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Topic:

AUDIO-ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE READING FLUENCY IN TEENAGERS

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APPROVAL SHEET

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RESUMEN

El objetivo de este trabajo de titulación es demostrar el impacto positivo de usar la técnica de lectura audio-asistida para mejorar la fluidez lectora en adolescentes. La fluidez lectora es una habilidad importante durante la adquisición del idioma inglés debido a que se relaciona con la habilidad de leer a una velocidad y expresión adecuadas mientras se comprende el significado del texto, en lugar de únicamente descifrar palabras. Desarrollar la habilidad de comprender lo que se lee es una de las destrezas más difíciles de adquirir. Al mejorar la fluidez lectora se puede aumentar la comprensión, así como las habilidades de comunicación oral y de escucha. Para medir la efectividad de esta técnica, un diseño cuasiexperimental fue aplicado con una prueba antes y después de la intervención, midiendo el tiempo que los participantes tomaron para leer un texto. Durante los períodos de clase de inglés, el grupo experimental recibió la intervención con sesiones de lectura audio-asistida. Los resultados mostraron una disminución significativa del tiempo de lectura del grupo experimental después de la intervención comparado a el tiempo del grupo control, indicando que la técnica de lectura audio-asistida puede promover la fluidez lectora en adolescentes. Este trabajo resalta la importancia de continuar la investigación en el campo de la fluidez lectora en el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma.

Palabras claves: adolescentes, fluidez lectora, lectura audio-asistida, técnicas.

ABSTRACT

This research project aims to demonstrate the positive impact of using the audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers. Reading fluency is a crucial skill in English language acquisition, as it involves accurately reading at an appropriate speed with expression while understanding the meaning of the text rather than simply decoding words. Developing the ability to comprehend what is reading is one of the most challenging skills to acquire. Improving fluency in reading can enhance reading comprehension and potentially improve listening and oral communication abilities. To measure the effectiveness of this technique: a quasi-experimental design was used, with a pretest and posttest to track the time students took to read a passage. During English classes, the experimental group received interventions of reading while listening to sessions. The results showed a significant decrease in reading rates for the experimental group compared to the control group, indicating that the audio-assisted reading technique can enhance reading fluency in teenagers. This research highlights the importance of continuing to investigate the field of reading fluency in second-language learning.

Keywords: audio-assisted reading, reading fluency, techniques, teenagers.

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INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, billions of people speak English either as their first or second language. It is used as a means of communication in various fields such as business, education, science, and technology. Furthermore, over recent years, learning English has been seen as a means for personal as well as economic development. Its widespread use has allowed people from different parts of the world to communicate effectively with each other. As a result, proficiency in the English language has become increasingly important in today's globalized world, opening up opportunities for personal and professional growth.

This reality is common in Latin American countries where governments have implemented policies aimed at building English proficiency among the population. As the world becomes more interconnected, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become a valuable skill for individuals and businesses alike. Many Latin American countries have recognized the importance of English and have made efforts to incorporate it into their education systems. Additionally, the rise of online communication and remote work has made English proficiency even more important, opening doors to new fields. As a result, English language learning has become a priority, and the demand for English language education continues to grow.

Like most Latin American countries, Ecuador has made huge efforts to improve the English language levels of its population. As the country becomes more connected to the global community, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become a crucial skill necessary to its development. Currently, English is taught as a second language in schools and universities (Rasinski & Padak, 2013). The Ministry of Education has implemented policies to improve English language education, such as providing training to English teachers and promoting the use of technology in language learning.

Despite these efforts, there are still challenges to improve English language education in Ecuador. It is a known fact that Ecuador is ranked as one of the worst countries concerning English proficiency, and reading fluency might be one of the factors that influence this low proficiency. Reading fluency refers to the ability to read quickly, accurately, and with expression. It is important because it allows learners to comprehend texts more easily, which in turn helps them to develop their vocabulary, grammar, and overall language proficiency showing that reading fluency is an essential component of second language learning. When learners can read fluently, they are able to focus on understanding the meaning of the text rather than struggling with individual words or phrases (Rasinski & Padak, 2013).

Fluency also helps learners to increase their vocabulary. When learners read quickly and accurately, they are exposed to a wider range of words and phrases. This exposure helps them to build their vocabulary and understand how words are used in context. In addition, reading fluency can improve learners' grammar because they are able to recognize and understand the grammatical structures of the language, helping them to use the language more effectively; even more, learners' confidence grows (Abdullah, 2021).

Currently, reading fluency can be improved by applying some techniques such as reading in pairs, reading aloud, reading while listening, etc. However, developing reading fluency can be challenging because it requires practice and exposure to different texts throughout the learning process. The mentioned factors have led to the following research problem: How can reading fluency be improved in teenagers?

Hypothesis

The audio-assisted reading technique improves reading fluency in teenagers.

Objectives

General objective

To evaluate the effects of the audio-assisted reading technique on teenagers' reading fluency.

Specific objectives

1. To describe the audio-assisted reading technique utilized for improving reading fluency.
2. To diagnose reading fluency in teenagers.
3. To develop suggestions to apply the audio-assisted reading technique in EFL classrooms for increasing reading fluency.
4. To socialize the outcomes after the data analysis within the educational community.

The main objective of this research was to evaluate the effects of applying the audio-assisted reading technique on the reading fluency of teenagers. The research design had to do with different aspects related to primary and secondary research. The research type was quasi-experimental, while the depth level was descriptive as well as explanatory. The research approach was quantitative as well as qualitative, and the modality was socio-educational.

The participants of this study were basic level high school learners from ninth grade who took a pretest that consisted of measuring the time each student took to read a short passage. Additionally, the number of mispronounced words were counted for each student both before and after reading the text. Students answered two questions to measure their general understanding of the passage. After taking the pretest, the experimental group worked with the audio-assisted intervention for 5 weeks in sessions of 10 – 15 minutes each, while the control group did not change their normal English training. After finishing the intervention period, both groups took a posttest that

consisted of measuring the time they took to read a passage, the number of mispronounced words, and two questions about the text.

Once the research was completed, data was analyzed using the statistical program JAMOVI, applying the Wilcoxson test to verify the hypothesis as well as a correlational analysis to find out if there was a relationship between the time students took to read the given text, and the number of errors they made. In addition, to check if the answers of the questions about the passage were related among each other, an extra analysis was utilized.

Like many schools in Ecuador, Unidad Educativa “Pedro Carbo” needs to improve students' reading fluency because they face reading difficulties that cause deficiencies in their communication and their overall English proficiency. Research on reading fluency can provide more information to help in the development of efficient instruments that can be applied in daily English instruction.

Working on techniques that can assist learners to improve fluency when reading is of major importance since it means students will be able to develop their skills in many other aspects related to second language acquisition. As mentioned by Grabe (2009), developing reading fluency can lead to comprehension and the development of other productive skills such as writing and speaking. Reading fluency might improve the overall language proficiency, and what is more, it helps learners to understand a text without much effort.

In our globalized world, it is mandatory to develop reading skills to be successful when reading information in a second language. Reading allows students to increase their vocabulary and might help them to apply different structures in different contexts because it helps them to have meaningful learning. Furthermore, reading allows students to become independent learners since they can create connections between what they read and what they already know. Developing different strategies that could

help students in Ecuador, where the levels of English proficiency are alarmingly deficient, is of major importance.

Additionally, reading improves memory and communication skills. It is crucial for academic success and in daily life. Having developed reading fluency assures that learners will have success when developing other skills in the second language including their focus, improve mental health, and imagination.

CHAPTER I. STATE OF ART AND PRACTICE

1.1. Reading in Second Language Acquisition

Reading is an important skill to be developed when learning a new language. Reading exposes the learners to new vocabulary and different grammar structures they can recall later in their instruction. Furthermore, L2 students can develop other skills such as fluency when speaking, writing, and listening. The cognitive, psycholinguistic, and sociocultural perspectives have been described in an attempt to understand the reading process in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (Abdullah, 2021).

Reading is a complex process that involves receiving and interpreting a written text to extract meaning and combine it to understand it. The process of reading combines L1 and L2 reading abilities to create a dual system to process information. However, there are some differences between L1 and L2 reading processes including linguistic, educational, and sociocultural differences. These differences are very notorious for poor or weak readers who are starting with the reading process in a second language.

L1 readers have higher comprehension levels because they have access to more linguistic resources than L2 learners. Usually, native speakers of a language have heard many oral expressions before starting to read, which assists them to understand a text. Their implicit knowledge supports L1 speakers when they start formal reading instruction. On the other hand, L2 readers need years to accumulate the same implicit knowledge. Because of this, L2 learners need to develop linguistic processes at the same time they are working on their reading formal instruction. The way L2 learners understand a text may be different compared with L1 learners (Grabe, 2009).

Reading is related to vocabulary acquisition and grammar development as well as acquiring reading strategies. It is crucial for second language learners because it is an important source of input. In the first stages of learning, reading is the ability to make sense of a written text at the same time as making sentences sound like storytelling

when reading aloud. Then, learners move towards whisper reading, lip reading, and silent reading (being able to read “in their heads”). At intermediate levels, learners are able to connect different ideas to learn new things by context (Brand & Brand, 2006).

Overall, reading allows people to connect with the world by comprehending different types of information. Furthermore, literacy is one of the main objectives that governments aid since it helps individuals to grow. Even though knowing how to read does not assure success, it is indeed difficult to be successful without being able to read. People read every day in informal contexts such as newsletters, announcements, advertisements, etc, as well as in formal contexts during their academic lives (Grabe, 2009).

Essential components of reading instruction

There are 5 essential components of reading instruction recognized by The United States National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and reading fluency.

- **Phonemic awareness**

Phonemic awareness relates to the ability to recognize that every sound produces a word because phonemes (the smallest units of sounds) join together to create syllables and words in spoken language. Because some sounds are not present in the native language of L2 learners, it may be difficult for them to recognize and produce some sounds in English. One recommended technique to teach phonemic awareness is to provide, in a meaningful way, different phonemes that can and cannot be present in the native language (Antunez, 2012).

- **Phonics**

Phonics means understanding the connection between phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters and spelling) so that learners can recognize or decode words. In some cases, L2 learners may have learned how to write with letters that correspond to different sounds. In other languages such as in Spanish, it may be a conflict when writing and speaking because, in the native language, every single written letter is pronounced. In these cases, it is necessary to focus more instruction on the unknown letter-sound relationship (Antunez, 2012).

- **Vocabulary development**

Vocabulary development refers to the word's meaning stored in the memory. This reading component complements phonemic awareness and phonics because it leads to comprehension. Learners can understand a text only if they discern the words and context where those terms are being used. In L2 instruction, vocabulary can be taught directly or indirectly, but always in a meaningful context (Antunez, 2012; Zhang & Zhang, 2022).

- **Reading comprehension**

Reading comprehension is a complex operation that involves other processes happening in the brain at the same time to create a mental image of what has been read (León & Escudero, 2017). Reading comprehension is related to the development of listening, speaking, and writing. Developing comprehension in L2 learners means exposing them to meaningful texts in which they can have access to different structures. It is not useful to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, or vocabulary in isolation, learners need to be exposed to different contexts that help them to develop high-order thinking skills (Antunez, 2012).

Extensive reading is widely used to improve comprehension in the classroom and outside of them (Nakanishi, 2015). Extensive reading is the process of reading as much material as possible not only to acquire a language, but for pleasure or research. When working with extensive reading, learners can select the material they want to read according to their likes, needs, and understanding. Extensive reading can help learners to improve their comprehension, speed, vocabulary, and attitude toward reading (Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009).

Extensive reading is more independent, in other words, students have control over the procedure of reading and teachers only set the main points or instructions, including how to start, introduction, motivation and support, monitoring, and evaluation (Bamford & Day, 2005). Additionally, extensive reading can increase vocabulary gains since learners are exposed to vocabulary in context as well as grammar structures (Nakanishi, 2015).

1.2. Reading fluency

Reading fluency is one of the five essential components of reading instruction. According to Rasinski and Padak (2013a), "reading fluency is the ability to read with expression, intonation and a natural flow that sounds like talking" (p. 4). Learners can obtain meaning from the text because they recognize punctuation and don't need to decode words. If the reading rate is at the expected level for their age, learners have the ability to automatically comprehend signal words and acknowledge sounds.

Reading fluency is an essential component of effective reading instruction. It is not only "reading speed" or oral reading. It is related to silent reading as well as comprehension. Developing reading fluency could make a difference in learners' literacy lives because it has been described as a connector between word recognition and text comprehension (T. Rasinski & Padak, 2013a). Although, it is not clear if reading fluency depends on reading quality or if it is an independent feature that affects reading skills.

Fluency is the process that involves the interaction of cognitive processes such as accuracy and automaticity, single-word reading, semantic and syntactic recognition, and effective interpretation of the general meaning of a text. Some abilities that define reading fluency are word recognition, text-reading ease, vocabulary, comprehension, and reading with expression, as well as three subprocesses that are automaticity, accuracy, and rate (Grabe, 2009).

According to Breznitz (2005), there are three different positions to define reading fluency. The first position states that reading fluency is a result of oral reading. In other words, reading fluency is achieved only when other skills such as word and text decoding are developed. There are used accuracy, prosody, and oral reading rates to measure it (Breznitz, 2005; Gersten et al., 2001).

The second point of view describes reading fluency according to its linguistic components: word, syntactic, and meaning level (Meyer & Felton, 1999). The word level is related to word decoding (recognizing letters and phonological awareness), reading fluency may be affected because there are difficulties in recognizing and pronouncing some words. Word decoding is also related to reading speed because it takes more time to recognize a word, hence more time is needed to read. The syntactic level refers to recognizing patterns of prosody and rhythm in a text that is written (Schreiber, 1980). Finally, the meaning level is related to comprehension which has a close relationship with the previous linguistic components. Insufficient word decoding and syntactic skills lead to a lack of comprehension because there is no possibility to retain the text in the working memory (Breznitz, 2005).

