



Classifying Parts of Speech through Google Sheets to Improve Reading Comprehension in
EFL Learners

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Proyectos de Investigación

Certifico que AMANDA SOFIA MOREIRA BAQUERIZO ha cumplido satisfactoriamente su investigación acción como pre-requisito de graduación de Magíster en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros con Mención en la Enseñanza de Inglés.

Su investigación es parte del proyecto *Classifying Parts of Speech through Google Sheets to Improve Reading Comprehension in EFL Learners* cuyo objetivo general es conocer si aprender vocabulario a través de la función en contexto tiene un efecto en la comprensión lectora.

El proyecto se implementa en diez contextos y niveles de eficiencia en inglés diferentes. En este proyecto, cada participante desarrolla la investigación-acción en un contexto educativo diferente. Las secciones de literatura y metodología (instrumentos y análisis de datos) son las mismas.

Particular que comunico para los fines consiguientes.

María Rossana Ramírez Avila

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find out whether word recognition through parts of speech classification using Google sheets improves reading comprehension in a group of 22 participants at a private school in Guayaquil. A mixed-method design was used to gather quantitative and qualitative data. Pre and post tests were used to measure students' reading comprehension and quantify the number of words classified into parts of speech. After the innovation, it was demonstrated that participants increased their reading comprehension and improved their ability on word recognition through its classification into parts of speech. A medium effect size of 0.53 was calculated in reading comprehension results while a large effect size of 1.63 in parts of speech. Similarly, p values of 0.002 and 0.000 respectively indicated that the results did not occur by chance. Additionally, student's perspectives towards learning vocabulary were measured with pre and post surveys using a Likert scale. It was shown that students improved their perspective after the innovation. These findings demonstrated that classifying vocabulary into parts of speech is an effective technique that can be used by teachers and learners in EFL reading comprehension classes.

Key words: reading comprehension, parts of speech, vocabulary, word recognition, Google sheets

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Resumen

El propósito de esta investigación fue descubrir si el reconocimiento de palabras a través la clasificación de las partes del discurso usando hojas de cálculo de Google mejora la comprensión lectora de un grupo de 22 participantes en una escuela privada en Guayaquil. Se aplicó un diseño de método mixto para recopilar información cuantitativa y cualitativa. Una prueba previa y una posterior fueron usadas para medir la comprensión lectora de los estudiantes y contabilizar el número de palabras clasificadas en partes del discurso.

Después de la innovación fue demostrado que los participantes aumentaron su comprensión lectora y mejoraron su habilidad en reconocimiento de palabras a través de su clasificación en partes del discurso. Un efecto medio de 0,53 fue calculado en los resultados de comprensión lectora mientras que un efecto largo de 1,63 en partes del discurso. Así mismo, valores p de 0,002 y 0,000 respectivamente indicaron que los resultados no ocurrieron por casualidad. Adicionalmente, la perspectiva de los estudiantes respecto al aprendizaje de vocabulario fue medido con una encuesta previa y una posterior usando la escala de Likert. Fue demostrado que los estudiantes cambiaron su perspectiva después de la innovación. Estos hallazgos demuestran que la clasificación de vocabulario en partes del discurso es una técnica efectiva que puede ser usada por profesores y aprendices en clases de comprensión lectora en inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: comprensión lectora, partes del discurso, vocabulario, reconocimiento de palabras, hojas de cálculo de Google

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Classifying Parts of Speech through Google Sheets to Improve Reading Comprehension in EFL Learners

Nowadays learning a second language has become a necessity for many people in different contexts. Knowing English not only opens doors professionally but enables people to break cultural barriers around the world. According to the English Proficiency Index, English is a necessity for many interactions in our globalized world so the cost of not speaking it increases rapidly (Education First, 2018). For this reason, in Ecuador, English is the foreign language taught at formal schools. Learners face the necessity of domain the four skills to successfully communicate (listening, speaking, reading and writing). This research was applied to high school students and was focused on classifying vocabulary into parts of speech to improve reading comprehension using Google Drive sheets as a technological tool.

According to Maley and Prowse reading involves an incredible and complex set of mental processes that, well developed, lead readers to affective, cognitive and linguistic benefits (as cited in Tomlinson, 2013). As Grabe (1995) claimed, it is known that reading is not only decoding words but constructing meaning, being reading comprehension the primary purpose of it (as cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002). Furthermore, reading can affect positively other skills, Krashen stated that it can improve comprehension, spelling, vocabulary, writing style, and grammar development (2004). Additionally, learning vocabulary is intrinsically related to the improvement of reading comprehension, Richards and Renandya said that it influences significantly the development of learners' reading abilities, besides being a key component of language proficiency (2002).

On the other hand, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a valuable tool to enhance teaching and learning (Maduabuchi & Emecheb, 2016), thus technology

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can be used as a powerful channel to facilitate language learning, not only increasing students' motivation but also facilitating educators' teaching practices. Although, using it in teaching and learning reading comprehension and vocabulary, it may have some pros and cons. In a study done by Maduabuchi and Emechbe to secondary English teachers using ICT in teaching reading comprehension, some findings were found: the improvement of vocabulary building in students, the excitement about reading comprehension lessons which promoted meaningful learning, versus difficulties as problems in classroom control, student's distraction, lack of infrastructure, and poor teachers' training using technology in their classrooms, among others (2016).

About the context of learning and teaching English as a foreign language in Ecuador, there has been a strengthening of it in the recent years. Now English has been included as mandatory since the elementary school. Moreover, the Ministry of Education has aligned the curriculum to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), and it has been designed following the communicative approach (Ministerio de Educación, 2014). At the same time, there are standards that English teachers must accomplish through their educational practices, the Ministry of Education organized these standards into five domains: language, culture, evaluation, curricular development and professionalism, and ethical commitment. It is worth mentioning that in the curricular development section it is included the effective use of technological resources in English and content instruction. (Ministerio de Educación, 2012).

