



A SYSTEM OF EXERCISES TO DEVELOP THE READING COMPREHENSION SKILL ON SEVENTH GRADERS

UM SISTEMA DE EXERCÍCIOS PARA DESENVOLVER O LER COMPREENSÃO HABILIDADE EM SÉTIMOS AVALIADORES

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ABSTRACT

The present work is the result of a long process of investigation. The authoress focuses her attention on the development of the reading comprehension skill on seventh graders at Manuel Ascunce Domenech Junior High School in Manzanillo. The work offers a system of exercises containing a varied typology of tasks directed to the work with reading comprehension, some of them created by the authoress and some others simply adapted to the objectives of the current seventh grade program.

The research also offers updated theoretical information in terms of the reading comprehension skill. During the research process, the authoress puts into practice different theoretical, empirical, and statistical methods, which paved the way for the gathering of the information and its processing. Besides, the work presents concrete conclusions the authoress arrives at once she evaluates the results of the application of the diagnostic and the system of exercises. In the process, the researcher consulted several updated bibliographical sources related with her interests and scientific needs.

Key word: reading comprehension skill, seventh graders, diagnostic, system of exercises.

RESUMO

O trabalho presente é o resultado de um processo longo da investigação. Os enfoques de autora sua atenção no desenvolvimento do ler compreensão leitora em sétima classe da Escola Manuel Ascunce Domenech Júnior em Manzanillo. O trabalho oferece um sistema de exercícios contendo uma tipologia variada de tarefas dirigidas para o trabalho com ler compreensão, alguma delas criada pela autora e alguma outra simplesmente adaptado para os objetivos do atual sétimo programa de grau.

A pesquisa também oferece atualizadas informações teórica em termos do ler compreensão habilidade. Durante o processo de pesquisa, a autora põe em prática diferente teórica, empírica, e statistical métodos, que abriram caminho para o ajuntamento das informações e seu processo. Além disso, as conclusões de presentes do trabalho concreto a autora chega de uma vez que ela avalia os resultados da aplicação do diagnostico. No processo, o pesquisador consultou várias fontes bibliográficas atualizadas relacionadas com seus interesses e necessidades científicas.

Palavras chave: compreensão leitora, sétima classe, diagnostico e sistema de exercícios.

INTRODUCTION

It is significant to mention the importance of English in all the spheres of personal and professional life. This is due to the global tendencies in technology, demography and economy. Nowadays, English is taught as a second language all around the world. The study of English has become almost compulsory at any educational level.

The teaching of the English language in Junior High Schools has been conceived towards the integration of the four major abilities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The teaching learning process of English as a foreign language should guarantee the proper formation and development of the linguistic and communicative abilities, taking into

account students' motivations and interests.

The teaching of English should contribute not only to the functional linguistic efficiency, but also to the ability to foster new knowledge, what means to develop in the students the habits, abilities and basic knowledge that allow them to communicate in that language. (Antich de León, R.,2018). Through reading, students get in touch with customs, traditions, scientific and cultural manifestations of the English Speaking people. They can also get in contact with the social, scientific, technical and cultural manifestations of many other countries. Reading is one of the main skills that the learner should acquire in the process of mastering a new language. Through reading, the learner enriches his knowledge of the world around him. (Acosta, R., 2019). He increases his knowledge and understanding of the culture of the speakers of that language, their ways of thinking, and their contributions to many fields of artistic and intellectual endeavor. Reading develops learners' psychological processes such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, memory and imagination. Reading is a mighty weapon to develop in the learner's qualities such as patriotism, internationalism, responsibility, honesty, loyalty, and love. (Abbot, G. y Wingard, P.,2019).

Reading is considered "Reading for Learning" as a very important process because through it the students should be able to evaluate and understand what they have read. (Canale, M.,2023).

During the exploratory stage of the investigation, by means of the analysis of reports of class observations, the exchange with junior high teachers and students, the systematic and partial evaluations applied to the students allowed to target some insufficiencies in the seventh-grade teaching learning process of English in relation to the reading comprehension skill, which are mentioned as follows:

- Students were not able to anticipate the context of the text.
- They do not know how to discern main ideas from secondary ones.
- They showed poor mastery of scanning and skimming skills at the time of gathering information from the text.

- They showed serious difficulties at the time of answering questions related with the texts.

- It was hard for them to summarize the contents of written texts.

objective: to elaborate a system of exercises to develop the reading comprehension skill in English on seventh graders at "Manuel Ascunce Domenech" Junior High School.

DEVELOPMENT

Theoretical references that support the seventh grade English teaching learning process and development of the reading comprehension skill.

The author of this paper directs the attention to the foundations supporting written skills, especially the reading comprehension skill in seventh grade, based on pedagogical, psychological, didactic and linguistic referents.

Therefore, the development of reading comprehension skill as part of written communication does not escape from this demand. The authoress of this investigation also assumes the application of these pedagogical principles, considering that they are derived at the present time of general pedagogic laws that make possible to insert them in English teaching. (Finocchiaro, M.,2019).

