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**Reading Comprehension for Twelve Graders: Techniques to Foster
Vocabulary Acquisition Using the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (2008)**

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ABSTRACT

It is widely acknowledged that Chileans lack comprehension skills even when facing texts in their native language. This problem translates into the EFL classrooms because students are not able to comprehend most types of texts that are required for them at this stage. Therefore, this piece of work seeks to train students' comprehension skills through the use of the novel *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2008) in activities that comply with the theories of: background knowledge, collaborative work, scaffolding, comprehensible input, teacher as a guide and skimming and scanning. In this sense, teachers should take into consideration that certain activities can be used to improve students' comprehension skills as well as increase their vocabulary acquisition rates.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Skills, Scaffolding, Collaborative Work, Vocabulary Acquisition.

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching reading comprehension in an EFL classroom is an important task for any teacher while learning to read is, in many cases, students' biggest academic achievement and has both social and intellectual connotations. Thus, it must be done carefully, consciously and efficiently since teachers are constructing the path students are to use the rest of their lives.

Its importance in the Chilean context has been noted in the results of previous standardized exams, such as PISA (2012), SIMCE (2012) and PSU, which show that Chilean students lack of comprehension skills at the time they perform a reading comprehension task. The roots appear to be: lack of motivation, efficiency and capability at the time of reading any type of texts. Thus, students' reading comprehension performance is demised and needs improvement.

Therefore, this proposal seeks to increase twelve grade students' performance when dealing with reading tasks by using a powerful and thought provoking reading. The pertinent use of reading instruction in EFL classrooms can benefit students' attitudes towards reading, raise their self-confidence and turn students into keen and proficient readers.

In this regard, this research paper focuses on the development of reading comprehension skills in twelve grade students. Due to the fact that reading comprehension skills will be needed throughout students' lives, it is pertinent to develop efficient methods to cope with it in the EFL classroom, as well as to scaffold students in the development of vocabulary rates. Thus, the main purpose is to develop the use of

reading strategies – skimming and scanning – to design reading activities to be used with current pieces of work, such as the book *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo (2008)*.

The chapters presented in this proposal are three. The first one is the theoretical framework, the second is the discussion and the third is where the proposal will be delivered.

In the first chapter the main theories related to reading comprehension are exposed by firstly establishing a significant context of reading comprehension skills nowadays. Secondly, literacy is explained as an important concept of reading comprehension. Thirdly, reading comprehension is defined from the perspective of psycholinguistics, which is done with the purpose of establishing the different and intricate processes involved in reading comprehension practice. Fourthly, vocabulary is defined by stating the Natural Approach and Schema theory view. Finally, the curricular standards for EFL instruction are described.

In the second chapter the discussion is exposed by describing reading comprehension in the Chilean curriculum and by enumerating its different flaws. Next, an analysis of reading comprehension activities in the Chilean Curriculum and how they can be improved by first activating background knowledge, using comprehensible input, stating scaffolding and also collaborative work. Finally, in the Rationale behind the teaching proposal as well as all the above mentioned concepts are organized in order to make the unit “Films and Books” more dynamic.

In the third and last chapter five activities are proposed. With the purpose of coping with the development of reading comprehension tasks and vocabulary instruction

exercises, different activities are suggested. In order to use updated novels for this unit, *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo (2008)* and its film adaptation was chosen. The activities include the activation of background knowledge, the use of comprehensible input, collaborative work and also scaffolding practice in order to train students in the use of pertinent reading strategies.

Finally, it must be noted that due to the abovementioned reasons, this teaching proposal is designed with the aim of assisting EFL teachers in the use of reading comprehension activities.

ANTECEDENTS

Research Question:

- How can the book “The Girl with Dragon Tattoo” (GDT) be used to improve reading comprehension skills in 12th graders in Chilean Public Schools?

Hypothesis:

- The inclusion of the novel Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (2008) and the design of reading comprehension activities will improve students’ reading comprehension skills as well as increase their vocabulary knowledge rates.

Objectives:

General Objective:

- To propose a set of activities to train Chilean 12th graders’ reading comprehension skills in the EFL classroom using the novel The Girl with Dragon Tattoo (2008) by Stieg Larsson in the context of the unit “Films and Books” of the national curriculum.

Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the reading comprehension strategies included in the national curriculum for 12th graders.
2. To select the reading comprehension strategies that are most effective for enhancing the teaching of vocabulary when working with twelve graders in the EFL classroom.

3. To design activities using the strategies selected in order to improve and update the unit “Films and Books” that is part of the National Curriculum for twelve graders.

Class Description:

This piece of work will be designed for Chilean 12th grade students to know, develop, improve and practice reading comprehension strategies and skills in any EFL class. The book *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo* (2008) will be used to accomplish these goals.

Justification:

Reading comprehension is a skill present in all the different subjects that teenagers face throughout their school process. In many cases, the performance of such a skill is a difficult and boring task. Mostly, the textbooks provided by the government are not contextualized; in other words, they do not relate to students’ interests nor to their cultural background. Usually when teenagers complete reading comprehension activities they face three types of problems: they are not properly guided in the process, they are given a short amount of time to carry out the assignment, and they are not provided with proper background information about the text.

By the time that students reach 12th grade, they are supposed to have developed the abilities needed for reading, both in their native and in their foreign languages. In the latter case, the main task that they need to achieve is not to decode the words and translate them into their native language, but to analyze and comprehend the texts as a

whole. Thus, it is the language teacher's responsibility – both English and Spanish teachers – to provide activities for students to reach full comprehension of a text, to build students' vocabulary, and also to design different strategies in order to develop a proficient reader. The main purpose of this pedagogical proposal is to present a new and updated tool for English language teachers to use, especially in 12th grade, since this is a class where students have already acquired enough tools, vocabulary and experience to work with any kind of text. Likewise, it is easier to cover more complex and interesting topics, as is the case of this novel, due to students' critical and intellectual maturity.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several and important topics related to the teaching and training of reading comprehension skills will be discussed in this piece of writing, especially throughout the theoretical framework. All the concepts exposed in this section are arranged with the purpose of describing, enumerating and analyzing the many views that the process of reading involves.

1.1 Setting the Context

The results obtained by Chilean 15-year-old students in the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA, 2012) – an international standardized test – show that students lack proficiency when they have to deal with any reading comprehension task in students' native language. PISA assesses three major educational areas: reading, mathematics and scientific literacy and it seeks not only to test them, but also to establish whether students can draw conclusions from what they have learned, and can use this expertise in a new circumstance (PISA, 2012, Assessment Framework). The national performance in this test proves that apparently there is a lack of motivation, efficiency and capability when students read a text. Thus, students' reading comprehension performance lacks proficiency.

In the process of depicting all characteristics involved in the reading comprehension instruction, several areas will be described. In the following segment, an important concept, Literacy, will be introduced; and how it affects the countries'

economies indirectly, as well as its active role in students' learning process and their educational development will be covered.

1.1.1 Literacy

It is important, for the purpose of this research, to establish the main role played by literacy in human lives. As it is stated by Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2006) "Literacy skills are essential in today's knowledge societies conferring benefits on individuals, communities and nations" (p. 27). Thus, it is described as a flourishing, powerful and liberating tool. This paper will start by setting an idea for literacy.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO (2008) describes literacy as an ability that involves many skills, and also as a human right due to the central role that it plays in all people's right to education settled by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to this premise, literacy is the main ingredient or basis for education. It is the core in the implementation of any language class because of the many abilities that it involves: indentifying, understanding, interpreting, creating and computing.

In the year 2000, 164 countries attended the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal. They established six goals in order to cope with global educational development. Literacy was among them and its inclusion denotes how present this idea is every time a country wants to improve its educational system. For instance, The Education for all Global Monitoring Report (2006) asserts that many countries are

developing governmental policies related to literacy improvement. Cuba's policy related to literacy meant to establish a "strong literate environment . . . with resources for sustaining and developing literacy" (p. 33). It is important to mention that, unlike Cuba's case, Germany has high rates of literacy due not only to the compulsory schooling, but also to the access to literate structures. In addition, in the year 2003, the Brazilian government also started a literacy program with the main goal of increasing literacy rates. The Education for all Global Monitoring Report states that (2006) "literate societies should provide and develop literacy that is of relevance to cities and communities and the nation, and at the same time acknowledge the diverse needs and priorities of the group" (*ibid.*, p. 34). Consequently, local governments are the ones that discriminate their own limitations, requirements and concerns. They are to be taken into account when developing pertinent literacy improving strategies, so that they portray literacy as a tool that contributes to improve citizens' lifestyle.

1.1.2 Literacy and EFL Reading Comprehension

As it was mentioned before, and according to research in this field, literacy involves a set of skills that interconnect in the reading process. Reading comprehension is one of them and will be described in order to state its important link with literacy instruction and, therefore, its improvement. First, both concepts will be viewed from the perspective of Foreign Language Teaching and will be positioned in context.

The Chilean curricular programs, developed by MINEDUC (2009), establish that EFL teaching begins in fifth grade, whereas the same curricular standards establish that literacy instruction in the mother tongue begins in first grade around the age of seven (MINEDUC, 2009). The curricular standards assert that in grade five students are able to read, comprehend and analyze texts in their mother tongue (*ibid.*). Therefore, when learners are first introduced to a new language, such as English, they should have mastered the different literacy skills needed in their mother tongue. The Literacy for Learning Report (2004) establishes that “literacy instruction introduces children to the fundamentals of reading and writing and nurtures an awareness of language and motivation to learn” (p. 5). This language awareness can be developed not only in the students’ mother tongue, but also in EFL; at first, one can always rely on Language (LI), the mother tongue. Cameron (2001) posits that “literacy learning needs informed and skilled teaching” (p. 123). First of all, a teacher needs to know how children learn to write and read in their L1, and also s/he needs to give clear and discernible patterns in EFL so that students will be exposed to the different forms of language as naturally as in their native language.

Cameron (2001) also states that since language is used to share and express meaning, literacy has two types of connotations: cognitive and social. Those two aspects are present any time anyone is dealing with language, literacy learning and strategies for classroom teaching. All these aspects must be taken into account and must be part of any EFL class.

Cameron (2001) also proposes that “Literacy skills include being able to read and write different sorts of texts for different purposes” (*ibid.*). Therefore, the application of those skills needs to be polished, exercised and applied in all the subjects across the curriculum. In addition, teachers also need to teach *reading for understanding* at all different ages and levels. “The more children read, the better writers they are likely to become” (Read, 2007, p.48). Thus, reading and writing are linked and are elements of the same essential part of the students’ educational life.

It takes loving reading for encouraging readers and writers in class, not only in students’ mother tongue but also in the foreign language. As a consequence, it is important to remember that “through learning to read in English, children develop positive attitudes, strong motivation and a sense of achievement” (*ibid.*).

Research on this topic shows that depending on the activities, readers’ attitude, and the amount of hours that a teacher uses for performing it, students will easily achieve a more successful and efficient process. Since in Chile students are firstly introduced to EFL at the age of ten, they will rely on their previous L1 knowledge. They will master their abilities for reading and writing in their own language inasmuch the purpose of teaching reading strategies is to accomplish, understanding and building critical readers,

Learning is a consequence of thinking. . . This sentence turns topsy-turvy the conventional pattern of schooling. The conventional pattern says that first students acquire knowledge. Only then do they think with and about the knowledge they have absorbed. But, it’s really just the opposite: Far from

thinking coming after knowledge, knowledge comes on the coattails of thinking.
As we think about and with the content we are learning, we truly learn it.
(Perkins, 1992)

In other words, for Perkins (1992) the idea of the ‘culture of thinking’ and learning in schools means that teachers need to encourage inquiry, curiosity and critical thinking in students due to the fact that they need to take an active part in the construction of their own knowledge. This process can take place through reading, teaching reading strategies for comprehension and encouraging students to read at all times. In consequence, a teacher needs to first set a literate environment and then to move to an active literacy environment so that knowledge will occur in all types of learning environment (Harvey & Godouvis, 2007).