As a consequence, it is expected that, by the end of high school, students can reach the B1 level as described in the CEFR. Thus, the five domains previously mentioned are connected with the four language skills expected to be developed by students, speaking, listening, reading and writing, encountered in the English Language Learning Standards

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(ELLS). The standards for reading involve: a) understanding and identifying longer, more complex expository, procedural, narrative, and transactional texts as well as simple persuasive texts with a satisfactory level of comprehension; b) Using appropriate interpretation strategies to deal with the corresponding text types (Ministerio de Educación, 2012).

In spite of the fact that English curriculum has been improved and the standards are established, there is still a gap between theory and practice. Although students are expected to reach B1 level by the end of secondary education, this goal has not been accomplished yet, especially in public institutions, that are most of the schools in the country. The National Institute of Educational Evaluation (Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa [INEE], 2016) indicates that public institutions embrace 76% of Unified General Baccalaureate students from Ecuador. This kind of gaps not only exists in Ecuador but in Latin America. In a study done by Education First (2018), it is mentioned that UNESCO test results indicate that 30% of third-grade pupils in Latin America have not achieved the basic competency in literacy.

This innovation was applied in a private school in Guayaquil-Ecuador, with a group of twenty-two 10th graders. In order to measure the level of the students in reading comprehension, it was done a Pre-test with A2 level. In concordance with the gap mentioned before, the test indicated a low score related to the CEFR level expected from 10th graders by the Ministry of Education. In addition, analyzing the results of a survey done also as a preliminary action to start this innovation, regarding to ICT, it was found that even though most of the students were familiar with the use of Excel program to work on subjects as mathematics or statistics, they were not used to practice vocabulary with it or learn anything related to language, even more, most of them were unfamiliar with the use of

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Google Drive as an ICT tool applied for learning. Besides this, the survey also questioned their motivation towards reading, the results showed that most of the students were not used to read even in L1, the main reasons were, lack of motivation and not having enough time to read.

Research has proven that vocabulary is key in becoming proficient readers. A study conducted by Ruiz (2019) to a group of students from an English Academy in the city of Loja-Ecuador, demonstrated that the technique of classifying parts of speech has effective results in improving reading comprehension. Similarly, two studies applied to university students from Babahoyo city in Ecuador showed positive results in reading comprehension through classifying parts of speech, they confirmed that knowing vocabulary form raises students' awareness to identify and classify words correctly, thus improving word recognition and reading comprehension (Almache, 2019; Contreras, 2019). It is worth mentioning that these three studies used Google sheet as a technological tool to classify words into parts of speech.

Therefore, the objective of this study was to improve reading comprehension through the classification of words according to their parts of speech in a shared drive sheet document using Google Drive. It was also expected to determine students' perspectives towards learning vocabulary before and after the innovation. Owing to the needs of the participants and the aims of this study, the following questions were addressed:

- To what extent does “classifying vocabulary into parts of speech” through the use of Google Sheets improve reading comprehension skills?
- Do students' perspectives of learning vocabulary change as a result of the innovation?

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Literature Review

In order to have a deeper understanding of the literature related to this innovation, in this section are explained the variables under study and all the concepts involved in it. Having as dependent variable the skill of reading comprehension and as independent variable classifying vocabulary into parts of speech through Google sheet tool. Moreover, it includes concepts related to: Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT), vocabulary and parts of speech, skimming and scanning techniques, technology for education, reading and vocabulary, perspectives, and Backwards Design planning.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach

Richards and Rodgers (2014) refer to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an approach that makes communicative competence the goal of language teaching. Teaching procedures of the four skills focus on the interdependence between language and communication. Knowing that language's first purpose is to communicate the speaker's objectives or needs, CLT comprises a fairly broad approach which not only frames the functional aspect of language but also encompasses the structural side of it (Littlewood, 1981). In a CLT methodology, students learn a language through the process of communicating it, trying to keep fluency despite communicative competence limitations. If this communication is meaningful, students learn better than uniquely following a grammar based approach that only focuses on repetition and memorization to achieve accuracy (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Therefore, the goal of teachers through CLT practices is to achieve in students both, fluency and accuracy. On one hand, fluency through activities that lead learners to the meaningful use of language, negotiation of meaning and the use of communication

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strategies, on the other hand, to achieve accuracy by the formation of correct examples of language. Nevertheless, CLT could result in some language gaps, Richards and Rodgers (2014) mentioned the possibility of fossilization, when students develop fluency at the expense of accuracy, having good communication skills but poor grammar command.

Other authors state that CLT is not applicable in different cultures of learning, Vasilopoulos (2008) referred to people being skeptical in Korea about the effectiveness of this approach, and Chowdhry (2003) said that in Bangladesh students complain that teachers doing CLT activities are not teaching because they seem to have lost their authority over the classroom, hence some students do not feel familiar with the new style of CLT methodology.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a skill that allows readers to understand a text by processing the information and making connections with their previous knowledge. According to Oakhill, Cain, and Elbro (2014), in order to successfully understand a longer text the reader's comprehension must embrace the understanding of single words, sentences, connected prose and outline. In this way, these authors explained that reading comprehension is a complex process that involves a range of cognitive skills and abilities such as word recognition, knowledge of vocabulary, syntactic skills, memory and discourse skills. In other words, reading comprehension is not only the mere process of reading words, it is about making inferences to determine implicit meanings in a text and not only recalling information from it (Hall, Vaughn, Barnes, Stewart, Austin & Roberts, 2019).

