

Viewpoints on layers of learning: Enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension skills by applying scaffolding strategies

Puntos de vista sobre niveles de aprendizaje: incrementando las destrezas de comprensión lectora de los estudiantes de Inglés como lengua extranjera mediante la aplicación de estrategias de andamiaje

Ramiro Junior Dominguez Viteri

Universidad Nacional de Loja

ramiro.dominguez@unl.edu.ec

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9027-1025>

Loja, Ecuador.

Bertha Lucía Ramón Rodríguez

Universidad Nacional de Loja

bertha.ramon@unl.edu.ec

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6790-2100>

Loja, Ecuador.

* Correspondencia:

ramiro.dominguez@unl.edu.ec



<https://doi.org/10.58995/lb.redlic.34.239>

1. INTRODUCTION

“Reading comprehension in English language learning emerges as a crucial skill for both educational and personal development, offering access to a broad spectrum of knowledge and enhancing critical and reasoning abilities” (Plessis, 2022, p. 2). Nonetheless, preservice teaching experiences have disclosed significant shortcomings in the reading comprehension abilities of ninth graders at a public institution in Loja, because of the absence of supportive strategies, preventing them from achieving the A1.2 proficiency level as outlined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (2022). These challenges encompass difficulties in grasping main ideas, understanding specific details, vocabulary comprehension, and predicting text outcomes, thereby limiting deep learning and effective class participation. Yawileong (2021) agrees that this issue aligns with findings from previous studies, indicating a widespread problem in reading comprehension skills among learners, where strategic support is essential for deeper understanding and engagement in reading activities.

Addressing this concern, the primary aim of this research is to analyse the students' perceptions about the use of scaffolding strategies on the development of EFL learners' reading comprehension skills among superior basic education students at a public institution in Loja, school year 2023-2024. To conduct this research, the subsequent question has been formulated: What are the students' viewpoints about scaffolding strategies to enhance reading comprehension among superior basic education students, school year 2023 – 2024?

In addition, Scaffolding, as a pedagogical approach, facilitates tasks and understandings beyond students' independent capabilities, supporting cueing, questioning, coaching, and providing necessary information for task completion, Herawati et al., (2020) explored that, this study not only contributes to the pedagogical field by analysing scaffolding's effectiveness in enhancing reading comprehension at the ninth-grade level but also offers insights for English teachers and pre-service teachers on employing these strategies to foster independent reading skills among students. Ariani (2018) suggested that through this lens, the study seeks to fill a gap in existing literature, particularly concerning scaffolding's

role at different educational levels within EFL contexts, thereby providing valuable contributions to teaching and learning English as a foreign language, with a specific focus on enhancing reading comprehension skills through effective scaffolding strategies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presented a detailed theoretical explanation of the variables related to the topic under investigation. It elaborates on the first variable, which encompasses the themes and sub-themes related to scaffolding, and the second variable, which outlines the topics and subtopics associated with reading comprehension skills. The aim is to delve into a more thorough analysis of each category involved in this study.

Scaffolding

What is scaffolding?

The idea of Scaffolding was initially introduced by Bruner (1975). Subsequently, Wood and Ross expanded upon it in (1976) and their work received further endorsement from Vygotsky in 1978. In the words of (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 35 as cited in Aslam et al., 2018, p. 8), immature learners are capable of accomplishing tasks they cannot do alone with the assistance of a more experienced individual. In the same way, this concept is attributed to Vygotsky in the sociocultural theory and the notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) which was proposed in 1978. Sociocultural theory considers that learning is influenced by both cognitive and social factors. Additionally, Kim (2010) stated that “language learners are more prone to achieve success in their learning journey when they engage in interactions with instructors, peers, and members of their community” (p.15).

In this way, scaffolding is a method widely adopted by teachers to support students' learning processes. According to Gonulal (2018). This approach involves providing temporary support or guidance to students, enabling them to achieve understanding or skills they would not manage on their own. As students become more proficient, the support is gradually removed, fostering independence and confidence in their learning journey (p. 8)

Elements of Scaffolding

The application of scaffolded instruction can be examined by considering its six overarching components. These three general aspects of the scaffolding process, as identified by Zhao and Orey (1999) , include: sharing a specific goal, whole task approach, and intention-assisting.