1.1.3 EFL Reading Comprehension in the Chilean Context

In Chile, the government manages the Chilean Educational system through the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)¹, which is the unit in charge of designing the curricular programs. These programs are the basis from which teachers must start their work so as to guarantee the homogenization of teaching, to establish the use of different teaching techniques, and also to apply innovative ones to reach pertinent education (MINEDUC). Following the same line of thought, Stephanie Harvey and Anne Godouvis (2007) explain that it is teachers’ responsibility to make the teaching process

¹ *Ministerio de Educación*

not only pertinent, but also fun and eye-catching for students by having literacy and their students' abilities in mind every time they teach.

In the Chilean context, there is a great concern about schooling, literacy and education because these three are the key for a well-developed economy. Hence, the great concern for countries' economies (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2006): they are either on their way to development, they have already attained it, or they want to keep it. Governments from all over the world organize their educational curricular standards with the aim of: maintaining, enriching and ensuring the growth of the different literacy skills due to the huge impact that they have in the growth of a country. Education for All Global Monitoring (Olson & Torrance, 2001 in EFA report, 2006) establishes that a "literate society is more than a society with high literacy rates; rather it is one in which important aspects in social life such as economics, law and science form what one may call "textual institutions". In the process of a country's development and its economy, the richer the country, the more it will be able to invest in education; the more a country invests, the better literacy rates it will have (Richmond *et al*, 2008).

Accordingly, the governmental policy for reaching such purposes is traced by MINEDUC through the National Curriculum. It sets the requirements for English as a Foreign Language Teaching (EFL); it also establishes the amount of class hours, the contents that should be covered, and the abilities that are to be embraced in the English language class. They are reedited and revised by the government in charge so as to update the different requirements in literacy and economy that a globalized society

demands. The major role played by literacy in Chile is placed not only in the economic field, but also in cultural growth since literacy is more than an indicator of cultural, economic and political proliferation; it also – and most importantly for countries such as Chile – Implies freedom (UNESCO, 2009).

Consequently, the teaching, training and managing of the different skills that are part of literacy are the core of the Chilean curricular program in the educational system. In this sense, the main purpose of MINEDUC is to promote the proliferation of literacy skills not only in EFL teaching, but also across the Curriculum for all the subjects – also known as interdisciplinary or cross-curricular programs (MINEDUC, 2004). In the case of EFL teaching, the program consists of increasing the amount of class hours using technology in the classroom, starting English as a Foreign Language in fifth grade and adjusting English Language Instruction from traditional grammar-based approaches to more innovative communicative ones (MINEDUC, 2009). Traditional grammar instruction is based on passive repetition and its main characteristic is to embrace grammar rules ‘explicitly’ (Richards & Rogers, 2001), whereas communicative instruction pursues the use of ‘implicit’ grammar instruction where an active use of language for communication takes place (Coady & Huckin, 1997), the shift proves that for teachers to improve EFL instruction, it is important to search for updated and dynamic teaching strategies.

In the Chilean curricular program for English language teaching, it is possible to notice the attempt of inclusion of all the different aspects previously mentioned that are present when dealing with literacy and language. Firstly, EFL teaching literacy skills are

divided into listening, reading comprehension, writing, and speaking. Then, a number of hours are mandatory for each skill to be developed by designing lesson plans that include the different and important subjects that are present in any language, such as the cultural aspects (MINEDUC).

1.2 The Reading Process

The reading process developed in any person is one of the key topics covered throughout this piece of writing. A profound description of this process is presented below, along with the skills and strategies that are directly related and that play an essential role in its development. In the same way, the relationship between reading skills and metacognition will be presented with the intention of providing evidence for a full understanding of this complex process.

1.2.1 Defining the Reading Process

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2013) defines reading as the act of “look[ing] at and understand[ing] the meaning of written or printed words or symbols”. This definition implies an action that can be done effortlessly. Thus for the purpose of this piece of work it is necessary to state the many and complex actions that reading involves. Paran (1995) highlights that the most prevailing and influential idea of reading in English Language Teaching (ELT) was asserted by the psycholinguistic model.

In this regard, psycholinguistics or psychology of language relates to the study of aspects that make it possible for humans to obtain, employ, and comprehend language from the psychological and neurobiological point of view (Sciencedaily, 2013). Kenneth Goodman (1967) posits reading as a ‘psycholinguistic guessing game’. In other words, it is an intricate mental activity that is divided into four phases: sampling, predicting, testing and confirming or revising predictions (*ibid.*) In other the words, the reader will first evaluate the text, will anticipate what the text is about, then will study and review her/his predictions and finally will search for deeper information from the text. Goodman (1975/1988) also posits the Reading Universals Hypothesis which claims that although the pattern “has been built through the study of English reading. . . , it must be applicable to reading in all languages and all orthographies” (n. p.).

On the contrary, Goodman (1965) and Smith’s (1971) definition does not establish a differentiation between reading and reading comprehension, since – from the perspective of psycholinguistics’ – they are both part of the same process: “. . . reading is comprehending [and] reading without comprehending is not reading” (in Pearson, 2009, p. 11). Thus, when reading takes place, comprehension occurs as well since they are both intertwined and part of the same process.

In the same manner, psycholinguistics positioned reading comprehension in an active place where the reader was a player trying to guess the meaning of a text. Grellet (1981) explains reading as “a constant process of guessing” (p.7). Those guesses might be discarded or validated, depending on how many words or cues a reader needs in order to get an idea of what would appear next in the text (*ibid*, p. 56). As it was previously

stated –and based on Goodman’s psycholinguistic–view – the reading process is an active one from which all the actions are developed. Reading is also described as a process with different stages with its own model; therefore, this process will be also described in the form of a schema.

Schema Theory (Rumelhart, 1981) establishes reading as a process where the reader stores different structures. Pearson (2009) posits that “schemata are like little containers in which we deposit the particular traces of particular experiences as well as the ‘ideas’ that derive from those experiences” (*ibid*, p. 13). In the schema theory, new ideas enter the game. First, the reader becomes an active explanation builder (Anderson, 1977; Collins, Brown, & Larkin, 1980). Secondly, the experiences that a reader has influence comprehension building (Pearson, 2009). Finally, an important player enters the game: background knowledge (Rumelhart, 1977; Stein & Grein, 1977).

In their work, Carrell and Eisterhold (1998) define background knowledge and its connection to schema theory. They state that:

According to schema, a text only provides directions for listener or readers as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own, previously acquired knowledge. This previously acquired knowledge is called the reader’s background knowledge and the previously acquired knowledge structures are called schemata (p. 76)

Thus, no reader can construct the same text’s pattern inasmuch they rely on their previous experiences for this pattern’s construction. For example, a student who lives near the sea can portray the ocean’s features easily from a text. However, a student who

has not seen the sea will portray different features from the same text. Background knowledge and schema are both the main ingredients of a dynamic view of the reading process. This dynamic view posits the reader in a powerful position; his/her previously acquired knowledge will give him/her different and rich views to face a text. No one but the reader can construct his comprehension process; the teacher is just a facilitator of such understanding, since in their active position the readers create their own mental patterns to use when facing a text. The teacher's task is just to activate students' background knowledge in order for students to create, use and develop efficient schemas during their design. In other words, the instructor will give patterns to follow and will release the responsibility in terms of readers' mental creations when reading.

Anderson and Pearson, 1984 and Rumelhart, 1981 (in Pearson 2009) explain that "schema theory is not a theory about reading comprehension but rather a theory about the structure of human knowledge as it is represented in memory" (p. 13). Memory, knowledge of the world, previous experiences and students' cultural backgrounds are saved in a students' mental vault which they might open anytime they interact with a text. Educators should examine those perspectives in order to activate or promote a constructivist view of comprehension (Pearson, 2009.)

Thus, for the purpose of polishing this procedure, it is necessary to establish class activities which set those important factors in both native and in the foreign language as well. Similarly, Carol Read (2007) proposes that "Reading in English provides an opportunity to build on and to transfer skills from and to L1²" Therefore, EFL reading

² L1 Native language/ Mother tongue

instruction delivers the unique chance of working, training and developing [students'] expertise.

In the action of defining reading process, a number of descriptions have been mentioned. As the complex procedure explained before, it is important to inform that more concepts are to be mentioned that can be easily mixed and confused as well. That is the case when dealing with the two concepts described below. Likewise, a description will be stated so that differences and similarities will be settled with the aim of stating a pertinent contrast.

1.2.2 Reading Skills and Reading Strategies

Reading skills and reading strategies are both active forces that are present in the reading process. Willian Grabe and Fredricka Stoller (2011) point out that the setting may influence the process of reading; depending on the purpose, it may swift from a comprehensive action to a superficial one. For instance, when one reads a book for pleasure, the details of the information are not retrieved. On the other hand, when reading a newspaper the headlines, the information and details are taken into account. A skilled reader in L2 will know what strategies he/she will use depending on the purpose of their reading.

Hence, the purpose of reading will affect the amount of concentration a reader will destine in the operation; there is a considerable number of means that will occur despite what the readers' motivation is. In this sense, there are five basic actions associated with

reading texts: scanning, skimming, reading, learning and memorizing (*ibid.*) and they are present whenever the reading takes action, regardless what the purpose of reading is or the amount of concentration given. Read (2007) states that “reading activities should be meaningful and create a reason and purpose for reading” (p. 49). In this sense, the main reason why those skills are to be practiced in the EFL class is to develop consciousness of the existence of different objectives for reading and the awareness of the differing reading strategies to utilize (*ibid.*).

During the purpose of reading, a number of actions will take part in the process; the way in which those actions will be directed depends on the skills and the strategies a reader will use.

Even though skills and strategies are part of the reading process, they are not the same. In some cases, they tend to be mixed and confused although there are certain distinctions among them. Alexander, Graham and Harris (1998) postulate that “what may distinguish skills and other processes from strategies is the level of awareness and deliberation on the processes” (p. 23). It is important to establish that the procedure a teacher uses to measure reading skills is comprehension; and comprehension instruction is the path to follow in order to promote and encourage the development of students’ mind, thinking and knowledge so that they will be competent readers in EFL.

Finally, Grabe and Stoller (2011) define skills as “linguistic processing abilities that are relatively automatic in their use and their combinations” (p. 8). They also claim that although strategies are commonly defined as ‘abilities under conscious control of the reader’ (*ibid.*), there are certain strategies that a reader uses rather automatically. In this

sense, both concepts share some important features. Thus, the distinction between them is not clearly stated; the authors also claim that “the reading process refers to cognitive activity involving skills, strategies, attentional resources, knowledge resources and their integration” (*ibid*, p. 9).

This integration takes part when teachers pursue to engage comprehension through reading instruction. He/she would make readers strive for understanding so that students will acquire the tools for searching not only information but also knowledge every time they read.

1.2.3 Reading Skills and Metacognition

In this stage of the research, the definitions of these two concepts are to be exposed with the purpose of enriching the proposal with this point of view.

From Harvey and Goudvis’ (2007) points of view, “getting readers to think when they read, to develop an awareness of their thinking, and to actively use knowledge. . . are the primary goals of the comprehension instruction” (p. 13). This active view of readers gives them the unique chance to build, develop and nurture thinking due to the fact that thinking and learning are intertwined.

According to Aek Phakiti (2006) “the goal of teaching and learning is to develop learners’ cognitive traits and repertoires independent of contexts” (p. 25) whereas those traits or repertoires are consciously or unconsciously done, it is necessary to set a pattern for them to happen. He also asserts that “the basic concept of Metacognition or strategic

competence is the notion of thinking about thinking” (*ibid.*). Thus, it is clearly stated that the conscious decision in the use of certain strategies at the time one reads involves a high mental process. On the other hand, Pearson (2009) states that “the key phrases associated with metacognition reveal its emphasis: awareness, monitoring, control and evaluation” (p. 14). This definition comes to enrich the psycholinguistic view of reading where the reader builds meaning; metacognition establishes that this construction is a strategic one, consequently, it can be – and needs to be – trained.

