

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS TO TEACH READING
COMPREHENSION SKILLS TO SECOND GRADERS OF THE SUR ORIENTAL
BOSTON BRANCH SCHOOL**

Andrés Felipe Londoño Morales

Telman David Ocampo Ramírez

Juan Pablo Ramírez Gómez

Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira

Facultad de Bellas Artes y Humanidades

Licenciatura en bilingüismo con énfasis en inglés

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Asesor / Evaluador:

Clara Inés González

Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira

Facultad de Bellas Artes y Humanidades

Licenciatura en bilingüismo con énfasis en inglés

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1. JUSTIFICATION

The inability to understand and interpret what is being read in a second language and in this case in English, is an issue that many students have faced across all ages, gender and background. Throughout time learners have encountered this difficulty in their native language and it becomes a greater problem when learning a new language. Traditional practices on the teaching of reading have focused merely on the linguistic aspect, whereas modern approaches to teaching reading comprehension are widening their attention on other overall components such as interpreting and inferring. One way to foster reading comprehension as a process of interpreting and inferring is through graphic organizers, over the years there have been studies to determine whether graphic organizers are an effective tool in teaching reading comprehension skills. Graphic organizers are used across the country at all levels of education due to their flexibility of subject use. It is vital to study and understand the effectiveness of all learning tools that educators decide to incorporate in the classroom to promote the learning and practise of English. Equally, the insufficiency of reading comprehension skills need to be taking into consideration, this skill needs to be studied as it is an essential part in the development of an individual in terms of having useful knowledge to be used in different aspects of life.

The insufficiency of reading comprehension skills needs to be studied due to the importance this skill has academically, professionally and in a person's personal life. Academically, reading comprehension is used in every subject. It increases the engagement and effectiveness of reading, components such as motivation to learn, critical thinking skills and intellectuality are also enhanced indirectly while improving reading comprehension. Professionally, reading comprehension skills is a vital competence that is required in most jobs, having the ability to read, understand, process, and recall what was just read is essential. In a

person's personal life, it is a fundamental advantage in functioning in today's society, there are many people who cannot read well enough to understand the instructions on a medicine bottle, job advertisement paper or even a newspaper. This insufficiency in day to day activities that many people take for granted becomes a source of frustration, anger and fear. Tackling this matter at primary school level by conducting this project could prove crucial for their future academic success in terms of boosting their results of the Prueba Saber (MEN, 2016) in English because reading comprehension is one of the skills tested in this exam.

The Prueba Saber (MEN, 2016) is a test that Colombian students need to take every year which measures the level they have in different subjects including English. The results indicate that there are issues concerning reading comprehension in Colombia. In 2016 only 8.92% achieved a level 4 in a grading scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being the highest grade, 46.81% attained a level 3, 40.81% reached a level 2 and 3.46% a level 1 (MEN,2016). These results indicate that students have deficits in reading comprehension in their native language which indicates that this problem will be even more concerning when it comes to English reading comprehension. Additionally, the PISA test (Programme for International Student Assessment) which is a study intended to assess educational systems worldwide by analyzing 15 year old school pupils' scholastic production on mathematics, science and reading. The results in 2015 also show low levels of reading comprehension in Colombia. The study confirms that pupils encounter difficulties in reading comprehension in their native language with outcomes beneath the average in a scale which measures from below (lowest), to average (medium), to above (highest). Moving on, on the bright side, having mentioned the deficient results in both tests, a study conducted by Vargas (2017) in Dosquebradas proved that effective pedagogical work through didactic sequences enhances the learners' performances in the area of reading comprehension by

carrying out analysis, interpretation and deep understanding of the texts. This result proves that to solve the stumbling block of insufficient reading comprehension skills it is fundamental to implement valuable reading strategies. This study is relevant to our project since it will also follow an organized didactic sequence through different steps which goes from the explanation about the graphic organizers to their implementation.

Based on the results of the Prueba Saber (MEN, 2016) exam, the PISA test and the study conducted by Vargas (2017) it is evident there needs to be more emphasis on effective didactic sequences focusing on reading comprehension skills with the aim of improving this ability. Taking into consideration the results of the tests, it can be stated that not much has been done to improve the reading comprehension competence and even though modern reading comprehension strategies have taking a step further from traditional methods, plenty of work still needs to be done in this area. Moreover, according to the outcome of the exams it shows that many teachers across Colombia including Pereira still focus their reading strategies on linguistic aspects only, using traditional methods. The study conducted by Vargas (2017) is an indication of a modern implementation of reading comprehension strategies to conduct with older students that are able to have a more analytical approach to reading. Furthermore, in terms of younger learners, educators should start their reading development process by encouraging them to read not only in lessons but autonomously as well, and also by making them aware of the importance of having efficient reading comprehension abilities.

Taking into account that the limited reading comprehension skills affect negatively the learners' educational performance, this difficulty also generates problems for individuals in the society due to the significance of having reading comprehension competences in many different situations in life. For instance, having gained low grades in their reading comprehension exams

in both tests in their native language, these results suggest that this issue will be even more challenging in English; therefore, when it comes to interacting with a person from another country or even travelling to another country this inability will be a huge obstacle Vargas (2017). The use of graphic organizers as an educational source should be a reading implementation strategy for professors to use in Colombia. In order to promote this educational tool for teachers to feel more secure using them, there should be more investigations to determine what type of graphic organizers are more suited to what type of texts or information and to what age group. For example, this project will only focus on mind maps as the graphic organizer to be used.

The purpose of the project is to address the obstacle of deficient reading comprehension skills through using graphic organizers that would help students structure, organize and understand the information read. Differing from other studies mind maps will be used as the only graphic organizer as a reading strategy in order to structure the information of a narrative text with the purpose to motivate, engage and hold the pupils' interest. Adding on, in order to elaborate and structure the concept maps according to the narrative text the following subsequent steps will be used accordingly; recognize the plot, setting, and theme, then identify the characters and interpret the text by giving a point of view. This project has significant relevance in terms of ascertain whether graphic organizers can construct reading comprehension skills in English and therefore possibly use this strategy to increase their grades in the Prueba Saber (MEN, 2016). Furthermore, it will also generate new ideas involving the reading comprehension field because other graphic organizers apart from the ones mentioned for this project can be used in other projects in order to determine the importance of different graphic organizers.

The project will impact the field due to the fact that a lot of research has to be done on the area of reading comprehension here in Colombia so as to try to enhance the reading

comprehension abilities amongst learners'; therefore, this project can begin opening the door to innovative ideas such as using graphic organizers to enhance reading comprehension in which students have to interpret, infer and identify certain aspects about a text. It will also influence the students linguistically and cognitively by developing reading comprehension skills using graphic organizers, it will contribute the learners as to learning how to structure information by classifying and organizing, identifying concepts and ideas, connecting prior knowledge with new information, interpreting and summarizing information in order to ease comprehension. Moving on, the institution and professors might potentially be influenced positively because depending on the results it could make way to use such educational instrument as a key tool to improve reading comprehension skills at all levels, specifically to pupils preparing to take the Prueba Saber (MEN, 2016). Lastly, the community presumably can be affected positively since pupils would gain more knowledge and increase education success which is very dependent on reading abilities.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 Teaching Objectives

- To follow a didactic sequence using mind maps as a graphic organizer reading strategy tool in order to construct reading comprehension skills.
- To apply a mind map as a graphic organizer reading strategy tool to improve reading comprehension skills.
- To guide learners how to locate and classify information using a mind map as a graphic organizer reading strategy tool in order to enhance reading comprehension skills.

- **2.2 Learning Objectives**

- To follow the main stages to construct a mind map: read, extract information and elaborate the mind map.
- To learn how to apply a mind map as a graphic organizer reading strategy tool to acquire reading comprehension strategies.
- To locate and classify information in narrative texts so as to structure it in a mind map.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this conceptual framework is to define in detail several concepts such as Reading Comprehension, Reading Comprehension and Indirect Benefits, Teaching Reading, Teaching Reading Strategies, Graphic Organizers, using Graphic Organizers as a Reading Strategy, steps to guide learners through Graphic Organizers and Graphic Organizers and Indirect Benefits in order to provide readers of this study a more general idea. The concept of reading will be discussed taking into account Cassany (2015) and Sattar and Salehi (2014) whom state that two important characteristics of reading comprehension are making connections and interpreting information. The concept of Graphic Organizers will be explored having in mind Novak (2010) and Youman (2016) whom state that graphic organizers are useful learning tools to enhance reading comprehension through critical thinking.

3.1 Defining Reading comprehension in another language

Reading comprehension is essential for an individual's success and reading in another language can become a challenge. Learners from different ages are faced with challenges and barriers which seem to exceed their desire to read and without appropriate teaching methods and procedures they never overpower them. Youman (2016) states that it is a fundamental skill that every student needs to develop in order to succeed academically. It is vital for learners who are preparing to take the Prueba Saber (MEN, 2016) due to the fact that it is one of the skills that is evaluated in the English language. This means that in order to be successful academically there needs to be a high level of reading comprehension competence which improves learning skills.

Through good reading strategies it can facilitate learning which means you begin to create a structured path towards a better understanding about the topic. Reading comprehension is a

simultaneous process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction between reader and written language according to Snow (2002). This interaction happens when the reader evaluates, connects, criticizes, shares, analyses, interprets and gives meaning towards a text. Developing the skills to interact effectively with the text facilitates the comprehension of a passage. During the interaction learners should be active as they read, structuring and organizing the information as they make their way through the narrative text in order to enhance the process of comprehension. From the view of Tarchi (2010) one of the most fundamental features of learning is reading comprehension due to the significance it has in the process of acquiring, gathering, sharing and constructing knowledge. Having mentioned the above, reading comprehension is a dynamic process of constructing coherent meaning. Developing this skill through graphic organizers is essential when learning a foreign or second language as it also involves boosting critical thinking in pupils.

3.2 Reading comprehension and indirect benefits

The function of reading comprehension is mainly to read a text, process it, and understand its meaning. Through graphic organizers these procedures facilitate the learning process of learners which also have some indirect benefits. Sam and Rajan (2013) express that while reading a text using graphic organizers it can also activate critical and creative thinking which expands the student's comprehension and understanding of a text by structuring the content into small comprehensible segments. Apart from comprehending the text itself students learn to use their critical thinking in order to give their point of view and in terms of language structure they would learn writing skills such as grammar and new vocabulary.

Appropriate reading comprehension skills also bring the benefit of increasing the vocabulary range of a new language through the exposure of information in texts. Newton et al.

(2018) affirms that vocabulary range is jointly associated with reading comprehension.

