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Contribution of the skimming strategy and graphic organizers for the development of reading for general information among incarcerated EFL adult learners

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ABSTRACT

The present action research study aimed to explore how the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers can support adult learners' reading for general information in a Chilean EFL incarcerated context. The focus was to analyze the influence and describe participants' perceptions about the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information. The data was collected using pre and post intervention tests and a focus group discussion based on an intervention of four sessions. The findings revealed that the explicit teaching of skimming strategy and the use of graphic organizers helped incarcerated learners to improve their reading subskill to find general information in a text. Moreover, the findings showed positive perceptions from learners towards the teaching of the strategy and the use of graphic organizers.

Key words: *adult learners, explicit teaching, incarcerated context, reading, skimming strategy.*

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

One of the skills that students encounter the most is reading (Amid, 2019). As specified by Grabe (2014), reading is a complex skill to not only define but also to acquire. As learners have different purposes for reading, they are expected to use different strategies that require cognitive and metacognitive processes to create meaning from words. Therefore, when learners of English as a second or foreign language encounter reading passages, they might use different strategies or sub-skills to succeed in the process of reading comprehension (Gómez and Ávila, 2009). In Chile, the Ministry of Education (2016) points out the English reading skill as a fundamental tool for students to be able to gain new knowledge from different topics and cultures. Because of that, it is also suggested to teach strategies to students to improve their skills. For instance, in the EFL curriculum framework provided by the Ministry of Education, it is exemplified that strategies can be taught either explicitly or implicitly. As a result, if students use the right strategy or strategies during the reading process, they can be more successful in comprehending texts.

Taking into account the above information, Majidi and Aydinlu (2016) mention that by teaching explicit strategies to enhance reading comprehension, students are expected to have more solid tools to improve their reading skill. Regarding the explicit teaching of strategies, one of the strategies that can help learners is skimming. As explained by Scrivener (2011), if students use the skimming strategy, they read quickly to discover key topics, main ideas, the overall theme, basic structure of the text, etc. Therefore, when students are asked to comprehend the main idea or main information in texts, they can use the skimming strategy. In the same regard, Pan and Pan (2009) investigated the use of visuals to support students' comprehension of texts, concluding that this tool has a very positive effect on readers' comprehension skills. Within this context, Pan and Pan (2009) also define visuals as any graphic displays (either in dynamic or static form) to accompany text's content; such as, pictures, photos, maps, diagrams, charts, animations, and cartoons. For this reason, the use of graphic organizers can be a great tool to support the explicit teaching of the strategy. Accordingly, Saputra (2017) states that the use of graphic organizers aid students to record main ideas, relationship among concepts, illustrate relationships among ideas, specially when they have limited vocabulary. What is more, when students use strategies to carry out reading tasks, the purpose is that at first they use strategies consciously, but throughout the time, students can use them unconsciously. As Campbell and Cuba (2015) point out, students can get accustomed to working with them.

1.2 Problem identification

In the Chilean context, when teaching English as a foreign language to incarcerated youth and adult learners, it is observed that students are mostly exposed to reading texts in classrooms. However, the reading skill continues to be challenging for them. For instance, in this particular context, students pointed out that it is extremely difficult for them to understand texts and claim they do not know how to overcome this situation. Particularly, when students face tasks where they have to find general information in texts or paragraphs, they struggle and have difficulties to continue working. That is why, it can be viewed that the reading skill is definitely a complex process for Chilean inmate learners.

In particular, in the context of adult learners in an incarcerated context, it is common that the learners are from different realities, age, social backgrounds, cultures, among other factors that involve their learning process. Moreover, it is important to mention that English is taught as a foreign language and they have 3 hours of English a week. English is also part of the compulsory subjects named 'general formation'. However, in the national curriculum framework, there are no specific topics, contents, textbooks related to incarcerated students specifically. Therefore, it is common to see that most of the materials are adapted from the national curriculum, since some contents might not be appropriate for the students. Additionally, English is expected to be taught in the context of adult learners and most of the topics are related to daily life in the world of work.

2.2 Aims

Based on the background information and problem explained before, the current research study aims to answer the following question: how could the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers support adult learners' reading for general information in a Chilean EFL incarcerated context? Accordingly, the following general and specific objectives are proposed:

General objective

To explore the contribution of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers in supporting adult learners' reading for general information in a Chilean EFL incarcerated context.

Specific objectives

To analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information.

To describe participants' perceptions about the teaching of the explicit skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support reading for general information.

CHAPTER II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Reading skill in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language

In the field of teaching English as a foreign language there are four fundamental skills that schools and teachers take into consideration when planning lessons and courses: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Accordingly, Harmer (2012) explains that these four skills can be grouped into two categories: receptive and productive skills. On one hand, reading and listening skills are considered receptive skills; for instance, learners need to extract information from the discourse/texts they are exposed to. On the other hand, writing and speaking are considered productive skills; because the learners are expected to produce language from the input they receive so as to produce their own output. Based on current approaches in the area of teaching English as a foreign language, Brown and Lee (2015) state that the four skills should be taught together as they can interact and complement each other. That is to say, if skills are taught together, this process is related to the integration of skills. Somehow, Harmer (2012) points out that there are teaching stages in which there is a need to focus on one skill in particular than on any other. As a result, reading is a skill that needs to be paid attention to regarding its complexities and particular features.

The term literacy has strongly been emphasized due to globalization and how society evolves through time. For this reason, Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Snow (2014) explain that reading is a fundamental skill to solve simple and complex problems that people deal with in their everyday life. Hence reading is naturally required to be encountered in daily tasks. As examples, we find ourselves reading when we see road signs, messages, news, advertisements, among other necessary chores. Moreover, Brown and Abeywickrama (2018) explain why reading is a skill that is taken for granted when it comes to thinking of the school context. To illustrate this idea, they point out that it is assumed that in literary societies, children are traditionally expected to start reading when they are between five or six years old. Furthermore, they claim that reading is one of the skills which, directly or indirectly, learners encounter the most. For example, reading can be seen in textbooks for any of the other three skills, even in tests that are intended to assess oral or writing skills. Therefore, reading can be seen as an essential skill in the classroom context.

In the context of second language learning, Ur (2012) defines reading as reading and understanding. For instance, learners should be encouraged to concentrate on understanding the meaning of texts, using their world knowledge. Decoding words is important in the first stage, for example when students are learning to read but she mentions that it is important to consider it, but only as a means to an end. Likewise, Cook (2008) emphasizes that reading, similar to speaking, occurs in context and it does not happen in isolated situations. This means that learners need to have background knowledge to interact with the text. This background knowledge is known as schemata. Therefore, a lack of context can affect comprehension.

When teaching or learning a second language, Harmer (2012) points out that students need to be involved in intensive and extensive reading. He explains that intensive reading is mostly related to classroom contexts, since intensive reading does not deal with long texts and there are questions to check comprehension. However, he explains that questions are intended to emphasize the process of teaching reading, because all of the questions are important to

activate schemata, therefore, engage learners in the reading process. In contrast, extensive reading has a different focus. Learners are expected to read outside the classroom in order to practice reading or read for pleasure, expecting that they can acquire language gradually. Respectively, Scrivener (2011) mentions that reading is a receptive skill as well as listening. They share common features and some procedures can be applied to both skills. For example, the task-feedback circle or the top-down and bottom-up processes can be applied to both skills. Nonetheless, the one important difference is when learners encounter reading tasks, they can read at different speeds and they can decide what way to read.

In order to comprehend information from texts, Brown and Lee (2015) address the bottom-up and top-down reading processes. They clarify that in the bottom-up process, readers are required to have knowledge of the language, because they need to recognize multiple linguistic signals, letters, words, phrases, etc. to make sense of what is the information they are reading. However, in the top-down reading process, readers are required to go from general to specific, utilizing general information of the text, since they need to draw on their own intelligence and experience to understand a text. The authors also reveal that in the past there was a belief that the bottom-up process was seen as the primary approach to reading in a second language. Nevertheless, due to current research on reading, it is seen that when students find themselves with new information, they need to make use of what they already know, so they use top-down processing (Brown and Lee, 2015). Furthermore, it has been observed that the combination of both processes can lead to a positive outcome.

To comprehend a text is essential to get meaning from texts. Therefore, reading comprehension is needed. According to Nunan (1989), reading comprehension can be explained as the process of decoding written symbols up to sentences in order to arrive at meaning and for doing this process, learners need to use varied strategies to get the meaning. Grabe and Stoller (2011) state that reading comprehension can be viewed as the ability to understand information in a text, therefore, the focus is on interpreting that information appropriately. According to Brown and Lee (2015), to become an efficient reader, readers have to master micro and macro skills for reading comprehension. On one hand, micro skills in reading comprehension involve understanding micro components of language such as phoneme, morpheme, syllables, words, phrases and sentences. On the other hand, macro skills implicate broader skills of reading since learners have to get specific information and general information, interpret literal and implied meanings or guess meaning from context.

2.2 Strategies to support reading skill

Even though reading is considered as one of the skills that learners mostly encounter in classroom practices, most teachers and schools rely on emphasizing reading in the learning process. This is why Grabe and Stoller (2013) indicate that the reading skill is not only a complex skill to define but also they discuss the fact that readers may have different purposes when they have to read. Accordingly, the type of texts students encounter could be a factor that determines if they will comprehend the text appropriately, without difficulty or in a moderate period of time. Consequently, it is relevant to mention that the focus should not be on remembering every word of the text, but most importantly to remember main ideas and supporting ideas.

When learners encounter texts in a foreign language, they may encounter many difficulties. Comprehending a text is a complex process and requires going through different processes to arrive at meaning. Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Snow (2014) indicate that teaching reading skills to non-native of English is a challenging process and it involves specific problems that can be present in all levels. To exemplify, Scrivener (2011) explains that some common concerns readers can express are that they do not have enough vocabulary or they read slowly. Therefore, if the purpose is to make students better readers, it is essential to raise awareness that there are strategies to use. Pourhosein and Sabouri (2016) review effective reading strategies to know how students could improve their reading skill. They concluded that reading strategies play an important role to improve reading comprehension, students have to be able to use the different strategies they can use to monitor their learning, since strategies can work together to construct appropriate and effective meaning from texts. For this reason, if reading is a fundamental but at the same time complex skill to develop, students can use strategies to support and improve their reading.

According to Oxford (1990), strategies can be defined as conscious actions or steps that learners use to improve the process of acquiring skills in learning a foreign language. Besides, Grabe and Stoller (2011) also state that strategies are conscious actions that learners take in order to control their process of developing a skill. More recently, Purpura (2014) agrees that strategies are thoughts or behaviors that learners take into consideration to regulate their learning.

In 1990, Oxford proposed a strategy taxonomy in which she grouped six strategies in two groups: direct and indirect strategies. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies were classified as direct strategies. While, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies were accounted as indirect strategies.

Accordingly, O'Malley and Chamot (1990), stated that strategies can be classified into 3 main categories: cognitive, metacognitive and socio affective strategies:

- a) Cognitive strategies help students to organize their learning, since when learners use cognitive strategies, they interact with the material to apply specific techniques. This interaction can either be mental or physical.
- b) Metacognitive strategies help students think of their process to monitor and assess their learning. Therefore, when students use metacognitive strategies, they are aware of how to use those strategies and reflect upon them.

- c) Social/affective strategies help students to interact with their peers regarding the use of strategies and they can solve problems discussing which strategies to use as they work in a collaborative way.

Brown and Lee (2015) also point out that there are different reading strategies that can be classified into 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' processes and depending on the students' characteristics, they can be put into practice. As examples, when students deal with top-down strategies, they move from general to specific to achieve comprehension. Whereas the bottom-up strategies are used for processing isolated letters, words or phrases in order to move from specific to general.

The use of strategies to support reading is an important process that enhances cognitive and metacognitive processes. Hence, when learners are given reading comprehension tasks, it is expected that they use one or more strategies to complete the tasks more effectively. For that reason, Brown and Abeywickrama (2018) state that strategies are fundamental to accompany the process of reading. Moreover, the importance of metacognitive reading strategy awareness was tackled by Ahmadi, Ismail and Abdullah (2013). They argue that metacognitive reading strategy awareness plays a significant role in reading comprehension and in the educational process. They explained that most of the students have difficulty with meaning from the written texts, and, based on their study, they found that a metacognitive reading strategy is one of the main important factors to facilitate and improve students' reading comprehension.

2.3 The explicit teaching of strategies

Over the last decades, the explicit teaching of strategies in the process of learning a foreign language has been given special attention in the field of research, schools and syllabus. Therefore, this is a concept that has been researched by researchers such as Chamot and O'Malley (1997). As a way of illustration, Brown and Palincsar (1985), explain that teaching strategies explicitly encourage students to be aware of how to monitor and assess their process of learning in order to be successful. Regarding the explicit teaching of reading strategies, Chamot and O'Malley (1997) point out that teaching strategies can enhance students' reading comprehension. More recently, Grabe (2009), states strategies comprise the reader's awareness of comprehension problems and selection of the most appropriate tools to solve the problems to get meaning and comprehension. With regard to the instruction of strategies, Purpura (2014) expresses that one of the main ideas of teaching strategies explicitly is to increase the learners' awareness on how to use and monitor strategies. Moreover, to give students the opportunity to learn new strategies and share their reflection upon the use and effectiveness of the strategies.