Keeping in mind the laws that govern the teaching process the authoress of this investigation assumes the application of the relationship it legitimates among the instruction, education and the development of the personality. This expressed one the instruction unit and the students' education in the teaching process.

Psychology as a science has been in charge of observing and studying the process of development of the personality of the human being through the activity. Human communication is one important of this activity. The study of the language in different educations has as fundamental purpose the development of the talkative competition of the students that they learn how to use the spoken language and written for its communication in an effective way in different situations. To reach that end it is necessary that the students develop abilities to speak, to listen, to read and to write. (González Cancio, R.,2019).

Foreign language students need to learn how to "think in English" in order to read

effectively in the English language. The profits of reading include fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and awareness of grammar, models for writing, and a concentration on the culture of the Foreign Language.

Reading skills are the cognitive processes that readers use to get to the message or to make sense of a text. In other words, they are the tools the readers put into practice to understand what they read. The reading is a basic element for the obtaining of the knowledge in the new society and for the individual's growth like person and human being. (Roméu Escobar, A., 2022).

Their validity transcends until the present time, an actually marked by a deep period of crisis, mainly in the scientific and technological plane that has generated new forms of knowledge and changes of paradigms with regard to the phenomenon of the reading starting from the emergence of Internet. Many psychological, linguistic, and methodological studies have shown that reading is both, an aim and a means of teaching and learning a foreign language. It is also a mental process of language activity that allows people to get the information they need, both in their native language, and in the foreign language as well.

Reading in a foreign language allows students to enrich their knowledge of the world around them. They get acquainted with the countries where the target language is spoken. Another important theory within the teaching of foreign languages is the theory of verbal activity.

The teaching of reading should involve the content of the text and the reading skill. Reading is taught as a process (skills-getting) and as a result (information). (González, M., 2019).

Reading is one of the main skills that the learner should acquire in the process of mastering a language. It increases his knowledge and understanding of the culture of the speakers of the language, their ways of thinking, and their contributions to many fields of artistic and intellectual endeavor. Reading develops learners' psychological processes such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, memory and imagination. Reading is a mighty weapon to develop learners' qualities as patriotism, internationalism, responsibility, honesty,

loyalty and love.

METODOLOGIA: Among the statistical methods, the authoress made use of the Descriptive-statistics, which served for rendering information about the statistical analysis of the data obtained through the application of the different empirical methods.

The population is made up of 52 seventh graders from Manuel Ascunce Domenech Junior High School, and 2 seventh grade teachers of English. The sample is composed of 27 students from group 02, who stand for the 51, 9% of the students' population, and a teacher, who stands for the 100% of the teacher population. This sample was chosen under an intentional basis, taking into account that it is the group which shows more difficulties at comprehending written texts not matter how simple they are.

RESULTS

The interview applied to the teacher (100%) agreed on the fact that the students have many problems at the time of articulating sounds accurately when they are reading e text, pronouncing words mainly those containing sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue.

As a result of this initial pedagogical test, it was corroborated that most of the students were not able to pass the reading comprehension test because they actually showed very limited development of the reading comprehension skill, observed mainly through the following insufficiencies:

Students were not able to predict the possible information given in the text
They could not skim the main ideas from the text.

They showed hard problems at scanning specific information from the text.

They were not able to summarize the information of the text, as they did not tell apart the main ideas from the secondary ones.

The authoress was driven to the conclusion that seventh graders were in a real need of a more practical approach to the English teaching- learning process. So, the she considers that it is necessary to go on with this investigation in order to find a solution to the problem under research by providing a system of exercises to develop the reading

comprehension skill, which is quite affected in the class object of investigation.

Theoretical foundation and characterization of the system of exercises:

The authoress of this research assumes the definition of system offered by Rodolfo Acosta (1996). A system of exercises is a set of well-organized activities for the students to develop different habits and skills in the process of learning a foreign language. It always reflects a definite methodological system as such with its aim, principles, and methods. So, the pedagogical process of teacher-student activities is programmed by means of exercises.

The researcher highly considered the idea expressed by the same author who states that every system is a set of detailed methods, procedures and routines created to carry out a specific activity, perform a duty, or solve a problem. It is an organized, purposeful structure that consists of interrelated and interdependent elements (components, entities, factors, members, parts etc.). These elements continually influence one another (directly or indirectly) to maintain their activity and the existence of the system, in order to achieve the goal of the system.

Among them, the authoress took some of the subskills as indicators to evaluate both the initial the state of development in seventh grade students' reading comprehension skill at Manuel Ascunce Domenech Junior High School before the application of the proposal, and after it as a way to assess its effectiveness, taking into account that they were the most affected ones on the students and because of the role they play in the development of this important communicative skill.