Sharing a specific goal. The teacher bears the responsibility of setting a common objective, but it is crucial to actively engage the learner's interests by effectively communicating and establishing intersubjectivity, which encompasses the mutual exchange of purposes, viewpoints, emotions, and thoughts, as quoted by Zhao and Orey (1999).

Whole task approach. Zhao and Orey (1999) emphasises that in the context of the whole task approach, the focus is on attaining the primary goal across the entire activity. As a result, the task is understood as an integrated whole instead of a series of distinct sub-skills. Every part of the lesson is seen in connection with the entire task, diminishing the dependence on passive knowledge and lessening the necessity for knowledge transfer.

Intention-assisting. An essential aspect of the scaffolding process involves providing assistance that aligns with the learner's current needs and challenges. By providing prompt assistance customised to the particular task, a more conducive learning atmosphere is created (Zhao y Orey, 1999).

Benefits of Scaffolding in Education

"Scaffolding is one of the principles of effective instruction that enables teachers to accommodate individual student needs". According to this theory, it becomes apparent that teaching should be designed to incorporate "contingent instruction," a concept introduced by (Zhao y Orey, 1999, p. 13). Furthermore, according to the University of San Diego (2022) mentions that even prior to its formal identification, the concept of scaffolding has demonstrated its significance as an essential educational approach. Educators have observed that scaffolding:

- ~ **Engages Language Learning progress.** The engagement of language learning through the scaffolding strategy is a pedagogical benefit designed

to support learners as they acquire new language skills. These strategies benefit language learning by actively engaging students in the learning process, allowing them to build upon their existing knowledge and skills at their own pace. By receiving the right amount of support at critical moments, learners are more likely to participate actively, and develop a deeper understanding of the language. (Yildiz y Celik, 2020).

- ~ **Motivation to learn.** The scaffolding strategy increases the motivation to learn by providing learners with the necessary support to overcome challenges at their own pace, fostering a sense of achievement and progress. By breaking down complex language learning tasks into more manageable components, scaffolding helps to reduce frustration and build confidence, as learners are able to see tangible improvements in their skills. This positive reinforcement encourages continued engagement and effort, making the learning process more rewarding. As learners experience success in overcoming hurdles with the aid of scaffolding, their motivation to learn and explore further increases, leading to a more self-directed and enthusiastic approach to acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Scaffolding plays a crucial role in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, enabling educators to effectively guide and support language learners in their journey towards proficiency (Yildiz y Celik, 2020).

Scaffolding Strategies

According to Ariani (2018) emphasises on three types of scaffolding strategies that teachers employ to instruct reading comprehension skills, which include:

- ~ **Asking Questions.** It involves having students read a specific text and respond to questions that are given. This aids in enhancing text comprehension and in the improvement of students' vocabulary. Teachers favour this strategy over others as it is deemed the most appropriate for the students (Ariani, 2018).

- ~ **Using Visual media.** This strategy is often directed at materials related to descriptive and explanatory texts. Initially, students are prompted to read the text. Subsequently, the teacher may display an image, inviting students to highlight specific sections of the picture or articulate their interpretation of the image grounded in the text they have examined. Furthermore, the use of graphic organisers is incorporated into scaffolding strategies, providing support for the learning process (Ariani, 2018).
- ~ **Generating Question.** According to Ariani (2018) this strategy involves having students read a passage and then create questions from the content. The students subsequently answer these questions themselves. Essentially, this strategy demands a greater emphasis on reading compared to others.

How to Teach Scaffolding Strategies

- ~ **How to teach asking questions.** Scaffolding can be utilised through various methods to assist students in reaching their target proficiency. In the same vein, Teng and He (2015) suggest that question flashcards, characterised by their simplicity, convenience, adaptability, and value, remain an underused asset yet show promise as an instrument for encouraging self-directed learning. Furthermore, these flashcards prompt students to introspect about their learning journey and assume accountability for it. Personalising learning tasks and objectives leads to heightened student motivation and dedication, with learners applying themselves as diligently as possible.
- ~ **How to teach visual media.** In this strategy, Lingaiah & Dhanapal (2020) argued that using graphic organisers as part of a visual media strategy within an instructional scaffolding framework is a powerful method to enhance learning and comprehension. Graphic organisers visually represent ideas, concepts, and relationships among them, making complex information more accessible and understandable for students. This visual representation supports the scaffolding strategy by breaking

down new information into more manageable parts, thereby facilitating easier assimilation and connection to prior knowledge.