The metacognitive turn was useful to understand the different types of knowledge that reading demands (Paris, Lipson & Wixon, 1983). Those types of knowledge are: first Knowing That, which includes the understanding of the world, it is also called Declarative Knowledge; and secondly, Knowing How includes all the tactics used in order to test one’s comprehension. Also, two more types of knowledge were added: ‘when’ and ‘why’ to the conditional knowledge. In terms of comprehension, the use of certain strategies would improve the comprehension of the text. According to Pearson (2009) “the real contribution was helping us understand that we cannot characterize comprehension or comprehension instruction without including all of these kinds of knowledge” (p. 15).

Therefore, comprehension instruction deals directly with knowledge in all its different shapes when a reader attempts to construct meaning from a text. Thus, in order to make this exercise efficient, readers need to be aware of the many different strategies, skills and knowledge construction that they can use and take advantage of when constructing their own understanding.

1.3 Vocabulary

With the aim of achieving complete understanding of the reading development and its importance in the acquisition of a foreign language, literacy and the definition of the process and skills involved are not enough. Now it is time to introduce one the feet of reading: Vocabulary. Firstly, the description of what this concept really is starts by providing a full definition of Vocabulary itself, followed by the explanation of the bond between Vocabulary and the Natural Approach, presented by some authors in the field where basically, the communicative methodology points out the use of a comprehensible and more significant input in order to succeed. As a final point, this section will demonstrate how Vocabulary is developed when facing English as a second language learning and teaching, and how these two interact in the process.

1.3.1 Defining Vocabulary

In 1990, Professor M. McCarthy referred to the role of vocabulary in the reading process in any educational curriculum around the globe: “it is the experience of most language teachers that the single, biggest component of any language course is vocabulary” (p. viii). In this point, it is clearly established the main connection among language, vocabulary and reading comprehension. When it comes to defining vocabulary, there are two ideas related to words and their amount. Firstly, Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (1989 in Lopez Campillo) defines that “the vocabulary of a language is the total number of words in it”. In the same way, it clarifies

that the total number of words known by someone corresponds, in fact, to his or her 'personal' vocabulary (*ibid.*, p. 35). Research on the issue has shown that efficient readers have a large amount of vocabulary. As a result, in order for readers to comprehend a text, they need to be capable of understanding separate words. Furthermore, they build up their interpretation of a text by gathering and understanding the words in context (Pang *et al.*, 2003).

At this stage on defining the reading comprehension process, vocabulary is placed as an important ingredient for understanding its construction. Grabe and Stoller (2011) establish reading as a linguistic exercise considering that a text cannot be interpreted "without engaging with it linguistically" (*ibid.*, p. 13). From their point of view, for a reader to connect linguistically with an EFL text is important that both languages LI and L2 share similar linguistic patterns. Koda (1999) and Birch (2002) explained that when orthographies of LI and L2 differ from each other, the reading processes is steady and that constructive transfer from LI to L2 does not happen. In this regard, Nation (2005 in Phakiti, 2006) proposes that "acquisition of new vocabulary occurs under the following conditions: interest, deliberate attention, and generative use of a word in a new context" (p. 22). In addition, Phakiti (2006) asserts that "L2 readers need to attain fluent L2 word recognition before they can read accurately and fluently" (p. 22). Hence, word recognition is present when readers connect with a text from the linguistic view; thus, for readers to understand a text, they need to be aware of the words in their visual aspect so as to fully comprehend them.

Whatever readers do when relating to a text, they do it by relying on their ‘metalinguistic knowledge’. Grabe and Stoller (*ibid.*) explain that learners develop this type of understanding due to L2 academic and foreign language settings. Since second language learners begin to read in English once they have already been learning L1 literacy skills for a certain period of time – at least, this is the case of Chile according to the current curricular standards (MINEDUC, 2012) they will tend to use metalinguistic understanding deliberately when facing new words in context since they will acquire and develop a greater awareness of (a) how they have learned to read because of their instructed L2 learning efforts, (b) what learning strategies can work for them and (c) how language knowledge can support literacy development. L2 students can more easily bring their ‘metalinguistic knowledge’ to a conscious level to provide strategic support or understand comprehension failure. (p. 38)

Metalinguistic understanding is closely related to word recognition; as Grabe and Stoller (*ibid.*) clarify, metalinguistic knowledge “includes knowledge of letters and sounds and how they relate, knowledge of words and word parts, knowledge of sentences and their parts and knowledge of texts and their genres and how they are organized” (p. 40). This sort of understanding is related to the way in which learners portray deliberately how the language functions. All these mechanisms are elaborated procedures that are activated, developed and performed when a reader faces a text. They are essential in the course of becoming a more strategic reader. Metalinguistic knowledge can be useful for readers when learning new words in context. Since when

facing new words in a text they will try to grasp a meaning relying on their knowledge of the words that are familiar for them (Yongqi Gu in Mehring, 2005).

1.3.2 Vocabulary and the Natural Approach

The Chilean EFL curriculum affirms the urgent need for shifting from traditional grammar-based approaches to new and innovative ones. From MINEDUC's perspective, it is important to set a 'communicative' environment in an EFL class. This kind of setting is useful for students to acquire certain proficiency when mastering the different skills of EFL teaching. The Natural Approach (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) is a communicative methodology which highlights the use of a comprehensible and a meaningful input. Its theoretical model encompasses with MINEDUC's curricular requirements for EFL teaching since this piece of work aspires to grasp reading comprehension by: First, giving comprehensible input; secondly, developing class activities under the premise of Krashen's and Terrence affective filter hypothesis (1983). Lastly, the inclusion of word recognition exercises will increase students' vocabulary learning.

For this reason, the two theories are to be included in this proposal. The first premise is related to Input. From James Coady and Thomas Huckin's (1997) perspectives "the recommended teaching methods for vocabulary, as for all aspects of language emphasize the importance of interesting and relevant input" (p. 15). The significance of input stated by Krashen and Terrell (1983) is that it must be

‘comprehensible’ so that learner will find it pertinent to replicate it. Furthermore, another important input feature is that it must be beyond the learner’s existing competence.

The second assertion is related to the Affective Filters (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). This aspect is related to the learner’s behavior when facing language acquisition task. The lower the affective filter is, the more receptive and more likely to get involved in reading activities with self-confidence the learner will become (Coady & Huckin, 1997). Both theories will be engaged and combined when designing the activities of this teaching proposal since comprehension, vocabulary and learners are the central part of it. As Coady and Hunckin (*ibid.*) consider vocabulary as a carrier of significance, with this connotation readers can construct their understanding. The understanding takes the reader to the conscious construction of strategies to grasp meaning, and thus, to achieve reading comprehension successfully.

McCarthy (1990) asserts that “no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in a meaningful way”. Thus, it is imperative to establish the core role that vocabulary plays in terms of increasing communication, under the communicative approach premise in order to develop the comprehension process and to nurture the learning process.

1.3.3 Developing Vocabulary in EFL Classrooms

The Chilean curriculum establishes that by the time students finish high school, they are to manage an amount of 2000 words in the foreign language (MINEDUC, 2004). Nation (in Nation & Warrin, 1997) highlights that “vocabulary knowledge enables language use, language use enables the increase of vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of the world enables the increase of vocabulary knowledge and language use and so on” (p. 6). In this manner, this piece of work seeks to make it possible for students to expand, use, and enrich vocabulary in EFL through reading comprehension activities.

Grabe and Stoller (2011) explain, “the general need to teach vocabulary, grammar and discourse structure in L2 settings . . . act as a support for early reading development [...] L2 readers often develop a greater awareness of L2 itself as part of their reading resources (p. 38)”. The increasing of learners’ vocabulary rate curves directly the reading comprehension performance. Since in this piece of work vocabulary exercises are to be developed through reading comprehension tasks, words are to be put in context. Jeff Mehring (2005) points out that “learning new vocabulary through context also helps the student understand the word’s correct usage”. In this sense class activities related to vocabulary instruction are supposed to increase, train and improve the management of the words in context. This understanding deals directly with metacognition as Yongqi Gu (2003) explains, the teaching of new words through context is only one method that students may use. Similarly, they should think meta-cognitively

whenever a new word appears. Thus, readers should be trained in the context's use so that meaning will be discovered.

With the purpose of lowering affective filters, the main strategy to use is this 'context guessing' process or the construction of words meanings through context. The activities are to be designed in terms of cooperative learning, which can be portrayed equally as an approach and a social organization that fosters learning (Kamil, 2004 in Rice, 2009). Thus, Students working in groups are to develop learning through sharing experiences and knowledge when completing tasks given by their teachers. Meliand Rice (2009) explains this view further inasmuch as "recent research is indicating that cooperative learning may help improve the comprehension of students who are in the process of learning English" (p. 4). Setting small groups or pairs will, therefore, be part of the type of activities that will be included in this teaching proposal. As Mehring (2005) states "when learning vocabulary in a cooperative learning environment, it allows students to learn from peers closest to them" (p. 4). In view of the fact that reading is a procedure closely related to thinking, understanding and meaning, It provides language teachers a unique chance of developing students' interaction with knowledge. Besides, it is a fundamental learning exercise by which most students discover new information (Grabe and Stoller, 2011); finally it is an intricate operation by which learners can enhance their worldview.

To conclude, important issues will be taken into account when designing the activities for this teaching proposal: firstly, reading comprehension techniques are to be nurtured; secondly, vocabulary instruction will be developed through reading

comprehension texts; thirdly, with the intention of lowering affective filters, class activities are to be managed by the premise of cooperative learning; and finally, by exposing students to comprehensible input students are to work towards the comprehension of texts and will, thus, achieve acquisition.

1.4 Chilean Curricular Standards for Reading Comprehension in EFL Classrooms

In this stage of this framework, the learning standards will be illustrated. Firstly, a definition for curriculum will be settled, which will be followed by a description of the Chilean learning standards for EFL teaching. To conclude this section, EFL curriculum and language as a cultural expression will be pointed out. All the topics previously mentioned are essential when planning an EFL class aimed to achieve language acquisition. For teachers, curriculum is a path to follow in order to improve language teaching practice.

1.4.1 Defining the Curriculum

In the process of teaching and planning EFL classes there are many factors that are to be present when preparing a class. Likewise, there is set of standardized requisites for teachers to cover in EFL classrooms: contents, class hours, unit objectives and even some teaching strategies. Those requirements are also called curriculum.

Professor Jack C. Richards (2013) defines curriculum as “the overall plan or design for a course and how the content for a course is transformed into a blueprint for teaching and learning which enables the desired learning outcomes to be achieved” (p. 6). Thus, curriculum can be viewed as leading principles, universal objectives, flaunts and also actions (Sauvé, 1986). Curriculum is strongly influenced by different social aspects present in the educational context, such as: language, culture, history, politics, economics, time and place (*ibid.*). As Cristian Cox (2001) asserts, “curriculum is a cultural selection with educational purpose that arranges students’ pathways through time from which contents, mental blueprints, abilities and values contribute to communicate” (p. 214). As seen in CL scrutiny and clearly stated by Wiggins and McTighe (2006)

Curriculum takes content (from external standards and local goals) and shapes it into a plan for how to conduct effective teaching and learning. It is thus more than a list of topics and lists of key facts and skills (the ‘input’). It is a map of how to achieve the ‘outputs’ of desired student performance, in which appropriate learning activities and assessments are suggested to make it more likely that students achieve the desired results (Wiggins & McTighe, 2006 in Richards, J. 2013, p. 6).

As stated, Richards (2013) explains that the language teaching ‘input’ submits to the linguistic content of a course which includes the arrangement of the linguistics units with a rational sequence, syllabus, and the process, or learning activities. The output points to the learning results. The learning results are the ones that can be improved

through students' exposure to comprehensible input and, thus, teachers are the ones in charge of commanding such composition by taking into account the curricular commitments as well as their students previous experiences and language levels.

