

**QUESTION – ANSWER RELATIONSHIP: A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE  
INFERENTIAL READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Centro Colombo Americano Cartagena is an institution where people study English as a Foreign Language; by the end of the courses students are hoped to be proficient on the four main skills of English Language: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing, reaching a B2 level according to the European Common Framework. However, the experience of one of the teacher-researchers who participated in this study is that many students show poor proficiency when it comes to Reading Comprehension skills, mainly on the Inferential level of Reading Comprehension. This Action Research Study aimed to present how a specific strategy: Question-Answer Relationship improves Inferential Reading Comprehension and the skills associated to it. The study units were eight students who were asked to take an initial questionnaire in order to collect information about their weaknesses and strengths related to reading comprehension. Throughout the course, students were instructed on how to apply the mentioned strategy. Four specific activities were given to them in order to collect enough information about if the strategy was working or not. Also, students filled out reading logs, therefore information about the whole process from their perspective was gathered. Findings suggests that intervention was helpful and students responded fairly well to the implementation of the strategy.

**Key words:** Reading Comprehension Skills, Question-Answer Relationship Strategy, Inferential Reading Comprehension.

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## INTRODUCTION

With the unrelenting trend toward globalization, which manifests itself in greater international trade, travel, Internet use, and mass entertainment, the need to be able to understand English continues to increase every day. As noted by Graddol (2006), English will soon be seen in many countries as a basic communicative skill rather than as a foreign language.

As part of the process of learning to communicate in English, reading becomes a skill of significant importance as learners must be able to comprehend the wide variety of written material they often come across through books, the media and the web. It is important to have in mind that reading comprehension is influenced by many situational issues such as society, culture, religion, background, likes, and particular purposes. Research shows there are several underlying causes for poor reading comprehension. Among the reasons, there are the complex process of learning to read, the type of instruction, method for decoding, prior knowledge, a diverse population, and development of vocabulary (Caposey & Heider, 2003). In this same line, Prensky (2001) claims that reading comprehension issues lie on learners' mother tongue, and that with appropriate instruction, materials and guidance, it would be quite simple transfer those skills to a foreign language successfully.

There are a great number of strategies to enhance reading comprehension. Barnett considers reading strategies as conscious techniques or unconscious processes employed by readers attempting to make sense of the written text (Barnett as cited by Gascoigne, 2005). However, the literature has also drawn attention to the fact that learners might be unaware

of what their strengths and weaknesses in reading are, or might not know how to monitor their reading process (Zhang, 2010).

In this research, we will be implementing the Question-Answer strategy in order to enhance the inferential reading comprehension skill in students of a regular English class at Centro Colombo Americano Cartagena. The question-answer relationship strategy, developed by Taffy Raphael (Raphael, 1982, 1984, 1986; Raphael & Mckinney 1983; Raphael and Pearson 1985), was triggered by Pearson and Johnson's (1978) taxonomy of questions, which does not classify questions in isolation but rather by considering the reader's background and knowledge and the text, doing so will reflect the current notion of reading as an interactive and constructive process influenced by characteristics of the reader, the text, and the context within the text occurs (Jett-Simpson 1990).

### **Needs Analysis**

Taking into account the importance of reading comprehension skills in the process of acquiring a second language, we found of great relevance to carry out a research in order to help students at CCA become proficient readers, by focusing on the inferential reading comprehension skill, since this is the level of reading comprehension where students are showing the most difficulties, evidencing problems when it comes to make inferences about things that are not directly stated on the texts. They also showed difficulties when identifying the supporting details, sequence, cause and effect relationships, interpreting figurative language, drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes, determining the mood, and judging the author's point of view, which are the most significant elements on effective inferential reading comprehension skill. All of these difficulties were identified through the direct observation of one of the teacher –

researchers (participating in this study) in a regular class at CCA, specifically course 1. The diagnosis started with the analysis and assessment of the reading activities done in class and also the tests given during the course. A questionnaire was then administered to the same students at the beginning of course 2. The results of the questionnaire confirmed that they perceived reading and solving questions related to texts as a very challenging task and that they were aware they lacked some of the necessary skills in order to find the correct answers to questions.

In this order of ideas, the main focus of this research is to conduct an intervention on students in an English class at CCA with the purpose of implementing a specific reading strategy which is the Question -Answer relationship in order to identify and describe the reading comprehension skills that are strengthened regarding inferential reading comprehension, and also to describe the benefits when overcoming difficulties when making inferences from texts, so that, students' performance, either in daily classes, activities, homework, tests and in the end, their performance on real life situations will be more effective and proficient, leading us to answer the research question:

*How inferential reading comprehension skills are improved through the question – answer relationship strategy?*

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this section the relevant literature to this dissertation is presented. We first define *inferential reading comprehension* in order to have a broad idea of what this level of reading means. Secondly, teaching *strategies to improve inferential reading* is introduced.

