

THE READING ADVENTURE THROUGH COMPUTER

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**Project submitted as a partial requirement
for the degree in Modern Languages.**

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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS EXACTAS Y DE LA EDUCACION
PROGRAMA DE LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS
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ADRIANA IDROBO HURTADO
LUIS EDUARDO VALDIVIESO

**THANKS TO GOD FOR GIVE ME LIFE AND HEALTH, TO MY PARENTS FOR
TEACH ME TO CHOSE TE BEST WAY TO DO THINGS AND FOR THEIR
EFFORTS JUST FOR GIVE ME THE BEST, TO MY BROTHERS AND MY
SISTER BECAUSE THEY ARE PATIENT WITH MY IN MY MOST DIFFIULT
DAYS, ANF FINALLY I WOULD LIKE THANKS TO MAURICIO, BECAUSE HE
BELIEVES IN MY AND HE ALWAYS HAVE AN APPROPRIATE WORD FOR AN
APPROPIATE MOMENT.**

THANKS TO ALL OF THEM!

ADRIANA IDROBO HURTADO.

INTRODUCTION

Education has been influenced by the scientific, technological, and technical events during the last few years. It has generated some changes in the pedagogical approaches, which have managed to integrate technology in teaching – learning process.

The computer, as technology applied to education, has dramatically transformed the way of thinking for some teachers. Thus, the use of computers as a pedagogical tool will support the educational labor as a motivator agent into the learning process in the classroom. In this way, the idea of resistance to change is disappearing.

However, this use must be linked to software development according to the educational needs. The use of the educational software to enhance the reading comprehension of English texts for the sixth grade students is a proposal to solve some weakness related to English Reading Comprehension through a friendly computational tool (Inter – phase). It is important to clarify that the use of software programs will encourage the interest in sixth grade students.

Finally, the use of educational software will create an attractive and suitable environment for the development of a new methodology to improve English Reading Comprehension in the classroom.

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can sixth grade students enhance their reading comprehension in English through the use of Educational Software Programs (E.S.P)?.

2. JUSTIFICATION

We are currently in the midst of a world-wide revolution, moving from the Industrial age to an era in which information is the primary product. As information processing tools, computers are central to this revolution. The ability to interact with computers is an essential skill for the Information age, one which our schools will need to address to prepare our students to meet the challenges of this fundamentally changing world. The educational reform movement of the 1980's has recognized the importance of computers in education.

Virtually every other reform proposal has included similar recommendations. The educational community has responded to the futurists' visions of the Information age and the reformers proposals are working to integrate computers into the curriculum at all levels.

At present, most children are in touch, or know something about computers by means of television, magazines, at home or comments among friends. The implementation of pedagogical materials into the schools has permitted student's access to computers.

In Colombia, through the Ministerio de Educacion Nacional, the educational institutions are endowed with computers to improve the educational level in our country. In this way, students have the chance to use this new technology.¹

1.Republica de Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Dirección de servicios técnicos Programa Inglés y Nuevas Tecnologías. Presidencia de la Republica, 1.999 - 2.002. (Donación de Computadores para las escuelas públicas del país).

However, nowadays the use of new technology is reserved only for computer science in schools, for example at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt the teachers of different subjects like Math, Spanish, Social Sciences, English, among others do not use the computer room and for this reason its uses are limited to other fields of knowledge.

The project “Reading Adventure through Computer”, found the most important aspects that have produced difficulties in English reading process in sixth grade students at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt, but among others we can find: the misconceptions about the meaning of reading, poor vocabulary, indifference and apathy towards reading, and difficulty of expression.

These difficulties were detected through the observation activities in the classroom, surveys, and with personal testimonies from teachers acquired by work experience in English teaching. This makes it imperative to develop new strategies for reading in English through educational software.

The use of a computer as a pedagogical tool in the classroom can contribute to the solution of these problems. Especially in sixth grade students at the Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt in Popayán.

In conclusion, the project seeks to use educational software for enhancing English reading process for the development of an innovative, effective and modern methodology to improve the reading process in sixth grade at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt. Reading Adventure Through Computer project aims at achieving an academic performance and creates an agreeable environment where the students can actively participate in the English learning process.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- To use educational software to enhance the reading skill for English students in sixth grade at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt in Popayán.

3.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

3.2.1. To help students develop their capacity for interpreting and understanding English texts.

3.2.2. To motivate students to understand the use of an educational software.

3.2.3. To foster positive attitudes towards the use of the computer as a helpful tool for English reading process.

3.2.4. To emphasize the importance of educational software to both students and teachers.

4. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. LICEO NACIONAL ALEJANDRO DE HUMBOLDT

The present research work entitled the “Reading Adventure Through Computer” has been carried out in Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt Popayán. It was founded in the middle of the 19th century and located at The University of Cauca building. It was regulated by The Education Ministry.

Later, in 1890 it took the name of Liceo de Varones and move to the University of Cauca at Santo Domingo Cloiser. On October 1st the university president Dr. Antonio Lemos Guzman moved the Liceo de Varones to Tulcán building known by teachers and students as Electronics School. On October 24th in 1961 the University of Cauca president separated the university from Liceo de Varones. After the separation, the name changed to Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt Popayán. On September 1st 1979 it was moved to its present building in the Pomona Neighborhood.

The move to Pomona gave the program roomy classrooms, adequate sport grounds, a beautiful ecological places to encourage the school fulfillment to the Liceistas community.

The school has three shifts (morning, afternoon and night), in 2.001 there were 800 students from the sixth grade level to the eleven grade level. The teacher’s curriculum was composed of 44 teachers where 3 of them are foreign language teachers. The students to first, second and social stratum (low ,middle – Low

middle). Nowadays (2.004), the schools is composed by 870 students in the morning, 35 teachers, and 4 language teachers, in the afternoon there are 210 students, 14 teachers and 2 language teachers, at night we found 100 students, 12 teachers and 2 language teachers.

The language teachers are: Mary Torres, Alejandra Mosquera, Hilda Pardo and Sonia Eraso, Irma Diaz and Gildardo Rodriguez. This information was given by Luz Mary Cifuentes, secretary.

Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt Popayán is undergoing some economic and administrative upheavals because of budget regulations for public institutions. However, this has not been an obstacle for ongoing education of the Liceista community. 1

1. Taken from Manual de Convivencia, Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt Popayán. Resolución 2126, octubre 10 de 2002. Secretaría de Educación del Cauca.

5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. ANALYTICAL STRATEGY: a detailed analysis for achieving success in situations, in this way about learning in English process.
2. AUTONOMY: (Cambridge Dictionary). The right of a group of people to govern itself, or to organize its own activities.
3. AUDIO-VISUAL AID: an audio or visual device used by teachers to help learning. For example, pictures, charts, and flash cards are visual aids; radio, records, and tape recorders are auditory aids. Film, television, and video are audiovisual aids.
4. AUDIO-VISUAL METHOD: method of foreign language teaching which teaches speaking and listening before reading and writing does not use the mother tongue in the classroom uses recorded dialogues with film – strip picture sequences to present language items uses drills to teach basic grammar and vocabulary.
5. CALL: Computer assisted language learning; CALL may take the form of: activities which parallel learning through other media but which use the facilities of the computer, for example: using the computer to present a reading text, activities which are extensions or adaptations of print based or classroom based activities.
6. CAI: Computer assisted instruction; the use of a computer in a teaching program. This may include: a teaching program which is presented by a

computer in a sequence. The student responds on the computer, and the computer indicates whether the responses are correct or incorrect. The use of computers to monitor students progress, to direct students into appropriate lessons, material, etc.

7. C.B.L: Computer Based Language.
8. COMPETENCE: the ability to do something to a level that is acceptable.
9. COMPUTER: an electronic machine that can be used to manipulate data according to a series of instructions stored in its memory and which can perform complex tasks in a very short time. The machine itself together with a keyboard, printer, screen, disk drives, programs, etc., is known as a computer system.
10. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to know when and where to use these sentences and to whom.
11. DISCOVERIES: National Bilingual Program (NBP). The Educational Software English Discoveries is only distributed by The Ministry of National Education through EL SENA offering the marketing and training enterprise and Education Public Institutions.
12. EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE: New strategy to teach, in this case is a conversational interaction between a human and a computer.
13. EFL: an abbreviation for English as a Foreign Language. The role of English in

countries where it is taught as a subject in schools but not used as a medium of instruction in education nor as a language of communication.

14. ELT: an abbreviation for English Language Teaching. It is used especially in Britain to refer to the teaching of English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign Language. In north American usage this is often referred to as TESOL.

15. EXTRINSICAL: external stimulus.

16. HARDWARE: the physical equipment which may be used in an education system, such as computer, video-cassette player, film projector, tape recorder, cassette or record player.

17. INTERACTIVE: describes the ability of a user to “communicate” with a computer. Lessons in CAI materials may involve a question on the computer, a response from the student, and feedback from the computer telling the student if the answer is correct. In CAI such activities are said to be interactive.

18. INTERACTIVE STRATEGY: is a plan used to exchange information; for example the computer involve the user (student) in the input and output process.

19. INTEREST: the feeling of having your attention held and your mind excited by something or of wanting to be involved with and to discover more about something.

20. INTRINSICAL: an internal stimuli.

21. LANGUAGE: it's a system of communication by sound, operating through the

organs of speech and hearing, among members of a given community, and using vocal symbols possessing arbitrary conventional meanings.

22. LEARNING: Involves active, conscious focus on and acting upon events outside or inside the organism.

23. LITERACY: the ability to read and write in a language. The inability to read or write is known as illiteracy.

24. MOTIVATION: the factors that determine a person's desire to do something. In second language and foreign language learning, learning may be affected differently by different types of motivation. Two types of motivation are sometimes distinguished: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation.

25. PRACTICE: Task oriented with a working computer program as the goal; making full use of computer resources.

26. PLATO: Programmed Logic Automated Teaching Operations. Educational project in the USA (Illinois, University).

27. READING: this can be done silently (silent reading). The understanding that results is called reading comprehension. Different types of reading are often distinguished, according to the reader's purpose in reading and the type of reading used.

28. READING SPEED: the speed which a person reads depends on the type of reading material, and the reader's purpose.

29. THEORY: Theory oriented with a working computer model the goal; certain

computational resources excluded as not theoretically motivated.

30. SOFTWARE: Logical part in the computational process. The materials used in such equipment such as programs, tapes, and films are called software.

31. STRATEGY: a detailed plan to do something.

32. TECHNIQUE: way of doing an activity requiring skill, in the art, sports, sciences, etc.

33. VARIABLE: if something is variable, it is likely to change frequently. A variable is something which can change.

6. STATE OF THE ART

6.1. ENGLISH AROUND THE WORLD

Through this project we want to mention some general aspects related to the history and importance of the English language as result of some events that changed world history. English language diffusion around the world had its beginning in England towards the end of the Middle Ages when the French language died out as a second language of the kingdom (England) and gradually surrendered to the English language 1.

Nevertheless, the English language was made known by the British Empire because of trading, empire building, migration and settlement of new territories in continents such as America, Africa over the discovery, conquest and colonial period. This result the implementation of a British political and religious system, and the evangelization of aboriginal people and the designation of English as the first language of the territories conquered by the empire.

The 19th century was an important epoch for humanity because events such as the industrial revolution in England, the migration phenomenon to the United States and the scientific and academic discoveries that changed the world's destiny.

At the end of the 19th century foreign language study underwent an important development through the reform movement carried out by some phoneticians that worked in the creation of phonetic science. One of the precursors was the phonetician was Henry Sweet.

1. Howatt A. A History of English Language Teaching. Oxford university press. 5th impression,1994.

Henry Sweet (1845-1912) was a man who taught phonetics and his role as the prime pioneer of an applied linguistic approach to the language teaching was widely acknowledged. In his classical work, the practical study of language was published in 1899, after nearly 30 years of preparation².

The large quantity of immigrants that were pouring into the United States influenced foreign language study, especially English because the new population had a common need to speak the official language of the country. In this way Maximilian D. Berlitz created a new method for teaching English.

Maximilian D. Berlitz (1852-1921) opened his first language school in Rhode Island in 1878 and his text book started to appear 4 years later. Though he did not invent the direct method, he made it available to a large number of language learners through America and Europe with his school system.³

Another researcher of English teaching was Harold Palmer (1877-1949), who created a solid intellectual and practical foundation for the development of ELT as an autonomous profession. Although he was not the creator of the direct method (developed by Berlitz), he combined it with the applied linguistic approach (Sweet and the Reform Movement)⁴.

In the middle of the 20th century, English had a growing period with the implementation of an English Grammar Dictionary by A. S. Hornby. In the forties and fifties, A.S. Hornby's hard work in this field led to the culmination of the traditions begun by Sweet and Palmer. His advanced learner's Dictionary, which first appeared under a slightly different title in 1948, is still accepted as one of the great works in ELT today.⁵

2, 3, 4, 5 Howatt A. A History of English Language Teaching. Oxford university press. 5th impression, 1994.

During the next few periods different foreign language researchers developed several methods, approaches and techniques such as: silent way, communicative approach, whole language and others. Those consolidated the foreign language teaching in institutes, colleges and universities around the world.

At the present time, English is recognized as the universal language through the need to establish International relationships based on cultural interchanges, transnational commerce, political alliances, scientific and technological advances and other world developments. All of this is supported by the humanity historical events from the end of the Middle Age which have solidified English as today's most important language.

6.2. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN COLOMBIAN EDUCATION

The influence of England and The United States, due to its political, economic, scientific, and technologic supremacy were a determining reason to implement English language teaching (ELT) in Colombian Education.

As from the constitution of 1991, Colombian Education suffered outstanding changes that influenced the educational system for children and young students.

The general education law of 1994 and the foreign language teaching (FLT) became basic requirements for the academic curriculum in elementary schools and high schools. In the title II, chapter I, article 23 from law 115 in 1994 stated: The main goal is to establish the study of fundamental areas of knowledge as mandatory ones regulated according to scholar curriculum and the educational institutional project (EIP).

In Colombia, ELT does not have a well-defined beginning but in the 1970's the communicative theory was introduced by Widdowson. After that, several methods were developed in the universities for teacher training. The grammar translation method was most frequently used for student training. Dating from the constitution of 1991, Colombian Education suffered major changes, which improved the English language for children.

As we know, the official language in Colombia is Spanish. Nevertheless, English has become the first foreign language taught in all educational institutions as opposed to the teaching of French and German. One of the studies accomplished by the ICFES (Instituto Colombiano de Fomento de la Educación Superior) states that English is more preferable than French and German for the presentation of the ICFES examination in. (www.icfes.gov.co).

In the 1990s years, one of the projects which fostered and encouraged ELT in Colombia was COFE project. The university's objective was to establish new plans for the improvement of the Licenciaturas programs and the quality of English teaching in Colombian schools. In this way children and young students can participate successfully in the challenges of the growing economy of the coming century and the world wide development 1.

Some services offered by the COFE project in its resource center are, the teacher training, didactic materials and audio-visual stuff for presentations for teachers and students activities

1. Ley general de Educación Impresión y encuadernación Mono ediciones. Primera edición. 1.999.

The COFE project was developed at the University of Cauca from 1990 to 1996. along with the resource center, the Modern Language Program has had an important influence on its teachers and students as well as a consultation center for all the teachers and students of the Cauca State 2.

Finally, the Colombian education system has come to realized that the study of foreign languages is a part of the educational process of a country which will contribute to the discovery of new world of culture and knowledge.

2. Arevalo, Guillermo, et. Al, Colombian framework for English COFE project. Thames Valley University .Ealing, London. 1994.

6.3. BEGINNINGS OF LEARNING BY COMPUTER

The Introduction of computers in ESL classroom is important for both teachers and students. Computers can handle a range of activities and carry out programmed functions at amazing speed. They can check exercises after they are done and move students gradually from easier to more difficult exercises according to their levels and abilities. When students fail to answer questions correctly or perform activities, the computer can simulate, drill, or explain the phenomenon in a way that makes it easier for the student to understand (Hoffman, 1996). However technology, especially computers, have not yet gotten to the point where they can make a real difference in language instruction in ESL classrooms.

This paper focuses on the question of how ESL reading can be facilitated with computer applications for language teaching and learning. First, the paper will go over some of the available research on computers and ESL reading, and then discuss some programs and software that can be used in teaching and learning ESL reading for intermediate students.