1.4.2 EFL Learning Standards in Chile

In the Chilean context, there have been several changes to those plan designs, starting in 1998, when the curriculum reform was approved. Since then, several changes have been put forward. The first main element was that greater emphasis was given to receptive skills, which, according to Sandra Mackay (2001), was one of the major reforms that took place after more traditional approaches like the Grammar-Based Approach. Thus, around the year 2000, the learning standards sought to “emphasize . . . receptive skills (reading and listening) as opposed to productive skills (writing and speaking)” (p. 141). She also asserts that 40 percent of EFL curriculum was established to develop reading comprehension. The rest of the program was divided into listening (40) and writing and speaking (20) (*ibid.*).

Then, the major reform that followed was the introduction of more Communicative-oriented methodologies that sought to educate students as effective communicators in learning and professional environments. In this regard, it can be said that this last reform is still in its implementation process. The 2012 policies stated by MINEDUC are to give learners “the required abilities for the use of English language as a tool which provides them information's access along with solving simple

communicative situations” (p. 85). In addition to the abovementioned, Chilean EFL learning standards pursue to “encourage the continuous growth of higher cognitive skills (metacognition), and also the development of the ability to value different lifestyles, customs and views” (*ibid.*). It is in this stage where Chilean learning standards for EFL teaching portray language as a container that can increase both higher cognitive skills and cultural awareness, which is the reason why these areas will be covered in the following section.

1.4.3 Curriculum and the Cultural Content

As it has been exposed, learning and teaching a foreign language involves many and complex skills as well as intricate cognitive processes and cultural settings since a vital component present and portrayed by the curriculum is Culture. The system used for approaching culture in both curriculum and EFL teaching must be exposed cautiously. Zofia Clopek (2008) poses that “communication that lacks appropriate cultural content often results in humorous incident or worse, is the source of serious miscommunication and misunderstanding” (p. 10). As part of the important issues displayed by the curriculum, EFL teaching must engage the cultural content portrayed by language, since language carries culture as well. EFL students have little contact with the target culture and consequently a slight aptitude to develop cultural competence (*ibid.*). Phillip Kerr (2004) argues that “culture is often seen as mere information conveyed by the language, not as a feature of language itself; cultural awareness becomes an educational objective

in itself” (p. 1). This point is present in EFL Chilean learning standards when topics such as different lifestyles, customs, and worldviews are addressed (MINEDUC, 2012). This cultural appreciation will “enable[e] language proficiency and . . . [become] the outcome of reflection on language proficiency” (Kramersch, 1993).

In this teaching proposal the development of this different view appreciation can be easily approached through the use of reading texts. Any language class has its own course-book which, from Kerr’s (2002) perspective, “directly or indirectly communicates sets of social and cultural values that are inherent in their make-up. This is the so-called ‘hidden curriculum’ and it forms part of any educational [program], but is unstated and undisclosed” (p. 2). The cultural content portrayed by language is developed in this piece of writing by the means of reading instruction. All the complex processes that reading comprehension involves are influenced by the cultural content present in any writing as well as a set of values and beliefs that students bring to a text. For instance, the cultural content present in texts, language and also in the language classrooms are a rich combination for constructing language acquisition.

As a conclusion of this first chapter, literacy is an important ingredient in language teaching and, therefore, it must be revised, used and developed throughout the learning process. In addition, the reading process is a procedure that involves many different strategies that can be trained in order to improve students’ performance. Furthermore, students’ vocabulary rates need to be expanded by applying suitable activities that include students’ background knowledge, comprehensible input and that make use of collaborative work. Thus, teachers can improve the curricular standards by

implementing pertinent changes and adjustments to the mandatory contents that must be covered in EFL class.

In the following chapter, a discussion will be presented in which all the elements exposed in this first chapter will be combined and analyzed in order to identify the rationale that will be the starting point of the teaching proposal.

CHAPTER 2: DISCUSSION

At this point, this piece of work will provide further explanations and implications of the previously mentioned theories. It is pertinent to state that this stage is developed under the premise that reading is a complex operation. Thus, teachers must take into account not only the design of the activities, the instruction of the strategies and students' mental path while reading, but also students' awareness of their metacognitive activity which they will use anytime an activity or subject demands it.

2.1 Reading Comprehension in the Chilean Curriculum

The Chilean curricular standards posit reading comprehension as an elemental content of the learning process. In this view, the skills to be covered in any EFL classroom are divided into receptive – *i.e.* reading comprehension and listening skills – plus the productive ones – speaking and writing. Similarly, the standards enable EFL teachers to establish differences, and to portray their own view when it comes to suit students' needs and interests (MINEDUC, 2004). The curricular criterion presents teachers with the chance to reveal their own perspective regarding three important points: firstly, the selection of the excerpts; secondly, the selection of the theme contents; and finally, the lexical content in which to centre the activities – always under the premise of the four hundred words to cover. All the previously mentioned is contained in the text books that MINEDUC sends to public schools, where the units, learning contents, and themes are divided and named with the purpose of keeping “students' interest in the contents of the book, *i.e.* subjects and themes of special relevance and attraction to young people of this

age group” (Polk, 2012, p. 6). Thus, as expected, the units displayed in *Global English* (2012) represent this tendency. The six units are called: Love, Literature and Films, Technology, Young Art, Science and In Business.

This research paper is an attempt to improve the unit “Literature and Films” which deals firstly with words related to books and film, seeking vocabulary growth. Secondly, it deals with the use of gerunds and present participle; and finally, reading comprehension is to be developed through the use of extracts from books and magazines. A number of activities are suggested and each one of them will be described.

In the first activity of the films and books unit, students will match a number of books with their author. Secondly, they will read a part of the first chapter of *The House of Spirits* by Isabel Allende (1982). Then, they will develop a series of vocabulary exercises related to film expressions. After that, students will read a review of the filmed adaptation of the same book and will also develop an event map of the same reading. The listening activity is the second lesson of the unit and deals with a short interview to Stephanie Meyer, the author of the Twilight Saga. Subsequently, there are a number of vocabulary exercises related to the learning of the use of gerunds and its forms. The unit also has a section related to knowledge consolidation, which, in this specific case, is the plot summary of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* (2005). In addition, at the end of the unit a brief extract of *Il Postino* (1994), the film adaptation of the book is suggested along with a self-evaluation rubric related to The Twilight Saga.

In the unit all suggested activities are organized under the premise of films and books, and most of the exercises related to reading comprehension make use of the film

review of the book adaptation. Only in the first activity is a brief piece of a chapter of the book used; while in the remaining activities, the use of book chapters is shifted to the use of the film review particularly.

Finally, it is important to mention that the text books with the current curricular standards stated by the Ministry of Education and given to all public schools represent a great tool for most EFL teachers, and in many cases is part of the EFL planning and of the activities and units, but does not conform not all of the activities that could be done. The same Ministry also gives teachers the chance of improving, creating and nurturing those class activities, units and, furthermore, students' learning process.

2.2 Analysis of Reading Comprehension Activities in the Chilean Curriculum

In the previous section of this research paper many activities were described, the main concern was to analyze the view that MINEDUC establishes for developing learning contents and also for the performing of reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. From the perspective of the theoretical framework presented in this piece of work, the unit presents a number of flaws related to reading comprehension instruction.

Firstly, since reading comprehension instruction and background knowledge are directly intertwined, activating background knowledge (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1998) is an important step at the beginning of any class activity, even more when the activity relates to reading comprehension (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). Thus, when developing a reading activity is important to initiate it by setting in motion what students' know about the

subject of the reading. Hence, to bring that knowledge into the activity introduction is an effective step to begin a reading activity and also a good incitement to increase that knowledge while reading. Pearson (in Harvey & Goudvis, 2007) points that learning occurs when today's new understanding develops into tomorrow's background knowledge. Although this stage is present in MINEDUC's textbooks, it is not given the proper direction it should have as the starting point of any lesson. For doing so, it is important to deliver suitable information as well as interesting topics from students' perspectives.

Secondly, and in the same line, in order to activate background knowledge, it is important to expose students to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985) which – from students' view – comes along with interesting texts, eye catching handouts as well as challenging ones. Krashen (1985) posits that for input to be optimal, it has to fulfill a major requirement: it must be comprehensible. From Krashen's perspective teachers can develop comprehensible material by including simpler vocabulary, high frequency words – less slang, fewer idioms – and by using syntactic simplification which means that teachers should simplify their speech, using more common words and so forth. Stating this in class activities comes along with the use of less complex syntax, precise instructions and frequent words used in class activities. Although textbooks should emphasize the inclusion of simpler vocabulary, they must keep in mind that simpler vocabulary does not mean easier vocabulary. Therefore, in order to make input optimal, activities should promote the use of such vocabulary starting from students' current language level and, afterwards, beyond.

Thirdly, students will develop a positive attitude towards reading comprehension activities when they are exposed to topics that are present in their daily lives (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). According to Harvey and Goudvis (2007) the selection of the text matters since their choice affects directly students' performance. In order to make a right decision, teachers that are in charge of the selection have to be aware of students' lives, interests, perspectives, opinions and ideas. If the purpose is to engage students in reading, it can be useful to develop cross-curricular activities as well. For instance, in the English Language class students can develop reading activities using the books that are covered in their Spanish Language class.

Fourthly, texts can be adapted taking into account students' level and cognitive abilities. In order to achieve comprehension when reading, it is mandatory for language teachers to create and activate different mental patterns since reading comprehension is a dynamic process that is fulfilled through students' mental interactions with the texts. This adaptation means presenting more useful activities, vocabulary and strategies according to students' stage. There are some activities that can only be developed by twelve graders due to their amount of vocabulary, cognitive level etc.

Finally, the development of the reading process has to be scaffolded (Pearson, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978) since students must be trained and directed in the use of different comprehension techniques in order to turn them into skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2011). Activities encourage students to grasp the meaning from a piece of text; these can be performed efficiently only if students receive guidance through this process. In the same manner, Pearson and Duke (2009) suggest balanced comprehension instruction along

with a ‘gradual release of responsibility’ that can facilitate the modeling of the use of the different strategies. Furthermore, scaffolding must occur respecting different stages that will be adapted by stating a gradual release of reliability until the level of responsibility is shared between both students and teachers. When performing reading comprehension the use of all the already mentioned components can assure the fulfillment of the main point in reading comprehension instruction which is to achieve the conversion of a reading strategy into a reading skill. In this regard, this will become one of the main guiding principles of the proposal that will be presented in the following chapter.

In conclusion, it is important to develop significant improvements in lesson planning as well as class activities that include pertinent triggering of background knowledge in order to construct future knowledge. It is important to develop activities that promote the use of suitable and comprehensible input by employing texts that are compelling for students and that also talk about issues that matter for them. In addition, class activities must be adapted to students’ proficiency in order to improve their interaction with the texts. Lastly, adequate teachers’ guidance and assistance is of utmost importance in the use and performance of reading strategies. Additionally, it is the teachers’ task to keep in mind students’ cultural traits, which, in case of Chile, are related to the identity group since culturally, Chilean people have the predisposition of being involved in the mass. Thus, this cultural component influences Chilean students’ performance and can be included in the classroom performance as well. Group activities also raise students’ motivation in class since, when socializing the learning process, students are truly acquiring it. According to Krashen (1985), only when the learning

process is developed through the use of comprehensible input along with the socialization while learning, acquisition is taking place. Thus, the social component is essential for developing effective teaching practices.

2.3 Rationale behind the Teaching Proposal

The teaching proposal is divided into five activities that take up one lesson – only one of them is planned in two sessions. The activities are arranged taking into account the different parts of the novel “The Girls with the Dragon Tattoo” (2008). The first activity uses the prologue of the book; the second one deals with one of the main characters and its main features which are supposed to be depicted through the piece of reading. The third activity is divided into two parts and is the introduction to the film adaptation in order to visualize the different characters. After the students have portrayed the main characters, they will move to the next activity which is the projection of the movie. Finally, in the last activity students will contrast both: the parts of the book that were used in reading comprehension activities, and the film adaptation.