The third standpoint refers to the system analysis approach. According to this approach, reading fluency is presented as a result of biological and cognitive systems (Breznitz, 2005). Additionally, Segalowitz (2010), describes fluency in L2 learners with two different processes: performance and cognitive fluency. Performance fluency is related to speed, fluidity, and accuracy while cognitive fluency is related to cognitive processes that are associated with the process of reading. He states that word

recognition can be built by working with many repetitions, preferably at the beginning of the instruction.

Elements of reading fluency

According to Breznitz (2005), automaticity, prosody, reading rate (speed and time while reading), and rapid automatized naming (RAN); which is used to measure the quality of the reading; are elements of reading fluency. On the other hand, Rasinski and Padak (2013a), mention that reading fluency consists of two elements: automaticity in the word decoding; which means recognizing words without effort; and prosody, which is described as a link to comprehension.

- Automaticity

When reading, it is important to decode words automatically to avoid wasting cognitive energy in recognizing words (Breznitz, 2005). When a learner spends much time recognizing terms as well as thinking about their meaning, they face comprehension difficulties. Those issues can be recognized when a student reads slowly, making a lot of pauses, and without comprehending the text. Like every skill, learners can develop reading fluency with lots of practice (T. Rasinski & Padak, 2013a).

Automaticity refers to the ability to read accurately and with speed. As stated by Logan (1997), there are four characteristics that describe automaticity: speed, effortlessness, autonomy, and lack of conscious awareness. Speed is related to reaction time; less reaction time means more speed and speed leads to automaticity in reading. Reading and understanding are automatic when a learner reads and recognizes high-frequency words (Breznitz, 2005; Logan, 1997).

Effortlessness is explained by applying the criterion that an activity is easy and a second activity can be performed while doing the first because one of those activities is automatic (Logan, 1997). Reading is also autonomous, which means a reader can

start and finish reading effortlessly. On the other hand, when reading is not automatic, a reader needs to start the process deliberately. Finally, consciousness is related to awareness. When a person reads, they are not aware of the processes it takes to decode words, the process is automatic (Logan, 1997).

- Prosody

Prosody is the rhythm of the oral expression of a language or its "chronometrics" such as "intonation, sound, and silence during oral flow and speech fluency" (Breznitz, 2005, p. 50). Prosody is connected to fluency and comprehension since it supports the intent of a text (T. Rasinski & Padak, 2013a). There is evidence that points out that oral language influences the development of reading (Breznitz, 2005).

According to Rasinski and Padak (2013b), people who read with no expression exhibit low comprehension skills while reading silently. Accurate prosody when reading leads to comprehension of a text, especially when relating to punctuation (Breznitz, 2005). There are six components that intervene in reading with prosody: inappropriate pauses, length of sentences, incorrect and correct sentences, words at the end of the phrases, oral reading of punctuation marks, and stress or accent (Dowhower, 1991).

- Reading Rate

Reading rate is a crucial factor when referring to reading fluency and comprehension. It is related to the ability to recognize letters and sounds in a written text, including words and pseudowords. Developing this ability lets students have suitable reading rates (Breznitz, 2005).

Measuring words that are read per minute is a method to measure the reading rate. This method consists of measuring the number of correct words read in one minute. Struggling with reading rates can negatively affect comprehension and motivation to read (Nathan & Stanovich, 1991). According to Breznitz (2005), practice and exposure

help to increase reading rates, and vocabulary could also increase by reading, however reading single words faster does not necessarily mean high comprehension rates (Tan & Nicholson, 1997). It is necessary to make a connection between whole ideas and comprehension by developing the ability to recognize words that are important to give meaning to comprehend the text and separate the words that do not.

As stated by Beglar, Hunt, and Kite (2012), reading fluency is one of the cognitive processes involved in effective reading. Since reading speed is one element of reading fluency, it means that reading speed is also related to the mental processes necessary to comprehend a text (Breznitz, 2005). According to Grabe (2009), in L2 contexts sometimes it is common for learners to read with comprehension but not at an adequate fluency rate. L2 readers usually read at a 1/3 or 1/2 of the rate of L1 speakers.

According to Beglar, Hunt, and Kite (2012) and Nakanishi (2015), to improve reading rates it is better to apply simplified texts because they contain high-frequency words that are repeated in the text. In summary, reading texts should be selected according to the level of the students, their vocabulary, and the words they can read per minute.

- Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN)

Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN) or Naming Speed is the ability to quickly pronounce the names of a set of items that are familiar to the person. This skill is related to reading because in both processes it is important that the eye movement recognizes the presented stimuli and the mental representation of them. Naming Speed can intervene in the total reading speed; hence it is related to reading comprehension. More comprehension skills mean less time to read. Rapid Automatized Naming can be used to recognize readers who might have difficulties in reading (Kirby et al., 2010).

Reading fluency and comprehension

Two theories explain the relationship between reading fluency and comprehension. One of them focuses on automaticity, and the other on prosody. The automaticity theory states that less time used in decoding words allows more time to understand the meaning. On the other hand, the prosody theory affirms that to read, the brain assigns roles to each word in a sentence which leads to comprehension. However, more research is necessary to verify the role of both components in comprehension (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003).

In addition, cognition and affection theories have been used to explain the link between reading fluency and comprehension. Overall, these theories state that low-fluent readers make great efforts to read texts, showing as a result reduced motivation to read because they need more time to decode words and more conscious attention to finish reading a text. Students with good reading fluency and motivation are more likely to engage in learning activities outside the classroom, hence achieving automaticity and word recognition when reading is the main step to increasing reading comprehension (Nathan & Stanovich, 1991).

The linguistic processes when developing reading fluency include three levels: word, syntactic, and semantic (Beglar et al., 2012). Poor readers face difficulties at the mentioned three levels: at the word level they cannot recognize words rapidly. Word recognition is one of the most important aspects when comprehending a text since comprehension is not possible without fast and adequate vocabulary recognition. At the syntactic level, poor readers have difficulties in getting the meaning of the words and understanding the prosody of written texts. Finally, at the semantic level, poor readers are unable to rapidly access the meaning of words.

When readers can work automatically at these three levels, they are free to focus on advanced reading processes such as making inferences, synthesizing information, and getting the main ideas from the text (Beglar et al., 2012).

Approaches to developing reading fluency

Reading fluency must be part of any reading instruction since it is a way of teaching a language. Moreover, reading fluency helps to improve word recognition, reading speed, and comprehension. Fluency training usually entails assisted reading, repetitions, and reading aloud as well as reading silently. Reading fluency instruction can be supported by reading rate instruction, assisted reading, repeated reading, timed reading, paced reading, text rereading, and word recognition exercises (Beglar et al., 2012; Breznitz, 2005).

Extensive reading may also help to improve reading fluency although it has been mostly studied to examine vocabulary and comprehension gains (Beglar et al., 2012; Breznitz, 2005). Specific practices recommended for L1 learners include assisted reading and repeated reading. There are no specific recommendations for fluency instruction in L2 learners, although applying the same recommended practices in L1 is feasible for L2 learners (Grabe, 2009).

Other approaches employed are oral recitation lessons and fluency-oriented reading instruction, however, two approaches highly used to increase reading fluency include "repeated reading and assisted reading" (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003, p. 1). Repeated reading involves the constant guidance of a teacher while silent reading is independent and encourages students to read outside the classroom. Assisted reading refers to reading aloud while a fluent reader models the reading to the learners (T. Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003). Referring to second language learners, Hiebert et al. (1998), recommends building L2 learners' reading fluency by applying repeated reading. Here are described other methods applied to increase reading fluency.

- Oral recitation lesson

An oral recitation lesson (ORL) is similar to repeated reading. After modeling the reading, the teacher starts a discussion about the text with the students focusing on

comprehension, then they consider the prosodic components found in the passage. The next step is to practice the text in groups as well as individually. Finally, students have to perform the reading in front of an audience to develop oral reading fluency. For that reason, poetry, rhymes, fairy tales, plays, or any written material with dialogues can be used to apply ORL (Richards, 2000).

- Fluency-oriented reading instruction

These are lessons designed to help students improve reading fluency. The first day of the lesson starts with the teacher introducing a story and reading aloud while the learners follow simultaneously. The next step is to discuss the story using different resources such as diagrams, story maps, questions/answers, etc. Then, the students engage in paired reading where one student reads a part of the text while the other monitors and assists when required. In the next class, students write journals about the reading in pairs, or work as a class. That way, learners can improve fluency as well as comprehension. An important part of the lesson design is to read at home by reading aloud to another person or read to themselves (only advanced readers) (Stahl & Heubach, 2005).

- Repeated Reading

Repeated Reading (RR) is a method in which a learner reads a text many times until they can read it without hesitation or effort at a determined speed. The process repeats with a new passage once the learner reaches a satisfactory fluency level (Samuels, 1979). This method works with few instructions given by the teacher. RR helps students to learn specific patterns and avoid unnecessary pauses when reading because they practice groups of words until they pronounce them appropriately. Another benefit given by RR is increasing the reading speed, intonation, and correctness (Dowhower, 1991).

In addition, Rasinski and Hoffman (2003), describe six different techniques for applying repeated reading: repeated reading with a partner, radio reading, character's

performance, mumble reading, cooperative repeated reading, and reading a text while listening to an audio. The general recommendation for all these techniques is to work with them daily for at least 15 minutes per day, combining different methods. The texts should be short, between 50 to 500 words, and they must be chosen according to the student's level (Grabe, 2009).

When working with repeated reading with a partner, learners must read a text with a teacher or partner until meeting a specific requirement, while in ratio reading students receive the text and the sections for each of them a day before, then learners practice and present the text to the class. With cooperative repeated reading, learners work in pairs; one student reads a text several times while the other student helps them to complete the reading. After practicing for about three or four times the students need to switch roles. Each practice goes according to the criteria set at the beginning of the sessions (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003; Grabe, 2009).

RR is associated with Deep Reading, in which a student reads a text until they develop automaticity and prosody. The foremost benefit of deep reading is that the knowledge students get through repeated reading is partially transferred to the next reading (T. Rasinski & Padak, 2013a, p. 4). Additionally, when learners start a new passage, they are reading at a higher fluency level. This allows students to keep advancing in the complexity level of the texts they read (T. Rasinski et al., 2009).

Repeated Reading might be a good tool for readers who are independent enough to monitor their progress. However, for novice readers, it is mandatory to have the support of a guide to monitor their improvement and give suggestions for their performance. Students need to have formative feedback that encourages them to overcome their errors and improve their fluency and comprehension (T. Rasinski et al., 2009).

A recommendation for applying the Repeated Reading method is to use short texts (50-300 words), starting at an appropriate level. It is important to check the progress of the reading until the students obtain at least 85-100 words per minute before moving to

more challenging texts. It is necessary to set a number of rereadings for each text, and according to Dowhower, (1991, p. 171), students start improving their reading “between the third and fifth rereading”.

Variations of Repeated Reading

Fluency Development Lesson (FDL)

This method was developed by Rasinski, Padak, Linek, and Sturtevant in 1994. They suggest reading short texts daily for about 10 to 15 minutes. The instructor has to read with the students 3 to 5 times. The process is as follows: students read a previous text to a partner or to the teacher before starting the lesson; then a new short text is introduced by the teacher who reads it while the learners follow; after that, the students have a discussion about the text; then, students read the text chorally; finally, they work in pairs to finish the practice. Learners can read the text after class to keep improving (T. Rasinski et al., 2009; T. V. Rasinski et al., 1994).

A variation is Fast Start, where parents apply FDL at home applying short texts previously chosen by the instructor. Research has proved that children working with their parents improve automaticity compared to fellow students who are not engaged in this type of repeated reading.

Fluency-oriented Reading Instruction (FORI)

Two FORI techniques, the repeated and assisted reading models, were described by Stahl and Heubach in 2005, wherein teachers work with the same reading material students have in their textbooks. Instructors model the reading to the learners and then they engage in a discussion about it. After that, students repeat the text at home and in school, and finally, they work on worksheets or journals about the texts they read. According to the results obtained by Stahl and Heubach (2005), classes applying this model improved their reading achievement compared with previous years, it helped

struggling readers to enhance their reading abilities. Moreover, it had a high level of acceptance among students and teachers.

Other forms of repeated reading that increase fluency in elementary students are reading theater scripts and singing songs (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Students work with a script every night for 10 minutes during a week and then during Friday's class they get feedback from the teacher and classmates. To finish the activity, learners had to perform the scripts to an audience. For the next week, they had to work with a new script and repeat the process. The results show that after 10 weeks, learners improved their reading achievement and increased their reading motivation.

Singing to a song is a form of repeated reading wherein students repeatedly read the lyrics and sing the song. Research that applied software to analyze singing showed that middle school students improved their reading achievement and comprehension by using the software 3 times a week for 9 weeks. The procedure was as follows: each student started with a low-level reading song and progressively started working with a harder-level song, they had to repeat silently the lyrics and then record their voices singing the song and saving the highest scores (Biggs et al., 2008).

Effectiveness of Repeated Reading

The theory of automatic word processing developed by Laberge and Samuels in 1974 supports the effectiveness of repeated reading. This theory states that repetitive processes are necessary to convert written text into meaning through automaticity. There is a relationship between visual input and phonological and semantic systems, and with ample training, a person can evoke immediately the meaning of a word once it is read. When recognizing the words and recalling their meaning is automatic, reading becomes effortless for the readers. Repetition leads to automaticity by letting readers recognize words and then, whole sentences through enough practice (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974).

Various research results demonstrate that repeated reading improves word recognition accuracy, automaticity, reading rates, comprehension, and motivation in beginner readers (Lee & Yoon, 2016). Researchers from the University of Connecticut report that applying repeated reading with struggling readers promotes their reading fluency by increasing the words per minute they can correctly read after the intervention although the increase was not significant due to the differences between the reading level of the participants (Chafouleas et al., 2004).

According to Lee and Young (2016), many results support the theory that repeated reading boosts reading fluency, especially those that combine other treatments before starting RR such as practicing isolated words, listening to audio recordings or a fluency model, error correction during the reading, performance feedback, guided reading and reading progressively more difficult texts. The results of the investigations cannot be generalized because every intervention is different in each case.

In the same manner, Swain and colleagues (2013), investigated the efficacy of repeated reading and listening to passage previews. The results proved that all interventions were effective in improving reading fluency even 5 months after finishing the treatment. In view of the fact that all interventions were effective, it is recommended that teachers choose interventions based on the characteristics of the students and the resources available in the classroom. Nevertheless, it is crucial to maintain the intervention over time to ensure learners maintain their growing reading levels.