Vocabulary and reading have a unified relationship, this means that successful development of reading comprehension skills leads to the expansion of vocabulary. As learners develop more language abilities such as the enhancement of vocabulary range the expectation is that through interaction with the passage their attention shifts from learning to read to understanding the text.

Developing sufficient reading comprehension competence helps the individual become a skilled reader in order to not only read but to interact with the text using critical thinking.

Developing a superior level of reading comprehension and critical thinking skills not only helps in an academic context but also in everyday life activities. Youman (2016) asserts that while learners develop, it is crucial that they learn the necessary tools to succeed, and it is with the mastery of skilled reading and reading comprehension techniques that students can ensure academic, economic, and societal achievement. Through reading, you are exposed to new things, new information, new ways to solve a problem, and new ways to achieve one thing. It is a gift due to the fact that it is a skill for life which will continue to develop with exposure to new ideas.

3.3 Teaching reading

The different types of texts a student is exposed nowadays leads to a conscious interpretation about the information. The technological advancements have resulted in the 21st century learner to be more exposed to reading on the internet using a digital device. Teachers have to adjust to these changes and teach reading using academic material and material that pupils use in their everyday life. Teaching reading should be focused on a critical and interpretational dimension. According to Cassany (2015) interpretation means being able to give your personal opinion about a text, whether you agree with the author or not, if you liked it and if

it is useful or not. This can be done using any type of passage and therefore should be taught in order to be used with different kinds of texts. Referring to graphic organizers this is one of the numerous elements that are used in order to extract and construct the information into smaller fragments, being able to interpret means understanding the core of the information and being capable to draw your own conclusions from it.

Reaching the core of the information to draw conclusions from it is achieved via significant activities that help promote interaction and dialogue between students to interchange different points of view. Cassany (2015) affirms that the pupils after working in groups will learn that their interpretation is one of many and comprehension is eased when different opinions are connected to see whether they coincide or not. It is crucial to encourage collaborative work in order for students to interact, support and learn from each other.

Individual work is as important as collaborative work and could be even more important to combine both techniques in the same activity. Encouraging pupils to interact with the text themselves and in groups are vital in terms of exposing their weaknesses and strengths. Some students will have more experience with reading than others, and the learners that have had less could have more difficulties to interpret and make conclusions. In the opinion of Cassany (2015) he says that taking the time to re-read a text while pointing out relevant words, fragments and asking questions can have a positive effect on reading comprehension. It is fundamental not to rush through the text and to use the correct reading strategies so as to extract the most significant information using critical analysis.

3.4 Teaching reading strategies

Acquiring good reading strategy skills can have a major impact in reading comprehension. Structuring knowledge can be achieved through adequate reading techniques

over time. Teaching reading comprehension skills demands clear and direct instruction and regular support from the educator to the learner. Moats (2000) points out the most appropriate reading strategies as follows: making connections, questioning, inferring, visualizing, summarizing, using prior knowledge, evaluating and synthesizing. However, the project will only be focused in making connections and using prior knowledge as reading strategies to be instructed. Acquiring the ability to implement this reading method through these two strategies can have a beneficial effect in the second or foreign language teaching setting as it requires critical thinking and deep analysis of the text. Making connections and using prior knowledge in order to be correctly conducted and to have a positive effect on second or foreign language learning has to be planned or established as a way of reading. It is important to make conscious connections while decoding the information in order to be an active and purposeful reader.

Sattar and Salehi (2014) propose that in terms of making connections as a reading strategy and to develop effective reading techniques the educators should motivate students to connect the ideas in the text to what they already know, which is one of the main objectives in reading. Being able to connect the decoded information to prior knowledge is one skill that helps develop the reading cognitive process and contributes to becoming a conscious reader. Moreover, along the same line of thought, Zuñiga and Vargas (2018) state that when using mind maps as a reading comprehension tool it allows the learners to connect new information to past learning, this means that pupils will be connecting topics already discussed in class with new information so as to establish relations and connections.

In relation to using prior knowledge as a reading strategy through mind maps, Zuñiga and Vargas (2018) address that when students develop the capacity of connecting what they have read to their prior knowledge and identify relationships between both sets of information, then

this indicates that mind maps have successfully assisted in the learning process. Adding on, Zuñiga and Vargas (2018) also affirm that not only is it fundamental to comprehend the vocabulary in the text in order to identify its organization and meaning, but it is also important to activate previous knowledge in relation to the information in the text which can compensate for the unknown vocabulary. This being said, Zuñiga and Vargas (2018) clearly suggest that the activation of prior knowledge through mind maps supports the learning process in comprehending a text.

3.5 Defining Graphic organizers

According to Sam and Rajan (2013) graphic organizers are visual instruments used to logically classify information under a schema in which learners can structure the passage by identifying the facts and opinions, the main idea, supporting details, topic sentences, comparing and contrasting, identifying vocabulary, interpreting, and making inferences. Graphic organizers are fundamental tools which can enhance and facilitate the understanding of a text in a scaffold and sequential process as pupils search for specific information at a time in order to internalize the reading. Graphic organizers are essential communication tools that use visual symbols to scaffold the learning process in order to express knowledge, concepts, thoughts, ideas, and the relationship between them. Sam and Rajan (2013) established that graphic organizers are more effective in terms of comprehending passages compared to other reading strategies such as skimming, scanning and note-taking. This visual educational tool assists students to understand and remember the material they are learning more efficiently.

Taking into account the importance of reading comprehension in today's education, this proposal focuses on strengthening this ability through a very useful tool such as graphic organizers. Graphic organizers include Venn diagrams, K.W.L charts, cause and effect diagrams,

analogy organizers and mind maps amongst others. With that said, the mind map will be the graphic organizer that this study will be focused on. This visual educational tool assists students to understand and remember the material they are learning more efficiently.

Learners are able to organize and structure the information logically in order to see the relationship and differentiate between and among ideas in a more effective and direct way. Youman (2016) affirms that graphic organizers provide students with a framework for a logical classification to promote reading comprehension and activate prior knowledge as pupils make connections between what they are reading and what they already know. In other words it is like a huge spider web, where you organize the content visually in order to link effectively and directly prior knowledge and structure new information.

3.6 Using graphic organizers as a reading strategy

The effectiveness and directness of using graphic organizers as a reading strategy to boost reading comprehension can contribute to assisting the active learning process in second and foreign language learners. Youman (2016) states that through graphic organizers as a reading strategy the task of understanding the main idea of a text becomes more simplified and manageable and, as a result, learners stay more engaged and motivated in the activity. By increasing student engagement it enables learners to actively participate and contribute to their learning process on a hand on approach. The design of graphic organizers will effectively contribute to prompting the creative and logical parts of the brain. Extracting information in an organized hand on approach allows for active learning and a deeper understanding of the content, this results in facilitating cognitive processes and improving self-confidence. Humbert (2014) reaffirms that learners could use graphic organizers as a reading strategy in order to synthesize concepts by arranging their thinking process when the ideas become more tangled and complex

passages need to be broken down. Graphic organizers as a reading strategy are essential tools to structure thinking and learning so as to guide pupils to become effective readers and as a result better learners.

Amid the various reading strategies graphic organizers provide a more modern view to reading comprehension, not just focusing on the linguistic linear text presentations but also concentrating on a more pictorial representation that allows for deeper understanding of the reading material. Salazar and Galora (2017) comment that graphic organizers provide new approaches to reading strategies that are different from the traditional ones. In other words by using graphic organizers as a reading instructional strategy it enables pupils to break down into pictorial steps bigger ideas or concepts into smaller and clearer information that is easier to understand.

3.7 Defining a mind map

There are various graphic organizers as mentioned above that are used as a reading strategy. For this particular project the focus will be upon mind maps and how they can be used as a reading strategy to improve reading comprehension skills in a foreign language. As stated by Delfi (2018) mind mapping is an activity which assists students to structure, internalize and remember easier the information read which as a result enhances reading comprehension. This means that the use of a mind map is a creative educational technique which the students can use to organize written information and visually recognize their ideas. According to Delfi (2018) after applying mind maps, the pupils are able to grasp different aspects of the narrative text easier because the information is presented in the mind map in a structured form. As a result, by

having pupils organize and recognize their ideas it could guide them to understand different parts and the core of the narrative text.

3.8 Using mind maps as a reading strategy

As mentioned before, mind maps will be used as a reading strategy to improve reading comprehension skills in a foreign language. Delfi (2018) conducted a research involving the effect of using mind mapping on reading comprehension with first year students from the academic year of 2016/17 in Indonesia. It involved 24 students chosen by cluster sampling. Based on her research, she concluded that a Mind Mapping technique is applicable for teaching reading comprehension skills to young learners in a foreign language due to the fact that it gave a significant effect on reading comprehension skills to the first year students of SMAN PLUS RIAU in narrative texts. The use of a Mind Mapping technique facilitates the understanding of narrative texts since the students are able to be more focused on their ideas. This suggests that using mind maps accordingly as a reading strategy can prove hugely beneficial as it can support learners in boosting reading comprehension skills in a foreign language by focusing on specific aspects of the text that will enable pupils to comprehend the main parts of the text. Also, by being more focused on their ideas this means that the learners are able to discard irrelevant information that is not useful to understand the narrative text.

3.9 Steps to guide learners through graphic organizers

To teach reading comprehension through graphic organizers the pupils have to be given an explanation on how to use certain types of graphic organizers accordingly. Sam and Rajan (2013) follow a procedure focusing on English as a second language. They begin to familiarize the students with different types of graphic organizers that are going to be used by instructing

them on how to use them effectively. Then, before they read the text learners choose their preferable graphic organizer that they feel more comfortable with so as to begin structuring and interpreting the information. Lastly, reading comprehension questions are set to find out whether students decode the correct information. Having students choose their preferable organizer would work with older learners that can make responsible decisions for themselves. Following the mentioned procedure is vital due to the fact that students receive a good chunk of instruction for them to begin elaborating their own graphic organizer to then focus on the outcome.

Certain steps used by educators to instruct students on graphic organizers tend to be similar. In the same line of steps according to Humbert (2014), the professor guides the students on how to use numerous types of graphic organizers. Secondly, the learners read a text according to their level. After the passage has been read, in order to fill in the graphic organizer they are allowed to look back at the text to use it as a reference. Lastly, pupils are given a short comprehension mock-test filled in with questions according to the passage read in order to analyze the results. This process emphasizes the importance of employing a reading text according to their level due to the fact that it might avoid demotivation and learning frustration.