The activities are arranged taken into account the different components of reading comprehension activities that were mentioned before: activating background knowledge, using comprehensible input, appealing to students’ concerns by the use of a thought-provoking reading, students’ cognitive abilities and finally scaffolded practice through collaborative reading.

All the components are displayed in the different activities developed. In this proposal the activities are arranged in the following order:

- Activity # 1 “*Why having a tattoo?*” Language objective: Students will be able to read a written text using scanning and skimming reading techniques. Skill: Scanning and Skimming.
- Activity # 2 “*Who is Lisbeth Salander?*” Language Objective: Students will be able to increase their vocabulary by reading a written text. Reading Skill: Reading and word recognition.
- Activity # 3 “*Moving from a book to a film*” Language Objective: Students will be able to find the main idea in a paragraph. Students will write character descriptions using adjectives, nouns and others. Reading Skill: Reading and scanning.
- Activity # 4 “*Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*” (Two sessions) Language Objective: Students will be able to write a film review. Skill: Reading and word recognition.
- Activity # 5 “*Was it a good adaptation? Comparing the Book with the Film*” Language Objective: Students will be able to write a film review. Skill: Reading and word recognition.

The order of the activities is based on the book sequence and, in the first activity, students will work with the prologue of the book. Next, they will portray the characters features, the main conflict and their opinions about them. Only after they have created

their own mental image of the character, students will watch the film adaptation and finally they will compare the piece of reading they have developed in class with the movie.

In a more precise manner, activity # 1 “*Why having a tattoo?*” is the introduction to the book, the prologue, when the conflict of the plot line is exposed through a phone conversation of two characters. The name of the book *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo* is suitable for activating students’ background knowledge since tattoos are really compelling from teenagers’ point of view. Thus, before the reading activity students will be asked about their opinion about tattoos, different pictures of tattoos will be displayed, and the final purpose of a tattoo will be discussed. At this stage of the activity, it is important to set an environment where students can express their points of view, writing them on the board and paying more attention to the content than to the form of their comments and opinions. All answers are valuable and must be written on the whiteboard. Next, the reading activity can be read out loud, having one member of each group read, or just practicing silent reading, calling students attention to the mental path they need to use while reading: main idea, supporting ideas, characters’ actions and so forth.

In activity # 2 “*Who is Lisbeth Salander?*” Students are introduced to one of the main characters of the book. In this stage it is important to establish collaborative work, to develop the reading activity with the constant support of the teacher who is only in charge of guiding. Background knowledge is taken into account again when dealing with hackers’ stereotypes by the exposure of pictures of hackers’ stereotypes. The aim of this

pre-reading activity is to set the students' curiosity about this character that is a girl, a hacker and has a dragon tattoo. Thus, it is important to activate the guesses before reading, also visualizing and constructing the character by establishing her main features from the reading. Only then will students be in position of moving to the next activity.

Activity # 3 "*Moving from a book to a film*" In this stage the activities will be divided into two parts. Firstly: getting the main idea of the different paragraphs as well as the supporting ideas; and secondly, after reading pieces of the book they will have the tools to view the trailer of the movie. In the first part students will get the main idea of a piece of paper, they will pay attention to details present in the paragraph as well as its form. In the second lesson students will use the character star where they will take into account the various traits of different characters. Students will watch the trailer three times; they will depict different traits and will write them on the handout. The main purpose of this activity is to introduce the film to students, to call their attention and set curiosity about the next activity.

Activity # 4 "*Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*" After students have previously viewed the trailer of the movie, they will be asked to develop some assumptions about the movie. Students will watch the movie and will also have to pay attention to the development of their handouts so that their focus will be directed to important parts of the movie, important characters and main actions as well. This activity will be divided into two important sessions. In the first one they will be introduced to the movie. They will pay attention to different details present in the movie. In the second one, a review of the movie will be developed in the first part of the

handout. Then, they will finish watching the movie. At the end of the two sessions the students will be asked for certain information exposed in the movie.

In Activity # 5 *“Was it a good adaptation? Comparing the Book with the Film”* students will compare what they have read with the adaptation of the same chapter in the movie. They will develop a comparison using the information obtained while they read; they will contrast both their character construction and the film adaptation. This is the final stage of the unit and the main purpose is to raise students’ ability to question, critic and think when they watch a movie.

Movies in this unit are used with the aim of helping students get a general idea of the book, and not a detailed one since this is only possible by reading the novel first, before watching the movie. In this regard, the main purpose of this proposal is to enrich the “Films and Books” unit, which is part of the suggested set of units delivered in twelve graders’ textbooks. The set of activities developed in the proposal are arranged in order to ensure students’ participation as well as, the use of students’ background knowledge, reading strategies, and collaborative work. The use of visual aids – pictures, trailers, movies and book – is distributed through all the different sessions in order to make the unit coherent, cohesive and dynamic, as well as helping students visualize the characters. Thus, in the first sessions the use of the readings, the title of the book and students’ opinion about tattoos are developed in order to activate background knowledge so that connections are made and the bridge between the reading and students’ interests is sated (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). In addition, in order to establish two main issues: scaffolding (Pearson & Duke 2009) and collaborative learning (Rice, 2009), activities

are organized for students' to work in groups in order to develop a positive attitude towards reading and lower their affective filters (Coady & Huckin, 1997). As it was previously stated, the unit relates to films and books; thus, the use of reading comprehension activities must be part of it. Furthermore, the presence of vocabulary exercises in any reading task is an important ingredient (McCarthy, 1990) through the use of word recognition exercises (Phakiti, 2006) and guessing the meaning of the words in context (*ibid.*)

Although the unit "Films and Book" is a respectable effort to call students' attention, it can be modified, updated and also improved. This can be done by readapting the reading exercises to current pieces of a book, using films adaptation and developing deeper reading comprehension activities. For instance, this piece of work suggests the use of skimming and scanning strategies (Grabe & Stoller 2011) in order to turn them into skills; in addition, research has shown that students learn words better when they are arranged in groups as the Schema Theory postulates (Rumelhart, 1981).

Finally, it is important to state that this piece of work seeks to enhance reading comprehension tasks by dealing with updated books with the purpose of compelling students to construct a critical view. Besides, the benefit of the use of visual aids as a tool to help students to visualize characters as well as to contrast what they have read with what they can watch in a movie. This piece of research also suggests collaborative work in order to lower students' anxiety when they perform this kind of activities. For EFL teachers it is important to establish an environment that facilitates students' interaction, opinions and also the training of the pertinent use of reading strategies since

the transferring of abilities from L1 to L2 can benefit their performance not only as students, but also in their professional lives.

CHAPTER 3: TEACHING PROPOSAL

This chapter will be divided into three main sections: novel overview, proposal overview and the activities designed. The first part will give a general idea about the novel that has been chosen to develop the proposal activities. Then, a proposal summary will be exposed. Finally, the activities designed will be described.

3.1 Novel Overview

This section will develop Freytag's pyramid for the book that has been chosen to develop the class activities. The main concern is to introduce the reader to the pertinent background information in order to approach the design of this proposal.

The German playwright Gustav Freytag acknowledged that all Shakespearean tragedies have six distinct structural sections (Freytag, 1863 in Rolfe, Jones & Wallace, 2010). The first part is called exposition (inciting incident): in this stage of the story the background information is given, as well as the location, the main character and the basic divergence. The second phase is where the series of actions start to develop the story and it is called rising action. After this part, the events of the story begin to move and the climax takes part; it is in this stage of the novel where the turning point changes the events that lead to the end of the story. Subsequently, the conflict is solved in the final action segment and the main character either wins or loses. The final part, where the story concludes, is identified as the denouement.

This famous novel was written in the year 2008 and is the first part of the intriguing trilogy of novels written by Swedish writer Stieg Larsson. The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (2008) belongs to the renewed trend of black novels or crime novels.

In the next part, the plot line will be described as well as the characters, the setting (time and place) and the conflict.

1. Exposition:

The **main character** is Mikael Bloomkvist who is a famous journalist and the owner of the political magazine Millenium. He is accused of libel and defamation of investor Hans-Erik Wennerström. After the trial, his credibility is diminished and decides to retire for a while. Thus, when Henrik Vanger – who pursues to clarify his granddaughter’s murder – offers him proofs against Wennerström, Mikael decides to investigate Vanger family and to reveal the mysterious vanishing. He establishes in Hedeby far from the city, close to the Vanger family and also in close proximity to the risk – since, apparently, the murderer is part of the family.

The **deuteroganist** is Lisbeth Salander who is an unconventional young hacker with piercings and tattoos. She works for Dragan Armansky in Milton’s Security. Her accurate report of Mikael Bloomkvist’s life is presented to Henrik Vanger’s lawyer, who is impressed by her look, her work and also her findings.

The **antagonist** is Martin Vanger who is member of the Vanger family, a wealthy entrepreneur and also a serial killer. He appears to be a respectable wealthy man but

turns out to be a neglected wealthy man who has the power to do whatever he pleases. He had a childhood full of alcohol, violence and sexual abuse.

- a) Setting (time and place): Sweden, present day.
- b) Characters: Several characters are part of this book in this section only the relevant ones will be described.

- Henrik Vanger: A wealthy entrepreneur who is the patriarch of Vanger family. He is disturbed by the disappearance of his beloved granddaughter, as well as, by the continuous birthday presents the murder sent him.

- Harriet Vanger: Martin's sister and Henrik's beloved granddaughter. Her whereabouts have been lost and it is Mikael's duty to investigate what happened to her.

- Erika Berger: She is in charge of Millennium as the editor. She is married and has had an affair with Bloomkvist since they were young.

- c) Inciting moment: Henrik Vanger hires Mikael Blomkvist in order to solve the murder of Vanger's beloved granddaughter, Harriet Vanger, who mysteriously vanished in 1966.

2. Precipitating Action:

- a) Conflict: Mikael Blomkvist tries to solve Harriet Vanger's disappearance. At the same time, he tries to restore his credibility as a journalist.
- b) Event: Blomkvist travels to Hedeby in order to initiate the investigation. He finds new information and realizes he needs an ally to continue his work.

3. Rising Action:

- a) Mikael visits different members of the Vanger's family in order to find new clues.
- b) Blomkvist asked Lisbeth Salander to join the investigation in order to solve the mystery.
- c) After investigating they find that Harriet Vanger's disappearance is part of a series of murders that have affected women.

4. Turning Point:

- a) Climax/moment of realization: Many clues point to Martin Vanger's responsibility in his sister disappearance. Martin, who starts to torture him, captures Blomkvist and admits that he is not responsible for his sister's departure. Lisbeth rescues Mikael and follows Martin who dies in a car accident.

5. Falling Action:

- a) After Martin died Lisbeth and Mikael found that Harriet is alive and they try to contact her.
- b) Cliff Hanger: Mikael visits Harriet who had run away and had been living under a different identity. She agrees to visit Henrik Vanger in order to reveal that she is alive.
- c) Moment of final suspense: Harriet visits Henrik Vanger and reveals that she is alive.

6. Denouement:

- a) Mikael publishes the final version of Wennerstrom report and recovers his journalistic credibility.
- b) After realizing she was in love with Mikael, Salander acknowledges that Mikael is still related to Erika Berger and decides to disappear.
- c) Theme: The novel was first published in 2005 under the original name *Män som hatar kvinnor* (*Men Who Hate Women*) and presents several important themes that are present in societies worldwide. Among the themes that are exposed in this black novel are: violence against women, political corruption and the value of journalism.