Previous researches, about development of computer-based reading curricula had been taken place before the existence of microcomputers in the late 1970s. Central mainframe computers dispatched instructional lessons to individual terminals in different locations. The relative difficulty in using mainframe computers for educational applications led developers to consider more practical and affordable microcomputers. The availability of such computers encouraged stand-alone programs designed for a single reading skill (Reinking & Bowles, 1996). The first major computer-based reading curriculum was the work of Richard Atkinson in 1964 at Stanford University which was supported by a grant from the U.S. Office of Education. The project was a first-grade reading curriculum aimed to lessen the need for classroom teachers (Atkinson, 1974). Computer-based reading curricula

continued to develop but was of a commercial nature. Though some research, primarily evaluative, was conducted, most computer-based reading curricula studies have been sponsored by the companies marketing them (Reinking et al, 1996). These research attempts were exclusively for L1 (Spanish) reading. Only during the past ten years has the use of computers in the field of teaching second language reading been increasing. A variety of studies have shown the importance of using computers in ESL reading (Willet, 1992). Chun & Plass (1996) investigated how reading comprehension can be facilitated with a multimedia application for language learning. They studied the effects of a dynamic visual advance organizer on the macro level and the effects of multimedia annotations for single vocabulary items on the micro level. Furthermore, they examined the relationship between vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. The results of their study indicated that the visual advance organizer does aid in overall comprehension and that annotations of vocabulary items consisting of both visual and verbal information help more than verbal information only. Also, a moderate correlation between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension was found. Chun & Plass claimed that the results support the dual coding theory and its extension to multimedia learning and emphasize the significance of visual information in addition to verbal information to support both top-down and bottom-up processing in reading a foreign language. In another study to improve reading speed and comprehension of ESL students using computers, Culver (1991) implemented a computer reading program to determine the exit and entrance scores of ESL college students and to find out if their reading speed and comprehension would improve. The results showed some improvements for the majority of students in the target group with an overall increase of 3.9 grade level in reading rate 1.

1. Balajthy, Ernest (1987). "What does the research on Computer-Based Instruction Have to Say to de Reading Teacher?". New York: Teachers College Press.

The results showed important information about the effect of increasing reading speed on student comprehension as a result of employing computers.

It was concluded that the computer was a good tool for improving students' reading rate despite the fact that increased speed did not lead to increased levels of comprehension for some students. Chun D. & Plass J. (1997) based on underlying theories of L2 reading comprehension and text comprehension with multimedia, discussed "how L2 reading research is focusing increasingly on the cognitive processes involved in reading, that is, the interaction of lower-level, bottom-up processes such as vocabulary acquisition with higher level, top-down processes such as activating prior knowledge" (p.60, in Chun D. & Plass J. work). They merged this understanding with existing research on learning with technology to find out how students with different learning abilities put together "verbal and visual information". Their goal, in this study, was not to determine the effectiveness of multimedia on reading comprehension, but rather the students who may benefit from multimedia instruction. Whereas Chun & Plass used the underlying theory of L2 reading comprehension with multimedia, Preisinger, R. et al., (1988) used the schema theory as a basis to evaluate reading software programs. They developed criteria and questions to evaluate:

- 1) Interactive capabilities of reading software (e.g. its flexibility, response to student errors, and ability to make a distinction between major and unimportant errors).
- 2) Information processing (e.g. support of the use of prediction and problem solving strategies, use of text-based activities in the context of a reading passage, and encouragement of analyzing texts).
- 3) Background knowledge (e.g. building schemata through pre-reading activities),
- 4) General software construction and implementation.

The goal of this study was to develop an evaluation tool based in light of a theory to help teachers choose the right reading programs for their students. In conclusion about the use of computers for reading instruction, previous research clearly supported the idea that computer-based instruction facilitates students' reading comprehension and increases their reading speed. This conclusion is supported by the results of the preceding studies and a series of other studies conducted by Kulik, Bangert, & Williams, (1983) who found significant increases in students' reading speed and comprehension across studies of computer-assisted reading instruction. These results should encourage ESL reading teachers to use computers in their classrooms not because they are "new technology" as reported by Wellington (1995), but rather because of the positive results they bring to students' achievements. Design after examining the previous research that dealt with computers and reading, it was found that computers were very useful in many aspects of literacy instruction 2.

Using computers in teaching ESL reading, however, did not get the attention it deserved. Most studies and software in the field were conducted and designed for L1 reading instruction. As a result, these activities aim to contribute to the field of second language reading instruction. The activities were designed for ESL students who are at the 450-500 TOEFL range and previously had some type of beginning-level of ESL reading instruction and some basic computer literacy. This group of students did have difficulties with their reading comprehension and needed to be prepared for freshman-level English reading or other college-level courses upon completion. Nowadays, on the computer- based test, the overall score is from 0 to 300.

2. Reinking, David (1988). "Computer Mediate Text and Comprehension Differences: The Role of Reading Time, Reader Preference, and Stimulation of Learning". *Reading Research Quartely*, 23. 483-98. New York: Teachers College Press.

There are three software programs that help ESL intermediate teachers to have their students practice reading using computers. The three software programs are: Mac Reader, Story Board, and Reading Galaxy. These activities are not meant to be used in one class period but rather in different classes depending on the type of reading we want to teach. The first program, MacReader, is more concerned with sentences and paragraphs structures. The teacher scrambles the text and the student reconstructs it. The teacher should choose the text to be centered from simple language resources that are suitable for ESL intermediate students. Once the text is entered, the program automatically shuffles it so that the students need to reconstruct it. There is a newer software called New Reader published by Hyperbole Software. The second program, Storyboard, is concerned with text completion and vocabulary building. Learners enter words that are missing from the text by guessing them from the context. Both of these programs provide change to the classes regular activities and are used to train students to use reading strategies and become better readers. MacReader and Storyboard do not have any multimedia capabilities. There are no buzzes, beeps, sounds, colors, or any type of multimedia (AlKahtani & Abalhassan, 1999).

Reading Galaxy, on the other hand, has what the two programs lack in terms of interaction, sound, and music effects, students interact with the program while reading; they listen to the computer and follow the directions. Unlike, the other two programs, the teacher cannot add or remove any of the program contents. Thus, the role of the teacher is to "construct" the content in the first two programs and "facilitate" the content in the third program. The student's role is to reconstruct the content in the first two, and construct the meaning in the third one.

Like many CALL programs, these provide changes to the class's regular activities. Teachers can use these programs to support their reading classes and train students to use reading strategies. Students become better readers using their

guessing abilities.

The emphasis should not be on using computers to increase reading and writing achievement, but rather on whether teachers use computers for meaningful reading and writing instruction, or are locked into computer-based drill and practice software. This digest will focus on how teachers can integrate computers into reading or writing instruction.

The following suggestions should be used as a checklist to help teachers to guide the students in the reading by computer.

Programs that offer learners a chance to process large chunks of related text, rather than bits and pieces of unrelated language fragments, allow students to use and extend what they know about reading comprehension 3.

- ✓ Students should have opportunities to work with word-recognition programs that stress the use of word meanings in conjunction with phonics and structural analysis. Care must be taken to make sure that, when programs feature the study of individual words and phrases, they are offered within a contextual framework that help them make sense to the learner. Assessment programs for teachers should also be provided in meaningful context.
- ✓ Students should have the opportunities to apply the skills being taught in some meaningful way. Programs that deny the learner an opportunity to make use of what is being "taught" are merely assessment tools and do
- ✓ little to further the learner's growth.

3. STRICKLAND, Dorothy, et al. (1987). USING COMPUTERS IN THE TEACHING OF READING. New York: Teachers College Press.

- ✓ Students should have the opportunity to work with computer materials that use content and language that are within the range of their conceptual development. Tasks should be challenging but not frustrating. Student interests, previous experiences, and purpose play a role in determining whether or not a computer task is comprehensible and worthwhile. Computer instruction in reading should foster active involvement and stimulate thinking.
- ✓ Students should have opportunities to discuss the purpose of the computer task or program as well as its nature. They should be aware not only of what they are supposed to do but also of why doing it is important.
- ✓ Students should have opportunities to make decisions that control or influence the computer task. Programs that build in opportunities for students to make choices and test predictions help them learn to think and act on their own rather than merely react to someone else's thinking.
- ✓ Students should have opportunities to monitor their own learning. Tasks that offer students opportunities to self-check and correct their own errors support the development of independent learners. Computer instruction in reading should support and extend students' knowledge of text structures.
- ✓ Students should have opportunities to encounter a wide variety of text structures upon which to apply and refine their comprehension skill. A variety of narrative and expository structures should be provided. Commercially prepared, teacher-authored, and student-authored materials should also be included. Reading instruction can take place through all kinds of computer-based materials, not merely those designated specifically for that purpose.

- ✓ Students should have opportunities to experiment with text in creative ways to suit their purposes. When students reorganize a story or an informational piece on the computer, they are employing and strengthening what they know about the structure of texts. Computer instruction in reading should make use of content from a wide range of subject areas.

- ✓ Students should have opportunities to use the computer as a means of applying reading strategies to all areas of the curriculum. Programs related to science, social studies, and math require the use of strategies for reading comprehension. Unless students are being helped to use what they know about reading comprehension under these circumstances, they are not progressing as competent readers.

- ✓ Students should have opportunities to use the computer in conjunction with other modes of instruction. The computer should not operate as a separate and isolated means of learning. Its use should be integrated with that of books and other learning materials. Students need to think of the computer as one additional means of sharing and retrieving information and practicing skills in interesting and meaningful ways. Computer instruction in reading should link reading and writing.

- ✓ Students should have opportunities to create text with the computer for sharing and use by others. When students enter information into the computer for someone else to retrieve and use, they must compose with the reader in mind. This frequently involves making explicit use of what they know about what makes a text comprehensible. Revision and proofreading strategies clearly involve the combined application of reading and writing skills.

6.4. CALL AND PLATO PROJECT

The introduction of computers in education started during the early sixties as Computer Based Learning (CBL), and also they have presented as a new resource in education over the last years and its fast growing method of instruction which is about using a computer to learn about something, which may previously have been taught by more traditional methods. This technology oriented and in construction model is called Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). It also includes books, tapes and human talents 1.

Technological Information with the use of computers also contributes to the aim of achieving autonomy in a progressive way in language learning, and in this way, computers provide important and tools for innovation in language acquisition.

Experience has shown that by using computers as pedagogical mediators, students have advantages. Their individual needs can be catered for, they can become active partners in the learning process, their learning pace and differences are respected, and their individual problems that arise can be solved in an easier way. In other words, learning can become more centered 2.

In the past, much of the research activities were centered around language teaching and language learning, and it assumed that the computers were not very important. Nowadays the value of computers changed and grew for a variety of tasks such as statistical analysis, textual analysis, and computer assisted language learning (CALL), and the use of computers help to complement language acquisition. It is not new but the last seven years have seen an important acceleration.

1, 2, Computer Assisted Language (Online). Available from Internet: [www. Google.com](http://www.Google.com). Software-Educativo. 2001.

According to an information page on the internet about educational Software, CALL started as a part of the PLATO educational project in the USA (Illinois, University). The PLATO system (Programmed Logic Automated Teaching Operations) was developed at the University of Illinois in 1960. Over 15,000 hours of instruction were developed for PLATO based on B.F. Skinner's behavioral learning model, representing perhaps the largest single investment in educational technology content ever made, even to date.

PLATO has a limited success at best. During the 1960's, PLATO was a small system for a single classroom of terminals, but around 1972 new mainframe technology supported its transition to a system capable of serving up to one thousand simultaneous learners. Online chat and bulletin board notes features were added in the early 1970s, long before the Internet. In 1975, Control Data Corporation (CDC) entered the picture, establishing PLATO-IV as a commercial educational product which, by 1985, had established systems in over 100 campuses around the globe.

At the University of Amsterdam, PLATO was tested in the period 1977-1979 in the French, Musicology, Italian, Physics and Pedagogy departments. A substantial amount of existing 'courseware' (mainly prepared at the university of Illinois) was already available, and the idea was that this collection would be extended by the participating institutes in Amsterdam.

After two years the experiment came to an end when it became clear that the very substantial costs (about \$200.000) were not equaled by the educational benefits. Today we can see that the project was far ahead of its time, if only because of the difficulties and cost involved in sharing a distant mainframe computer. However, it seems that many of the objections of the late 70's are still valid today: high cost of courseware development in relation to a course's limited lifecycle; troublesome

user-machine interaction; difficulties of combining CAI with traditional instruction methods. 3.

In England, the CALL project started during the 70's, and they started with central and expensive computers, CALL, is a free access system where the most important aspect is the individual learning, development about own learning strategies.

Today CALL is involved in more communicative activities and the interaction user – computer, user – user, is said to be far more advantageous in terms of production.

With CALL, students must be responsible and independent, because they have to know how and how much they can learn, in this way they are conscientious about their own learning and also active in the evaluation when they are using computers in classroom.

6.5. SENA PROJECT

Here in Colombia, we find that The Ministry of Education through SENA (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje) created the National Bilingual Program (NBP) on May 21st.

This program had a first stage of creation based on the installation of The Language Practice Centers Sena (LPCs). These LPCs are rooms designed for offering a real language learning environment, constituted the integrated use of Multimedia Technology and Educational strategies.

3. CALL, Computer Assisted Language (Online). Available from Internet: [www. Google.com](http://www.Google.com). Software-Educativo. 2001.

The LPCs are structured in 3 areas and 1 instructor control manager. The 3 areas work autonomous and simultaneously in the following way: Multimedia educational software area, audio-lingual area and reading area.

- A. The multimedia educational software area is composed by computers with audio, image, animation, video and text service.
- B. The audio-lingual area : Students can learn new experiences in a foreign language through movies, records, etc.
- C. The reading area is a library composed by English Learning text, dictionaries and all kind materials related to the English Learning.

These areas must be referred with all information generated among them to get a good work with efficacy. Furthermore, el Sena implemented an Educational support tool in the English formation, English Discoveries. El Sena drives all rights of the educational software products English Discoveries integrated with its additional module “The Executive and The Hotelier”. These programs are an Educational Solution developed for the use of the computer as a teaching and Learning tool. They offer students the knowledge, exploration, reinforcement and practice of the English Language in an interactive way.

Even now, the educational software English Discoveries considers the development of the English Language in its 4 skills associated with technology. The content is based on grammatical points which are represented in a progressive way from easy level to a difficult one. Also English Discoveries is provided of complete exercises, games and interactive educational options. These levels are structured in the following levels: let's star, basic, intermediate and advanced.

The executive module is created for the English studies in marketing and business requirements.

The hotelier module: It is created for the English studies in factory and technical and tourist requirement. The Educational Software English Discoveries is only distributed by The Ministry of National Education through EL SENA offering the marketing and training enterprise and Education Public Institutions 4.

6.6. ANTONIO NARIÑO UNIVERSITY PROJECTS – “ESPECIALIZACIÓN EN COMPUTACIÓN PARA LA DOCENCIA”.

The development of science and technology over the last decade has created new disciplines to permit the study of the educational process from the research of the universities. In such a way, the University Antonio Nariño de Colombia is contributing with the creation of programs like the especialization in Computing for Teaching. The main purpose of the program is to apply some strategies to increase the quality of teachers which are responsible for the students' instruction.

The preparation and training of teachers in the use of new technologies (development of educational software) is guided to the fulfillment of research projects to implement new methodologies for putting into the practice the teacher creative capacity for the solution of teaching and learning problems in the education. In addition to foster the research, also the program has intended for recovering the teacher human sense over her/his educational labor to seek advice and help out the student task.

4. Dirección de Formación Profesional “ Grupo de Ética y Desarrollo Humano”, (Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo, pautas generales, Mayo 2001) Sena Regional Cauca.

The University Antonio Nariño in Popayán has contributed to the improvement of educational research in the Cauca Department through teacher training in the use of new technologies as it is the implementation of the educational software into the different knowledge areas.

The bibliography found about the implementation of educational software in the University Antonio Nariño library on the use of computers for the foreign languages (English) are identified in two projects called: Synthesis of the Qualifying Adjective in English by Carmen Sanchez Garcia, and English for Electricity and an introduction to reading strategies in English for Specific Purposes through the computer by Antonio Nariño University 5.