These strategies will help us understand how the process of reading becomes meaningful for learners and make them more skillful. Finally, the definition of *question-answer relationship* is stated, as the more suitable strategy implemented in an English class at Centro Cultural Colombo Americano.

## **1. Inferential reading comprehension**

Inferential reading comprehension involves more than simply assign set of passages for learners to read and then reviewing their understanding by answering controlled questions or stating what the text is about. According to Grabe and Stoller (2013, as cited in Stoller et al., 2013) good readers at this level, need to go beyond lines, they are expected to distinguish between facts and opinions, synthesize, draw conclusions on their own and extend information to new tasks. Following this same line, making stronger inferences require the reader to build rhetorical frames to support ideas about the text by linking the extract to one's knowledge or known experiences (Grabe & Stoller 2013). Furthermore, this level of reading demands learners to be able to establish the gist and purpose of reading, the author's intention and also apply plenty of strategies that will help while processing and interpreting meanings.

One of the most striking features of inferential reading is to help learners become more active and more critical readers. Hence, tasks must be challenging, fun and develop higher order thinking skills. Davies (1995) emphasizes that low demanding activities such as finding the answer to a question or only have learners locate the information in a text encourage passive reading behavior. In order to contribute to the development of a strategic

reader, inferential activities should enable learners to predict, deduce, speculate and even, go to the text with some ideas in mind which facilitates the whole process; in other words, readers are far from being merely receptors but also seen as active contributors to construct their point of view. With this in mind, Tomitch (2000) stands that:

(...) active reading tasks provide opportunity for students to interact with other classmates, by Checking hypotheses they have made and also by discussing possible interpretations, in this way enabling students to see reading not only as a lonely private activity but also as a social and contextualized event. (p.85).

This process implies also guiding the reader to question at some extend, the reliability of the source that contains the text.

As a matter of fact, learners are being assessed by national and international reading programmes that among other aspects, look forward to seeing how good learners are at interpreting texts. By way of illustration, The “Instituto Colombiano para el Fomento de la Educación Superior”, ICFES (2013) highlights as inferential reading standards:

- To comprehend how the parts of a text are articulated to get its overall meaning.
- To draw conclusions from the analysis of the provided information.

The Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA (2015) points:

- To understand cause-effect relations.
- To make comparisons.

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, PIRLS (2016) emphasizes:

- To interpret the information of the text in a real context.
- To contextualize the text.



Thus, part of the problem that Colombo students have to deal with, lies on the fact that it is not an easy task for them to use the context of a passage to determine the meaning of words with multiple meanings, unfamiliar and uncommon words or expressions. As a consequence, they find it difficult to get the main idea of texts and the purpose of it, so that they can handle with questions and answers properly.

## **2. Teaching strategies to improve inferential reading**

Reading strategies are such vital tools for learners to know how to face a text by decoding words and confronting new ideas that derive from the extract. By applying strategies, reading demands upper-level thinking skills to make this process more meaningful as they enhance their inferential level (Burns, 2003). According to Freebody & Luke (1990) most of the time when learners read they focus easily on grammar structures or unknown vocabulary than on content itself. Consequently, students get blocked and feel unable to infer or deduce meanings from the context. In light of this, there is a need for teachers to introduce strategies in the classroom and promote skills as an opportunity for learners to express their attitudes toward a text and be capable to reflect on their discoveries and connect what they already know to what they are learning.

Israel (2007) classifies the reading strategies into three types: planning, monitoring and evaluating. Planning strategies refer to the pre-reading to activate learners' schemata to make them infer information from the title, illustrations, teach vocabulary and even,

support students to recall previous knowledge so that they can compare and contrast (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012).

Monitoring strategies occur during-reading. These foster the development of higher order thinking skills. During this stage of inferential reading, learners stop for summarizing, making differences and similarities, skimming for general meaning, scanning for special details, analyzing and synthesizing information, and expressing ideas in their words (Lyutaya, 2011).

Subsequently, evaluating is the post-reading stage where readers expand the information they just read by making logical suppositions based on their own experience and background, speculate about information gaps and provide alternatives (Iwai, 2011). In other words, learners appropriate what they have read in order to apply it or generalize it for other situations in their real lives.