The exercises were designed also to contribute, in one way or another, to foster the students' values, ideological political formation, sexual education, and enrich their general comprehensive culture. Taking into account the main goal of reading comprehension skill, the authoress proceeded with the proposal. It was composed of some readings that dealt with interesting topics, not only important from the educational point of view, but also from the social ground.

This system of exercises is conceived to be applied in the English teaching learning

process of seventh grade at Manuel Ascunce Domenech Junior High School in Manzanillo. This system will be present in all the units of the syllabus because the authoress considers these topics important and accurate to fulfil the objective of this research. The system of exercises has been organized taking into account the three stages of reading comprehension (before reading stage, while reading stage, and after reading stage), since they have a great importance to have the students interact and interpret the texts under analysis.

Steps for the elaboration of the proposal.

- Initial diagnosis of the pupils and analysis of the current stage of the teaching learning process of English.
- Analysis of the potentialities provided by the English syllabus of seventh grade.
- Selection of the contents and topics to manage for developing a general integrated culture.
- Analysis of the correspondence between the theoretical possibilities and the practical necessities.
- Analysis of the particularities of the reading comprehension skill.
- Elaboration of the system of exercises to strengthen the reading comprehension skill.

To promote an active character and position for the students to develop their capacity to **System of exercises to strengthen the reading comprehension skill.**

1. These exercises are elaborated taking into consideration the following methodological components:

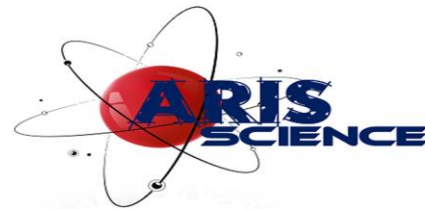
- Unit
- Objective
- Communicative functions
- Level of assimilation
- Teaching aids
- Time
- Steps to follow
- Heading
- Evaluation

Objective: it declares the goal of the exercise, for what it was conceived.

Skill: it enables the ability the exercise will develop (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Level of assimilation: it shows the level of assimilation in which the exercise is involved (recognition, reproduction, production and creation).

ARISTAS DE LAS CIENCIAS



Teaching aids: they are technical and instructional means used by the teacher to support the teaching-learning process and make it more affordable and comprehensible.

Time: it is the time allotted to the performance of the exercises in the classroom, with the students' active participation.

Steps to follow: they are the practical operations that the teacher and the students should follow in order to accomplish the exercises proposed.

Heading: it indicates what the students have to do in the exercise.

Indicators: To evaluate this exercise the teacher took into account the following parameters:

- Speed of the students at the time of giving their answers.
- Ability to give short and complex answers.
- Ability to drop conclusions.
- Students' security in their responses.

The teacher also took into consideration the student's readiness and sharpness.

Evaluation: it allows the teacher to control and evaluate the students' performance. A qualitative scale is created, denoting different grades: very good, good, fair, and poor. The evaluation will also include the number of items, statements, and personal considerations the students give while accomplishing the exercises.

Unit	Title	Estimated frequency (in hours)
1	Hello! What's your name?	6
2	What's your town like?	10
3	What's your mom doing?	10
4	What's your friend doing?	10
5	What is your friend like?	8
6	What's the weather like?	7
7	What are they wearing?	7
8	What do you do at school in the morning?	8
9	Can you do it on your own?	6
Total		72

2. Presentation of the system of exercises
Unit # 1 "Hello! What's your name?"

Text: Letter

223 José Martí Street Manzanillo, Granma, Cuba.

Friday, April 22 th, 2019.

Miss Susie:

First of all, it is a pleasure to greet to you from Cuba. I'm Ana Pérez Rodríguez and I'm twelve years old. Though you don't know me I know you. I know you are from Canada because your address is in a magazine exactly in the section "Looking for a friend" Actually; I want to be one of them. I 'm interested in a friend who speaks English because I like it very much, so I need to practice it more often. I know Canada is a beautiful country and it has an interesting history and culture, which I 'd like know. I like to do many things. My favorite activities are reading, dancing, listening to music, and watching good movies. I usually do all these things together with my wonderful family, whom I love so much. I live with my parents and a sister who is younger than me, her name is Liza. My country is beautiful, too. I'll let you know more about it in my next letter. I would like to know more from you and your country too, especially about personal information like your hobbies and activities you do in your free time. I hope you will write to me soon. I wait for your answer.

Sincerely yours,

Annie

Pre - reading stage

Exercise 1

Objective: To predict information about the text students going to study.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about personal information.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction.

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 7 minutes

Steps to follow:

The teacher writes two sentences on the board.

She instructs students to read them carefully so they can predict information about the text.

Heading: Read the following statements and say if the text is:

- ___ a fragment of a novel.
- ___ a letter.
- ___ a news reports.

d) ____ a part of a magazine

Statements:

...your address is in a magazine exactly in the section "Looking for a friend"

I would like to know more from you and your country too...

...about personal information...

See you soon, Ana.