- ~ **How to teach generating questions.** As for the final strategy, Ordoñez & Matts (2022) argue about the use of a reading spinner, students are encouraged to explore different aspects of the text, which can lead to a deeper understanding and retention of the material. This strategy can be particularly beneficial for students who may struggle with open-ended tasks, as it gives them a clear starting point for their inquiry, the interactive and tactile nature of the reading spinner can make the learning process more engaging for students.

Reading Comprehension

What is reading comprehension?

According to Rashed et al., (2015) “reading comprehension is a critical skill that EFL teachers must develop to equip learners with the ability to handle more complex texts and tasks effectively, efficiently, aptly, and adeptly” (p. 18). Furthermore, it involves an interactive exchange between a reader and a written text, as noted by Pham and Nguyen (2017). Pang et al. (2003), defined it as an engaged process where the reader actively constructs meaning from the text, at the same time, reading comprehension is a process in which the reader's cognitive processes and prior knowledge interact with the text to create meaning. Taken together, reading is a dynamic and active process that necessitates the application of various reading strategies, enabling learners to comprehend a specific text comprehensively as quoted by Hong and Nguyen (2019).

Based on the constructivist viewpoint, reading comprehension can be understood as a dynamic process of active learning, wherein students actively construct meaning by integrating their prior knowledge with new information. In this way, reading comprehension empowers students to become engaged and self-reliant readers throughout the reading journey (Hong y Nguyen, 2019).

Importance of Reading Comprehension

Token and Aminou (2019) believed that reading comprehension equips individuals with the essential abilities to perform various tasks, liberates people from the constraints of illiteracy, and enables them to fulfil their dreams, thereby enhancing personal growth and development. Meanwhile, Rintaningrum (2020), highlighted the significance of reading ability in securing employment, expanding one's knowledge base, accessing new information, sharing newfound insights with others, enhancing focus, and providing entertainment.

Elements of Reading Comprehension

The primary goal of reading is to grasp the meaning of the text we read. Reading comprehension is a vibrant and interactive activity. Snow (2002) suggested that “comprehension involves three key components: The readers, the texts, and the activities” (p. 5).

- ~ **Readers:** The initial component is the readers. Those engaging with the text need to possess a broad spectrum of skills and abilities. This encompasses cognitive skills (such as attention and memory), motivation (including a reason for reading and confidence in their reading abilities), and diverse forms of knowledge (like vocabulary). The reading process is shaped by the readers' skills, abilities, knowledge, and experiences as quoted by (Snow, 2002).
- ~ **The text:** Textual features have a significant impact on the comprehension, it is not just about deriving meaning from the text. Throughout the reading process, the reader builds various representations of the text crucial for understanding. These representations encompass the surface code (the precise wording of the text), the text base (units of idea that convey meaning), and a depiction of the mental models contained within the text (Snow, 2002).
- ~ **The activity:** Regarding the last element, Snow (2002) argues that the activity of reading comprehension is a process undertaken to decipher the text's meaning (Snow, 2002). This activity encompasses one or more goals or tasks, various operations for text analysis, and the results of these

actions, all situated within a particular context. The original intent behind the activity may evolve as the reader progresses through the text. In other words, encountering new information can prompt fresh inquiries, rendering the initial goal inadequate or obsolete.

Strategies for Reading Comprehension

A reading comprehension strategy refers to a cognitive or behavioural tactic employed in specific situational contexts, aimed at enhancing facets of understanding. Several strategies available for readers to use include

- ~ **Skimming:** This is a type of speed reading that allows you to quickly find the general information or gist of a text. It implies that readers skim through the text to capture the main idea or general content, without going through each word in detail. (Brow, 2004).
- ~ **Scanning:** Brown (2004) describes scanning as the reader's practice of searching for specific details within the text without reading it in its entirety. Essentially, readers focus on particular sections of the text to find precise information. This technique allows readers to quickly locate the specific points they need without dedicating a significant amount of time to read the entire text.
- ~ **Predicting:** Prediction involves forming expectations about the text's developments using clues gleaned from the text and the reader's prior knowledge. This means that before delving into the text, readers should speculate about its contents. To evaluate this strategy, pictures can be used to anticipate future events or outcomes in the text.
- ~ **Vocabulary Comprehension:** This process enables readers to recognize when they comprehend the material and when they do not, allowing them to employ suitable strategies to enhance their understanding. Assessing vocabulary comprehension involves gauging how well a reader grasps the meanings of words and phrases in the context of a passage. One method for this strategy is using form-filling questions. Thus, proficient readers are aware of and reflect on their cognitive processes while reading to achieve improved reading results (Pourhosein, 2016).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at a public institution situated in Loja city, in the southern region of Ecuador. The institution is part of the Educational District of Zone 7, positioned at the geographic coordinates of latitude -3.99258° and longitude -79.20926 . The research intervention took place in face-to-face classes over a period of eight weeks, involving a ninth-grade classroom during the 2023-2024 academic year.