Differing from the procedures mentioned above, other teachers concentrate their methods more in keeping students focused and motivated. Salazar and Galora (2017) emphasize that to avoid loss of motivation and confidence educators should not do too much intervention during the process as learners might not enjoy the practice when using graphic organizers to comprehend a text. They also recommend that professors should group learners before conducting the steps to guide learners through graphic organizers so that pupils can structure and share their points of view from their reading passages and arrange well their ideas utilizing graphic organizers. Lastly, students should expose to their classmates their graphic organizers in

order to be evaluated. This technique concentrates on motivation and collaborative work which are principal characteristics in any learning environment.

Moving on, In terms of the steps to guide learners through mind maps Santiago (2011) mentioned that in order to construct a mind map there are certain guidelines that need to be followed. The mind map itself has a specific appearance similar to a tree with a trunk with branches around the trunk and smaller branches outgrowing from the main branches. Santiago (2011) also affirms that at the center of the mind map it possess an image, word or phrase representing the core idea, the branches contain keywords that are subheadings of the main topic and each branch line should contain only one keyword. The guidelines mentioned above are crucial so that the pupils understand visually what characteristics a mind map is meant to possess. Moreover, these steps would be useful after having exposed the learners to the narrative text and the students have understood what information needs to be extracted from the story and included in the mind map. Furthermore, these steps of instructing pupils how to construct a mind map could facilitate the organization of the information due to the fact that learners would know what information needs to go in certain parts of the mind map.

3.10 Graphic Organizers and indirect benefits

Employing graphic organizers to develop reading comprehension skills also has various indirect benefits. Students will be more engaged and motivated using this tool due to the fact that learning is simplified and learning deficits can be decreased. Sam and Rajan (2013) emphasize that when educators use this reading comprehension strategy and learners are elaborating their own graphic organizers it indirectly improves the pupil's creativity and enhances their motivation. Students with different learning strategies and modalities will be also motivated

since graphic organizers include a wide variety of learners, including learners with special needs and English language learners by integrating text and visual imagery.

In terms of foreign or second English language learning, there are several language skills that are benefited using this process which also increases motivation. Youman (2016) asserts that using graphic organizers is a successful tool to promote language development to teach English as a foreign or second language as there are a number of benefits that this strategy generates. English Language skills are increased in areas such as reading and decoding fluency, reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and oral expression. These skills are improved consciously and unconsciously enabling pupils to extract direct information from the text in order to implement creative and critical thinking into their learning process.

Critical thinking skills such as analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating are other indirect benefits that graphic organizers produce in terms of learning by identifying and organizing information visually. In the opinion of Novak (2010) mind maps stimulate students to extract information using critical thinking skills to analyze the content, also, it encourages learners to directly arrange and make public their understanding. Developing this skill is hugely important in relation to English language learning due to the fact that learners are consciously internalizing new information by using cognitive strategies.

In relation to mind maps and their indirect benefits Delfi (2018) suggests that through the use of mind maps the learners not only read the narrative text once but they are guided to keep on reading so as to extract the specific information from the text in order to construct the mind map which as a result increases their vocabulary. In other words, the students will read the same word in the narrative text more than once which means that it could increase the chances of internalizing the meaning of the word as not all of the words are paid the same attention to when

the text is read for the first time. Furthermore, the fact that learners have to know the meaning of the words that are included in the mind map which asks to incorporate the specific information from the narrative text encourages the students to understand the meaning of those words to structure the mind map accordingly.

To conclude, there are several common graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams, K.W.L charts, cause and effect diagrams, analogy organizers, etc. However, this study attempts to measure whether using mind maps as a graphic organizer and as a reading strategy is effective in terms of constructing reading comprehension skills of narrative texts in a foreign language; therefore, we will take into account the steps to guide learners through a mind map according to Santiago (2011). This study will also take into consideration the importance Delfi (2018) gives to using a mind map as an educational tool to improve reading comprehension skills in a foreign language.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Graphic organizers have been extensively researched for their use in effectively arranging the content of a passage and decoding its meaning in classrooms. The objective of the project is to implement graphic organizers to teach reading comprehension skills to eleventh graders of the Hernando Velez High school. Youman (2016) states that while learners develop, it is crucial that they learn the necessary tools to succeed, and it is with the mastery of reading and reading comprehension that students can ensure academic, economic, and societal achievement. This literature review will cover the effectiveness in using graphic organizers to improve reading comprehension skills to ESL middle school students and the effects of Venn diagrams versus concept maps on student test scores. It will also explore the relevance the two studies have on the focus of the project.

4.1 The effectiveness in using graphic organizers to improve reading comprehension skills to ESL middle school students

The study carried out by Sam and Rajan (2012) that was published on the 9th of January 2013 focuses on the use of graphic organizers to Improve Reading Comprehension Skills for the middle school ESL students. The authors proposed different types of graphic organizers to achieve better understanding while reading a text. The experimental group which were the ones that received the instructions on how to use the graphic organizers and the controlled group that did not receive any consisted of 35 learners each from a public school in the western part of Tamil Nadu, India. In order to gather the data a quantitative method was employed by conducting pre and post-tests.

Moreover, the intervention lasted for two weeks. The reading material used in the study consisted of selected texts published by the Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation and contained both expository and narrative texts. At the beginning of the instruction, the researcher familiarized the students with what graphic organizers were and how to use them effectively while reading a text. The students were also trained to use different kinds of organizers for different types of passages, the strategy includes searching for the author's purpose, main idea, supporting details, fact and opinion, and compare and contrast. The results of the post-test suggested that the experimental group compared to the controlled group improved in five types of reading questions such as identifying the main idea, finding the supporting details, dealing with vocabulary, identifying fact and opinion, and making inferences. The pedagogical implication is that using graphic organizers during reading comprehension sessions indirectly motivates the students to create their own graphic organizer for the passages they read and comprehend which also improves their creativity.

The study mentioned above has significant relevance to the project to be conducted in terms of the procedure implemented to instruct the pupils. In Colombia, students in public high schools tend to have low levels of English which makes reading comprehension challenging (Ríos & Valcárcel, 2005). Therefore, in order to facilitate reading comprehension the learners will be exposed and instructed to effectively use graphic organizers such as a mind map. In addition, regarding the findings of Sam and Rajan (2012), in order to elaborate and construct the learners reading comprehension skills, the mind maps will focus mainly on identifying the main idea, finding the supporting details, dealing with vocabulary and identifying specific and general information.

4.2 The effects of Venn diagrams versus concept maps on student test scores

The other study to explore was conducted by Humbert (2014) with two fifth grade students from a rural Chautauqua County School throughout four weeks to determine that graphic organizers are an effective visual tool in teaching and which type of graphic organizers the Venn diagrams or concept maps were more effective. To support Humberts' hypothesis and so as to collect the data the researcher employed a quantitative method to compare the effects of Venn diagrams and concept maps by applying a raw score analysis of student grades on their pre and post comprehension tests they took each week.

Adding on, the research lasted four weeks. For the first two weeks of the study the students used concept maps and for the second two weeks of the study the students used Venn diagrams. Learners were given an explanation at the beginning of the sessions on how to use these graphic organizers. Each student participated by reading a passage at fourth grade reading level. Then, they completed a graphic organizer using the reading passage as their reference. The researcher found that the use of both Venn diagrams and concept maps significantly increased test scores with both participants. When using a cognitive mapping strategy or any type of graphic organizer, students are enhancing their reading comprehension by processing the information into information that is easy to decode and comprehend (Youman, 2014). The researcher concluded that the pedagogical implications of the study are that both graphic organizers positively affected the fifth grade students with recall and comprehension of passages at their current reading level.

The study conducted by Humbert (2014) is important to the project in terms of the positive results from using Venn diagrams and concept maps in order to enhance reading comprehension, graphic organizers have been linked to the development of higher thinking skills

for reading comprehension (García & Villegas, 2003). Adding on, the procedure employed to instruct learners on graphic organizers also has relevance in terms of exposing the students to different kinds of graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams and concept maps. The quantitative method of analyzing the information gathered also has significance in terms of the easiness to compare test results.

To conclude, both studies explored have significant relevance to the project in terms of the procedures, findings and the methods used to instruct the pupils how to organize and structure information from narrative texts.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Context and Setting

This classroom project was carried out with students from 2nd grade in a public school situated in an urban area of Pereira Risaralda. In terms of gender of the group of students' it is mixed, male and female, in total the whole group was composed of 30 students . Regarding the English curriculum in this school, they were taught the language once a week for one hour and thirty minutes and it was taught by one of the implementers who conducted his teaching practicum there. The education of English in this school is based on competences, however, the practitioner English teacher was allowed to make modifications based on standards of teaching English in Colombia using “Guía 22 and DBA ’s” (MEN, 2006). The project was conducted in five sessions lasting one hour and a half per session. Adding on, the classes were designed by the practitioners having in mind the age, level of English from the pupils and their interests. Lastly, the classroom of implementation had the following learning materials: a television set for visual and audio purposes and a white board.

5.2 Participants

This classroom project was carried out with thirty students in 2nd grade from a public school. However, the target learners chosen randomly to analyze their results for the project consisted of fifteen pupils in total, seven males and eight females. The learners' ages varied from six to nine and the average English level of the students was A1 according to the CEFR (2001). In general, most pupils had a previous knowledge about simple vocabulary previous practitioners from the same practicum of the Licenciatura en bilingüismo con énfasis en Ingles had taught them. Also, they had a basic ability to follow simple instructions. The cognitive skill and need

that this project is focused on improving is reading comprehension, and most of the learners had a natural interest and motivation to learn English. The group of learners were very receptive and were easily engaged by learning activities which facilitated the introduction and implementation of the graphic organizers.

5.3 Practitioners Role

The three direct implementers that were in charge of this project were ninth semester students from the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira in the Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con énfasis en inglés programme. During planning, implementation, assessment and reflection stages of the sessions, all three implementers' team and individual roles had an active participation. According to Spradley (1980) active participation means being involved in almost everything that is going to be conducted as a means of trying to attain information. Therefore, in this project the practitioners were engaged in nearly all of the process of instruction apart from the stage where learners had to elaborate their activities. Moving on, since this was a qualitative project, according to Merriam (1988) the core of the project should be focused on the process rather than the results, this signifies that as practitioners we had to value the pupils' effort more than their achievements. In addition, Merriam (1988) also stated that it should involve fieldwork, as a consequence, throughout the process the practitioners recorded observations using teacher's journals and learners artefacts by adopting an analytical stance.