Similarly, Begeny and colleagues (2009), reported that Repeated Reading was effective in increasing the correct number of Words Per Minute (WPM) read by fourth-grade students after the intervention. However, it is important to mention that WPM is not the only goal of developing reading fluency, but also to increase comprehension. Understanding the meaning and intention of a text creates effective reading instruction.

The type of texts used during the intervention also influences the effectiveness of repeated reading. During the instruction, transfer and non-transfer passages can be

used. Transfer passages refer to readings that students have never practiced before, on the other hand, non-transfer passages are texts that learners repeat several times during the intervention (Lo et al., 2011).

As reported by Wexler et al. (2008), repeated reading improves reading rates when working with non-transfer passages, especially when the intervention includes fluency models and an instructor to give feedback. Unfortunately, applying only repeated reading without other strategies does not make a difference in comprehension which is the utmost purpose when reading. Knowledge and working memory are crucial characteristics to be taken into account when working with comprehension. Reading the text three to four times benefits increasing reading rates.

In the same way, Ardoin et al. (2007), stated that repeated reading enhances reading fluency even in transfer passages. In the research, after applying two different treatments with repeated reading alongside error correction and feedback; the first one reading a short text 4 times, and the second reading 2 different passages twice; results show that both interventions improve reading fluency when reading an untried text with an overlap of previous words.

1.3. Assisted reading strategies

Assisted reading refers to a set of reading strategies aimed at building fluency among learners with the guidance of a fluent reader who models reading the text for the learners and monitors the sessions, helping students decipher complicated words. Multiple demonstrations are needed to increase reading fluency among learners since the fluent reader sets a model of how effortless reading sounds (Brand & Brand, 2006). The fluent reader can be a person or a recorded text to listen to. Choral reading, paired reading, and audio-assisted reading are some assisted reading techniques (Paige, 2013).

Choral Reading

Whole-class choral reading consists of the complete number of students in a class reading a text as a unit. This technique helps students who feel anxious about reading aloud because everybody will be reading without being recognized individually hence it promotes self-confidence and motivation building, as well as fluency development (Paige, 2013). To implement whole-class choral reading, the teacher provides the fluency model by reading aloud with the students following the text at the same time. After that, students read aloud imitating what they heard (Reading Rockets, 2013).

Paired reading

Paired reading works with two people at the same time. The most proficient reader is the "fluency model" which helps the other reader to improve their reading. The "fluency model" could be a teacher, a parent, or even a student who has better reading skills. To apply paired reading, both readers need to work for about 5 to 15 minutes. The "fluency model" reads the text at the same time as the less fluent reader. In this way, when the less fluent reader is struggling with a word, he can have immediate help provided by the "fluent model". The process can vary when the fluent reader reads silently and only helps out when the less fluent reader asks for support (T. Rasinski & Padak, 2013b).

Audio-assisted reading

Audio-assisted reading, also known as reading while listening, is a technique used to improve reading rates as well as raise confidence among students who struggle in reading. It is an assisted reading strategy that consists of "reading while listening to a fluent reader" by using an audio-recorded text (Pytash & Calabria, 2013, p. 48). The main purpose of applying this technique is to have learners internalize the fluency model they hear. This technique represents a great opportunity to enhance fluency in learners of different ages and diverse reading abilities as listening to a fluent reader

conveys the correct phrasing and expression of the written text which contribute to a better understanding of it (Pytash & Calabria, 2013).

Reading while listening works with two skill-based strategies: listening preview, where a fluent reader models the reading while the learners follow a text, and repeated reading, where the students read a short text, several times before being assessed. Although initial comprehension levels might be deficient, once decoding becomes automatic and reading fluency improves, comprehension occurs (Chafouleas et al., 2004).

This method can also be applied as part of reading–language programs setting first a starting level for each participant. Chang and Millett (2015), recommend applying a vocabulary test before starting the intervention. Another recommendation to start working with the audio-assisted reading technique is to make an inventory of the technological resources that are available in the classroom or at home. Then, it is important to choose the reading materials to use, which can be printed or digital. Nowadays, there are lots of resources available on the web that include audio and videos. Many educational institutions and organizations offer free audiobooks on their webpages. For instance: Ambling Books, Bus Songs, Folger Shakespeare Library, Inkless Tales, Magic Keys, Reading is Fundamental, Story Online, Storynory, etc.

One challenge is the pace of the readings. It is challenging to find audio texts at the same reading level and pace that the students require. To overcome this inconvenience, teachers can look for specific level texts or create their own recordings matching the pace according to the needs of the students. Fluent models could be teachers, native English speakers, or even more fluent readers in the same group of students. Building an audio library is another option to motivate repeated reading practice among students (Pytash & Calabria, 2013).

Monitoring students is another crucial factor when applying assisted reading with audio support. Learners need to be accompanied by an instructor during the sessions to

check their progress and answer questions. The instructors can be parents if the practice is at home, or teachers. Another option to monitor the learners' development is to schedule reading-aloud sessions during class time (Pytash & Calabria, 2013).

One factor to take into account while working with reading while listening is to make sure that students are following the text while they are listening to the audio. This might be challenging because unless the instructor sits next to the student there is no certain way to monitor this.

There are many suggestions about how to apply audio-assisted reading in the classroom. This technique can be used with students who face difficulties in basic literacy or inefficient decoding skills, and also with students whose reading is lower than expected for their chronological age to practice fluency and comprehension. Nevertheless, it is fundamental for learners to have knowledge about consonants and vowels, sounds, and basic frequent words (Dobson, 2013).

Effectiveness

There are some studies that have measured the effectiveness of applying reading while listening. As mentioned by Dobson (2013), audio-assisted reading fosters self-motivation and confidence because students see themselves as capable learners. It reduces anxiety and lets students' progress to a level where they are capable of working independently. Furthermore, this method engages students by providing an enthusiastic and expressive reader as a model and can make input more interesting for them.

Similarly, Swain et al. (2013), reported that listening while reading reduces anxiety and it is an attainable technique to use when working with a limited amount of time in the classroom. Koskinen et al. (1999), reported that applying supported reading programs with students of English as a second language had a positive impact on the development of their reading expertise. English language learners and native English

speakers can work with assisted reading because it enhances motivation and comprehension. Moreover, it is an important technique to scaffold the knowledge of the students.

Feelings toward reading are crucial since they determine how a learner reacts to a learning situation (Stanfield, 2008). A positive reading attitude supports a person to become a competent and lifelong reader. Applying methods that enhance positive feelings about reading might make a huge difference in the life of learners and must be part of any reading instruction.

Researchers from Taiwan and New Zealand conducted research with 64 EFL students to compare the effectiveness of applying silent and audio-assisted reading to improve comprehension and reading rates. The study was performed for 26 weeks, 90 minutes per week, using 20 graded texts. The results provided evidence that both groups improved their reading rates and comprehension, and audio-assisted reading boosted higher improvement levels three months after finishing the intervention. A recommendation given by the authors includes working with higher-speed audio to improve reading rates (A. Chang & Millett, 2015).

In the same way, Koskinen et al. (2000), worked with 16 teachers for 7 months applying 4 different models of reading books in the classroom and rereading at home. The models were applied as follows: a group worked only with reading at school, the second utilized reading at school plus rereading at home, the third worked with reading at school as well as audio-supported rereading at home, and the last group did not change their normal reading instruction. The results proved that all groups working with readings at school improved comprehension levels. Moreover, groups enhanced with home rereading increased motivation and parental interest. Additionally, second language learners benefited from having access to audio models.

Similarly, Blum et al. (1995), concluded that repeated readings with audio recordings helped second-language learners to boost their literacy training by gaining fluency and

accuracy even when reading more difficult passages. Within the intervention, appropriate texts were selected for independent practice, with common language patterns and images that fostered comprehension. This means that working with appropriate resources is crucial when implementing the audio-assisted reading technique.

Additional benefits stated by various authors include vocabulary acquisition, fostering listening skills, and increased word recognition by working on metacognitive word identification strategies. Brown et al. (2008), carried out a study to compare three different methods to improve incidental vocabulary acquisition in students of English as a Foreign Language. One of the methods applied was the listening-while-reading method.

The aforementioned research employed two different tests after the experiment to measure vocabulary gains. The experiments considered the events of the story (context) that was read, and applied images to support the learning of new words. The results presented remarkable gains after applying the listening-while-reading method, proving that working with this method helps students to learn new words by context and even allows students to retain the words after concluding the experiment (Brown et al., 2008).

Likewise, in research conducted with 60 Chinese EFL learners, the outcomes showed that applying reading-while-listening increases incidental word and grammar vocabulary acquisition. In the study two different methods were compared: reading-only and reading-while-listening. The participants read and listened to a book that was modeled by a native English speaker, they worked in sessions of around 120 minutes. The evaluation instruments were four different tests that measured form and grammar recognition as well as meaning recall and recognition of collocation. At the end of the study, there was evidence that with reading and listening input, students achieved better vocabulary gains (Teng, 2018).

Referring to word recognition, Rasinski (1990), reported that applying repeated reading and reading-while-listening are effective to boost word recognition accuracy as well as reading speed. In this research, 20 participants from different elementary schools were selected to participate in the experiment. According to the author, it is recommended to apply a combination of both techniques to maintain the student's interest as well as improve reading fluency among them.

Additionally, Chang (2011), worked on an investigation into second language acquisition by applying audiobooks to improve listening fluency and vocabulary earnings. The study compared formal listening instruction and reading-while-listening during 26 weeks. Seven students participated in the reading-while-listening instruction whereas 12 participants took formal instruction and acted as the control group. The findings showed that reading while listening significantly improved listening fluency along with a major vocabulary increase.

In a similar way, Chang (2009), conducted a study with 84 university students, to analyze the development of listening skills by comparing the reading-while-listening method with usual listening input. The results showed that both methods boosted auditory discrimination skills as well as word recognition and awareness of form-meaning relationships. Another major finding was that the participants considered it more engaging working with the reading while listening method because the tasks seemed to be shorter and more interesting, allowing them to pay better attention to the activity.

In addition, Amer (1997), stated that applying reading-while-listening instruction can help students to improve reading comprehension skills. In the research, in the experimental group, a teacher read aloud a story to the students. The story was divided into four parts, and each part was read in sessions of 50 minutes. Each session started with a pre-reading exercise followed by an explanation of the key vocabulary of the story. After that, the teacher started the reading-aloud session, stopping at some points to ask students to follow the reading.

Finally, the participants answered some comprehension questions about the text. The control group followed a similar procedure with the difference that they read the story silently. Results showed an improvement in the post-test results in the experimental group proving that reading while listening promotes comprehension.

Limitations in developing Reading Fluency

Developing reading fluency takes time and extensive practice. Unfortunately, the time learners spend reading in the classroom is very limited. The development of reading fluency depends on the age of the students and their proficiency. Usually, children need to work more on word recognition while teenagers do not. Moreover, fluent reading is not only about sounding good but also requires comprehension of the text. For this reason, it is fundamental to build automaticity in recognizing high-frequency words and predicting unfamiliar ones (Brand & Brand, 2006).

Another challenge that instructors face is choosing the appropriate text level for learners. This requires consideration of the learner's age, interests, and literacy level. It is also important to select interesting texts tailored to the age group and proficiency level. Some authors recommend applying graded texts instead of authentic material because in graded texts there are more high-frequency words. Unfortunately, little research on L2 settings has been carried out. Furthermore, illustrated texts may also be useful when working for extended periods. In order to be effective in promoting reading fluency, it is essential to integrate reading and writing instruction by establishing a schedule to work on them simultaneously (Nakanishi, 2015).

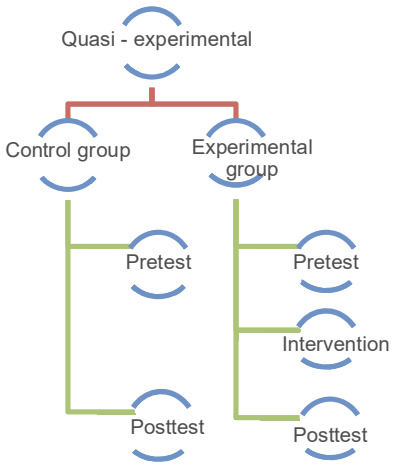
CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research design

This research applied a quantitative approach. Quantitative research values statistical descriptions and measurements that control the process and achieves objectivity. The research works with a hypothesis that investigates relationships between the variables, both dependent and independent. It is guided by the philosophy of Positivism which states that reality exists independently of the research process and evidence supports or rejects the hypothesis. This reality can be studied by measurements, control, and systematic observation (Lodico et al., 2006).

The design is quasi-experimental which is widely used in the educational investigation because researchers have access to learning institutions, therefore the participants are not randomly assigned. It involves working with two groups: control and experimental. Both groups receive the pretest and posttest but only the experimental one receives the treatment. The research modality is socio-educational, which means it is related to the educational area and aims to identify a method to effectively foster the development and improvement of reading fluency in EFL students (Leavy, 2017).

Graph 1. Research design



Source: Self-made

The research depth level is explanatory as well as descriptive. According to Lodico et al. (2006), explanatory research explains causes and effects, in other words, it establishes relationships between variables. The type of research is bibliographical-documentary and field research. The first chapter was conducted on documentary research which aims to synthesize the recent studies related to the topic and helps to predict how the variables relate to each other. The bibliographical research describes deeply the two variables and what is already known about them.

Additionally, field research helps to work directly with the object of the study for collecting information about the relationship between variables (hypothesis testing). Field research tests how to use an intervention by working with the behavior of the participants in their natural environment, in this case, their natural environment is the classroom and the intervention aims to improve reading fluency in teenagers.

Population and sample

The participants of this study were basic English level learners at “Unidad Educativa Pedro Carbo”, a public secondary institution located in Guaranda city. The “Unidad Educativa Pedro Carbo” works in two different schedules: during the day and later in the afternoons. The research population was all teenagers categorized as basic users of the language. According to the Ministry of Education (2016), students from 8EGB to 1BGU are considered Basic Users of the language, 8EGB and 9EGB are recognized as A1 learners while 10EGB and 1BGU as A2 learners.