This study's participants were chosen using convenience sampling, a method where the selection criteria include factors like ease of access, geographic closeness, and the participants' availability to the researcher at a specific time. (Etikan et al., 2016).

This study used a qualitative method approach, allowing the researcher to gather, analyse, and integrate qualitative data within one investigation to comprehensively address a research issue, as explained by Creswell (2012). As reported Creswell (2012) "the adoption of qualitative method furnishes researchers with the capacity to explore research questions with the necessary depth and scope, thereby facilitating the generalisation of the study's findings and implications to the broader population" (p. 162)

Therefore, to gather data, the researchers employed a questionnaire and reflective journals designed to analyse the students' viewpoints about using scaffolding strategies on the development of EFL learners' reading comprehension skills among superior basic education students at a public institution in Loja, school year 2023-2024.

This study was conducted using the action research cycle framework as proposed by Susman and Evered (1978), enabling researchers to autonomously select their research focus, define their methodologies for data collection, conduct data analysis and interpretation, and formulate action plans derived from their conclusions. Thus, the researcher structured the study in accordance with the phases outlined by Susman and Evered (1978) namely: diagnosing, action plan, acting, and evaluating and reflecting.

Diagnosing. -Based on the observations made above, the researchers identified some difficulties in English reading comprehension skills among ninth-graders at a public institution. Further insights into this problem were gathered from theoretical sources. Moreover, the researcher determined that a questionnaire was the most suitable tool for understanding students' views on the impact of scaffolding strategies on enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension abilities.

Action Plan. - Once the main problem was identified, the researcher proposed three scaffolding strategies such as asking questions through flashcards, generating questions through a reading spinner and using visual media through the use of graphic organisers and images. These strategies specifically aimed to enhance skills such as skimming, scanning, predicting, and vocabulary comprehension. To effectively implement these solutions, the researcher designed eight lesson plans following the Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP) model.

Acting. - At this phase, the researcher implemented the action plan, executing the eight lesson plans weekly during on-site classes, each lasting sixty hours. Additionally, throughout the execution of the proposed strategies, the researcher used a specific research tool that enabled the collection of crucial data for analysing the students' perceptions regarding the improvement of their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading comprehension skills.

Evaluating & reflecting. - During this phase, the data gathered from the questionnaire underwent analysis, involving both quantitative and qualitative interpretation. A comprehensive report detailing the overall findings was prepared. Through conclusions and recommendations, the study addressed its specific objective and laid the groundwork for future research in this area. Consequently, the main outcomes were documented, leading to the formulation of conclusive insights.

After completing the intervention, a questionnaire was distributed to gauge student perceptions on the use of scaffolding strategies like question flashcards, reading spinner, graphic organisers, and images for enhancing reading comprehension skills, as well as their engagement in language learning, motivation to participate, and reading comprehension improvements. The questionnaire

enabled the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed.), 2012). In this sense, the researcher designed seven open-ended questions that allowed research participants to justify their answers.

4. RESULTS

This section presented the findings from the questionnaire administered to students following the intervention period. It details the specific questions posed, alongside the collected data, with the responses' frequencies expressed as percentages.

Table 1

Engagement in Language Learning

Questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		T. P	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	1. How effective did you find the use of graphic organisers, questions flashcards, reading spinner and images in helping you understand and organise information of the reading?	18	78	5	22	0	0	23
2. Using graphic organisers, questions flashcards, reading spinner and images captured your attention and encouraged your active participation in enhancing your reading comprehension	16	70	7	30	0	0	23	100

Note: F= Frequency %= Percentage T. P= Total of Participants

The questionnaire conducted by the ninth graders about their perceptions of the application of scaffolding to enhance reading comprehension revealed the following findings in relation to Engagement in Language Learning. Concerning the first item

(78%) of students answered strongly and (22%) said that the use of the scaffolding strategies was effective in helping them understand and organise information from their reading. Regarding the second item, (70%) of students selected strongly agree and (30%) agreed that the implementation of these strategies captured their attention and encouraged their active participation, which is essential for enhancing reading comprehension.