The first theme presented in the book reveals that even nowadays in a developed society such as the Swedish one, women are victim of physical, sexual and mental abuse: “Forty-six percent of the women in Sweden have been subjected to violence by a man” (The Girl with Dragon Tattoo, 2005, p. 100). Despite the fact that violence against women is present in the Swedish society, in the book the feminine characters are strong, brave and intelligent. For example, Erika Berger is a strong opinionated woman who always has the temperament to say her points of view. She also has a sort of liberal agreement with her husband who is aware of her close relationship with Bloomkvist. In addition, Harriet Vanger manages to escape from her abusive brother and killed her also abusive father as self-defense. Finally, Lisbeth Salander is an unorthodox young woman who manages to take revenge from the men who placed her as a victim “In her world,

this was the natural order of things. As a girl she was legal prey, especially if she was dressed in a worn black leather jacket and had pierced eyebrows, tattoos, and zero social status” (The Girl with Dragon Tattoo, 2005, p. 179).

In The Girl with Dragon Tattoo (2005), female characters are not only put in difficult positions, mistreated and abused, but they are also given the possibility to rebuild their integrity by themselves.

The second theme present in the book is related to political corruption. In the novel power is related to men and money, through masculine characters such as Wennerström and the Vanger family. They both share the power given by their wealthy economic position which allows them social impunity. Corruption is also depicted through characters such as Nils Bjurman, who is Lisbeth’s legal guardian and commits sexual abuse against her. He takes advantage from his legal position and threatens her to allow the mistreatment “If you’re nice to me, I’ll be nice to you,” he repeated. “If you make trouble, I can put you away in an institution for the rest of your life. Would you like that?” (The Girl with Dragon Tattoo, 2005, p. 175)

Finally, the theme offered by the value of journalism is depicted through the character of Mikael Bloomkvist, who stands for the real task of journalism. This task is related to social activism, exposure of all types of corruption, abuse or wrongdoings. As explained in Bloomkvist’s words “Many financial reporters have refrained from scrutinizing Hans-Erik Wennerstrom. On the contrary, they have actually helped to build up his prestige by publishing brainless, idolatrous portraits. If they had been doing their

work properly, we would not find ourselves in this situation today” (The Girl with Dragon Tattoo, 2005, p. 475).

The themes that are portrayed through the book are current in societies worldwide, for that reason this book was chosen to carry out the activities that form this teaching proposal. The main themes are present in most twelve-grade students’ lives and they are important to be mentioned in any language classroom. The main purpose is to develop students’ critical thinking and opinions through the use of updated material, innovative teaching strategies and the effective development of reading skills – the main concern of this teaching proposal.

3.2 Teaching Proposal Overview: List of Activities

The teaching proposal consists of 5 activities. The list and titles will be exposed next.

Activity #1: Why having a tattoo?

This activity seeks to introduce students to this unit. The activities are planned for the students to develop scanning and skimming techniques.

Activity #2: Who is Lisbeth Salander?

The main purpose of this activity is to introduce students to the main character of the book by finding different features of the character in the piece of reading.

Activity #3: Moving from a Book to a Film

This activity seeks to train students in selecting information from a piece of reading and supporting the information with coherent details.

Activity #4: Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo (2 Sessions)

At this stage students will watch the filmed adaptation of the book. The activities are designed so that students find the characters' distinctiveness and link them with their previous readings.

Activity #5: Was it a good adaptation? Comparing the Book with the Film

The main point of this activity is for students to compare the book with its filmed adaptation. They will develop their own critic view about the film.

3.3 Teaching Proposal Summary Guide

Activity	Level	Skill	Language Content	Time
Activity #1: Why having a tattoo?	Intermediate/ All levels	Strategic Reading Competence	Past and Present tenses. Collocations and Basic vocabulary	1 Session (90 mins)
Activity #2: Who is Lisbeth Salander?	Intermediate/ All levels	Strategic Reading and Metacognitive Competence	Past and Present tenses. Vocabulary and Adjectives for description	1 Session (90 mins)
Activity #3: Moving from a Book to a Film	Intermediate/ All levels	Strategic Reading and Metacognitive Competence	Past and Present Tenses. Vocabulary	1 Session (90 mins)
Activity #4: Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo	Intermediate/ All levels	Collaborative work	Past and Present tenses. Vocabulary related to movies physical description, using gerunds and giving opinions.	2 Sessions (180 mins)
Activity #5: Was it a good adaptation? Comparing the Book with the Film	Intermediate/ All levels	Strategic Reading Metacognitive and Collaborative Work	Past and Present tenses. Vocabulary related to movies and physical description using gerunds and giving opinion	1 Session (90 min)

3.4 Teaching Proposal

In the pages that follow the reader will find the template for each activity that comprises the teaching proposal of this research paper.

The activities will be identified and described in terms of: age group and language level of the students; time needed in order to complete the activity; language objective that is enhanced, taught or practiced; reading skill that is trained; the classroom management and arrangement that is most suitable for the activity; the teaching materials that are needed; the steps that students and teachers need to follow; comments and suggestions, such as the application or possible modifications that the activity could suffer; and the reference or acknowledgement of the activity or its materials.

3.4.1 ACTIVITY 1: WHY HAVING A TATTOO?

<i>“Why having a tattoo?”</i>
<p>Age group: 12th graders (secondary).</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary – Intermediate.</p> <p>Time: 90 mins.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to read a written text in Present Simple.</p> <p>Skill: Scanning and Skimming</p>
Classroom Management and Arrangement:
Students will sit in pairs.
Teaching Materials:
<p>In order to develop this activity the teacher will need:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout #1 (Prologue activity) 2. Pictures of different tattoos.
Steps:
<p><u>Preparation:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose pictures of different tattoos to show to your students (see suggestion, Appendix #1). 2. Print and copy Handout #1, you should have one for each pair. <p><u>Class:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place different tattoo pictures on the board in order to call your students’ attention. 2. Ask the students their opinion about tattoos and discuss the pros and cons of tattoos. 3. Divide the students into pairs. 4. Tell the students to read the handout. 5. Each pair will have to complete the text with the words that are missing (collocations, common words). 6. Correct students’ answers.

Comments and Suggestions:

This activity can be used with students of all ages and English levels.

Various grammar topics can be covered through this activity, not necessarily present simple.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Stieg Larsson. (2008). *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*. Retrieved December, 2013, from

http://fc07.deviantart.net/fs70/f/2010/335/9/4/tgwtdt_dragon_by_bazurs13-d33zdz5.pdf

Dragon Tattoos www.pinterest.com/nydragon69/dragon-tattoos/

www.cuded.com/.../30-awesome-dragon-tattoo-desi

3.4.2 ACTIVITY 2: WHO IS LISBETH SALANDER?

<i>“Who is Lisbeth Salander?”</i>
<p>Age group: 12th graders (secondary)</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary – Intermediate.</p> <p>Time: 90 mins.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to increase their vocabulary by reading a written text.</p> <p>Reading Skill: Reading and word recognition</p>
Classroom Management and Arrangement
Students will sit in pairs.
Teaching Materials:
<p>In order to develop this activity the teacher will need:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout # 2 (Who is Lisbeth Salander? activity) 2. Pictures of hackers stereotypes
Steps (Teacher):
<p><u>Preparation:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose pictures of different hacker stereotypes to show to your students. 2. Design the handouts using eye-catching images. 3. Give each group a handout in order to work in pairs. <p><u>Class:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students their opinion about hacker stereotypes and write their answers on the board. 2. Divide the students into pairs. 3. Tell the students to read the handout. 4. Each Group will have to write their answers on the handout. 5. Then, they will share their answers and other classmates will guess what character they are talking about.

Comments and Suggestions:

This activity can be used with students of all ages and English levels.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Stieg Larsson. (2008). *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*. Retrieved December, 2013, from http://fc07.deviantart.net/fs70/f/2010/335/9/4/tgwtdt_dragon_by_bazurs13-d33zdz5.pdf

3.4.3 ACTIVITY 3: MOVING FROM A BOOK TO A FILM

<i>“Moving from a book to a film”</i>
<p>Age group: 12th graders (secondary)</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary – Intermediate</p> <p>Time: 90 mins.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to find the main idea in a paragraph. Students will write character descriptions using adjectives, nouns and others.</p> <p>Reading Skill: Reading and Scanning</p>
Classroom Management and Arrangement
<p>Students will sit in pairs.</p>
Teaching Materials:
<p>In order to develop this activity the teacher will need:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout (#3 Main idea) 2. Characters stars (#3 Defining characters from Penguin Readers Teacher’s Guide to Using Film and TV, 1999).
Steps (Teacher):
<p><u>Preparation:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get the trailer of the movie from youtube. 2. Print and copy the handouts. 3. Give each group a handout in order to work in pairs. <p><u>Class:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students to read and develop the first part of the activity: getting the main idea and the supporting elements from the text (Handout #3). 2. Each Group will have to write the main idea and the supporting detail on the handout. 3. When ready, ask them to compare their answers. 4. Give the students the handout with the character stars. 5. Explain that with the information provided in the trailer, they will have to

complete the star with the information of 3 characters, at least. They can choose the characters they want to work on.

6. Watch the trailer 3 times.
7. Each group will share their descriptions with the rest of the class.
8. Then, ask each group to come up with an alternative ending for the movie.
9. To share their endings, the teacher can ask them to act it out, read it aloud or mime it.

Comments and Suggestions:

This activity can be used with students of all ages and English levels.

The movie trailer can be projected with subtitles in English or without any subtitles.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Stieg Larsson. (2008). The Girl with Dragon Tattoo. Retrieved December, 2013, from

http://fc07.deviantart.net/fs70/f/2010/335/9/4/tgwtdt_dragon_by_bazurs13-d33zdz5.pdf

Carolyn Walker. (1999). Penguin Readers Teachers' Guide to Using Film and TV.

Retrieved May, 2013 from

<http://www.penguinreaders.com/pdf/downloads/pr/teachers-guides/PRTGusingfilmtv.pdf>

Youtube trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KBPrU-Pu5Q>

3.4.4 ACTIVITY 4: WATCHING THE GIRL WITH DRAGON TATTOO

<i>“Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo”</i>
<p>Age group: 12th graders (secondary)</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary – Intermediate</p> <p>Time: 180 mins.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to write a film review.</p> <p>Skill: Reading and Word Recognition</p>
Classroom Management and Arrangement
Students will work in groups.
Teaching Materials:
<p>In order to develop this activity the teacher will need:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout (#4 Film Review).
Steps (Teacher):
<p>SESSION #1:</p> <p><u>Preparation:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look for the film adaptation of the book. 2. Copy the handout. You need one for each group. 3. Give each group a handout. <p><u>Class:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students their opinion about films adapted from books. Ask them to name examples of famous novels that have been filmed. 2. Divide the students into groups. 3. Tell the students to read the handout. 4. Each Group will have to write their answers while they are watching the film. 5. Stop the film at: 1:16 mins. <p>SESSION #2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout SUMMARY. 2. Students work in pairs and order the events that occurred in the first section of the movie. (HANDOUT EVENTS) 3. Check the order of the events.

4. Give students the next handout with general questions about section #2.
5. Finish watching the movie and ask students to complete the handout. (partes del script sin nombres y ellos dicen WHO WHAT WHERE WHEN WHY?)
6. Check their answers.

Comments and Suggestions:

This activity is suitable to work with any novel that has been adapted.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Stieg Larsson. (2008). *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*. Retrieved December, 2013, from
http://fc07.deviantart.net/fs70/f/2010/335/9/4/tgwtdt_dragon_by_bazurs13-d33zdz5.pdf

Carolyn Walker. (1999). *Penguin Readers Teachers' Guide to Using Film and TV*. Retrieved May, 2013 from
<http://www.penguinreaders.com/pdf/downloads/pr/teachers-guides/PRTGusingfilmtv.pdf>

ACTIVITY 5: WAS IT A GOOD ADAPTATION? COMPARING THE BOOK WITH THE FILM

<i>“Was it a good adaptation? Comparing the Book with the Film”</i>
<p>Age group: 12th graders (secondary)</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary – Intermediate</p> <p>Time: 90 mins.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to write a film review.</p> <p>Skill: Reading and Word Recognition</p>
Classroom Management and Arrangement
Students will sit in pairs.
Teaching Materials:
<p>In order to develop this activity the teacher will need:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout. (#5 Film and Book comparison)
Steps (Teacher):
<p><u>Preparation:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print and copy the handouts. 2. Give each group a handout in order to work in groups. <p><u>Class:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students their opinion about the film they watched. 2. Divide the students into groups. 3. Tell the students to read the handout. 4. Ask the students to remember the scenes that were developed in the reading comprehension activities (Activity # 1 and Activity #3). 5. After students have answered. Project the scenes again and ask students to fill in their handouts 6. Explain the students that each group will have to write their own opinions about the scenes, characters, and music in their film comparison. 7. Ask each group to read and share their answers.