On the other hand, being aware of the meaning of the words enables the readers to have a deeper understanding of what is being read, this was demonstrated through a study done by Binder, Cote, Lee, Bessette and Vu (2016) where it was proved a high correlation

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between vocabulary mastery in students and their level of comprehension skills. Likewise, the researchers August, Carlo, Dressler and Snow (2005) indicated that the lack of vocabulary limited reading comprehension and development of metalinguistic skills in English Language Learners (ELL), leading them to have a poor academic achievement. Similarly, a study applied to English university students in Malaysia showed that vocabulary size enhanced their reading comprehension as the higher students' mastery in vocabulary size was, the higher their performance in reading comprehension was (Ibrahim, Sarudin & Muhamad, 2016).

Vocabulary and Parts of Speech

Therefore, teaching vocabulary must be an important issue for teachers, who must apply various techniques that allow students to acquire new vocabulary in a fluid and correct way. As it was said by the researchers Moeller, Ketsman, and Masmaliyeva (2009) "One of the major roles of the teacher then becomes to assist students to learn vocabulary as well as to equip them with strategies for learning words" (p. 1).

According to Hunt and Beglar, there are three approaches to vocabulary teaching and learning: incidental learning, explicit instruction, and independent strategy development. Incidental learning results as a product of doing other things that imply English such as reading or listening; explicit instruction depends on identifying specific vocabulary-acquisition for learners; and, the independent strategy development is about teaching strategies for inferring words from context and retaining the meaning of those words. These two researchers recommended the combination of these three approaches when teaching vocabulary to English learners (as cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Undoubtedly, learning vocabulary is essential to understand readings and it must be viewed as a multidimensional structure rather than be considered in a single dimension.

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(Moghadam, Zainal, & Ghaderpour, 2012). Vocabulary depth implies knowledge of different word's components as semantic (conceptual relation between words), syntactic (grammatical structure of language) and morphological ones (how words are formed), these components play a key role in reading and writing abilities (Proctor, Silverman, Harring, & Montecillo, 2012).

Following this line, parts of speech is one of the dimensions of vocabulary knowledge, Schachter and Shopen claimed that it refers to the major classes of words grammatically distinguished in a language (2010). Parts of speech allow readers to interpret the meaning of words written in sentences that form a passage. According to Sukanya and Nutprapha, it helps learners to understand and use the target language better, if they manage parts of speech, they can be able to listen, speak, read, or write English effectively (2017). The five classes of parts of speech included in this study are: *nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions*. Nouns refer to people's names, places and things. Verbs refer to actions. Adjectives describe or qualify nouns. Adverbs modify adjectives, verbs or other adverbs (Schachter & Shopen, 2010). And Conjunctions connect, words, phrases, clauses and occasionally sentences (Ilysh, 1969).

Skimming and Scanning

Besides the help of managing parts of speech to understand written texts, the application of strategies while reading is also useful. As stated by Fauzi (2018), skimming and scanning are reading strategies that help readers to improve comprehension. This researcher also referred to authors as Beale, Macleod, and Brown who suggested that the lack of reading strategies turns comprehension into a problematic issue for readers. Both reading strategies, skimming and scanning, are used to find relevant information in a text,

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through them the reader can cover large amounts of material with only a preview. Liao (2011) explained that while scanning is a strategy used to search for key words or ideas, skimming is used to quickly identify main ideas of a text. Usually once readers have scanned the text, the next step is to go back and skim it.

Some of the activities done while skimming a text are: read the title of the text, examine the introduction of the book or document, read the first paragraph completely and then analyze the first sentences of each section, among others (Blitary, 2016). On the other hand, when scanning readers look for organizers such as numbers or letters, keywords or words that are bold faced, italics or in a different size-style-color, in order to find answers to specific questions (Fauzi, 2018).

Technology for Education, Reading, and Vocabulary

The use of technology in the classroom is also a beneficial tool in teaching and learning English as a foreign or a second language. As found by the researchers Godzicki, Godzicki, Krofel and Michaels (2013), students tend to engage more in classes where technology is used, when learners are immersed in technology-supported learning environments their motivation and participation in class increases.

Regarding reading comprehension and vocabulary, Lee and Lomicka stated that learners can easily have access to help in decoding the meaning of words, explanations or translations through glosses or online aids available in multimedia resources, which facilitate their improvement in vocabulary and reading comprehension (as cited in Moeller, Ketsman, & Masmaliyeva, 2009). Likewise, Maduabuchi and Emechebe (2016) claimed that some of the most significant prospects of using ICT in teaching reading comprehension include the improvement in vocabulary building and usage through the use of online

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dictionaries, the promotion of meaningful learning experiences in students through their natural excitement using ICT in lessons, among others.

Despite technology is expected to transform the classroom, some problems are prevalent in the use of ICT. One of the issues that are still faced is teachers using technology to sustain their existing practices or their teacher-centered approach, in this case, technology does not have the desired effect (Godzicki, Godzicki, Krofel, & Michaels, 2013). Similarly, Maduabuchi and Emechebe (2016) found through a study that most ESL teachers have never tried to apply technological tools while teaching reading comprehension despite being computer literate. Some other teachers only preferred conventional methods because they did not feel comfortable with ICT use. These researchers mention as problems found while using ICT in teaching reading comprehension: difficulty in the classroom control due to the excitement of students and distraction by irrelevant websites.

Google Drive

Collaborative work and technology can easily work together and, as a result, have higher benefits in teaching and learning. Being possible to build up knowledge from collaborative interaction with others through socially web-based learning, students can complete assignments, creating and negotiating meaning (Gale, 2003). Google Drive is a collaborative virtual tool that works as a Gmail application. In this virtual space users can store, share, and edit documents in real time with different users. In a study done by Brescó and Verdú (2014) to university students using and comparing Google Drive with other virtual tools, it was found a positive reaction towards Google Drive. Even though most of them did not know about it for being a relatively new tool on the web, they qualified

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Google Drive as a great help to work in groups and maintain communication through participants, which increased their motivation and group implication in shared activities.