After analyzing the implementation of the explicit teaching of reading strategies in a Norwegian context, Brevik (2019) concluded that to support the reading comprehension skill, the explicit teaching of strategies is an example of a successful reading instruction. The explicit teaching of reading strategies is considered to be a fundamental component due to the complexity of what reading a text involves (Gilani, Ismail and Gilakjani, 2012). Thus, Küçükoğlu (2013) states that reading strategies are key elements to develop students' reading comprehension. However, sometimes teachers are not trained to teach strategies explicitly. Somehow, in the action research the author took part in, it was concluded that students had great improvement in reading comprehension. Alongside, the authors concluded that it is important to include the teaching of strategies in the curriculum and also concluded that the research was productive.

Furthermore, Spörer, Brunstein and Kieschke (2009) suggest that explicit strategy instruction would have a positive effect if it was considered as part of the overall curriculum in the context of teaching English as a foreign language. Because most of the time, strategies are taught implicitly or are integrated as part of a lesson. However, it would be better to teach strategies explicitly, since this is a guided and controlled way, students can get used to using strategies every time they think some strategies may help them. Consistently, Ahmadi, Ismail and Abdullah (2013) conducted a study where they corroborated the view that explicit instruction of metacognitive reading strategies is a practical and feasible tool to enhance students' reading comprehension and they point out the benefits from explicit reading instruction. Somehow, they say that teaching metacognitive strategies may be challenging for teachers if they desire to teach in a conventional way; although, the outcomes are positive and worthwhile. Another benefit is that it helps students to know when and how to utilize a strategy while reading.

In order to teach strategies, O'Malley and Chamot (1997) proposed the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). This framework has the purpose of illustrating a way to teach strategies explicitly in an ESL or EFL context. On that account, the CALLA model consists of three main components: (a) topics from the major content subjects, (b) the development of academic language skills, and (c) explicit instruction in learning strategies for both content and language acquisition. Somehow, the three components of the CALLA model are expected to be carried out in the following five stages:

1. Preparation: the teacher poses questions to students in order to elicit their background knowledge and strategies in the preparation stage.
2. Presentation: the teacher presents new strategies, concepts, and language through modeling in the presentation stage. The teacher is encouraged to use lots of visuals and demonstrations.
3. Practice: students use the strategies they learn from modeling and apply the strategies more effectively with new tasks in the practice stage. They verbalize and describe their efforts to apply strategies with learning activities, often working with classmates in a collaborative manner.
4. Evaluation: students raise their metacognitive awareness of what they achieved and assess their learning process.
5. Expansion: the students relate what they learned to their culture and transfer strategies they learn to the outside world.

Regarding the implementation of the CALLA model, Suh (2012) states that the CALLA model emphasizes both language and content. Therefore, this model can be suitable to be implemented in EFL or ESL classroom context. What is more, the author mentions that there has not been much research regarding the use of the model in classrooms. In the same way, Albashtawi (2019) conducted a research study where participants were divided in two groups: an experimental and a conventional group. The results showed that students' reading achievement increased only in the experimental group, since they were taught using the CALLA model. Additionally, the students expressed that being taught using the model had a positive impact on their learning process.

2.4 The skimming strategy

As Grabe and Stoller (2011) state that learners may have different purposes for reading, Harmer (2012) points out that learners need to be involved in both, intensive and extensive reading. As examples, he states that extensive reading mostly takes place outside the classroom and it is expected that students can read for pleasure rather than reading for learning the language. On the other hand, the term intensive reading is the one that deals with classroom context learning and most of the time, this type of reading is designed for learning purposes where students deal with short texts accompanied by questions to test comprehension. As a result, students may read for general or specific information.

In accordance with Krashen and Terrel (1983), when learners are looking for the main or general idea of a passage, they do not focus on specific information or pay attention to details. This reading strategy is called skimming. As specified by Scrivener (2011), when students use the skimming strategy, it is expected that they need to read quickly to discover key topics, main ideas, overall theme, basic structure of the text, etc. By doing this, students do not need to read

every work, instead they only read portions of the text. Furthermore, Scrivener (2011) affirms that the skimming strategy uses top-down processing. Students read for overall information and when they do this process, they are also focusing on text shape or structure. Additionally, Brown and Lee (2015) indicate that skimming is a valuable strategy, since it gives them the opportunity to predict the purpose of the passage, main topic, it can also make them predict supporting ideas resulting in reading in a more focused way.

For this reason Konstant (2011) summarizes three important characteristics of the skimming strategy: skimming to overview, skimming to preview and skimming to review. These 3 processes can be used with the same reading text or depending on our purposes for reading, we can use one or two of them. As examples, when readers skim to overview, the focus is on the text structure rather than on content. Skimming to preview is used when learners need to re-read the text, collecting as much information as possible in a short period of time. Finally, skimming to review is a process that takes place after we read the text and the idea is to get more familiar with the content.

Dhillon, Herman and Syafryadin (2020) conducted research which revealed that students who use the skimming strategy can improve their ability to comprehend texts. However, the study also showed that students who did not use the strategy could not be able to show improvement. Sari (2016) conducted classroom action research regarding the use of skimming and scanning strategies. Focusing on the skimming strategy, it was shown that students made significant improvement in relation to reading comprehension and it also showed that this also had positive results with respect to students' participation in joining the reading class. Darmawan (2017) concluded that the skimming technique had a significant contribution to students' reading comprehension at the fourth semester of the English Study Program at the University of Metro. What is more, this great impact in reading comprehension has assisted students when reading for general comprehension in a text or paragraphs. In a study to find out whether the skimming and scanning techniques can improve EFL students' English reading comprehension in Indonesia, Yusuf, Yusuf, Yusuf and Nadya (2017) found that the mean score between a pre-test and a post-test was significantly different.

2.5 The use of visuals: graphic organizers

The use of visuals to predict content from a text is essential. Hence, Pan and Pan (2009) determine that any graphic displays that accompany a text's content, can be defined as visuals. For instance, charts, pictures, photos, animations are defined as visuals. Accordingly, Majidi and Aydinlu (2016) concluded that the effects of visuals are very significant in the process of reading when they mingle with the use of reading strategies. Taking into account that the use of visuals is greatly important in the process of reading, Campbell and Cuba (2015) determine that using visuals is a great feature to support reading comprehension. Respectively, to investigate teachers' perception towards the use of visuals to enhance students' interest in reading, Yunus, Salehi and John (2013) found out that the majority of teachers had positive perceptions about the use of visuals in the classroom. For instance, it was mentioned that this not only helps teachers to engage their students to read literary texts but also helps to build a positive atmosphere among students; as a result students find their own initiative to continue improving.

When learners of a foreign language have to present ideas, information in a new language can be overwhelming. This is why graphic organizers can show the information graphically (Echevarria, Vogt and Short, 2008). They also say that graphic organizers are used in school but it would be of a great advantage if they can be linked to the lesson learning objectives, since students can display their ideas or definitions in a simple way. Further, students can use graphic organizers that are appropriate to organize the information they are learning. In relation to the use of graphic organizers in reading instruction, Jiang and Grabe (2007) argued that graphic organizers represent the discourse structures of a text, therefore, graphic organizers could illustrate strong evidence of effectiveness. Hence these visuals should be adopted in comprehension instruction, considering the different types of graphic organizers available and appropriateness to the tasks. Finally, the authors concluded that there was enough research in L1 reading context at the time; somehow, there was scarce investigation in L2 contexts.

Action research conducted by Saputra (2017) highlights the use of graphic organizers and mentions that graphic organizers are visual displays where the relationship between facts, terms, or ideas can be illustrated. Therefore, they can be seen as a bridge to connect ideas from reading texts. Moreover, the findings showed that the use of graphic organizers improve learners' reading comprehension to understand main ideas and important information in the text. Another important finding was that the use of graphic organizers helped students to overcome boredom, because before the implementation students felt unmotivated to read English texts or participate in reading lessons. As a result, after the implementation it was observed that students wanted to participate in the reading lessons and felt motivated in the teaching and learning process. Praveen and Rajan (2013), in their article to examine ESL middle school language learners' use of these graphics as information organizers while comprehending a passage for main ideas, supporting details, facts, opinions, comparisons and contradictions, concluded that the use of graphic organizers by ESL learners promoted strategic reading competence, classified the content of a passage, distinguished the most salient ideas from the supporting information. Furthermore, they revealed that in comparison with the traditional reading approach, the use of graphic organizers provides more chances for school learners to participate more actively in constructing organizers.

2.5 Chilean EFL adult confinement context

Education for youths and adults started in 1976 to improve the rates of illiteracy as well as to increase compulsory schooling (Ibarra, Opazo and Zamora, 2020). In this context, the national curriculum is based on equality, since it allows the same opportunities of education for all students to improve their life projects. For this reason, it is important to mention education within confinement contexts, since this is a concept used in Chile when accessing education in the penitentiary space, in institutions for young people, adult people and in closed addiction care centers. The main goal is to safeguard peoples human rights (Huaiquián, Sánchez, Quilodrán and Vera, 2021). In this context, it is common to find learners from different realities, ages, social backgrounds, cultures, among other factors that involve their learning process to finish their secondary school studies.

When teaching in incarcerated contexts, it is relevant to mention the importance of giving inmates the guarantee of access to education as well as to highlight the relevance of educators and their contribution to teaching in unconventional contexts (Guerrero, Mora and Zavala, 2022). Due to the complexities and particularities that exist in incarcerated contexts, Mineduc (2019) identified some issues regarding not having classrooms or spaces available for teaching, behavior and discipline, which can be difficult for classroom management. However, it is highlighted how teachers and other professionals can promote a positive environment based on respect.

Respectively, Garcés, De Rosas, Gacitúa and Pedraza (2018) explain the importance of materials to support students' learning process, exemplifying that it is essential to have materials that are designed for incarcerated contexts as well as the power of innovation into the classrooms.

Taking into consideration the context explained before, it can be observed that the reading skill is a complex skill to develop. Although the Ministry of Education (2016) suggests teaching strategies to enhance the reading comprehension process for secondary students, in the syllabus for adult learners, this is not mentioned explicitly. However, Mineduc (2020) proposed the foundation of the national curriculum bases of education for young people and adults, in which it is encouraged that the curriculum has to be adapted to the context. Somehow, students from confinement contexts may face many drawbacks when it comes to learning English as a foreign language because there are some limitations in terms of technology, curriculum, schedule, students' socio-cultural and the mere physical environment; resulting in lack of appropriate strategies to develop reading comprehension tasks. Therefore, in an incarcerated context, it can be observed how most students find challenging and difficult to comprehend varied types of texts in English. More specifically, there is almost scarce research on how adult learners from confinement contexts develop the process of reading comprehension by using strategies.

De Lucio, Avilés and Butrón (2018), explain the context of working in a prison. As they state, there are many challenges that teachers experience when teaching to inmates. Particularly, the authors mention that reading could be considered as a skill to get students distracted from their immediate reality. Moreover, they found out that inmates considered English classes as a rewarding experience, because they can express their emotions and build human relationships. Shippen, Houchins, Crites, Derzis and Patterson (2010) researched to examine basic reading skills of incarcerated males. They discuss that even though incarcerated learners have a lower level of English, if teachers can increase their literacy skills, their quality of life can be strengthened.

CHAPTER III. METHOD

3.1 Type of research

The present action research study was implemented in an EFL class for youth and adult inmate learners in an incarcerated school context. According to Burns (2005), action research can be seen as a means to understand problematic situations that occur in particular contexts with the purpose of improving them. Correspondingly, in this action research the problem is related to the reading skill, since it has been identified that students specifically have difficulty when reading for general information. According to the literature, authors such as Grabe and Stoller (2013) define reading as a complex skill. In this same respect, they mention that strategies are conscious actions that learners take into consideration to regulate their learning. Therefore, the use of strategies can be seen as conscious steps to improve the process of acquiring skills in a second language (Oxford, 1990). Accordingly, Crookes (1993) points out that action research is a particular research where teachers are directly involved in the study and they research to answer the issues and questions that affect their own school context.

3.2 Description of participants

The participants in this study are 6 inmate adult learners who are in an incarcerated school context. They are 9th and 10th graders. They are taking this modality as part of the special program for youth and adult students in the country, which aims to provide these students the opportunity to finish their primary or secondary studies in a more flexible program. This educational modality called education for youths and adults was born in 1976 to improve the rates of illiteracy as well as to increase compulsory schooling (Ibarra, Opazo and Zamora, 2020). The students' ages range from 19 to 50 and they come from different social backgrounds, which means they come from different cities along the region and country. Additionally, some students identify themselves as indigenous native people.