Comments and Suggestions:

For this activity the scenes were selected taking into account the previous activities (Activity # 1 and Activity #3)

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Stieg Larsson. (2008). *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*. Retrieved December, 2013, from http://fc07.deviantart.net/fs70/f/2010/335/9/4/tgwtdt_dragon_by_bazurs13-d33zdz5.pdf

Carolyn Walker. (1999). *Penguin Readers Teachers' Guide to Using Film and TV*. Retrieved May, 2013 from <http://www.penguinreaders.com/pdf/downloads/pr/teachers-guides/PRTGusingfilmtv.pdf>

CONCLUSIONS

The results of Chilean students in standardized reading comprehension tests proved that most of them did not have the proper management in the use of reading skills when performing a reading comprehension task. Furthermore, when students reached the last year of high school they did not perform reading comprehension tasks effectively or efficiently in both their mother tongue and foreign language as well. Thus, the competent development of reading comprehension skills is compelling and imperative task teachers have to cope with in language class nowadays.

Following from the problem stated above, this paper sought to recommend a set of activities to guide Chilean 12th grade teachers in the use of reading comprehension skills in the EFL classroom employing the novel *The Girl with Dragon Tattoo* (2008) by Stieg Larsson. Thus, in order to develop such activities it was relevant: first to identify the reading comprehension strategies included in the national curriculum for 12th graders; second, to decide on effective reading comprehension strategies suitable for teaching vocabulary when working with twelve graders; and third, to implement a set of activities with the purpose of achieving pertinent and efficient reading comprehension instruction and therefore, improving the learning process in the EFL class.

In order to achieve the objectives set by the author of this research paper, three chapters were developed. In the first chapter, this paper focused on the definition of literacy and its main role in the learning process. It also portrayed the psycholinguistics' view of the reading process, as well as, the importance of reading skills and strategies. The relevancy of vocabulary instruction in EFL class was also stated along with reading

comprehension instruction, metalinguistic skills, including the Natural approach and its main contributions. Finally, the curricular requirements were discussed in addition to the Chilean curricular standards for EFL instruction.

Then, in the second chapter, the main implications that the previous mentioned theories have in the Chilean EFL context were explained. A description of the reading comprehension requirements in the Chilean curricular standards was asserted and, ultimately, the description of the textbook unit was delivered in order to set the context for the future improvements that were then developed in Chapter 3.

Afterwards, in the third chapter, the proposal was developed. This teaching proposal, based on the *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2008), consisted of five activities that allowed students to develop, train and improve reading comprehension strategies in order to expand the pertinent awareness in the employment of such skills. This proposal also pursued to increase students' vocabulary rate and to nurture language acquisition through the establishment of activities that seek for the employment of collaborative work. The main purpose was to design activities that would help students attain the proficient development of the learning process and reading comprehension skills growth.

Following from the chapters mentioned above, it was noted that reading skills can be nurtured through the growth of comprehension instruction, collaborative work and significant use of comprehensible input in the development of reading comprehension activities and materials. Therefore, it was clearly seen that when carrying out reading comprehension activities in the EFL classrooms, teachers should rely on

background knowledge, be aware of students' interests, develop comprehensible activities and establish the execution of scaffolding in EFL activities.

In this regard, the main contributions of this piece of research can be identified in the fact that a combination of different perspectives was developed; a number of distinctive theories were described and extended with the purpose of improving the Chilean curricular standards. Finally, the main contribution was to develop a set of thought provoking reading comprehension activities that enhance and nurture the performance of reading comprehension skills which, then, could easily transfer from students' foreign to their native language. Lastly, another contribution was to train students in the use of skills that allow them to successfully complete reading comprehension activities while also making them aware of the process that can help them succeed, efficiently and proficiently, not only in their English language class, but also every time they confront a reading task in the future.

Regarding **Further Research**, the author would like to point out that more research is needed in the areas of EFL curricular standards for reading comprehension, the performance and development of reading skills, and finally EFL reading comprehension instruction. This proposal could be tested in the background of a formal research. Although, the author has developed some of the activities with students, the process was not stated as a formal research.

As it was mentioned at the beginning this proposal can be applied with any current novel that has a filmed adaptation. Thus, further research could be designed with novels such as *Divergent* (Roth, V., 2012) *The Hunger Games* (Collins, S., 2008), *Silver*

Linings Playbook (Quick, M., 2008) Water for Elephants (Gruen, S., 2006), Atonement (MackEwan, I., 2001), among many others. It was also noticed that many cultural elements can be added, discussed and developed using the previous mentioned pieces of work.

Finally, the author would like to point out some limitations that arose from developing this piece of work that would be helpful for future researchers to take into consideration. Firstly, the number of students per class can affect directly their performance, since in many Chilean public schools forty to forty five learners who are distributed in a crowded space. The second restraint is related to the students' tendency to work in pairs. Ever since, they are required to work in larger groups they find it difficult to distribute the roles, to develop the activities and even to present the tasks. The final and most important limitation is related to the curricular standards which presents flaws that affect directly students' performance in reading comprehension tasks. First, the curricular standards does not present the teachers specific instructions regarding to reading comprehension instruction and vocabulary. The syllabus only develop reading comprehension tasks using short excerpts due to that fact it is difficult for teachers to train students to develop longer reading comprehension activities. Since, the activities take more time to develop, are harder to execute and demand more concentration from them.

Lastly it was noticed that the amount of time related to reading comprehension tasks is not enough. In order to train proficient readers it is necessary to give them time to develop the tasks pertinently, to train the strategies use in order to turn them into skills

demands more time, dedication, and efficient planning from teachers behalf but also and more importantly curricular standards can be improved in order to assure the students development as well.

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The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo- Prologue

I. Read the text and fill in the gaps with the following words

November - circumstances- world – year – age – subject – men – flower - minute

A Friday in _____.

It happened every _____, was almost a ritual. And this was his eighty-second. When, as usual, the flower was delivered, he **took off** the wrapping paper and he **picked up** the telephone to call Detective Superintendent Morrell, who when he retired, had moved to Lakesiljan in Dalarna. They were not only the same _____; they had been born on the same day - which was something of an irony under the _____. The old policeman was sitting with his coffee, waiting, expecting the call.

“It arrived”

“What is it this year?”

“I don’t know what kind is it. I’ll have to get someone to tell me what it is. It’s white.”

“No letter, I suppose”

“Just the _____. The frame was the same kind as last year. One of those do-it-yourself ones”

“Postmark?”

“Stockholm”

“Handwriting?”

“Same as always, all in capitals. Upright neat, lettering.”

With that, the _____ was exhausted, and not another word was exchanged for almost a _____. The retired **leaned back** in his kitchen chair and **drew on** his pipe. He knew he was no longer expected to **come up** with a pithy comment or any sharp question which would shed a new light on the case. Those days had had long since passed, and the exchange between the two _____ seemed like a ritual attaching to a mystery which no one else in the whole _____ had the least interest in unraveling.

**II. Look at the text again and find the verbs that are written in bold.
Look at the columns below and link them with their meaning:**

Phrasal Verbs:

- a. Took off
- b. Picked up
- c. Leaned back
- d. Drew on
- e. Come up

Meaning:

- 1. Employed
- 2. Recline
- 3. Elevate
- 4. Find
- 5. Removed

III. Answer the following questions

1. What is the text about?

2. How many characters appear in the text?

3. What is the main issue between the two characters?

4. What happened with the mysterious flower?

Who is Lisbeth Salander?

She was not afraid of Bjurman—Salander was rarely afraid of anyone or anything. On the other hand, she felt uncomfortable with this new guardian. His predecessor, Advokat Holger Palmgren, had been of an entirely different *ilk*: courteous and kind. But three months ago Palmgren had had a stroke, and Nils Erik Bjurman had inherited her in accordance with some bureaucratic pecking order.

In the twelve years that Salander had been under social and psychiatric guardianship, two of those years in a children's clinic, she had never once given the same answer to the simple question: "So, how are you today?"

When she turned thirteen, the court had decided, under laws governing the guardianship of minors that she should be entrusted to the *locked* ward at St. Stefan's Psychiatric Clinic for Children in Uppsala. The decision was primarily based on the fact that she was deemed to be emotionally disturbed and dangerously violent towards her classmates and possibly towards herself.

All attempts by a teacher or any authority figure to initiate a conversation with the girl about her feelings, emotional life, or the state of her health were met, to their great frustration, with a sullen silence and a great deal of intense staring at the floor, ceiling, and walls. She would fold her arms and refuse to participate in any psychological tests. Her resistance to all attempts to measure, weigh, chart, analyse, or educate her applied also to her school work—the authorities could have her carried to a classroom and could chain her to the bench, but they could not stop her from closing her ears and refusing to lift a pen to write anything. She completed the nine years of *compulsory* schooling without a certificate.

This had consequently become associated with the great difficulty of even diagnosing her mental deficiencies. In short, Lisbeth Salander was anything but easy to handle.

By the time she was thirteen, it was also decided that a trustee should be assigned to take care of her interests and assets until she came of age. This trustee was Advokat Palmgren who, in spite of a rather difficult start, had succeeded where psychiatrists and doctors had failed. Gradually he won not only a certain amount of trust but also a modest amount of *warmth* from the girl.

When she turned fifteen, the doctors had more or less agreed that she was not, after all, *dangerously* violent, nor did she represent any

immediate danger to herself. Her family had been categorised as dysfunctional, and she had no relatives who could look after her *welfare*, so it was decided that Lisbeth Salander should be released from the psychiatric clinic for children in Uppsala and eased back into society by way of a foster family.

That had not been an easy journey. She ran away from the first foster family after only two weeks. The second and third foster families fell by the wayside in quick succession. At that point Palmgren had a serious discussion with her, explaining *bluntly* that if she persisted on this path she would be institutionalized again. This threat had the effect that she accepted foster family number four—an elderly couple who lived in Midsommarkransen.

But it did not mean, however, that she behaved herself. At the age of seventeen, Salander was arrested by the police on four occasions; twice she was so intoxicated that she ended up in the emergency room, and once she was *plainly* under the influence of narcotics. On one of these occasions she was found dead drunk, with her clothes in disarray, in the back seat of a car parked at Söder Mälarstrand. She was with an equally drunk and much older man.

The last arrest occurred three weeks before her eighteenth birthday, when she, perfectly sober, kicked a male passenger in the head inside the gates of the Gamla Stan tunnelbana station. She was charged with *assault* and battery. Salander claimed that the man had groped her, and her testimony was supported by witnesses. The prosecutor dismissed the case. But her background was such that the district court ordered a psychiatric evaluation. Since she refused, as was her custom, to answer any questions or to participate in the examinations, the doctors consulted by the National Board of Health and Welfare handed down an opinion based on "observations of the patient." It was unclear precisely what could be observed when it was a matter of a silent young woman sitting on a chair with her arms folded and her lower lip stuck out. The only determination made was that she must suffer from some kind of emotional *disturbance*, whose nature was of the sort that could not be left untreated. The medical/legal report recommended care in a closed psychiatric institution. An assistant head of the social welfare board wrote an opinion in support of the conclusions of the psychiatric experts.