Evaluation: It is considered taking into account the answers given by the students and their participation in the exercise, as well as their approximation to the text and the subskill under practice (predicting).

While- reading stage

Exercise 2

Objective: To scan specific information expressed in the text.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about personal information.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 10 minutes

Steps to follow:

- The teacher writes the following statements on the board.
- Then she commands the students to read the text so they can say if they are right, wrong or if they do not know.

1-Heading: Say True (T), False (F), or I can't tell (ICT):

- a) __ Ana is a Susie's old friend.
- b) __ Susie is from Canada.
- c) __ Ana's sister is two years old.
- d) __ Ana is interested in a friend who speaks English.

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses, as part of the reading comprehension and the subskill under practice (scanning).

Exercise 3

Objective: To scan specific information from the text and answer the following questions.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about personal information.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 10 minutes

Steps to follow:

- The teacher instructs the students to read the text again finding information requested.
- Then she gives hope students to practice the questions and answers in pairs.

Heading: Answer the following questions about the text.

1-Why does Ana decide to send this letter to Susie?

2- Does Ana like to speak English?

3-How many activities does Ana like to do?

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' answers and the subskill under practice (scanning).

After-reading stage

Exercise 4

Objective: To summarize the text with or without help on personal information.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about personal information.

Level of assimilation: Production

Teaching aids: Blackboard, notebook, picture, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 15 minutes

Steps to follow:

- The teacher commands the students to summarize the letter in no less than forty words taking into account the main ideas expressed in it.
- She motivates them to share their letter already summarized with their classmate.

Heading: Write a summary of the letter, taking into account the main ideas expressed in it. Be ready to read the letter in the classroom.

Evaluation: The evaluation is given considering the quality of the summary, taking into account the main ideas in relation to personal information and other important aspects, as well as its extension and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Post – reading stage

Exercise 5 (Homework)

Objective: To write a letter summarizing personal information.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about personal information.

Level of assimilation: Production

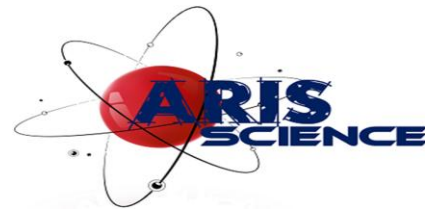
Teaching aids: Blackboard, notebook, picture, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 15 minutes

Steps to follow:

- The teacher commands the students to write a letter to a new pen friend.
- She instructs them to bring some information about the activities they like to do.

ARISTAS DE LAS CIENCIAS



- She motivates them to share their letter with the rest of the class.

Heading: Write a letter to a new pen friend. Give personal information about yourself as you can like members of your family or your favorite place. Be ready to read the letter in the classroom.

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the letter based on the features of the letter, the information given, and its structure and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Unit # 2 "What's your town like?"

Text: Welcome to Manzanillo!

Manzanillo is a beautiful city located in the South region of the Granma province in Cuba. Though Manzanillo is not the capital of the province, it is quite populated, because it has more than one hundred thousand population, who work hard to make it look beautiful before the eyes of the visitors and its inhabitants. The old colonial heart of the city is being restored, especially its summer house, which is considered the pride of the city, but at the same time it is a national monument.

The Sea Wall is another place every new comer enjoys to visit because it gives you a magnificent look to the Guacanayabo Golf. Many people are fond of Manzanillo, due to the Rum Factory because it produces one of the most famous rums in the country: the Pinilla. There are also two comfortable hotels and an excellent seafood restaurant, such as the Lisetera restaurant. There is a funny saying in Manzanillo which reads that the one who tastes the head of the liseta in Manzanillo stays.

The city is 225 years old where you can find not only delicious food, but interesting museums, an Art Gallery, and the Cultural House. In fact, Manzanillo is a very rich city for the features of its citizens and the beauty of its places. I invite to visit Manzanillo and you will love it in the same way I do.

Pre- reading stage

Exercise 1

Objective: To predict information about the text.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about places.

Level of assimilation: Production

Teaching aids: Picture (See appendix 10), teacher's voice, and blackboard.

Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher writes the title of the text on the blackboard.

- She instructs them to predict information about the text.

- Students give as much information as they can, taking into account its title.

Heading: Taking into account the title of the text, "Welcome to Manzanillo!" answer the next questions:

a) What do you think the text is about?

b) What words do you expect to find in the text?

c) What places do you think the text describes.

Evaluation: It is considered taking into account the answers given by the students and their participation in the exercise, as well as their approximation to the text and the subskill under practice (predicting).

While- reading stage

Exercise 2

Objective: To scan specific information expressed in the text.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about places.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction.

Teaching aids: blackboard, text and teacher's voice.

Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher copies some sentences on the blackboard.

- She reads them asking the students to listen them carefully.

- The students have a proper time to analyze the sentences.

- The students select if the items are true or false according to the information already read in the text. Afterwards, the exercise is checked orally.