At the same time, Google Drive is free software used to create and share documents online, with the possibility of collaborating in a group simultaneously, it encompasses other apps as Docs and Sheets (Ferrón & Cañizares, 2014). According to online information shown at Google platform, some of the characteristics of Google sheets are: it is free, users can create, edit and collaborate wherever they are, it can be used through phones, tablets or computers, all changes are automatically saved while modifying the sheet, it works with Excel - users can convert Excel files into Google sheets and vice versa, among others.

Despite, there are not studies regarding the use of Google sheet for classifying parts of speech to improve reading comprehension, it was decided to use this technological tool to not only increase student's collaborative work and motivation in reading comprehension lessons but also to demonstrate how useful it could be to classify parts of speech and its impact in vocabulary acquisition.

Perspectives

To know the impact of this innovation on students it is necessary to measure their perspectives towards the use of Google Drive to learn vocabulary. Through different studies it has been proved that student's perspectives are positive regarding the use of Google Drive, as they perceived it friendly-user and useful for academic work (Sadik, 2016; Brescó & Verdú, 2014). Thus, it can be said that after the use of useful innovations student's perspectives might change.

Backwards Design

Finally, for this innovation it was necessary to plan a sequence of activities in class aimed at achieving the desired objective of the research. Therefore, backwards design was

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used to direct the activities during the innovation time. According to Wiggins and McTighe (2011) planning must be like a GPS that guide the process of teaching, having clarity about the desired learning outcomes first and the evidence that will show that learning has occurred. Therefore, the three stages of backwards design to follow are: 1) Identifying desired results, 2) determining acceptable evidence, and 3) planning learning experiences. With these stages the process of teaching is more than just thinking of activities to do in class, but to think first about what the teacher wants the students be able to reach at the end of the lesson so then the activities are designed for achieving that purpose.

Innovation

The innovation was about classifying vocabulary into parts of speech using Google sheets to enhance reading comprehension. It was applied to 10th grade students with an A2.1 level. The books considered were: “The Witches of Pendle”, “White Death” and “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe”. The first two options were selected by the students from five other novels, the last book was selected by the teacher. All of them were narrative texts, having the first two books an A1+ level and the last one an A2+ level. As in the first part of the innovation the students were able to choose the book they wanted to read, the class was divided by their preferences, at the second part of the innovation all of them read the same book but the groups were the same. Participants read the chapters and updated the list of new words according to the text context and their classification using the Google sheet to work individually and collaboratively with their groups.

For the implementation, the lessons were planned using the backwards design model (See appendix 1). The innovation lasted six weeks with four class hours each, a total of 24 class hours (40 minutes each). The four periods a week were

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divided into two of laboratory practice and two of classroom work. There were included six class hours of induction and six autonomous extra hours for assignments.

During the first weeks of the innovation, the technological tool “Google sheets” was introduced and its use through Google Drive, first the students did an initial survey about the use of this technological tool (See appendix 2), then they started to use it in class . At this time, all the students created a Gmail account, so they could practice together with the teacher using computers in a laboratory at school. Additionally, parts of the speech were taught, especially the ones considered for this study: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and conjunctions. Finally, as an important aspect to cover, there were included in the introductory lessons the reading strategies proposed for this study: skimming and scanning.

The whole implementation embraced the following sequence of activities: First the teacher selected general words from the text and introduced them according to their context. Then, in groups students had to classify the words into parts of speech. Finally it was done a general feedback with the whole class. Students could work collaboratively in the laboratory or with printed papers in the classroom. At the middle of the innovation time, it was done a middle-term survey to measure students’ acceptance towards the project in order to determine possible changes in the activities (See appendix 3).

Regarding reading, the schema applied through the formative assessment process was: a) Before reading activities: questions to guess the content or predict what they were going to read and introduction of vocabulary in context used as a warm up to increase their motivation and awake their previous knowledge, b)While reading activities: skimming and scanning strategies with reading comprehension and vocabulary questions (See appendix 4), and c) Post reading activities: learning logs (See appendix 5).

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To work on the classification of parts of speech, besides the introductory lesson, through the formative assessment were done board games, the classification of words using Google sheets and printed papers, and mini quizzes (See appendix 6).

Additionally, students had the opportunity to perform an authentic task, becoming “Book reviewers”. They had to write their opinion and recommendations about the books they read. Explanations and examples about book reviews were included in the lessons, their performance task was done following a checklist (See appendix 7) as a rubric. At the end of their book reviews students were asked to choose vocabulary they used on their writings and to classify them into parts of speech.

Methodology

Research Methodology

This research project adapted the Action Research (AR) method. According to Edwards-Groves and Kemmis (2016), the researcher gets involved in the research itself in order to take specific action of improvement and share the results found. Besides, the instruments used provided qualitative and quantitative data, in order to help the researcher have a better understanding of the results. While quantitative data can be measured or quantified, qualitative data embraces the unquantifiable, personal, in depth, descriptive and social aspect of a source (Winter, 2000). Similarly, Hoepfl (as cited in Golafshani, 2013) claimed that while quantitative researchers seek causal determination and generalization of findings, qualitative researchers look for understanding and extrapolation to similar situations.