Notably, there are no students who disagree with the two statements, indicating a unanimous positive reception towards these scaffolding strategies in the context of understanding the texts. In conclusion, as we can observe the students' perceptions were positive in relation to the engagement in language learning. After examining the answers to the open-ended questions, students expressed that they engage their language learning as it was a different way of learning and for this reason, they were improving their reading comprehension with the use of different strategies presented in class.

In discussing these perceptions, student 3 emphasised that the aforementioned scaffolding strategies were easier to learn and grasp the information from the readings encouraging her to increase her reading comprehension skills through the use of these supporting strategies. Associated with engagement is active participation. In this regard, students pointed out that scaffolding strategies provide an interactive way to learn English expressing engagement to use these supporting strategies. Additionally, it is interesting the response from student 13 who mentioned that within scaffolding strategies increase his comprehension at the moment of getting specific information and their vocabulary comprehension of the readings.

Table 2.

Classification of scaffolding strategies

3.- Order the strategies from 1 to 4; 1 will be the least to understand a reading and 4 will be the most useful strategy.

Scaffolding Strategies	#1		#2		#3		#4		T. P	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Graphic Organisers	6	26	1	4	9	39	7	31	23	100
Question Flashcards	5	22	3	13	5	22	10	43	23	100
Reading Spinner	10	44	4	17	4	17	5	22	23	100
Images	2	9	15	65	5	22	1	4	23	100

Note: F= Frequency %= Percentage T. P= Total of Participants

As it is presented, table 3 displays a categorization of each scaffolding strategy according to the students' preference. In this regard, a large portion of the students (70%) identified “Graphic Organizers” as the favourite scaffolding strategy for improving their reading comprehension while “Images” was the least favourite with (74%).

Based on responses to open-ended questions, students expressed a preference for “Graphic organisers” as their favourite scaffolding strategy due to its simplicity to learn, and helped to find specific information from the texts. This encourages them to engage actively with the texts they are reading not only it improves reading comprehension but also fosters a deeper, more meaningful interaction with the text, enhancing overall learning and retention. Conversely, students did not feel motivated with the use of Images since it was presented via zoom, therefore, it was a digital version. It is worth mentioning that the researcher’s initial plan was to work this strategy with the use of students’ hands to choose an image to make predictions about the text in order to guess what will be the text about and to increase their vocabulary comprehension. This interaction with images as real objects may have probably increased students’ interest and motivation to increase their vocabulary comprehension and predictions skills.

Table 3.

Motivation to Learn

Questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		T. P	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	4. How motivated did you feel to participate in reading activities when the teacher uses graphic organisers, questions flashcards, reading spinner and images?	15	65	8	35	0	0	23

Note: F= Frequency %= Percentage T. P= Total of Participants

As shown in table 4, The results from the questionnaire revealed a highly positive response from students regarding to motivation to learn in applying scaffolding strategies by the pre-service teacher, specifically about how students motivated they felt to participate in reading activities when the teacher used graphic organisers, questions flashcards, reading spinner and images, (65%) of them selected strongly agree. Besides they indicated that the use of those strategies created a positive learning environment. Further on, (35%) of participants agreed that these strategies represent a positive reception and support the notion that scaffolding strategies play a crucial role in motivating students towards reading activities. It is important to say that there are no students who disagree with the statement, which is a strong indicator of the acceptance and perceived effectiveness of these scaffolding strategies in motivating students.

Additionally, based on the open-ended questions students indicated that through the scaffolding strategies, they felt motivated to participate in class in order to increase their reading comprehension. Additionally, students highlighted the importance of incorporating scaffolding strategies such as graphic organisers, question flashcards, reading spinners, and images into reading activities. These strategies are evidently successful in enhancing students' motivation to participate, due to the way they make reading more interactive, understandable, and enjoyable.