The participants have 3 hours of English classes a week. Some of them have not been in the school system for years, whereas there are others that have interrupted their secondary studies recently. Moreover, students are part of the school system for different purposes. They explain their desire to finish their studies to get benefits from the prison system as well as personal goals that involve themselves or their families. Regarding their level of English, at the beginning of the year, students sat for an adapted international diagnostic exam ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) from Cambridge University, specifically the Knowledge of English Test (KET). As a result, the exams showed that only some students were able to get close to an A1 level of English in relation to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001).

In relation to the sampling selection, this corresponds to a non-probability sampling since participants are selected in a convenience sampling due to some limitations and particular characteristics of students (Taherdoost, 2016). Consequently, according to Mason (2002), this action research has a purposive sampling because the participants selected are meaningful in concordance to the objectives this action research embraces as well as what the literature suggests.

3.3 Research question and objectives

The main purpose of this action research study is to improve students' sub-skill in reading for general information. Therefore, the question that is intended to be answered is: how could the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers support adult learners' reading for general information in a Chilean EFL incarcerated context? Hence the scope of this study is to explore the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming technique through the use of graphic organizers to support the reading for general information sub-skill. Therefore, this study can serve as a way to illustrate how the teaching of explicit strategies can improve students' performances and be analyzed by other classroom contexts so as to serve as a resource for teachers and students. With respect to the intellectual puzzle, this study attempts to address a predictive intellectual puzzle, since one of the main focuses is to obtain data from the intervention that is going to be done. Therefore, it is expected to have a favorable outcome from the objectives that guide the research (Mason, 2002).

3.3.2 General objective

To explore the contribution of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers in supporting adult learners' reading for general information in a Chilean EFL incarcerated context.

3.3.3 Specific objectives

To analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information.

To describe participants' perceptions about the teaching of the explicit skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support reading for general information.

3.4 Research problem

Teaching English as foreign language is a well-known subject taught in many countries. In this context, teaching English as foreign language (TEFL), involves the four fundamental skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. As a way of illustration, one of the skills that students encounter the most is reading (Amid, 2019). As specified by Grabe (2014), reading is a complex skill to not only define but also acquire it. Since learners have different purposes for reading, they are expected to use different strategies that require cognitive and metacognitive processes to create meaning from words. In the same regard, the Ministry of Education (2016) suggests teaching strategies to students in order to achieve the skills. For instance, in the curriculum framework provided by the Ministry of Education in Chile, it is exemplified that strategies can be taught either explicitly or implicitly.

As a result, in the Chilean context of teaching English to incarcerated youth and adult learners, it is observed that students are mostly exposed to reading texts in classrooms. However, the reading skill continues to be challenging for them. For instance, in this particular context, students point out that it is extremely difficult for them to understand texts and claim they do not possess strategies to overcome this situation. In particular, when students face activities where they have to understand general information, they struggle to get a general idea of the text and paragraphs. Moreover, Mineduc (2019), highlighted some problems and challenges that are encountered when teaching in incarcerated contexts. As exemplified, issues regarding classroom

availability and discipline are found in prison. Garcés, De Rosas, Gacitúa, and Pedraza (2018) also exemplified lack of contextualized and adapted materials for inmates, which can be observed as a challenging drawback for teachers and students.

Taking into account the above context, this problem is tackled by explicitly teaching the strategy of skimming. According to Majidi and Aydinlu (2016), by teaching explicit strategies to enhance reading comprehension, students are expected to have more solid tools to improve their reading ability. Consequently, this process will be supported by the use of graphic organizers. Accordingly, Saputra (2017) states that the use of graphic organizers aid students to record main ideas, relationship among concepts, illustrate relationships among ideas, specially when they have limited vocabulary. Respectively, the importance of innovation into the classroom is a key element to support students in jail (Garcés, De Rosas, Gacitúa and Pedraza, 2018).

3.5 Stages of the action research

This action research study consisted of 4 sessions in total. In the first session, participants took the pre-reading intervention test and they were taught the first lesson regarding the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers. Consequently, in the second, third and fourth sessions, participants were also taught the strategy explicitly. Moreover, in the fourth session the students took the post-reading intervention test. Finally, in the fifth session the students took part in the focus group interview in which they had to discuss the questions stated to finally make a drawing to deepen on the answers provided in the focus group discussion.

In sessions number one, two, three and four, participants were explicitly taught the skimming technique through the use of graphic organizers. The lesson structure was based on the O'Malley and Chamot (1997) framework for teaching strategies, named as the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). This framework is composed of five stages: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and expansion. During the five stages students are prepared by activating prior knowledge, presented with the strategies they will use, they practice the strategy in a guided way, they assess their performance using the strategy taught and finally they practice the strategy autonomously (See appendix 6).

To gather data regarding the students' perceptions towards the explicit teaching of the skimming technique through the use of graphic organizers, they took part in a focus group discussion (See appendix 4). The questions were related to 3 dimensions, the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy, the teaching and use of graphic organizers and their improvements to enhance the reading for general information sub-skill. Furthermore, to inquire on their answers, students were asked to make a drawing to display their experience regarding the sessions they were part of (See appendix 4 and 5). Accordingly, each session is described in the chart below.

Session	Objective	Activities
1	Based on an explanation of what a skimming strategy is, students are able to	Preparation: greeting, rules of the class and objective and prior knowledge activation. Presentation: vocabulary, teaching of the skimming strategy and the use of a graphic organizer.

	skim general ideas from a descriptive text supported by the use of a “tree” graphic organizer.	<p>Practice: practice of the strategy and use of the tree graphic organizer.</p> <p>Evaluation: self assessment checklist based on their performance.</p> <p>Expansión: use of the strategy and creation of a tree graphic organizer.</p>
2	After having practiced how to skim general ideas from a text, students are able to gather general ideas from a descriptive text creating a “tree” graphic organizer to display the information.	<p>Preparation: greeting, rules of the class and objective and prior knowledge activation.</p> <p>Presentation: vocabulary, teaching of the skimming strategy and the use of a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Practice: practice of the strategy and use of the tree graphic organizer.</p> <p>Evaluation: self assessment checklist based on their performance.</p> <p>Expansión: use of the strategy and creation of a tree graphic organizer.</p>
3	After having reviewed how to skim general ideas from a text, students are able to gather general ideas from a descriptive text supported by the use of a “spider” graphic organizer.	<p>Preparation: greeting, rules of the class and objective and prior knowledge activation.</p> <p>Presentation: vocabulary, teaching of the skimming strategy and the use of a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Practice: practice of the strategy and use of the tree graphic organizer.</p> <p>Evaluation: self assessment checklist based on their performance.</p> <p>Expansión: use of the strategy and creation of a spider graphic organizer.</p>
4	After having practiced how to skim general ideas from a text, students are able to gather general ideas from a descriptive text creating a “spider” graphic organizer to display the information.	<p>Preparation: greeting, rules of the class and objective and prior knowledge activation.</p> <p>Presentation: vocabulary, teaching of the skimming strategy and the use of a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Practice: practice of the strategy and use of the tree graphic organizer.</p> <p>Evaluation: self assessment checklist based on their performance.</p> <p>Expansión: use of the strategy and creation of a spider graphic organizer.</p>

Table 1. Action research planning.

In session number one, the students were explicitly taught the skimming strategy and the use of graphic organizers. The use of the skimming technique was taught and modeled using a reading text. Then, to explain the use of the tree graphic organizer, the same reading text was used. To practice the skimming technique supported by the use of the tree graphic organizer, they were given a different text and the graphic organizer was already drawn. Moreover, one part of the graphic organizer was already written. After the students self assessed themselves, they were asked to share some of the descriptors they answered. Finally, in the expansion part, students were given another reading text and they needed not only to find general ideas from the text and paragraphs, they also needed to create the tree graphic organizer.

In session number two, the students were asked to remember key concepts of the skimming strategy and the graphic organizer from the last lesson. Again, they were explicitly taught the skimming strategy and the use of the tree graphic organizer. The use of the skimming technique was modeled using a reading text and the same text was used to explain the use of the tree graphic organizer. To practice the skimming technique supported by the use of the tree graphic organizer, they were given a different text and the graphic organizer was already drawn and one part of the graphic organizer was already written. They took the self assessment and shared ideas about it. Finally, in the expansion part, students were given a different reading text and they needed to find general ideas from the text and paragraphs to display them in a tree graphic organizer they created.

In session 3, the students were asked to remember key concepts of the skimming strategy and the use of graphic organizers. They were explicitly taught the skimming strategy and the use of a spider graphic organizer. The use of the skimming technique was modeled using a reading text and the same text was used to explain the use of the spider graphic organizer. To practice the skimming technique supported by the use of the spider graphic organizer, they were given a different text and the graphic organizer was already drawn and one part of the graphic organizer was already written. They took the self assessment and shared ideas about it. Finally, in the expansion part, students were given a different reading text and they needed to find general ideas from the text and paragraphs to display them in a spider graphic organizer they created.

Finally, in session 4, the students were asked to share the ideas and concepts regarding the skimming strategy and the use of the spider graphic organizer. They were taught the use of the skimming technique using a reading text and the same text was used to explain the use of the spider graphic organizer. To practice the skimming technique supported by the use of the spider graphic organizer, they were given a different text and the graphic organizer was already drawn and one part of the graphic organizer was already done. They took the self assessment and shared ideas about it. Finally, in the expansion part, students were given a different reading text and they needed to find general ideas from the text and paragraphs to display them in a spider graphic organizer they created.

3.6 Data collection techniques

In order to collect data and to answer the research question and its objectives, this study aims to use two types of data collection tools: pre and post tests and a focus group discussion. The instruments were piloted with a group of 6 secondary inmate students from 9th and 10th grade.

3.6.1. Pre and post reading intervention tests

According to Lankshear and Knobel (2004), pre and post-intervention tests aim to compare whether or not changes occurred. In this study the pre and post reading tests are intended to measure students' improvements regarding the explicit teaching of the skimming technique through the use of graphic organizers. The type of text consists of a reading text that mainly focuses on reading for general information. Therefore, the pre reading test that students take in the first lesson is a descriptive text where they have to answer one single item that contains open ended questions. As a consequence, after the sessions and at the end of the action plan (See appendix 1), students take the same reading text; however, they have to display general

ideas from texts by using a graphic organizer instead of answering open ended (See appendices 2 and 3).

3.6.2 Focus group

To collect students' perceptions regarding the skimming reading strategy and the reading process where they took part in, a focus group to discuss the topic is conducted at the end of the intervention. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) state that the purpose of focus groups is to generate discussion based on questions that are asked to several individuals simultaneously. Therefore, this helps to obtain insights, consensus or divergences on an issue or topic. Moreover, focus groups can help to maximize data collection in a limited period of time. In this context, the focus group discussion will contain 6 questions to guide the conversation and the questions are based on three dimensions; the explicit teaching of the skimming technique, the use of graphic organizers to support the reading technique and improvements in the sub-skill of reading for general information (See appendices 4 and 5).

3.7 Data analysis techniques

In order to analyze the data collected, it was analyzed both qualitative and quantitatively. Firstly, the pre and post reading intervention tests were statistically analyzed based on a measure of central tendency. For instance, findings are presented in a chart as descriptive statistics, which show students' improvements based on the score they get in both tests (See appendix 7).

Secondly, the focus group interview is based on content analysis. According to Lankshear and Knobel (2004), content analysis is mainly used with interview transcripts and fieldnotes. For that reason, content analysis helps to make valid inferences from the data analyzed. Although, this does not mean that any inferences can be made, so the inferences are only based on what the text says.

CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

This chapter aims to illustrate the findings related to the two specific objectives stated for this action research. The following data was gathered before and after the intervention. Regarding the specific objective number one, the data was collected from the pre and post reading intervention tests. With respect to the specific objective number two, the data was collected from the focus group discussion and drawings from students together with the questions to explain their drawings.

4.1 Specific objective 1: to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information

To gather data regarding the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers, pre and post reading intervention tests were conducted. For instance, these texts aimed to evaluate students' answers on getting general ideas from the texts and separate paragraphs. As a result, the tests were given scores and both tests were assessed using a rating scale. The rating scale contained three dimensions: content, organization and language. Moreover, each dimension was attached to two criteria.

4.1.2 Pre and post reading intervention tests

The following table aims to show each student's score in terms of the mean and standard deviation obtained in the pre and post reading intervention test.

Student	Pre intervention test	Post intervention test	Mean	Standard Deviation
Student 1	7	21	14	7
Student 2	21	23	22	1
Student 3	19	24	21,5	2.5
Student 4	19	23	21	2
Student 5	20	22	21,5	1
Student 6	17	23	19,9	3
Total	103	136	119.5	16.5

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation from re and post intervention tests

In relation to the pre and post reading intervention test, it can be observed that all of the students had improvements with respect to reading for general information. Taking into account the global score, it is observed that the standard deviation (SD) from the mean is 16.5. With respect to each student's score, the results are explained as follows: student number one is the one who increased his score the most in comparison to the pre-intervention test. Student number

two had a good performance regarding the pre-intervention test. Somehow, it can be said that he did not have issues when reading for general information. Student number three had a great performance in the post-reading intervention test in comparison to the pre-intervention test. Student number four also had a higher score in comparison to the pre-intervention test. Student number five is one of the students whose score did not differ greatly in comparison to the pre-intervention reading test. Finally, student number six was the second student who had a greater performance in relation to the pre-reading intervention test.