### **3. Inferential strategy: Question-Answer relationship**

Question-Answer Relationship hereafter QAR, is a strategy that enhance comprehension and test taking across grades and content areas as a result of promoting high levels of literacy while developing high level of thinking skills on learners. In addition, Raphael & Au (2005) believe that “QAR provides a framework that offers teachers a straightforward approach for reading comprehension instruction with the potential of eventually closing the literacy achievement gap” (p. 208). In other words, regardless the level or grade learners have (beginners, intermediate or advanced), teachers introduce little by little some stages to foster the inferential reading comprehension. Initially, learners are taught how to respond to “right there” questions by simply finding words in one sentence;

secondly, learners answer more complex questions through the “author and me” stage to predict and infer how one’s background knowledge fit what is in the text; finally, after reaching the previous stage, learners are invited to apply the final stage named: “on my own” to make personal connections and get the sense of the text by synthesizing the information with what it is already known from other sources (Raphael & Pearson, as cited in Pennell, 2002).

The implementation of question-answer relationship on inferential reading comprehension skill is necessary to foster what Vygotsky called the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which according to the sociocultural theory, it stands that a learner should receive structured intervention from mediators that aimed at promoting one’s development. With the assistance of a mediator, the learner can move from the current level where the learner can not work independently to a higher level that allow accomplish the same task on his own. The intervention, which comes from a more mature counterpart, can be from a human, a cultural artifact, an object, or a tool. (Vygotsky, as cited in Teo, 2012)

Furthermore, Jones (2007) asserts that QAR encourages learners to be strategic about their search and accurate to respond appropriately. From all this, the research of the literature suggests that there are diverse strategies to be taught in order to improve inferential reading. However, based on our learners’ needs and the different courses assigned per month at CCA, QAR is seen as the most suitable strategy to improve the inferential reading comprehension skill and help students become proficient readers.

Using a variety of documents, we developed a grounded theory as a light to choose the most appropriate instruments to collect data for the diagnosis of the present study.

The next section discusses the methodology used to carry out the present research.

## **METHODOLOGY**

On this section, we will provide a brief description on how the research question will be responded. So, it is necessary to clarify the type of study, the advantages and disadvantages, the setting, participants, pedagogical intervention, data collection techniques instruments, specific procedures and ethical considerations that will take place during the research.

### **Type of study:**

This study uses action research as an inquiry strategy. Action research “seeks to change the social, organizational and personal dynamics of the research so that all who participate benefit from its outcomes” (Stringer, 2013, p. 15). Therefore, it requires researchers to get actively involved in the research process to help people define their problems and support their activity to get a resolution of the implications that deal with the focus of the investigation. The first thing to do is acquiring the information by collecting data and analyzing that information in order to transform the understanding about the

nature of the problem and then, this new assumption should be used as an action plan to provide a clear panorama for evaluating hypotheses (Berg, 2004; Stringer, 2013).

Action research is differentiated from other research procedures because it focuses on an action. The researcher adopts an insider position where new questions emerge through the process in relation with others in order to make improvements; it leads to how and why the improvement has occurred and how the validity of the issue has been evaluated. “Action research is about taking action (what to do), researching the action (how you find out about what you do), and learning from the process” (McNiff, 2016, p. 7).

Our research question plays a fundamental role for the choice on the type of study. Action research was relevant to take intentional action by implementing question-answer relationship in order to enhance inferential reading comprehension skill in students of an English class. We also believe that action research design is the most suitable for showing personal and collaborative work of learning as well as improving our practices for our and others’ benefit.

This study was carried out in a regular class at Centro Cultural Colombo Americano, hereafter CCA, located in 4 Vientos. The English class that was chosen is taught for 2 hours a day. For this research study, the parties involved are three teachers (the same teachers designing the present study). Other participants are the students of the English Language program at CCA who are adults around 18 and 25 years old with different interest of learning English either applying for a job, educational or personal

matters. The number of students in a regular class oscillates between 8 and 20 members, including both genders female and male.

The criteria used to select the participants was based in a typical case sampling which focuses on what is standard or typical where candidates are chosen for their likelihood of behaving like others (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim 2016). The data collected for this study came from students' artifacts, students' reading logs and open-ended questionnaire.

The whole process of this action research is described in the following three phases.

### **Phase 1: The Diagnosis.**

In this first stage of the study, the problem was identified. The direct observation of one of the teacher – researchers (participating in this study) in a regular class at CCA, specifically course 1, showed that students were having problems when solving inferential questions after reading a text. The diagnosis started with the analysis and assessment of the reading activities done in class and also the tests given during the course. A questionnaire was then administered to the same students at the beginning of course 2. The results of the questionnaire confirmed that they perceived reading and solving questions related to texts as a very challenging task and that they were aware they lacked some of the necessary skills in order to find the correct answers to questions.