The sampling technique applied was Convenience Sampling. According to Etikan et al. (2016), Convenience Sampling, also known as Haphazard Sampling, is a Nonprobability Sampling Technique that is useful when enough resources or time are not available. Applying this type of sampling means that the results cannot be generalized for the entire population. Within the Haphazard Sampling, the chosen participants share certain criteria: proximity, predisposition, or time convenience as well

as ease of access to the researcher. Convenience Sampling is mostly applied in quantitative research because of the nature of the data to be analyzed.

The sample was selected according to the criteria of the researcher being chosen from two classes of the 9th grade (A1 learners). One class acted as the control group while the other acted as the experimental group. The number of students was 37 for the experimental group and 30 for the control group.

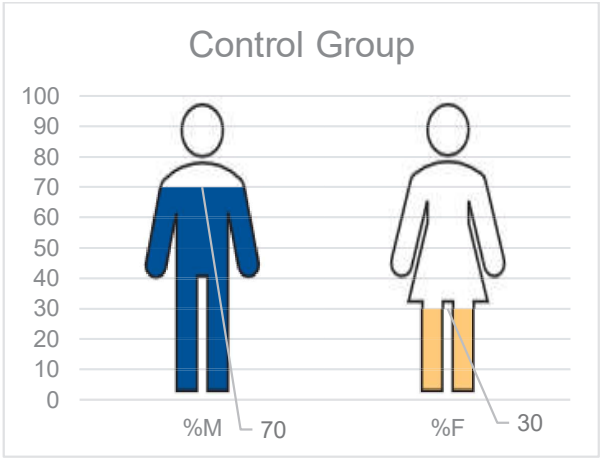
Table 1. Participants

Participants	**Male**	**Female**	**TOTAL**
Control Group	21	9	30
Experimental Group	20	17	37
		Total of participants	67

Source: Self-made

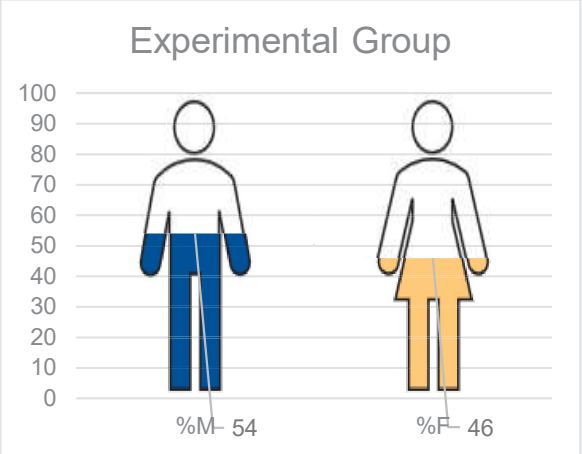
The ages ranged between 11 and 13 years old. In the control group, 9 female students represented 30% of the participants while 70% of students were 21 male students. On the other hand, in the experimental group, the number of female and male participants was similar, 54% of students were male while 46% of the participants were female.

Graph 2. Participants – Control group



Source: Self-made

Graph 3. Participants – Experimental group



Source: Self-made

2.2. Data collection

Techniques and instruments

In this research, reading fluency has been taken as reading rate since it can be expressed as performance time (Beglar et al., 2012; Breznitz, 2005), hence, an adaptation of the self-paced reading task was applied as the pre and post-test. The self-paced reading task measures the number of words and reaction time for each sentence read by the participant. Generally, the task is carried out on electronic devices where participants need to press a key to read a sentence word by word on the screen. There is a variation of this task where the words become visible on the screen one by one but they do not disappear until all the words in the passage are read, the task is known as self-paced reading increased (Jegerski, 2013).

Due to the conditions and resources available in the institution where this research took place, the instrument was modified to fit the working conditions. Each participant was asked to read aloud a short passage, and a timer was set to measure the time they took to read the text. Additionally, the words read incorrectly were counted, and at the

end of the task, students answered two questions to check their comprehension and vocabulary understanding.

As stated by Marsden et al. (2018), in the last few years, self-paced reading has been widely used in second language acquisition research being accepted as a tool in the field. Referring to the validity and reliability of the instrument, according to Bastos et al. (2014), if the results obtained by applying an instrument have been accepted by the scientific community, and the instrument respects the ethical guidelines of research, it is recognized as a valid and reliable instrument.

The variables obtained after applying the pre and post-test to the control (CONTROL) and experimental (EXP) groups were as shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Variables

VARIABLES			
QUANTITATIVE		**QUALITATIVE**	
Time	Errors	General meaning	Vocabulary

Source: Self-made

The treatment was applied for 5 weeks in sessions of 10 minutes each. During the sessions, students were given short passages to read. Before starting, they were conducted through an activity to review the main vocabulary words. After checking the new vocabulary, students listened to a recording of a native speaker reading the text. Then, students listened to the recording one more time while following the reading with their fingers. Finally, learners read the text aloud while listening to the recording trying to imitate the sounds and pronunciation. To end the sessions, students answered two questions related to the reading.

The participants followed the same process, working with the same passage, at least twice before continuing with another passage. The passages were chosen from a free database that contains ESL short stories for beginners and intermediate learners. The total number of words in the elected passages was on average fifty-four. Additionally, the database included recordings by native speakers for each story as well as

vocabulary exercises and yes/no questions. All passages had common basic English vocabulary that means high-frequency words, but they were not related to each other.

The reading level was measured with the Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level score, which is a formula to measure the readability of a text (i.e., how easy a text is to read). The formula uses the total number of sentences, syllables, and words (Crossley et al., 2011). The Flesh-Kincaid score was provided by the database, it was not measured by the researcher. The passages applied during the intervention are described in Table 3.

Table 3. Passages

PASSAGES	WORDS	READING GRADE LEVEL	READING LEVEL
NEW TO AMERICA	52	3.2	BASIC
A HAIR CUT EVERY TWO WEEKS	52	3.3	BASIC
A GOOD HOT DOG SANDWICH	58	3.5	BASIC

Source: Self-made

2.3. Analysis of data

For the data analysis, four different statistical analyses were applied by using the statistical software Jamovi: descriptive statistics, the Wilcoxon Test, a correlational analysis, and contingency tables. Descriptive statistics were used to organize and summarize the collected data about the qualitative and quantitative variables in the research. This type of statistic describes the data in a logical and meaningful way by reporting the mean, median, mode, size of the sample, and standard deviation (Vetter, 2017).

The mean, median, and mode are Central Tendency Measures. The mean shows the average obtained by dividing the total sum of the values by the sample (total number of participants). This can be affected by extreme values. The median is the midpoint in the group of values. Generally, it is not affected by extreme values and the mode is the number that is most frequently repeated in the set of data. The interquartile range gives

information about the variability of the set of data by dividing the data into sets of 25%. This is useful to describe the collected data when it has extreme values. Other descriptive measurements were the maximum and minimum number to describe the extreme data (Fisher & Marshall, 2009; Vetter, 2017).

In addition, the Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to determine if the variable “TIME” followed a normal distribution. A normal distribution means that the media, mean, and mode are the same and in the central region most values are grouped. The Shapiro-Wilk test is applied when working with small samples (less than 50) and determines the statistic to be employed (parametric or non-parametric test).

Table 4. Descriptives – Variable TIME

	TIME_EXP_PRE TEST	TIME_EXP_POST TEST	TIME_CONTROL_ PRETEST	TIME_CONTROL _POSTTEST
N	37	37	30	30
Missing	0	0	7	7
Mean	29.0	27.1	28.5	27.4
Median	27.8	24.3	27.0	26.2
Standard deviation	10.5	9.41	9.90	7.24
Minimum	0.00	16.1	13.7	15.5
Maximum	53.5	55.0	60.1	50.2
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.930	0.816	0.911	0.918
Shapiro-Wilk p	0.022	< .001	0.016	0.024

Source: Self-made

The mean reading time for the pre-test experimental group was 29.0 seconds, which was higher than the post-test group at 27.1 seconds. In the pre-test control group, the lowest minimum reading time was recorded at 13.7 seconds, while the highest reading time was observed at 60.07 seconds.

To assess the normality of the variable “TIME” of the control and experimental groups, the p-value (Shapiro-Wilk p) was taken into account. If the p-value was greater than the significance level (α=0.05) it is a normal distribution, otherwise, the distribution is not

normal. This test determines the statistic to use, with normal samples, the t-student test for paired samples is applied, while with non-normal samples the Wilcoxson test for paired samples is employed. The normality test works with two hypotheses as described in Table 5.

Table 5. Normality Test Hypotheses

Hypotheses	
Null Hypothesis (H0): The variable “TIME” follows a normal distribution.	Alternative hypothesis (H1): The variable “TIME” does not follow a normal distribution.

Source: Self-made

Table 6 describes the results of the Normality Test for the variable TIME, pre and post-test.

Table 6. Normality Test Results

VARIABLE	**P**	**ALFA**	**DECISION**	**CONCLUSION**
TIME_EXP_PRETEST	0.022	0.05	H0 rejected	Not normal
TIME_EXP_POSTTEST	< .001	0.05	H0 rejected	Not normal
TIME_CONTROL_PRETEST	0.016	0.05	H0 rejected	Not normal
TIME_CONTROL_POSTTEST	0.024	0.05	H0 rejected	Not normal

Source: Self-made

As all the variables were not normally distributed, to analyze the results of applying the audio-assisted reading technique in the reading fluency of teenagers, the Wilcoxon test for paired samples was applied. The Wilcoxon test compares the median of two variables to determine if the difference between them is significant or not. If the value of significance (p-value) is lesser than the level of significance (α) it means that the difference is significant, otherwise the difference is not significant. The level of significance (α) for this analysis was 0.05. Obtaining a significant difference in the analysis means that the probability of casualty is less than 5%.

In addition, the research's practical significance was assessed by computing the effect size, with a large effect size indicating considerable practical implications and a small effect size suggesting restricted practical applications (Bhandari, 2020). The effect size

ranges between 1 and -1. The closer to 0 the smaller the effect size is. The results can be interpreted as shown in Table 7:

Table 7. Effect size interpretation

EFFECT SIZE	RANGE	RANGE
Small	0.1 – 0.3	-0.1 – -0.3
Medium	>0.3 – 0.5	<-0.3 – -0.5
Large	>0.5 – 1.0	<-0.5 – -1.0

Source: Modified from Bhandari, (2020)

In order to verify the hypothesis, the analysis was conducted for the variable "TIME" of the experimental (EXP) and control (CONTROL) group to determine if the experimental group improved their reading fluency after the intervention. Additionally, with the purpose of describing the qualitative variables that were measured in the pre and post-test; within the control and experimental group; an analysis of frequency using contingency tables was applied. The variables were nominally categorized as shown in Table 8:

Table 8. Qualitative variables categorization

QUESTION	NAME OF THE VARIABLE	LEVELS
YES/NO QUESTION: General meaning of the passage.	GM	1: Correct 0: Incorrect
VOCABULARY QUESTION: Vocabulary	VOCAB	

Source: Self-made

Level 1 represents that the question was correctly answered while level 0 shows that the answer was incorrect. Applying a description of frequency by using contingency tables, the total number of answers in each group was described as follows:

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP – PRETEST

Table 9. Contingency Table – Experimental (EXP) group - Pretest

	VOCAB_EXP_PRETEST		
GM_EXP_PRETEST	**Incorrect**	**Correct**	**Total**
Incorrect	6	0	6
Correct	0	31	31
Total	6	31	37

Source: Self-made

Table 9 shows that six students out of 37 participants in the experimental group answered incorrectly the yes/no (GM) and the vocabulary (VOCAB) question, whereas thirty-one participants answered both questions correctly. The total number of responses was 6 incorrect and 31 correct answers for each variable.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP – POSTTEST

Table 10. Contingency Table – Experimental (EXP) group - Posttest

	VOCAB_EXP_POSTTEST		
GM_EXP_POSTTEST	**Incorrect**	**Correct**	**Total**
Incorrect	0	2	2
Correct	2	33	35
Total	2	35	37

Source: Self-made

Table 10 shows that 2 students out of 37 participants, answered incorrectly the yes/no question (GM) but correctly answered the vocabulary question (VOCAB), whereas two other participants answered correctly the yes/no question (GM) but incorrectly the vocabulary question (VOCAB). Thirty-three participants answered both questions correctly. In total, two participants gave incorrect answers and 35 answered correctly the question for both variables.

CONTROL GROUP – PRETEST

Table 11. Contingency Table – Control group - Pretest

	VOCAB_CONTROL_PRETEST		
GM_CONTROL_PRETEST	**Incorrect**	**Correct**	**Total**
Incorrect	10	1	11
Correct	1	18	19
Total	11	19	30

Source: Self-made

Table 11 shows that out of the 30 participants in the control group, 10 students answered both the yes/no (GM) and vocabulary (VOCAB) questions incorrectly. One participant answered the vocabulary question correctly but the yes/no (GM) question incorrectly. Similarly, one student answered the vocabulary question incorrectly but the yes/no (GM) question correctly. Finally, 18 participants answered both questions correctly. In total, 11 students answered both questions incorrectly and 19 students answered both questions correctly.

CONTROL GROUP – POSTTEST

Table 12. Contingency Table – Control group - Posttest

	VOCAB_CONTROL_POSTTEST		
GM_CONTROL_POSTTEST	**Incorrect**	**Correct**	**Total**
Incorrect	8	1	9
Correct	9	12	21
Total	17	13	30

Source: Self-made

In the posttest, the results vary according to the question. On the one hand, 8 students answered both the yes/no (GM) and vocabulary (VOCAB) questions incorrectly. One

participant answered the vocabulary question correctly but the yes/no (GM) question incorrectly, and 9 students answered the vocabulary question incorrectly but the yes/no (GM) question correctly. Finally, 12 participants answered both questions correctly, being in total nine incorrect and twenty-one correct responses for the yes/no question and 17 incorrect and 13 correct answers for the vocabulary question.