Heading: Say true (T) or false (F). Justify your answer in the false ones.

a)___Manzanillo is a beautiful city located in the North region of Granma province.

b)___There are two comfortable hotels.

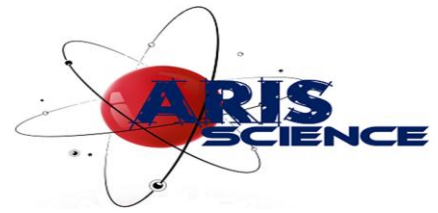
c)___There is an excellent seafood restaurant.

d)___Manzanillo is the capital of the province.

Evaluation: It is evaluated taking into consideration the ideas given by the students. If the answers are certainly correct, the teacher encourages the students to do their best in the next activity and the subskill under practice (scanning).

Exercise 3

ARISTAS DE LAS CIENCIAS



Objective: To scan specific information from the text.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about places.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction.

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher instructs the students to find words in the text.

Heading: Let's find in the text:

a) Two adjectives describing places:

b) The antonym of delicious: _____

c) The Spanish equivalent for the word city: _____

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses and the subskill under practice (scanning).

After-reading stage

Exercise 4

Objective: To summarize viewpoints about the text orally.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about places.

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher commands the students to work in pairs for giving their opinions about the text.
- The students have to share their opinions with their classmates.

Heading: Work with your partner to answer the following questions and share them with the rest of the class:

a) Where is Manzanillo located?

b) Mention some of the most important places located in this city?

c) If you taste the liseta's head, what would happen to you?

d) How old is Manzanillo?

Evaluation: The evaluation will be considered taking into account the quality of the students' answers and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Exercise 5

Objective: To summarize the text in the written form.

Communicative function: Asking and answering about places.

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Blackboard, teacher's voice, text.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow: The teacher instructs the students to summarize the text by writing paragraph about it, considering its main ideas.

Heading: Write a summary in no less than forty words about the text.

Evaluation: It will be considered according to the quality of the information given by means of the summary and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Unit #5 What is your friend doing?

The things I do everyday

I have a friend who I love so much. Her name is Susan. Susan and I are most of the time together. People think we are relatives. We actually get along very well. We have similar interests and motivations, except about our future professional activity.

She wants to be a teacher, but I just want to be a doctor. Any way both professions are socially very important because they have to do with people's education and health. Now we are studying very much to reach the senior high school. I am writing these lines from my house, but at the same time I am helping my mother with the housework. I am cleaning the house right now, but my brother and father are fixing the car and my bicycle in the garage. My friend is at her house too. She is feeding her baby's sister while her mother is cooking. Her younger brother is doing the homework and his father is working on the computer.

I am working hard now so that my mum lets me go out with my friend tonight. She is happy because all of us are quite busy at home and we are together. I have many things to talk to my friend about. That is why; I am missing my friend so much.

Pre-reading

Exercise 1

Objective: To predict information about the text.

Communicative function:

- Identifying members of the family and parts of the house.
- Expressing about what the persons are doing in the moment that they are talking.

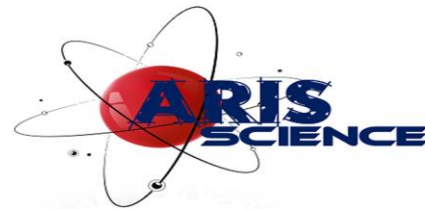
Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Text, teacher's voice, blackboard.

Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow:

ARISTAS DE LAS CIENCIAS



- The teacher writes on the blackboard some possible titles for the text.

- She instructs the students to select the correct idea for the title of the text.

Heading: Select the title you suggest for the text. What's the text about?

- Professions.
- My friend and I.
- Daily activities.
- A visit to a museum.

Evaluation: It is considered taking into account the selection of the item that best approximates to the title of the text and the subskill under practice (predicting).

While -reading

Exercise 2

Objective: To scan information about the text.

Communicative function:

- Identifying members of the family and parts of the house.
- Expressing about what the persons are doing in the moment that they are talking.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction

Teaching aids: Text, teacher's voice, blackboard.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- Teacher writes on the blackboard some questions.
- Teacher instructs the students to answer the questions about the text.

Heading: Answer the following questions from the text:

- Are Susan and her friend relatives?
- Does Susan want to be a teacher?
- Why are both professions (teacher and doctor) very important?
- Is the writer of the text on her house or at school?

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses, as part of the reading comprehension and the subskill under practice (scanning).

Exercise 3

Objective: To scan information about the text.

Communicative function:

- Identifying members of the family and parts of the house.
- Expressing about what the persons are doing in the moment that they are talking.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction

Teaching aids: Text, teacher's voice, blackboard.

Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- Teacher writes on the blackboard two columns A and B.

- Teacher commands students match the content in column A with the content in column B supporting in the text.

Heading: Match the subjects in column A with the information given about them in column B according to the text.