The first project, “Synthesis of the qualifying adjective in English”, was guided by the University Antonio Nariño graduate school in Santa Fé de Bogotá CREAD Popayán – Cauca. The problem found, which motivated the research development was the difficulty presented by the 7th grade students at INEM Francisco José de Caldas High - school of Popayán in the writing sentences in English where were included to the Synthesis of the qualifying adjective in English.

5.Universidad Antonio Nariño, Antecedentes y Desarrollo del Programa de nuevas Tecnologías, 1.995. - English for electricity –an introduction to reading strategies in English for specific purposes through the computer,1995. University Antonio Nariño de Popayán.

Two stages are included in the project: the first one permits the practice and the use of noun phrases, verb phrases and prepositional phrases.

Consequently the identification of the problem permitted to face the success the student instruction in the English learning process through a practical educational software. The second project is called “English for Electricity”, it’s an introduction to reading strategies in English for specific purposes through the computer carried out for the 11th grade students in the INEM Francisco José de Caldas high - school of Popayán. This project was based on the implementation of courseware which faces up the lack of English comprehension of technical reading supported by the semantic and communicative approach in the English learning process.

The second one helps to develop some strategies in reading comprehension like inference, scanning , skimming related to the Electrical technical text written in English.

Finally , the University Antonio Nariño of Popayán is the only educational institution which has developed researches about the use of new educational technologies in the Popayán.

6.7. ANTIOQUIA UNIVERSITY PROJECTS.

In Antioquia, La Caja de Compensación COMFAMA, has had a Project with La Secretaria de Informática, de la Presidencia de la República since October 1st , 1984 until this project named the informatica center are opened spaces to the community in general, where each person can learn in a free way and without cost.

By means of its Multimedia rooms, COMFAMA offers:

- Consultations
- Stories by computer
- Introduction to the multimedia technology
- Electronic books
- Graphic creativity
- Knowledge about book by the computer

Reading by computers will give to the students the possibility to imagine, dream, create or reproduce narration, tales, stories or their own reality.

Another examples of technology in education:

- La Red Icarito; which are programs to write, draw and calculate.
- “Diseño y Experimentación de una Propuesta Didáctica Apoyada en Tecnología Multimedial para el desarrollo de Habilidades Comunicativas en Niños con Síndrome de Down” (Octavio Henao a, Doris Adriana Ramirez, Luz Estella Giraldo) Facultad de educación, Universidad Antonio Nariño-Medellin – Colombia – Oral and written communication represent an area, (clearly deficient in Down’s síndrome children) which affects their capacity to interact with their surroundings and significantly influences their cognitive development. These limits on everyday communication translate into a barrier that hinders social interaction and integration in regular schools. The situation as such, brings to light the need to produce tools, learning environments, teaching strategies, and pedagogic proposal that stimulate the acquisition of better communicative ability reflect in speaking, reading, and writing skills”.

The purpose of this project is to create and test a teaching/learning proposal based on multimedia technology that develops communication skills in a Down’s

Syndrome population comprised of individuals between the ages of 4 and 12 years. Its development involves the design of computerized programs to practice and stimulate communication skills in a dynamic and holistic approach.

- “Aproximación Teórica y Experimental a una Didáctica de la Lectura y la Escritura de Textos en formato Electrónico, Hipertextual y Multimedial” (Octavio Henao Álvarez – Universidad de Antioquia teacher. He says in his Project that in an electronic text a written text (paper) there are differences that are going to influence the way that students or readers read such as:

1. The nature of the electronic text is interactive and its ability to respond to specific needs of reader,

2. the inclusion of maps (in the structure) guide the reader (students) is his/her exploration,

- 3 the introduction of symbols and images that allows the access to different audiovisual resources.

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

7.1. READING

According to Jorge E. Benavidez (1999), reading is a way to make decisions because it is an option to develop the knowledge and also the human being, and for him this aspect is the most important part in reading process but at the same time it has been forgotten from our educational system.

Reading is a mental process of securing and reacting to an author's message represented by written or printed symbols. To read, one must be able to recognize words, know the meaning of them, understand the ideas expressed by the author, sense the mood and tone of the selection, evaluate the accuracy of the ideas and use or apply them, and also reading is an activity that permits oneself to find appropriate answers to transform an ideology, to become aware of a society or to educate a person. At the same time, reading helps qualify intellectual performance in all fields of knowledge.

Children in the primary grades usually learn to read simple materials. These abilities are expanded and refined in the middle and upper grades, but the most important is the purpose of the reading, student with a purpose in his or her mind can have an effective understanding, guided to a particular objective. A lack of purpose from the student can lead to superficial reading and misunderstanding.

There is a lot of important research about reading. We can find short readings and long readings, in books, internet, papers, and other things that this century is bringing more to read. The most remarkable in reading is the way to do it and the purpose. For example: a reading to improve grammar; is a software to help

students to increase or improve their way of reading, can be interactive in an amusing way. However, the most important aspect about reading is that it is an active process and not a passive one. This process implies real comprehension from the student.

Reading is a platform to success in our society. It is an excellent way to succeed in an academic, professional and personal way, and also reading helps the students to understand the most important aspects about a text and to identify messages transmitted by the writer. The texts of an idea is an active process in their mind.

For us, reading is a basic way of man's expression which has contributed to the progress humanity. Reading is also considered a scholarly activity guided by personal knowledge in educational fields such as universities, colleges, high-school, but it is not an isolated idea in the classroom. Even now, it is the support point for writing the literature of the Reading Adventure project.

We can find a lot of definitions, but we are going to take into account only a few. There is not really any difference between reading in English and reading in Spanish. We found that they are both based on the same thing, how you understand it, how you read it, how you take it, and how you evaluate it. Reading is a mental process of securing and reacting to author message represented by printed symbols" 1. Reading is a setting-up of the expectancy that written material is related to sounds and meaning and partly the beginning practice of attempting to fulfill that expectancy by marking effective system guesses as sounds and meaning (Donald Knapp) .

According to these definitions, the first definition from an encyclopedia and the second one taken from the author's thoughts, we can find a point of view very

similar between the encouragement of sound and written symbols being the starting point to develop reading. The relationship between sound and written symbols must be executed through constant practice where a reading activity is the main aspect to take into account.

Practicing reading aloud is a preliminary suggestion to both reading for comprehension and also for writing. In this part we can find that without practice reading, it is difficult to develop reading for understanding. Even now, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of reading comprehension and the value of words, phrases and paragraph meanings.

Reading comprehension must include word recognition, knowing the meaning of words, understanding the idea expressed by the author and evaluating the accuracy of the ideas. So, a beginning reader becomes aware that he can find and understand the meaning from the printed page, through reading. Therefore the basic purpose of reading will always be to find meaning, to read for comprehension and understanding 2.

Reading is essential for social and economic advancement, but the most important aspect is reading comprehension which is an ability to recall texts, the ability to answer questions about the reading, and the ability to evaluate the structure of the text.

1, 2. ARISTOS VERGARA. Diccionario Enciclopédico. Librería editorial Argos S.A, primera edición. Barcelona , España .1977.

Reading is a psychological process that integrates physical stimuli and general knowledge. Reading in first and second languages can be similar and share many things in common. Reading in a first language takes place in a context that is not often similar to second language acquisitions 3.

According to Gilma Zuñiga (2001), in her book, *Constructing Literacy from Reading in First and Second Languages*, the most important components of the reading process are the reader, in our case the students; the second one is the text, and the last one is the Reading Context. We think that this is the most important aspect because the context can affect our comprehension: all the words in a text do not have the same meaning.

Computer technology has potential in the development of reading for students who have difficulty understanding texts.

Some researches, such as El Servicio Nacional de Pruebas (ETS) suggest that the Computer Assisted Instruction (IAC) can help the students to learn in a faster way than a traditional class.

Zuk (1986) in his research found that young students spend more time reading by computer than reading from a printed text, but the comprehension was not affected.

3.KENNETH CROFT. *Reading on English as Second Language*. Winthrop Publishers, inc, second edition. Cambridge, Massachusetts(USA) .Page # 348.

Benavidez (1993-1997) found that the university students improved their reading and vocabulary, and also their velocity level and their English reading comprehension.

7.2. READING PURPOSE

Any type of language used for either listening, speaking, reading, or writing has a purpose. Everything in our world has a purpose. Everything in the world has a purpose. This may be to give us pleasure, or to play a good role in social interaction. It's probably that every reading we realized has a purpose, if for example we read the newspaper, our purpose is to know a little about our country, or our political, economical situation, it's depends on reader's purpose.

7.3. READING FOR LEARNING

To know how to read is very important, because in this way we know what kind of topics or things we want to learn. Reading for learning is related to a school level and is supported by academic contexts that hardly have anything to do with acquisition facts.

7.4. READING FOR PLEASURE

Reading for pleasure must be accepted as a principal way for learning, but unfortunately in the traditional educational practices it is not accepted, because in schools reading is an obligation, and teachers never encourage their students to do it, the motivation does not exist. With this research we expect students to take

reading as a pleasure and habit more than academic assignment.

7.5. READING INTEREST

Studies of reading interests have been made of school children, young people and adults. The results show certain trends. In the primary grades, children are usually interested in familiar experiences and enjoy stories about other children of their ages and about animals. They prefer narrative to other types of materials.

In the schools or in preadolescent period, the interest of the majority of boys is in adventure readings, descriptions of "how to do it", hero worship, hobbies and science. At the same period, girls interests turn toward home and family life and fantasy and some interest is show in adventure. It is significant that girls will often choose boy's books while boys do not like girls' books. Near the end of this period most pupils do more free reading than at any time in their school careers.

In the other hand, and according to Jere Brophy (1987), motivation to learn is a competence acquired "through general experience but stimulated most directly through modeling, communication of expectations, and direct instruction or socialization by significant others (especially parents and teachers)."

When parents nurture their children's natural curiosity about the world by welcoming their questions, encouraging exploration, and familiarizing them with resources that can enlarge their world, when children are raised in a home that nurtures a sense of self-worth, competence, autonomy, and self-efficacy, they will be more apt to accept the risks inherent in learning. Conversely, when children do not view themselves as basically competent and able, their freedom to engage in academically challenging pursuits and capacity to tolerate and cope with failure are greatly diminished.

The sources to which children attribute their successes (commonly effort, ability, luck, or level of task difficulty) and failures (often lack of ability or lack of effort) have important implications for how they approach and cope with learning situations.

7.6. READING STRATEGIES

One of the biggest problem of foreign languages students, is that they always try to translate at the same time that they are reading, and for this reason, their reading comprehension is affected and also their speed. Unfortunately, our teachers teach to read word by word, not to know the meaning of the words.

When we are talking about reading or when we are talking about reading comprehension it is relevant to take into account several strategies to do it; for example, when a student takes a text, the students must have a purpose, this is the first step, when we know what kind of information and what we need, in that moment we know the purpose.

In the beginning, when the students try to improve their reading, encourage them to read aloud; however, it is sometimes a good idea to use efficient silent reading techniques.

According to Nuttal (1985), Skimming and Scanning are the most appropriate ways to develop the reading skills, and also to develop the ability to recognize a word each time the student reads.

7.6.1. Skimming: With this technique the student can predict the main idea or the different messages that a reading has. The idea with skimming is that the students

from the beginning just by look at the text can give some information about it.

According to some definitions of Skimming – in International Dictionary of English – Cambridge , it is “ to read or consider (something) quickly to understand the main point, without studying it in detail.

Skimming, is an important reading skill that every English student should try to develop. Skimming involves reading a selection, or even a paragraph, quickly in order to get a general idea of the content. We usually skim a newspaper before choosing which articles to read in detail. Very often we skim a reading or a paragraph in order to determine the main idea 1.

In skimming a reading we generally read titles and heading first. Then we look for important words which give clues to the general idea to the passage. We call these words KEY WORDS. Sometimes these words are set off by punctuation (parenthesis, quotation marks, apostrophes, commas, etc) by capital letters or by a different type of printing. Words or phrases that are repeated several times in a paragraph or reading give a clue concerning the subject or topic of that paragraph or reading. However when we skim a paragraph or reading, we try not to focus on one idea or one vocabulary item in particular, but rather understanding the author’s main idea.

7.6.2. Scanning: this technique refers to a quick search for something particular in a reading or in a text. By doing these scanning exercises, the students are able to look for names or dates, to find definitions, or details.

1. SKIMMING. (Online). Available from Internet.

The main idea with scanning is that the students do not need to read the whole text in an extensive way to extract specific information.

Scanning: International Dictionary of English – Cambridge: to look at (something) usually carefully, with the eyes or with a machine, in order to obtain information.

To scan a text can also be to look through it quickly in order to find a piece of information that you want, to get a general idea of what the text contains.

Scanning, like skimming, is a method of reading quickly. However, the purpose of scanning is different. When we scan a paragraph or a reading selection, instead of looking for the main idea, we are looking for specific information or details. For example, the way we read the telephone book is through scanning 2.

Before we begin to scan for specific information, it is important to decide what the information is and what form it will take. For example, in response to a question when you are looking for a date: in that case we would move our eyes quickly over the page, looking for numbers. If we are looking for a measurement, we would probably also scan for numbers. In response to a question about a person's name, we would look for capital letters. When we are scanning for specific information, we should pay attention to punctuation. Special facts and details are often set apart by commas, dashes or parentheses. Sometimes they follow a colon. A title for example, would appear in quotation marks or would be underlined. When we scan, we are usually trying to save time.

2. SCANNING. (Online). Available from Internet.

7.7. CATEGORIES FOR THE READING PROCESS.

The following levels were explained (correspond to the work carried out in 1.997 by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional, by Fabio Jurado, Mauricio Perez Abril y Guillermo Bustamante), and have been defined as a referring to characterize ways of reading; these levels are not assumed in a definitive way, but they can be an optional methodology to show competition stages in reading in primary and secondary school. It is very important to remember that the definition of these levels “of competence” are made from a theoretical perspective.

7.7.1. level a: Literal Level.

The word literal comes from the natural or primary meaning of a word, and it means the action of retaining the meanings. It's the first key to enter into a text, if we take into account that the process of reading is a group of keys to pass from one level to the other. In this level we can find two aspects:

- a. transcriptive literality and
- b. literality in the sense of paraphrasing.

In the first one, the reader recognize just words and phrases with their meanings and their usage, and in the second one, the reader overflows only the graphematic transcription, to make a semantic translation where similar words to the ones in the text read help to retain the meaning, it's called the integration of fundamental information.,

The results of this level (literal level) are readings establish in the frame of the dictionary.

7.7.2. Level b: Inferential Level.

The reader carries out inferences when she or he is able to establish relationships and association among the meaning which point to dynamic and stressful actions of the thought. In this level we can find particular procedures to the presupposition (or hypo codification).

7.7.3. Level c: Critical-Intertextual level.

In this reading level we can exploit the force of the conjecture, where the interpretative explanation is carried out in different ways from the global coherence of a text to the identification of the superstructure, it's a story?, is a poem?, is a letter?. In this reading level the reader plays with the capacity of controlling the consistency in several and possible interpretations.

7.8. THE USE OF MULTIMEDIA IN TEACHING

Nowadays, multimedia technology has been improved by joining basic tools with new educational models like the conjunction between the use of sounds and images (with movement). Through multimedia technology we can easily make the student acquisition of new concepts by using images and animation. This allow them to interact with the computer and their own learning speed. Decroly said "when the child was in a real contact with the truth, they can carry out an acquisition process in harmony with the way of thinking" 1.

1. Dewey , Jhon. Democracy and Education. Buenos Aires. Losada, Fourth Edition, 1960.

However, the use of these two tools would not be satisfactory without a theoretical model (instruction for guiding the application) within the learning process. Therefore, the educational reason used by the practical application of the technology and education is based on the programmed instruction of the teaching machine developed by B.F. Skinner. The teaching machine was created by Skinner for his daughter Deborah.

Skinner based "The Skinner Box" on the presents of a stimulus transmitter, an answer receiver and reinforcement transmitters. These positives answers are accomplished by the student.

In the programmed instructions, the student receives a group of related stimulus which is sure to give a specific answer. If the answers have been positive (the program function is to encourage student to be responsible with the wrong answer proof reading) the student receives the reinforcement according to the given answers.

Piaget said that the child is an active being and his behavior is guided by interest or need, when he is encouraged an activity. The child builds knowledge through the interaction with the environment. He suggests possible explanation of facts, and so on until generating solution by integrating those facts into a complex and extensive way 2.