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I. After reading the text complete the box with the information about the main character:

Physical Treats	Psychological Treats

II. Answer the following questions:

1. Who are Bjurman and Palmgren? What are the differences between them from Lisbeth's point of view?

2. How many years/Where and Why was Lisbeth under guardianship?

3. How did Lisbeth react to any authority figure? How did this affect her in school?

4. What happened to Lisbeth when she turned fifteen?

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III. Choose the word with the closest meaning to the one that is underlined

1. His predecessor Advokat Holgrer Palmgren had been of an entirely different ilk.
a) type b) family c) variety
2. She should be entrusted to the locked ward at St. Stephan's Psychiatric Clinic.
a) loose b) protected c) released
3. She completed nine years of compulsory schooling without a certificate.
a) obligatory b) optional c) important
4. Gradually he won not only a certain amount of trust, but also a modest amount of warmth from the girl.
a) tenderness b) indifference c) doubt
5. When she turned fifteen the doctors had more or less agreed that she was not, after all, dangerously violent.
a) arrogantly b) violently c) perilously
6. She had no relatives who could look after her welfare.
a) safety b) health c) life
7. Palmgren had a serious discussion with her, explaining bluntly that if she persisted on this path she would be institutionalized again.
a) candidly b) brusquely c) honestly
8. She was so intoxicated that she ended up in the emergency room, and once she was plainly under the influence of narcotics.
a) directly b) frankly c) evidently
9. She was charged with assault and battery.
a) robbery b) bullying c) physical attack
10. The only determination made was that she must suffer from some kind of emotional disturbance.
a) disorder b) issue c) trouble

Main Ideas and details

Read the following pieces of the book. Find the main idea and the details in each text.

“The strange story of the flowers had never been reported in the press; only a very few people knew of it. Thirty years ago the regular arrival of the flower was the object of much scrutiny—at the National Forensic Laboratory, among fingerprint experts, graphologists, criminal investigators, and one or two relatives and friends of the recipient. Now the actors in the drama were but three: the elderly birthday boy, the retired police detective, and the person who had posted the flower”.

Main idea _____

Details _____

“I’m going to tell you a story in two parts. The first is about the Vanger family. That’s the pretext. It’s a long, dark story, and I’ll try to stick to the unvarnished truth. The second part of the story deals with my actual objective. You’ll probably think some of the story is...crazy. What I want is for you to hear me out—about what I want you to do and also what I am offering—before you make up your mind whether to take on the job or not.”

Main idea _____

Details _____

“My Rebecka case was Harriet. In this instance we don’t even know how she died. We can’t even prove that a murder was committed. But I have never been able to let it go.” He paused to think for a moment. “Being a homicide detective can be the loneliest job in the world. The friends of the victim are upset and in despair, but sooner or later—after weeks or months—they go back to their everyday lives”.

Main idea _____

Details _____

“In her world, this was the natural order of things. As a girl she was legal prey, especially if she was dressed in a worn black leather jacket and had pierced eyebrows, tattoos, and zero social status”.

Main idea _____

Details _____

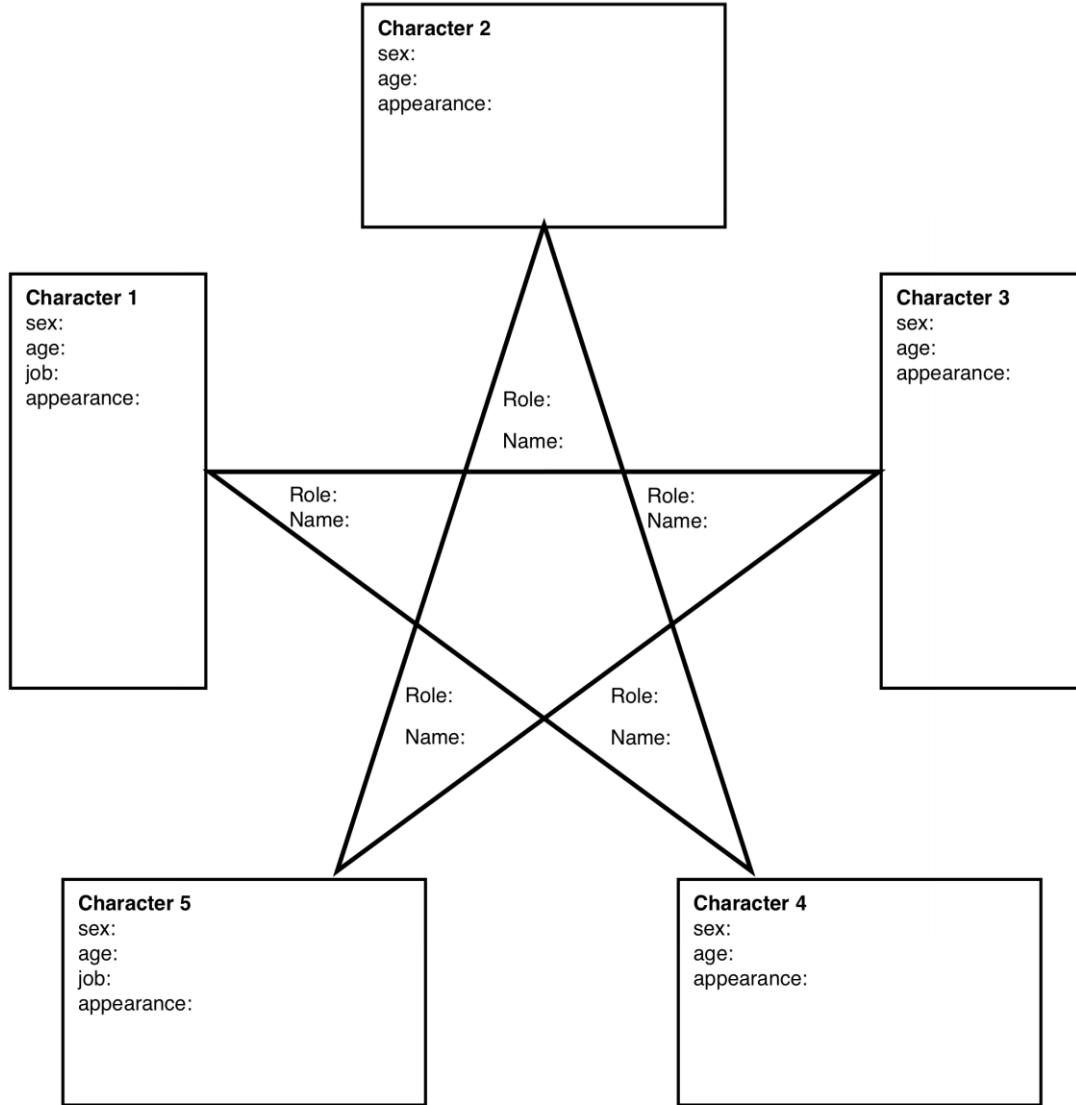
“You’ve been in my computer, Froken Salander,” he said aloud. “You’re a fucking hacker.”

Main idea _____

Details _____

Establishing the characters

Watch the video clip and complete as much of the following as you can.



- Who do you think will be the most important character in the story? Why?

PHOTOCOPIABLE



Film Review: Session 1

I. Watch the film and complete the following table:

Name of the film	
Film Director	
Name of the Book	
Author of the Book	
What is the film about? (Write 4 sentences maximum)	

II. Answer the following questions

1. What is the gift Henrik Vanger received for his birthday?
a) A framed flower
b) A painting
c) A picture
2. According to Henrik who sent him those presents?
a) An old friend
b) His sister
c) His granddaughter's killer
3. Why does Henrik hire Blomkvist?
a) To save him from the journalists
b) To investigate Vanger family
c) To solve his granddaughter's murder.
4. What is the name of Henrik Vanger's missing granddaughter?
a) Hannah
b) Harriet
c) Henriette
5. What is the name of the city where the Vanger family live?
a) Vangersville
b) Sweden
c) Hedestad
6. What is the name of Mikael's magazine?
a) Decade
b) Century
c) Millenium
7. Why does Mikael accept Vanger's offer?
a) He doesn't have any money
b) Vanger promised proofs against Wennerstrom
c) He wants to dissappear for a while.

Handout Activity 4: Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo A-9

8. How does Mikael travel to his new job?

- a) By car
- b) By plane
- c) By train

9. What pet does Mikael have in his new place?

- a) A turtle
- b) A fish
- c) A cat

10. Who told Mikael about the significance of the names in Harriet's book?

- a) Harriet
- b) Lisbeth
- c) His daughter

11. How does Mikael find Lisbeth's place?

- a) He searches her name in google
- b) He asked for information at her work
- c) He calls her friends

12. Who is in charge of Lisbeth's finances?

- a) Her legal guardian
- b) Her bank
- c) She is

13. Who is Bjurman?

- a) Mikael's lawyer
- b) Salander's guardian
- c) The Vanger family lawyer

14. Why does Mikael want to find Lisbeth?

- a) He wants to sue her for being a hacker
- b) He wants to enter Wennerstrom's computer
- c) He wants help in his investigation

III. Order the events from the film and state the name of the character that the event refers to:

Order of the event	Scene	Name/s of the character/s
	A man is lighting a cigarette.	
	The old man is at the hospital	
	A man is looking for the name and address of a woman	
	A group of reporters surround a man and ask questions.	
	A woman is driving a motorcycle	
	A man is travelling by train	
	Two elderly men are talking on the phone.	

Answer the following questions

1. What are the two elderly men talking about?

2. Where are the journalists waiting?

3. After leaving a place filled by journalists, where did the man go and what did he ask for?

4. What is the girl's answer when her opinion is asked?

5. Who are the two men waiting for the girl?

6. What is the deal the old man offers the journalist?

Film Review: Session 2

After finishing the first part of the movie complete the table

Setting (Where does the story take place?)	
Main characters	
Problem (What is the main problem the story deals with?)	
Events (List the main incidents that you can remember)	
Final Scene (What happened in the final scene?)	

Fill in the table with the information about the lines of the script:

What?	Who?	Where?	When?	Why?
I'm concerned that you won't like her. She's different.				
He's clean in my opinion.				
How many partners have you had in the last month? How many were men?				
No it's ok. You can nod because it's true. I'm insane.				
Can I ask you something? Why don't people trust their instincts? They sense something's wrong –				
May I kill him?				
Martin didn't deny killing anyone. But when I mentioned Harriet, he was confused. He was angry - at me - for not being able to tell him what happened to her.				

Handout Activity 4: Watching The Girl with Dragon Tattoo A-12

Complete the following sentences using the words from the film:

May I _____ please?

Hi! you and _____ need to _____ I got us some _____.

Who said this? _____

I'm asking _____ it's better to _____ What I'm about to _____

You with an _____

Who said this? _____

You have to _____ and keep _____. You're Henrik's _____ at
some kind of _____.

Who said this? _____

Everyone in town _____ who and _____.

Who said this? _____

I will. And then _____ have a _____ about what's _____ and
_____.

Who said this? _____

I _____ to show you _____. Bring your _____ leave
_____.

Who said this? _____

Handout Activity 5: Was it a good adaptation?
Comparing the Book with the Film A-13

Film and Book Comparison¹

I. Compare the parts of the book with the scenes of the film (Prologue Act 1)

	Book	Film
Setting (Where does the scene take place?)		
Main characters (Their attitudes to each other)		
Problem (What is the main issue the scene portrays?)		
Events (Enumerate the events)		

Who is Lisbeth Salander?

	Book	Film
Setting (Where does the scene takes place)		
Main characters (Their attitudes to each other)		
Problem (What is the main issue the scene portrays)		
Events (Enumerate the events)		

¹ Adapted from *Penguin Readers Teachers' Guide to Using Film and TV*. (1999)

Handout Activity 5: Was it a good adaptation?
Comparing the Book with the Film A-14

II. Answer the following questions:

1. What did you specially like or dislike about the film?

2. What was your favorite scene?

3. Describe your favorite character

III. Develop your own ending for the story.