- | A | B |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| a) I | ___ wants to be a teacher. |
| b) Susan | ___ want to be a doctor. |
| | ___ is feeding her baby's sister. |
| | ___'m working hard. |

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses, as part of the reading comprehension and the subskill under practice (scanning).

After-reading

Exercise 4

Objective: To summary viewpoints about the text.

Communicative function:

- Identify members of the family and parts of the house.
- Expressing about what the persons are doing in the moment that they are talking.

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text, teacher's voice.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher commands the students to work in pairs for giving their opinions about the text.
- The students have to share their opinions with their classmates.
- She instructs them to summarize it.

Heading: Write summarize in not less than forty words about the daily activities appeared in the text and others that you do.

Evaluation: It will be considered according to the quality of the information given by means of the summary and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Unit # 7 "What are they wearing?"

Fashion and Weather

Fashion is actually complicated. All depends on the time, place, and person's likes and dislikes. In summer, for example, people wear short clothes like bikini, blouse with neckline, sport clothes, short pants, etc. On the other hand, some other people prefer to wear long clothes because they

protect themselves from sunshine during the day, no matter how hot the weather is. In winter, people buy warm clothes because the weather is very cool, and because of their colors, especially sweaters, gloves, scarfs, socks, etc. The clothes they wear in spring also show a variety of color: Blue, yellow, red, green, and orange; probably because it is in this season when flowers grow more beautiful to make our lives happier. In autumn, people like to wear clothes in clear colors. No matter what the weather is, but when people go to public places, such as the movies, restaurant, art exposition or theater wear formal clothes like dresses, in case of women, elegant long leave shirt and trousers in men.

Young people do not usually follow this fashion; instead, they wear sport clothes. In fact, it is important to be on fashion, but we also have to take care with the way we look to others, because the way we wear clothes identifies us.

Pre- reading stage

Exercise 1

Objective: To predict information about the text.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering about clothes and color.
- Talking about weather. (Seasons)

Level of assimilation: Production

Teaching aids: Picture, teacher's voice, text and blackboard.

Time: 5 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher writes the title of the text on the board.
- She instructs the students to predict information about the text.
- Then the students give as much information as they can, taking into account the title of the text and the picture shown.

Heading: Taking into account the title of the text, "Fashion and Weather", answer the following questions:

- a) Do you imagine what the text is about?
- b) Do you like to be on fashion?
- c) Do you use short clothe in winter, for example, bikini? Justify in case of not.
- d) Do we go to the theater on sport clothes?

Evaluation: It is considered taking into account the answers given by the students and their participation in the exercise, as

well as their approximation to the text and the subskill under practice (predicting).

While- reading stage

Exercise 2

Objective: To scan specific information expressed in the text.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering about clothes and color.
- Talking about weather. (Seasons)

Level of assimilation: Reproduction.

Teaching aids: Black board, text and teacher's voice.

Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow: the teacher writes on the board the initial letter of a word and leaves the others in blank, so that the students complete them. The words might be the name of a season or a cloth name given in the text.

Heading: Complete the blanks with the correct word taken from the text.

- a) S _ _ _ _ _
- b) B _ _ _ _ _
- c) W _ _ _ _ _
- d) D _ _ _ _ _
- e) S _ _ _ _ _

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses, as part of the reading comprehension and the subskill under practice (scanning).

Exercise 3

Objective: To scan information expressed in the text.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering about clothes and colors.
- Talk about weather. (Seasons)

Level of assimilation: Reproduction.

Teaching aids: Teacher's voice, blackboard, and text.

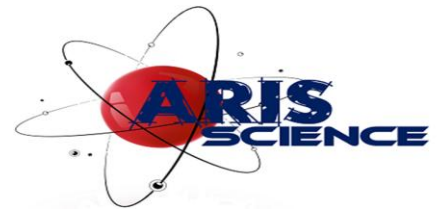
Time: 7 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher shows the students some pictures.
- She instructs them to identify the item that belongs to exercise 2.

Heading: The following pictures are closely related to the previous exercise. Write next to each the item corresponding to the word you completed in exercise 2.

ARISTAS DE LAS CIENCIAS



Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses, as part of the reading comprehension and the subskill under practice (scanning).

After-reading stage

Exercise 4

Objective: To summarize the text orally about the weather in Cuba and the clothes people usually wear.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering about clothes and colors.
- Talking about weather. (Seasons)

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Blackboard, text and teacher's voice.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher commands the students to work in pairs for giving their opinions about the topic.
- The students share them with the class.

Heading: Work with your partner to answer the following questions and share them with the rest of the class:

- a) What's always the Cuba weather like?
- b) What kind of clothes do Cuban people wear in August? Why?

Evaluation: The evaluation is given considering the quality of the summary, taking into account the main ideas in

relation to personal information and other important aspects, as well as its extension and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Exercise 5

Objective: To summarize the main ideas from the text in the written form.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering about clothes and colors.
- Talking about weather. (Seasons)

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Teacher's voice and blackboard.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher instructs the students to write a summary about the text, taking into account its main ideas.
- She provides them with some hints.

