

## **UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA** *La Universidad Católica de Loja*

# ÁREA SOCIO HUMANÍSTICA

## TÌTULO DE LICENCIADO EN CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN MENCIÒN INGLÉS

Analysis of the use of reading and writing techniques in both private and

public Ecuadorian high schools and their influence on the quality of the

teaching learning-process.

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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## LOJA-ECUADOR

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De mi consideración:

El presente trabajo de titulación: "Analysis of the use of reading and writing techniques in both private and public Ecuadorian high schools and their influence on the quality of the teaching learning-process", realizado por José Luis Salazar Tamayo ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

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Yo, José Luis Salazar Tamayo declaro ser autor del presente trabajo de titulación: "Analysis of the use of reading and writing techniques in both private and public Ecuadorian high schools and their influence on the quality of the teaching learning-process" in the city of Loja, de la Titulación de Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés, siendo Nesterenko Nina Aleksandrovna directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales. Además certifico que las ideas, conceptos procedimientos y resultados vertidos, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad.

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#### **DEDICATION.**

I dedicate this thesis especially to God and the Virgin of the Cisne who illuminated me were my inspirations throughout all academic year for being my inspiration day by day and to my grandparents who have been my support since the beginning of my major. Also, I want to express my sincere gratitude to my family for their unconditional help. Having in mind that my mother who is not here merely deserve gratitude for helping me during my life for her love and kindness and for allowing me to fulfill my long cherished dream.

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#### RESUMEN

El presente trabajo de investigación titulado "Análisis del uso de las técnicas de lectura y escritura y su impacto en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del Idioma Inglés en colegios públicos y privados" tiene como objetivo mostrar la efectividad de dichas técnicas dentro de clase. Asimismo, busca conocer los factores que afectan la eficacia y el desarrollo de las mismas y profundizar en la importancia del uso del material didáctico.

Este estudio se realizó en la ciudad de Loja en dos colegios una fiscal y el otro particular. La población se conformó de ocho maestros y veinte estudiantes de cada institución.

El análisis se desarrolló basado en las encuestas que se aplicaron a la población antes mencionada. Adicional a esto, fue necesaria la observación directa de clases para así obtener información empírica que contraste las respuestas obtenidas a través del instrumento.

Finalizado el proceso de investigación se concluyó que habilidades como Reading and Writing son puestas a un segundo plano es decir no se desarrollan a la par con las otras habilidades. A lo que también se añade la falta de material didáctico y recursos tecnológicos que son de vital importancia para motivar a los alumnos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: técnicas de lectura y escritura, escuela secundaria privada y pública, estudiantes, profesores.

#### ABSTRACT

This research investigates and identifies the use of reading and writing techniques in High-Schools in the urban area of Loja. It was carried out with 20 English students.  $\sim 10$  students from and ten from private high schools also, 8 teachers (4 from public and 4 from private high schools) took part in this research.

The methods used in this research were qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative research was used for collecting numeric data, analyzing, and writing the research report." Also, the qualitative method was used for gathering the scientific information to explore the problem and develop a detailed understanding of the main phenomenon. The main instruments used to gather data were questionnaires to students and observations.

In conclusion, some important findings were found in the analysis data and observations. Teachers and students should work better in the use of language skills. The educational institutions and the importance of technology in the classroom to gather the needs in the development of the four basic skills.

KEY WORDS: reading and writing techniques, private and public high school, students, teachers.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

These days learning English as a foreign language has become a popular trend among society as English is. It is the most widely spoken language in the world. About 1.5 billion people around the world speak English, whether as their native tongue or as a foreign language and these numbers are expected to increase. As a result, both public and private high schools include English in their curricula so that students can be readily prepared to face different challenges in their further studies.

This research seeks to analyze the use of reading and writing techniques as they complement each other and because they are considered the most complex for students to master. Also, one of its main objectives is to determine the effectiveness of reading and writing techniques as applied in an EFL class in public and private high schools. In order to accomplish this general goal some specific objectives were established which are: To identify the main factors which affect the efficacy and development of reading and writing techniques in EFL classes, to analyze the importance of supplementary material used to explore and expand reading and writing skills and to analyze the influence of teacher training on teaching reading and writing skills.

The analysis of the reading / writing techniques contributes to the English teaching-learning process because it can provide an overview of the most useful activities which enhance reading and writing and the ones with which students struggle. Conversely, this study will attempt to highlight the negative aspects which teachers and students face on a daily basis, which can be taken into account to improve the curriculum and to try to find new alternatives to get the most out of these skills.

There are some prior studies which gave rise to this research: one of them is a research paper written by Ya-Li Lai, Yu-Jung Tung and Shu-Ying Luo (2008) of Taipei Municipal

University of Education which revealed two EFL adult learners' utilization and understanding of reading strategies during reading. The first case indicated that a prolonged, regular, and constant reading strategy instruction is needed and more efforts need to be made with regard to helping struggling readers to use more metacognitive strategies in order to develop their understanding of English texts. The second case suggests that teachers should choose reading materials that are slightly above students' current English proficiency level in order to stimulate students to adopt more reading strategies to deal with more challenging English texts.

Another important case was the one done by BOUYAKOUB (2012) whose main concern was to investigate the actual teaching of writing in order to locate deficiencies in the teaching of writing at the level of first-year students of the English Language Section at Tlemcen University in order to propose some useful teaching strategies to help the student improve their writing competence and better cope with university tasks. There were no limitations found here.

A third study done by *Klingner* of the University of Colorado (2010) supported this research. The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent and in what ways special education teachers promoted their students' reading comprehension. It was found that predicting was the most common strategy observed. Many special education teachers seemed unsure of how to promote their students' reading comprehension. This research also did not have any limitations.

The findings of this study have the potential to become a reference for in-service teachers in Ecuador or for similar case studies investigating EFL students' understanding and utilization of reading and writing techniques. Furthermore, it suggests ideas and alternatives for schools to include in their curricula and supplementary materials to fully develop reading and writing.

Whilst developing this research, some limitations appeared, especially when some of the information provided by teachers and students did not match with the results obtained through observations.

#### **METHOD**

This investigation was conducted over a year and completed by gathering information from the Internet, from books published about reading and writing and previous research works concerned with the development of the aforementioned skills. By the same token, it was essential to collect information through class observations and surveys that were applied to teachers and students.

#### Settings and participants

This research was carried out in Loja in a public and private high schools located in the city. To ensure the correct sample, 8 teachers and 20 students from each institution were surveyed. To complement this study some observations were made in order to contrast the results obtained through the surveys.

#### Procedure

The information which sustained and provided insights to the current situation of the use of reading and writing techniques into the English teaching-learning process was obtained from bibliographic sources, internet and previous studies related to this topic, which were carefully analyzed and paraphrased to facilitate the understanding of the topic and contribute to the literature review. This last being a particularly useful aspect while doing/writing the questions included in the surveys. It also helped to put forward some practical suggestions for further or similar studies.

It is important to note that all the authors of books and previous research works have been acknowledged and cited in the section: *Reference*, using the APA style.

The focus of the current study was based on the qualitative and quantitative data extracted from the surveys as well as findings from field notes collected during class observations. The information for the quantitative analysis began with the selection of questions which were applied in the surveys. The institutions were selected and with the consent of the authorities, surveys were applied to three teachers and fifteen students from a public and a private high school. These samples were taken at random. In order to tabulate the results efficiently and effectively, multiple choice questions were used. Others were open-ended questions which required additional information to be included; this allowed participants to provide reasons for their answers.

The results were represented in the form of pie charts. Each question consisted of two figures, one for each high school. This eased the analysis and the contrast. Finally, the empirical data gathered from observations was used to create the qualitative analysis based on the results obtained some conclusions and recommendations were down.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW.

Education is a crucial factor in the development of a society in our country. Education, according to Knight (1980, p 4)  $\sim$  is a lifelong learning process that can take place in an infinite variety of circumstances and contexts $\sim$ . It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come (White, 1903, p. 13). Other statements of educational purpose have also been widely accepted: to develop the intellect, to serve social needs, to contribute to the economy, to create an effective work force, to promote a particular social or political system and to prepare students for a job or career.

Nowadays, it is often seen the constant effort of the educational institutions to achieve the quality standards and academic training for the students. The goal of education is the facilitation of change and learning. Teacher roles have changed and proceed to meet new requirements as schools gradually become locations where students learn about the world of work and get prepared for successful citizenship by socializing and collaborating with others around them (Tseng,1999). They are in charge of guiding the teaching learning process precisely. Teachers need to welcome their new functions as facilitators, information-gatherers, decision-makers, motivators, counselors and so on.

Teachers need to welcome their new functions as facilitators, information-gatherers, decisionmakers, motivators, counselors and so on. Teachers, to be facilitators, must first of all, be real and genuine. Second, teachers need to have genuine trust, acceptance, and a prizing of the other person-the student-as a worthy, valuable individual. And third, teachers need to communicate openly and empathically with their students and vice versa (Brown 2000:89-90).