On one hand, quantitative data were the results obtained through the pre and posttests, to determine the impact of classifying vocabulary in reading comprehension, all quantitative data was uploaded in SPSS program to get descriptive statistics such as:

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minimum, maximum, mean, frequency and standard deviation, this last one was used to find the effect size. On the other hand, results from the learning logs and surveys (open questions specifically) provided qualitative information, useful to determine students' perspectives and the impact of the innovation to their vocabulary expansion in terms of possibility to define, apply and identify the part of speech. It is also important to mention that the reliability of the survey was given by Cronbach alpha.

Participants

This research study was conducted in a private school located in the north of Guayaquil city. A group of 22 ten graders conformed the sample group, 11 boys and 11 girls, from around 14 years old. The majority came from a medium socioeconomic status. At the moment of this study, they were attending English classes four times a week, with a total of seven class hours. A placement test from the Cambridge book "American English in Mind" was taken to know the current student's English level according to the CEFR, this was done as a pretest which results showed an A2 (Pre intermediate) proficiency level in the majority of the students with a 77% of the whole group, 9% of students got an A1 (Elementary) level, and 14% B1 (Intermediate) level.

The preliminary survey also showed that 100% of students had access to internet at home, through a computer or a mobile phone. Additionally, they considered themselves comfortable with the use of technology, 82% of the students had used Excel to work with subjects at school, however none of them had used it on English language learning. Moreover, only the 18% said that they were familiar with the use of Google Drive and Google sheets, the rest of participants had not used these technological tools, thus they had to create their Gmail accounts and learn how to use it during the project.

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Instruments

Through this research project there were used different instruments to: draw participants characteristics and to measure the variables of the study.

Demographic survey.

It was used to compile participant's basic information such as sex, age, socioeconomic situation, technology abilities they had, among others (See appendix 8). Similarly, to obtain a clear idea of their English level, it was used a proficiency English test, taken from the book English in Mind (See appendix 9). It was a printed version compound of 100 optative questions related to grammar, the use of English, and vocabulary. This test was framed in the CEFR English levels, between A1 to B1.

Variables of the study.

To address the first research question: *To what extent does "classifying vocabulary into parts of speech" through the use of Google Sheets improve reading comprehension skills?* It was applied a pre and a post tests to measure both, reading comprehension and parts of speech classification. Regarding reading comprehension, participants took a KET (A2) reading sample test, formed by five reading parts with a total of 35 options with questions such as matching, true or false, and multiple option. Additionally, to measure participant's ability on classifying parts of speech, it was adapted a second part using the same tests where students had to classify different words from the reading passages on the five word categories used for the study (noun, verb, adverbs, adjective, and conjunction) (See appendix 10).

Additionally, to address the second research question: *Do students' perspectives of learning vocabulary change as a result of the innovation?* It was used a pre and a post survey, with a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions regarding students

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perspectives towards vocabulary for reading comprehension. Both surveys were made of fourteen items to answer, with categories of totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree; with six open questions at the end (See appendix 11). Participants answered these questions following a Likert scale, which was measured with Cronbach's Alpha to certify reliability and consistency.

Additionally, qualitative data was also collected through six learning logs that participants completed during the innovation process. Each learning log was made of 2 to 3 open questions each (See appendix 4).

Data Analysis

There was a collection of quantitative and qualitative data that helped answer the two research questions established for this study and detailed below:

Research question 1: To what extent does “classifying vocabulary into parts of speech” through the use of Google Sheets improve reading comprehension skills? Regarding reading comprehension, students' grades of the pre-post tests were tabulated in an Excel spreadsheet and then transferred to SPSS program to generate descriptive statistics: minimum, maximum, media and standard deviation. Afterward, it was applied Cohen's d to get the effect size, which demonstrated if the impact of the innovation was null, small, intermediate, or large. In the same way, to analyze the results on parts of speech classification, the total of words correctly classified in the pre and posttest by students were tabulated using excel, the mean was calculated and compared between the pre and posttest results. It was also calculated the p -value that represents the statistical significance ≤ 0.05 , and determined if the results were not obtained by chance.

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Research question 2: Do students' perspectives of learning vocabulary change as a result of the innovation? There was applied pre and post surveys regarding student's perspectives towards the innovation. Student's answers were tabulated and gathered according to their similarity and the results were organized by frequencies. The same process was applied to summarise the qualitative information gathered from the learning logs students did during the different lessons.

Ethical Considerations

In order to carry out this research project, the school principal was informed about it through a letter explaining the purpose of the study. As participants identities keep anonymous in the document, it was not necessary parents' permission to conduct the research with students. However, all the participants were informed about the study and agreed on being part of it.

Results

The results of this study are based on the research questions detailed before. Regarding the first one: To what extent does “classifying vocabulary into parts of speech” through the use of Google Sheets improve reading comprehension skills? It was measured the effect size through Cohen's *d* calculation over the results of the pre and posttest. It is reported in table 1.

Table 1.

Reading comprehension pre and post tests

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	<i>p</i> -value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
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Pretest	22	4	34	19	8.28	1.61	0.002	0.531
Posttest	22	11	34	23	6.67			

Table 1 shows that from a group of 22 participants, there is a minimum score of four in the pretest and 11 in the posttest, while in both the maximum score is 34. Likewise, the mean shows a grading average in the pretest of 19 while in the posttest is 23 (the total score of reading comprehension pre and posttest was 35). These results evidence that students increased their reading comprehension through the innovation time. On the other hand, a standard deviation of 8.28 in the pretest shows that participant's individual achievements were more spread from the mean than 6.67 in the posttest, which indicates that after the innovation most of students reached grades closer to the mean of 23. Additionally, Cohen's *d* of 0.53 shows a medium effect size, while the $p=0.002$ demonstrates that the results did not occurred by chance.

Table 2 summarizes the results from parts of speech classification, a comparison between the number of words students could classify correctly in the pre and posttests.

Table 2.

Comparison of the average number of words classified correctly in the pre and posttests.