2.Piaget, Jean. *Psicology and Pedagogy*. Barcelona. Ariel. Original Edition in French, Donoel, Paris, 1969.

The use of a computer can present a way to synchronize text writing with specific content, and likewise to present a group of images to help the comprehension. When the text finishes, the student looks for different way to give an answer through his/her writing or signs in relation to some possible schemes to allow the interaction "student to computer and viceversa". This kind of activity establishes a quick evaluation and feedback about the acquired information. Each correct answer permits the user to continue on with the next step. It also takes into account a time limit allowed for answering each question. In this case, the wrong answer will be notified to the student and so not continuing to the next step until finish.

A good example of the above application is the TOEFL test program which follows the same procedure of the Skinner machine.

7.9. MULTIMEDIA AND READING.

Computers have been presented as a new resource in education over the last years. When we talk about computers in education, we have to take into account the use of multimedia because it is a tool to help learning. Its tools, such as texts, graphics, sound files, full motion video, intensive colors, etc, make the learning process more comfortable and agreeable for students and also allow other different strategies to learn, specifically reading and vocabulary.

7.10. INTERNET AND READING.

“Cuando la autopista de la información este en funcionamiento, dispondremos del texto de millones de libros. El lector podrá hacer preguntas, imprimir el texto, leerlo sobre pantalla, o incluso hacer que se lea con las voces que haya elegido. Podrá formular preguntas. La red será su

tutora” – (Bill Gates, 1995 – Pág. 191).

The internet has a common process, the reading. It contains a great collection of reading materials and numerous contexts for meaningful written communication. The internet offers a highly motivating learning environment that encourage students to interact with language in new and varied ways. It also has a great potential for language learning. With its visual stimulating interactive learning experience it creates an educational environment favorable to students of different learning styles.

The World-Wide Web is a hyper textual information retrieval and access system that allows users to read and write texts that are spread out across the Internet. There are currently 3 million WWW information sites storing texts which are accessed through the World-Wide Web (as of March 1995), this number is increasing by approximately 25,000 per month. The number of users of the World-Wide Web is currently unmeasurable, although it will most likely be nearly the same as the number of individuals with Internet access.

Email is the exchange of computer-stored messages by telecommunication. Email was one of the first uses of the Internet and is still the most popular use.

The use of email as a complementary tool to practice and improve writing English was a project developed by Modern Language Students for their undergraduate degree in 2001. The purpose of that project was to test the effectiveness of technological tools in English as a foreign language process.

The use of email as a strategy for learning to write in a foreign language was developed for the following reasons:

- The University of Cauca has several computer rooms with access to Internet technology and their use is limitless for the English Language Learning Process.
- The use of traditional pedagogical resources in the learning of a foreign language without a research purpose.
- The use of Internet as a mass media in the 21st century provide several services like electronic mail.
- The last reason was made for developing this research project on behalf of the students as a new alternative to motivate them in order to practice and improve the writing English through internet technology. Through continuous practice of writing e-mails, students increased their ability to create, analyze and produce written information and ideas more easily and efficiently that by using the traditional writing tools (Law and Penington, 1996).

The project “The Use of E-mail as a Complementary Tool to Practice and Improve Writing in English” by Delgadillo Yazmin et al (2.001), was carried outside the classroom, essentially in the computer rooms at the University of Cauca taking in Internet technology as a base for the project. Students communicated their ideas in a free way and took advantages of the use of e-mail to develop a writing task, being an autonomous expression with real implications in the practice of writing in English.

Finally, the relationship between technology and education must be a constant for the future research projects developed in the Modern Language program in order to offer new environments for motivating the students by the interchanging the information in the English language as a pedagogical tool for the English Learning

Process.

7.11. THE AUDIO-VISUAL METHOD

The audio-visual method was developed in the fifties in France at the Centre de Recherche et d'Etude pour la Diffusion du Francaise (CREDIF) by a team directed by Guverina and Rivenc. The principles of this method was applied in a small number of programs prepared and published by CREDIF team, voix et images de France, a French course intended for adult beginners, Bon jour Line, an equivalent program for children and a revised version of voix et images de France, entitled De Vive Voix. The adaptation of some of these programs were produced in America (Renard and Heinle 1969) and in the U.K. (Gross and Manson 1965) ; and new program based on the same principles was produced in Canada under the title of Dialogue Canada (Commission de la fonction publique 1974-77), prepared for the Canadian government language schools. The CREDIF method as well as the programs were made widely known through teacher's courses in which a rigid in the principles of the audio-visual method. 1.

The audio-visual method provides the chief means of involving the student in meaningful utterances and contexts. Language learning is visualized as falling into these several stages: the first stage to which the audio-visual method is particularly applicable to the student that becomes familiar with everyday language. The memorization of the dialogues is taught through of the visualization of the images, the listening of the recorded sentences and then the repetition of these sentences in a progressive way. A second stage involving the capacity to talk more consecutively on general topics and to read non-specialized fiction and the newspaper. The third stage involving the use of more specialized discourse of professional and other interest. So the audio-visual method is intended particularly for teaching systematic process.

1. BASTIDAS, J.A Opciones Metodológicas para la Enseñanza de Idiomas. 1993

7.11.1. TECHNIQUE OF THE AUDIO VISUAL METHOD

The audio-visual teaching developed by the CRETIF method, consists of a carefully thought-out but rigid order of events. The lesson begins with the filmstrip and tape representation. The sound recordings provide a stylized dialogue and narrative commentary. A filmstrip frame corresponds to an utterance. In other words, the visual images and spoken utterance complement each other and constitute jointly a semantic unit. In the second phase of the teaching sequence the meaning of sense groups are explained by the teacher through pointing, demonstrating selective questions and answers. In the third phase, the dialogue is repeated several times memorized by frequent replays of the tape-recording and filmstrips or by language laboratory practice 2.

In the next stage of teaching sequence(the development phrase exploitation and transposition) students are gradually emancipated from the tape and filmstrip presentation, for example, the filmstrip is shown without the tape recording and the students are recall the commentary or make up their own, the subject matter of the scenario is modified and applied to student himself, his family or friends by means of question and answer or role playing. 3.

Besides this treatment of the dialogue situation, each lesson contains a portion of grammatical drills which practices a pattern or a group of patters which have previously occurred in the context of the tape and filmstrip dialogue presentation.

2. LEARSEN-Freeman, Diane. Techniques and principles in language teaching. First edition. London. University of Oxford. Press 1986.

3. RIVER, Wilga. Teaching Foreign Languages Skills. First edition. Chicago. University of Chicago.

Press 1968.

Grammatical as well as phonological features are practiced. No importance is attributed to linguistic explanations. Writing and reading are exploited in a reduced frequency; they are delayed due to course are nonetheless given emphasis.

The audio-visual method seeks a basis in linguistic. It derives its grammatical and lexical content from descriptive linguistic studies such as *française fondamentale*. But in contrast to the antecedents of the audio-lingual method, the audio-visual stresses the social nature and situational embedded of language.

The visual presentation is not an added gimmick. It is intended to stimulate the social context in which language is used. The assumed learning process of this method has an affinity with the gestalt psychology. It proceeds from a total view of the situation to particular segments of language. By its insistence on a non-analytical learning approach and its well defined teaching sequence the method makes definite assumptions about optimal ways of language learning .

The student is encouraged to absorb in a global fashion the utterances he hears on the tape in the context he sees on the screen, in others words, not to analyze. Equally, in teaching phonology grammar, the method insists that intonation, rhythmic patters and semantic units should not be broken down. But the practice sequences, based on the global presentation, are not fundamentally different from those of the audio-lingual method. However, the stimulation in the exercises are pictorial and the attempt is made to practice all features to be learnt in a meaningful context. Pure pattern practice without attention to meaning and outside a context is avoided. 4.

4. STEVICK,E.W. *Memory ,Meaning and Method* ,Newbury House. 1976

7.12. MOTIVATION: motivation is very important aspect of learning in our lives because if we have the desire to do something (motivation), we can develop it in a productive way.

Student motivation naturally has to do with students' desire to participate in the learning process. But it also concerns the reasons or goals that underlie their involvement or noninvolvement in academic activities. Although students may be equally motivated to perform a task, the sources of their motivation may differ.

A student who is intrinsically motivated undertakes an activity "for its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes" (Mark Lepper 1988). An extrinsically motivated student performs "in order to obtain some reward or avoid some punishment external to the activity itself," such as grades, stickers, or teacher approval (Lepper).

The term motivation to learn has a slightly different meaning. It is defined by one author as "the meaningfulness, value, and benefits of academic tasks to the learner--regard-less of whether or not they are intrinsically interesting" (Hermine Marshall 1987).

7.12.1. SELF-MOTIVATION: is when we decide to make some changes in our lives like losing weight, quitting smoking, starting to exercise. We set our goals, and we work towards them, and for a while, they work out very well. If we are dedicated, motivated, and moving towards improving ourselves.

The term "motivation to learn" has different meanings. According to Hermine Marshal (1987), it is the meaningfulness, value and benefits of academic tasks to the learner- regardless of whether or not they are intrinsically interesting.

We can find several factors that influence the development of students' motivation such as:

- The children's home environment shapes the initial constellation of attitudes they develop towards learning. The parents' influence is very important because they can give their children the message that learning is worthwhile, fun and satisfying.
- Once children start school, they begin forming beliefs about their school-related successes and failures.

"The beliefs teachers themselves have about teaching and learning and the nature of the expectations they hold for students is a powerful influence" (Raffini, 1980), so in this way the motivation always is going to begin by teachers, because they are the people who can motivate the most to the students in an extrinsic way.

"To a very large degree, students expect to learn if their teachers expect them to learn". (Stipek, 1988). According to Stipek, in the classroom all depends on teachers, and the students are the passive elements in the process.

7.13. COMPUTERS AND MOTIVATION.

The motivating aspects of learning with computers are widely touted, and there exists much literature about this topic.

The most frequently-cited motivating aspects of computer – assisted instruction include:

- a. The novelty of working with a new medium. (Fox, 1988).
- b. The individualized nature of computer – assisted instruction (Relan, 1992).

c. The opportunities for learner control (Williams, 1993).

In this case, in “ Reading Adventure Through Computer”, the main objective is that the students or readers develop their reading skills by means of images, clear sounds, etc. The student learns autonomously and this is the most important aspect in this research.

According to Luz Marina Constain M, and Nelly Cecilia Hurtado C (2000), in their research project “Increasing Reading Comprehension Trough the use of Topics Suggested by Students”, it is very relevant to say that reading is not an imposing way to teach. The students must be autonomous when they talk about a text.

When a person wants or desires to do something, this person is motivated by some reason and in this way the process will be easier and more pleasant. “ when a reader follows a text of special interest, the reading strategy becomes a main tool that fulfills the reading purpose. That is why the process of reading asks for engagement and a positive attitude on the reader’s part in order to demonstrate his main reason to read. If the text is for pleasure or for information the interest must be present to carry out the work successfully”.

7.14. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCES

The term Communicative Competence has enjoyed increasing popularity among teachers, researches and others interested in language learning.

In the field of second (and foreign) language pedagogy, this general interest in language for communication is viewed as a promising departure from the narrower and still popular focus on language as grammar. (Michael Canale, 1988).

When we talk about communicative competence in a foreign language, we talk about the students ability to interact in different situations and their having to use their background or previous knowledge.

According to Chomsky (1965): the competence is the linguistic rules mind representation.

7.14.1. MAIN COMPONENTS OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE.

- The nature of communication.
- Social interaction.
- Creativity in form and message.
- Discourse and sociocultural contexts.
- The purposful nature.

“ Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an idea speaker – listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors...”.

The theoretical framework for communicative competence includes four areas of knowledge and skill:

1. GRAMATICAL COMPETENCE is concerned with mastery code (verbal or non –verbal). Which is the ability to recognize and produce the distinctive grammatical structures of a language and to use them effectively in communication.
2. SOCIO-LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE includes both sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse: their address “the extent to which utterances are

produced and understood appropriately in different socio-linguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participant, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction” (Canale and Swain, 1980).

3. DISCOURSE COMPETENCE: this type of competence concerns mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres. (Bennet and Slaughter, 1981).
4. STRATEGIC COMPETENCE: Composed of mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action.

Other important aspect that block or retard communicative competence are:

1. Fear: usually associated with spoken language. This can be defeated through practical exercises such as:
 - Facing your fear.
 - Taping one’s voice and listening to it.
 - Practicing speaking to yourself in a mirror.
2. Ignorance: it means that we are happy if we do not know the true facts of a situation, it is similar with a foreign languages when we ignore the meaning of the words.
3. Malapropism: the wrong use of one word instead of another word because they sound similar to each other, and which is amusing as a result.
4. Mispronunciation: can be a serious obstacle to making yourself understood in a foreign language.
5. Misinterpretation: miscomprehension caused by the lack of communication process.

7.15. LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

“ Language learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning. Strategies are specially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Appropriate language learning strategies result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence” 1.

Language learning strategies are specific actions taken by students to try to make learning easier, faster, enjoyable, self-directed, effective and adjustable to new situations, and also to try to develop the ability to communicate proficiently.

The most important aspects in Language learning strategies are:

1. Contribute to the communication competence.
2. Permit the students to become self-directed.
3. Try to improved the role of the teacher.
4. Take the students in specific actions.
5. Involved all the aspects about students.
6. Support students both directly or indirectly.
7. Are flexible
8. Another important factors are taking into account.

7.15.1. Direct Language Learning Strategies.

This kind of strategies involved the target language. They required mental processing of the language in a variety of a specific tasks and situations. In these kind of strategies we can find three groups:

1. OXFORD, Rebecca. Language Learning Strategies. Boston, 1.987.

1. Memory strategies: the most important in this kind of strategies is try to help the students to retrieve and store new information. These strategies are divide into four groups:

- a. Creating mental linkages, where visual images may be the most powerful device to help recall verbal material.
- b. Applying images and sounds, it imply remembering by means f visual images or sounds.
- c. Reviewing well, it is to be able to go back to notes taken before and the main goal is to get very familiar with the new information and put it into practice.
- d. Employing action, allows using physical response or sensation which involves movement or action.

2. Cognitive Strategies: the function of these strategies are the repetition and analysis of expressions and also summarizing information. The student is in charge of manipulate and transformed the target language. These strategies are divide into four groups:

- a. Practicing implies repetition, with sounds and writing systems, recognizing and using patterns.
- b. Receiving and sending messages, getting the idea in a quick way, using resources for receiving and sending messages.
- c. Analyzing and reasoning deductively, analyzing expressions, translating, transferring.
- d. Creating structures for input and output, taking notes, summarizing and highlighting.

3. Compensation Strategies: these kind of strategies are used to compensate the lack of appropriate vocabulary, and also they allow students to produce spoken or

written expressions in the new language without complete knowledge of it. These strategies are divided in two groups:

- a. Guessing intelligently linguistic and nonlinguistic clues.
- b. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing, where the speaking, writing, reading and listening do not stop.

4. Metacognitive Strategies: they allow to the students go beyond their own cognition, they allow them to control and coordinate their own learning process by using functions like centering, arranging, planning and evaluating. These strategies are divided into:

- a. Centering learning on certain language tasks, activities, skills or materials.
- b. Arranging and planning learning help students to organize and plan information to get the most from language learning.
- c. Evaluating learning, checking language performance, learning from errors and evaluating language learning process.

5. Affective Strategies: they refer to emotions, attitudes, motivations and values involved in the language learning process which contribute a great deal to language leaning success or failure. They are divide in:

- c. Lowering your anxiety, controlling emotions using music, laughter, using progressive relaxation.
- d. Encouraging yourself help to improve self - steem making positive statements, taking risk, and rewarding ourselves.
- e. Taking your emotional temperature, is related to feelings and attitudes when we are performing the new language.

6. Social Strategies: they deal with social behavior and communication with others. They are divided in:

- f. Asking questions, for clarification and verification.
- g. Cooperating with others, it means social acceptance.
- h. Empathizing with others, getting along with others language learning can take place easily.