However, it is important to note that teachers need to be trained to perform well. Even though, educators have been previously trained to be in front of students, and use appropriate methods

to reach the academic objectives, they should keep on updating their knowledge and techniques. In this way, they will be ready to work with students who demand the usage of new methodologies. In other words, teachers have to adapt to the permanent changes that society is facing today.

A real challenge that learners deal with at the moment is the learning of a Foreign Language. In the modern globalizing world, many speakers acquire more than one language because of the necessity of communicating with other foreign people and creating a direct connection with other cultures, customs, technologies, business, and education (Patsy M. &Spada N. 2006, p.186).

#### English as Foreign Language

According to Cambridge dictionary, (2015) English as a Foreign Language refers to a language taught to people whose main language is not English and who live in a country where English is not the official or main language.

According to Harmer, (2007 p. 12), English as a foreign language is very important because it allows the student to understand a new culture and society, advance in the knowledge that would take years to reach the level of their mother tongue. The globalization and become competent in different fields like the use of technology and new communications. Learning a foreign language also allows developing all the skills in the student: communicative, social, and procedural and thus become an integral being.

A foreign language gives you access to another culture, the ability to communicate and to exchange views with people all over the world. It has a positive effect on intellectual growth and it enriches and enhances mental development. Learning a foreign language is especially effective at an early age. One of the most important reasons to acquire a foreign language is the stimulation it offers your mind. Based on three studies by Bruck, Lambert, Tucker (1974), Hakuta (1986) and Weatherford (1986), children who took up in foreign language courses demonstrate stronger cognitive skills, especially in the area of creativity. In addiction: those with competency (not necessarily fluency) in more than one language are more likely to have higher intelligence scores on standardized tests.

On the other hand, the importance of learning English as a foreign language becomes selfevident in today's economy which is increasingly globalized, and this means that many of us are interacting across cultures in a way we never did before. In such an economy, English is also important to those working in business, communications and nearly every other career track. In many cultures, attempting to speak the language is viewed as a sign of respect and has the potential to open doors in the future.

English is very necessary for an adequate and appropriate preparation for college or graduate school, and become able to speak a foreign language and have experience with a different culture.

Additionally, Byram (1989 states that learning other languages gives the learner the ability to step inside the mind and context of that other culture for create the knowledge the way people behave, communicate and believe, guide to the acquisition of develop important skills and experiences.

Carvajal (2007) says: "English allows students to be able to come from a place in the world." In other words, the foreign language is introduced in the school environment with the purpose of providing several benefits to students in the long term, especially for their professional life. When it comes to education, the foreign language is commonly imparted in a classroom and practiced through a variety of activities such as games, songs, readings and other things which can help to develop and improve the language learning.

Teaching a foreign language is focused on offering information to students in an interesting way, communicating passion for the English learning. Teachers use a wide range of course books, other materials and a variety of audio-visual aids (Campbell &Kryszewska, 1995, p. 11). There is a strong emphasis on dialogue and role-playing, but more formal exercises, language games and literature are also used. Also, the interaction with the use of the language plays an important role in the classroom because it is one of the few places where speakers can produce and improve the language with others.

All resources and previous activities that teachers apply in their classes are meant to develop language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing.

#### Language Skills

According to Merriam Webster dictionary,(2015) the concept *"skills"* refers to the ability to do something that comes from training, experience, or practice, achieve a particular goal or task.

The concept 'language' can be defined as the system of communication consisting of sounds, words and grammar or a system of communication used by the people of a particular country or profession (Everson, 2009).

Language is central in the sense that it enables people to be able to interact or communicate effectively in order to convey a message. It is imperative to understand that language varies from one society to another depending on a particular group of people. Consequently, there are four language skills that are commonly used in order for people to be able to interact or communicate such as listening, speaking, reading and writing Bailey, (1999).

#### Listening

Everson (2009:26) explains that, "listening is vital skill of language in the sense that it enables one to be able to understand what other people are saying or communicating" in order for one to become a good listener. This means that developing Listening skill can keep to develop different abilities such as: dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the expressed.

Listening is vital because it leads to effective speaking which also leads to active reading in order to know more about some subject and this allows one to write effectively. Listening Is very important in the sense that allows people to be able to pay attention to others in order and understand what is being trying communicate to them (Littlewood, 1995).

According to Celce (2001), listening comprehension is now felt to be a prerequisite for oral proficiency as well as an important skill in its own right. EFL teachers have several responsibilities with respect to the listening skill. They must understand the essential role that listening plays in the language learning process in order to utilize listening in ways that facilitate learning. Second they must provide their learners with an appropriate variety and range of listening experiences. Last but not least, teachers must understand how listening skills typically develop in foreign language learners so that students can engage in the most beneficial types of listening activities.

However, listening skills emphasizes the development of learners' abilities to identify words, sentence boundaries, contractions, individual sounds, and sound combinations, that is, linguistic processing. According to Verghese (1989), "familiarity with the English sounds system and ability to articulate English sounds prepare the students for listening to English utterances with understanding." Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning from University of Texas at Austin (2010), emphasizes that, "Listening is also

important because it provides input that can be very significant for second language acquisition in general and for the development of the speaking skill in particular as well as it promotes the language development and encourages learners to develop holistic strategies to texts<sup>''</sup>.

#### Speaking

The importance of speaking skills is enormous for the learners of any language. Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. We use language in a variety of situations. For most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous of knowing the language since is speech is the most basic means of human communication.

Speaking is a specific spoken discourse that is primarily social and engaged in for social purposes and in social contexts. According to Burnkart (1998), it involves three areas of knowledge. First, the mechanical elements of language (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary), which allow the speaker to use the right words in the correct sequence and appropriate pronunciation. Second, the speaking functions (transaction and interaction), which enable the speaker to know when the clarity of the message is needed (as in carrying out the transaction or in exchanging of information) and when a deep understanding is not necessary (as in the development of relations). Third, the sociocultural norms (such as turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants) which enable an individual to realize the conversational situation, whom he is talking to, and what the purpose of speaking is.

Nevertheless, as Bayle and Savage (1994) mention, they agree that many people are able to comprehend a language but they cannot speak it. Some of these factors are related to the learners themselves, the teaching strategies, the curriculum, and the environment. For example, some learners lack the essential vocabulary to get their meaning across, and therefore, they cannot keep the interaction going. Another author, Littlewood, (1984, p.53), says that some learners also lack the motivation to speak English. They do not see a real need to learn or speak English. Actually motivation is the crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks in a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he preservers.

The capacity to put words together in a meaningful way to reflect thoughts, opinions, and feelings provides the speaker with these important advantages (Gillis, 2014). Additionally, speaking is defined as the faculty of uttering articulate sounds or words through which people can express thoughts by words or articulate sounds (Verghese, 1989).

There are three main reasons for getting students to speak in the classroom. First, speaking activities provide opportunities to practice real life speaking in the safety of the classroom. Second, speaking tasks in which students try to use any or all of the languages they know provide feedback for both teacher and students. Third, students have opportunities to active the various elements of language they have stored in their brains.

#### Reading

The importance of reading English for EFL learners cannot be overemphasized. It is widely recognized that reading is one of the most significant skills for EFL learners to master. As Anderson (2003) stated, the mastery of reading skill could help EFL learners achieve success not only in English learning but also in other content-based classes where English reading proficiency is required. In addition, Kondrat (2009) correctly states that "Reading skills serve as a foundation for writing." She argues that effective reading skills give people the opportunity to learn new information about the world, people, events, and places, enrich their vocabularies, and improve their writing skills. In the same way, she mentions that reading enriches the inner world of a person, improves grammar and spelling. Also, she observes that

avid readers not only read and write better than those who read less, but also process information faster.

There are two kinds of reading: Extensive and Intensive reading. According to Carrell (1997), extensive reading often consists of a reading of large amounts of materials such as a whole book, for getting a gist or a focus generally on the meaning of what is being read. This type of reading involves learners reading texts for enjoyment and to develop general reading skills.

In contrast, the purpose of intensive reading is focusing not only on what the text means, but also on how the meaning is produced. It means that "how" and "what" are equally essential.

Intensive reading happens when someone reads in detail with specific learning aims and tasks. In the classroom intensive reading activities include skimming a text for specific information to answer true or false statements or filling gaps in a summary, scanning a text to match headings to paragraphs, and scanning jumbled paragraphs and then reading them carefully to put them into the correct order.

According to Nuttal (1996), the students should try to understand a text as fully as necessary in an intensive reading setting. Besides this, intensive readers are often required to study a small amount of material in an analytical manner under the teachers' guidance (Good, 1926).

#### Writing

Writing is a complicated process which involves a number of cognitive and metacognitive activities, for example: brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising. Cognitive aspects of writing have received specific attention, as investigators have attempted to understand the thought processes underlying the compositions of students (Flower & Hayes, 1981). According to Hadley (1993), writing requires composing, which implies the

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ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or to transform information into new texts, as in expository or argumentative writing.