Heading: Write a paragraph about the text summarizing its main ideas discussed in class so far. Use the following help.

1. The type of clothes to wear according to the weather and fashion taken from the text.

Evaluation: The evaluation is given considering the quality of the summary, taking into account the main ideas in relation to personal information and other important aspects, as well as its extension and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Post-reading state:

Exercise 6 (Homework)

Objective: To extrapolate the information in a written form from the original text to another personal text about fashion and weather.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering about clothes and colors.
- Talking about weather. (Seasons)

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Teacher's voice, text and blackboard.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher instructs the students to write a text about weather and fashion.
- She provides them with some suggestions.

Heading: Write a text in no less than forty words about the about weather and fashion.

Suggestions:

1. Prepare a mind map about a place you select and take some pictures to the people there showing their traditional clothes.
2. Find information about the place, and take notes to guide yourself.

Evaluation: The evaluation is given considering the quality of the summary, taking into account the main ideas in relation to personal information and other important aspects, as well as its extension and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

Unit # 8 "What do you do at school in the morning?"

Text: "My school activities in the morning"

Probably you do not believe me when I say that I like going to school. School activities involve me so much that I do not even realize how fast the time goes. I enjoy being at school because it is the time we always get together and talk about many things. It is a good thing that I usually have classes in the morning.

I sometimes go to school in the afternoon, especially for taking physical education or simply practicing sports. I do most of the activities in the morning, especially the brief meeting we do before getting into the classroom. This activity is very important because we know about many things happening in the locality, the province, the country, and even in the world. We also become familiar with the historical events. But actually, we spend the whole morning in the classroom listening to teachers from different subjects, copying lessons, taking down notes, reading, etc., but we mostly do exercises of every kind and subjects, especially mathematics which I do not like at all, but I have to do them anyway for learning.

I really enjoy the English subject. The teacher of English motivates her class so much that I feel fine doing them, especially when we have to talk or work in groups. In fact, I am at school all morning long. I do many things at school in the morning. I do not have time to get bored because I learn something new every day.

Pre- reading stage

Exercise 1

Objective: To predict information about the text.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering information about daily activities, frequency and the time.

Level of assimilation: Production

Teaching aids: Pictures (see appendix 11), teacher's voice, text and blackboard.

Time: 6 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher writes the title of the text on the board.
- She instructs the students to predict information about the text.
- Then the students give as much information as they can, taking into account the title of the text and the picture shown.

Heading: Taking into account the title of the text, "My school activities in the morning", answer the following questions:

- a) Do you imagine what the text is about?
- b) Do you like to go to school?
- c) What do you do at school in the morning?
- d) Why is the school important to you?

Evaluation: It is considered taking into account the parameters already stated as well as the correct use of logical ideas in reference to the content of the text and the subskill under practice (predicting).

While - reading stage.

Exercise 2

Objective: To scan specific information expressed in the text.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering information about daily activities, frequency and the time.

Level of assimilation: Reproduction.

Teaching aids: teacher's voice, text and blackboard.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- In this exercise, the teacher instructs the students to find words in the text.

Heading: Find in the text:

- a) A subject: _____.
- b) A personal pronoun: _____.
- c) A frequency adverb: _____.
- d) An activity doing at school: _____.

Evaluation: The evaluation is considered taking into account the quality of the students' responses and the subskill under practice (scanning).

After- reading stage.

Exercise 3

Objective: To summarize the main ideas from the text.

Communicative function:

- Asking and answering information about daily activities, frequency and the time.

Level of assimilation: Production.

Teaching aids: Teacher's voice, text, and blackboard.

Time: 10 minutes.

Steps to follow:

- The teacher instructs the students to write a summary about the text, taking into account its main ideas.

Heading: Write a brief summarize about the text in no less than forty words including some activities that you do in your school.

Evaluation: The evaluation is given considering the quality of the summary, taking into account the main ideas in relation to personal information and other important aspects, as well as its extension and the subskill under practice (summarizing).

4- Assessment of the application of the system of exercises for the development of the reading comprehension skills.

Results of the final pedagogical test (See appendix 6)

With the purpose of checking the effectiveness of the proposal elaborated by the authoress of the investigation, and to find out student's outcomes concerning the development of the reading comprehension skill, the researcher gave them a final pedagogical test, which included five questions related to four subskills of reading comprehension, which, at the same time, were taken as indicators already explained above. (See appendix #7) For holding the analysis, the researcher made use of the same indicators and evaluating scale as for the initial pedagogical test.