Additionally, in order to establish the correlation between qualitative variables; “GM” and “VOCAB”, a Chi-test was conducted through contingency tables. The Chi-Square test of independence is a statistical analysis method employed to determine if two categorical variables are related to each other. The test works with frequency distribution which describes the allocation between the groups (Turney, 2022). The analysis was performed on the variables “GM” and “VOCAB” for the control and experimental group, pre and posttest.

The Chi-test involves testing two hypotheses: the null hypothesis (H0), which implies that there is no relationship between variables, and the alternative hypothesis (H1), which suggests that there is a relationship between them. The test employs a significance level (α) of 0.05. If the p-value is less than the significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a relationship between the variables. Conversely, if the p-value is greater than 0.05, the H0 is accepted, indicating no relationship. When a correlation between variables was observed, the Cramer's V coefficient was calculated to determine the size of the effect.

Finally, to determine the presence and extent of any relationship between the quantitative variables (TIME and ERRORS), a correlation analysis was performed. A positive correlation indicates that both variables increase simultaneously, while a negative correlation implies that as one variable decreases, the other increases. The statistical correlation is generally assessed using one of three approaches: Spearman, Kendall, or Pearson (James, 2019).
In this research, the Spearman correlation scale was applied to analyze the correlation matrices. Table 13 was used to interpret the Spearman coefficient:

Table 13. Spearman correlation scale

0 - <0.2	Very weak
0.2 - <0.4	Weak
0.4 - <0.6	Moderate
0.6 - <0.8	Strong
0.8 – 1.0	Very strong

Source: Modified from Ozkur & Duman (2019)

2.4. Pedagogical proposal

Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in Teenagers

General Information

Location of execution: Unidad Educativa “Pedro Carbo”
Province: Bolivar
City: Guaranda
Area: English as a Foreign Language
Beneficiaries: High school students – 9th graders

Proposal background

This proposal consists of giving suggestions to apply reading while listening in the classrooms for increasing reading fluency in teenagers. Working on increasing reading fluency is important since learners are surrounded by written texts in the form of magazines, newspapers, billboards, product information, ads, emails, text messages, etc. Furthermore, in academic contexts, students need to read large amounts of texts.

According to Nakanishi (2015), L2 learners usually read at a range of 200 words per minute or below that might be translated into difficulties when reading, especially related to a lack of comprehension. According to Beglar, Hunt, and Kite (2012),

comprehension is related to gains in reading rates since comprehension improves when there is adequate fluency meaning that fluent readers can read a wide variety of texts even without intention. The suggestions presented in this proposal are aimed to boost reading fluency in teenagers while practicing audio-assisted reading.

Objectives

General objective

- To develop suggestions about how to apply the audio-assisted reading technique in EFL classrooms for increasing reading fluency.

Specific objectives

- To describe audio-assisted reading steps in reading sessions.
- To apply the audio-assisted steps with teenagers.

AUDIO-ASSISTED READING

Suggestions to apply the audio-assisted reading technique in Ecuadorian EFL classrooms.

What is the audio-assisted reading technique?

The audio-assisted reading technique is a strategy designed to help learners improve their reading skills by using audio recordings. This technique can utilize various types of audio resources, including role models such as teachers or proficient instructors and recordings of native speakers. By having access to a role model, learners are able to read challenging texts, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their comprehension and fluency from the initial stages of language acquisition. This technique provides a valuable opportunity for learners to bridge the gap between listening and reading skills.

When working with audio-assisted reading, learners should engage in certain actions to ensure effectiveness. These actions include following along with the reading while listening to the audio, reading aloud, and independently rereading the text.

What are the benefits of working with the audio-assisted reading technique?

The audio-assisted reading technique is an effective way to help students improve in various aspects of reading. This technique helps learners to be exposed to different inputs. By utilizing this technique, students can increase their reading rates and ability to recognize vocabulary, while also enhancing their comprehension skills. This technique also serves as a valuable model for proper pronunciation, particularly when learning English from the very beginning. Moreover, working with the audio-assisted reading technique can boost motivation and develop a positive attitude towards reading.

Aspects to consider before applying audio-assisted reading

- Before applying this technique, it is crucial to determine the reading speed of the students. To do so, teachers can use self-paced reading instruments. If resources are available, teachers can work in computer laboratories applying self-paced reading activities.

- Once the reading speed has been measured, teachers need to choose an appropriate text for students to read. It should take between 3 to 5 minutes to be read. This represents enough challenge for students to work with repeated reading.

- Provide students with the passage to be read in advance. The materials might be printed or digital according to the available resources in the classroom. It is a good idea to work with readings that students have in their textbooks. Additionally, some online options offer a variety of texts with audio such as StoryNory or LibriVox.

- Organize a space for students to work during the session, the space must be free of distractions.

- Use speakers to work on each session, the audio must be loud enough to be heard by all students that are working in the classroom.

- If resources are available, it is recommended for students to work with earphones or headphones making it possible for them to work individually at their own pace.

- Check each passage in advance for high-frequency words. Provide students with activities to practice the new vocabulary words and improve comprehension.

Audio-assisted reading steps in a reading session

During the reading session

- Explain the goals to the class and how the session will be carried out.

- Explain in detail the instructions for the session emphasizing that they need to read along and not just listen to the text. Remind them that they can use a finger to trace the text while listening to the audio.

- Give written instructions to the students so they can refer to them while doing the exercise.

- Play the audio and ask students to follow the text with their eyes while listening to it.

- Play the audio one more time and ask students to read along with the text while listening to the audio (follow the text with a finger).

- Play the audio a second time and ask students to read aloud the text while listening to the audio.

- Ask students to read the text by themselves without listening to the audio. Students will mark words that are difficult for them to read.

- Play the audio again, at least three more times, and have students read along until they feel confident enough to read the text without listening to the audio.

- Ask students to read the text without listening to the audio.

- Provide a self-monitoring chart for students to record their progress focusing on speed, phrasing, and expression.

NOTES:

- Students need to fluently read the given text in 95% before changing to another reading.

- Before continuing with another text, provide students with vocabulary and yes/no questions about the texts.

- Each reading session can last between 10 to 20 minutes.

- It is important to make sure that students are following the text while listening to the audio.

- It is a good idea to work with readings that students have in their textbooks. Additionally, some online options offer a variety of texts such as StoryNory or LibriVox.

Self-paced reading

Self-paced reading is a technique used to measure and analyze the reading process. It involves presenting text to readers word by word, with each word presented individually for a controlled amount of time. The reader is required to process and comprehend each word before moving on to the next, allowing researchers to examine the time it takes to process different linguistic elements and the overall cognitive processes involved in reading (Tullis & Benjamin, 2011).

This method allows researchers to investigate the processes that occur during reading. It provides insights into reading speeds, helping researchers to gather valuable data about reading fluency and reading proficiency. Different strategies can be employed in self-paced reading research (Tullis & Benjamin, 2011).

Self-paced reading tasks can be conducted using various instruments, each with its own features and methodologies. One common instrument used is a computer-based program where participants read sentences presented on a screen and press a key to move on to the next word. This type of instrument allows measuring the reading times of each word or phrase in the sentence and provides a controlled and standardized environment for data collection (Jegerski, 2013; Stoet, 2010, 2017).

PsyToolKit is a free tool for programming psychological experiments that allows researchers to work with self-paced reading tasks. The PsyToolKit helps researchers to work online with different experiments and questionnaires to study reaction times. It provides results in a spreadsheet and it is free for academic studies. It has a broad library with examples of different psychological experiments and questionnaires as well

as tutorials about how to use them. This tool can be modified according to the needs of the researchers since it allows the adaptation of programming codes (Stoet, 2010, 2017).

Within the PsyToolKit library, two self-paced reading tasks can be used. These experiments measure the number of words and reaction times for each sentence. Participants may be presented with one word at a time, and they have to press a key to proceed to the next word. There is a variation of this task where the words appear on the screen one by one but they do not disappear, the task is known as self-paced reading increased (Jegerski, 2013).

Table 14. Table of PsyToolKit results

1	2	3	4						
7	2807	“Minnie enjoys to spend time with Mickey”	918	400	317	342	332	277	221
7	14934	“Mickey likes to take walks with Minnie”	9999	3867	307	133	225	218	185
3	485	“Daisy likes gardening”	201	152	130				
6	1052	“Clara is looking after her pets”	167	144	133	129	145	334	
6	925	“Mary cooked dinner for her son”	220	141	139	139	139	147	

Source: Taken from Stoet (2010)

Table 14 exhibits how results are presented within the PsyToolKit program. Column 1 shows the number of words in the sentence, column 2 presents the total reaction time in milliseconds and column 3 shows the sentence that was applied. Finally, column 4 presents the reaction time in milliseconds, this reaction time corresponds to each word presented in the sentence.

These methods enable researchers to analyze reading times and examine the effect of different variables on reading speed and comprehension. Eye-tracking technology is often used as an additional instrument in self-paced reading tasks. Eye-tracking devices allow for the measurement of eye movements and fixations, providing insights into reading behavior and attention allocation during the reading process (Marsden et al., 2018b).

Generally, the instruments used in self-paced reading tasks involve computer-based setups for precise measurement of reading times and may include features such as incremental reading or eye tracking to gain further insights into the reading process, however, if enough resources are not available these instruments might be modified to fit the working conditions (Jegerski, 2013; Marsden et al., 2018b).

Online audio-book resources

Storynory

Storynory is a web page that contains a vast collection of over 600 stories with audio. Since November 2005, it has been providing an extensive range of stories that aim to enhance imagination, accurate writing, and narration skills. Nowadays, it also offers factual content such as interviews and historic content.

Open Culture

Open Culture, founded in 2006, is a web page dedicated to making available free courses, audio books, lessons, and educational videos for the benefit of the educational community. Its mission is to centralize all quality resources in one place. Within the free audiobooks option, there are many resources including fiction, literature, poetry, and non-fiction.

Internet Archive

Internet Archive is a non-profit web page that aims to build an open digital library. Since its creation in 1996, it has been growing and providing public access to various resources such as web pages, book and texts, audio recordings, videos, images, and software programs. It is focused on providing access to books, and audiobooks.

LibriVox

LibriVox is a web page that offers a wide range of books read by volunteers. Its main objective is to offer free books read by real people. The webpage offers their services for free and is opened for academic and personal purposes.

Learn Out Loud

Learn Out Loud, created in 2005, is a web page that aims to provide free audio and videos to the educational community. It contains audio books, podcasts, college courses, and many other resources. Its catalog includes more than 50,000 files, and the most popular are free audiobooks, courses, documentaries, among others.

Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is a free online library that offers a variety of ebooks. It was founded in 1971 and has been providing free access to many ebooks until now. Within this webpage, users can find ebooks about a wide range of genres. The project is sustained by volunteers who work to create and distribute ebooks in many formats all around the world.

Lit2Go

Lit2Go is an online repository of stories and poems available in Mp3 (audiobook) format, completely free of charge. Each passage on the website is accompanied by an abstract, citation, playing time, and word count for the convenience of users. What's more, most passages also feature a related reading strategy to help readers make sense of and engage with the texts. Additionally, all reading passages can be effortlessly downloaded in PDF format and printed, enabling users to enjoy them as read-alongs or to use as supplementary reading material in classroom settings.

Esl yes!

This webpage is dedicated to providing original stories and dialogues for English learners at the Beginner and Intermediate levels. It is accessible for PC, Mac, and mobile devices, ensuring that learners can access the content anytime, anywhere. Each story comes with a range of interactive exercises, such as Vocabulary, Cloze, Scrambled Sentences, Crosswords, and Dictation, which are designed to enhance language proficiency. Additionally, most stories are accompanied by audio, available in two speeds—normal and slow—to support listening comprehension. Best of all, this resource is completely free for teaching purposes, making it an invaluable tool for language educators.

Table 15. Online audio books resources

NAME	INFORMATION	LINK
StoryNory	Free audio source. More than 600 audios. It shows stories and factual information.	Storynory - Audio Stories for Kids
Open Culture	Offers free audio books, courses, lessons, and educational videos.	1,000 Free Audio Books: Download Great Books for Free | Open Culture
Internet Archive	Open digital library with audio books, audio recordings, videos, images, and software programs.	Audio Library and Talking Books : Free Audio : Free Download, Borrow and Streaming : Internet Archive
LibriVox	Webpage with audio books read by real people.	LibriVox | free public domain audiobooks
Learn Out Loud	Online page that provides free audio book, courses, documentaries, etc.	4,000 Free Audiobooks (learnoutloud.com)
Project Gutenberg	Online library that offers a variety of ebooks about a wide range of genres.	Browse By Category: Audio Book, human-read | Project Gutenberg
Lit2Go	Online repository of poems and stories available in Mp3.	Lit2Go Audiobooks | FCIT (usf.edu)
ESL YES!	Webpage that offers 1600 free short stories for English learners.	ESL Yes 1,600 Free ESL Short Stories, Exercises, Audio

Source: Self-made

CHAPTER III. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

3.1. Hypothesis verification

Experimental group: Applying the audio assisted reading technique improves reading fluency in teenagers.

H0: Time_Exp_Pretest ≤ Time_Exp_Posttest
H1: Time_Exp_Pretest > Time_Exp_Posttest

Table 16. Wilcoxon Test 1 - Experimental group - variable "TIME"

			Statistic	p		Effect Size
TIME_EXP_PRETEST	TIME_EXP_POSTTEST	Wilcoxon W	510	0.008	Rank biserial correlation	0.451

Note. H_a $\mu_{Measure\ 1 - Measure\ 2} > 0$

Source: Self-made

Table 17. Results interpretation 1 – Experimental group

p	Alfa (α)	Effect Size
0.008	0.05	0.451
	p < α	MEDIUM

Source: Self-made

As the p-value is less than the significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected with 95% reliability, indicating that the time in the pretest is greater than the time in the posttest. In other words, applying the audio assisted reading technique does improve reading fluency in teenagers. The effect size of 0.451 categorizes the practical application of the technique as having a medium effect.