### **Phase 2: The intervention.**

The action plan consisted of instruction on the Question-Answer relationship strategy starting on day 2 of the course. The implementation of the strategy took place every other day in order to get students to be accustomed to use the strategy when solving questions about a written text.

On day 3 of the course, students were instructed on how to fill in their reading logs. This tool allowed us to have a closer view of the process from students' perspectives and also to obtain better input on how the strategy was working or not.

The most important source of data for this research was students' artifacts, which were collected on day 4, 8, 12, and 16 of the course. These activities were conducted in 4 different classes, so that, lesson planning was necessary to define objectives, choose the materials, the activities and the instructional procedures for each one of them.

### **Phase 3: Describing the impact.**

The effect of the action plan was described by:

- Analyzing the results of a survey administered right after the course started.
- Analyzing students' reflections on their reading logs.
- Analyzing students' work after having done the four activities designed for the course on inferential reading comprehension.

After having collected all the data, the results obtained were described by analyzing students' answers to questionnaires, their reflections on the reading logs, and the activities they did during the course, all of this on the spotlight of the theory available regarding reading comprehension and Question-Answer relationship strategy.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

To obtain concrete data related to the project we collected data before, during and after the 19- day English course 2 at CCA. At the beginning of the course, students were given a questionnaire in order to collect information related to students' barriers at the moment of facing reading comprehension activities. The questionnaire focused on the inferential level of reading, which is the ability to process written information and understand the underlying meaning of the text. The first part of the questionnaire was about their interests and needs when reading. The second part described the student perception of their difficulties and how they solved these difficulties; also takes into account their current reading habits.

As a second moment, the students were instructed on how to fill in a Reading log which was their tool during the process; these reading logs were filled in after each class where a reading text was given in order to obtain information from students themselves about these reading activities, which were done during class. The use of four specific readings in their guide book along a specific activity that was designed for each one of them, in order to develop and strengthen their inferential reading comprehension skill through the implementation of the question-answer relationship strategy (see annex).

The intervention was conducted on an English Course at CCA, specifically course 2. Students in this course are classified on Level A1 according to the common European framework. The first part of the intervention consisted on giving students the questionnaire, which took place on day 1 of the course. On day 3 of the course, Instructed



on how to fill in the reading log. Subsequently, they started filling out their reading logs on day 4 and continued to do so during the 4-week course. It is of great importance to point out that students participants of this study are beginners at using the language and are starting to strengthen (in some cases build) skills and abilities such reading comprehension, listening, fluency, among others.

### **The Questionnaire: students' needs, interests and identification of reading comprehension barriers.**

This tool allowed to collect initial information about the students before starting the course that showed their interests, needs and what they identified as a difficulty when facing reading comprehension exercises. This initial information was analyzed in the following chart:

Table 1.

#### **Most interesting kind of English topics preferred to be read in class**

Novels	1
Poems	1
Sports	2
Literature in general	1
Philosophy	1
Current events (Economy, politics, society)	3
Learning methods	3
Forms of communication	1
News	1
Comedy	1
Daily life	1

This information provided input on students, interests related to reading. One of the biggest concerns of language teachers is to develop a good level of reading comprehension

on their students, help them be able to understand, make predictions, analyze, provide conclusions and enjoy reading texts. However, what students are interested in when reading, is hardly ever taken into account. Based on this, Prensky (2001) states that “the single biggest problem facing education today is that our Digital Immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language” (p.2). As a result, learners most of the time are not engaged to read texts which do not appeal to their interests or feel out of date. It is high time for teachers to provide plenty of topics, so that learners choose the one that meet their needs.

In this sense, the class showed different interests but with a coherent common one which was to be able to improve their reading comprehension skills to have access to different kinds of texts that are part of real life and that many times are not available in Spanish which becomes a constraint when developing a variety of activities related to school, university, work or even during their daily routines.

Table 2.

**Biggest challenges when reading English**

Lack of vocabulary	7
Reading	1

Table 3.

**Ways to surpass vocabulary barriers \*participants can choose two or more options**

a. Search for it in the dictionary	6
b. Deduced by context	6
c. Help from a friend	4
d. Other	0

Following the previous fact, the tables 2 and 3 showed that 90% of students identified that the vocabulary is the main obstacle and that at the same time implies a challenge that students face during their time learning the language. This aspect made them get frustrated at the moment to read or try to read more complex texts; but also in table 3 they show they have specific ways to handle with the lack of vocabulary such as using the dictionary or making interpretations of the context that at the end does not solve the problem of lack of vocabulary.

