and the boys and girls brought their presents and piled them on Miss Thompson's desk. They were all in brightly colored paper except for Teddy's. His was wrapped in brown paper, held together with Scotch tape. On the paper he had written the simple words, "For Miss Thompson from Teddy."

When she opened Teddy's present, out fell a gaudy rhinestone bracelet, with half the stones

missing, and a bottle of cheap perfume.

When the other boys and girls began to giggle, Miss Thompson had enough sense to silence them by immediately putting on the bracelet and putting some of the perfume on her wrist holding it up for the other children to smell. She said, "Doesn't it smell lovely? Isn't the bracelet pretty? And the children, taking their cue from the teacher, readily agreed.

At the end of the day, when all the children left, Teddy lingered, came over to her desk and said, "Miss Thompson, you smell just like my mother. And her bracelet looks real pretty on you too. I'm glad you liked my presents."

When Teddy left, Miss Thompson got down on her knees and asked God to forgive her.

The next day when the children came, Jean Thompson was a different teacher. She helped all the children, but especially the slow ones, and especially Teddy Stallard.

But the end of the school year, Teddy showed dramatic improvement. He had caught up with the most of the students and was even ahead of some.

She didn't hear from Teddy for a long time. Then one day, she received a note that read:

Dear Miss Thompson:

I wanted you to be the first to know. I will be graduating second in my high school class.

Love,

Teddy Stallard

Four years later, another note came:

Dear Miss Thompson:

They just told me I will be graduating first in my class. I wanted you to be the first to know.

The university has not been easy, but I liked it.

Love,

Teddy Stallard

And, four years later:

Dear Miss Thompson:

As of today, I am Theodore J. Stallard, M.D. How about that? I wanted you to be the first to know. I am getting married next month, the 27th to be exact. I want you to come and sit where my mother would sit if she were alive. You are the only family I have now; Dad died last year.

Love,

Teddy Stallard Miss Thompson went to that wedding and sat where Teddy's mother would have sat. She deserved to sit there; she had done something for Teddy that he could never forget.

The end!

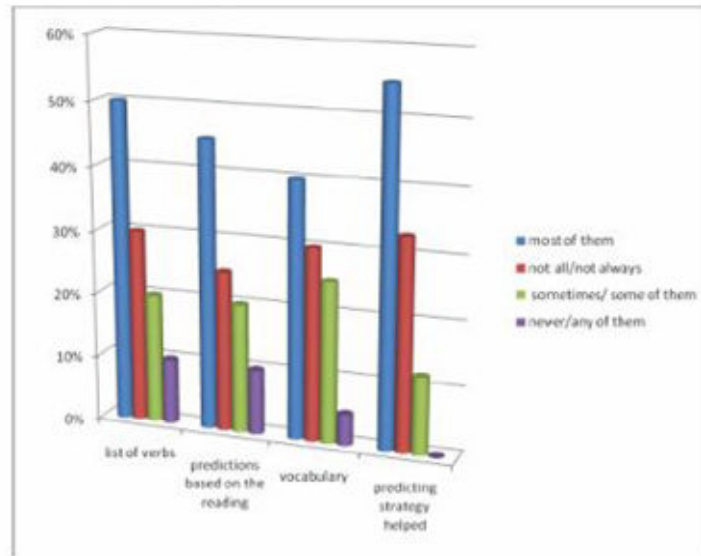
PRACTICE

Prediction strategy:

- " The teacher will write the title of the story on the board
- " Students are going to write down 10 verbs, 3 places/ settings, 3 characters.
- " <Students will read the first paragraph of the story and when they finish, the teacher is going to verify predictions.
- " The students will infer the possible problematic situation of the story = inferencing
- " The teacher will verify predictions and guesses related to that situation. Teachers read the story and give it to the students to check whether their estimations were correct.
- " In groups students will use imagery strategy to create an image to represent the end of the story. Socialization= coaching feedback.
- " The teacher will read the end of the story and she will stick all images on the board, and all together will check the end of the story and check the end.

" For finishing the teacher will model a last strategy: graphic organizers and students will represent the story through time lines, story maps or ven diagrams.

Preguntas	En su gran mayoría	No siempre	Algunos/ algunas veces	Nunca
¿La lista de verbos, lugares y personajes que hice, estaban realmente en el texto? ¿Las predicciones hechas sobre la lectura están relacionadas con el texto original? ¿Las listas de vocabulario hechas al comenzar la actividad me ayudaron a entender el texto? ¿La estrategia de predecir me es muy útil en la comprensión de textos escritos?				



Annex N°9

Evaluation:

Students will answer the following survey in order to evaluate the strategy

1. ¿Al ver imágenes las relaciona con lo que se está hablando?

Mucho no mucho poco nada

2. ¿Las imágenes utilizadas para contar el texto le ayudan a asimilar e interpretar vocabulario?

Mucho no mucho poco nada

3. ¿Puede predecir lo que va pasar en la historia después de saber una parte de ella con ayuda de dibujos?

Mucho no mucho poco nada

4. ¿Fue fácil para usted inferir lo que pasa en el texto a partir de las imágenes mostradas?

Mucho no mucho poco nada

5. ¿Cree que la estrategia "imagery" unida con "predicting" le ayudan a tener una mejor comprensión textual?

Mucho no mucho poco nada

Annex No. 10

THE BRACELET READING COMPREHENSION TEST

Choose the correct answer:

1. In the first line of the text it says "I have not favorites". This sentence is:
 - a) From the student to the teacher
 - b) From the students to the teacher
 - c) From the teacher to other people

2. Teddy Stallard was:
 - a) Miss Thompson's favorite student
 - b) A student miss Thompson liked at the beginning
 - c) A student that miss Thompson didn't like

3. According to the reading, Teddy Stallard's best description is:
 - a) He had a kind attitude, he always participated in class and he liked to share with his classmates
 - b) He had an unexpressive and sad face, his clothes were not in good conditions and wasn't talkative
 - c) He was a normal boy, anybody noticed him but he was always well dressed

4. Teddy Stallard's mother illness caused that:
 - a) Teddy improved his studies at school
 - b) Teddy got extra help from others
 - c) Teddy is a slowlearner and he gets distracted easily

5. The occasion students and teacher were celebrating, mentioned in the story is:
 - a) Teachers' birthday
 - b) Christmas
 - c) Valentine's day

6. Teddy's present was:
 - a) Some flowers packed in a shiny box
 - b) A perfume and a bracelet from his mom
 - c) A candle and a beautiful doll

7. One of the consequences of miss Thompson's help to Teddy was:
 - a) He improved and always remembered her
 - b) He disliked her forever and he never changed
 - c) He decided to be a teacher in the future

8. The reading moral message is:
 - a) It is not good to have favorites
 - b) You need to pay attention and try to help everybody
 - c) You always have to give good presents to the teacher