Celce (2001) claims that within the communicative framework of language teaching, the skill of writing enjoys special status – it is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of messages to a close or distant, known or unknown reader or readers. Such communication is extremely important in the modern world, whether the interaction takes the form of traditional paper-and-pencil writing or the most technologically advanced electronic mail.

In addition, Kokemuller (2014) argues that "writing skills help in college class performance." In English classes, students typically write many papers, essays, reports, and so on, that will become the main source of their grade for the semester. Extensive writing implies successful management of all the processes and strategies of writing for all purposes, up to the length of an essay, a term paper, a major research project report, or even a thesis. Writers focus on achieving a purpose, organizing and developing ideas logically, using details to support or illustrate ideas, demonstrating syntactic and lexical variety. Meanwhile, Bruton (2002), intensive writing characterizes "having comprehension and language-focused tasks completed communally by the whole class." Refers to producing appropriate vocabulary within a context, collocations and idioms, and correct grammatical features up to length of a sentence.

Responsive writing requires learners to perform at a limited discourse level, connecting sentences into a paragraph and creating a logically connected sequence of two or three paragraphs.

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#### Lesson plan

Lesson planning is a vital component of the teaching-learning process. An appropriate classroom planning will keep teachers organized and on track while teaching, thus allowing them to teach more, helps students reach objectives more easily and manage less. The better prepared the teacher is, the more likely she/he will be able to handle whatever unexpectedly happens in the lesson.

According to (Celce 2001), lesson planning often provides a coherent framework for smooth efficient teaching, helps the teacher to be more organized, gives a sense of direction in relation to the syllabus, helps the teacher to be more confident when delivering the lesson, provides a useful basis for future planning, helps the teacher to plan lessons which cater for different students and it is also a proof that the teacher has taken a considerable amount of effort in his/her teaching.

In addition, a lesson plan provides teachers with a structured 'route' through lessons so that they can be sure of achieving their lesson objectives. It gives a secure base from which professors can project the impression that they are organized and that you know what you are doing. It also provides insights into the way teachers are approaching their teaching, and shows that pupils are making progress.

Celce (2001) also states that the lesson plan serves as a map or a checklist that guides teachers in knowing what we want to do next; these sequences of activities remind us of the goals and objectives of our lessons for our students.

#### Teaching Reading

Celce-Murcia (2001) argues that reading is by far the most important academic skill for foreign and second language students. In academic settings, reading is supposed to be the central means for learning and acquiring new information and gaining access to alternative explanations and interpretations. Furthermore, reading provides the foundation for synthesis and critical evaluation skills. In addition, reading is the main means for independent learning whether the objective is performing better an academic task, learning more about subject matter, or improving language abilities.

When we read, we read for a variety of purposes. We sometimes read to get the main idea, to locate specific information, to learn information or just for pleasure without the intention of being tested. However, reading in the classroom is a difficult task to achieve since students do not show such an interest in reading that is why teachers should encourage learners using engaging and innovative activities and strategies. English Foreign learners know for sure that reading skill will be part of their academic performance; in other words, they have to be able to read, understand, synthesize, evaluate and search information from different sorts of texts.

Teaching reading takes into account different types of learners and their needs about of children and adults native speakers as they learning to read in a second or foreign language. They try with different aspects of reading that are very important in the planning and design appropriate materials because texts are written with a specific audience in mind, knowledge is present in texts and it is assumed that the reader is familiar with such knowledge. Bernhardt, (1991); Bernhardt, (2000); Hulstijn, (1991); Kamil, Mosenthal& Pearson, (2000); Snow Burns & Griffin, (1998).

#### Reading Techniques

<u>Predicting</u>: It is a general technique used in the reading process (Grellet, 1981). To continue, Smith (1988) says that prediction was viewed as the core and the basis of reading comprehension. Furthermore, Nuttall (1996) explained that if a reader understands a text, he could make predictions with a fair chance of success what is likely to happen and what is not. It is supposed that the readers use schemata about the way stories work the way texts are constructed, and the way people tend to think. Therefore, predicting is effective to fostering readers' activation of their background knowledge, which is a central part in the reading process.

Additionally, Lamb and Johnson (2001) affirm that "skimming is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text and it is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading" Moreover, the same authors say that "scanning is a technique often used when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary and it also involve moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases"

<u>Skimming</u>: is the most rudimentary type of reading. Its object is to familiarize reader as quickly as possible with the material to be read. According to Grellet, (1981) using skimming, readers go through a particular text quickly in order to get the gist of it and to know how it is organized, or to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer. Another author, Kern (1989), says that EFL/ESL readers are likely to process texts in a "bottom-up" manner; learning to skim for the main idea is a good technique to improve their top-down reading, which is helpful to enhancing their comprehension of difficult texts.

<u>Scanning</u>: is another useful tool for speeding up your reading. Unlike skimming, when scanning, you look only for a specific fact or piece of information without reading everything. According to Beale, (2013), for scanning to be successful, it is necessary to understand how the material is structured as well as comprehend what is going to be read so that a reader can locate the specific information needed. Scanning also allows finding details and other information in very quick way.

<u>Guessing the meaning from context</u>: Smith (1971) stated that the best way to recognize an unfamiliar word in a text was by drawing inferences from the rest of the text rather than looking it up in a dictionary.

This view differentiates top-down processing that means an approach in which employees are given extensive information (including confidential data) on the prospects of their actions and then provided with feedback on their performance, meanwhile, Bottom-up Language learning that proceeds from the most basic blocks of language, such as words, and then proceeding to more complex structures, and finally to meaning processing to deal with unknown words, emphasizing that the reader depends on the context to understand words.

<u>Making Inference</u>: It is the process of coming up with a personal meaning from text. It involves a mental process of combining what has been read with relevant prior knowledge (schema). The reader's unique interpretation of text is the product of this blending. Vonk and Noordman (1990) stated that the writer would leave implicit the information that was supposed to be derived from the text by the reader.

<u>Self-monitoring</u>: In order to check the student's awareness of reading strategies, an approach known as metacognitive theory was developed in the 1970s. Metacognition is knowledge about cognition (Flavell, 1977). Metacognition in reading refers to readers' background knowledge of the text, their awareness of using strategies and of the importance of particular strategies. According to Oxford University (1990), metacognitive strategies include three strategy sets: (1) centering your learning, (2) arranging and planning your learning, (3) evaluating your learning. In "evaluating your learning" set are two related strategies: self-monitoring and self-evaluating, both aiding learners in checking their language performance. One strategy includes noticing and learning from errors, and the other concerns evaluating overall process.

#### Writing Techniques

<u>Brainstorming</u>: according to Osborn (1942), it is a process designed to obtain the maximum number of ideas relating to a specific area of interest or a technique that maximizes the ability to generate new ideas.

Brainstorming is often carried out as a group exercise in which all students in the class are encouraged to take part by sharing their collective knowledge about a particular subject. It generates far more material than any one student is likely to think of on his or her own Celce-Murcia (2001).

<u>Listing</u>: according to Merriam Webster dictionary,(2015), it refers to a list of things that includes detailed information about something. Unlike brainstorming, listing turns out to be a soft and essentially activity. As a first step in finding an approach to a particular subject area, the student is encouraged to produce as many ideas as possible and subcategorize them.

*Clustering*: according to Buzan&Buzan, (1993); Glenn et al., (2003); Sharples, (1999); Soven, (1999). is a structured technique based on the same associative principles as brainstorming and listing. Clustering is distinct, however, because it involves a slightly more developed. It begins with a key word or central idea placed in the center of a page or the board. The student then quickly jots down all of the free association triggered by the subject matter using words or short phrases. They are put on the page or board in a pattern which takes shape from the connection the writer sees as each new thought emerges. By sharing their cluster pattern with other in the class, students are fully exposed to a wide variety of approaches to the subject matter, which might generate further material for reading. (Celce-Murcia 2001).

<u>Description</u>: By means of description, a writer helps the reader use the senses of feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting to experience what the writer experiences. It also gives the reader a sense of clearly understanding of the people, places, and things about which the writer is writing. It is the most common form of writing. You will find descriptive writing in newspapers, magazines, books, and most other forms of written communication.

<u>Drawing and Sketching</u>: When we are talking about art, a sketch usually refers to a quick, informal drawing, usually done from life. A sketch captures the essentials of the subject - the overall form and perspective, a sense of volume, movement and feeling; sometimes a suggestion of light and shadeIt enables students to illustrate ideas for which they do not have language. It can be used with beginners so that they can have a clear idea about how to start, for example a story.

<u>Key Questions</u>: They approach a topic in a more structured manner. Start by reviewing the question words: who, what, where, when, why and how. Then, for your given topic, ask questions starting with each of these words. This activity can be done either individually or in groups with success. Students write answers to each question. As a result, they have vital information to start their writing.