7.16. AUTONOMOUS LEARNING.

According to the Colombian Framework for English COFE Project / document N° 5, autonomy is an attitude towards learning which may not necessarily have many external features. In terms of attitude, autonomy has some important characteristics:

- It implies the ability to make decisions about ourselves, our own learning as our responsibility.
- It implies independence of traditional systems, (in this case it's self control in learning).
- It involves thinking critically about different concepts, situations, etc.
- It is a way of being; we can practice it in our work, our homes, our classroom, with our friends, etc.

An autonomous person chooses what he or she wants to learn according to what she or he needs to know, but it doesn't imply working alone all the time.

Autonomy: it means that individuals are willing and able to take charge of their own affairs in a responsible and effective way. This term describes the situation in

which students are totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with their learning and the implementation of those decisions.

In this aspect:

- The student chooses what he wants to learn
- The student investigates possible ways in which he might achieve learning
- The student is versatile (use a variety of situation to promote his learning)
- The student monitors his process
- The student knows what he needs to know.

8. THE READING ADVENTURE THROUGH COMPUTER

The introduction of computers in our educational field was very difficult because it was the most effective way to evaluate our traditional system of teaching and using pedagogical forms. The “Reading Adventure Through Computer”, describes the integration of computer technologies in the classroom. (Regardless of the new forms of communication made possible using the computer as a medium for reading process).

There are a lot of different ways to learn about reading and vocabulary with different types of programs or software applications, especially with some programs that use multimedia and the integration of sound, video, graphics and text to give opportunities to the students, to learn in an interactive way. One of the drawbacks of electronic text as a medium is the difficulty in seeing what is on the screen as a real text. Students find that reading their work is best done on a hard copy printout.

Learning to use this kind of technology (computers) implies trying to understand aspects such as velocity, comprehension and the most importantly, the use of information.

8.1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND.

The following antecedents consulted, analyzed and processed the research were a fundamental part of the proposal for the use of educational software to enhance English reading among sixth grade students of Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt High School.

This research project was carried out by Adriana Idrobo Hurtado and Luis Eduardo Valdivieso, Foreign Language students at the University of Cauca. We wanted to work on a significant project for ourselves and the University of Cauca which would encourage other students to investigate the pedagogical field of New Educational Technologies.

At the beginning, we relied on consultation, observations, experiences, books, classes and student and teacher testimonies.

Our first step was the consultation of thesis information collected in the English Resource Center; actually, it is called “Unidad para el Desarrollo Profesional de Educadores y Estudiantes de Lenguas” (UNIDPEL). There was very little source of information related to the use of new educational technology.

Acting on our own initiative, we thought of integrating educational software to enhance English reading, since, as B.F. Skinner states, teaching with machines provides quick feedback answer, as an encouragement to the student. It also allows more individual work.

We started working in the Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt; specifically with sixth grade students because of their high-motivation to contribute to our project. The class observation guided by Mary Torres, the teacher was very important. The data collected and surveys and some interviews to the English and Computer Science teachers helped us to develop our project.

After that we took software material and then we tested them with some students. This experience resulted high-motivated because it was an individual work and the real practice is the most motivated step in a project like this. The use of new technology in different field of knowledge is something which we can not leave

unnoticed, it has been our wish to contribute to encourage use of new educational technologies between foreign language teachers and students of Popayán.

8.2. METHODOLOGY

The use of new technologies as support to the teaching process has been the idea that motivated this research project. The use of educational software programs to enhance the reading comprehension of English texts in the sixth grade students was the starting point.

The purpose was based on the need to develop the use of the different kinds of educational tendencies, in our case the use of the computer; specially when these have been studied at a more superficial level than others; this case occurs in the Foreign Language Department (Unicauca), where we can not find enough researches in relation to the use of new technologies applied to the Foreign Language Teaching.

For supporting the last affirmation it was necessary to consult the data bank in the English Resource Center (Unicauca). The result was poor because only one subject was found, "The use of E-mail as a complementary tool practice and improve writing in English" (2.001) 1.

1. DELGADILLO, C. Yasmin et al. "The use of E-mail as a Complementary Tool to Practice and Improve Writing in English. Universidad del Cauca. 2.001.

For the development of the research project, the Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt Popayán, gave us access to work with the sixth grade students (34 students) taking into account the Principal's and teacher's permission.

The main objective is to evaluate the new experiences through the use of educational software to help the students to recognize their capacity to read English texts, to motivated them to use the computer for their learning reading process in English, and emphasize the importance of this kind of tools to both students, and teachers.

The type of research carried out the following project was based on a descriptive design. Descriptive design purpose is to discover or create solutions to specific problems. In this way, It seeks to study mainly people, communities or whatever phenomena to be analyzed (Dankhe,1986). According to Omar Antonio Santander a descriptive design stars through the observation of phenomena, the real contact, the exploration of the problem, measurement and evaluation proposing a temporary solution by means of the formulation of a hypothesis or a research question.

Descriptive design has an advantage due to the research group can manage the variables with independence (a variable is anything which does not remain constant), for example in our case, the variables are: the students, class observations, teachers' surveys, students' surveys, students' behavior towards learning, the level of motivation. It does not matter the antecedent factors which influence on the instruction; in this case the improvement of English reading. This permitted us to be in real contact with the sixth grade students through a Direct Observation for collecting information necessary to support the written report.

“Direct Observation may be reliable than what people say in many instances, it can

be particularly useful to discover whether people do, what they say, what they do or behave in the way they claim to behave “ 2.

The direct observation consists of observing and analyzing all situations or events taken place in the classroom. The main aim of the project was to identify, analyze, describe and understand the English reading processes through the different language learning strategies used by sixth grade students, and also their teacher.

This research work was done in two stages on:

- ✓ The first stage related to the literature aspects on education and technology, for this, it was necessary to collect information and materials from Universities, libraries, etc. These resources were elements such as books, tapes, interviews, surveys, computers, software and others, which contributed to the information measurement so that it was validated by the written report. This was useful for supporting the idea of integrating education and technology, since, the main encouragement was to carry out a revolutionary research so that teachers and students begin to use and to study technology as an innovative and alternative resource for English teaching / learning in the classroom.
- ✓ The second one was related to the data analysis collected from the group researched. Through detailed observation of English teacher and students work into the classroom. Another important factor was the student's knowledge about computers, because computer and software exposure into the English class were necessary.

2. Judith Bell, Doing your Research Project. Open University Press, Buckingham-Philadelphia, Pàg 110.

8.3. DATA ANALYSIS OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS, INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS

8.3.1. Objectives of teachers' interviews.

For “Reading Adventure Through Computer” project is very important the teacher's points of view about strengths, methodologies and materials that they think that are useful in their classes, for that reason our teacher's interview has the following objectives:

- ✓ To determine the current situation of English reading teaching in Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt high school.
- ✓ To identify the teacher's needs according with the project.
- ✓ To know the type of methodology and activities used by the teachers.
- ✓ To identify the relevance given to each one of the skills in sixth grade by individual teachers.

8.3.2. Results of the teachers' interviews.

Next is the result of three conversations with teachers of the Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt, taking into account that the answers were the inspiration for the “Reading Adventure Through Computer” project.

TEACHER: Alejandra Mosquera, English teacher.

Question: What are the most frequently problems in English in sixth grade students at Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt?

ANSWERS:

1. "When the students came to 6th grade, they didn't know read in Spanish".
2. "The students came from far villages".
3. "Poor preparation in primary school".
4. "Lack of motivation in English, it doesn't exist".
5. "The students don't like study".
6. "They have many dyslexia problems"

TEACHER: Mary Torres, French/Spanish teacher.

Question: What are the most frequently problems in English in sixth grade students at Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt?

ANSWERS:

1. " It was the first time that I taught English subject".
2. "The students don't like English".
3. " The students from villages don't know English".
4. "She expressed that trying to get students motivation is very difficult".
5. "The students are shy to express ideas".
6. "Lack of concentration".

TEACHER: Guido Imbachi Fernandez, computer science teacher.

Question: the teacher of Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt high school use the computer room for their classes?

ANSWERS:

1. "Teachers from different areas never come to computer room, for the resistance to the change".
2. "Computers are old, inefficient and they don't have multimedia".
3. "Teacher are fearful to new technology, they don't like study or think about computers in classroom".

8.3.3. Objectives of the Students' Surveys

- To determine the students' interest in English and Spanish reading.
- To determine the topics of interest for the students.
- To know and to analyze the needs and desires of the students in order to carry out a methodological proposal based on their likes and their interests.
- To determine the importance that students give to English reading in their lives.
- To discover the difficulties that students find in their English reading process.

8.3.4. Interpretation of the student's surveys.

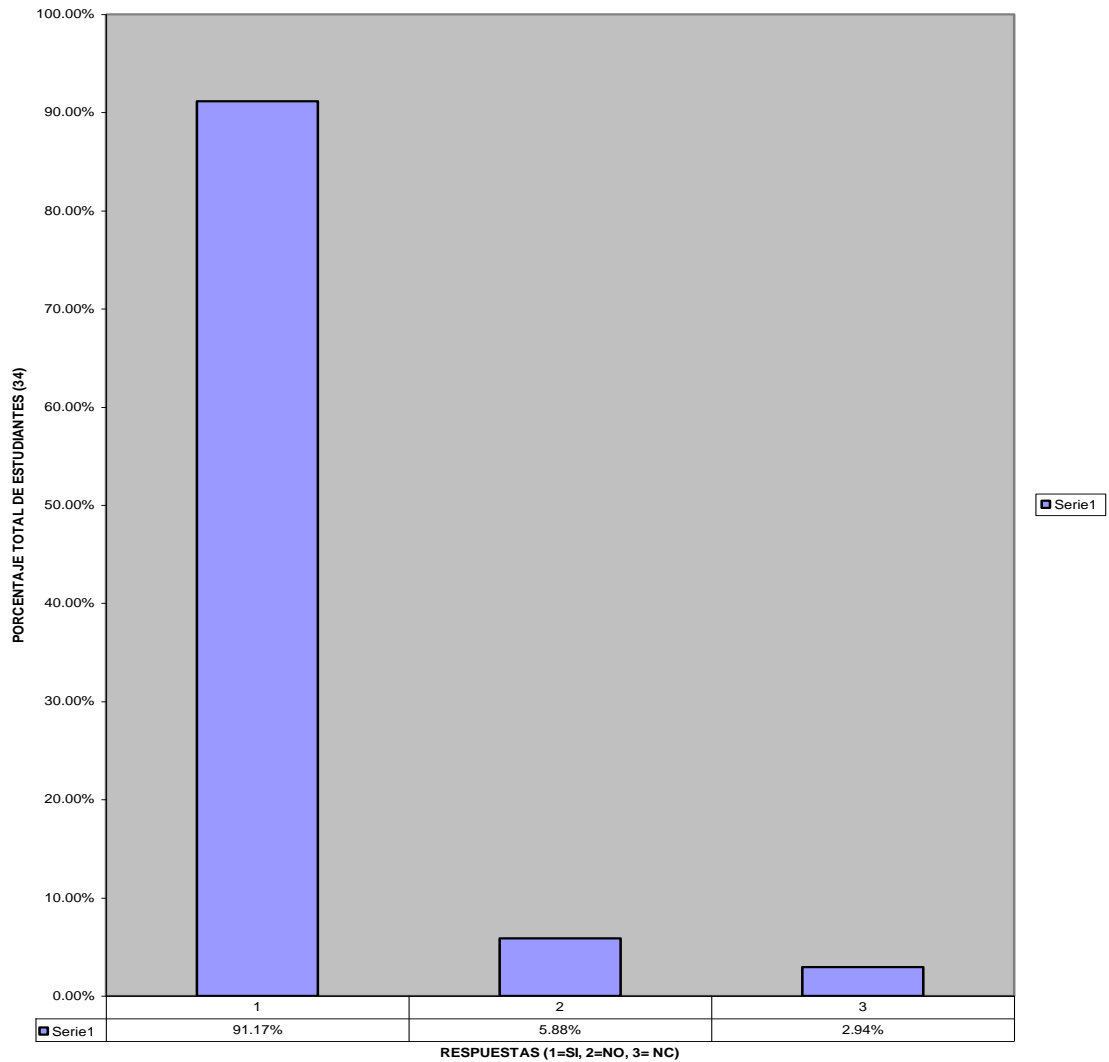
The following information is our interpretation of the students' answers to the surveys where the students had different options to chose and also they could chose more than one answer. Appendix 1 and appendix 2 show the questionnaire

given to the students. In this document we included graphs and interpretations that show the totals for the questions.

APPENDIX N°1

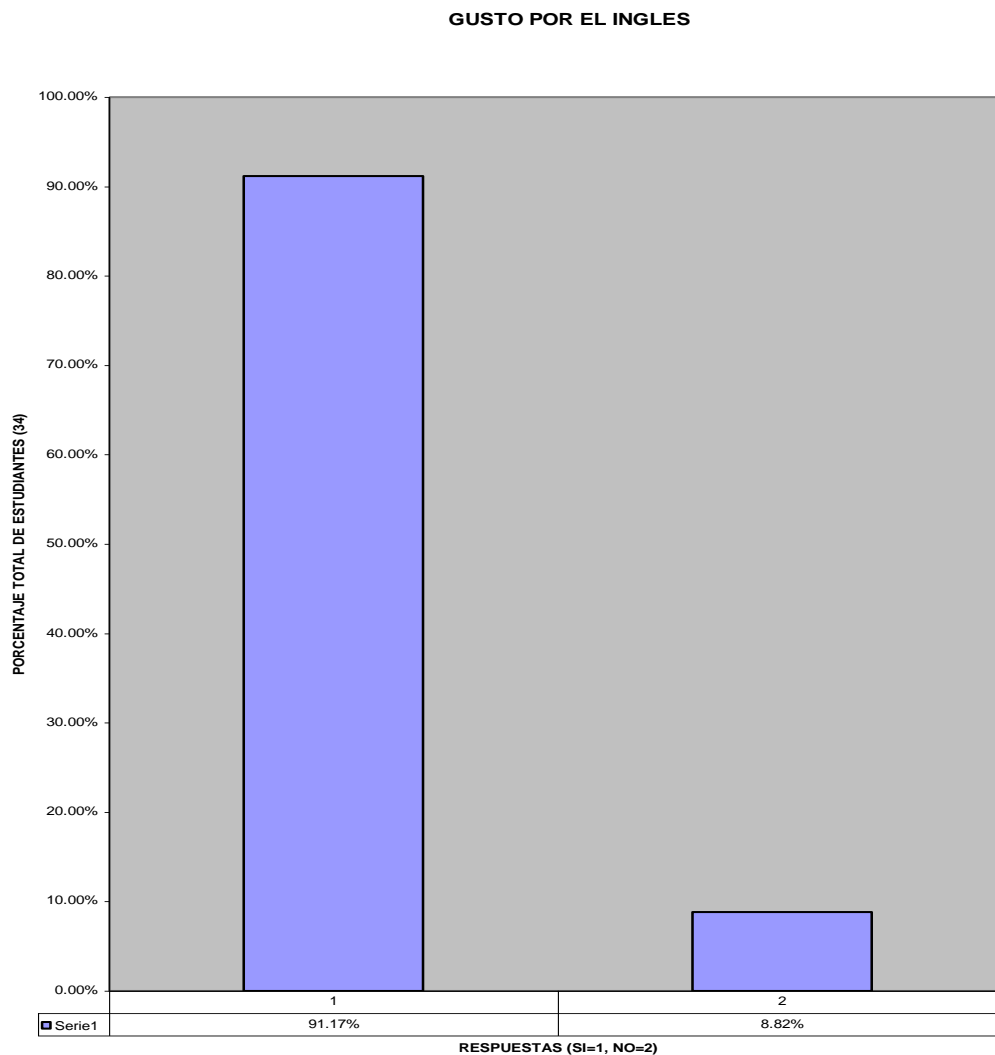
GRAPH N°1

GUSTO POR EL ESPAÑOL Y LA LECTURA



This graph shows the likes for reading in Spanish, and was carried out to 34 students which represent 100% of this research work. The 91.17% (31 students) liked to read in Spanish while the 5.88% (2 students) did not. The 2.94% (1 student) did not answer anything, this meant that the most students liked to read in Spanish.