4.1.3 Dimensions of the rating scale for assessing the graphic organizer

In order to assess the answers from the pre and post intervention tests as well as to assess the use of the graphic organizer in the post intervention test, a rating scale was applied. Therefore, the rating scale assessed three important dimensions: **content, organization and language**.

1. The **content** dimension addressed the following descriptors:
 - The text contains relevant and sufficient information. The text illustrates the whole idea from the text. (4 points)
 - The texts contain relevant and sufficient information. The texts illustrate general ideas from each paragraph. (4 points)
2. The **organization** dimension included the following descriptors:
 - The general idea of the text is shown in a figure/space. (4 points)
 - The general ideas of each paragraph are shown in figures/spaces. (4 points)
3. The **language** dimension covered the following descriptors:
 - The texts/ideas do not contain any grammatical errors, spelling or punctuation. (4 points)
 - The texts/ideas are coherent and cohesive. (4 points)

Correspondingly, table 2 aims to show the scores obtained in the pre and post intervention tests so as to explain the mean and standard deviation from the tests.

Dimension	Pre intervention test	Post intervention test	Mean	Standard deviation
1. Content	29	44	26.5	7.5
2. Organization	34	48	41	7
3. Language	40	44	42	2
Total	103	136	119,5	16.5

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation from the global scores per dimension

Table 2 shows the results obtained from both intervention tests, pre and post. As observed, in the dimension related to content, students showed great improvement in terms of identifying the general idea from the text and general ideas from the three paragraphs the reading text contained. Therefore, it can also be said that this is the dimension in which students showed remarkable improvement.

In terms of organization, students showed great improvement as well. However, in the pre-intervention test, the general idea from the whole text and general ideas from each paragraph had to be written below the right questions. However, in the post reading test the general idea from the whole text had to be written in the right space of the graphic organizer. However, most students were not able to complete and write some of the questions in the pre-reading intervention test while in the post-reading intervention test all the students were able to write all of the answers in the right graphic organizer.

In relation to language, students showed great improvement in both tests. Somehow, in the post reading test their scores were four points higher. The results did not show a great difference since students wrote their answers in Spanish and that is one reason why they did not show spelling problems nor did they have inaccuracies regarding coherence or cohesion.

4.1.4 Mean, median and mode from the pre intervention tests

The following table aims to show students' scores in terms of the mean, median and mode in the pre-reading intervention test.

Student	Pre intervention test	Minimum possible score	Maximum possible score	Mean	Median	Mode
Total	103	6	24	17.1	19	19

Table 3. Mean, median and mode from pre intervention tests

Table 3 shows that the total score achieved from all of the students is 103 from a rating scale whose minimum possible score was 6 and maximum score was 24. The mean was 17.1 and the median was 19. Regarding the mode, the score 19 was repeated twice, since two students had the same score.

4.1.5 Mean, median and mode from the post intervention tests

Table 4 aims to show students' scores in terms of the mean, median and mode in the pre-reading intervention test.

Student	Post intervention test	Minimum possible score	Maximum possible score	Mean	Median	Mode
Total	136	6	24	22.6	23	23

Table 4. Mean, median and mode from post intervention tests

Table 4 shows that the total score achieved from all of the students is 136 from a rating scale whose minimum possible score was 6 and maximum score was 24. The mean was 22.6 and the median was 23. Regarding the mode, the score 23 was repeated three times, since three students had the same score. Additionally, it is important to say that students who had the same scores in the post-reading intervention tests were not the same students whose scores were the same in the pre-reading intervention test.

4.1.4 Mean, median and mode from the pre and post intervention tests

Table 5 aims to show students' scores in terms of the mean, median and mode in the pre and post intervention test.

	Pre intervention test	Post intervention test	Mean	Median	Mode
Total	103	136	19.9	21	23

Table 5. Mean, median and mode from post intervention tests

Table 5 shows the mean, median and mode regarding both tests, pre and post reading intervention tests. For instance, the difference between both tests is 33 points, resulting in having a higher score in the post-reading intervention tests from all of the students. The mean is 19.9, the median 21 and the mode 23, the mode is repeated three times and it corresponded to the post-reading intervention tests. Overall, it can clearly be seen that students had a great performance in the post reading tests, which means that the intervention had a positive effect on students' performance regarding the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers in supporting reading for general information subskill.

As a result, the data showed that most of the participants improved their scores regarding the pre-intervention test. Interestingly, the majority of the participants' scores were a little similar in the pre-intervention test. On the other hand, in the post intervention tests, those participants increased their scores but they were slightly higher. However, one of the participants had a great performance in comparison to the pre-intervention test. When assessing each dimension in regards to the use of graphic organizers, it was observed that participants improved their scores in relation to two criteria: content and organization; since their scores in terms of the use of language did not differ much from the pre-intervention test.

4.2 Specific objective 2: To describe participants' perceptions about the teaching of the explicit skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support reading for general information

To describe students' perceptions about the teaching of the strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support their reading comprehension for general information, a focus group discussion was conducted. The discussion was based on eight questions regarding the teaching of the strategy. For instance, between two and three questions were intended to address each dimension. To illustrate this, questions number one, two and three were related to the explicit teaching of the strategy; questions four and five had to do with the use of graphic organizers to support the strategy use; and questions number six, seven and eight addressed the students'

improvement regarding the the pre and post tests as well as the sessions they were part of.

4.2.3 Perceptions towards the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy

The following section has a relationship with students' perception towards the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy. The three subheadings tackled are in concordance with three questions asked to the students. For instance, students had to answer regarding the explicit teaching of the strategy, its use and results as well as the strengths and difficulties when using the strategy.

a) Explicit teaching of the skimming strategy

Regarding the first question, the students were asked about their impression towards the sessions where they were explicitly taught the skimming strategy. In general, students expressed that the sessions helped them in terms of keeping learning English and as a good experience. To illustrate one of the answers, student number one explained the following:

“Bueno, mi impresión fue que, pude aprender inglés, no sabiendo nada. No sabía que yo podía aprender y participar en las clases de inglés” [Well, my impression was that I was able to learn English, not knowing anything. I didn't know that I could learn and participate in the English classes].

Moreover, student number two said:

“Fue bueno, porque la enseñanza que nos dio fue algo, fue una experiencia buena porque trabajar aquí nosotros es algo que hemos aprendido y que nos va a servir a lo mejor más adelante” [It was good, because the teaching he gave us was something, it was a good experience because working here is something that we have learned and that will serve us better later on].

Consequently, it can be seen that the explicit teaching of the strategy raised awareness of the importance of learning a strategy but also learning the target language. Therefore, it resulted in a positive experience for students.

b) Use of the strategy and its result

In relation to question number two, students were asked if they were able to use the skimming strategy and what happened when they used it. One student provided an answer that reflects that he was able to use the strategy and it helped him to understand the text better. For instance, he explained:

“Si, pudimos utilizar la estrategia, ya que se nos facilitó más para entender cada párrafo de cada diálogo que se ponía, y a la vez se nos hizo más fácil para completar la materia” [Yes, we were able to use the strategy, since it made it easier for us to understand each paragraph and each dialogue, and at the same time it made it easier for us to complete the task]. The student tried to explain that using the strategy helped him and the class to understand what was being read and carry it out the task. When he referred to the 'materia', he referred to the class and the task related to reading.

c) Strengths and difficulties when using the strategy

With respect to question number three, the students were inquired regarding the strengths and difficulties when using the skimming strategy. The students who addressed this question,

Furthermore, in relation to the strengths and difficulties, students expressed that learning and using the strategy help to understand what they are reading; however, vocabulary is still an issue they find difficult to deal with.

4.2.4 Perceptions towards the use of graphic organizers to support the strategy use

The following subheadings are stated to explain students' perceptions towards the use of graphic organizers to support the strategy use. Correspondingly, the students were asked to address two questions regarding the experience of using graphic organizers to support the reading for general information and if graphic organizers helped them in their learning process.

a) Experience of using graphic organizers

Regarding question number four, students needed to answer how they would describe the experience of using graphic organizers instead of responding to written questions. In general, students stated that the use of graphic organizers can be seen as positive tools. For instance, student number two pointed out the following:

“Los gráficos fueron algo bueno. Porque haciendo los gráficos empezamos a desarrollar la historia, la lectura que estaba en la guía que usted nos daba y aparte uno comprendía más porque podía analizar toda la historia que se... venía en la guía” [The graphics were a good thing. Because when making the graphics we began to develop the story, the reading that was given in the worksheet, that you gave us. And apart from that, I understood more because I could analyze all the story that was in the handout] .

Respectively, student number four added:

“Porque se hace más fácil aprender un poco, los organizadores gráficos. Porque uno centraliza toda la... el contenido en cada organizador gráfico [Because it makes it easier to learn a little bit, the graphic organizers. Because you centralize all... the content in each graphic organizer].

The answers provided by the students explain that the use of graphic organizers aided into guiding, analyzing and learning.

b) Graphic organizers to help the learning process

The students were asked to discuss if graphic organizers helped them in their learning process. One student answered by explaining that using graphic organizers was a tool that made it easier to read the text. To exemplify, student number three expressed this:

“Si, yo considero que sí. La gran parte ya que se nos fue más fácil comprender la lectura, porque fuimos separando cada párrafo de cada contenido. Entonces, para mí por lo menos, se nos fue un poco más fácil para comprender todo” [Yes, I think so. Most of it because it was easier for us to understand the reading, because we were separating each paragraph from each content. So, for me at least, it was a little easier to understand everything].

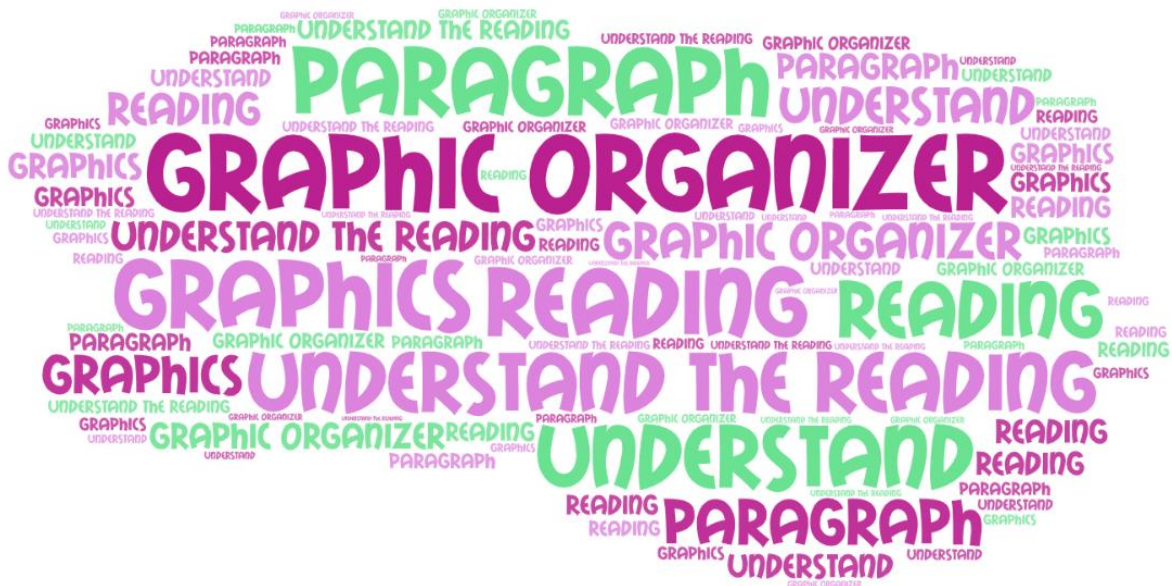


Figure 2. Word cloud of the most frequent concepts expressed by participants in the focus group discussion.

As observed in the word cloud, the most repeated word or concept was graphic organizer. Which is fundamental, since participants were asked how the use of graphic organizers helped them. Consequently, participants explained that graphic organizers help to understand the texts more because the text can be split up to order the ideas and analyze what is being read. As a result, when students use graphic organizers, they find it less difficult to read and understand reading texts.

4.2.5 Improvements regarding the the pre/post intervention tests and intervention sessions

The subheadings addressed in this section are intended to explain the students' perceptions regarding the improvements and implications regarding the skimming strategy. Focusing on the pre and post intervention test as well as the intervention sessions, students discussed the changes and improvements, and if they will use the skimming strategy in the future.

a) Changes and improvements

During the process of teaching the skimming strategy, students needed to explain if they noticed any changes in their responses and if they improved their reading comprehension. The answers provided illustrate that students noticed changes during each class and how they were improving. For example, student number two explained:

“Si notamos cambios porque con la estrategia que usted nos dio se nos hizo fácil comprender la lectura y hacer las oraciones más fácil. Porque cada gráfico tenía un... lo que significaba, y colocamos todo para hacer la oración” [Yes, we noticed changes because using the strategy that you gave us it was easy for us to understand the reading and make the sentences easier. Because each graphic had... what it meant, and we put everything to make the sentence].