- In addition to these findings, it is necessary to take into account the last two questions of the questionnaire: “*How often do you read texts in English? and what kind of texts do you read?*”; the answers showed that more than 50 percent of students do not have consistent reading habits; the average response oscillated between *once or twice a week* in contrast to the information obtained on which what kinds of material they read, which shows that 80 percent of the students read Internet articles, academic papers, books or material for their English class and also songs and movie captions. This information could lead to the assumption that students would have a high level of proficiency when comes to reading, but the variety of texts they mentioned are not reflected on their reading comprehension skills, due to lack of reading habits and vocabulary, which were identified as the main barrier when reading different kinds of texts.

**Reading logs: A tool to track the implementation of the Question –Answer relationship strategy.**

As it was stated above, reading logs were the students' artifacts that allowed us to have a clear view of students' perception about the activities given. Four of these logs are directly connected to the activities proposed. These activities are:

**To compare 2 sets of daily routine in a text:** in this activity students were informed about the habits of a typical American. They were provided with data about their work habits, frequency, use of internet etc. Then they were given a short questionnaire where they should answer yes or no to questions related to their routine. After having finished this part of the activity, students were asked to compare the typical American routine on their own, by stating the differences and similarities they found, writing them down on a T-chart.

**In the given text, to list six things that technology addicts do :** Students were provided with a text about the different uses of the internet, the amount of time people spend using their computers or phones and the activities they used them for. This text also addressed the concept of "Technology Diet", and also they were given some clues about how to identify when someone is getting out of control when using the internet. After reading the text, students listed six things that an addicted to technology does, taking into account the information given by the text and students' own knowledge in order to foster their higher order thinking skills.

**To predict 3 reasons how people like their neighborhood in a picture:** in this activity, students were given the picture of a neighborhood alongside the picture of three

people who lived in this neighborhood and some pieces of information about them. Only the names, occupations and ages of the people on the pictures were given to students. The students were told to take into account the information given about the characters and also their gender in order to make predictions by giving three reasons whether these people liked their neighborhood or not. This information was collected on a chart.

**To summarize 4 ideas about why the village is an artsy neighborhood in an inferential paragraph:** in this last activity, students read about The Village, which gives general information about different activities offered by a neighborhood in Manhattan. From there, students should answer a series of questions about the neighborhood and afterwards, organize their ideas and write a short paragraph explaining why The Village is an artsy neighborhood.

It is important to point out that these activities intended to work on the inferential level of the readings, by starting with activities such as comparing, pointing out, listing, moving to more complex activities such as making predictions and finally summarizing aspects that are not explicit in the readings to write an inferential paragraph. The activities started after class planning, once the needs and interests of the students were identified. Their needs were initially detected during class observation and were confirmed by the results of the questionnaire which indicated that the students had a previous idea about the strategies that allowed them to make inferences from texts, but lack of instruction on how to use them efficiently. However, the sequence of these activities was intended to scaffold students on the inferential level of reading.

Table 4.

**Reading strategies applied when reading English \*participants can choose two or more options**

a. Summarize and generalize	4
b. Highlight key concepts	4
c. Search for specific data	4
d. Predictions	4

Regardless the fact that the table shows that students had equal answers when it comes to the question asked about *which strategies they apply when reading in English*; it should be pointed out that several of these strategies were applied by the students prior the instruction, which lead to the conclusion that the activities developed during the course were aimed to be addressed to improve reading comprehension skills, through the ***question-answer relationship strategy***, which in this sense, implies guided questions where they must give coherent answers to what is asked, taking into account both the implicit or explicit information that the text can provide and also their previous knowledge. On the other hand, a major benefit of reading logs was that at the moment that each student had to think and made a reflection about the activities, they became aware of their own learning process, what make them autonomous and independent of their knowledge, as well as when they had to answer the questions about the readings such as *if they have felt confused, how this relates to their daily life or which was the easiest part of the exercise*. That also allowed them to make connections between the topics that were addressed in these activities with their daily lives so they could become part of the exercise itself.