5.4 Instructional Design

The purpose of the project was to provide reading comprehension strategies through mind maps as a graphic organizer educational tool. At the end of the project the learners were expected to use a mind map as a graphic organizer in order to structure information from narrative texts in

English. To conduct the project, it was developed in different stages: planning, implementation, assessment and reflection. In the planning stage of the lessons, aspects such as adjusting the appropriate reading material according to the learners' English level, age, grade and interest were taken into consideration (*Appendix #1 shows a sample of a narrative story designed and implemented in a session*). The purpose to suit the narrative text to their English level was to facilitate reading comprehension and avoid learning frustrations.

During the project the following materials were used in order to contextualize the students with the narrative texts: Flash-cards, worksheets containing mind maps as a graphic organizer tool along with the narrative text and reading comprehension questions, PowerPoint Presentations containing images and text, markers and a white board. (*Appendix #2 exhibits a sample of a narrative story and appendix #3 shows a sample of a mind map worksheet*). This means that the implementers not only used mind maps but also the other materials mentioned above to help contextualize the pupils with the text. The flash-cards were used to show the vocabulary that was needed during that lesson. The worksheets containing a mind map as a graphic organizer were used in order for the pupils to structure the information asked by the teachers. The power point presentations were employed to present the narrative texts to the learners so that they could visualize the information shown. The markers and the white board were used to write vocabulary, reading comprehension questions and draw the mind map as a graphic organizer tool to instruct the students.

Moving on, this project was framed under the backward approach which according to Richards (2013) it starts by considering the output, by defining the competence or goals at the beginning and then the activities and content are designed. This approach applied to the project since it firstly focused on improving reading comprehension skills as the goal, then the activities

were designed involving the mind map as the graphic organizer and last but not least the content. The implementation stage of the sessions involved the trilogy of the teaching sequence procedure ESA (engage, study, activate). According to Harmer (2007) engage includes emotionally engaging learners with the lesson in order for learning to be effective, study involves the teaching and learning phase of the lesson and finally activate stands for the stage in which students are encouraged to put into practice the language knowledge acquired.

Taking this didactic sequence into account in the engaging phase of the lessons the implementers began with a warm up which included the vocabulary that was used in the narrative texts. Then, in the study phase the narrative text was read by one implementer and the pupils at the same time using a PowerPoint Presentation, while the text was being read the other implementers used gestures and illustrations so as to facilitate the understanding of the story and with the purpose of clarifying any misunderstood vocabulary. Moreover, in the study phase the implementers introduced and drew the mind map on the board, this was done in order to go through some steps with the pupils' and instruct them how to organize and structure the information from the text. This phase involved interaction and collaborative work from the implementers and the students'. Additionally, this phase was developed having in mind that not all of the steps were going to be covered with the purpose of making students' extract the remaining information in the activating step. Lastly, in the activating step, the pupils were given a worksheet and encouraged to extract the remaining information from the text individually and occasionally in pairs. The worksheet included the narrative text, the mind map and the reading comprehension questions in the L1. The learners had to read the narrative text, then complete the mind map according to the information asked and lastly answer the reading comprehension questions in the L1 or L2. The mind map in each worksheet given had different titles according

to the information in the narrative text that the pupils had to locate and structure. On top of that, after finishing elaborating the narrative text using the mind map as the graphic organizer students' at random were asked to answer some reading comprehension questions so as to check for understanding.

In the assessment period the learners' expected language outcomes were analyzed using fieldwork such as teacher's journals, observations to observe different aspects and student's artefacts from classroom work. The learners were assessed through the elaboration of worksheets containing a mind map and reading comprehension questions. Also, they were assessed how verbally they identified and located correctly the information in the narrative text in the L1 or L2. As a result, the students' artefacts attained and the verbal identification of information gave us conclusive results whether a mind map is an effective educational tool. Additionally, the teachers' journals and observations were used by the three implementers in every session to record valuable information such as learners' participation in the lesson to record whether students were motivated and understood how to use a mind map as a learning tool.

The reflection part after the implementation of the sessions were focused on the following aspects: professional growth, student's responses and linguistic outcomes. The instrument that was employed for the professional growth aspect is teachers' journals and observations. Through the teachers' journal, the implementers used the notes taken during and after the lessons to reflect on different aspects of professional growth such as evaluating whether the instructions of how to use the mind map went according to plan and if time management was used appropriately throughout the sessions. Furthermore, to reflect on students' responses teachers' journals, observations and artefacts were utilized. Having mentioned the above the teachers' journals were used to reflect on the notes taken during the implementations focusing on

learners attitude such as involvement in the lesson and output from classroom work. Besides, pupils' artefacts was another instrument used to reflect on students' responses by gathering and analyzing output from classroom work. The analysis was focused on learners' performance during the sessions, whether they responded positively by conducting their activities.

Additionally, to reflect on linguistic outcomes student artefacts were analyzed. The reflection was focused on identifying and evaluating reading comprehension improvements in learners' through classroom work.

6. RESULTS

6.1 Professional Growth

In terms of professional growth there are some skills that were developed and enhanced as implementers. The creativity to design authentic narrative texts in the L2 is one of those skills. All of the narrative texts used in each lesson were designed having in mind the target students in terms of the context and real life situations in which the learners are immersed in, in their culture. The implementers designed the narrative stories so that it would have a moral at the end and to capture the attention of second graders. Furthermore, the narrative stories were created so that all of the vocabulary the learners had seen before was used in the story. Moreover, the narrative texts were also developed in PowerPoint Presentations illustrating the story with text and images, each particular moment in the story was displayed in the PowerPoint Presentation with an image. Apart from developing creative skills to design narrative texts, those narrative stories elaborated had to be carefully adjusted in worksheets in order to position the story, a mind map and reading comprehension questions all in the same worksheet, to clarify, the reading comprehension questions were designed in the L1 and the learners had to respond in the L2, the questions were developed in the L1 because the focus was on identifying whether the students understood the main parts of the story by answering in the L2. Therefore, the worksheets had to be designed in order to facilitate the elaboration of the graphic organizers and reading comprehension questions using the text. (*Appendix #4 shows a sample of a worksheet implemented in one of the classes.*)

Moving on, as implementers the skill of being active teachers to monitor every learner in the lesson was enhanced. During the mind map worksheet activity every student was attended to so as to monitor their work and clarify any doubts, pupils had to be given explanations and instructions by using body language and the L2 several times in order to facilitate their

understanding and development of the activity. As implementers we supported the students without giving the answers to them explicitly but rather gave them hints in the L2 by asking them questions about what they thought the answer could be or showing them where they could find the answer, these hints also included reading the story with them and at the same time pointing to the words being read using intonation in the keywords highlighted and underlined in the text. It was important to use intonation in the highlighted key content words in the story since it supported the pupils in the identification of the content words needed to structure the appropriate information in the mind map. Adding on, personalized guidance was given to learners who were having difficulties conducting the mind map worksheet activities, those learners were given examples and instructed on a number of occasions the steps of how to elaborate and structure the information in the mind map.

Another skill boosted as implementers was time management. The didactic sequence during the development of the lessons were organized in order to have sufficient time in each stage. The stages of the lessons were the following; a warm up, the presentation and reading of the narrative text, the elaboration of the mind map worksheet, and finally a wrapping up activity. Each step was timely monitored so as to give the pupils enough time to participate and develop each activity in each phase. The pupils were also informed about how much time they had during each stage in order to keep them active. The time in each stage was monitored using a technological device so that each stage would not overlap the following phase.

In addition, lesson planning was another professional aspect boosted. The development of the lessons was planned bearing in mind that the learning process had to be scaffolded in order to guide the learners step by step and avoid learning frustrations and facilitate the understanding and completion of each activity. Furthermore, the lessons were planned using an engage, study

and activate method which was implemented accordingly without interruptions, during the sessions each stage was conducted without having to improvise or divert any stage. Adding on, during the planning phase of the lessons anticipated problems and planned solutions were pre-determined so as to become aware of what steps to take if confronted with the anticipated situation. The activities in every lesson were designed having in mind the objectives of the sessions, it was made sure that every activity was connected and was a guide to meet the established objectives.

6.2 Students Response

Throughout the sessions, although most of the learners were motivated in some stages of the lesson, such as when the pupils read the narrative stories (the narrative stories include: Pedro's routine, Mateo's 8th birthday party, The Halloween night of three friends, The carnival of three friends and The holy week of Mateo and Pedro) (*Appendixes #1-2-5 exhibits samples of the various narrative stories designed and implemented in the sessions*) with one of the implementers from the PowerPoint Presentations, it was observable that during the mind map worksheet activities the majority of the learners were not engaged nor interested in reading the story from the text, this was evident in several implementations because the students kept on asking questions regarding information in the story which showed that they were not reading the story autonomously. Evidence from a teacher's journal shows

Excerpt taken from: S4_E5_TO_09/11/18, lines 16-19

"...moreover it is worth mentioning that despite the fact that students seemed motivated to learn, other students did not

read the text to put the information in the mind map, they just ignored the reading and went straight to the organizer and structured the information in the mind map by asking for support”.

Furthermore, another excerpt taken from another of the implementers teacher’s journal mentions that...

Excerpt taken from: S3_E4_TO_26/10/18, lines 8-10

“...the understanding the learners had was not because of the reading but due to the tools like pictures and gestures used by implementers to make the story easier to understand”.

The majority of the learners found it difficult to read the narrative text in the worksheet by themselves and this was due to the fact that all of the pupils did not have the capacity to read in the L2, therefore, the learners were not equipped with sufficient language reading abilities in the L2 in order to read individually and grasp the meaning. As a consequence, the mind map was elaborated based on the support given by the implementers from pictures, gestures and instructions, those students avoided reading and instead asked for support from the implementers in order to construct the mind map and answer the reading comprehension questions.

On the other hand, approximately three students did read the story in the worksheet in order to extract information from the text, since the content words required to fill the mind map where underlined and highlighted, this lead the learners to focus specifically on those words in

order to structure the information in the mind map. That said, it is evident in the journal entry written by one implementer where it says...

(Excerpt taken from: S4_E5_TO_09/11/18, lines 21-24).

"...other students did read the narrative text in the worksheet to recall specific information since some of the vocabulary in the text was highlighted, they used the highlighted vocabulary in order to structure accordingly the information in the mind map".

These learners identified those specific content words in the narrative text and organized them in the mind map under the correct category, after that they structured specific information accordingly in the mind map to then use that information to answer the reading comprehension questions effectively. (*Appendix #6 shows a sample of a worksheet implemented in one of the classes and elaborated by a student.*)

Another student response was the collaborative work between the learners, it was noticed that the learners were supporting each other during the worksheet activity, the pupils that finished ahead of their other classmates were instructed to help another learner develop their work. This being said, it is evident in the journal entry where it says ...