Additionally, student number three pointed out:

“Claro, porque fuimos mejorando. Porque al principio no teníamos idea qué hacer, nos costó. Y con las clases, en cada clase fuimos mejorando, osea por todo [Of course because we were improving. Because at first we had no idea of what to do, it was difficult. And through the classes, in each class we were improving. I mean, for everything].

Therefore, the students were able to notice changes regarding reading comprehension as well as they observed that it was easier to understand the texts.

b) Skimming strategy and its implication in future readings

In regard to question number 7, the idea was to inquire if students think that in future readings they will use the strategy to locate general information in texts. Hence, the ideas explained by the students illustrate that they may use the strategy as well as they pointed out the use of graphic organizers as supporting tools. To exemplify, student number three answered:

“Sí, absolutamente sí, porque ya hemos aprendido más” [Yes, absolutely. Because we have already learned more].

Additionally, student number one explained:

“A futuro nos sirve mucho, porque como dice el compañero, en otro tiempo al leer así por leer no íbamos a entender. Pero así con los gráficos que nos enseñó aquí el profesor, ahora podemos entender un poco más y cada día más vamos a ir aprendiendo más...” [In the future it will be very useful for us, because as my classmate says, in other times when we read for the sake of reading, we would not understand. But with the graphics that the teacher taught us here, now we can understand a little more and every day we are going to learn more...].

As explained by both students, they were in agreement about using the strategy in the future and they also said that they had learned a little more. Moreover, student number one added that the graphic organizers are supportive tools.

c) Level of reading comprehension

Finally, in question number eight, the students needed to discuss if they noticed any change in their level of reading comprehension. Two students answered the question, and they explained what changes they experienced. Then, student number two pointed out:

“Si observamos, porque no sabíamos nada de inglés. El mismo vocabulario y el gráfico que empezamos a desarrollar, todas las preguntas que venían en las guías y con la enseñanza que usted nos dio. Osea obviamente aprendimos a desarrollar los gráficos y el mismo vocabulario que va a ir” [I observed changes because we didn't know any English. The graphics we began to develop, all the questions that were in the worksheet and with the teaching that you did. I mean, obviously we learned to develop the graphics and the same vocabulary that is in].

Further, student number one explained:

“Si, yo logré comprender más. Porque como dije anteriormente, no sabía nada de inglés y ahora sé algo de Inglés, aprendí algo de Inglés. Quiero seguir aprendiendo más Inglés” [Yes, I managed to understand more. Because as I said before, I didn't know any English and now I know some

English, I learned some English. I want to continue learning more English].

Consequently, the answers provided by the students explain that they observed changes regarding the reading skill. It can also be viewed that after the intervention, they knew what they had to do and they also explained the vocabulary they needed to use. Moreover, one student explained that he wants to continue learning.



Figure 2. Word cloud of the most frequent concepts expressed by participants in the focus group discussion.

As shown in the word cloud, the concepts expressed by participants are crucial to the questions they were asked. In this case, they were able to use and explain words related to the implementation of the action research and that were related to the skimming strategy and the use of graphic organizers.

In conclusion, the improvements students noticed in relation to the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy, the data they provided is marked by the positiveness of the strategy. This is also supported by the idea that using the strategy can result in reading the text with less difficulty. Although students explained that vocabulary was an issue when it comes to reading, they stated that the strategy and the use of graphic organizers helped them into reading and understanding the global meaning of the texts. Additionally, students stated that they may use the strategy in the future since it helped them to learn more and improved their reading comprehension. Correspondingly, the use of graphic organizers is another important aspect of the implementation of the action research, since students advocate these tools as supportive and guiding. Furthermore, students provided good reasoning regarding the experience they got from the action research.

4.2.6 Drawings as a means to gather more data from the participants

In order to gather more data from the focus group discussion, the students were also asked to make a drawing based on the three following suggestions:

1. Express through the drawing how you felt when doing the first and last reading test.

2. Express through the drawing how you felt when learning the skimming strategy to find main ideas in the text and paragraphs.
3. Express through the drawing how you felt when learning to use and create graphic organizers.

a) Student number 1 (See drawing one)

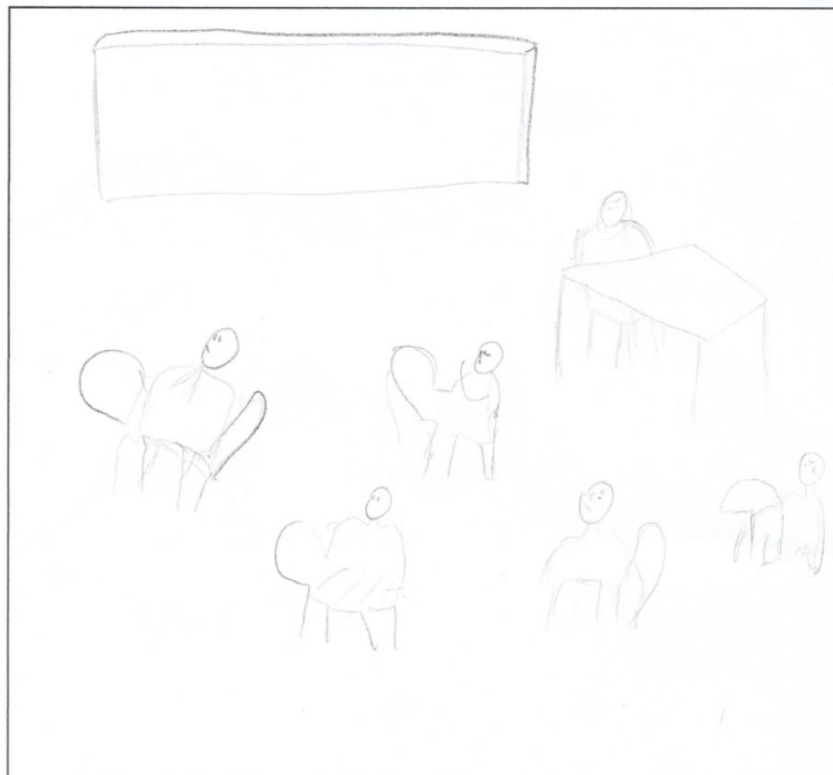
Firstly, regarding the first suggestion, student number one expressed the following:

“Representa la enseñanza de vocabulario y así también representa de que igual hemos aprendido” [It represents the teaching of vocabulary, and it also represents that we have learned and that we have grown].

Secondly, in relation to suggestion number two, the student stated:

“Representa el dibujo que está el profesor enseñándonos la estrategia de skimming, que para leer una lectura, tenemos que leer la primera estrofa, la estrofa del medio y la última estrofa. Y cómo podemos saber la conclusión que se de...” [It represents, the drawing represents that the teacher is teaching us the skimming strategy. If we want to read a reading text, we have to read the first ‘stanza’, the one in the middle and the last one. And we can know what the conclusion is].

Thirdly, the students explained something very positive: *“si, representa algo bueno, buena educación” [yes, it represents something, good education].*



Drawing 1: student number one

From the drawing and the interview extracts, it can be inferred that the sessions in which the student took part were very significant and he could remember specific steps to use the strategy. He also mentioned that the lessons were a symbol of good education and he valued the role of the teacher in guiding and modeling the lessons.

a) Student number two (See drawing two)

In relation to the first suggestion, student number two explained:

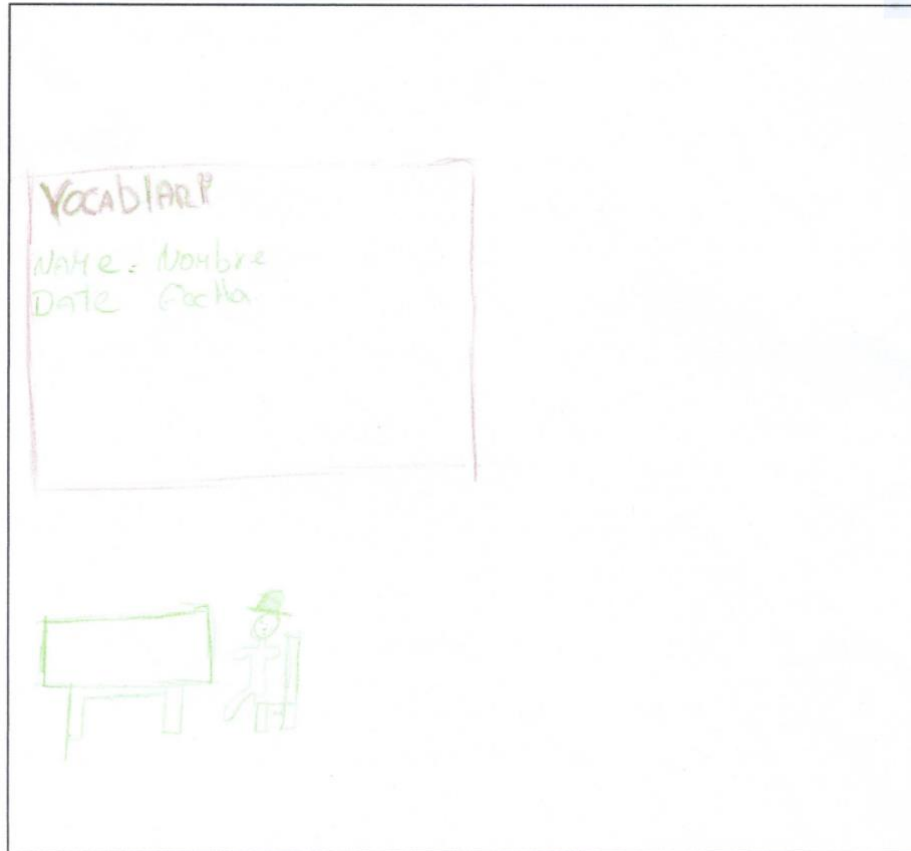
“Bueno yo hice prácticamente el vocabulario, representa la primera clase. La primera clase era como que no sabíamos nada, palabras que no sabemos, y empezamos a ver el vocabulario. Con la última prueba y con el skimming aprendimos a traducir los párrafos, los últimos párrafos para sacar la oración y también saber de qué se trata el texto [Well, I practically drew the vocabulary, it represents the first class. The first class was like we did not know anything, words we did not know and we started to see the vocabulary. In the last test and with skimming we learned to translate the paragraphs, the last paragraphs to get the sentence and also to know that the text is about].

With respect to the second suggestion, the student stated:

“Como le dije anteriormente, fue de que con el skimming que aprendimos, usted nos enseñó a ver la oración al principio y al fin, ahí se trata todo...” [As I told you before, it was that using skimming we learned, you taught us to see at the beginning and at the end, there is what is all about]. Regarding the use of graphic organizers, the student pointed out: “Los organizadores gráficos fue un aprendizaje bueno, porque ahí, uno hacía el primer gráfico, los cuadritos. El primer párrafo, segundo párrafo, tercer párrafo y al último hacemos un resumen de lo que significaba” [The graphic organizers were good as a teaching, because there, I did the first graphic, the squares. The first paragraphs, the second, the third, and at the end we do a summary of what it the text meant].

Finally, regarding the colors used, the student mentioned:

“Los colores fueron café y verde, como vida” [The colors were brown and green, like life].



Drawing 2: student number two

In order to make inferences from the drawing and the answers provided, the student explained that at first he did not know about the strategy and at the end he was aware of what to do and the steps to follow. Regarding the use of the graphic organizers, he explained how they are used and that they are good in terms of learning. Finally, he referred to the colors as something positive, since he related the colors to life.

b) Student number three (See drawing three)

In concordance to the first suggestion, student number three expressed:

“Mi dibujo representa lo aprendido en las clases más que nada, ya que con la estrategia de como sacar el método de skimming” [mi drawing represents what we learned in class, above all, since with the strategy of how to get the method of skimming]. In relation to the suggestion two, the student said: “Mi dibujo prácticamente se denomina la estrategia de skimming. Hice el gráfico del tipo de araña, que fue con el que me siento más cómodo y más ordenado para aprender más” [my drawing practically is named as the skimming strategy. I did the spider graphic type, that was the one with which I felt more comfortable and is more ordered to learn more].

Regarding the graphic organizers, he mentioned that his drawing represented the following:

“Representa lo aprendido y el orden prácticamente” [It presents what we learned and order practically]. In relation to the colors, the student explained: “...los colores representan más que

nada colores de la naturaleza ya que en el lugar en el cual estamos no se aprecian muchos colores...” [the colors represent the nature mainly, since the place where we are, we do not appreciate colors].