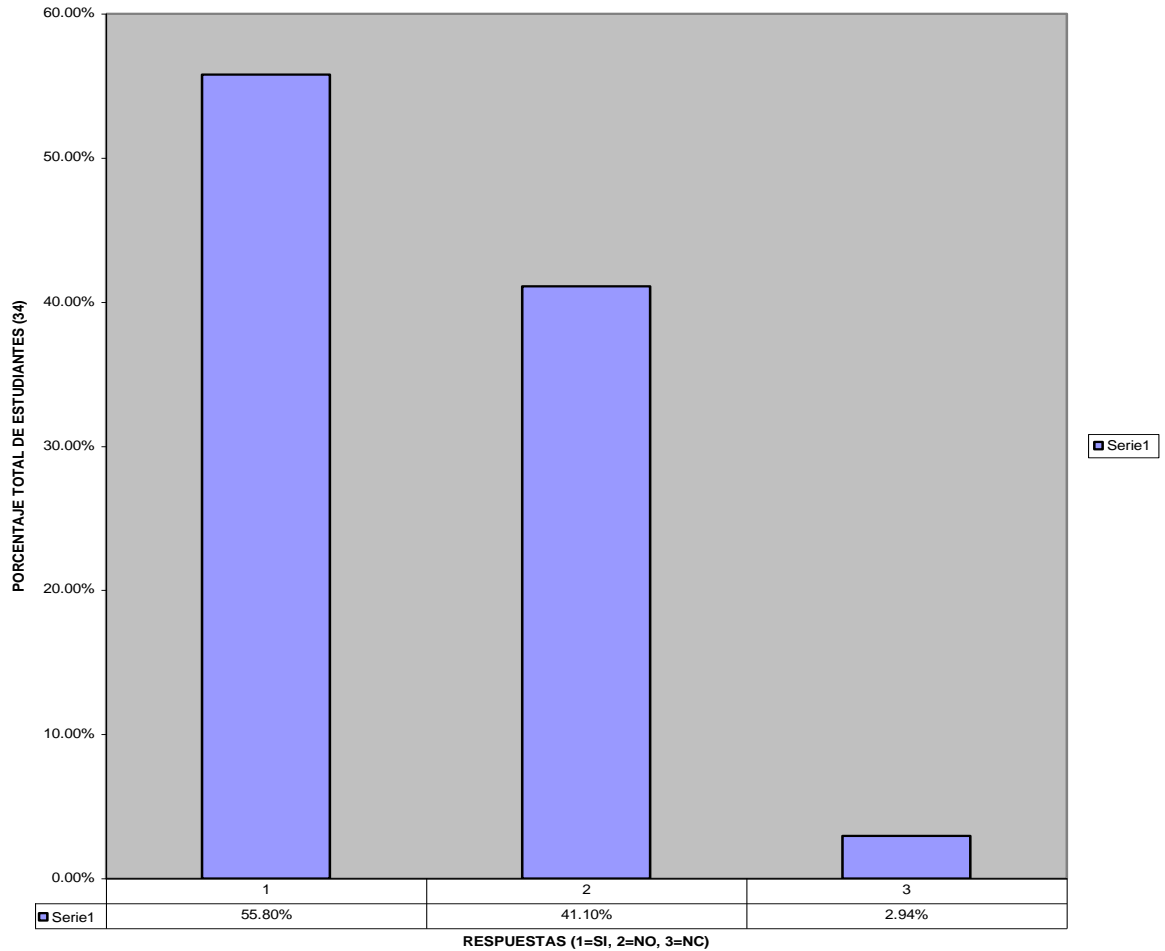
GRAPH N°2



The graph N°2 shows the likes for the English language where 34 students surveyed that represent 100%, the 91.17% (31 students) liked the English language while 8.82% of the students (3 students) did not like it. This meant that for the most of students English language is important.

GRAPH N°3

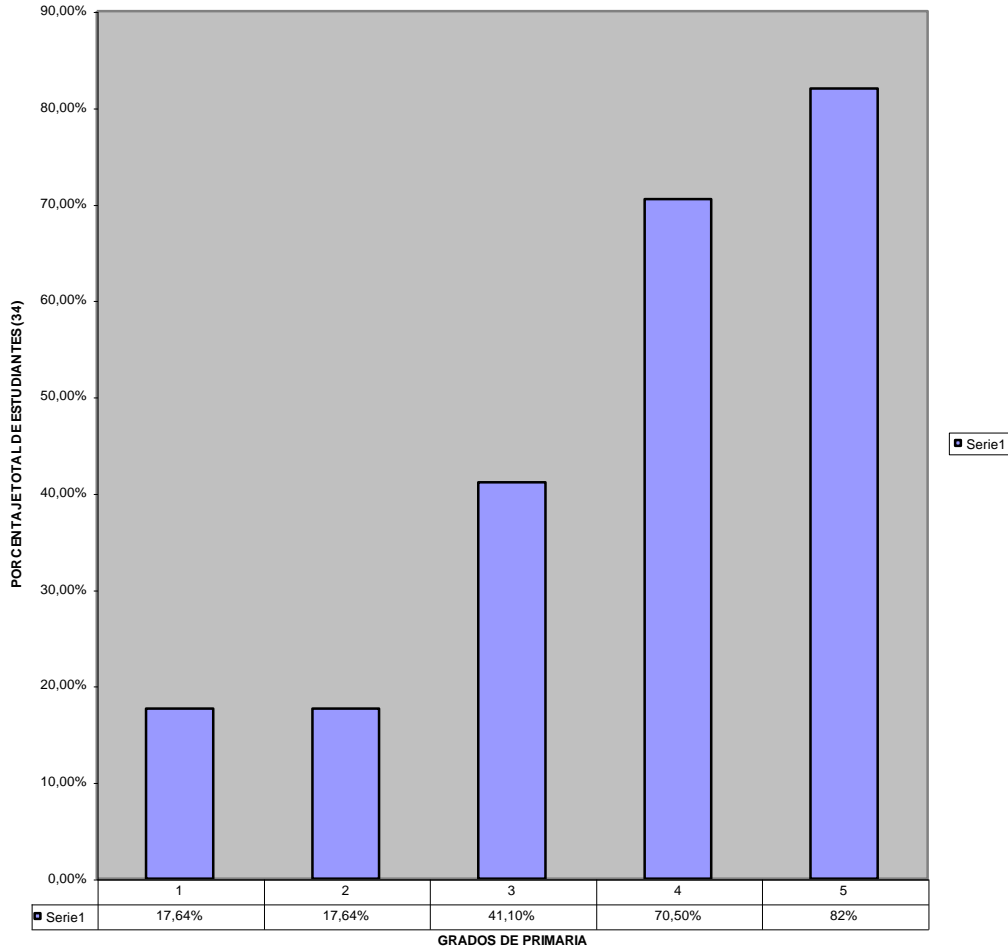
LECTURA EN INGLES



The graph N°3 shows the likes for reading in English language from 34 students surveyed that represent 100% of this research work, the 55.80% (19 students) liked to read in English language while 41.10% of the students (14 students) did not. According to this result we can say that it happen if we take into account the following reasons: the students don't understand the English class contents, they didn't like the way the teacher guide the reading class and it become bored and difficult. Only the 2.94% (1 student) did not answer anything. This meant the lack of motivation in the English reading class.

GRAPH N°4

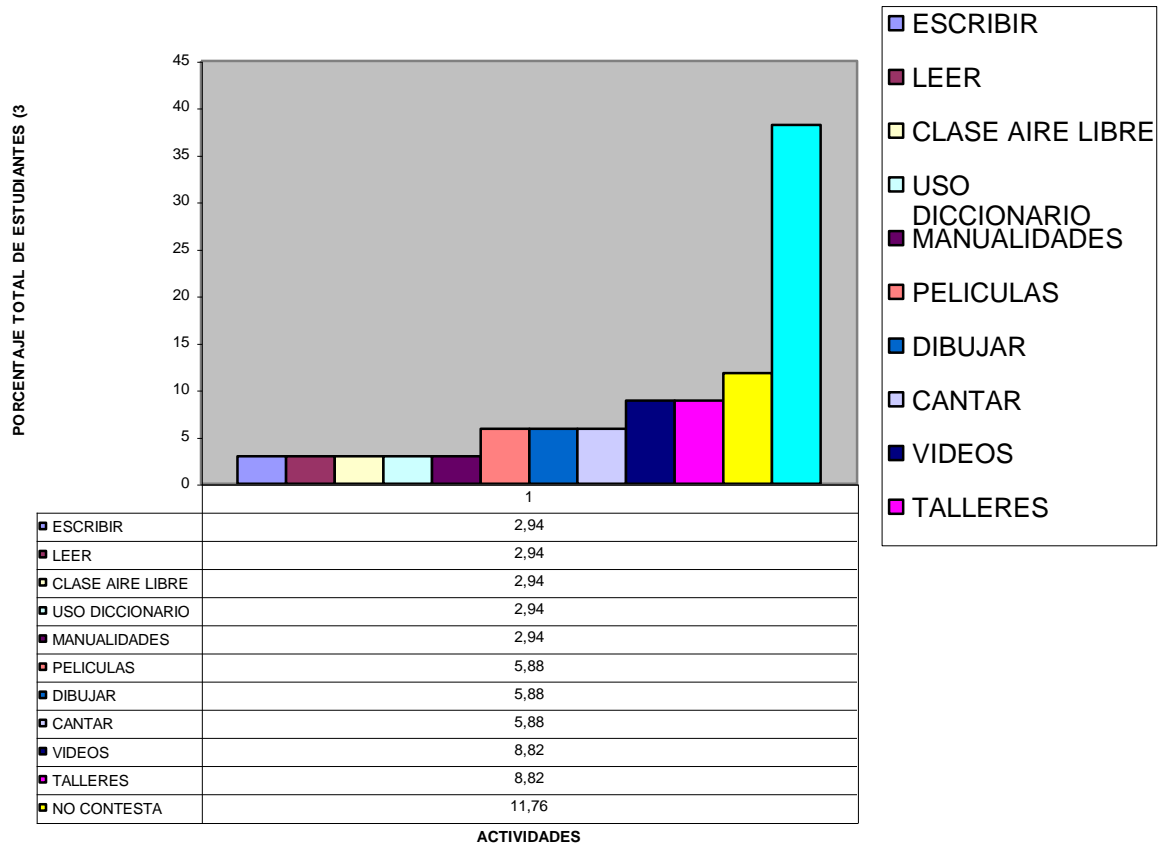
GRADOS CURSADOS DE INGLES EN PRIMARIA



This graph represents the English in the Elementary School, and from 34 students surveyed corresponding 100% of this research work, 17.64% (6 students) attended English class in second grade, 41.10% (14 students) attended English class in third grade. The 70.50% (24 students) attended English class in fourth grade and finally 82% of the students (28 students) attended English class in the fifth grade. It meant that the English language is known for the students before entering to the sixth grade and also this meant the students were familiarized with it.

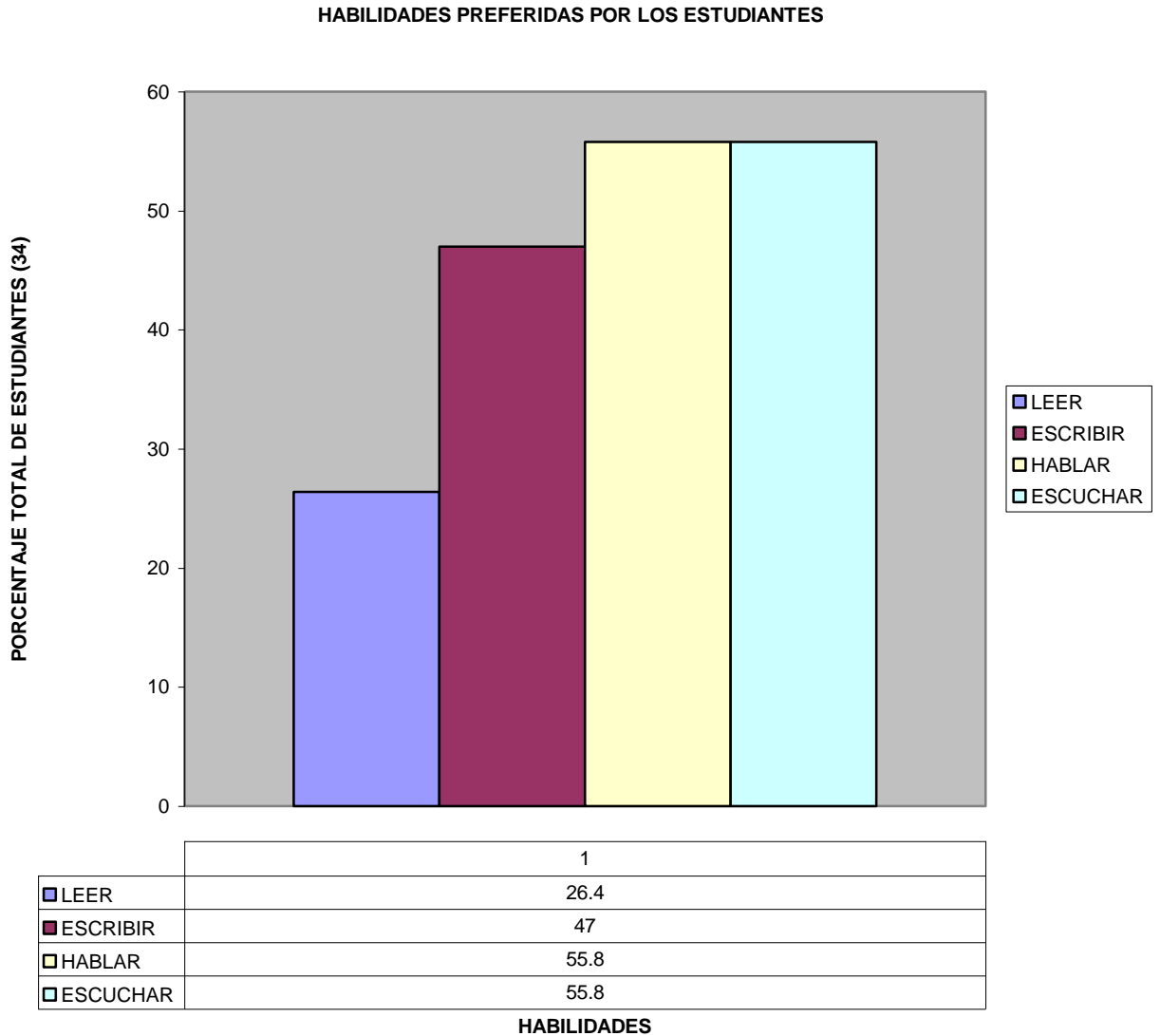
GRAPH N°5

ACTIVIDADES PREFERIDAS REALIZADAS EN INGLES



This graph shows the most important activities for the students into the classroom, and according with this and from 34 students surveyed, the most important one for them were games with 38.2% (13 students), the second highest rating was given to the videos with 8.82% (3 students), and just the 8.22% (3 students) liked working activities in the English class. The rest of the activities had equal importance to the students. This results showed us that students prefer ludic activities in the English class, they are children who need to be motivated in a constant way. To play is a good way to learn.