(Excerpt taken from: S4_E5_TO_09/11/18, lines 25-27).

"...the students who finished faster than other pupils were told to help other partners to finish the activity and those

learners managed to help their classmates elaborate their work appropriately”.

These learners were asked who they wanted to work with and once they chose who they wanted to support they sat down next to them and explained what information needed to go in each category and what the reading comprehension questions should include, some learners managed to help more than one classmate. It is also worth mentioning that the pupils were extra motivated because the implementers gave them a smiley face or stickers to enhance their commitment each time they supported a classmate.

Active participation, engagement and motivation in the sessions were perceptible in the stage when the implementer was reading the story and at the same time asking comprehension questions in the L1 and L2 about the story, the majority of the pupils raised their hands to participate and the learners answered correctly and incorrectly in the L1 and at times in the L2. This is stated in a journal entry where it is mentioned that...

(Excerpt taken from: S4_E5_TO_09/11/18, lines 10-13).

“...during and after the reading of the story, the implementers asked questions related to the story which learners answered correctly and incorrectly. For instance, one correct answer was when the implementer asked about several details of the story of the holy week of Pedro and Mateo, the student was congruent with the answer required by responding “profesor, Mateo era el que no quería ir a misa ”.

During the reading stage of the narrative text the learners had an active participation, the learners read at the same time with the implementer and different students answered different questions related to specific information in the text in the L1 and L2. To clarify, the fact that pupils answered questions correctly regarding specific information in the story in the L1 meant that they understood aspects from the story.

In regards to making connections and using prior knowledge to develop the activities proposed such as the warm up and the mind map worksheet activities, the learners were able to recall the previous vocabulary taught in the English lessons to conduct the activity. This is apparent in the teachers journal where it says...

(Excerpt taken from: S3_E4_TO_26/10/18, lines 1-4).

“At the beginning of the lesson the students could recall the vocabulary previously taught since students responded to the opening warming up activity accordingly. It was notable that the memory warm up game was useful to recycle vocabulary needed to develop the mind map because it was the same vocabulary to be used in the story”.

In terms of making connections and using prior knowledge to develop the mind map worksheet activities, it is evident in one of the implementers observation reports where it is stated that...

(Excerpt taken from: O5_JR_S#5_16/11/18, lines 10-12)

“...we noticed that students were able to recall vocabulary from previous lessons by structuring the words in each part of the mind map accordingly”.

(Appendixes #5-7 exhibits a narrative story along with a learner’s artefact)

The vocabulary used in each session was vocabulary that was previously covered with the pupils, this meant that through the implementation of warm up activities such as memory games, hangman, etc. *(Appendix #8 shows a sample of a lesson plan used to implement one of the sessions)* the pupils were able to refresh and connect previously covered vocabulary in order to use that same information in the understanding of the narrative text and the elaboration of the mind map worksheet activities.

6.3 Linguistic outcomes:

A linguistic outcome identified was the learners correct verbal responses in the L2 to questions asked in the L1 about specific details in the story, this occurred in the moment when one implementer was reading the narrative text with the students from the PowerPoint Presentation while another implementer was asking questions about the story. This is stated in the teacher’s journal where it says that ...

(Excerpt taken from: S2_E3_JR_19/10/18, lines 9-11).

“...on one occasion the implementer asked a learner what were the two school supplies that Pedro forgot to take to his Maths class, the pupil answered by saying “glue, scissors”.
(Appendix #5 shows a sample of the narrative text that was implemented to ask the question mentioned above).

Throughout the sessions, in the reading stage, the implementers used code switching by asking questions in the L1 and L2 about specific information in the story and the pupils responded in L1 and L2. During this stage the pupils were very attentive and participative, and when the questions were asked a lot of learners shouted out the answer. When a question was asked, the implementers made sure the answer was on the PowerPoint Presentation in order to support the learners and give them hints on what the answer could be.

During the planning of each session, the vocabulary used to create each narrative text was the same vocabulary previously seen by the learners during the English lessons with one of the implementers in the project. This meant that the vocabulary was recycled and exposed in context. As a consequence, the learners were already familiarized with the words used to elaborate the mind map which helped as support. This is evident where the implementer affirms that...

(Excerpt taken from: S3_E4_TO_26/10/18, lines 11-12).

“...it is important to mention that the use of the graphic organizer helped students to practice and recycle vocabulary already seen in previous lessons”.

The use of mind maps meant that pupils had to identify and categorize vocabulary in the narrative text that was already previously covered under specific titles in the mind map, some students were able to structure the information accordingly (*Appendix #9 demonstrates a sample of an artefact which was the mind map worksheet activity conducted by a student*). When it comes to introducing new words to young learners it is important to expose those words in context so that pupils can recognize when those words can be used. Moreover, through mind maps students were also exposed to new vocabulary.

A negative linguistic outcome was the fact that the majority of the pupils did not read by themselves to extract information from the narrative text so as to elaborate the mind map. The students that managed to fill in some information by themselves in the mind map used the information acquired from the power-point presentation in which one implementer read the narrative text with the pupils, also, those students received a lot of support from the implementers and in some cases from other students. This is evident in the journal where one implementer states that...

(Excerpts taken from: S3_E4_TO_26/10/18, lines 23-26 and O3_AL_S#3_26/10/18, lines 4-7).

“...most pupils were able to elaborate the mind map through a lot of support given by the implementers such as examples on the board and guidance in identifying specific information in the narrative text”.

It is also evident in one of the implementers observation reports where it is written that...

“...we observed that the students did not read the story by themselves in the worksheet, they managed to develop the mind map because of the support given through the visual aids on the board which was a mind map drawn by the implementers”.

It was a challenge to guide the pupils to read the narrative text by themselves and extract information due to the fact that the pupils were second graders which did not even have enough reading abilities in the L1. Those learners that did not read the narrative text in order to construct the mind map asked for help from the implementers, the implementers guided those students by helping them to identify some of the specific information required to structure the mind map.

Another linguistic outcome was the learners written language production. Once the pupils developed the mind map they had to answer reading comprehension questions in the L2. The reading comprehension questions were in the L1 and they were connected to the titles used to fill in the mind map. This meant that the pupils in order to answer the reading comprehension questions they had to use the same information included in the mind map. The students had to read each question and connect that information to the titles in the mind map in order to identify what they had to write. That said, it is evident in the journal entry written by one implementer where it says that...

(Excerpt taken from: S3_E4_TO_26/10/18, lines 22-24).

“...in general, some reading comprehension questions were answered correctly due to the fact that the information was already classified in the mind map and because of the support given by the implementers”.

Once the pupils were instructed to use the mind map constructed to answer the reading comprehension questions most of the learners were able to answer the questions accordingly. The fact that the pupils used the information elaborated in the mind map facilitated the answering of the reading comprehension questions, the majority of the learners were able to read the questions in the L1 and connect it with the information written in the mind map.

7. LIMITATIONS

Before and during the classroom project there were several limitations that influenced and had an impact on the conduction of the project. Firstly, before implementing the sessions, the University went on strike, which meant that the project had to be postponed for several weeks. At first the school was interested and agreed for the project to be conducted in the private institution with 11th graders. However, after the strike had ended, due to the limited amount of time and the extensive curriculum of the school, they ultimately disagreed and the project had to be carried out in another school.

After this negative outcome, the implementers had to find another school willing to accept the classroom project. Due to the fact that one of the implementers was conducting his teaching practicum in a public school, the implementers came to an agreement to execute the project at the same school with the same learners which were 2nd graders. As a result, the fact that the target pupils changed from 11th graders to 2nd graders the whole project had to be abruptly adjusted in regards to the lesson planning, the designing of the materials to be used in the lessons and the teaching methods and strategies, etc.

Due to the fact that it was the last period of the academic year, both in the school and the University, the planned time that was expected to be used to execute the sessions was altered, therefore the implementers had to adjust the conduction of the sessions according to the limited amount of time available. For this reason, the different sessions had to be rapidly but efficiently conducted week after week so as to the intended results and outcomes be achieved.

Consequently, the didactic sequence planned had to be executed faster but significantly in order for the project not to be affected and also to impact the students reading comprehension skills.

Moving on, another limitation was that due to the fact that a few learners did not have sufficient skills such as their reading, writing and speaking abilities in the L1, this meant that during the sessions those pupils had difficulties not only expressing themselves in the L1 but also conducting activities in the L2. For this reason, the implementers had to pay special attention to the learning process of those learners by instructing other pupils who conducted their work faster to help them finish their activities collaboratively. Also, due to this limitation the implementers had to constantly guide those pupils by clarifying doubts by giving them explanations.

8. CONCLUSIONS

As language teachers based on the conduction of this reading comprehension strategy it can be concluded that the implementation of mind maps as a graphic organizer to improve reading comprehension skills in 2nd graders requires; creativity to design authentic materials such as narrative texts having in mind the pupils interests and needs in regards to the learners L2 level in order to motivate and engage the students in the sessions, being an active professor with the intention of monitoring every learner in the lesson in order to apply effective methods and strategies to approach the target pupils so as to solve uncertainties and give clarifications, efficient time management abilities by monitoring the time of each step during the sessions with the purpose of avoiding overlapping different phases and giving enough time to the learners to elaborate the activities, and useful lesson planning in order to; follow a scaffolded didactic sequence bearing in mind the teaching and learning objectives of the project in each session, avoid improvisation of activities and diversion of the objectives, and determine solutions for possible problems.

The implementation of mind maps as a graphic organizer was effective for the learners to become aware of how to classify specific information in the mind map under specific titles. The pupils also became aware that the narrative texts included different elements (such as the characters, places, introduction, body and moral of the story) that contributed to the understanding of the main parts of the text. Each narrative story was created, contextualized and related with a social event which facilitated the pupils understanding of the story.

The project was effective not in terms of developing reading comprehension skills in some students L2 but in fostering linguistic knowledge such as vocabulary and their listening skills for the reason that the sessions were executed mostly in the L2. The vocabulary was fostered because the vocabulary used to structure the mind maps and conduct the activities was vocabulary recycled from previous lessons, this meant that the pupils were exposed to the same vocabulary but in a different context.

The project was not useful for some learners in terms of enhancing their reading comprehension skills in the L2, this is because in the Colombian educational system the reading comprehension skills in the L1 are not one of the main focuses for 2nd graders, therefore, the difficulty level of the mind map activity was too advanced for the English level certain pupils had.