Drawing 3. Student number three

As seen and stated above, it can be observed that the student drew what he learned from the class and mentioned the strategy they were taught. He also drew one type of graphic organizer, the spider one. He put emphasis on the use of the graphic organizer because he said that using a graphic organizer helps to order ideas and the answers are also ordered. Finally, the colors he used have a relationship with the place where he currently is: jail.

c) Student number four (See drawing four)

Student number four drew according to the three suggestions. For instance, he first mentioned that:

“Mi dibujo representa el vocabulario que uno aprendió y respecto a la segunda prueba de leer y comprender en Inglés y del skimming, de leer la primera y la última oración” [My drawing represents the vocabulary that I learned and with respect to the second text of reading and understanding in English and the skimming, which is to read the first and the last sentence].

In relation to how he felt learning the strategy he explained:

“Que hay que leer y comprender bien el texto, y la estrategia de skimming abarca leer el primer

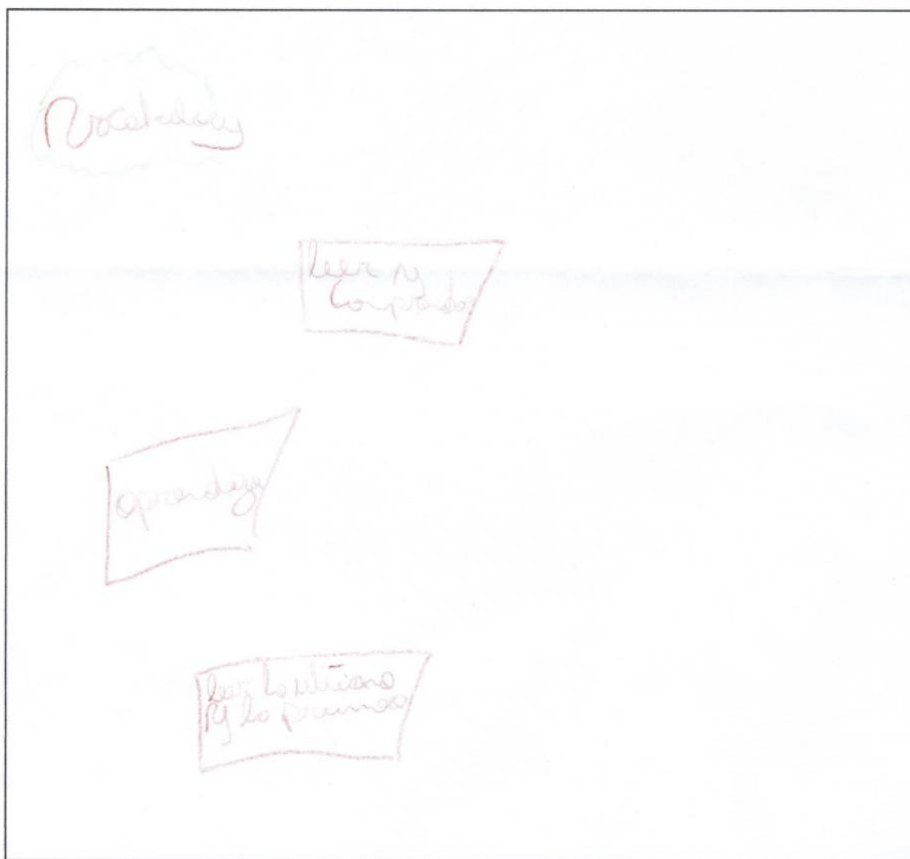
párrafo y la última parte del párrafo para comprender de qué se trata el texto” [We have to read and comprehend the text, and the skimming strategy is about reading the first and the last part of a paragraph to comprehend what the text is about].

Regarding the use of graphic organizers, he said:

“Bueno yo ocupé un organizador gráfico donde le puse leer y comprender, leer el primer y último párrafo. Y le puse aprendizaje, porque... todo abarca una sola cosa que es aprendizaje” [I used a graphic organizer where I wrote read and comprehend, read the first and the last paragraphs. And I wrote learning, because... everything is one thing, learning].

Finally, when he was asked about the colors, he explained:

“Los colores no tienen nada que ver” [The colors had nothing to do].



Drawing 4. Students number four

In the drawing as well as the answers provided, it can be pointed out that the student also referred to vocabulary that he learned and how to use the skimming strategy. He also mentioned the importance of comprehending, and when he needed to explain about the use of graphic organizers, he linked them to learning. Finally, the student did not link the colors to the drawing.

To conclude, drawings were very helpful to gather more data or to reinforce ideas stated

in the focus group discussion. For instance, participants showed interest in drawing and being asked to explain them. Most of the answers showed positiveness in relation to the interventions and the knowledge gained. Moreover, they were able to compare their performance based on the pre and post intervention tests, they could explain their thoughts on the strategy taught and the process of identifying general ideas in texts and paragraphs. Furthermore, they expressed a positive perception towards the learning and use of graphic organizers. Finally, when they were asked to explain the colors used, one of them explained that he used colors that were related to the fact of being in prison and another participant did not link the color to a feeling or thought. However, one participant linked the color to life.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The general objective of this study was to explore the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers on supporting adult learners' reading for general information in a Chilean EFL incarcerated context. Findings were analyzed based on the following two specific objectives: to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information and to describe participants' perceptions about the teaching of the explicit skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support reading for general information.

5.1 Reflections

To implement the present action research study, the sessions were based on what Chamot and O'malley (1997) proposed to teach strategies in second language acquisition, the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). Accordingly, Chamot and Robbins (2005) also presented a workshop to describe CALLA components. This framework has the purpose of illustrating a way to teach strategies explicitly in an ESL or EFL context. On that account, the CALLA model consists of three main components: (a) topics from the major content subjects, (b) the development of academic language skills, and (c) explicit instruction in learning strategies for both content and language acquisition. The three components of the CALLA model are expected to be carried out in the following five stages: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and expansion.

Taking into consideration the stages explained, the CALLA model can be considered as a solid framework to develop the teaching of the skimming strategy supported by the use of graphic organizers. In this context, for teaching the skimming strategy and the use of graphic organizers, students were trained in every lesson following the steps suggested by the CALLA model. As a result, in the post-intervention reading test, it was observed that students were able to complete the post intervention test and applied the knowledge and skills learned during the sessions. In the focus group discussion, students reflected and expressed their perception towards the action research study they were part of. The intervention resulted in expressing positive perceptions upon the explicit teaching of the strategy through the use of graphic organizers.

5.2 Specific objective one

Regarding the first specific objective, a pre and post reading intervention tests were applied. To assess both tests, an analytic rubric was designed and adapted. Firstly, when both tests were scored, the post-testing results showed that all of the students improved their reading for general information subskill. Therefore, as students were taught the skimming strategy during four intervention sessions, they raised awareness of the use of a strategy to improve reading comprehension and supported their understanding through the use of graphic organizers. Respectively, results are in concordance with Pourhosein and Sabouri (2016) conclusions in the field of reading comprehension in foreign language learning. They discussed whether learning reading strategies can enhance students' reading comprehension or not. They stated that reading

strategies have an important impact on students' reading comprehension and students become active makers of meaning. However, they also pointed out that reading activities should be attractive and related to the students' proficiency level. Therefore, even though the reading intervention tests in this action research study were adapted and simplified, vocabulary was a drawback for students when reading the texts. As Spielman (2022) explained, a lack of reading skills or strategies can limit students to carry out different tasks, which can be academic ones or situations they can face in the future. It was also stated that the lack of reading skills can also limit students' access to rehabilitation. For instance, in this action research study, this can be related to the problems the participants faced when they needed to carry out reading tasks. To illustrate those problems, the participants struggled a lot when they were asked to read in English, they considered that texts were difficult to understand. Consequently, in this intervention it was observed, in both the pre and post reading intervention tests, that students struggled with some vocabulary related to pronouns, verbs or adjectives.

Somehow, in the post reading test, it was observed that students were more familiar with the task, since the texts used during the intervention had basic linguistic features in relation to grammar and vocabulary. Correspondingly, it is also important to address what Ahmadi, Ismail and Abdullah (2013) researched about metacognitive awareness of strategies. In their study, they explain the importance of metacognitive reading strategy awareness in reading comprehension. As they say, when students are aware of the use of the right strategies to comprehend a text, this facilitates students' reading comprehension. In the case of this action research study, participants dealt with the skimming strategy, which can be associated with cognitive strategies. Somehow, the authors also agreed on the explicit teaching of strategies to improve students' reading comprehension. Moreover, Zhan and Guo (2020) concluded that when students are taught and trained to use strategies, they become aware of the use of such strategies, therefore, they improve their reading comprehension. Furthermore, one of the key points concluded by Svenson (2011) was that the reading ability, as well as writing, is an important skill not only for young students in an incarcerated context, but it is also essential for adult prisoners. The author explained that when students are trained to develop language skills, the outcomes are positive for their academic and emotional experiences. Therefore, this can eventually help to enhance their purposes to reintegrate in society and decrease the risks to interrupt studies or recidivism into criminality.

With respect to the use of the skimming strategy, specifically, results in this study showed that participants acquired the strategy positively and they were aware of its use and why it was used. To exemplify, Dhillon, Herman and Syafryadin (2020) conducted a research study to know what was the students' ability in reading without using the skimming strategy and also using the skimming strategy. Results showed that students who were part of the experimental group increased their ability in reading a narrative text. Students who were not part of the experimental group did not improve their ability to find the main idea from the text. This reinforces the idea that teaching reading strategies explicitly can enhance students' scores based on their level of comprehension in reading tasks. Moreover, this can be linked to what Freitez (2015) pointed out about the principles regarding the use of material or techniques to enhance effective communication, regarding the role of teachers and learners as fundamental. The author also argued the need for research in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in an incarcerated context. Somehow, it is relevant to mention that in this case, the identification of the problem regarding the reading skill as well as the action plan to solve the problem resulted in a positive outcome for participants.

Based on the evidence provided before, in the present study, it was observed that students

were able to increase their scores in the post reading test. Also, students were able to find the main idea in each paragraph and how to arrive at the main idea of the whole text. In the same regard, Sari (2016) conducted action research to implement the use of skimming and scanning techniques to improve the reading comprehension achievement of junior high school students. Hence, it was found out that students' results improved after the implementation. Although the study mentioned before is based on teaching the skimming and scanning strategies together, in the present study, students could also improve their score. Consequently, if the implementation of teaching the skimming technique is explicitly taught, positive results can be found, if students are trained (Darmawan, 2017).

In regard to the dimensions the rating scale contained to assess the use of graphic organizers as well as the responses students provided, it was found that content and organization of ideas had a great improvement. Language also had an improvement, somehow in the pre and post tests students performed well, whereas there was a slight improvement in the post intervention test. As stated before, the content of answers and the use of graphic organizers were significantly better in the post reading intervention test. Since the ideas they wrote and the use of the graphic organizers to display the answers, showed how students were aware of the use of the strategy taught. Jiang and Grabe (2007) proposed that the use of graphic organizers should be adopted in comprehension instruction, with clear procedural teaching and claimed that graphic organizers with second language students (L2) facilitate reading comprehension. They argued that based on empirical studies, graphic organizers can facilitate the representation of discourse. Consequently, Albashtawi (2019) conducted a research study where participants were divided in two groups: an experimental and a conventional group. The results showed that students' reading achievement increased only in the experimental group, since they were taught using the CALLA model. Additionally, the students expressed that being taught using the model had a positive impact on their learning process. To conclude, Egbert (1989) explained the constraints that can be encountered when teaching English in unconventional settings, explaining the constraints met in correctional institutions, which could be administrative or affective. For instance, the author suggested the need for guidelines regarding the curriculum in order to ensure that students could have a positive educational experience. Then, this can be related to the use of the CALLA model as a fundamental guideline to accomplish the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers.

5.3 Specific objective two

In relation to the second specific objective, which was to describe participants' perceptions about the teaching of the explicit skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support reading for general information, the results were positive as well. For instance, in the focus group discussion, students explained that the teaching of the strategy helped them to be aware of how to find the general idea from a text. They also stated that the process of being part of the intervention sessions could help them in the future. As explained by Brevik (2019), the explicit instruction of strategies can be an example of a successful reading lesson. Nevertheless, the author also concluded that the teaching of strategies should be a daily reading practice, since this could help students not to forget the strategies learned. With respect to the use of graphic organizers to support the skimming strategy, students explained that the graphic organizers helped them to order their ideas and also helped them to do the activity more smoothly. To illustrate this, Praveen and Rajan (2013) depicted that graphic organizers are a great tool for students to construct text meaning. In the same way, this also guided and helped students to find the required information as well as to use their creativity.