In the same way these activities were analyzed altogether with their corresponding Reading log; also the Reading log that was filled out at the beginning of the course and those ones that were not linked directly to the activities were taken into account since they targeted to the purpose of this project and at the same time became essential tools in the process of improving the inferential reading comprehension of students. The analysis of this set of activities yielded the following results:

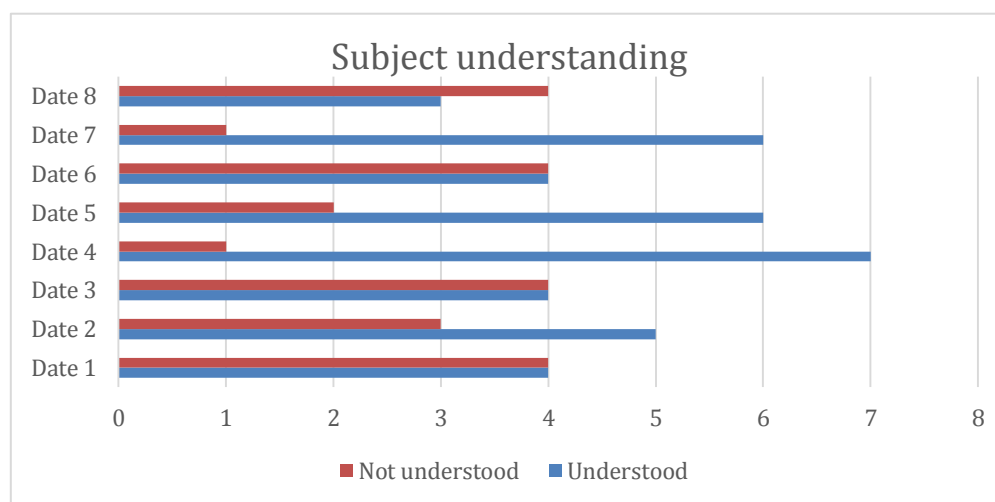
- First, taking into account the description of the four activities designed for this course, we observed that each one of the aspects of the inferential level of reading that were enhanced, lead students to the development of increasingly complex skills. We were able to come to this conclusion based on the comparison and contrast of information of the text used for the first activity with the information provided by the students after finishing the task; the enhancement of the ability to make inferences and deducting information from the text in the second activity; the third one made students go beyond in the sense that they had to extract information from the picture and establish relationships with the implicit information on it in order to be able to generate predictions about each character's opinion by taking into account how their age, occupation and gender would influence their perception about their neighborhood. Finally in the fourth activity it is explicitly tested whether the question-answer relationship strategy is effective, since the students had to interpret the text to answer the questions, so that, the activity aimed the students to be able to identify details in the reading and establish connections between what is

explicitly said to information that is not explicitly stated, indeed related to “The Village”, and at the end, write an inferential paragraph.

- Second, the results are confirmed by the reading logs through the description of five aspects:
  - a) What I have been learning, which is the identification of the central theme of the learning activity.
  - b) How knowing about this topic will help me, which makes the student aware of the skills learned or reinforced by this activity.
  - c) What the topic reminds me of, that allows the student to connect the reading and the activity with their daily life.
  - d) Which part when reading the text made me feel confused, that allows to identify the weaknesses that are presented.
  - e) Which was the easiest part that allows to identify the strengths at the moment of carrying out the activity.
- Third, regarding the question "*Which part made you feel confused?*" referring to it as if at some point when reading the text, the content or language had been misunderstood, the Reading log showed that since this question was asked during the progression of the course, it is of great importance to point out that on the last three dates there was a substantial increase in the number of students who responded "*I was not confused*" when they filled out the reading logs; which allowed us to conclude that there was an improvement in the comprehension of the texts, which is shown in the following graph, where it can be observed that starting



from date 2 there is a first indicator of this improvement expressed textually by the students and reflected in the responses to the activities; that reaches its peak between dates 4 and 7. It should be added that date 8 not all students participated.



This, in general shows an increase of the level of students understanding in comparison with the first reading log and the last one, and that highest points of comprehension were shown during the activities where the question-answer relationship strategy had already been implemented.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This section draws conclusions and implications reached along with the future research scope that can be derived from this study. Through this dissertation, it was possible to respond to the main question of this study: *How inferential reading comprehension skills are improved through the question – answer relationship strategy?*

Considering the analyzed data throughout this research the following conclusions have been drawn:

- The difficulties participants had when facing the challenge of reading inferentially seem to be due to not having been familiar with enough reading strategies, such as summarizing, making differences and similarities, paraphrasing, analyzing and synthesizing information.
- The participant students are aware of the importance reading has for their performance on the different levels of the English courses at Centro Colombo Americano, and show great interest in being instructed on how to answer the questions they are asked after reading different kinds of texts.
- Students' perception in regard to the kind of English topics is supported by the fact that learners prefer readings that suit their needs in life. Some of them, prefer reading about sports because they are athletes; others are inclined to economy, politics, and society as a result of their careers. Therefore, to have learners hooked on reading, as teachers we may offer plenty of options for them to choose the one that fit their English level, interests and feel attractive. After that stage, it would be easier to introduce reading strategies to support their inferential comprehension through different activities (written, oral) since they will comment on topics they really enjoy.
- The students are also aware that reading comprehension is one of the main aspects to be proficient in English and that is an aspect that is not isolated from their daily lives but on the contrary, related to it very closely, since they face many written text in English when developing activities for their classes, jobs, daily activities such as watching TV, reading the news, among others.