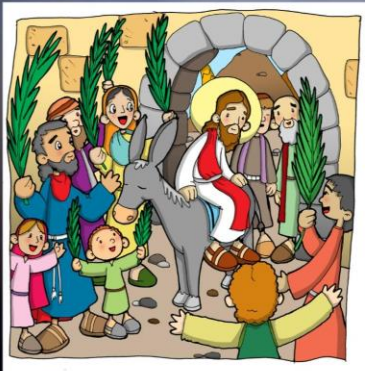
9. APPENDIXES

#1

The holy week Of Pedro and Mateo



The Holy Week of Pedro and Mateo started on palm Sunday, on March 25th of 2018.



Pedro wanted to look after the environment so he decided to take an artificial palm.



ARTIFICIAL PALM



That Monday, Mateo was being lazy and did not want to go to church, however, Pedro managed to convince him.



Pedro and Mateo went to mass together and enjoyed some peaceful time.

Mateo



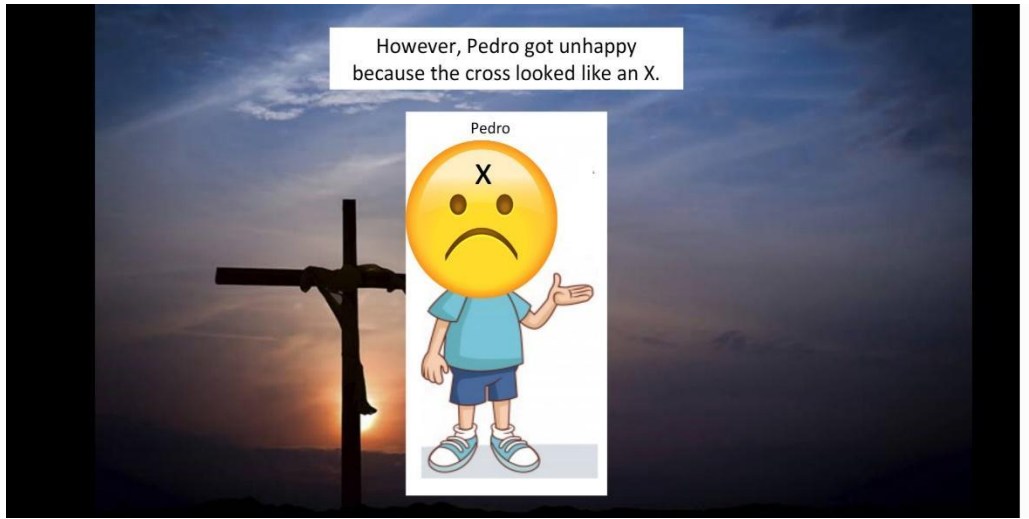
Pedro

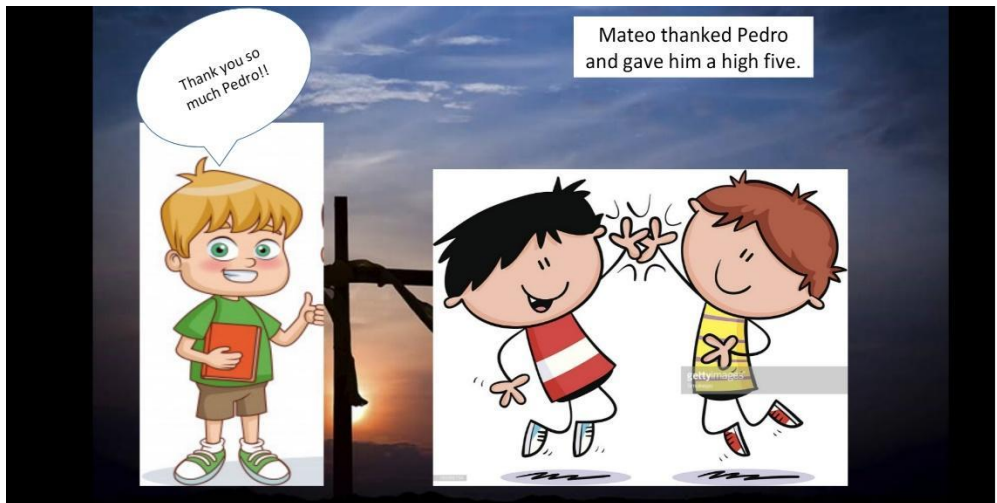
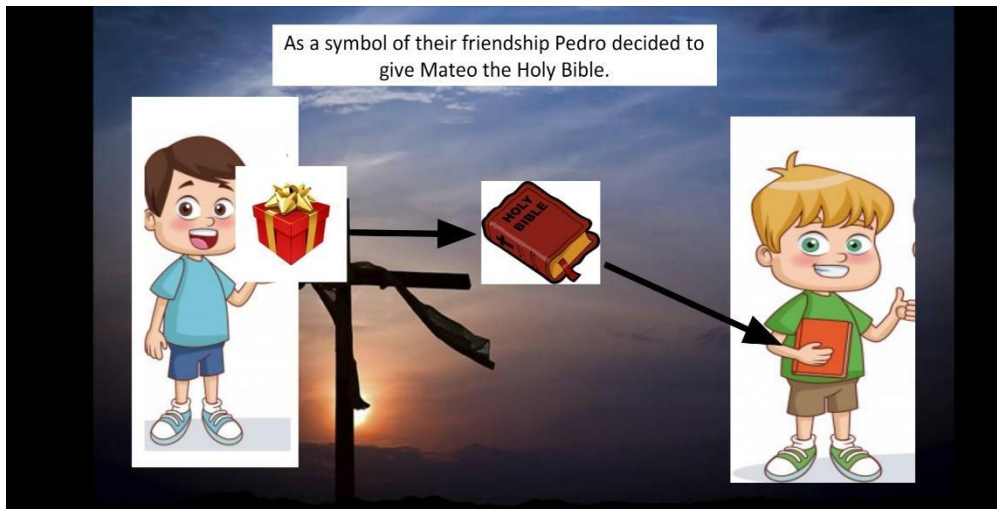


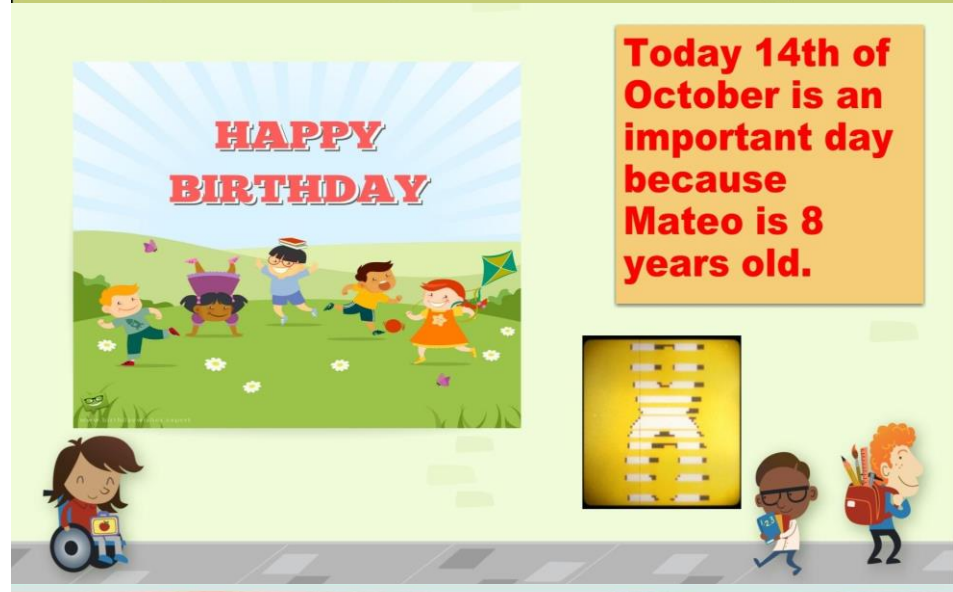
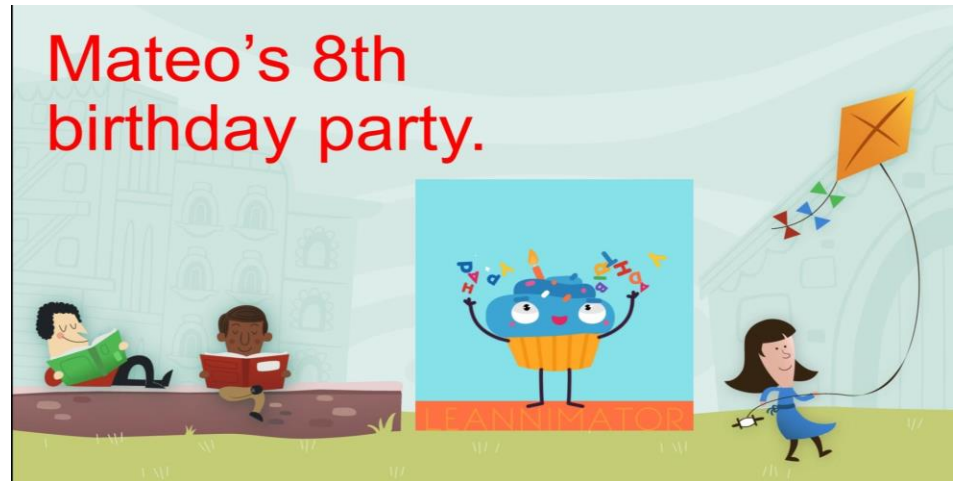
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Tuesday came by, Mateo and Pedro went to the procession together and they both sang church songs.



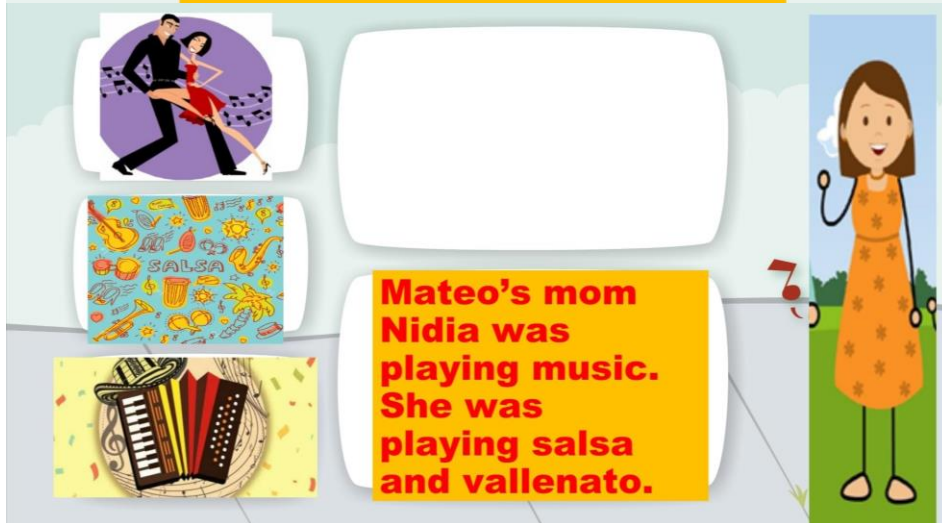








Mateo's Father Julio decorated the house with balloons, candles, gift boxes, birthday hats and the chocolate cake.