<u>Comparison and Contrast</u>: Through comparison and contrast, students point out the similarities and differences about a topic. Comparison is used to show what is alike or in common. Contrast is used to show what is not alike or not in common. Describing living conditions in 1900 and living conditions today would allow for much comparison and contrast. Mind maps are key for the developing of this technique.

*<u>Free-writing</u>*: It originated as a result of helping native speakers to deal with the difficulty of getting started. Here, students are given a specified period of time and an opening clause or

sentence to structure their free-writing. The writing generated from this activity is raw material to work with.

Thereby, teacher's role in an EFL class is primary to achieve the language objectives. Thus, teachers are in charge of planning each activity that will be carried out in during the class period and most importantly they are the ones who encourage students to learn.

#### Teacher's role in an EFL class

It is generally recognized that the teacher is a backbone of any educational system. Nations are giving primary importance to the quality of teachers and national policies have been influenced by the growing realization that teachers have a basic role to play in determining the quality of output of educational institutions. Secret of quality education lies in the quality of teachers. Chochran (2006) supports the same idea, by saying "It is a universal fact that quality of students depends upon the quality of teachers either highly qualified or have high professional development"

Therefore, the role of the teacher needs to change in order to produce students who are able to think, plan, and act on their knowledge, additionally, Kaback, april23, (2007) said that, ''students have to learn to discriminate between useful knowledge and less useful knowledge and decide on their own language learning priorities''

The role of the teacher is vital to progress in society and it is both significant and valuable. It has great influence on the society we live in, and no other personality can have an influence more profound than that of a teacher, who is always trying develop his knowledge with learners, while others see him as a leader, or coach, facilitator and a role model. Whatever description one would want to use, the underlying issue still remains that the teacher plays a leading role in determining the future of students and society. (Shiben Raina 2007).

Students are usually very perceptive to find out if they are producing correct work and it is the opportunity for the teacher to act as assessor, giving feedback and correction as well as evaluating the students. The teacher should be fair and consistent with all students and also be sensitive to the students' reactions and provide support. Tutoring implies a more personal role for the teacher and will be used when the students need additional support or guidance when working individually or in small groups.

The teacher's role can vary according to the teaching methods applied in class. Thus, in direct method the teacher is in charge of providing learners with the target language using realia, visual aids and demonstrations. In Audio-lingual method teachers present the correct model of a sentence and students have to repeat it. When it comes to the Structural Approach method, the teacher's role consists of teaching grammatical rules at one time in set order within Total Physical Response the tutor plays an active and direct role. The teacher becomes the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors. In Communicative Language Teaching, the professor presents situations in which the learners can communicative effectively in various situations where they can find themselves in. For example, invitation, role-plays, suggestions, complains and so on. In Natural approach the teacher has the task of exposing students to the language and avoids correcting mistakes.

#### Traditional EFL Teacher Roles

Some other authors such as Cook, (2000) Hedge, (2002); Wang, (2007) have engaged in teacher role innovation, dominating EFL teachers to be helpers, organizers, monitors, co-communicators, explainers, involvers, and enablers (Teachers' Role, 2007). In addition, Harmer (2001) assumes that teacher roles "may change from one activity to another, or from one stage of an activity to another" in the classroom (p. 57). He suggests a framework of teacher roles that are dependent on what students are wished to achieve.

Teacher should encourage students to see realistic purposes, consequently, educators should expose children to the constant changes of the world in different areas, arrange a physical environment in order to provoke curiosity so that children can find out logical help children define complex problems, place students in challenging and creative roles of explorers, hunters, inquirers, designers, performers, etc. Teachers should select content from basic and common human activities and make them vivid and exciting or use the children's background of experiences to provide a rich variety of new experiences.

#### Teacher as Mediator

According as (Sun, 2005, p. 6), said, "Mediation theory has played a central role in social constructivist framework" which "is concerned with helping learners to become autonomous, to take control of their own learning, with the fundamental aim of enabling them to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers". Williams & Burden, 2000, p. 68). Continued the idea regarding the role of a teacher, by saying that a Mediator, the teacher establishes for the teaching-learning process. Mediation means interject. The teacher interposes something within the environment with which child interacts. The problem for the teacher is to make appropriate stimuli available for the child's interaction and to help the child select and organize these stimuli in ways that develop his thought processes.

Teachers should select content from basic and common human activities and make them living and exciting or use the children's background of experiences to provide a rich variety of new experiences. Another important strategy could be involving children in multi-sensory experiences that are natural to them and provoke critical thinking by asking open-ended questions designed to provoke dissatisfied thinking.

Many of the processes teachers carry out to develop a good class based upon student's effective learning should include the usage of at least one didactic resource. It is often said

that the role of supplementary materials in the classroom is key to keeping students motivated and to going beyond the textbook goes.

#### The role of supplementary materials on the teaching-learning process

The use of supplementary materials has an important and specific role in the teaching learning process, understanding, and production of a language. The use of didactic materials creates a more stimulating classroom and inspires students to learn a new language. When a teacher selects the appropriate material for each lesson and uses it wisely, it fosters the learning, interest and classroom behavior of the students in their English learning process.

According to Tomlinson (2006, p. 12), "The role of supplementary materials is focused on complementing the knowledge to introduce special-interest topics and practicing language not covered by the course book." He considers that the use of materials inside or outside the class will be beneficial to improve skills, writing, reading, grammar, listening, speaking, and vocabulary through educational materials.

Since this study is focused on the analysis of reading and writing techniques, a list of useful materials that is offered is included.

First of all, to make reading an enjoyable and productive experience teacher should include in their plans some didactic resources. They provide students with full benefits and moreover they keep them awake while reading.

Among the most common supplementary materials we have:

*Pictures* -- Photographs and illustrations depict nearly any object, process or setting, and magazines, commercial photos and hand drawings can provide visual support for a wide variety of content and vocabulary concepts and can build background knowledge. In reading

they can be used as a pre-reading activity where students get to come up with ideas about a particular topic.

*Visuals* -- These can include overhead transparencies, models, graphs, charts, timelines, maps, props, and bulletin board displays. Students with diverse abilities often have difficulty processing an inordinate amount of auditory information and are aided with visual clues. If possible, teachers can prepare a poster reading in advance instead of using the readings they have on the textbook.

*Multimedia* – A wide variety of multimedia materials are available to enhance reading. These range from simple tape recordings to videos, DVDs, interactive CD-ROMs, and an increasing number of resources available on the WWW. For some students and tasks, media in the students' native language may be a valuable source of information.

*Related literature* – A wide variety of fiction and non-fiction can be included to support content teaching. Many teachers create classroom libraries with trade books on key topics. Students can read these as supplements to the textbook. They offer a more relaxing way to look at a topic in more depth.

*Adapted text* – A type of supplementary reading material that can be very effective for English learners, especially for beginners' readers. Without significantly diminishing the content concepts, a piece of text (usually from a grade level textbook) is adapted to reduce readability demands.

An advantage of using authentic texts is that is very easy to find a suitable one the main advantage for the teacher of using authentic texts is that it is possible to find interesting and relevant texts for the students from your own reading of the internet, newspapers, magazines, etc. Students can follow a story and recycle the Vocabulary that they not do understand. They might know the story already; achieve faster comprehension and guessing vocabulary much easier.

While the disadvantages of using authentic texts with language low levels of some learners, vocabulary and grammar is not pleased because difficult understand the text. It might include language that isn't in a dictionary; the texts are often too long. Alex Case (2012)

*Worksheets* – They are cheap resources to begin reading. They may contain short passages and a list of possible exercises based on the text. They are easy to carry and students can build a portfolio with them. Another benefit is the fact that teachers can create them using up-todate information according to the level of learners and their age.

Readers: These types of resources are closely linked with reading skill. Bell and Gower (1998) point out that "at the very least we listen and speak together, and read and write together" (pag.125) ideally, materials produces should give learners opportunities to integrate all the language skills. With these resources students can do lots of exercises for instance: write reviews, summaries or descriptions.

Multimedia – Like reading, writing skill can take advantage of multimedia materials such as interactive CD-ROMs, web pages, audios, games and so on.

Visual aids: They provide practical solutions to the problems of a language teacher whose equipment, as a rule, consists of nothing more than books and classroom. They include white-board (it is used for reading and writing for the learner), chart, maps, flash cards, posters, pictures and etc.

Role play/dialogue: book with skills activities to provide additional practice of language taught earlier.

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Realia: is a term that refers to real things or concrete objects that are used in the classroom to build background knowledge and vocabulary.

Silent reading: The ability to sit and silently read a text is a skill that all students will need as they move through secondary education and into college.

**Demonstrations** –provide visual support and modeling for ELLs. These tasks that include supplementary materials and information by carefully planning demonstrations that model how to use the materials and follow directions.