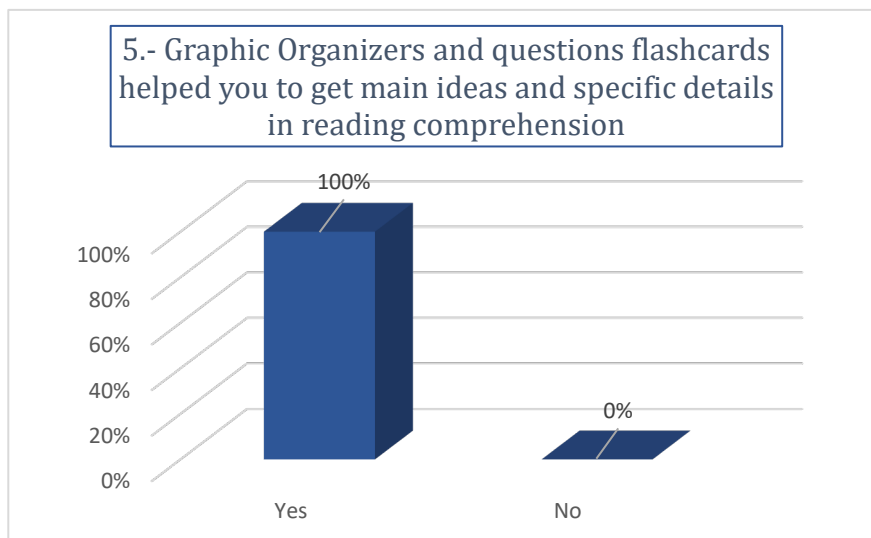


Figure 1. Participant Motivation Levels in Reading Activities with scaffolding strategies

Regarding the aforementioned positive perceptions, figure 2 illustrates the use of graphic organisers and question flashcards for aiding in reading comprehension are highly positive. The unanimous endorsement with (100% Yes) of students responding that these strategies helped them identify main ideas and specific details in texts, means a strong consensus about the value of graphic organisers and question flashcards in enhancing their reading comprehension skills. This unanimity is particularly noteworthy, as it suggests that these tools are beneficial across different learners, regardless of their individual learning preferences or abilities.

From the open-ended questions they pointed out that graphic organisers and question flashcards facilitated the practice and improvement of their reading comprehension to get main ideas and specific details from the texts. The use of these two strategies were necessary and very important for the students to understand the readings presented in class, and by incorporating these strategies it was easier to find the different answers in relation to the questions presented. Reflecting on these insights, student 7 emphasised that the scaffolding strategies had a significant impact on their learning because they were able to increase their reading comprehension with the help of the different strategies that the pre-service teacher presented in class.

Table 5.

Reading Comprehension

Questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		T. P	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
6. Making predictions using images gives you an idea about the reading	18	78	3	13	2	9	23	100

Question	A lot		Moderately		A little		T. P	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
7.- Vocabulary comprehension was easier to keep in mind with the use of reading spinner and images	15	65	6	26	2	9	23	100

Note: F= Frequency %=Percentage T. P= Total of participants

Concerning whether scaffolding strategies in reading comprehension facilitate the learning a significant portion of students (78%) answered strongly agree and (13%) of students answered agree felt that making predictions based on images significantly helped them form an idea about the reading. Additionally, a large number of students (65%) strongly agree and (26%) answered that their vocabulary comprehension was significantly enhanced when using the reading spinner and images. This indicates that the interactive and visual nature of these strategies makes learning new vocabulary more memorable and engaging. The reading spinner, in particular, might add an element of randomness and fun, making the learning process more dynamic and less predictable. Apart from this, (9%) of students did not find making predictions with images and a similar percentage of students had a little benefit from these strategies. This disagreement is a product of the different learning styles that students have at the moment of acquiring a learning.

From the open-ended questions, students outlined that the use of images helped in understanding what the reading might be about, also the use of this strategy drew their attention to increase their reading comprehension. Examining the images and attempting to forecast the text's content introduced a novel and engaging approach

for the students. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the reading spinner and images in enhancing vocabulary comprehension points to the benefits of making vocabulary learning more engaging, memorable, and contextually grounded.

5. DISCUSSION

Regarding the general question for this study: What are the students' perceptions about scaffolding strategies to enhance reading comprehension among superior basic education students at a public institution in Loja, school year 2023-2024? This question was addressed through the questionnaire, and peer observations, both of which underscored positive attitudes towards the strategy under study. As illustrated in Table 1, students agreed that the use of the different scaffolding strategies helped them to understand and organise information of the reading, capturing their attention and encouraging the students' participation in enhancing their reading comprehension.