Mateo's mom Nidia was playing music. She was playing salsa and vallenato.

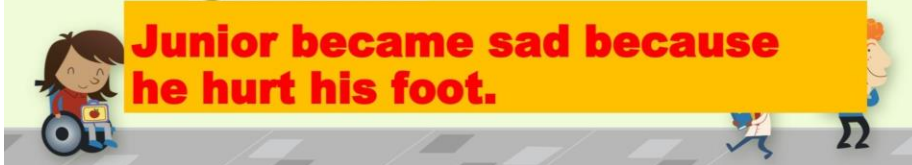
Mateo's friend Junior was dancing salsa and suddenly fell on the floor.



Mateo and his friends helped Junior to stand up on his feet again.



Junior became sad because he hurt his foot.



The gift was a toy called Woody





The Carnival of Barranquilla of three friends

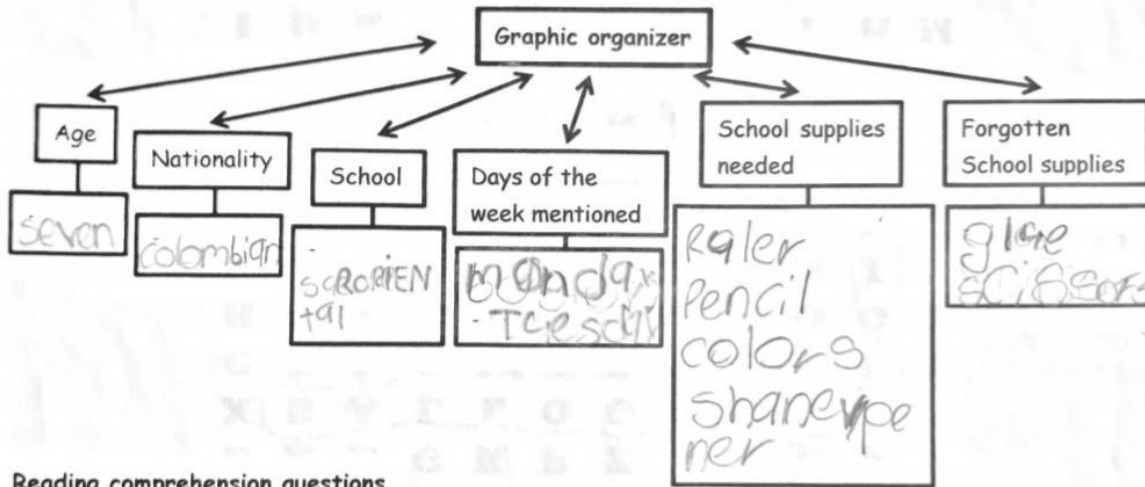
It was Saturday 10th of February 2018 when three best friends Mateo, Junior and Pedro were getting dressed with costumes to go to the carnival of Barranquilla. It was a very hot day and the sun was shining. The three friends arrived at the carnival and there was a big parade full of colourful flowers. There was music and people dancing. Mateo, Junior and Pedro joined in to dance cumbia and salsa. The following day during the night, there was a full moon. Pedro, Junior and Mateo were dressed in costumes and masquerades. They went to the parade that night, when they arrived they noticed other people wearing the same costumes and masquerades similar to them. Suddenly, Pedro got lost. Junior and Mateo got worried and started searching for him. When Junior and Mateo found Pedro he was dancing salsa having a great time. Junior and Mateo got excited having found Pedro and started dancing salsa as well.

Graphic organizer

1. ¿Qué fecha fue el carnaval de Barranquilla?
Saturday 10th of Feb 2018
2. ¿Quiénes eran los amigos?
Mateo, Junior and Pedro
3. ¿De qué era el primer desfile?
flowers
4. ¿Que bailaban los tres amigos?
Cumbia and salsa
5. ¿Que se colocaron el día de luna llena?
costumes and masquerades
6. ¿Qué notaron los amigos al llegar al carnaval?
other people wearing the same costumes and masquerades similar to them.
7. ¿Quién se perdió?
Pedro
8. ¿Qué estaba haciendo la persona que se perdió cuando la encontraron?
dancing salsa

Pedro's routine

Pedro is seven years old and is Colombian. Pedro is in 2nd grade and he goes to the Sur Oriental Sede Boston School. On Mondays Pedro has three lessons: maths, Spanish and English. Pedro needs his pencil case, pencil, book, ruler, eraser, scissors and glue to take to those lessons. But Pedro forgot to take his glue and scissors to his maths class. Luckily, Pedro's friend Pablo borrowed the glue and scissors to him. On Tuesday Pedro has arts. Pedro needed his pencil, colour pencils, eraser and sharpener to make a drawing of a dog. During the art lesson Pedro drew two dogs.



Reading comprehension questions

1. Cuantos años tiene Pedro? *seven*
2. Donde estudia Pedro? *Sur Oriental*
3. De donde es Pedro? *Colombian*
4. Que día Pedro tiene matemáticas, Inglés y Español? *Monday*
5. Que materiales necesita para las clases de matemáticas, Inglés y Español?
case pencil book scissors and glue
6. Que materiales se le olvido a Pedro llevar al colegio?
glue eraser
7. Que día Pedro tiene artes? *Tuesday*
8. Que materiales necesito Pedro para la clase de artes?
glue eraser ruler

Pedro's routine

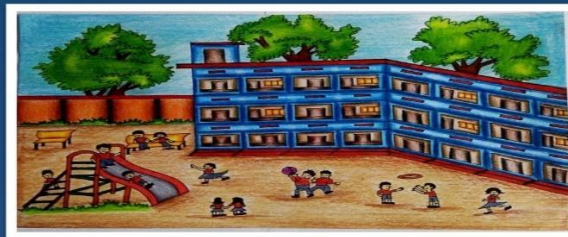


7




Pedro is seven years old and is Colombian.

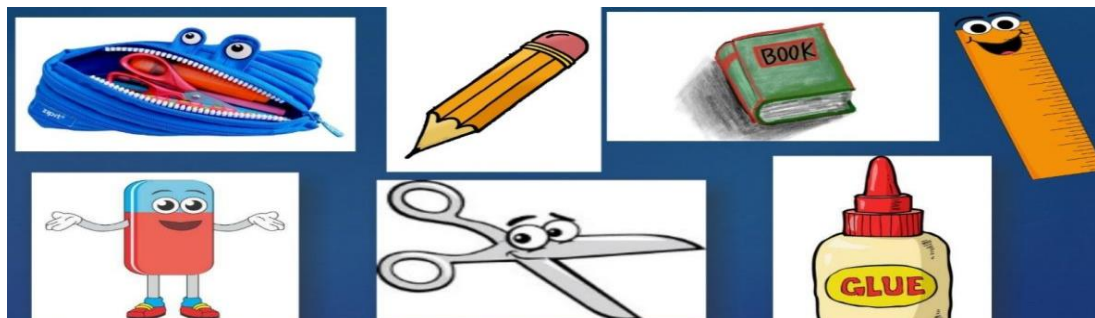
2nd
Grade




Pedro is in 2nd grade and he goes to the Sur Oriental Sede Boston School.



On Mondays Pedro has three lessons: maths, Spanish and English.

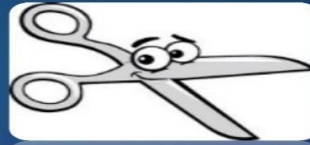


Pedro needs his pencil case, pencil, book, ruler, eraser, scissors and glue to take to school.



But Pedro forgot to take his glue and scissors to his maths class.

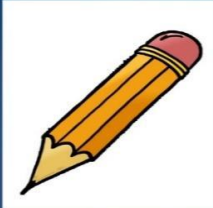
Pedro Pablo



Luckily, Pedro's friend Pablo borrowed the glue and scissors to him.



On Tuesday Pedro has arts.



Pedro needed his pencil, colour pencils, eraser and sharpener to make a drawing of a dog.



Mateo's 8th birthday Party

Today 14th of October is an important day because Mateo is eight today. He invited all of his friends, family members and his dog Fred. Mateo's father Julio decorated the house with balloons, candles, birthday cards, gift boxes, birthday hats and the chocolate cake. Mateo's mom Nidia was playing music. She was playing Salsa and Vallenato. Mateo's friend Junior was dancing salsa and suddenly fell on the floor. Mateo's and his friends helped Junior stand up on his feet again. Junior became sad because he hurt his foot. Mateo decided to give Junior a gift. The gift was a Toy called Woody. This gift made Junior happy again.