Music and Songs: Begin and end the class with music and songs, Relaxation, Drawing Vocabulary, Phonetics, Spot the mistakes, Translating lyrics into mother tongue and Students can experience a wide range of accents.

#### Public and Private Education

*Public education:* According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, it is school that is maintained at public expense for the education of the children of a community or district and that constitutes a part of a system of free public education commonly including primary and secondary schools.

Private education: A school supported by a private organization or private individuals rather than by the state. Under an association contract (staff and day school expenses covered), or do not have a contract with the State.

In contrast between public and private education, according to the NELS data, parents of students at independent schools are much more likely to discuss schoolwork with their children and help them with it. Thus, the independent school student, in addition to starting high school ahead of the public school student, obtains more support from the family. The family advantage is not purely a financial one. As might be expected, independent school
parents are richer; otherwise, they could not afford independent school tuitions, which are the highest of all private school tuitions. Affluent students often engage in different types of activities than less affluent students do. They are more likely to go to museums with their parents, take music lessons, participate in academic enrichment experiences, and discuss academic issues with their parents and peers. In many cases, less affluent students have access to these experiences only if they are offered by the school. These experiences form a store of cultural knowledge, or cultural capital, on which affluent students can draw in their classes and on assessments.

These differences in family background raise doubts about the alleged private school advantage. Students who have performed better academically in elementary and middle school are more likely to gain entry into various private schools.

In Ecuador, it is often seen as most families will do as much as they can to make sure their children get a quality education. That is why they are so selective when choosing the school. Sometimes, this means looking a private school rather than a public high school and university system, which often lacks resources.

According to a 2009 survey by UNESCO's Institute of Statistics, about 1.7 million Ecuadorian children aged 6 to 11 were enrolled in primary school. But of those children, 18 percent attended private schools instead of public schools. Government is involved on both sides of education: public and private. First, it compels parents to send their kids to school. Second, government subsidizes the cost of purchase of educational services for all citizens who decide to send their children to schools that are nominated "public schools". Citizens are free to forego this subsidy and send their children to "private schools" so long as those private schools meet various criteria that are set by the State.

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The educational systems in Ecuador have changed dramatically over the past few years. Children, Teens and Youth are supposed to attend the school or college every day at any cost. To some extent the public education in Ecuador is free. However, to enroll in a public university, students are to take a test which guarantees them the free access.

There are several benefits of public schools such as:

Teachers have more qualifications. According to a major study from the National Center for Education Statistics, public school teachers are expected to be more qualified than their independent school counterparts in terms of education and experience.

Public schools can sponsor more activities. When it comes to offering extra-curricular sports and clubs, academic support, and better supplies and learning tools, public schools have the edge.

The student population tends to be more diverse. A private education is usually out of reach for poorer students, which means that it is less likely to introduce a child to children of various races and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Although of all the above mentioned benefits, it is sometimes seen that public schools lack didactic resources and although, they tend to be bigger than private schools, their classrooms are not big enough to hold a certain number of students.

There are different comments about public and private education however, private education has better managed universities that has been characterized by training professionals rather than by developing critical thinkers, problem solvers, and leaders with innovative ideas able to create new ideas with materials appropriate for learning of the students, but, the government is able to improve the quality of primary and secondary education, more children from poor families and with indigenous roots will persist to graduation. Eventually they will become eligible for the benefits of free public higher education. (Tunnermann, 1996).

#### DISCUSSION

#### Description, analysis and interpretation of results

This section intends to analyze, interpret and describe the results obtained from the observations and questionnaires applied to students and teachers regarding the use of reading and writing techniques, and their influence on the quality of the teaching and learning-process in both private and public High Schools. In order to carry out this study, 20 students from ten public high schools and ten private schools were involved. Also, 8 teachers from four public and four private high schools took part in this research. It is important to note that the people who participated in this research were sixth course students participating in a High School Curriculum.

#### Quantitative and qualitative analysis

### Do you like to study English?

Public high school



Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire Private high school



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

The first pie chart shows that approximately 90% of the students enjoy studying English as they answered that they are interested in learning the language. Whereas, 10% of students said that they do not like this subject because they find it difficult.

Similarly, the second pie chart which gives information about private high school shows that the majority of students like English with 80% whilst those who answered "No" is only 20%.

There is a difference of 10% between public and private high schools but generally the progress is the same. These findings clearly show the importance of motivation in learning a new language as most of the time learners show little interest in the subject because they are unknown of the benefits it will bring in the long term. Most professors and researchers believe that student motivation is the key to good school performance. This involves motivation to accomplish academic goals, dedication and effort in academic tasks, determination in doing class work or homework and the completion of complex and challenging tasks amongst others.

Although the observations revealed that students participated actively during the class, teachers still need to come up with new and engaging ideas for use in their classes.

How would you rate the reading and writing activities done in class?













As can be seen from Graph 2, Public High School students find reading and writing activities "very easy" at 40% and "easy" 10% respectively. They noted that the activities given by the teachers are according to their levels, allowing them to reach a deeper understanding of the topics. Conversely, the option "very difficult" is shown as 30% and "Difficult" accounts for a much smaller percentage, 20%. Some of the reasons mentioned reveal that they are not familiar with some vocabulary and grammar structures.

Alternatively, Private High School figures differ significantly from Public High Schools. For instance, "easy" reached 50%, and "very easy" 20%, "difficult" 10%, and "very difficult" 20%. In other words, private high school students tend to show in a higher percentage that they are more familiar with writing and reading activities, which is why they find them easy to accomplish. Meanwhile, public high school students show the same percentage for both easy and difficult options.

In 2001, Celce-Murcia pointed out that in academic settings, reading is supposed to be one of the foremost means for learning and acquiring new information and writing is a skill which enables the learner to design and rethink the communicative process. That is why these need to be fully developed in such a way as to allow students to get the most out of them.

Hedge (2005), states that writing is more than producing accurate and complete sentences and phrases. She indicates that it is about leading students to: "produce whole pieces of communication, to link and develop information, ideas, or arguments for a particular reader or a group of readers..." Therefore effective writing involves several things: a high degree of organization regarding the development and structuring of ideas, information and arguments. This is the reason why writing has to be carefully organized and produced. Thus, teachers are central to this process because students often effort with this language skill as it is one of the most challenging.

The findings revealed that most of the time students enjoyed working with the reading and writing activities within the textbook. It is also the result of the effort and dedication of the teacher in making those activities more engaging for them. Are technological resources such as TV's, mp3 players, computers or smart displays used in the classroom for teaching reading and writing?







*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

Graph 3 gives information about the technological resources used in classes. As can be seen, 55% of public high school students stated that they do not use some types of technological resources, while 30% said that some resources are used. It is notable, according to this chart, that there are significant differences in the results. Therefore, the assumption could be made that didactic resources are hardly ever used in private high school.

Conversely, private high students answered that they do have technological resources in class with 80%, being the highest percentage. The option "No" has only 20%. It is clear from both graphs that Private High Schools have a wide access to technology and this could be evidenced through class observations.

These days, technology is spreading around the world and most educational institutions are inserting it into their curriculums in order to achieve more effective results from their learners. When it comes to learning languages, it is key to developing skills such as reading and writing.

#### Which skill does the teacher focus on most during the class?

#### Public high school





*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

Looking closely at Graph 4 for public high schools, it can be seen that the highest percentage is for "Listening", with 50%, "Reading" correspond to 20%, "Writing" and "Speaking" remained stable at 20% and the lowest percentage is for "Translation" with only 10%. Students commented that they do listening exercises almost every day, those exercises are in their books. They also said that they read while they listen in order to master good pronunciation.

On the other hand, private high schools depict different results "Speaking" and "Listening" represent 30% respectively, "Writing "correspond to 20% and "Reading" and "Translation", to 10%. Some comments about this question highlighted that they are learning English for real purposes and what they wish for most is to speak, therefore teachers prepare listening activities and students have to comment on them in order that they can communicate fluently. In addition, they get to read at least three times a week.

As both graphs show, there is a significant difference between the two groups. While Public High School teachers focus on listening and reading most of the time, Private teachers develop speaking, listening and writing simultaneously.

Regarding this question, Bailey (2005) mentions the significant relationship of the four skills since they enhance the process of communication. For instance, in our daily life, there are many circumstances in which people use more than one language skill in order to communicate with others. In other words, people talk while they are listening and they write references they have read.

Would you consider a good idea that the teacher includes more reading activities in class? Public high school







Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. *Source*: *Student's questionnaire* 

Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire

As graph 5 illustrates, 90% of the public high school students would like to have more reading activities in class because they want to learn more vocabulary and above all to improve their reading skills. However, a significant 10% students does not show any interest in developing more reading skills. Interestingly, private high school students presented similar results, the option "Yes" with 70% and "No" with 30%. From this data we can see that both institutions need to increase the time devoted for reading first and foremost because this skill is critical in the learning process and also because the majority of students want to practice it more.

A number of studies have found that reading has a crucial role in the learning process as it enriches vocabulary and make us more critical.