Taking into consideration the incarcerated context in which this action research study took place, Shippen, Houchins, Crites, Derzis and Patterson (2010), expressed that one of the most common characteristics prison inmates typically share is low literacy skills. For example, students in an incarcerated context have commonly unsuccessful educational experiences. The reasons why students may decide to drop out of school can be diverse. That is why in this action research study, the participants could not start or finish their secondary education. However, considering participants' perceptions, they expressed positive feelings about the process they went through during the implementation of the action plan and how this helped them in the post-reading intervention test. For instance, De Lucio, Avilés, and Butrón (2018) carried out a collaborative study with pre-service teachers who taught English to inmates. Among the data gathered, it was observed that inmates found English as a rewarding experience. Similarly, in the focus group discussion from this action research study, some participants expressed that being part of the implementation was similar to receiving good education and that made them feel more prepared to complete the tasks and the post-reading intervention test.

5.4 Implications and limitations

On one hand, with reference to implications of this action research study, it can be stated that the explicit teaching of strategies is a teaching opportunity to enhance students' performance in their learning process. This process raises awareness of how they can improve their skills and the training aids them to facilitate the learning. Moreover, it also improves teachers' pedagogical practices in order to generate meaningful classroom interactions to be shared in the school community. Furthermore, the use of visuals such as graphic organizers, can facilitate learning in a positive way as they can be used in any subject or skill. Another important aspect is to generate instances to carry out the teaching of strategies as part of the course or syllabus.

On the other hand, during the implementation of the action plan, it was clear how to proceed. Using the CALLA model helped in the planning of each session to monitor learning and time as well as to assess participants' learning process. Quite the opposite, there were some teaching instances where some drawbacks were identified. Although in the pre reading intervention it was difficult for the participants to complete the test, during and after the implementation they knew what to do in order to find and display the general ideas from paragraphs and the whole text. At last, the results were in accordance with what it was expected to happen and the improvements were not only seen in the post-reading intervention test, but also during the implementation of the skimming strategy. Teaching the skimming strategy as well as the two graphic organizers allowed participants to be more familiar with the types of texts and tasks they needed to complete.

As a consequence, the limitations that can be stated from this study, are the context in which this study took place and time limit for developing the implementation of the action plan. For instance, the context in which this action took place is totally different from most classroom contexts as well as students are particularly different in age, social background, interests to study, and personal issues they deal with, due to their incarceration. Regarding the time provided for developing the study, it can be pointed out that it would have been better to tackle both skimming and scanning strategies and the training process could have lasted longer. Somehow, another

limitation to address is that the results come from a small sample. Therefore, the results cannot be over-generalized nor do they represent the entire population of the town, region or country. Despite these limitations, this action research study provides evidence regarding the explicit teaching of strategies to support reading skill.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of the main findings

When referring to reading in a foreign language, we tend to think of how difficult it is for learners to read in their mother tongue, therefore, when it comes to reading in a foreign language, difficulties and complexities are encountered too. In the present action research study, the problem identified was that students had trouble when reading to identify main ideas or information. To solve the problem identified, a plan of action was designed in order to intervene.

Firstly, to carry out the intervention, a pre-reading intervention test was applied to test participants' reading for general information subskill. The pre-reading intervention test was taken from the Headway Elementary Book (Oxford University Press) and the level of English was A1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001).

Secondly, the intervention consisted of four sessions in which participants were explicitly taught the skimming strategy using graphic organizers to support the strategy. In session one and two they were taught the "tree graphic organizer". In session three and four, they were taught the "spider graphic organizer". Each session followed the same teaching stages: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and expansion.

Thirdly, to conclude the intervention, a post test was applied in order to test participants' subskills to identify main ideas through the use of graphic organizers. In the post-reading intervention test, participants were asked to choose one graphic organizer they were taught to display the main ideas found in the text. Moreover a focus group discussion was applied to get students' perceptions about the explicit teaching of the strategy. Furthermore, students also were asked to draw based on questions they were asked in order to get more insights.

In regard to the first specific objective of this action research study, "to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information", it was concluded that teaching the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers had a positive impact on participants' improvements regarding reading comprehension, specifically, students were able to improve their reading for main main ideas subskill. Moreover, the use of graphic organizers helped participants to organize and picture their comprehension in order to display or illustrate the ideas they found in the texts. Furthermore, the explicit teaching of the strategy helped participants to have a framework to guide their readings and use the strategy taught accompanied by the use of the graphic organizers. This resulted in increasing their scores and being more autonomous when reading the texts they were asked to.

Regarding the second specific objective, "To describe participants' perceptions about the teaching of the explicit skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support reading for general information", it was concluded that the participants expressed positive reflections about the teaching of the strategy. In particular, the participants explained how helpful it was for them to be part of the intervention and also the knowledge they got from the lessons and the pre-reading and post intervention tests. Additionally, they reflected upon the improvement they had on the post-reading intervention test in comparison to the pre-reading intervention test.

Furthermore, the drawings drawn by the participants were fundamental to go further on their explanations. Consequently, the drawing accompanied by the questions they answered, helped to get more insights from their perceptions about the teaching of the strategy and the use of the graphic organizers.

6.2 Personal reflections

As this was an action research study carried out in a context that I have been used to working in, I consider that it as a rewarding experience to improve my teaching practices based on my students' weaknesses and needs. To illustrate the idea explained before, I would like to explain the following personal reflections:

First, working in an incarcerated context is not only challenging but also an uncommon setting for many teachers in the country. The students have their own particularities, needs and behaviors that teachers need to deal with. The lessons that need to be planned for them have to be related to their context, the level and complexities are also key points to take into consideration. However, it is important to say that they need and have to be given the same attention and consideration all students have in their learning process.

Second, I believe that it is very important to research and take action based on what is important to improve and to regularly reflect upon our teaching practices. There is always a space to improve to enhance our students' performances in learning. Therefore, when a problem is identified and actions are taken, the outcome is fundamental for us and our school community. Moreover, the results can be shared with other teachers.

Third, teaching strategies explicitly has been an important practice to enhance students' skill in learning a second language. As explained by Palincsar and Brown (1985), if students are explicitly taught strategies, the strategies are solid tools they can use since they are aware of which strategy they can use to be successful in the task they are performing. Moreover, the use of visuals is an important feature to support the use of strategies (Campbell and Cuba, 2015).

6.3 Recommendations

On one hand, I do consider that researching in our classroom is a rewarding and important challenge that we have to think of. Then, I hope this action research study can serve as a tool for school communities, teachers and learners. I also believe that there is scarce research in the country regarding teaching in unconventional contexts, in this regard, teaching to inmates. For this reason, I think that it is important that teachers and researchers can contribute by sharing their works and can be challenged to research in incarcerated contexts.

On the other hand, I consider that as this is a small scale study, results cannot be generalized and it is also important to mention that in this action research, only one strategy was taught. Therefore, I would recommend when planning teaching strategies, teachers could take into account the other skills, such as writing, listening and speaking, and if there is more time to devote, more strategies can be taught. Moreover, I would recommend having a bigger sample so as to have a bigger scope and see how the explicit teaching of strategies can enhance students' skill in learning English as a second language. Furthermore, I would recommend having more sessions and if necessary, to test learners after weeks or months after the post intervention test was taken, to observe if students remember the strategy or strategies they were taught.

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CHAPTER VIII: APPENDICES

1. Intervention lesson plan

Date	Objective	Activities and Procedures	Time	Materials	Assessment	R Objectives
May 25th	Based on an explanation of what a skimming strategy is, students are able to skim general ideas from a descriptive text supported by the use of a "tree" graphic organizer.	<p>Preparation</p> <p>1) The students are greeted, explained the rules of the class and the objective.</p> <p>2) Prior knowledge activation: the students are shown pictures of different festivals, they are asked questions about them. They are asked to mention different festivals they know and the teacher writes them on the board. They discuss which festivals are more interesting for them.</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>1) The students are explained the vocabulary through a matching activity. They write the vocabulary in their notebooks.</p> <p>2) Through the use of slides the students are presented and explained the skimming strategy, its use and procedures.</p> <p>3) Using a text about a festival, students are explained how to find general ideas/information using a "tree" graphic organizer. They are explained how to create the graphic organizer and use it in order to display the general ideas extracted from texts and paragraphs.</p> <p>4) The graphic organizer is created based on the number of paragraphs and it contains a central part to display the main idea of the whole text.</p> <p>Practice</p> <p>1) The students are given a reading text. They are asked to read the text in order to find the main idea of the text and main idea from each paragraph. The reading text contains a "tree" graphic organizer that has one main idea from a paragraph already written. The students have to complete the other parts of the graphic organizer displaying the main ideas needed.</p> <p>Self-evaluation</p> <p>1) The students self-assess themselves regarding the use of the skimming strategy, the star graphic organizer and reading development.</p> <p>Expansion</p> <p>1) The students are given another reading task where they have to read to display the general idea/ideas from the text and paragraphs in "tree" a graphic organizer they create.</p>	<p>Preparation : 15 minutes.</p> <p>Presentation : 15 minutes.</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QIkHznAiDIQYNPGdiPP20pqcG2iMSARKitBnU5nZc9IQ/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>Practice: 30 minutes.</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HyHZyCo8cwAeTeTySHig9aeOcvpdUaM_uycLiwc1CHs/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>Self-evaluation: 10 minutes.</p> <p>Expansion: 20 minutes.</p> <p>Total: 90 minutes.</p>	Markers. Reading handout. Board. Projector. Laptop.	<p>Self-evaluation: checklist. To assess students' performance regarding the process of skimming general ideas they will assess using a checklist.</p> <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Reading: rating scale. To assess reading performance regarding the use of the strategy and the use of the graphic organizer.</p> <p>Appendix B</p>	<p>SO 1: to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information.</p>
June 1st	After having practiced how to skim general ideas from a text, students are able to gather general	<p>Preparation:</p> <p>The students are greeted, explained the rules of the class and the objective. Their prior knowledge is by showing pictures in which they see different leisure activities or hobbies.</p> <p>Presentation:</p> <p>1) The students are explained the vocabulary to be used in the reading, they write it in their notebooks.</p> <p>2) The teacher asks the students to remember about the skimming strategy. The teacher writes one the board the information they provide and</p>	<p>Preparation : 15 minutes.</p> <p>Presentation : 15 minutes.</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QIkHznAiDIQYNPGdiPP20pqcG2iMSARKitBnU5n</p>	Markers. Reading handout. Board. Projector. Laptop.	<p>Self-evaluation: checklist. To assess students' performance regarding the process of skimming general ideas they will assess using a checklist.</p>	<p>SO 1: to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for</p>

	<p>ideas from a descriptive text creating a “tree” graphic organizer to display the information.</p>	<p>supports the explanation with more details that are important about the strategy. 3) The students are asked to remember how a “tree” graphic organizer is created and the teacher draws it on the board based on the students’ instructions. 4) Through a reading text about free time activities, the tree graphic organizer is created. The graphic contains all the spaces for displaying the main idea of the text and each paragraphs.</p> <p>Practice 1) The students are given a reading text. They are asked to read the text in order to find the main idea of the text and main idea from each paragraph. The reading text contains a “tree” graphic organizer that has one main idea from a paragraph already written. The students have to complete the other parts of the graphic organizer displaying the main ideas needed.</p> <p>Self-evaluation 1) The students self-assess themselves regarding the use of the skimming strategy, the star graphic organizer and reading development.</p> <p>Expansion 1) The students are given another reading task where they have to read to display the general idea/ideas from the text and paragraphs in “tree” a graphic organizer they create</p>	<p>Zc9IQ/edit?usp=sharing Practice: 30 minutes. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HyHZyCo8cwAeTeTySHig9aeOcvPdUaM_uycLiwc1CHs/edit?usp=sharing Self-evaluation: 10 minutes. Expansion: 20 minutes.</p> <p>Total: 90 minutes.</p>		<p>Reading: rating scale. To assess reading performance regarding the use of the strategy and the use of the graphic organizer.</p>	<p>general information.</p>
June 8th	<p>After having reviewed how to skim general ideas from a text, students are able to gather general ideas from a descriptive text supported by the use of a “spider” graphic organizer.</p>	<p>Preparation 1) The students are greeted, explained the rules of the class and the objective. 2) Prior knowledge activation: the students are shown pictures of different types of neighborhood, they are asked questions about them. They are asked to mention different types of neighborhood they know. They think of how neighborhoods are in other countries and what are the differences to Chile.</p> <p>Presentation 1) The students are explained the vocabulary to be used in the reading, they write it in their notebooks. 2) The teacher asks the students to remember about the skimming strategy. The teacher writes one the board the information they provide and supports the explanation with more details that are important about the strategy. 3) Using a text about a neighborhood, students are explained how to find general ideas/information using a “tree” graphic organizer. They are explained how to create the graphic organizer and use it in order to display the general ideas extracted from texts and paragraphs. 4) The graphic organizer is created based on the number of paragraphs and it contains a central part to display the main idea of the whole text.</p> <p>Practice 1) The students are given a reading text. They are asked to read the text in order to find the general idea and general idea from each paragraph. In the reading task, they are given the “spider” graphic organizer to display the</p>	<p>Preparation : 15 minutes. Presentation: 15 minutes. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QikHznAiDIQYNPGdiPP20pqcG2iMSARkTbnU5nZc9IQ/edit?usp=sharing Practice: 30 minutes. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HyHZyCo8cwAeTeTySHig9aeOcvPdUaM_uycLiwc1CHs/edit?usp=sharing Self-evaluation: 10 minutes. Expansion: 20 minutes.</p> <p>Total: 90 minutes.</p>	<p>Markers. Reading handout. Board. Projector. Laptop.</p>	<p>Self-evaluation: checklist. To assess students’ performance regarding the process of skimming general ideas they will assess using a checklist.</p> <p>Reading: rating scale. To assess reading performance regarding the use of the strategy and the use of the graphic organizer.</p>	<p>SO 1: to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants’ reading for general information.</p>