Graphic organizer

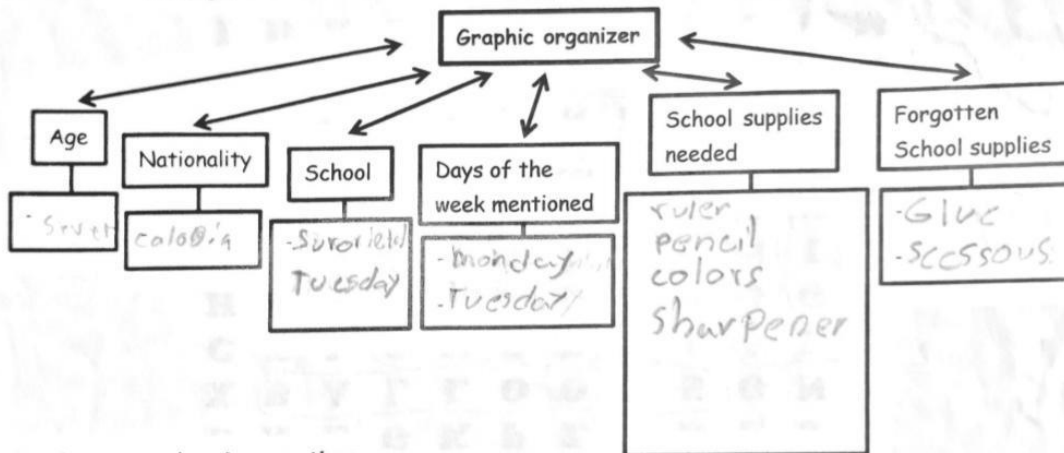
Birth date	Age	Dog's name	Decoration used	Music Played	Who fell?	Who helped	Gift
Happy to birthday October	Eight	dog Fred	balloons candles birthday cards gift boxes birthday hats and the chocolate cake	Salsa and Vallenato	Junior	Mateo's friend dancing salsa	Mateo and his friends

Reading comprehension questions:

- ¿Cuándo es el cumpleaños de Mateo? 14 October
- ¿Cuántos años está cumpliendo Mateo? eight
- ¿Cómo se llama el perro de Mateo? Fred
- ¿Qué materiales usó el padre de Mateo para decorar la casa?
balloons
candles
birthday cards
- ¿Qué música puso la mamá de Mateo? Vallenato y salsa
- ¿Qué música bailaba el amigo de Mateo? salsa
- ¿Quién se cayó en la historia? Junior
- ¿Quién ayudó a levantar al amigo de Mateo? Mateo
- ¿Qué hizo Mateo para que su amigo se sintiera feliz? dio le regalo
- ¿Qué le regaló Mateo a su amigo? Woody

Pedro's routine

Pedro is seven years old and is Colombian. Pedro is in 2nd grade and he goes to the Sur Oriental Sede Boston School. On Mondays Pedro has three lessons: maths, Spanish and English. Pedro needs his pencil case, pencil, book, ruler, eraser, scissors and glue to take to those lessons. But Pedro forgot to take his glue and scissors to his maths class. Luckily, Pedro's friend Pablo borrowed the glue and scissors to him. On Tuesday Pedro has arts. Pedro needed his pencil, colour pencils, eraser and sharpener to make a drawing of a dog. During the art lesson Pedro drew two dogs.



Reading comprehension questions

1. Cuantos años tiene Pedro? *seven*
2. Dónde estudia Pedro? *suroriental*
3. De dónde es Pedro? *colombian*
4. ¿Qué día Pedro tiene matemáticas, Inglés y Español? *mondays*
5. ¿Qué materiales necesita para las clases de matemáticas, Inglés y Español? *pencil case, pencil, Book ruler, eraser scissors and glue pencil colour pencils eraser and sharpener*
6. ¿Qué materiales se le olvidó a Pedro llevar al colegio? *Glue Scissors*
7. ¿Qué día Pedro tiene artes? *Tuesday*
8. ¿Qué materiales necesito Pedro para la clase de artes?



UNIVERSIDAD TECNOLÓGICA DE PEREIRA
Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés
Primary Teaching Practicum
Lesson plan format – competences



INSTITUTION: Colegio Suroriental	Branch: Sede Boston
NAME OF THE PRACTITIONERS: Andres Londono, Telman Ocampo, Juan Ramirez	
GRADE & GROUP: 2nd, 2A	ROOM: Aula 5
TIME TABLE: 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM	LEVEL OF LEARNERS (CEF): A1
NUMBER OF LEARNERS: 30	AVERAGE AGE OF LEARNERS: 6 to 9

LESSON PLAN

Date of the class: 16/11/18	Class Number: 17 Classroom project class number: 5
<p>Estándares Básicos de Competencias (MEN): Entiendo la idea general de un texto narrativo contada por mi profesor cuando se apoya en imágenes, movimientos, gestos y cambios de voz.</p> <p>dar General: Comprendo historias cortas narradas en un lenguaje sencillo.</p> <p>dares Específicos:</p> <p>Escucha: Sigo la secuencia de un texto narrativo apoyado en imágenes.</p> <p>Lectura: Utilizo organizadores gráficos para organizar la información de textos narrativos cortos leídos en clase.</p> <p>Escritura: Utilizo organizadores gráficos para estructurar información usando palabras sencillas.</p> <p>Monologo: Identifico y organizo verbalmente la información en organizadores gráficos.</p> <p>Conversación: Participo activamente en juegos de palabras.</p> <p>dores de logro: Estructuro información de un texto narrativo en un organizador gráfico para comprenderlo y responder correctamente las preguntas de comprensión de lectura.</p>	
<p>GENERAL AIM: Describir en lenguaje sencillo en inglés algunas diferencias culturales (tradiciones y festividades) entre diversas comunidades y mostrar respeto por las mismas.</p>	

<p>Assumed Knowledge: Barranquilla's carnival vocabulary such as: sun, moon, parade, costumes, masquerade, dancing, music and flowers. Months of the year and numbers from 1 to 31.</p>			
<p>Materials: markers, flashcards, TV, worksheet, laptop, board and a power point presentation.</p>			
<p>What is the connection between standards and DBAs? Since module 4 requires cultural knowledge these standards help learners comprehend a narrative text by recognizing vocabulary related to the carnival of Barranquilla. How today class is connected to DBAs? Today's lesson will enhance cultural knowledge of vocabulary related to the carnival of Barranquilla.</p>			
<p>AIM: At the end of the lesson the learners will be able to: Structure and organize information from a narrative text in a graphic organizer to understand the text and answer reading comprehension questions.</p>			
DAY/STAGE/ ACTIVITY/TIME	PROCEDURE TEACHER AND LEARNER ACTIVITY	ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS AND PLANNED SOLUTIONS	COMMENTS

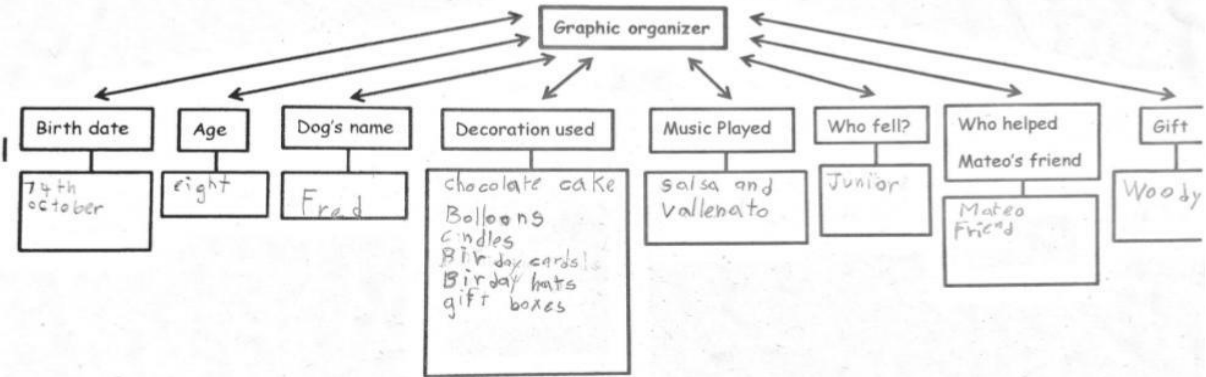
<p>Warm up</p>	<p>Memory game (Revising Vocabulary): The Ts' will place 16 flashcards on the board which will contain the vocabulary about the carnival of Barranquilla studied in a previous lesson such as sun, moon, parade, costumes, masquerade, dancing, music and flowers. Each word will be printed twice into flashcards in order for the ss to associate the words. On one side of the flashcards it will contain an image and the word itself, and on the other side it will contain a number. The ss will be split into three teams. The ss from each team have to work as a team in order to associate the words on the board. The flashcards will be placed on the board with the numbers facing the ss, therefore the ss will have to remember the word and their number in order to associate it with the same word. For example, the ss will have to associate the flashcard of the sun which is on number 5 with the other flashcard containing the image and word of the sun which is on number 12. Every time a team manages to associate the word they will gain a point and these points will be written on the board. The game will end when all of the flashcards have been associated with each other.</p>	<p>Ss will be instructed to raise their hands in order to speak and avoid shouting out the answer.</p>	
<p>Activity 1</p>	<p>Narrative text (The carnival of three friends): The narrative text will be read by Andres Londoño using the correct voice projection and intonation. The narrative text will be read from a power point presentation using the text itself and background images. While the T is reading Telman Ocampo and Juan Ramirez will use movement, gestures and images to act out the narrative text. Telman will also use the white board to write some information and stick images in relation to the narrative text to contextualize the ss.</p>	<p>To keep the ss engaged in the reading learners at random will be asked questions about the text.</p>	

<p>Activity 2</p>	<p>Graphic organizer worksheet: Before handing out the worksheets instructions will be given, and in order to make sure ss understood a random student will be asked to repeat the instructions. During the instructions the T will write examples on the board regarding the worksheet and ask if there are any doubts. The worksheet will contain the narrative text with some words highlighted, the graphic organizer to structure the information and eight reading comprehension questions in Spanish. The ss need to structure the graphic organizer with only the information asked and using the same information they need to answer the reading comprehension questions in English or Spanish. The Ts' will elaborate some parts of the graphic organizer with the ss and some parts will be done on their own.</p>	<p>To support the ss conduct the graphic organizer some examples will be given on the board. Also, the learners will have sufficient time to finish the worksheet.</p>	
<p>Activity 3</p>	<p>Wrapping up: To conclude the lesson, ss chosen at random will be asked to answer verbally one reading comprehension question from the worksheet, this activity will be done until all eight questions have been answered.</p>	<p>In case they forget the answer in English ss can answer in Spanish.</p>	

Mateo's 8th birthday Party



Today **14th of October** is an important day because Mateo is **eight** today. He invited all of his friends, family members and his **dog Fred**. Mateo's father Julio decorated the house with **balloons, candles, birthday cards, gift boxes, birthday hats and the chocolate cake**. Mateo's mom Nidia was playing music. She was playing **Salsa and Vallenato**. Mateo's friend **Junior** was **dancing salsa** and suddenly fell on the floor. **Mateo's and his friends** helped Junior stand up on his feet again. Junior became sad because he hurt his foot. Mateo decided to give Junior a **gift**. The **gift** was a Toy called **Woody**. This gift made Junior happy again.



Reading comprehension questions:

- ¿Cuándo es el cumpleaños de Mateo? 14th October
- ¿Cuántos años está cumpliendo Mateo? eight
- ¿Cómo se llama el perro de Mateo? Dog Fred
- ¿Qué materiales usó el padre de Mateo para decorar la casa? chocolate cake, balloons, candles, Birthday hats, Birthday cards, and gift boxes
- ¿Qué música usó la mamá de Mateo? salsa and Vallenato
- ¿Quién se cayó en la historia? Junior
- ¿Quién ayudó a levantar al amigo de Mateo? Friend
- ¿Qué hizo Mateo para que su amigo se sintiera feliz? le dio un regalo
- ¿Qué le regaló Mateo a su amigo? Woody

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