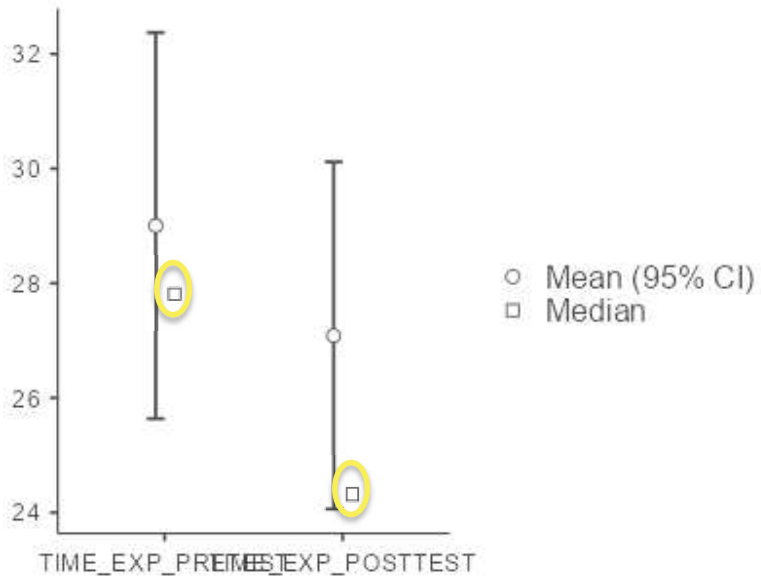
Table 18. Wilcoxon Test 1 - Experimental group descriptives - variable “TIME”

	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
TIME_EXP_PRETEST	37	29.0	27.8	10.45	1.72
TIME_EXP_POSTTEST	37	27.1	24.3	9.41	1.55

Source: Self-made

The disparity in median values is evident on Table 18. Upon analysis, it is observed that the median of the "TIME" variable for pretest is greater than in the posttest, indicating a reduction in reading time for the experimental group participants after the intervention.

Graph 4. Wilcoxon Test 1 - Experimental group Descriptive Plot - variable “TIME”



Source: Self-made

The descriptive plot (Graph 4) visually shows how the median values of the variable “TIME” of the experimental group changes in the pretest and posttest.

Control group: Traditional reading practice improves reading fluency in teenagers.

H0: Time_Control_Pretest ≤ Time_Control_Posttest

H1: Time_Control_Pretest > Time_Control_Posttest

Table 19. Wilcoxon Test 2 - Control group - variable “TIME”

			Statistic	p		Effect Size
TIME_CONTROL_PRETEST	TIME_CONTROL_POSTTEST	Wilcoxon W	286	0.140	Rank biserial correlation	0.230

Note. H_a $\mu_{\text{Measure 1 - Measure 2}} > 0$

Source: Self-made

Table 20. Results interpretation 2 – Control group

p	Alfa (α)	Effect Size
0.140	0.05	0.230
	p > α	SMALL

Source: Self-made

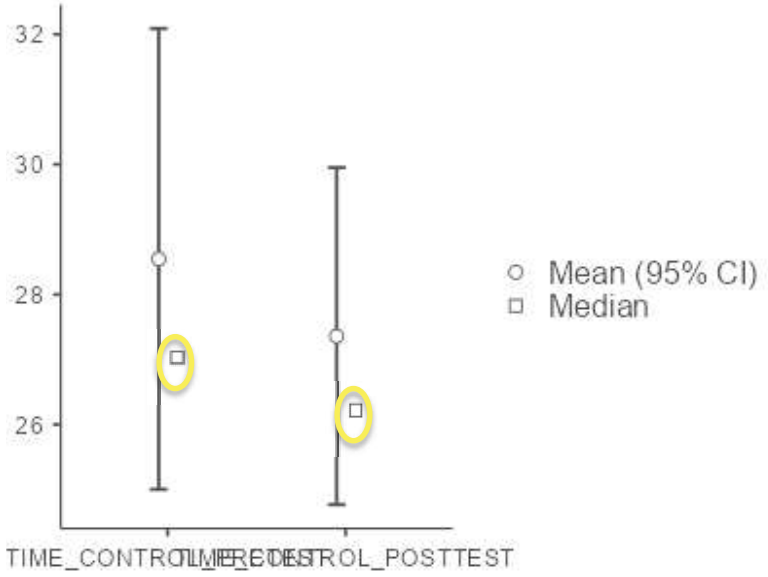
With a 95% level of confidence, the null hypothesis is accepted as the p-value is higher than the significance level. This implies that the time taken during the pretest is either less than or equal to the time taken during the posttest meaning that traditional reading instruction does not enhance reading fluency in teenagers. The effect size of 0.230 suggests a small practical application.

Table 21. Wilcoxon Test 2 - Experimental group Descriptives - variable “TIME”

	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
TIME_CONTROL_PRETEST	30	28.5	27.0	9.90	1.81
TIME_CONTROL_POSTTEST	30	27.4	26.2	7.24	1.32

Source: Self-made

Graph 5. Wilcoxon Test 2 - Control Group Descriptive Plot - variable “TIME”



Source: Self-made

The descriptive plot (Graph 5) visually shows how the median values of the variable “TIME” of the control group remains almost at the same level in the pretest and posttest.

Table 22. Hypothesis verification

TREATMENT	MEDIAN	EFFECT SIZE
Audio-assisted reading technique	Pretest= 27.8	r= 0.451
	Posttest= 24.3	
TradiTional reading instruction	Pretest= 27.0	r= 0.230
	Posttest= 26.2	

Source: Self-made

All median results can be seen in table 22. Applying the audio-assisted technique among teenagers resulted in a reduction of the time taken to read a passage meaning that reading fluency was improved. The effect size of the experimental group indicates a moderate effect, suggesting that the difference could also be of practical significance.

3.2. Additional Analysis

The Chi-Square (X^2) Tests were applied to determine if there was a relationship among the qualitative variables: VOCABULARY and GENERAL MEANING.

Chi-Square (X^2) Tests

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP – PRETEST

H0: There is no relationship between the variables.
H1: There is a relationship between the variables.
Alfa (α) = 0.05

Table 23. χ^2 Test – GM vs VOCAB - Experimental group - Pretest

	Value	df	p
χ^2	37.0	1	< .001
N	37		

	Value
Phi-coefficient	1.000
Cramer's V	1.000

Source: Self-made

Because the p-value is less than 0.001, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. In other words, there is a relationship between the variables “GM” and “VOCAB, showing that comprehension and vocabulary are related to each other. According to the V-Cramer’s coefficient, which indicates the magnitude of the effect, the strength of the relationship between the variables is high because the value is 1 (maximum possible value).

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP – POSTTEST

H0: There is no relationship between the variables.
H1: There is a relationship between the variables.
Alfa (α) = 0.05

Table 24. χ^2 Test – GM vs VOCAB - Experimental group - Posttest

	Value	df	p
χ^2	0.121	1	0.728
N	37		

Source: Self-made

Because the p-value is 0.728, which is greater than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to accept the null hypothesis. In other words, there is no relationship between the variables.

CONTROL GROUP – PRETEST

H0: There is no relationship between the variables.
H1: There is a relationship between the variables.
Alfa (α) = 0.05

Table 25. χ^2 Test – GM vs VOCAB - Control group - Pretest

	Value	df	p
χ^2	22.0	1	< .001
N	30		

	Value
Phi-coefficient	0.856
Cramer's V	0.856

Source: Self-made

Because the p-value is less than 0.001, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. In other words, there is a relationship between the variables. According to the V-Cramer's coefficient, which indicates the magnitude of the effect, the strength of the relationship between the variables is high because the value is 0.856.

CONTROL GROUP – POSTTEST

H0: There is no relationship between the variables.
H1: There is a relationship between the variables.
Alfa (α) = 0.05

Table 26. χ^2 Test – GM vs VOCAB - Control group - Posttest

	Value	df	p		Value
χ^2	5.44	1	0.020	Phi-coefficient	0.426
N	30			Cramer's V	0.426

Source: Self-made

Because the p-value is less than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. In other words, there is a relationship between the variables. However, the V-Cramer's coefficient, which indicates the magnitude of the effect, indicates that the strength of the relationship between the variables is low because the value is 0.426. It is interesting to notice that the variables are related to all groups with the exception of the posttest of the experimental group.

In addition, a Correlation Analysis was applied to determine if there was a relationship between the qualitative variables ERRORS and TIME.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Table 27. Correlational Matrix – Experimental group

		TIME_EXP_PRETEST	ERRORS_EXP_PRETEST	TIME_EXP_POSTTEST	ERRORS_EXP_POSTTEST
TIME_EXP_PRETEST	Spearman's rho	—			
	p-value	—			
ERRORS_EXP_PRETEST	Spearman's rho	0.501 **	—		
	p-value	0.002	—		
TIME_EXP_POSTTEST	Spearman's rho	0.528 ***	0.554 ***	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—	
ERRORS_EXP_POSTTEST	Spearman's rho	0.448 **	0.679 ***	0.545 ***	—
	p-value	0.005	< .001	< .001	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Source: Self-made

Upon conducting the correlation analysis, it is evident that a correlation exists between the variables "TIME" and "ERRORS" for the experimental group during pre and posttests. This suggests that the variables can either increase or decrease simultaneously. In other words, an increase in the "ERRORS" variable results in an increase in the "TIME" variable as well. The correlation between the two variables is moderately strong, with a Spearman coefficient ranging between 0.4 and 0.6.

CONTROL GROUP

Table 28. Correlational Matrix – Control group

		TIME_CONTROL_PRETEST		ERRORS_CONTROL_PRETEST	TIME_CONTROL_POSTTEST	ERRORS_CONTROL_POSTTEST
TIME_CONTROL_PRETEST	Spearman's rho	—				
	p-value	—				
ERRORS_CONTROL_PRETEST	Spearman's rho	0.165		—		
	p-value	0.383		—		
TIME_CONTROL_POSTTEST	Spearman's rho	0.852	***	0.113	—	
	p-value	< .001		0.553	—	
ERRORS_CONTROL_POSTTEST	Spearman's rho	-0.232		-0.100	-0.050	—
	p-value	0.218		0.598	0.793	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Source: Self-made

Regarding the control group, the values indicate the absence of a correlation among the variables, implying a need for further research.

CONCLUSIONS

- The audio-assisted reading technique is widely used in second language learning to provide learners with meaningful guidance to improve their pronunciation as well as their reading pace.

- After conducting a successful experiment on the effectiveness of audio-assisted reading technique, it can be concluded that this technique has a moderately positive effect on reading fluency and is a promising and effective approach to improve reading skills. The use of an audio while reading a text can enhance the overall reading experience and improve understanding of the material.

- Audio-assisted reading can be a valuable tool for educators and learners alike, particularly for those who struggle with traditional reading methods. This technique might improve language acquisition, helping to enhance speaking and comprehension, vital skills when communicating in another language.

- According to the results obtained during research, there is a relationship between errors and reading time made by students in the experimental group. Further research is needed to determine if the technique is effective in reducing the number of errors made and increasing reading speed.

- Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of this technique and its potential for wider applications in second language education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct more studies to determine the long-term effects of the audio assisted reading technique. This will help to determine if the technique has a lasting impact on reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary gains.

- Compare the effectiveness of the audio assisted reading technique with other intervention techniques such as traditional reading instruction, paired reading, or using other assistive technology techniques. This will help to determine if the audio assisted reading technique is more effective than other methods.

- Test the effectiveness of the audio assisted reading technique using different types of reading materials such as fiction, non-fiction, and academic texts. This will help to determine if the technique is effective across different genres and reading levels.

- Conduct a more thorough assessment of comprehension levels by using a variety of question types such as multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. This will provide more insight into the impact of the technique on comprehension. Furthermore, it is recommended to do a deep assessment of vocabulary gains by using a variety of vocabulary tests including receptive and productive vocabulary tests. This will provide more insight into the impact of the technique on vocabulary development.

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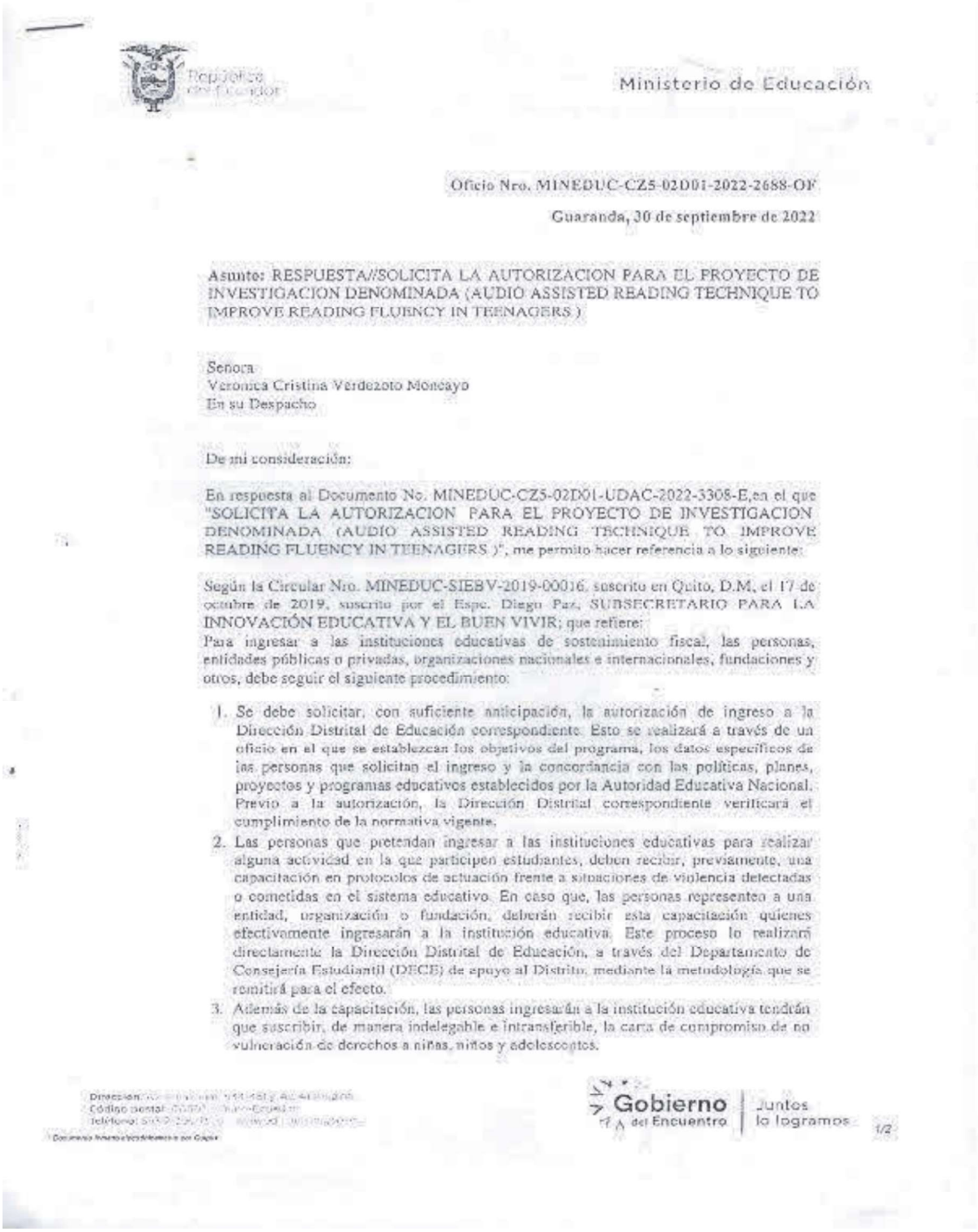
APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1. AUTHORIZATION