- After the intervention, we can conclude that the inferential level of reading was enhanced, leading the participant students to the development of increasingly complex skills when facing reading material. The improvement on the inferential level of reading comprehension was perceptible from the moment the students were able to make comparison and contrast information from written texts; they also developed the ability to make inferences, deduct and extract information from the texts, establish relationships with the implicit information on them in order to be able to generate predictions; the students were also able to interpret the texts in order to answer questions by identifying details in reading material and establishing connections between what is explicitly said to information that is not explicitly stated, allowing them to write an inferential paragraph.
- The information provided by the reading logs, allowed us to conclude that the implementation of the Question-Answer Relationship Strategy was successful, since students themselves, during the last 3 dates when Reading Logs were filled out, explicitly stated that they “were not confused” when reading the texts that were provided in class, showing major improvement since date one, when most of them answered they were confused when facing written texts and their corresponding reading comprehension activities.
- Based on the results of the present study, implementing the Question-Answer Relationship Strategy in all levels of the English courses At Centro Colombo Americano Cartagena, will be beneficial for all the students, starting from beginner levels, since this strategy would allow students to have better reading comprehension skills, which at the end will represent major improvements when facing reading material in both academic context and real life situations.

This study opens a door for teachers who are reluctant to implement different strategies on their classes, maintaining the strategies that are suggested by the textbook, and that at some extent, are not getting them to achieve their goals when comes to reading comprehension on their students. The Question-Answer Relationship Strategy can be implemented from course 1 on, allowing students become familiar with it, therefore, their implementation will become natural when facing reading comprehension activities, allowing students to get the most out of this strategy in order to successfully comprehend a text at any level.

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## ANNEXES

### Appendix 1. Diagnosis Questionnaire

#### CUESTIONARIO

Estimado (a) estudiante:  
Favor, responda el siguiente cuestionario.  
Es muy importante contar con su participación.

Muchas gracias.

**1. ¿Qué temática de su interés le gustaría leer en la clase de Inglés?**

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**2. ¿Qué dificultades encuentra cuando lee en Inglés?**

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**3. Si encuentra dificultad en el vocabulario, ¿cómo la resuelves?**

- a. Busca en el diccionario.
- b. Deduce por contexto.
- c. Pregunta a alguien el significado.
- d. Otro \_\_\_\_\_.

**4. ¿Qué habilidades de comprensión lectora aplica al leer en Inglés?**

- a. Resumir y generalizar.
- b. Subrayar conceptos claves.
- c. Encontrar datos concretos.
- d. Predecir.

**5. ¿Con qué frecuencia lee textos en Inglés?**

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**¿Qué clase de textos?**

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**Appendix 2. Students' Artifact after reading the text "The Average American"**

**THE AVERAGE AMERICAN.**

1. According to the text you read, What differences and similarities can you find between the average american daily routine and your daily routine?  
Write them in the chart.

I am like an average American because...	I am not like an average American because...

### **Appendix 3. Student Artifact after the reading “Technology Diet”**

#### **TECHNOLOGY ADDICTS**

According to the reading “Technology Diet”, list six (6) things technology addicts do

**Appendix 4. Students' Artifact after the reading "How do you like your neighborhood?"**

**HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?**

Look at the picture and make predictions about three reasons how people in the reading like their neighborhood.

AMY JOHNSON	PAUL JOHNSON	STACY KING

## **Appendix 5. Student Artifact after the reading “The village”**

### **“THE VILLAGE”**

1. Read the text “THE VILLAGE”
2. After reading the text answer the following questions:
  - What do you think “Artsy” means?
  - What places can you go in The Village?
  - What can you do at these places?
  - What other activities can you do in The Village?
3. Use the answers to the questions above to help you write a short paragraph explaining why The Village is an “artsy” neighborhood.

## Appendix 6. Students' artifact during the intervention: Reading Log

### MY READING LOG

1. He estado aprendiendo sobre:
2. Saber sobre este tema me ayuda a:
3. Este tema me recuerda:
4. Al leer sobre este tema la parte que más me confundió fue:
5. Al leer sobre este tema la parte más fácil fue:

Appendix 6. Samples of students' artifacts.