Likewise, in Table 2 evidenced that students' preferences differed regarding which scaffolding strategy they found most beneficial and effective for their learning. The results are consistent with the studies of Herawati et al., (2020), Yin & Aziz (2019), who stated that one of the key advantages of scaffolded instruction is that it fosters a nurturing learning atmosphere, where instructors are dedicated and invested in aiding students' educational progress, providing strategies that incentive students to take a more active participation and engaging they learning, teachers can use these strategies to help students improving their reading performance through compensating their comprehension breakdowns on specific reading tasks and in specific contexts, helping them to identify the main ideas, to get specific information, to increase their vocabulary comprehension, and to make predictions.

Furthermore, considering the questionnaire, specifically in the questions five, six and seven, they emphasised that the supporting strategies presented in class showed a positive pedagogical assistance in enhancing their reading comprehension skills and helped them to complete different activities independently. Consequently, students perceived that the applied strategies contributed to their learning,

facilitating their ability. Similarly, Yawileong (2021), and Aslam et al., (2018) stated that scaffolding is recognized as a potent instructional technique that bolsters learning within a nurturing environment. In educational settings, it represents a unique form of assistance that facilitates learners' progression towards acquiring new abilities, concepts, or deeper insights. Within such a context, students are encouraged to participate in reading activities as a component of their learning journey. This approach enhances various reading comprehension skills through scaffolded support, enabling learners to master tasks they would be unable to accomplish on their own.

Although the students reported positive perceptions about the use of scaffolding strategies, there were several limitations that affected their implementation when applying this strategy. Nevertheless, the action research design of the present study posed a major challenge to the researcher provided that it was the first time that a pre-service teacher conducted research. On the other hand, the change of modality that students had from face to face to online due to unforeseen events in the country affected the implementation of scaffolding strategies planned in the intervention plan. To counter these limitations, the researcher recommends that teachers incorporate scaffolding techniques into the teaching and learning process.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The students' viewpoints of scaffolding strategies were positive, and beneficial indicating a strong appreciation for the supportive and adaptive learning environment these strategies create. This feedback underscores the significance of employing scaffolding in educational settings, highlighting its role in not only facilitating understanding and retention of complex concepts but also in boosting student confidence and independence in learning. Moreover, these strategies increase their engagement in language learning as well as motivating their participation in the different reading activities.

The implementation of scaffolding strategies, including graphic organisers, question flashcards, reading spinners, and images, positively impacted the development of students' reading comprehension skills, significantly boosting their

capabilities. These strategies enabled students to tackle complex texts and assignments effectively. Their use in English classes not only engaged students but also motivated them to actively participate, thereby enhancing their reading skills. As support was progressively withdrawn, students grew into more autonomous readers, exhibiting improved proficiency.

The results of this research concluded that students had favourable perceptions towards the implementation of the scaffolding strategies, students perceive scaffolding strategies as a highly effective approach to improve reading comprehension, as well as they have meaningful impact in engagement in learning since they feel motivated and participate more actively with the help of them. This positive perception underscores the importance of continuing with the implementation and refinement of scaffolding techniques in educational settings to support students' reading development comprehensively.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

1. Ariani, D. (2018). Scaffolding Strategy Used by English Teacher In Teaching Reading Comprehension To The Eleventh Grades Students At Smk Muhammadiyah 2 Surakarta. *UMS Digital Library*, 6-19.
2. Aslam, N., Khanam, A., y Fatima, H. G. (2018). Study of the Impact of Scaffold Instructions on the Learning Achievements of Post-Graduate Students. *Research Gate*, 3-11.
3. Brow, D. H. (2004). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. New York: Pearson.
4. Bruner, J. (1975). Scaffolding: Who's Building Whose Building? *Language Arts* , 480-482.
5. Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed.)*. Boston M.A: Pearson.
6. Creswell, J. W. (2012). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches . *Canadian Center of Science and Education*.
7. EF, I. T. (15 de Noviembre de 2022). EF. EF: <https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/regions/latin-america/ecuador/>
8. Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., y Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016, pp. 1-4.
9. Gonulal, T. (2018). Scaffolding Technique. *Research Gate*, 1.
10. Herawati, C., Gani, S., y Muslim, A. (2020). THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCAFFOLDING READING EXPERIENCE. *Journal of Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 102-104.
11. Hong, T. D., y Nguyen, H. B. (2019). TEACHER BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF SCAFFOLDING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH QUESTIONING AT PRE-READING STAGE. *European Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 72-73.
12. Kim, Y. (2010). Scaffolding through questions in upper elementary ELL learning. *Literacy Teaching and Learning*, 15, 109-136.