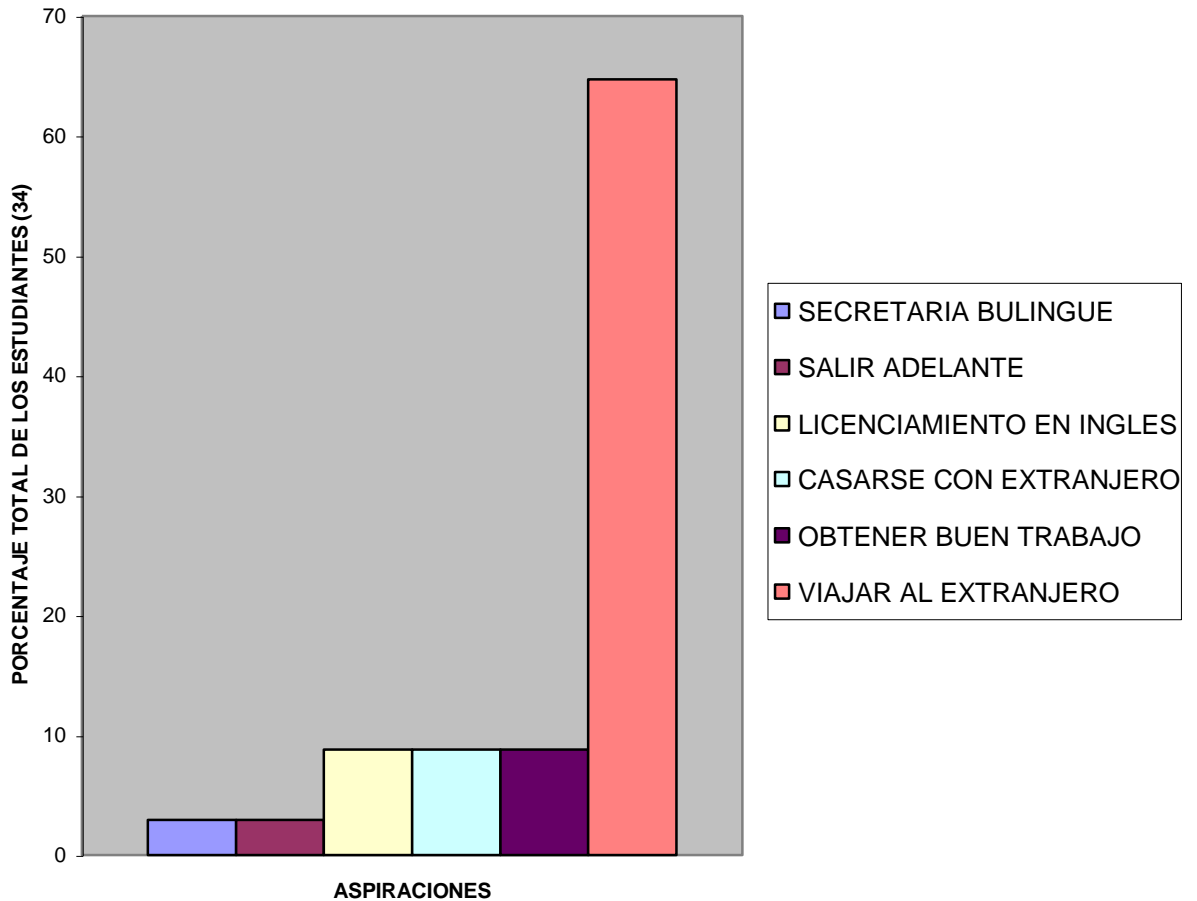
GRAPH N°6



In sixth grade and from 34 students surveyed (100%) the most important skills for them were listening and speaking with the highest rating, 55.8% each one of them and it represented (28 students); the written skill was chosen by 47% (16 students) and the lowest rating was for reading with 2.64% (9 students). The conclusion is that the students preferred listening and speaking skills.

GRAPH N°7

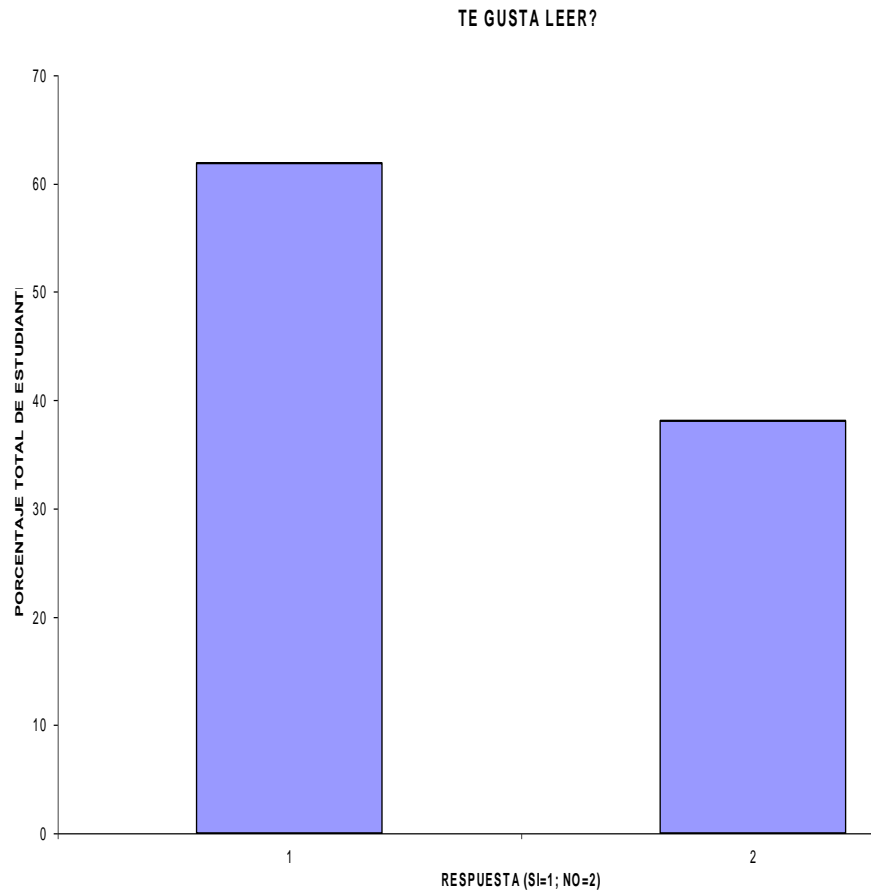
ASPIRACIONES DE LOS ESTUDIANTES AL APRENDER UN IDIOMA EXTRANJERO COMO EL INGLES



This graph shows the different reasons the students have for learning English and from 34 students surveyed (100%), the highest rating is given to traveling abroad looking for a new style of life specially in U.S.A with 64% (22 students). The students gave equal importance to the various options: to study, working as an English teacher and marriage. The lowest rating was for being a bilingual secretary.

APPENDIX N° 2

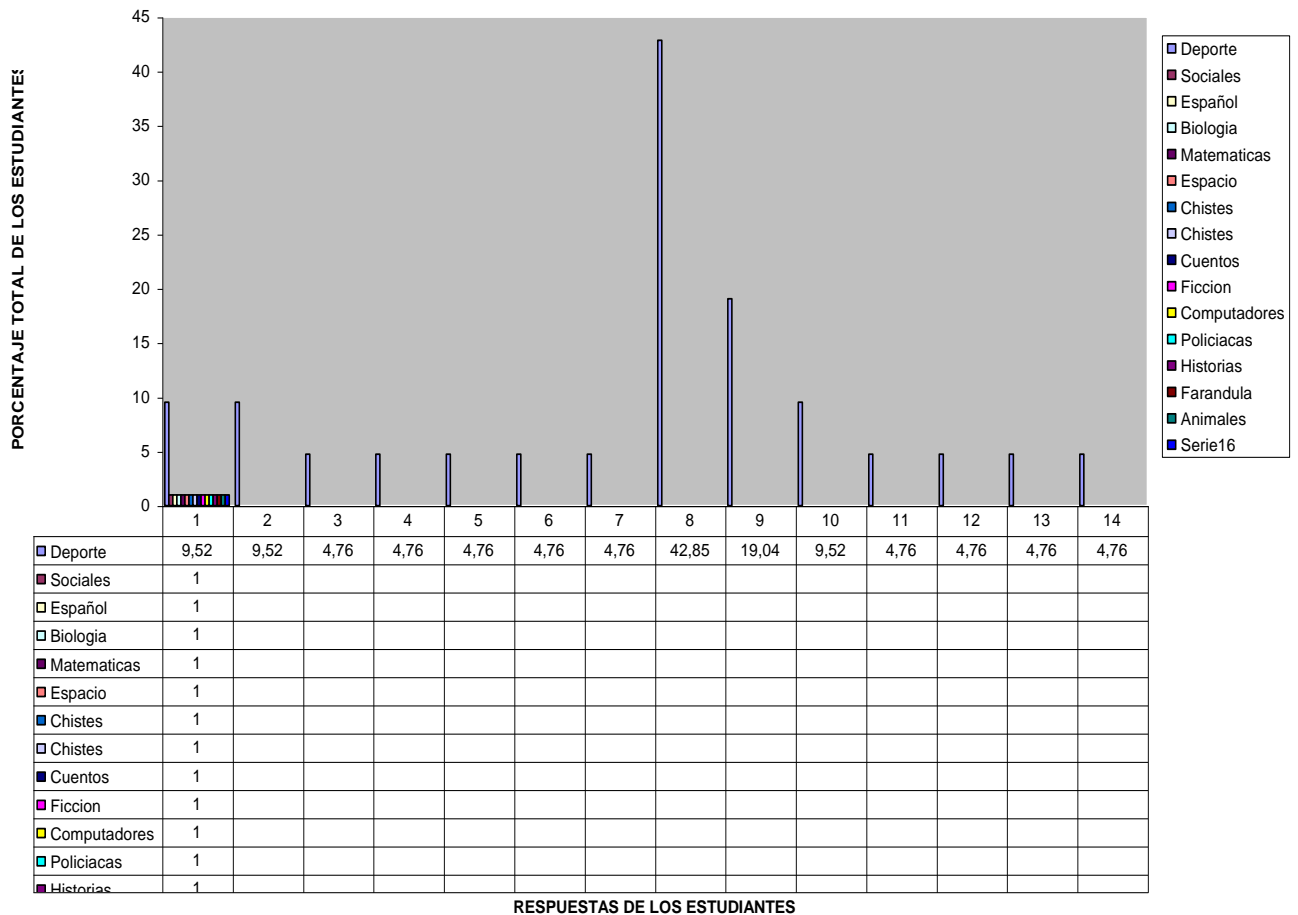
GRAPH N°1



This graph shows the likes for reading in Spanish, in 34 students surveyed (100%). The 62% (21 students) were interested in reading, only 38% (13 students) were not. This meant that the reading interest in their mother tongue was not so high as we were expecting, and also it depended on the lack of motivation to do it.

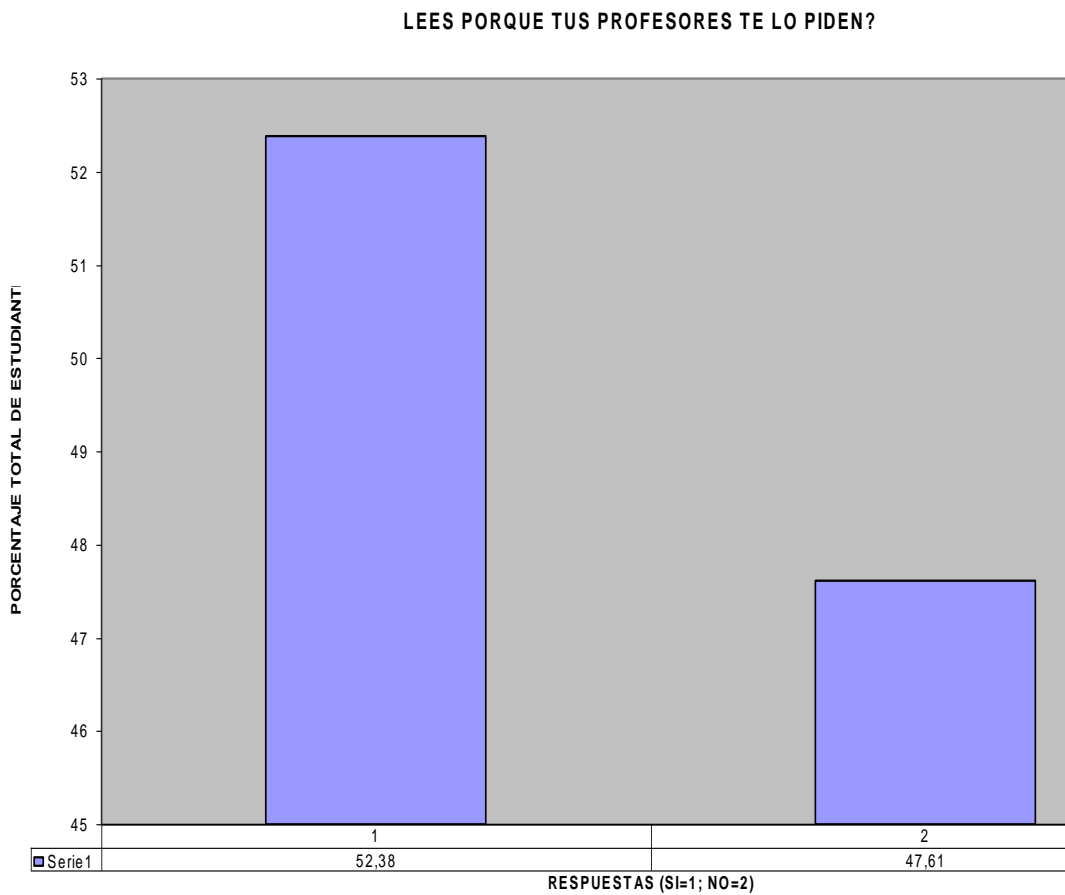
GRAPH N°2

QUE TIPO DE LECTURAS HACES?



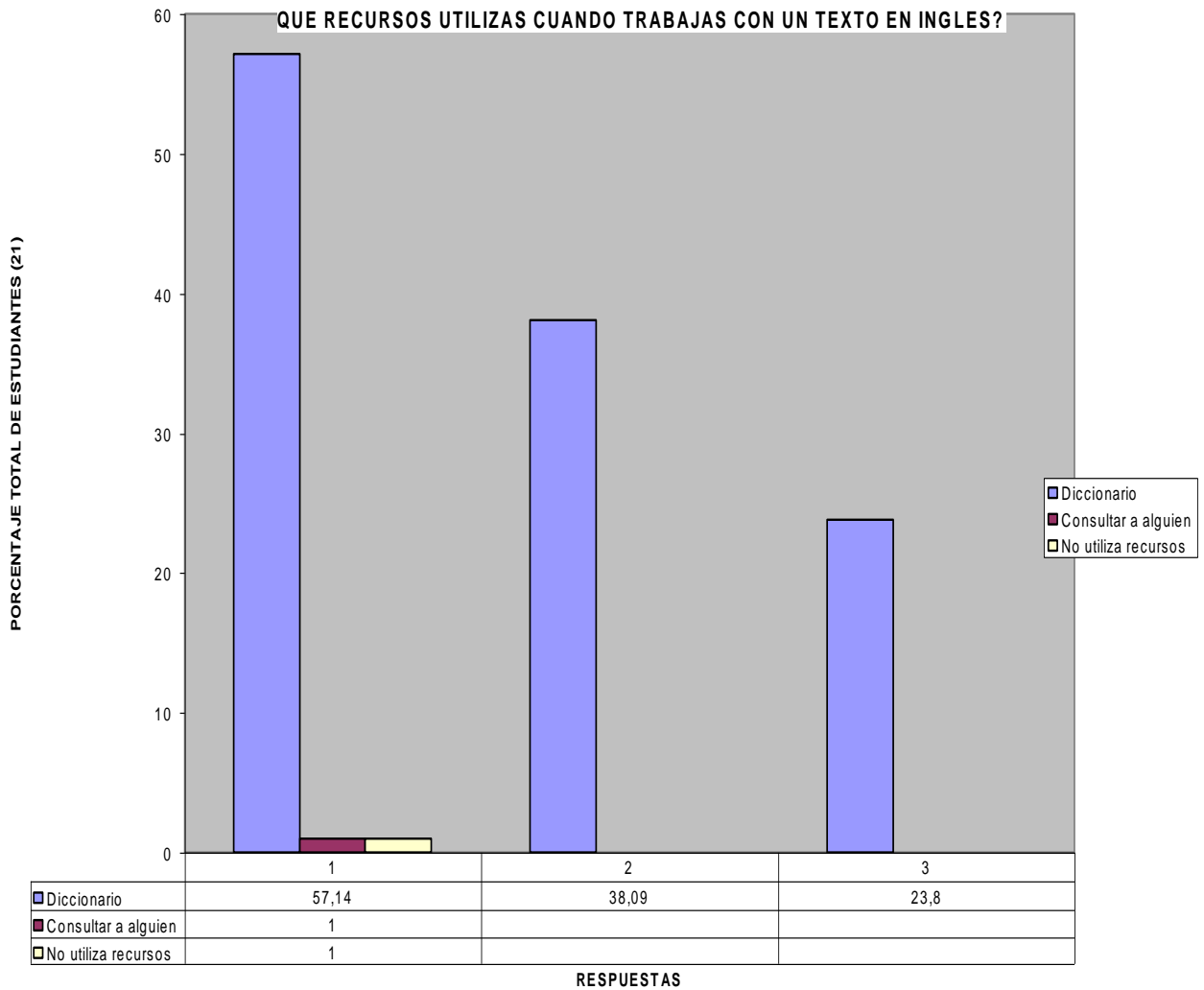
This graph shows the kind of readings the students liked the most, and from 34 students surveyed (100%), the highest rating was given to the short stories (cuentos) with the 42.85% (15 students). The second highest rating was for fiction readings with 19.04% (7 students), the rest of the options (sports, social sciences, Spanish, mathematics, space, jokes, computers, histories, etc) obtained the lowest rating, 4.76% for each one of them (2 students). This meant that the students preferred short and funny readings, without complex structures.