		<p>information found. One part of the graphic organizer is done already.</p> <p>Self-evaluation 1) the students self-assess themselves regarding the use of the skimming strategy, the spider graphic organizer and reading development</p> <p>Expansion 1) The students are given another reading task where they have to read to display the general idea/ideas from the text and paragraphs in a "spider" a graphic organizer they create</p>				
June 15th	<p>After having practiced how to skim general ideas from a text, students are able to gather general ideas from a descriptive text creating a "spider" graphic organizer to display the information.</p>	<p>Preparation 1) The students are greeted, explained the rules of the class and the objective. 2) Prior knowledge activation: the students are shown pictures of different types of neighborhood, they are asked questions about them. They are asked to mention different types of neighborhood they know. They think of how neighborhoods are in other countries and what are the differences to Chile.</p> <p>Presentation 1) The students are explained the vocabulary to be used in the reading, they write it in their notebooks. 2) The teacher asks the students to remember about the skimming strategy. The teacher writes on the board the information they provide and supports the explanation with more details that are important about the strategy. 3) Using a text about a neighborhood, students are explained how to find general ideas/information using a "spider" graphic organizer.</p> <p>Practice 1) The students are given a reading text. They are asked to read the text in order to find the general idea and general idea from each paragraph. In the reading task, they are given the "spider" graphic organizer to display the information found. One part of the graphic organizer is done in advance.</p> <p>Self-evaluation 1) The students self-assess themselves regarding the use of the skimming strategy, the spider graphic organizer and reading development</p> <p>Expansion 1) The students are given another reading task where they have to read to display the general idea/ideas from the text and paragraphs in "spider" a graphic organizer they create</p>	<p>Preparation : 15 minutes. Presentation: 15 minutes. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QIkHznAiDIQYNPGdiPP20pqcG2iMSARkIBnU5nZc9IQ/edit?usp=sharing Practice: 30 minutes. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HyHZyCo8cwAeTeTySHig9aeOcvPdUaM_uycLiwc1CHs/edit?usp=sharing Self-evaluation: 10 minutes. Expansion: 20 minutes.</p> <p>Total: 90 minutes.</p>	<p>Markers. Reading handout. Board. Projector. Laptop.</p>	<p>Self-evaluation: checklist. To assess students' performance regarding the process of skimming general ideas they will assess using a checklist.</p> <p>Reading: rating scale. To assess reading performance regarding the use of the strategy and the use of the graphic organizer.</p>	<p>SO 1: to analyze the influence of the explicit teaching of the skimming strategy through the use of graphic organizers to support participants' reading for general information.</p>

2. Pre-reading intervention text

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____ Score: ___/24pts

1. Read the text about a perfect holiday and for questions 1 to 4, answer using your own words. (You can write in Spanish if necessary)

My perfect weekend – Jamie Cullum

Song-writer and jazz pianist Jamie Cullum lives in London with his wife Sophie Dahl, the model and cookery writer. He enjoys going to markets, French films, and playing cards at weekends. Jamie says, 'In my work I travel a lot and I stay in different hotels, so my perfect weekend is at home with my family and friends. I live in a flat in north-west London next to my brother, Ben, and at weekends I like being with him and my wife, Sophie. On Friday nights, we often go to a club – we all love dancing.

On Saturdays, we get up late and I make breakfast; that's important to me. Then I sit at my piano – it's in my kitchen – and I play for a couple of hours. I don't write songs, I just play. My cat, Luna, listens. Sometimes in the afternoon we go shopping in Portobello market. I love old things. I have black leather cowboy boots from there. Also, I look for old postcards – I like reading about people from the past. In the evening, we often watch a French or Japanese film – I enjoy foreign films.

After that I like playing cards – poker – with friends, sometimes until early Sunday morning. We sleep late on Sundays, but then I like cooking Sunday dinner, usually roast chicken. I really enjoy cooking. In the evening I call my parents and my nan – they like hearing about my week.

Taken from: Headway Elementary Fourth Edition • Student's Book • Unit 3 p.26 © Oxford University Press

1. What is the text about? (___/6pts)

2. What is the main idea in paragraph 1? (___/6pts)

3. What is the main idea in paragraph 2? (___/6pts)

4. What is the main idea in paragraph 3? (___/6pts)

3. Post-reading intervention text

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____ Score: ___/24pts

Read the text about a perfect weekend. Then, create a graphic organizer to write the main idea from the text and the paragraphs. (You can write in Spanish if necessary)

My perfect weekend – Shilpa Shetty

Indian film actress and model Shilpa Shetty has homes in Mumbai and England. She enjoys takeaway pizza, going to garden centres, and playing cards at weekends. Shilpa says, 'Here in England my perfect weekend begins at my home in the countryside with my husband Raj Kundra. On Fridays, we usually watch TV, but sometimes friends or family come to play cards – poker. I love poker. We get a takeaway pizza – pizza goes best with playing cards – and I drink green tea. I love green tea.'

On Saturdays, I get up late, at about 10.45, and then I have a long bath. Sometimes I watch TV in the bath or listen to music. I like staying in the country at weekends – I love walking barefoot on the grass. We go to a pub for lunch – I like the puddings, especially sticky toffee pudding. I prefer to have Saturday evening at home. We like watching cookery programmes; Jamie Oliver is my favourite. I like cooking Indian food, but not at weekends.

On Sundays, I love shopping and gardening. I always buy my clothes from small boutiques, and I love visiting garden centres. I love flowers. My homes in Mumbai and England are always full of beautiful white lilies. I don't cook on Sunday, we prefer eating out and sometimes, if we have time, we go to a spa hotel for a swim and a massage. It's a great way to end a perfect weekend.'

Taken from: Headway Elementary Fourth Edition • Student's Book • Unit 3 p.26 © Oxford University Press

Create your graphic organizer and write your answers below.

4. Focus group discussion

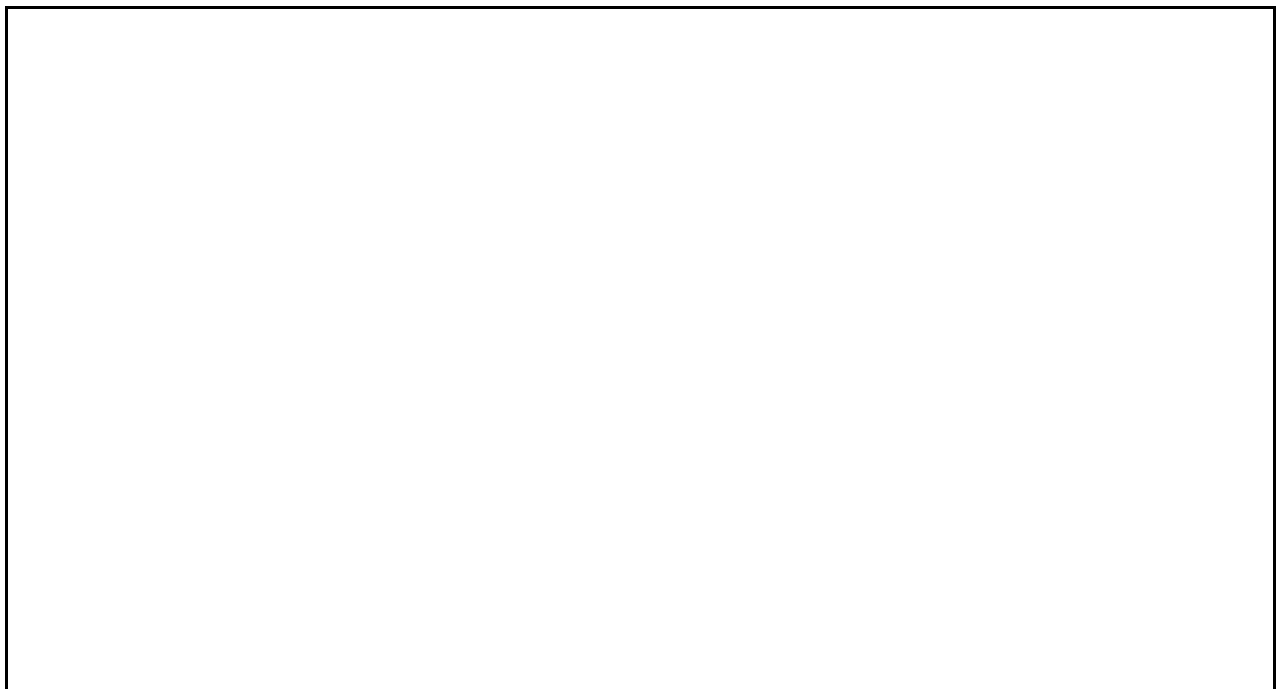
Descripción del instrumento y objetivo	Estructura del instrumento	
	Ejes temáticos	N° de preguntas
Preguntas para desarrollar discusión en torno a las percepciones de los estudiantes adultos sobre la enseñanza explícita de estrategia de "skimming" mediante el uso de organizadores gráficos para apoyar su lectura de información general.	Enseñanza explícita de la estrategia de skimming.	1. ¿Cuál es su impresión con respecto a la participación en las clases donde se enseñó la estrategia de "skimming" explícitamente? ¿Por qué? 2. ¿Pudieron usar la estrategia de skimming? ¿Qué ocurrió cuando la usaste? 3. ¿Qué fortalezas y dificultades tiene el usar la estrategia de skimming?
	Uso de los organizadores gráficos para guiar las preguntas y respuestas.	4. ¿Cómo describirían la experiencia de utilizar organizadores gráficos en vez de preguntas escritas solamente? ¿Por qué? 5. ¿Consideran que los organizadores gráficos les ayudaron en su aprendizaje? ¿De qué manera?
	Mejoras en la habilidad de comprender información general.	6. Durante el proceso de enseñanza de la estrategia de "skimming": ¿Notaron algún cambio en sus respuestas y comprensión de las lecturas? ¿Cuáles? 7. ¿Creen que en futuras lecturas utilizarán esta estrategia para localizar información general del texto? ¿Por qué? 8. ¿Observaron algún cambio en su nivel de comprensión de lectura en inglés? ¿Cuál o cuáles fueron estos?

5. Drawing

1. Piensa en el proceso de enseñanza de la estrategia de skimming y los organizadores gráficos y crea un dibujo donde puedas expresar cómo fue tu proceso de aprendizaje.

2. Crea tu dibujo en torno a las siguientes sugerencias:

- a) Expresa a través del dibujo cómo te sentiste al realizar la primera y última prueba de lectura.
- b) Expresa a través del cómo te sentiste al aprender la estrategia de skimming para encontrar ideas principales en el texto y párrafos.
- c) Expresa a través del dibujo cómo te sentiste al aprender usar y crear organizadores gráficos.



5.1. Questions for the drawing

1. ¿Qué es lo que representa tu dibujo en relación a la primera y última prueba de lectura?
2. ¿Qué es lo que representa tu dibujo en relación al proceso de aprendizaje de la estrategia de skimming?
3. ¿Qué es lo que representa tu dibujo en relación al uso y creación de organizadores gráficos?
4. ¿Qué representan los colores que usaste?

6. Self evaluation

SELF EVALUATION		
Name: _____ Grade: _____		
Date: _____ Score: ____ / 6 points.		
Marca con una X de acuerdo a lo que lograste y que no lograste.		
Aspectos a considerar	SI	NO
Comprension de la estrategia y del organizador grafico		
¿Comprendi la definicion de la estrategia de "skimming"?		
¿Comprendi como usar la estrategia de "skimming"?		
¿Comprendi el uso del grafico organizador?		
Uso de la estrategia y del organizador grafico		
¿Logre identificar la idea general del texto?		
¿Logre identificar la idea general de cada parrato?		
¿Logre utilizar o crear el grafico organizador?		

7. Rating scale

RATING SCALE: READING INTERVENTION TEXTS/TESTS					
Name: _____ Grade: _____ Score: _____/24 pts					

Dimension	Specific criteria	Well developed (4)	Partially developed (3)	Poorly developed (2)	Not developed (1)
Content	The text contains relevant and sufficient information. The text illustrates the whole idea from the text.				
	The texts contain relevant and sufficient information. The texts illustrate general ideas from each paragraph.				
Organization	In one figure/space is displayed the general idea of the text.				
	General ideas from each paragraph are accordingly displayed in figures/spaces.				
Language	The texts/ideas do not contain any grammatical errors, spelling or punctuation.				
	The texts/ideas are coherent and cohesive.				