	N	Min	Max	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	<i>p</i> -value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Pretest	22	11	24	3.57	-1.41	0.000	1.615
Posttest	22	16	35	4.98			

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Table 2 shows a minimum of 11 words correctly classified and a maximum of 24 in the pretest, while in the posttest there is an increase of 16 correctly classified words and a maximum of 35. These results evidence that participants extended their ability to classify vocabulary into parts of speech. Besides, the standard deviation of 4.98 shows that the results of the posttest were more spread from the mean than the pretest with 3.57. Finally, Cohen's $d= 1.615$ evidence a large effect size, and the $p=0.000$ shows the results were connected to the innovation and did not occur by chance.

Regarding the second research question: Do students' perspectives of learning vocabulary change as a result of the innovation? A comparison between the frequency of the answers from the pre and post-survey about learners perspectives on vocabulary in reading comprehension is reported in tables 3 and 4. Table 3 summarizes student's perspective towards vocabulary complexity and table 4 shows general answers towards vocabulary in reading comprehension.

Table 3.

Comparison between pre and post-survey regarding vocabulary complexity

Participants' opinion	Vocabulary complexity			
	PRE SURVEY		POST SURVEY	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Complex	9	41%	2	9%
Neutral	5	23%	8	36%
Not complex	8	36%	12	55%
TOTAL	22	100%	22	100%

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Table 3 shows that in the pre-survey the majority of participants thought learning vocabulary was complex with a total of 41%, while after the innovation they changed their perspective with only 9% of participants thinking it was complex. Similarly, there was an increase of 55% of participants in the post-test asserting that learning vocabulary is easy or not complex while before the innovation there were only 36% thinking that.

Additionally, in order to compare participants' perspectives towards vocabulary in reading comprehension there were selected seven questions from the pre and post-survey and the means of students' answers to each question were compared.

Table 4.

Comparison between pre and post-survey regarding vocabulary in reading comprehension.

QUESTIONS	Vocabulary in reading comprehension		Difference between means PRE - POST SURVEY
	Means PRE SURVEY	means POST SURVEY	
1. Understand short simple text.	4.50	4.64	0.14
2. Understand single phrases at a time.	4.55	4.64	0.09
3. Pick up familiar words or phrases in passages.	4.23	4.55	0.32
4. Understand a short text with the first reading.	3.55	4.05	0.50
5. I can skim	3.09	3.73	0.64
6. I can scan	3.36	3.73	0.36
7. When I read I translate all the words.	4.36	2.41	-1.95

It is shown in table 4 a difference between students' perspectives in regards to the questions selected from the pre and post survey. In the post survey there was a increase in

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the means from questions 1 to 6, showing that participants perceived less difficult to achieve successfully those activities. Moreover, the decrease in the mean of question 7 demonstrates that after the innovation less students felt the necessity of translating all the words while reading.

Finally, there were analysed answers gathered from learning logs, which were classified according to their similarity and frequency. In table 5 it is shown a comparison between learning log 2 and 5, done in the second week of the innovation and the fifth week respectively.

Table 5.

Comparison between answers from learning logs 2 and 5.

Learning log questions	Students' similar answers	Students' answers frequency (%)	
		LEARNING LOG 2	LEARNING LOG 5
1. Which activity did you find challenging?	Organizing words into parts of speech	65%	40%
2. Which activity required more work?	Search the meaning of words and classify them	56%	35%

Table 5 demonstrated that, with the progress of the innovation, participants perceived organizing words into parts of speech and identify the meaning of words while reading less challenging.

Discussion

Recent studies have proven that reading comprehension improves when readers are aware of the meaning of the words, showing a high correlation between vocabulary mastery

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and the level of reading comprehension skills (Binder, Cote, Lee, Bessette and Vu 2016; Agosto, Carlo, Dressler & Snow, 2005; Ibrahim, Sarudin & Muhamad, 2016). Similarly, the use of reading strategies helps learners to reach a better reading comprehension (Fauzi, 2018). In concordance to researches above, this study shows that learners' reading comprehension improved (as demonstrated in table 1) while they enhanced their vocabulary mastery and used skimming and scanning as reading strategies.

Furthermore, studies reveal that master the use of parts of speech enables readers to use the target language better and to read effectively (Sukanya and Nutprapha, 2017). The findings of the present study are similar to the statement above since it is confirmed that readers improve their classification of parts of speech (as demonstrated in table 2) in the same way they got better at reading comprehension.

Additionally, after having applied this innovation, student's perspectives about learning vocabulary through the use of Google Sheets changed (as shown in table 3). This result is in agreement with studies that showed that students enjoy the use of technology in class, and that by using it to improve reading comprehension, vocabulary building is positively affected (Godzicki, Godzicki, Krofel and Michaels, 2013; Maduabuchi and Emechebe, 2016). Likewise, it can be highlighted that the use of technology through Google sheets to classify vocabulary had a positive impact on participants' change of perspective, since it agrees with studies that show that learners perceived Google Drive tools as friendly and easy to use (Sadik, 2016; Brescó & Verdú, 2014).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find out if classifying words in parts of speech through the use of Google sheets helps students to improve reading comprehension.

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Moreover, the study tried to determine if student's perspective towards learning vocabulary changed after applying the innovation. In this section, the conclusion is posed in concordance with the two research questions.

With the results of this research project it has been proven that identifying parts of speech can enhance learners' reading comprehension. Even though before the innovation students were not familiar with the different categories of words, and during the application of the project it was difficult for them to classify words according to their context or differentiate between adverbs and adjectives, after the innovation they ended up improving their ability on recognizing and classifying words correctly.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates that students' perspective towards learning vocabulary improved after applying the innovation, in the same way that the used tool, Google sheets, was perceived as easy and user-friendly. In conclusion, through this research lights have been given to prove the incidence of the understanding of parts of speech into the improvement of reading comprehension with the use of Google sheet as a useful tool to reach this. Findings of this study may have significant implications for English teachers and learners, in reading comprehension classes especially.