GRAPH N°3



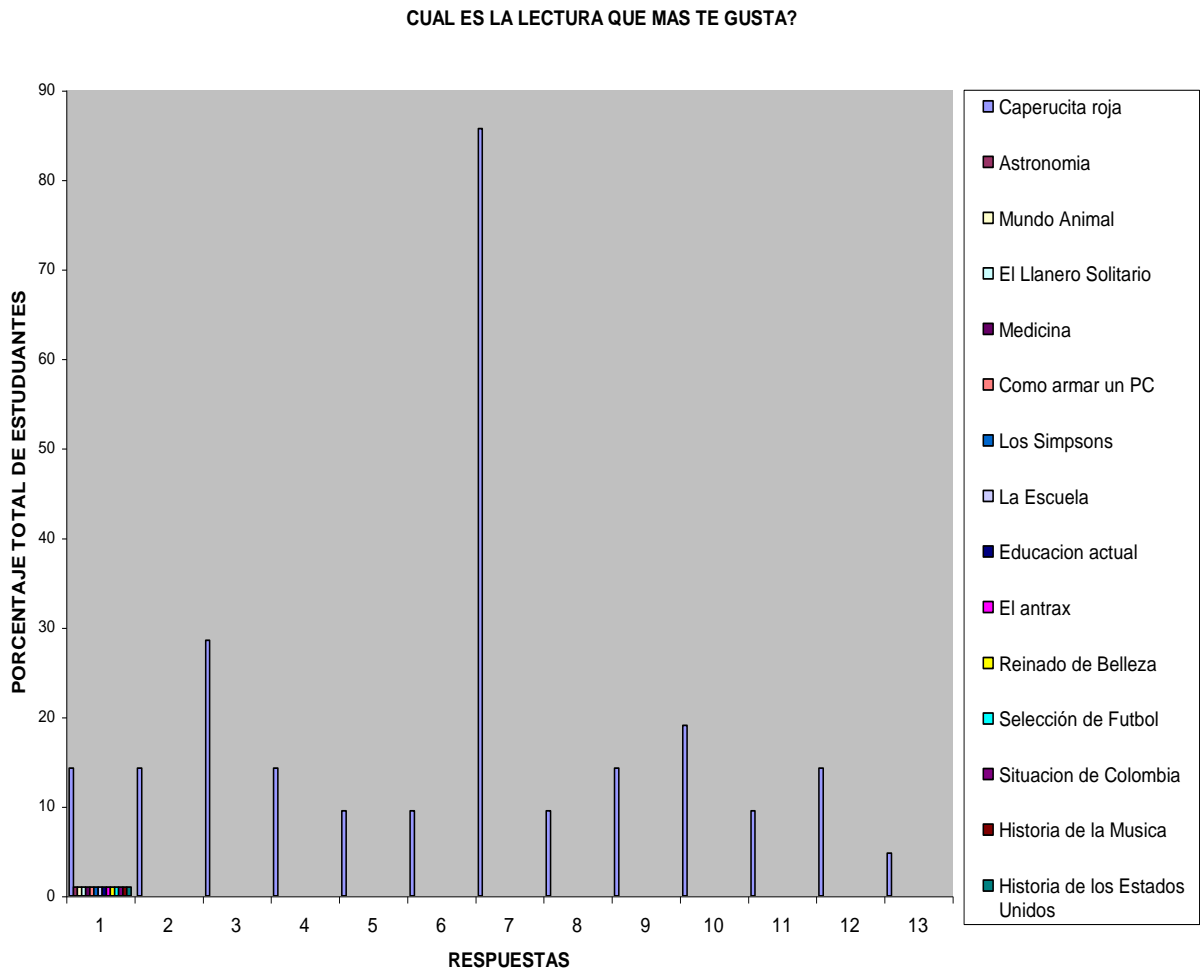
This graph shows that from 34 students surveyed, the 52.38% (18 students) of them read because their teachers asked it, and it was not an autonomous activity. Just the 47.61% (16 students) of the students are autonomously doing this activity. One more time, we found the lack of motivation towards reading.

GRAPH N°4



This graph shows the resources that the students used to try to read in English, from 34 surveyed students, 57.14% of them (17 students) used the dictionary, the 38.09% (11 students) asked to the teacher, the relatives or someone, just the 23.8% (6 students) didn't use any resource.

GRAPH N°5



This graph shows the preferential readings for the students, from different options and from 34 surveyed students, the most popular reading among them were the Simpsons because “this kind of readings are short, easy and very funny”, and they gave to the Simpson the highest rating, 85.71% that represented 29 students. The second place is for the animals with 28.57% (5 students), and the rest of the reading had equal importance for students.

8.4. SOFTWARE ANALYSIS IN THE CLASS ROOM

Long years ago, the Colombian education system went through a process of change, which is a result of new learning theories and also the integration of new technological resources in the schools. In this way, some of our traditional teachers are thinking about their teaching methods.

The Reading Adventure Project is looking for new educational processes where the interaction between teacher and student will be the most important, taking into account that the teacher is just a guide, because in this process, the student is an autonomous learner.

The use of educational software in English is a tool in the classroom that gives possibility to generate new information for students. The most remarkable is the motivation that students obtain with this kind of proposals.

One of the first stages in this process (The Reading Adventure through Computer), was the software selection that we had to use. Taking as a reference survey “Encuesta Diagnóstico”, and the graph 13, the sixth grade students of Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt felt the need to choose the integration of cartoons in the texts for English learning. For us, it was not strange because the cartoons have a lot of symbolic elements that are easily perceived by the spectator. In graph 7 the students gave equal importance to the various options: for university studies, for traveling abroad, for work and to become an English teacher.

On the other hand, cartoons are easy to understand. According to Gagner, in his book “Mentes Creativas”, children see nature in a different way than adults. In this way cartoons show a lot of elements of reality that catch children’s attention by

means of movements, exaggerated forms to express things which permit children to create their own reality.

One of the questions that we asked ourselves: ¿How are the students going to feel in front of a computer in an English class with cartoons?. It was our main goal, but for it we had to give them enough information about the use of a computer and also about the use of the software.

The first software to use was Dally Doo you can too! Numbers.

Dally Doo you can too!, by ARC Media, 1998 is Windows and Macintosh based, it can be used for many purposes such as homework, listening tasks, and reading task. It is the teacher who decides what the program should be used for. The program is a great supplement for ESL teachers and can provide a tremendous benefit to ESL beginner students when they use it in their free time or when assigned by teacher. The skills that this software can be used for are reading, vocabulary building and listening.

As for the reading exercises, when students click on "lessons", a pop up window gives several options specially repetition drills. The program is based on exercises that are accessed by icons found in the main screen. Some of these icons are useful to improve glossary and terms about numbers and for adding vocabulary.

This first experience was well received by students because it was the students first time, working in English class with computers, listening and repeating numbers in English. This first experience was useful for us to introduce them to the second stage which represents the objective proposed in the project "Reading Adventure Through Computer".

As we can see in the graph number 8, the students do not like to read a lot in Spanish. In graph number 2, we see that they like to read in English. We also notice that the motivation is diminished because of their difficulties working with computers in the scholastic years.

The strategy used was to work again with software, introducing to the students in a long period of work. We worked on it during three weeks of English class without interrupting the work of Mary Torres, the teacher.

The software choice for the second stage was our own choice, taking into account the students' suggestions.

The second software used was the Lion King by Walt Disney, (as we know, Walt Disney is a company that pioneered the creation of cartoons for children, and now is a leading power in the focused production of educational software and also developing reading and writing abilities (see www.WaltDisney.com) adjusted after suggestions by the students given in appendix nº 2, graph nº2, and graph nº 5. The first step was the instructions for the handling of software, it was necessary to translate them into Spanish to take advantage of the software. It is important to clarify that for the students the use of the computer is also an innovative idea, because the contact with this technology does not exist.

Despite a software menu which includes several options such as: play, read, pick a page, exit. The students were expected to try to read the instructions in English. It is important to clarify that this software have also a Spanish version.

In the first stage, they did not understand the instructions but they demonstrated great interest in trying to understand them, this aspect was very important for us because the motivation was one of the most important objectives in our project.

The audio and video displayed by the first and second software programs were key tools in maintaining students motivation.

It is important to clarify that for the different software tests we had to transfer the students to an internet room because in the school there were not enough resources. Most of the time we worked with groups of 15 students, and on 2 occasions we had to transfer a computer to the school to demonstrated the applications, in a general way.

Despite the lack of computer literacy instruction, the students found themselves becoming more comfortable with the computer technology. We gave individual instruction as the students needed and requested it. We also discovered that the more technologically literate students were more than willing to serve as guides to their peers, and we frequently discovered students teaching each other the skills they needed, when they needed to know them; this was a form of collaboration which we encouraged.

Also, because the students are not graded on their computer literacy skills and because they know that we do not show preference to the products of technological literature, we found that they were more willing to learn at their own pace and less likely to get discouraged when things weren't working on the computer.

In an posterior class evaluation assignment, one or more computer-phobic students said in Spanish, "al comienzo yo estaba confundido, y pense que no iba a hacer nada en la clase. Después de algunos días me sentí mejor usando estos programas. . . ."

Most of our students felt that they were learning valuable abilities both in terms of

computing and in terms of reading. The majority of responses on the course evaluation assignment reflected the students' belief that computer skills are becoming more necessary as our culture immerses itself in technology to a greater degree.

The secret to making the best possible use of technology in the reading class is balance. The balance between action and reflection, computer-mediated reading and traditional reading, and electronic reading and class reading. The description of computer-facilitated pedagogy that we have presented in this project reflects the results that can be expected when a balance is not established between the technological and the traditional.

Based on the information analyzed from the surveys, we found the analytical and interactive strategies that the students preferred. Their attitude towards reading in English as a foreign language improved and showed the impact of the techniques used for improving reading, in this case the use of the computer made the reading activity very interesting, and also showed us that this technique, the use of computer, It's a great tool.

We found that among 34 students in the sixth grade at the Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt of Popayán, some students thought that reading was very important for learning vocabulary and expressions. Reading is understanding the full context of any text and being able to analyze it not word by word, but to get the main idea. They also saw reading as a good form of entertainment and an important element to recreate the imagination. Thus, reading is a very good way to learn for students.

As for reading continuity, we noticed that students did not read frequently because the English for them is very confusing and difficult. Regarding this, it is notable that, while they do not like academic texts, the students like to read stories tales like the

Simpsons, El Llanero Solitario and so on.

In regards to the motivation that the students have received in their current English reading process, the students said that it is very relevant to use interesting texts to keep their attention, taking into account their likes. According to students' opinion, several teachers do not give enough motivation to their students or they use texts which do not keep their attention and interest.

In conclusion, we have found that there is a problem when trying to improve reading skill in the school due to deficient motivation in the area of reading. The poor motivation was observed in the reading process and the reluctance of the students to improve the reading skill. Since they are interested in other kinds of readings like short readings with animation, color and sound, readings that allow the students to interact with their own learning and life.

Finally, this diagnosis gave us a basis to reinforce the hypothesis we are trying to demonstrate with this project, 'The importance of using short readings through computer in a sixth grade students as a way to improve the reading skill'.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ A first step is for teachers at Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt to recognize that they have to begin to use new strategies into the class room to motivate their students to live in a deep way the process that they are living, the high school process.
- ✓ The use of computers in sixth grade students developed in them the biggest interest and motivation in English reading class, it is the most important point because they were very happy using computer in their classes. The computer-based instruction facilitates students reading process and increases their reading speed.
- ✓ We found that the use of computers for developing reading activities were very useful because it helped us to foster positive attitudes in front of this new way to learn for them.
- ✓ Reading as a good form of entertainment and an important element to recreate the imagination, in this way the students were happy and motivated taking into account that working with computers was a new medium for them and the autonomy they had.
- ✓ It was clear for teachers at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt the big importance of the educational programs in every field of knowledge, because the teachers could see the success of our strategy in reading process as a model to implement in the different field of knowledge.
- ✓ Memory strategies were very important at sixth grade students because they were always trying to remember visual images helping in this way to

perform their memory and their reading process.

- ✓ Cognitive strategies were useful in the Reading Adventure Through Computer because the students were very active in repetition activities.
- ✓ The most important Learning Strategy for us in this process was the Affective Strategy, because the use of directions, the implementation of a good environment to work kept the students's motivation higher.
- ✓ Sixth grade students at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt need to be encourage to find ways to keep their motivation levels high while they try to understand and produce the new language.
- ✓ Students expressed a positive answer when they began to work with software applications. At the beginning it seemed that they felt obligated to read in English, but when they used the computer it was really different. The problem lied in the lack of resources due to computer availabilities.
- ✓ It is important to remark that Multimedia technology helped us to keep student's interest because multimedia is a pedagogical mediator and we demonstrated that it offers high effectiveness in English reading process.
- ✓ Sixth grade students at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt could benefit with the use of computers in their reading class because they expressed their likes and we put them into action and in this way they could cope easier with their communications difficulties.
- ✓ According with the students' survey we realized, they need more implementation in Spanish and English reading motivation, and also using

new technology like computers which allow students to improve their reading proficiency.

- ✓ The use of short stories and also the use of adequate explanations, sixth grade students can improve their reading process in a successful way.

- ✓ With this work we can say that fundamental changes in our school curricula will follow, paralleling the changing needs of society. Envisioning these changes, we can imagine a time when screen will replace printing readings as an essential skill for elementary school children, complementing a language arts curriculum using computers extensively for such activities as reading.

- ✓ Sixth grade students at Liceo Alejandro de Humboldt high school need more opportunities in computer reading practice to perform in the foreign language and situations which take anxiety and fears away.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: ENCUESTA DIAGNOSTICO

NOMBRE: _____ GRADO: _____ FECHA: _____

OBJETIVO: Detectar el grado de motivación para el aprendizaje del Ingles en estudiantes de sexto grado del Colegio Liceo Nacional Alejandro de Humboldt.

1. Le gusta el Español? SI _____ NO _____
porque?
2. Le gusta leer en Español? SI _____ NO _____
porque?
3. Le gusta el Ingles? SI _____ NO _____
porque?
4. Le gusta leer en Ingles? SI _____ NO _____
porque?
5. En la primaria usted estudio Ingles? SI _____ NO _____
6. En que cursos? _____
7. Cuántas horas semanales? _____ horas
8. Que actividades le gustaban de la clase de Ingles?

9. De las siguientes habilidades del Ingles, cual le gusta mas?
Escribir _____ Leer _____ Hablar _____ Escuchar _____
Porque?
10. Cuales serian sus aspiraciones al aprender un idioma extranjero como el Ingles?

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APPENDIX Nº 2: EL PLACER DE LEER.

1. Te gusta leer? SI _____ NO _____
2. Que lees?, Que tipo de lecturas te gustan?
3. Te gustan los cuentos?
4. Lees porque tus profesores en el colegio te lo piden?
5. Que lecturas te gusta que tus profesores te lleven a clase?
6. Has tratado de leer algún artículo en Ingles?
7. Si la anterior pregunta es positiva, cual es la técnica que has utilizado, buscas en el diccionario o le preguntas a alguien?
8. Si la pregunta 6 es negativa, porque?, no te gusta leer en Ingles?
9. Que clase de lectura te gusta en Ingles?
10. De la siguiente lista de lecturas cuales son las que mas te gustan, marca en orden de prioridades.
 - a. Caperucita Roja
 - b. Astronomía
 - c. El mundo de los animales
 - d. El llanero solitario
 - e. Avances en la medicina
 - f. Como armar un computador
 - g. Los Simpsons
 - h. La escuela y la educación
 - i. El reinado nacional de belleza
 - j. Selección Colombiana de Fútbol
 - k. Situación actual del país
 - l. La historia de la música
 - m. La historia de los estados unidos
 - n. Que otras lecturas te llaman la atención?

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