13. Lingaiah¹, J., y Dhanapal, S. (30 de Junio de 2020). Use of Graphic Organiser and Instructional Scaffolding as a Teaching Strategy for TESL Undergraduates: An Overview of Students' Experiences. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research*, 87-102. <https://horizon-jhssr.com/articles/authors/pdf-version-3/IHSSR-1026.pdf>
14. Mufariza, R. (2019). The use of herringbone technique to improve students' reading ability assisted by wattpad application. *Doctoral Thesis, University of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara*. <http://repository.umsu.ac.id/handle/123456789/3130>
15. Ordoñez, A., y Matts, J. (2022). Scaffolding strategy to enhance reading sub-skills among young-adult learners. *Green World Journal*, 5-7.
16. Pang, E., Muaka, A., Mernhardt, E., y Kamil, M. (2003). Teaching Reading. Educational Practices Series.
17. Pham, N. H., y Nguye, H. B. (2017). TEXT-BASED VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION AS A LEARNING TOOL FOR EFL FRESHMEN'S READING COMPREHENSION. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3(1).
18. Plessis, S. d. (2 de Junio de 2022). EDUBLOX ONLINE TUTOR. EDUBLOX ONLINE TUTOR: <https://www.edubloxtutor.com/reading-skills/>
19. Pourhosein, A. (2016). How Can Students Improve Their Reading Comprehension Skill? *Journal of Studies in Education*, 229-240. <https://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/jse/article/view/9201>
20. Rasheed, A., Narmeen, I., y Muhammad, M. (2015). The Effect of Using Scaffolding Strategies on EFL Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement. *Arts Journal*, 92-93.
21. Resia, Y. D. (2021). Teaching and learning reading comprehension by using visualisation strategy at the first semester of the eighth grade of mts assalam tanjung sari south lampung in the academic year of 2020/2021. *Doctoral dissertation, University Raden Intan Lampung*, p. 17. <http://repository.radenintan.ac.id/14575/>
22. Rintaningrum, R. (2020). The Importance of Reading Literacy . *Research Gate*.

23. Snow, C. (2002). Reading for Understanding: Toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension. *RAND Corporation*.
24. Susman, G., y Evered, R. D. (1978). The Cyclical Process of Action Research . *Research Gate*.
25. Teng, F., y He, F. (2015). An Example of Classroom Practice Using Flashcards for Young Learners: Preliminary Indications for Promoting Autonomy. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 6(4), 382-398. [https://sisaljournal.org/archives/dec15/teng he/](https://sisaljournal.org/archives/dec15/teng_he/)
26. Toker, A., y Aminou, S. (2019). A Study on Reading Habits of the University Students in Nigeria: A Case of Selected Students of Economics Department at Nile University of Nigeria. *ERIC*, 2(3).
27. University of San Diego - Professional & Continuing. (2022). *University of San Diego - Professional and Continuing*. University of San Diego - Professional and Continuing: <https://pce.sandiego.edu/scaffolding-in-education-examples/>
28. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Development of Higher Psychological Processes. En L. S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society* (p. 174). Harvard University Press.
29. Wood, D., Bruner, J., y Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines*, 89-100.
30. Yawiloeng, R. (16 de Noviembre de 2021). Peer Scaffolding During EFL Reading Activities: A Sociocultural Perspective. *Canadian Center of Science and Education* , 14, 44-45.
31. Yawiloeng, R. (17 de Noviembre de 2021). Peer Scaffolding During EFL Reading Activities: A Sociocultural Perspective. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 44-51.
32. Yildiz, Y., y Celik, B. (Septiembre de 2020). The Use of Scaffolding Techniques in Language Learning: Extending the Level of Understanding. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 147.
33. Yildiz, Y., y Celik, B. (Septiembre de 2020). The Use of Scaffolding Techniques in Language Learning: Extending the Level of Understanding. *Research Gate*, 148-153.

34. Ying, S. W., y Aziz, A. A. (11 de Mayo de 2019). Scaffolding Approach with Reading Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension to Rural Year 3 ESL Learners in Malaysia. *International Journal of Current Innovations in Advanced Research*, 6-18.
35. Zhao, R., y Orey, M. (1999). The Scaffolding Process: Concepts, features, and Empirical Studies. *University of Georgia Press*.