

## **Reading Aloud Activities as a Way to Determine Students' Narrative Template**

Actividades de lectura en voz alta como una forma de determinar el modelo narrativo de los estudiantes

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This article focuses on the description of a methodological innovation implemented in a beginner's English class at university level in Bogotá, Colombia which had two aims: First, to explore the role of reading aloud activities in the teaching of English, and second, to describe the narrative template students use when retelling a story in writing. Data collection sources for this small-scale project incorporated class observation during the reading aloud activity, students' written samples as the means for them to retell the story, and interviews that were held at the end of the research process. This experience allowed both the teacher and the learners to approach English and see themselves playing a different role in the classroom. Moreover, it helped students foster their communicative competence as well as their motivation toward English language learning. Thus, this study promotes pedagogical debate about literacy processes in English in adults and the applicability of this kind of innovation in an EFL context.

**Key words:** Literacy, Reading Aloud, Storytelling, Narrative Template, English Innovation, Foreign Language-Innovation

El objetivo de este artículo es describir una innovación que se implementó en un curso de inglés básico a nivel universitario en Bogotá, Colombia y el cual tuvo dos objetivos: primero, explorar el rol de las actividades de lectura en voz alta para el aprendizaje del Inglés y segundo describir el modelo narrativo que usan los estudiantes cuando narran una historia. Los métodos de recolección de datos para este proyecto a menor escala incorporaron observación de clases durante las actividades de lectura en voz alta, producción escrita de los estudiantes como un medio para que ellos narraran las historias y entrevistas al final del proceso de investigación. Esta experiencia permitió al profesor y a los

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estudiantes acercase al inglés de una manera diferente y verse a sí mismos asumiendo otro rol en el aula de clase. Además, incentivó el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa así como la motivación hacia el aprendizaje de la lengua. En consecuencia, este estudio promueve la discusión pedagógica acerca del proceso de desarrollo de lectura y escritura en inglés en adultos y la aplicación de este tipo de innovación en un contexto de enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera.

**Palabras claves:** Proceso Lecto-escritor, Lectura en voz alta, Narración-Historias, Modelo Narrativo, Inglés-Innovaciones, Innovación- Lengua Extranjera

## INTRODUCTION

This paper describes the development of a small-scale project that was part of the assignments of two seminars of the Master in Applied Linguistics of the TEFL program of Universidad Distrital. The interdisciplinary work on both subjects –the seminars on Discourse Analysis and Classroom Interaction and Teacher Preparation about Theory and on Methodology of Foreign Language Teaching– prompted carrying out an innovation grounded on the articulation and generation of pedagogical knowledge between these two areas in order to enrich the teaching-learning task. The study carried out during the second semester of 2003 aimed at promoting the literacy process not only in its linguistic dimension (reading and writing) but also in its socio-cultural dimension since any literacy practice constitutes a social practice (Baynham, 1995).

Next, I describe the background and the basic constructs that support this study; then I report on the methodology, participants and site, the data collection procedure, and analysis. Later, I discuss the findings in order to describe, first, the components of the narrative template

that students use to retell a story and second, the impact of the reading aloud activity upon the students and language learning. Finally, I examine the conclusions and pedagogical implications of the experience.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When I started thinking about the innovation that I was required to develop in my teaching context, I became interested in providing my students with exposure and interaction in a different language source. My first step was to carry out an informal needs analysis whose results revealed the students felt that reading aloud activities gave them more possibilities to interact with the foreign language. Thus I found it interesting to integrate reading aloud with discourse analysis. Hence, the reading aloud of a story would act as the input to enable students to use the components of the narrative genre. In this sense, I posed these two research questions:

- What are the components of the narrative template students deal with when they retell a story in writing?

- What is the role of the reading aloud activity in the foreign language teaching-learning process of a beginners class?

Reading aloud as part of a literacy process attempts to encourage students' oral and written production. In this sense it agreed with the basic concept that literacy is the mastery of the written and oral language forms. Nevertheless, being literate is not only having the ability to read and write; it is a social practice (Kramsch, 1998; Baynham, 1995). As stated by Zuñiga (2001), it is a social and cultural construction built up within the interaction of individuals. Therefore, literacy is interpreted either in a linguistic dimension or in a socio-cultural dimension. Thus, reading aloud nurtures both dimensions in a teaching-learning context.

### **The Process that Underlies Read-Alouds**

According to Ellis and Brewster (2002), a person can retell a story in several ways; for instance, s/he can tell a tale without a book, an anecdote, a joke or can tell a story from a book by *reading it aloud*. When you read aloud, you open a space for retelling a story. Retelling is part of our culture and daily life; we retell jokes, songs, poems, plays, and stories. For this reason, reading aloud comprises the bases for students to start performing retelling little by little in the second language (Wright, 1997) thus prompting at a more interactional rather than transactional approach (McCarthy, 1991). As such, it will enhance the establishing

of roles and relationships between and among the teacher and the students, the teaching and the learning process.