Many educators claim that reading and writing have to be taught together since both contribute tremendously to the teaching-learning process and have a positive effect on the acquisition of English as Foreign Language. Good writing can be seen to be the result of good reading acquisition.

The mastery of reading skills could help EFL learners achieve success not only in English learning but also in other content-based classes where English reading proficiency is required As Anderson (2003), states, "Reading skills serve as a foundation for writing." She argues that effective reading skills give people the opportunity to learn new information about the world, people, events, and places, enrich their vocabularies, and improve their writing skills. In the same way, she mentions that reading enriches the inner world of a person, improves grammar and spelling. Also, she observes that avid readers not only read and write better than those who read less, but also process information faster Kondrat (2009).

#### How often does the teacher include supplementary reading materials?



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

Private high school



#### Source: Student's questionnaire

Graph 6 presents data concerning the frequency of use of supplementary reading materials. Regarding public high schools students (nearly 40%) indicated that they sometimes

use this material. 30% said that the use of extra materials is usually done, whereas 20% said that they "Always" use them. And the lowest percentage is for "Never" with only 10%. Data from this school can be compared with the data for private high school students who pointed out that they sometimes use supplementary materials with 70% and "Usually" with 30%.

From this data it is apparent that both schools do not often include extra supplementary materials in class and students confirmed that through the above results. Although Private High School students answered only using the option "Sometimes" and "Usually", they still need to include more resources in class.

According to Tomlinson (2006, p. 12), "The role of supplementary materials is focused on complementing the knowledge to introduce special-interest topics and practicing language not covered by the course book." Thus, the use of didactic materials creates a more stimulating classroom and inspires students to learn a new language. When a teacher selects the right material for each lesson and uses it effectively, it fosters the learning, interest and classroom behavior of the students in their English learning process.

Direct observation showed how enthusiastic students are for reading and they consider it necessary to include supplementary reading materials such as books, worksheets, magazines and so on.

#### Which is the most frequent type of reading the teacher uses?



Public high school

Private high school.



Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire

## *Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo.* **Source:** *Student's questionnaire*

Reading can be developed in many ways. Reading aloud and silent readings are the most common though. (However, it should be noted that reading aloud is not a natural thing to do). Figures for both techniques are the same at 60% respectively in public and private Institutions.

There are some reasons why reading aloud is used, some of them are to analyze the text as a literary critic, to grow and develop as a performer, to give a speech to an audience, and to perform an artistic creation (University Interscholastic League, in press, p.1)

The purposes of "Silent Reading", on the other hand, as defined by Education World (Hokins, 2002, in press, p.1) are an important tool for developing lifelong readers. Silent reading is positive as it offers students a chance to read material they prefer to, use their word attack skills to understand new words, build confidence in their abilities to work through reading trouble spots, it results in students wanting to read more, and increase the amount of time they choose to read independently at home (Hopkins, 2002, in press, p. 1).

The observation confirmed the use of both techniques in class. In addition, it can be said that teachers as well as students make good use of them. In other words, there is a right balance and they are used effectively.

#### When exploring writing, how is the class organized?

#### Public high school



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 



Private high school



Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire

According to graph 8, public high school figures showed that individual tasks are highly used with 60% of class time which is the highest percentage. 20% of class period is for working in pairs and group work. Private high school, on the other hand, display similar results when it comes to individual tasks, but they differ in the number of group work activities because it accounts for 40% of class time, while pair-work activities are not common in this private institution. These results reveal that the teacher provides an equal number of tasks that can be developed individually, in pairs and in groups, thus fostering different types of learning.

The present finding also supports Sun's (2005) study which concluded that "Mediation theory has played a central role in social constructivist framework" which "is concerned with helping learners to become autonomous, to take control of their own learning, with the fundamental aim of enabling them to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers".

The observations revealed that when students are working in groups the level of attention to the class slightly decreases as they easily get distracted by their peers. Conversely, they showed more concentration when working alone.

#### What activities do you do after reading a text?

#### Public high school







Private high school

As illustrated in graph 9 for public high schools, 70% of what class activities are focused by translation of the text from English to Spanish in order to understand the main idea and details, whereas, discussion of the text, summarizing and writing short paragraphs shows the same figure that represent 10%. Unlike public schools, private schools show surprising results since the biggest percentage of class activities represent "Translation", with nearly 90% and only 10% for summarizing. The findings provide evidence that translation is widely used to develop reading and it happens in both institutions; however the private high School uses it the most.

Translating word by word is not advisable when learning a foreign language. Instead the teacher should foster guessing the meaning from the context as most of the time students tend to use translation because they are unfamiliar with words or structures.

*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

According to Nuttal (1996), the students should try to understand a text as fully as necessary in an intensive reading setting. Besides this, intensive readers are often required to study a small amount of material in an analytical manner under the teachers' guidance (Good, 1926).

There are some techniques that teachers can apply before, while and after reading. For example, before reading they can start with some predictions, Smith (1988) says that prediction was viewed as the core and the basis of reading comprehension. While reading students can practice skimming and scanning in order to find general and specific details and after reading they can hold debates, summaries, discussions, presentations, follow-up activities, etc.

Would you like to suggest any specific English Book to work with?

Public high school





Private high school



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Student's questionnaire* 

This graph provides information about the possibility of suggesting the English Book to work in class. The majority of students from both public and private Institutions intimated their agreement with 60%, the main reason for this was being able to select an updated book. Meanwhile 40% of students said they do not know which books are appropriate for them, which is why they prefer to work with the textbook selected by their teachers. It has been suggested that the use of a course book has to be decided by teachers based on the curriculum and the goals the institution wants to achieve.

According to the observations, students were more comfortable with the book they are using but they intimated that the book was a little boring and outdated. This would seem to indicate that the topics are not attractive enough for them. Teachers need to consider various aspects when choosing a book such as themes and contents apart from curriculum and academic goals.

#### **TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE**

Which of the following methods is used in these classes?







Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. *Source: Teacher's questionnaire* 

The chart provides information about the methods that teachers apply in class. Overall, it can be seen that Communicative Language Teaching has the highest figure in both Private and Public School; which is 50%. According to Diaz –Rico and Weed (1995), Communicative Language Teaching is used by the teacher with the objective of promoting communicative skills through the use of dialogues. This is supported by the observations which evidenced that teachers are using brainstorming, which encourages students to use English to attain communicative competence.

Public Institutions also rely on Grammar Translation Method at 50% and Private High Schools account for a smaller percentage which is 25%. It can be seen that the "Grammar Translation" Method is among the most popular methods used during observations done. Although for the present research it is not considered effective enough, some teachers claim that it is useful when students do not seem to understand the definition of new words or some instructions in English.

During the observation it was confirmed that teachers use the "Grammar Translation" Method to give instructions or to explain some content. Students looked more comfortable using Spanish rather than English in class. It was confirmed by analyzing the students' results who stated that this method is largely used in class. Richard and Rodgers highlight that this method can be frustrating for the students since they must memorize endless list of words and grammar rules for achievement a perfect translation.

Only in the private high school 25% of the teachers show that they used "Cooperative Language" learning in their classroom. Rogers and Richards published a paper in which they describe it as an effective approach to teaching, based on the use of cooperative activities in small groups. However, previous observations showed that teachers prefer to explain different issues by talking in front of the class rather that giving students the opportunity to interact in groups.

#### Do you use whole-group activities to teach your lessons?

#### Public high school





#### Private high school

*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire* 

*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire* 

The chart highlights information about the use of whole group activities to teach English. 100% of public high schools teachers confirmed this in the surveys applied. Conversely, private schools teachers answered that they use whole group activities in 75% while 25% do not use this type of activities. Figures for both institutions are quite similar since the highest percentages are in favor of using whole group tasks. By doing so, students have the chance of learning about the same topic simultaneously. Therefore teachers do not have to explain things individually.

The teacher should be fair and consistent with all students and also be sensitive to the students' reactions and provide support. Tutoring implies a more personal role for the teacher and will be used when the students need additional support or guidance whilst working individually or in small groups.

Additionally, Gower, Phillips, and Walters (2005) state that students need to interact in the classroom because it is a way to communicate and use the target language. They also claim that that interaction helps students to develop communicative skills. One of the advantages of whole-class activities is the bonding together of the whole group. In addition, the larger the group is, the more variety there is in the ideas, opinions and experiences which can contribute to the learning process. They can also be used at the end of any lesson to summarize and assess what has been taught in a lesson. It is especially useful and time efficient when it is used in question answer sessions to evaluate students understanding of a topic. However, there are significant disadvantages such as: there will be low students who fail to keep up with the work and become more and more despondent day by day. There would also be high achievers, who may get bored by the teacher's lesson which is not enough challenging for them or it is not providing them with any new skills or knowledge.

Generally, Whole-group activities predominated during the observed classes. It would seem that teachers prefer to use them in order to maximize academic results.