Limitations

Some limitations about literature available, school's infrastructure and curriculum, class control, and student's reading habits appeared during the application of this research project. To start, limited literature about parts of speech was found available online. Likewise, there were only a few studies done about the use of Google Sheets to classify vocabulary into parts of speech. This made it difficult to base procedures on relevant literature about these topics and also compare results with other researches.

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Secondly, the school's infrastructure was not completely satisfactory to the needs of this research, as some computers available in the lab, where participants did their activities twice a week, were not functional, whether for the lack of internet connection or lack of equipment' maintenance. Moreover, the school curriculum did not allow enough time to work fully with the innovation. This made the research take more time than expected.

Finally, classroom control was difficult to manage while participants were in the laboratory and using internet to work on Google sheets, as some students got easily distracted with irrelevant pages found online. Similarly, some students demonstrated a lack of reading habits, even in L1, which affected their intrinsic motivation to develop reading abilities in L2.

Recommendations

Based on the experience gained during the development of this study, some recommendation can be provided for future studies on the same or related topics. Firstly, since time is generally a limited resource, it is recommendable to pilot the innovation before so possible obstacles can be avoided during the implementation. In this way, the researcher can polish the methodology and instruments to be used, saving time and resources. Secondly, the researcher should apply observation techniques and qualitative data collection that allow measuring the reaction of students towards the innovation in order to effectively modify or improve proposed activities.

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Appendix 1

Backward Design – Lesson plan

Contact the researcher for this template.

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Appendix 2

Google Drive use - survey

Estimados Estudiantes:

La información de la siguiente encuesta se utilizará para el estudio denominado “Classifying parts of speech to improve reading comprehension” (Clasificación de palabras de acuerdo a su función para mejorar la comprensión lectora”. Los datos obtenidos en este instrumento se tratarán con estricta confidencialidad.

Gracias por su participación libre y voluntaria.

Atentamente,

Lic. Amanda Moreira Baquerizo

Candidata a Master.

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Pre- survey. Use of Google Sheets / Encuesta inicial – Uso de Google Sheets.

Nombre:

<i>Drive Survey - / Encuesta sobre el uso de Drive.</i>	Yes/ Si	No
I have a Gmail account. <i>Tengo una cuenta de correo electrónico en Gmail.</i>		
I know how to use Google Drive. <i>Se cómo utilizar el Drive.</i>		
I can open an Google sheet . <i>Puedo abrir una página de excel en Drive.</i>		
I can share my document with others. <i>Puedo compartir la página de excel con mis compañeros u otras personas.</i>		
I know certain functions of Google sheets . <i>Conozco ciertas funciones de excel.</i>		
I have used an excel spreadsheet for learning any subject before. <i>He utilizado excel para aprender cualquier materia antes.</i>		

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I have used an excel spreadsheet to learn English. <i>He usado excel antes para aprender Inglés.</i>		
I have used an excel spreadsheet to learn vocabulary. <i>He usado excel antes para aprender palabras en inglés.</i>		

What are your expectations regarding the usage of this e-tool? *¿Cuáles serían sus expectativas en relación al uso de Excel para aprender palabras en inglés?*

What do you expect to learn in next classes using the tool? *¿Qué espera aprender en las próximas clases de inglés con el uso de Google Sheets?*

Suggestions for the teacher to conduct classes using Google Sheets in expansion of new words for Reading comprehension. *Sugerencias para el docente referente al uso de Google Sheets para la expansión de vocabulario con el fin de lograr la comprensión de lectura.*

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Appendix 3

Mid-term survey

Contact the researcher for this template.

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Appendix 4

While reading activities: skimming and scanning strategies with reading
comprehension and vocabulary questions

Book's name: _____
Student's name: _____ Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions:

1. Read the text
2. Find the new words: meaning, and part of speech. (underline or **highlight** them on the text)
3. Classify in the excel-spreadsheet
4. Write the main idea
5. Answer the questions

A) Skimming (find the main idea)
B) Scanning (specific information)	Comprehension question: 1) Do you think the Faun is guilty or innocent? Why? 2) Why do you think Lucy decided to enter to the cave? 3) What would happen if the White Witch knew the Faun did not tell her about Lucy? 4) What is the real meaning of: "Spare Oom" and "Wardrobe"?

Today I've read up to chapter

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Appendix 5

Post reading activities - Learning logs

Learning log 1

What did you learn with the first practice?

What facilitated that learning?

Learning log 2

Which activity did you find challenging?

Which activity required more work for you to get the answer?

Learning log 3

Which vocabulary activity do you remember the most?

Which class activity (individual-pair-group) was most enriching?

Which reading/passage do you enjoy best, why?

Learning log 4

What did you learn in the second practice?

What facilitated that learning?

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Learning log 5

Which activity did you find challenging?

Which activity required more work for you to get the answer?

Learning log 6

Which vocabulary activity do you remember the most?

Which class activity (individual-pair-group) was most enriching?

Which reading/passage do you enjoy best, why?

Appendix 6

Mini quizzes

A) Vocabulary mini quiz

Student's name: _____ **Course:** _____ **Date:** _____

Book's name: _____ **Chapters:** _____

1. Write as many words as you can remember from the chapters you read before.

.....
.....
.....

2. Define as many as you can.

.....
.....
.....

B) Reading comprehension and vocabulary mini quiz

Student's name: _____ **Course:** _____ **Date:** _____

Book's name: _____ **Chapters:** _____

1. Why do you think Peter, Susan and Edmund didn't believe what Lucy said?

.....