Assessing the indicator predicting (Question #1), it could be appreciated that 10 students (37.0 %) were able to predict the information from the text, as they selected the two items which were supposed to be the correct ones; therefore, they got the high level in predicting, five more students than in the initial test. Fourteen students (51.9%) chose just one item correctly out of the two possible to select, so they were placed in the mid position, showing that they had developed this subskill somehow. Three students (11.1%) attained the low level, as they were not able to select any of the items correctly, demonstrating the poor development of this subskill.

In the case of the indicator skimming, (Question #2), the authoress detected those 11 students (40.7%) could reach the high level, as they answered all the items correctly. showing that they could get the global idea from the text. It means that three students changed their learning status at reaching a higher level as compared to the initial pedagogical test. Twelve students (44.4 %) were placed in the mid position, since they could pick up just one item correctly. It allowed showing that they have developed this subskill up to certain extent; at least two students could reach this place as they were assessed as low in the initial pedagogical test. Only four 4 students (14.8 %) were located in the low level, considering that they were not able to select any of the items correctly, it demonstrated that five students developed their comprehension skill, especially the skimming skill.

For assessing the indicator scanning (Question #3; 4), the authoress gave the students several items for them to answer some questions or say true, false or I can't tell, so the outcomes behaved as follows: Eighteen students (66, 6%) were placed in the high level because they were able to answer correctly all the questions, what means that seven students were able to shift their final learning condition, as they passed to a better position. Six students (22,2 %) got the mid level, taking into account that they were able to answer some questions and some true, falls, and ICT correctly, so three students reached a higher level as compared to the initial pedagogical test. Three students (11.1%) got the low level, considering that they were not able to answer none of the items in the questions two and three, evidencing that the quantity in this level is six students less than the initial test, showing the difference in correspondence with the first test, demonstrating that the work with the individual differences has positive results in the development of this subskill of reading comprehension.

For assessing the indicator summarizing (Question #5), It could be found out that 14 students (51,9 %) obtained the high level, taking into account that they were able to expresses the fundamental ideas in a brief and precise way, so nine students reached a higher level as compared to the initial

pedagogical test. Eight students (29,6%) were placed in the mid position, considering that they expressed some main ideas, but also some others which were not relevant. Taking into account that the quantity in the first test was higher than the final test, it could be observed that four students obtained the high level from mid level. However, 5 students (18.5%) remained in the low level, since they could not summarize the text, identify, or tell apart the main ideas from the secondary ones, manifesting that the students were progressing in this subskill. It was good to know that four students passed to a better position showing a developmental result of reading comprehension.

For the general evaluation of the final pedagogical test, the authoress integrated the subskills and indicators in correspondence to the answers of the questions of the test: so, she used the same assessing scale as in the initial pedagogical test. Therefore, the general outcomes behaved as follows:

Thirteen (13) students (48,1%) got the high level, as they were able to answer all the questions correctly, six students more as compared to the initial pedagogical test, so that they mastered a fair development of the four subskills of reading comprehension under research.

Ten (10) students (37, 0 %) reached the mid level, since they answered three or four questions correctly out of five questions given in the test, showing an acceptable development of the reading comprehension skill; so, two students changed their learning status, as they passed to a higher position.

However, four students (14.8 %) were placed in the low level, taking into consideration that they only answered two, less than two, or non questions correctly, showing a poor level of development of the reading comprehension skill; it means that four students demonstrated a better development of such skill, as they acquired a higher level as compared to the initial test. As a result of this final pedagogical test, it was proved that most of the students were able to pass the reading comprehension test because they actually showed a fair development of the reading comprehension skill, observed mainly through the following achievement:

- Students were able to predict the possible information given in the text.
- They could skim the main ideas from the text.
- They were able to scan specific information from the text.
- They could summarize the information of the text, as they set apart the main ideas from the secondary ones.

In fact, students actually evidenced a higher level of development of the reading comprehension skill.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the systematic research process undergone, the investigator considers it necessary to declare the following conclusions:

The study of psycho-pedagogical, didactic and linguistic referents that support the 7th grade teaching-learning process of the written skills in English, particularly the reading skill, allowed to back up the researcher's proposal, intended to contribute to the development of the seventh graders' reading skill.

The diagnosis of the initial state of the 7th grade teaching-learning process of the writing skills in English, and particularly the development of the reading skill of the seventh graders included in the research sample, permitted to know their real difficulties and, at the same time, proved the necessity of applying the researcher's proposal.

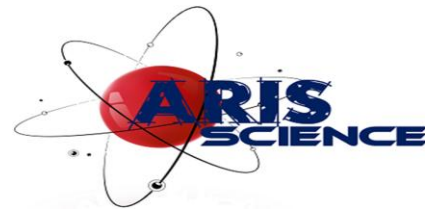
In correspondence with the difficulties detected, a new and well graded system of exercises was elaborated, giving the students the chance to have a more active oral interaction in class and, consequently, a better development of their reading skill.

The application of the system of exercises in a genuine pedagogical context corroborated its effectiveness, as it contributed to develop the reading skill in the great majority of the students subjected to experimentation.

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