#### Which of the following writing techniques do you apply in class?

Public high school

#### Private high school



Graph 3 displays data about the writing techniques applied in class. According to the graph, numbers for high school teachers show that the use of wall charts is by far the highest figure with 50% whilst vocabulary activities and comprehension questions have the same percentage; 25%.

Alternatively, Private High School teachers prefer to assign some writing activities such as summaries based on readings. This option represents the 50%. Nevertheless, figures for vocabulary activities and comprehension questions which is 25% respectively are similar for Public Institutions.

The success of a class is largely determined by the techniques that teachers use. For each language skill, there are different techniques; thereby educators have been given the hard task of finding the most appropriate. The teacher's role can vary according to the teaching methods applied in class. Thus, in the "Direct Method" the teacher is in charge of providing learners with the target language using realia, visual aids and demonstrations.

The observations confirmed the use of the aforementioned techniques in class. Even though students respond well to all the activities, teachers still need to consider innovative techniques in order to keep students motivated.



#### What techniques do you often apply in teaching reading comprehension texts?

0%

0%

Private high school

Graph 4

75%

skimming to get

scanning to get

information predicting

main ideas

specific

deducing



Figure 4 presents information about the techniques teachers' use which includes developing reading comprehension. A significant 50% of public high school teachers use

<sup>.</sup> **Author:** José Luis Salazar Tamayo **Source**: Teacher's questionnaire

scanning to get specific information from a text. In 2013, Beale pointed that scanning is successful if we understand how the material is structured as well as comprehend what is going to be read so that a reader can locate the specific information needed.

Techniques, for instance, "Skimming" and "Predicting", do not show significant changes since both are static at 25%.

In contrast, 25% of private high school teachers use "Scanning" and 75% "Skimming" to find the main idea of a passage. A study carried out by Grellet (1981), concluded that by using skimming, readers go through a particular text quickly in order to get the gist of it and to know how it is organized, or to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer.

Public as well as private high school teachers use a limited number of techniques. Among the most popular are skimming, scanning and predicting.

Furthermore, this study shows that significant techniques such as deducing and inferring have been neglected. Teachers claimed that it is difficult for them to apply many techniques because they have limited time.

It was demonstrated through observations that students enjoy scanning much more than skimming. However, their performance was about right in both techniques.

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Do you use teaching resources such as (TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer(s), projector(s), smart board, and supplementary materials during the class?



Public high school

Private high school

Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Source: Teacher's questionnaire

The pie charts depict information about the use of technological resources and supplementary materials during the class. The results show that 50% of public high school teachers use these resources such as TV, mp3 player, projector, smart displays and supplementary materials to teach; however, the remaining 50% answered "No", some of the reasons they gave were that their schools do not have enough financial resources to get them. Conversely, 100% of private school teachers' uses all kind of supplementary materials as their schools have provide them with the resources they need.

When developing reading and writing, technology can make a significant difference and give positive outcomes in terms of motivation and effectiveness. Teachers can use different resources to make lessons more interesting and effective, but educational institutions vary enormously in the number and type of resources available to teachers.

It was clearly evidenced through observations that most schools face the lack of didactic resources. In most cases they only have a white board and a few posters which is not enough to fully develop a class.

Teachers' claimed that they use didactic materials and resources to teach. However, this is contrary to the students' opinions because most of them said that technological resources are hardly ever used in class. Likewise, this point was supported by the observations where it could be evidenced that only notebooks, markers, the white board and the mp3 player are used.

According to Tomlinson (2006, p. 12), "The role of supplementary materials is focused on complementing the knowledge to introduce special-interest topics and practicing language not covered by the course book." He considers that the use of materials inside or outside the class will be beneficial to improve skills, writing, reading, grammar, listening, speaking, and vocabulary through educational materials.

It is important to mention that nowadays, the government of Ecuador has already built 14 schools called 'Millennium', which are fully equipped with technological devices to access the Internet, and with smart boards, with the objective to maximize development in students especially at an early age. Thus, public education is expected to reach higher standards in the long-term.

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#### What do you think about the reading texts in the course book?





Private high school



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire* 

#### *Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire*

With reference to the graph, public school teachers consider the reading texts as "Difficult", "Suitable", "Interesting" and "Boring" at 25% respectively. They mentioned that the book they work with has reading materials but it still needs to be improved and more challenging readings should be included. By the same token, this book is selected based on the English Curriculum for public schools. It means that the Ministry of Education already endorses it. The contents and quality of this textbook has improved a lot because currently students are expected to reach the B2 level. However, many teachers do not consider this book effective as it misses more academic tasks needed to explore reading and vocabulary.

As illustrated in the pie chart; 50% of private high school teachers described the reading text as "Interesting" with 50%. "Suitable" and "Boring" remain stable with similar percentages, i.e. 25%. Teachers pointed out that the book they are using is carefully analyzed in order to meet students' academic standards. That is why most of the reading material can be defined as motivating. When choosing the book teachers give their point of view of the book and then the principal and an academic commission make a decision on the most suitable book for their use. Although this textbook contains different types of activities to develop all four skills, teachers still find some unrelated exercises and it sometimes has a lot of information to work at in class time.

This percentage matches the student's opinion in part. On the one hand, it is clear that the course book has a variety of readings and in most cases they are quite interesting. On the other hand, the book lacks challenging texts. That is why the majority of students from private and public high school would like to have more reading material.

Among some comments added by teachers and students it is important to highlight that learners work better and feel more engaged when the text book holds real pictures, new activities and updated information.

#### How often do you develop reading activities in your class?

Public high school





Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo.

As can be seen on graph 7, 25% of public high school teachers regularly use reading activities in class, usually at least once. While 25% develop reading with less frequency that is once or twice a week. The graph also shows that 50% of private high school teachers chose the option "Regularly" and the remaining percentage answered that they use reading in a minimal frequency. These findings are somewhat contrary to students' results because they pointed

Source: Teacher's questionnaire

that they want to have more reading activities and the percentages similarity is between 60% and 70% for both institutions.

Reading is understood to be critical in the learning process as it enhances vocabulary and helps to possess a better lexicon. As Anderson (2003) stated, the mastery of reading skills could help EFL learners achieve success not only in English learning but also in other content-based classes where English reading proficiency is required. In addition, Kondrat (2009) correctly states that "Reading skills serve as a foundation for writing." She argues that effective reading skills give people the opportunity to learn new information about the world, people, events, and places, enrich their vocabularies, and improve their writing skills.

In the same way, she mentions that reading enriches the inner world of a person, improves grammar and spelling. She also notes that avid readers not only read and write better than those who read less, but also process information faster.

The observations have found that generally teachers are not exploring and expanding reading as effectively as they should be. The time devoted for reading is limited and is not enough to undertake the exercises most reading texts have. Students also commented that they would like their teachers to explain step by step what they have to do to understand rhetorical questions.

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#### Do your students use self- selected readings?

#### Public high school





**Author:** José Luis Salazar Tamayo. **Source**: Teacher's questionnaire Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire

According to graph 8; 75% of public high school students do not use self- selected reading while 25% do use self-selected reading materials. Interestingly enough, 100% of private high school students use self-selected readings such as books, news, articles, etc. Teachers mentioned that they do this in order to increase interest in reading. Thus, students select what they please and work on some assignments afterwards.

In order to increase the number of students interested in readings, it is always a good strategy to ask them to look for a piece of text and share it with the class. Thus, they can bring topics that are attractive to them and above all explore reading in detail.

Self-selected reading in classes can also benefit the teacher as there will be a selection of appropriate reading materials according to the level of the students which will facilitate the progress of each class.

The results provided by the observation showed that self-selected reading materials are very unusual in Public Institutions because the level of students is low and it is difficult to find appropriate readings for their levels. Likewise, teachers rely generally on the book, which has reading resources that are interesting, but at the same time short and not challenging for students.

#### Do you use reading as extra class or in class activity?

Public high school



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire* 

Private high school



*Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire* 

Graph 9 shows information about the application of reading as an extra class or as an activity class. It can be seen that 75% of public high school teachers use reading as an extra class and 25% use reading as an activity class. Teachers answered that they set reading passages as homework. Students get to read and provide answer for the questions or write summaries. They also used reading as a class activity because, in this way, they will be able to place students' errors and give support as necessary.

Alternatively, 100% of private high School teachers use reading as an extra activity. Among the most possible reasons for this finding is that students have to read graded books during each semester. They also have to read reading worksheets given by their teachers and the selfselected material they choose.

According to the above results, both institutions develop reading as an extra activity in high percentage. It is done by means of homework, worksheets, and graded material and so on.

According to Harmer (2007) learning allows students to exercise "on their own", and to develop their autonomy for working. There are some activities related to individual work such as reading privately and then answer comprehension question individually.

Harmer (2007), also points that individual work allows students to learn at their own pace taking, into consideration the differences and allowing learners to understand in their own way. In addition, the development of two of the four skills in English; reading and writing abilities, could not be fully built up in the total of participants since as stated before; 'individual reading tasks help the improvement of knowledge in foreign language learning'.