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN.

1. According to the text you read, What differences and similarities can you find between the average american daily routine and your daily routine?. Write them in the chart.

I am like an average American because...	I am not like an average American because...
I don't exercise every day	I'm <del>don't</del> wake up at 6:30 am on weekdays
	I <del>don't</del> sing in the shower
	I don't eat cereal with milk for breakfast
	I'm use public transportation every day
	I have a pet
	I don't watch television about three hours a day
	I don't eat at a restaurant three times a week

## TECHNOLOGY ADDICTS

According to the reading "Technology Diet", list six (6) things technology addicts do

1. They spend too much time on computers and cellphone.
2. the first thing they do in the morning is check their email.
3. they ever spend time talking to a different friend on your cellphone.
4. they answer calls or texts in a movie theater.
5. they spend too much time online every day.
6. they spend a lot of time on their social network.



### HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Look at the picture and make predictions about three reasons how people in the reading like their neighborhood.

AMY JOHNSON	PAUL JOHNSON	STACY KING
I think she likes her neighborhood because it's small	I think He likes His neighborhood because there is a Gym	I think she likes her neighborhood because there is a park
I think she likes her neighborhood because there is a boutique and she can buy clothes	I think he doesn't like neighborhood because there is not a bank	I think she likes her neighborhood because there is a station police
I think she doesn't like her neighborhood because there is not a Hospital	I think he likes His neighborhood because there is a bookstore	I think she likes her neighborhood because there is an Ocean Grill

MY READING LOG

<p>1. He estado aprendiendo sobre:</p> <p>Encuestas acerca el tiempo libre, (lo que se hace, la frecuencia con la que se hace) Aprendi sobre lugar, tiempo.</p>
<p>2. Saber sobre este tema me ayuda a:</p> <p>Hacer preguntas correctas en el tiempo o contexto correcto.</p>
<p>3. Este tema me recuerda:</p> <p>a una encuesta que tuve hace algunos meses (me preguntaron de todo).</p>
<p>4. Al leer sobre este tema la parte que mas me confundió fue:</p> <p>el tema en el que se habla acerca de frecuencias con que hacemos las cosas.</p>
<p>5. Al leer sobre este tema la parte más fácil fue:</p> <p>las cosas que hacemos en nuestro tiempo libre.</p>

MY READING LOG

Carlos Bostamante

1. He estado aprendiendo sobre: e estado aprendiendo a completar respuestas que voyan mas alla de si o no Para evitar el ser cortante en una conversacion casual

2. Saber sobre este tema me ayuda a:  
a ampliar mi vocabulario y poder mantener una conversacion de rutina

3. Este tema me recuerda:  
a una vez que estaba en el gym y deje de hacer ejercicio Para hablar Durante 7 Hora

4. Al leer sobre este tema la parte que mas me confundió fue:  
no hubo ninguna confusion Puesto que en cada oracion habian palabras muy claves que le daban la coherencia

5. Al leer sobre este tema la parte más fácil fue:  
La parte mas facil fue la de ubicar la residencia de cada quien

### MY READING LOG

1. He estado aprendiendo sobre: la encuesta me enseñó a saber las cosas que hago en tiempo libre con mi familia o amigos

2. Saber sobre este tema me ayuda a: saber en que invierto mi tiempo

3. Este tema me recuerda:

una película donde se trata de vivir en el tiempo

4. Al leer sobre este tema la parte que mas me confundió fue:

No me confundió

5. Al leer sobre este tema la parte más fácil fue:

Darme cuenta en que forma uso mi tiempo

### MY READING LOG

<p>1. He estado aprendiendo sobre:</p> <p>ocupaciones, rutinas y disciplina.</p>
<p>2. Saber sobre este tema me ayuda a:</p> <p>mirar que es posible cuando te lo propones. lograr cosas como ser responsable, disciplinado. en muchas areas de tu vida.</p>
<p>3. Este tema me recuerda:</p> <p>a un amigo que fue que trabajaba medio tiempo en un lugar diariamente y luego estudiaba.</p>
<p>4. Al leer sobre este tema la parte que mas me confundió fue:</p> <p>Cuando el chico (Andy) hablaba de su chica u ocupación.</p>
<p>5. Al leer sobre este tema la parte más fácil fue:</p> <p>La parte donde la chica habla acerca de como llegaba de su casa o gym. puesto que he escuchado hablar de esto en varias ocasiones.</p>