República del Ecuador

Ministerio de Educación

Oficio Nro. MINEDUC-CZ5-02D01-2022-2688-OF

Guaranda, 30 de septiembre de 2022

Asunto: RESPUESTA//SOLICITA LA AUTORIZACION PARA EL PROYECTO DE INVESTIGACION DENOMINADA (AUDIO ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE READING FLUENCY IN TEENAGERS)

Señora
Veronica Cristina Verdezoto Moncayo
En su Despacho

De mi consideración:

En respuesta al Documento No. MINEDUC-CZ5-02D01-UDAC-2022-3308-E,en el que "SOLICITA LA AUTORIZACION PARA EL PROYECTO DE INVESTIGACION DENOMINADA (AUDIO ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE READING FLUENCY IN TEENAGERS)", me permito hacer referencia a lo siguiente:

Según la Circular Nro. MINEDUC-SIEBV-2019-00016, suscrito en Quito, D.M, el 17 de octubre de 2019, suscrito por el Espc. Diego Paz, SUBSECRETARIO PARA LA INNOVACIÓN EDUCATIVA Y EL BUEN VIVIR; que refiere:
Para ingresar a las instituciones educativas de sostenimiento fiscal, las personas, entidades públicas o privadas, organizaciones nacionales e internacionales, fundaciones y otros, debe seguir el siguiente procedimiento:

1. Se debe solicitar, con suficiente anticipación, la autorización de ingreso a la Dirección Distrital de Educación correspondiente. Esto se realizará a través de un oficio en el que se establezcan los objetivos del programa, los datos específicos de las personas que solicitan el ingreso y la concordancia con las políticas, planes, proyectos y programas educativos establecidos por la Autoridad Educativa Nacional. Previo a la autorización, la Dirección Distrital correspondiente verificará el cumplimiento de la normativa vigente.
2. Las personas que pretendan ingresar a las instituciones educativas para realizar alguna actividad en la que participen estudiantes, deben recibir, previamente, una capacitación en protocolos de actuación frente a situaciones de violencia detectadas o cometidas en el sistema educativo. En caso que, las personas representeo a una entidad, organización o fundación, deberán recibir esta capacitación quienes efectivamente ingresarán a la institución educativa. Este proceso lo realizará directamente la Dirección Distrital de Educación, a través del Departamento de Consejería Estudiantil (DECE) de apoyo al Distrito, mediante la metodología que se remitirá para el efecto.
3. Además de la capacitsción, las personas ingresarán a la institución educativa tendrán que suscribir, de manera indelegable e intransferible, la carta de compromiso de no vulneración de derechos a niñas, niños y adolescentes.

Gobierno del Encuentro | Juntos lo logramos

1/2

República del Ecuador

Ministerio de Educación

Oficio Nro. MINEDUC-CZ5-02D01-2022-2688-OF

Guaranda, 30 de septiembre de 2022

Las actividades deben enmarcarse en procesos exclusivamente educativos y pedagógicos y que sean concordantes con las políticas, planes, proyectos y programas educativos establecidos por los distintos niveles desconcentrados de la Autoridad Educativa Nacional.
Se recalca que se prohíbe, de forma expresa, la realización de cualquier tipo de actividad proselitista, conforme lo establecido a la circular Nro. MINEDUC-SIEBV-2019. A su vez, se solicita vigilar el cumplimiento de las "responsabilidades del Ministerio de Educación para actuación en hechos vinculados con drogas y allanamientos policiales e instituciones educativas", remitido mediante circular Nro.
MINEDUC-SIEBV-2019-00002-C, de 14 de mayo de 2019.

Una vez cumplidos con todos los puntos en mención, se AUTORIZA su petición.

Con sentimientos de distinguida consideración.

Atentamente,

Documento firmado electrónicamente

Lcdo. William Estuardo Angulo López
DIRECTOR DISTRITAL - 02D01 GUARANDA EDUCACIÓN

Referencias:
- MINEDUC-CZ5-02D01-UDAC-2022-3308-E

Anexos:
- img20220928_11202502_0409.pdf

Copia:
Señor Psicólogo
Rodrigo Timoshenko García Aveiros
Coordinador Distrital del Departamento de Consejería Estudiantil

RG

WILLIAN ESTUARDO ANGULO LOPEZ

APPENDIX 2: PRETEST

CG | EG

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador | Sede Ambato

AUDIO-ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE READING FLUENCY IN TEENAGERS

Name: _____ Age: _____

INSTRUCCIONES

El presente ejercicio es parte de la investigación "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". Debe leer en voz alta un texto, cuando comience a leerlo por favor presione el botón "START" en el cronómetro entregado. Una vez haya acabado de leer, presione "STOP" ¡Muchas gracias!

INSTRUCTIONS

The following exercise is part of the research project "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". You have to read aloud a passage, please press the timer's button "START" when you start reading the text. Once you have finished, press "STOP". Thanks!

PASSAGE

One kind of boat is a sailboat. A sailboat uses the wind to move. The sailboat moves when the wind blows. One kind of boat is called a motorboat. A motorboat uses a motor to move. The motor gives power to the boat. The motorboat makes a loud noise.

RESEARCHER USE ONLY

TIME (s): _____ ERRORS (/49): _____

CG | EG

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador | Sede Ambato

TEST DE COMPRENSIÓN LECTORA

Name: _____ Age: _____

INSTRUCCIONES

El presente ejercicio es parte de la investigación "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". Esta NO es una prueba calificada. Por favor, lea atentamente cada oración y ENCIERRE "YES" (sí) o "NO" (no) según corresponda de acuerdo al texto leído.

INSTRUCTIONS

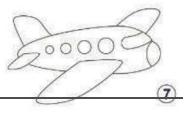
The following questions are part of the research project "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". This is NOT a graded test. Please, read each statement carefully and CIRCLE YES or NO according to the text that you read.

EXAMPLE

Text: Christmas is my favorite holiday. My grandmother makes ham, salad, and cupcakes on Christmas. Halloween is another good holiday. My grandmother makes candy corn and cupcakes on Halloween.

N°	STATEMENT	YES	NO
1	My favorite holiday is Halloween.	YES	NO

For each statement, circle YES or NO.

N°	STATEMENT	YES	NO
1	The text is about boats.	YES	NO
2	This picture shows a boat: 	YES	NO

APPENDIX 3: POSTTEST

CG | EG

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador | Sede Ambato

AUDIO-ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE READING FLUENCY IN TEENAGERS

Name: _____ Age: _____

INSTRUCCIONES

El presente ejercicio es parte de la investigación "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". Debe leer en voz alta un texto, cuando comience a leerlo por favor presione el botón "START" en el cronómetro entregado. Una vez haya acabado de leer, presione "STOP" ¡Muchas gracias!

INSTRUCTIONS

The following exercise is part of the research project "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". You have to read aloud a passage, please press the timer's button "START" when you start reading the text. Once you have finished, press "STOP". Thanks!

PASSAGE

Nancy was new to America. She came to America speaking only her native language. She brought her son with her. He was all she had in the world. They found an apartment in Arcadia. They were there for only two months when a neighbor's dog jumped over the fence.

RESEARCHER USE ONLY

TIME (s): _____ ERRORS (/49): _____

CG | EG

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador | Sede Ambato

TEST DE COMPRENSIÓN LECTORA

Name: _____ Age: _____

INSTRUCCIONES

El presente ejercicio es parte de la investigación "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". Esta NO es una prueba calificada. Por favor, lea atentamente cada oración y ENCIERRE "YES" (sí) o "NO" (no) según corresponda de acuerdo al texto leído.

INSTRUCTIONS

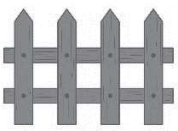
The following questions are part of the research project "Audio-assisted reading technique to improve reading fluency in teenagers". This is NOT a graded test. Please, read each statement carefully and CIRCLE YES or NO according to the text that you read.

EXAMPLE

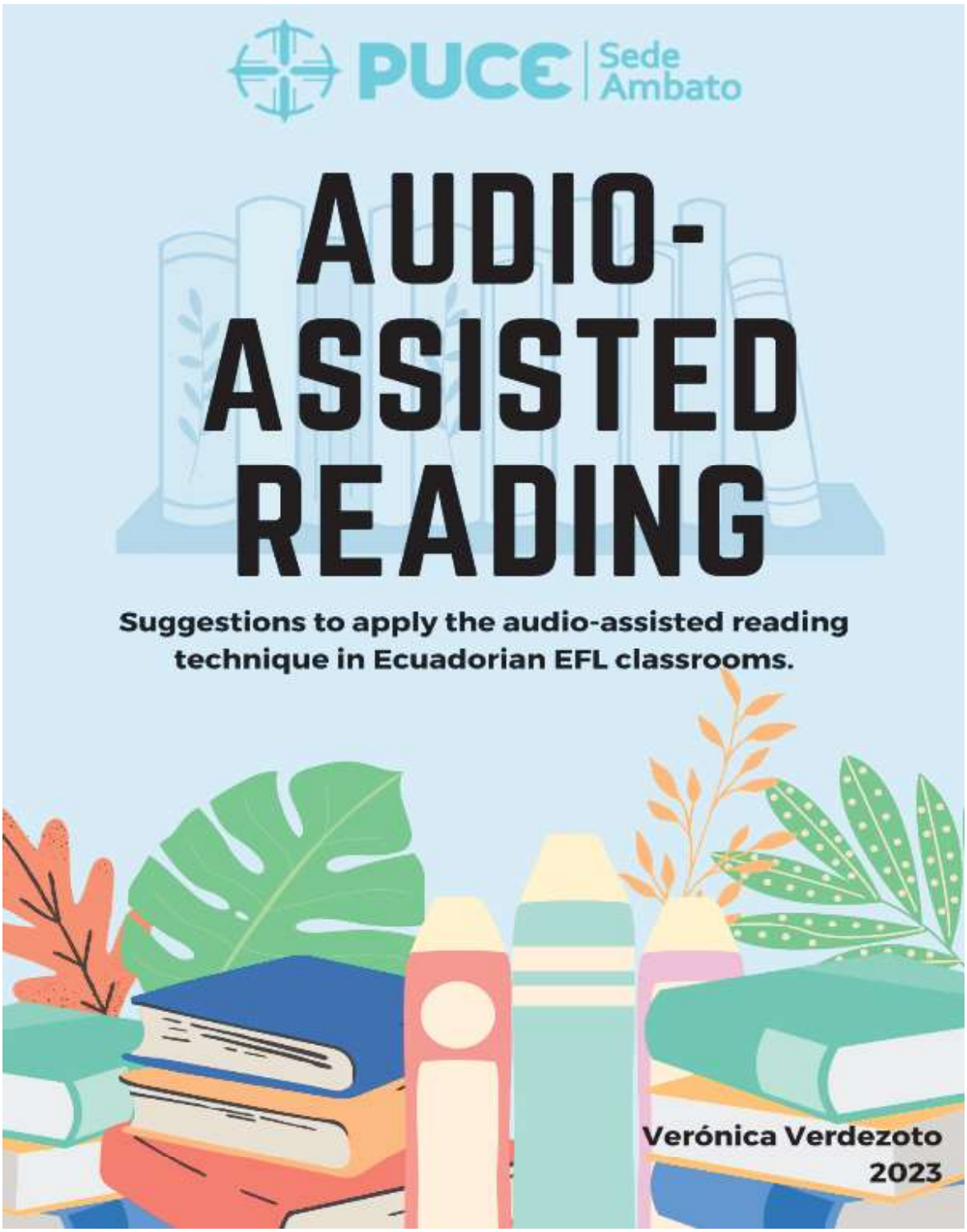
Text: Christmas is my favorite holiday. My grandmother makes ham, salad, and cupcakes on Christmas. Halloween is another good holiday. My grandmother makes candy corn and cupcakes on Halloween.

N°	STATEMENT	YES	NO
1	My favorite holiday is Halloween.	YES	NO

For each statement, circle YES or NO.

N°	STATEMENT	YES	NO
1	Nancy can speak English.	YES	NO
2	This picture shows a fence: 	YES	NO

APPENDIX 4: SUGGESTIONS TO APPLY THE AUDIO-ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE



WHAT IS THE AUDIO-ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE?

The audio-assisted reading technique is a strategy designed to help learners improve their reading skills by using audio recordings. This technique can utilize various types of audio resources, including role models such as teachers or proficient instructors and recordings of native speakers.

By having access to a role model, learners are able to read challenging texts, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their comprehension and fluency from the initial stages of language acquisition. This technique provides a valuable opportunity for learners to bridge the gap between listening and reading skills.

When working with audio-assisted reading, learners should engage in certain actions to ensure effectiveness. These actions include following along with the reading while listening to the audio, reading aloud, and independently rereading the text.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH THE AUDIO-ASSISTED READING TECHNIQUE?

The audio-assisted reading technique is an effective way to help students improve in various aspects of reading. This technique helps learners to be exposed to different inputs.