However, the observations show that students were not given any extra material to read at home. Indeed, they did have to read after the class but the information was from the textbook they are using. It happened in both Public and Private Schools.

#### How do your students respond to reading activities?

**Public high school** 



Private high school





Author: José Luis Salazar Tamayo. Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 10 indicates that 50% of the surveyed teachers reported that students showed a positive attitude toward reading activities as they are used to introduce or reinforce a topic. However, 25% answered that learners feel interested when carrying out readings. Interestingly, there is a similarity since the figures are the same for both Institutions.

Reading has to be carefully selected in order to have effective outcomes on students. By the same token, teachers need to find proper and dynamic activities to explore and develop reading because many students do not feel tempted to read.

Although students find it boring, English speaking foreign learners know that reading skills will be part of their academic performance; consequently, they need to be able to read, understand, synthesize, evaluate and search for information from different types of texts.

The observation shows when reading is being performed there is a lack of pre-reading activities which means that students do not get completely involved in class and some of them prefer to do different activities during that time.

#### CONCLUSIONS

As a result of this research work, it could be possible to conclude so the factors based on the different observation.

Students in public high school consider it is necessary to include more reading activities, because they want to learn more vocabulary and improve their reading skills: in contrast, student in private high school are satisfied with reading activities used in the class. In both private and public high schools students manifested they would like to have more emphasis on reading activities.

Translation from and into Spanish and English is widely used in class in both private and public high schools. Students read texts and translate them in order to understand main ideas and details. They even translate teacher's instructions.

To develop reading, teachers in private and public high schools rely on the same techniques such as Skimming and Scanning. However, students respond positively to these activities.

In both public and private high schools, students prefer working individually; because they are develop better your critical thinking.

In both public and private high schools, the textbooks do not meet students' and teacher's expectations, they are not updated and consequently the contents do not engage students, and do not motivate them.

This research demonstrates that in both public and private high school students find in- class activities helpful in learning the four basic skills of English: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

It was observed that in both private and public high school students are interested in learning English, because it is very important for academic studies.

In private high school teachers use technological resources with more frequency which contributes to more interesting classes and thus, helps to increase student motivation.

In both private and public high schools students manifested they would like to have more emphasis on reading activities

Generally, whole-group activities in private and public high schools predominated during the observed classes. It would seem that teachers prefer to use them in order to maximize academic results.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The majority of schools want to be ahead of future changes in education, thus they devote plenty of time to updating their curriculums or changing regulations. However, they should consider including technological resources in the classrooms as nowadays technology is the new trend, especially in education. If schools do not have financial support to provide every classroom with the aforementioned resources, it is recommendable they can create an English Lab and teachers can take turns to use it at various times throughout the week.

Supplementary materials keep the teaching-learning process in many ways. They motivate students with extra activities that enhance the process and most importantly they expand and reinforce many topics. These resources are cheap and affordable so teachers can ask students to bring things such as old magazines, cutouts, recycle paper, pictures, music, newspapers and other supplementary resources. It is very necessary and recommendable to require teachers to plan classes and collect materials in advance in order.

Although translation is necessary in some cases, teachers should encourage themselves and students to use English as much as they can. Learning this language gives more positive outcomes when someone is involved in real English. In this way, teachers can set new rules for their classes. First and foremost, they have to teach useful classroom language. For instance, if students keep on speaking Spanish, they can be assigned extra homework. Thus, it is recommendable to decrease/or diminish the use of translation in EFL classes in both public and private high school.

It is recommendable to use more technological resources and supplementary materials in public high schools because it way help students to become more motivated and contribute to improve their language skills. Textbooks should be assessed from different points of view. It is absolutely highly recommendable to choose a book that covers all the main areas such as language skills, grammar and vocabulary. By the same token, books have to be updated as most of the learners are young and their interests are focused to motivate

Reading and writing are known to be the most critical skills. The findings of this study suggest teachers should include more techniques to develop these skills effectively. It includes more pre-reading activities to activate students' previous knowledge about the topic, and then comprehension exercises such as inferring questions, true false statements, challenging questions that make students think critically; and to focus more on developing writing skill as well.

Before choosing reading material, it is recommendable to consult the students' preferences, class tastes, suggestions, in order to make reading class reading activities a more enjoyable activity, and thus, foster reading skill.

Teacher should get acquainted with new strategies to combine them with modern methods for effective instructions.

Educational institutions should assist teachers with information about new technologies and ways of teaching.

Finally, teachers should take into account students and the aspect related to them such as needs, aptitude to learn a second language, level, personality, age, motivation to plan their lesson.

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# ANNEXES



### UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

#### MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL CARRERA DE INGLES STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

#### **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:**

DATE:

YEAR:

1. Do you like to study English?

YES ( ) NO ( )

- 2. How would you rate the reading and writing activities developed in your class? Very easy ( ) Easy ( ) Difficult ( ) Very difficult ( )
- **3.** Are technological resources such as TV's, mp3 players, computers or smart displays used in your classroom for teaching reading and writing?

YES ( ) NO ( )

4. Which skill does your teacher focus on most during the class?

a. listening	( )
b. speaking	( )
c. reading	( )
d. writing	( )
e. translation	( )

5. Would you consider a good idea that your teacher includes more reading activities in class?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

a. always	( )	
b. usually	( )	
c. sometimes	( )	
d. never	( )	

#### 7. Which is the most frequent type of reading you use?

```
a. Reading aloud class ( )
```

b. Silent Reading in class ( )

#### 8. When exploring writing, how is the class organized?

- a. individually. ( )a. in pairs ( )
- c. in groups ()

#### 9. What activities do you do after reading a text?

- a. summarizing the texts. ( )
- b. discussion of the texts. ( )
- c. translating the texts. ()

#### 10. Would you like to suggest any specific English Book to work with?

YES ( ) NO ( ) Why?

Thanks for your cooperation!!!!!!!



#### UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

#### MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL CARRERA DE INGLES TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

#### **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:**

DATE:

YEAR:

**STUDENT LEVEL:** Basic ( ) Intermediate ( ) High Intermediate ( ) advanced ( )

#### 1. Which of the following methods is used in this class? ( Check only1)

Communicative l	Language Teaching	(	)
-----------------	-------------------	---	---

- Natural Approach ( )
- Cooperative language learning ()
- Task-Based Language Teaching ()
- Total physical Response ()

Grammar Translation Methods. ()

Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you use whole-group activities to teach your lessons?

YES () NO()

Why

#### 3. Choose the reading /writing techniques that you apply in your EFL class.

- a) I assign writing summaries based on reading selections ( )
- b) Students work independently on assigned reading selection ( )
- c) I use wall charts. ( )

d) I prompt the students to apply reading techniques ( )

e) I use activities to practice new vocabulary from reading selection ( )

f) I use role-plays based on short reading selection ()

## 4. What skills do you often teach your students in teaching reading comprehension texts?

a. skimming to get main ideas	( )
b. scanning to get specific information	( )
c. predicting	( )
d. deducing	( )
e. inferring	( )

**5.** Do you use teaching resources (TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer(s), Projector(s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials)?

YES () NO () Which ones?

6. What do you think about the reading texts in the course book?

a. difficult ( )
b. suitable ( )
c. interesting ( )
d. boring ( )

#### 7. How frequently do you use reading in your class?

a. Never () b. Once in a while () c. Once per class ()

#### 8. Do your students use self- selected readings?

**YES**() **NO**()

#### 9. Do you use reading as, extra class/in class activity?

YES ( ) NO ( )

#### 10. How do your students respond to reading activities?

- a. interested ( )
- b. bored ( )
- c. don't care ()

Thanks for your cooperation!!!



#### UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

#### MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL CARRERA DE INGLES.

#### **OBSERVATION SHEET.**

1. Los estudiantes muestran interés por aprender inglés.

SI ( ) NO ( )

2. Los estudiantes tuvieron dificultad para desarrollar las actividades en clase.

Si ( ) NO ( )

3. Durante la clase se utilizó alguna herramienta tecnológica.

SI ( ) NO ( )

4. Las actividades desarrolladas por los estudiantes se enfocan claramente a una determinada habilidad del inglés.

SI ( ) NO ( )

- 5. Los estudiantes demuestran su interés por las actividades de lectura y escritura
  - SI ( ) NO ( )
- 6. Se utiliza material extra para sustentar las actividades previamente realizadas.
   SI () NO ().
- 7. Se desarrolla actividades grandes, individuales basadas en el aprendizaje de Reading and Writing.

SI ( ) NO ( )

8. Los estudiantes realizan alguna actividad al finalizar una lectura.

SI ( ) NO ( )

9. La institución revise sus planes de clase?

SI ( ) NO ( )

10. Las técnicas de escritura y lectura que usted aplica en clase ayudan al estudiante?

SI ( ) NO ( )