2. Describe the Queen (White Witch) - Give some characteristics.

.....

3. Write down at least 3 new words that you found while reading the chapters, classify them into the different parts of speech and write with their definitions (use your own words)

Remember:

- (Parts of speech) Your words could be a: NOUN, VERB, ADJECTIVE, CONJUNCTION OR ADVERB.
- Be sure of the meaning of your word according to the context.

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New word	Part of speech	Meaning

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Appendix 7

Assessment Task Rubric - Book review checklist and useful tips

Contact the researcher for this format.

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Appendix 8

Demographic Information/ Información Demográfica

Name: _____ Nationality: _____

School name /Nombre de la institución: _____

City/Ciudad: _____

Course-parallel/level – Curso-paralelo/nivel: _____

Religion: _____

Gender/Género: Male/ Masculino () Female/ Femenino ()

Ethnicity/Étnia: _____

Social-economic class/ Clase socio-económica:

() low-income/bajos ingresos () middle class/clase media () high-income/clase alta

Age/Edad:

() 17 - 22 () 23 - 26 () 27 - 30 () 31 - 40 () 41+

Language/Idioma: Spanish/Español () English/Inglés () Quichua ()

Marital status/Estado Civil: single/soltero(a) () married/casado(a) ()
widowed/viudo(a) () divorced/divorciado(a) () separated/separado(a) ()
other/otro _____

English level/Nivel de inglés: Beginner/principiante () Basic/básico ()
Intermediate/intermedio () Advanced/avanzado ()

English learning background/Describa su experiencia aprendiendo inglés (donde, por cuánto tiempo, dificultades):

Special needs/Necesidades especiales:

Other skills/otras destrezas:

Access to technology/Tiene acceso a tecnología: Yes/Si () No ()

Access to technology from/Tiene acceso a tecnología desde:

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Home/casa () School/institución educativa () Municipality/Municipio ()

Other/otro: _____

Knowledge about technology/ Conocimientos sobre tecnología:

None/nada () Beginner/principiante () Basic/básico ()

Intermediate/intermedio ()

Advanced/avanzado ()

Professional/Employment Status-Estado profesional/empleo:

Student/estudiante () employed/empleado () self-employed/independiente ()

Retired/jubilado () Unemployed/desempleado ()

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Appendix 9

Proficiency test

Contact the researcher for this instrument.

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Appendix 10

Reading Comprehension Pre-test and Post-test

A) Pre test - reading comprehension and parts of speech classification

Contact the researcher for this instrument.

B) Post test - reading comprehension and parts of speech classification

Contact the researcher for this instrument.

Appendix 11

Pre- post survey - Students' perspectives toward vocabulary.

Estimados Estudiantes:

La información de la siguiente encuesta se utilizará para el estudio denominado "Classifying parts of speech to improve reading comprehension" (Clasificación de palabras de acuerdo a su función para mejorar la comprensión lectora". Los datos obtenidos en este instrumento se tratarán con estricta confidencialidad.

Gracias por su participación libre y voluntaria.

Atentamente,

Lic. Amanda Moreira Baquerizo

Candidata a Master.

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Pre-Post Survey vocabulary for reading

Encuesta sobre vocabulario para lectura.

Name:

	Totally disagree Totalmente de acuerdo	Disagree En desacuerdo	Neutral	Agree De acuerdo	Totally Agree Totalmente de acuerdo
I can understand a short, simple text. <i>Puedo entender un texto pequeño y fácil en inglés.</i>					
I understand single phrases at a time. <i>Entiendo frases cortas en inglés.</i>					

CLASSIFYING PARTS OF SPEECH

<p>I pick up familiar words or phrases in passages.</p> <p><i>Reconozco palabras familiares o frases en lecturas en inglés.</i></p>					
<p>I understand a short text with the first reading.</p> <p><i>Entiendo una lectura corta en la primera lectura.</i></p>					
<p>I understand a short text by rereading it.</p> <p><i>Entiendo una lectura corta después de leerla dos o más veces.</i></p>					
<p>I can skim.</p> <p><i>Puedo leer rápido para encontrar la idea principal.</i></p>					
<p>I can scan.</p> <p><i>Puedo leer rápido para encontrar datos específicos.</i></p>					

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<p>I can classify words according to their function in a sentence.</p> <p><i>Puedo clasificar las palabras de acuerdo a su función en una oración.</i></p>					
<p>I can recognize a noun.</p> <p><i>Puedo reconocer un sustantivo.</i></p>					
<p>I can recognize a verb.</p> <p><i>Puedo reconocer un verbo.</i></p>					
<p>I can recognize an adjective.</p> <p><i>Puedo reconocer un adjetivo.</i></p>					
<p>I can recognize an adverb.</p> <p><i>Puedo reconocer un adverbio.</i></p>					
<p>When I read I translate all the words.</p> <p><i>Cuando leo traduzco todas las palabras.</i></p>					

CLASSIFYING PARTS OF SPEECH

I see a passage and I feel... / *Veo una lectura en inglés y me siento*

I can skim and scan. Explain the process of each. / *Puedo usar estrategias de lectura. Explique el proceso de cada estrategia.*

I translate all the words. / *Traduzco todas las palabras.*

I can recognize the following part of speech (conjunction, pronouns, and prepositions).
Puedo reconocer las siguientes funciones: conjunción, pronombre y preposiciones).

I feel the knowledge of vocabulary in English is...
Siento que mi conocimiento de vocabulario en inglés es

I think learning vocabulary is complex
Pienso que aprender vocabulario en inglés es complicado.....

English words are/aren't easy because
Las palabras en inglés son/no son fáciles porque