By utilizing this technique, students can increase their reading rates and ability to recognize vocabulary, while also enhancing their comprehension skills. This technique also serves as a valuable model for proper pronunciation, particularly when learning English from the very beginning.

Moreover, working with the audio-assisted reading technique can boost motivation and develop a positive attitude towards reading.

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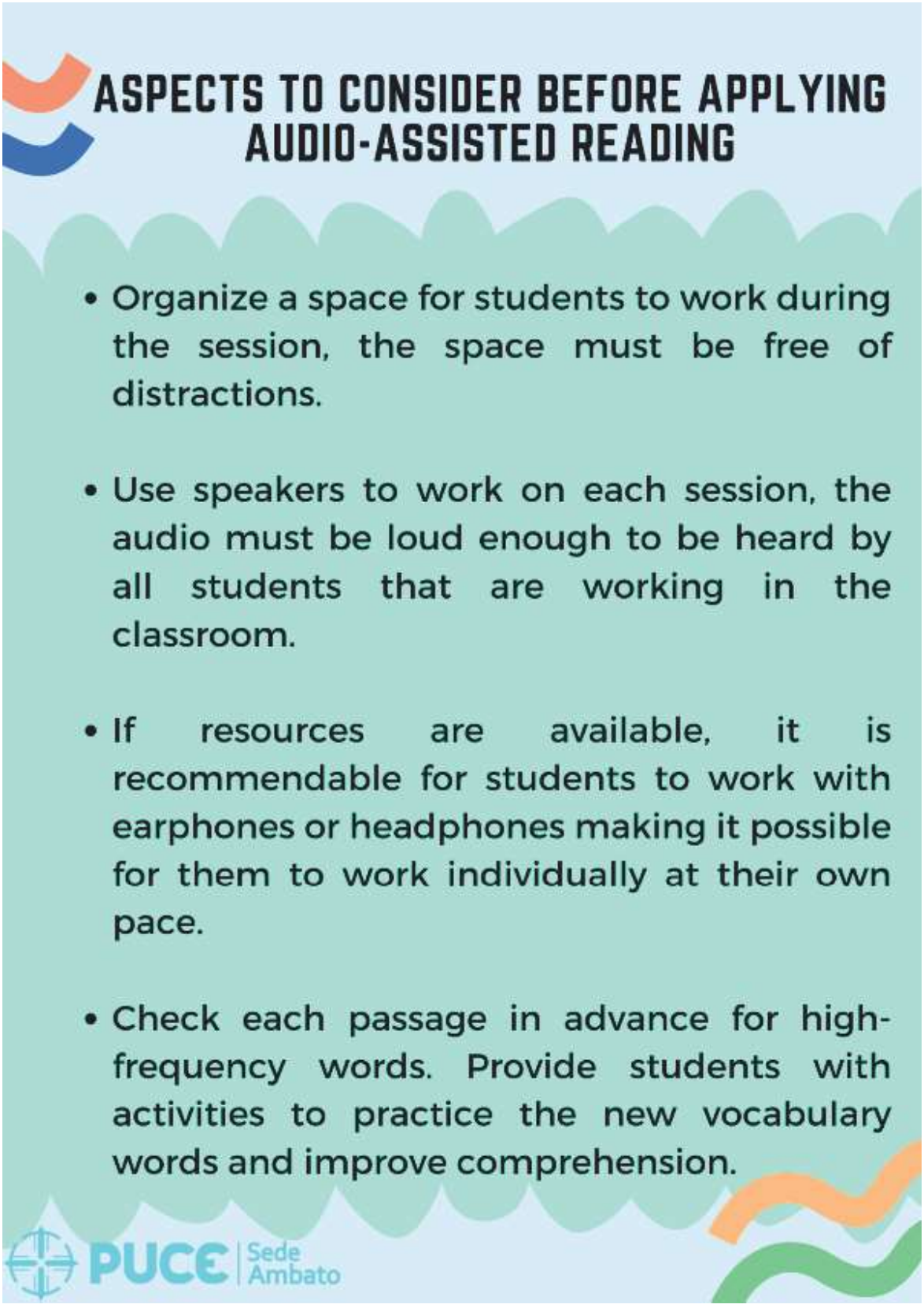
ASPECTS TO CONSIDER BEFORE APPLYING AUDIO-ASSISTED READING

- Before applying this technique, it is crucial to determine the reading speed of the students. To do so, teachers can use self-paced reading instruments. If resources are available, teachers can work in computer laboratories applying self-paced reading activities.
- Once the reading speed has been measured, teachers need to choose an appropriate text for students to read. It should take between 3 to 5 minutes to be read. This represents enough challenge for students to work with repeated reading.
- Provide students with the passage to be read in advance. The materials might be printed or digital according to the available resources in the classroom. It is a good idea to work with readings that students have in their textbooks. Additionally, some online options offer a variety of texts with audio such as StoryNory or LibriVox.


ASPECTS TO CONSIDER BEFORE APPLYING AUDIO-ASSISTED READING
• Organize a space for students to work during the session, the space must be free of distractions.
• Use speakers to work on each session, the audio must be loud enough to be heard by all students that are working in the classroom.
• If resources are available, it is recommendable for students to work with earphones or headphones making it possible for them to work individually at their own pace.
• Check each passage in advance for high-frequency words. Provide students with activities to practice the new vocabulary words and improve comprehension.
PUCE Sede Ambato

AUDIO-ASSISTED READING STEPS IN A READING SESSION

During the reading session

- Explain the goals to the class and how the session will be carried out.
- Explain in detail the instructions for the session emphasizing that they need to read along and not just listen to the text. Remind them that they can use a finger to trace the text while listening to the audio.
- Give written instructions to the students so they can refer to them while doing the exercise.
- Play the audio and ask students to follow the text with their eyes while listening to it.
- Play the audio one more time and ask students to read along with the text while listening to the audio (follow the text with a finger).

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AUDIO-ASSISTED READING STEPS IN A READING SESSION

During the reading session

- Play the audio a second time and ask students to read aloud the text while listening to the audio.
- Ask students to read the text by themselves without listening to the audio. Students will mark words that are difficult for them to read.
- Play the audio again, at least three more times, and have students read along until they feel confident enough to read the text without listening to the audio.
- Ask students to read the text without listening to the audio.
- Provide a self-monitoring chart for students to record their progress focusing on speed, phrasing, and expression.

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AUDIO-ASSISTED READING STEPS IN A READING SESSION

NOTES:

- Students need to fluently read the given text in 95% before changing to another reading.
- Before continuing with another text, provide students with vocabulary and yes/no questions about the texts.
- Each reading session can last between 10 to 20 minutes.
- It is important to make sure that students are following the text while listening to the audio.
- It is a good idea to work with readings that students have in their textbooks. Additionally, some online options offer a variety of texts such as StoryNory or LibriVox.

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ON LINE RESOURCES FOR AUDIO BOOKS

NAME	INFORMATION	LINK
StoryNory	Free audio source. More than 600 audios. It shows stories and factual information.	https://www.storynory.com/
Open Culture	Offers free audio books, courses, lessons, and educational videos.	https://www.openculture.com/freeaudiobooks
Internet Archive	Open digital library with audio books, audio recordings, videos, images, and software programs.	https://archive.org/details/audiolibrary
LibriVox	Webpage with audio books read by real people.	https://librivox.org/

ON LINE RESOURCES FOR AUDIO BOOKS

NAME	INFORMATION	LINK
Learn Out Loud	Online page that provides free audio book, courses, documentaries, etc.	https://www.learnoutloud.com/Free-Audiobooks
Project Gutenberg	Online library that offers a variety of ebooks about a wide range of genres.	https://www.gutenberg.org/browse/categories/1
Lit2Go	Online repository of poem and stories available in Mp3.	https://fcit.usf.edu/category/lit2go-audiobooks/
ESL YES!	Webpage that offers 1600 free short stories for English learners.	https://eslyes.com/

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APPENDIX 5: STUDENT'S MATERIAL


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AUDIO-ASSISTED READING
SELF-MONITORING CHART
AFTER COMPLETING THE SESSION, PLEASE FILL OUT THIS CHART:
HOW WELL DID I DO TODAY?
SPEED
PHRASING
Chunking words together
EXPRESSION
Reading aloud with feeling
A NEW WORD I LEARNED TODAY IS _____


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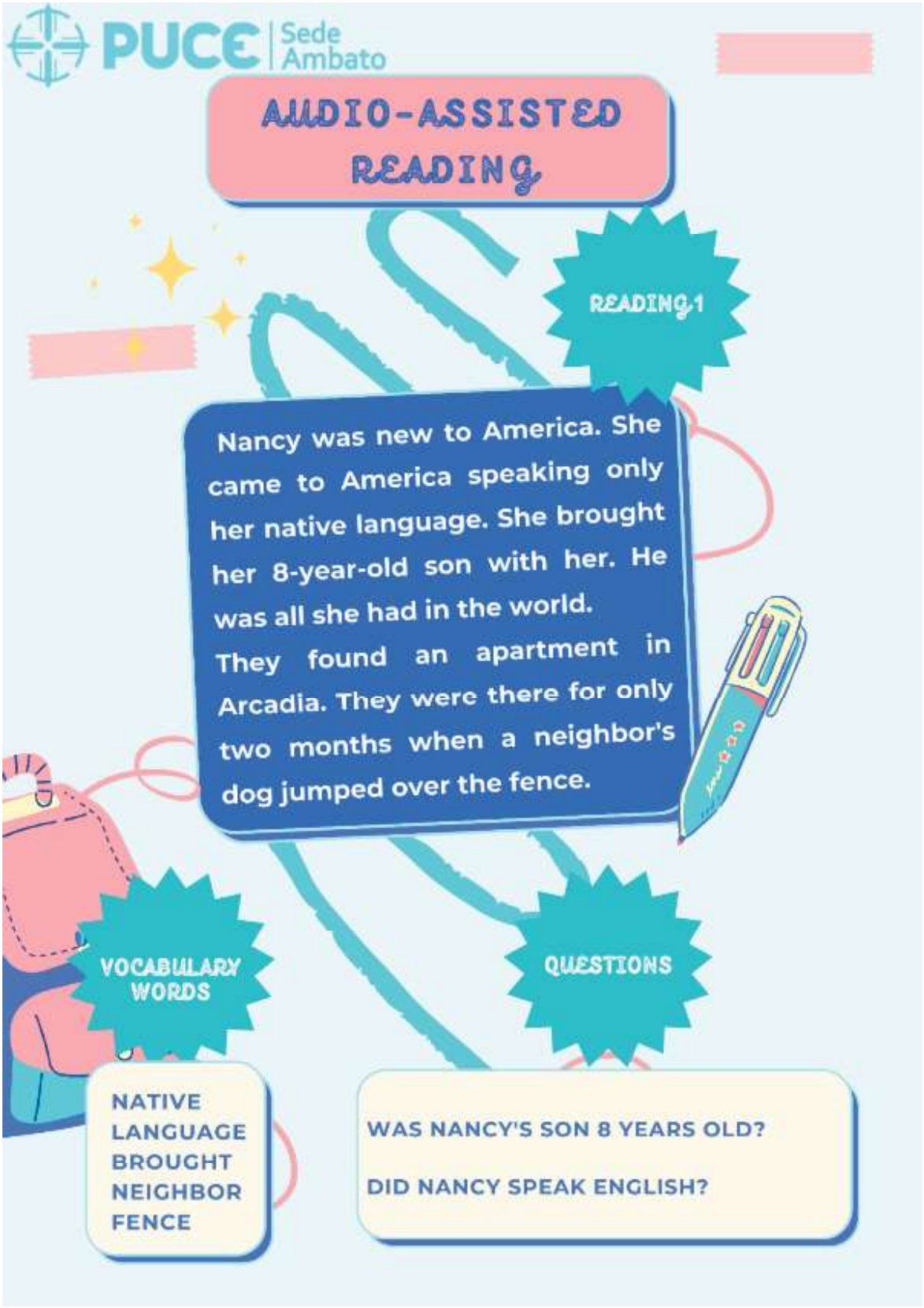
AUDIO-ASSISTED READING
INSTRUCTIONS
STEPS
1
• Listen to the audio and follow the reading with your eyes.
2
• Listen to the audio one more time and read silently the text while listening to the audio (follow the text with your finger).
3
• Listen again to the audio and read aloud the text while listening to it.
4
• Read the text without listening to the audio. Highlight the words that are difficult for you.
5
• Listen to the audio again and read the text aloud.
6
• Read the text without listening to the audio.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AUDIO-ASSISTED READING
READING 1
Nancy was new to America. She came to America speaking only her native language. She brought her 8-year-old son with her. He was all she had in the world.
They found an apartment in Arcadia. They were there for only two months when a neighbor's dog jumped over the fence.
VOCABULARY WORDS
NATIVE
LANGUAGE
BROUGHT
NEIGHBOR
FENCE
QUESTIONS
WAS NANCY'S SON 8 YEARS OLD?
DID NANCY SPEAK ENGLISH?


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AUDIO-ASSISTED READING
READING 2
It was time for a haircut. Lenny didn't even have to look in the mirror. Even though he was going bald, he knew that he needed to cut his hair every two weeks.
He had a "tongue" of hair on the top of his head. His hair was thinning at the crown.
VOCABULARY WORDS
HAIRCUT
MIRROR
BALD
TONGUE OF HAIR
CROWN
QUESTIONS
WAS HE GOING BALD?
DID HE NEED TO CUT HIS HAIR EVERY WEEK?

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AUDIO-ASSISTED READING

READING 3

Gordon was hungry. He opened the refrigerator. There must be something in here to eat, he thought. There was a single hot dog.

He took it out of its package and put a small frying pan onto the stove's gas burner. He turned on the heat. Then he poured a little bit of vegetable oil into the pan.

VOCABULARY WORDS

HUNGRY
THOUGHT
SINGLE
PACKAGE
FRYING PAN
STOVE
GAS BURNER
POUR
OIL

QUESTIONS

DID HE PUT A LARGE FRYING PAN ONTO THE BURNER?

DID HE TAKE THE HOT DOG OUT OF ITS PACKAGE?