During my experience as a language teacher, I have noticed that reading aloud or read-alouds, as named by Campbell (2001), is a term that is generally used to refer to children's literacy processes. However, I consider that the scope of this activity goes beyond this limited perception. It can provide an innovative approach to literacy instruction not only for children but also for adults (Nurss, 2000 as cited in Smallwood, 1992). Readings can be adapted to any kind of language command and the characteristics of the students. Children's literature, for example, widely used with elementary ESL students can be adapted to teach literacy skills to adult ESL learners as well (Smallwood, 1992).

Read-alouds help the literacy process of foreign language learners in many ways according to Ellis and Brewster (1991). Some of these are as follows:

- Stories are motivating and funny and can help develop positive attitudes toward language learning.
- They exercise the imagination as listeners become engaged and interpret and infer issues related to the narration.
- They constitute a source for sharing social experiences different from the individuality that the writing and reading activity demands. This agrees with Trelease (1989), as cited by Campbell (1998), who claims that story reading supports emotional, social, and psychological development.

- Students learn more because they learn about language -new words, new syntactic forms, new meanings, and new ways of organizing discourse (Dombey, 1988 as cited by Ellis and Brewster, 1991).
- They also support the teacher whenever s/he wants to address any kind of topic because stories provide cross-curricular links.
- They allow the teacher to convey her/his love and excitement for both reading and learning and that starts building up the knowledge required for eventual success in reading (Cooper, 1993).
- It helps us to change traditional classes into perhaps very interesting ones (Barreto, 2002, p. 55).

There are different aspects that play a paramount role in the reading aloud activity. They are the kinds of stories the teacher chooses and the procedure used to carry out the reading. The former refers to the types of storybooks. According to Ellis and Brewster (1991) you can select humorous, rhyming, animal and everyday stories. The latter relates to the reading aloud model utilized in this study. Ellis and Brewster (2002) propose a model made up of three components: Plan (pre-activity), Do (while-activity) and Review (post-activity).

The pre-activity refers to all of the strategies the teacher uses to introduce the story, creating an environment and raising interest and motivation toward the reading aloud of the story. The while-activity is the reading aloud activity itself in which the teacher prompts students to infer, make relations, draw

conclusions and so forth. During the post-activity, students will engage in different activities of retelling orally or in writing, discussions, games, presentations, etc.

Essentially, reading aloud constitutes a great source to enable students to improve in regards to their learning of the foreign language (reading, writing, grammar, spelling, listening, speaking, socio-cultural issues, etc.). In other words, learners will not be learning the language but living it when engaged in meaningful activities.

### **Narrative Genre on the Spot of Discourse**

'Discourse analysis' is defined as a variety of procedures for examining chunks of language, whether spoken or written, that are the product of different interactions in different contexts (Allwright and Bailey, 1994; Hatch, 1992; McCarthy, 1991). In this sense, discourse is made up of the pragmatic context and it embraces various domains such as socio-cultural, political and ideological issues.

Hatch (1992) describes three streams that function as the umbrella terms that cover the different approaches to analyzing discourse. First of all, those streams that explain the structure of a text (linguistic cognitive templates); second, those that show the text structure as the result of the speakers' or writers' goals and intents (linguistic and cognitive processes); and finally, those that depict structure as evolving from socially and cooperatively built communication (social, linguistic and cognitive processes).

This study is grounded in a rhetorical genre analysis that comprises part of the first group of methods of discourse analysis. Rhetoricians have traditionally divided genres into narrative, descriptive, procedural and persuasive discourses (Hatch, 1992). Since this particular study focuses on storytelling, I decided to work on the narrative genre; hence, narrowing down its scope towards the narrative text.

Narration is thought to be the most universal genre because all cultures have storytelling traditions. According to research done in this area (Labov, 1972; Labov and Waletzky, 1967) and Mandler (Mandler, 1978; Mandler and Johnson, 1977; and Mandler et al., 1980) as cited by Hatch (1992), there is a basic universal template for the narrative based on the analysis of storytelling tasks of different languages. Narrations usually begin with an orientation that includes the time, the spatial setting and the characters as well as their role in the story. Later, when the story setting is complete, the storyteller sets up the story line. In general, the story lines revolve around a hero who has a goal which involves a problem, an adversary and some steps to resolve it. In addition, there is a resolution and a coda that includes a possible moral which represents an evaluative component that might also occur at various points throughout the narrative. As a final component of the narrative template we have the abstract. This is what we know as the title of the story. The components of the narrative template can either be described in an oral or written text; however, the current study decided to concentrate only on the written text.

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher acted as a participant observer and followed a qualitative study under the scope of a social constructivist approach as the means for students to grow as language learners and social beings who construct meaning through their interaction. Social constructivism deals with the construction of knowledge and understanding that the learners make out of the social and interactional environment in a classroom context (Wells, 1995).

### Participants and Site

The participants of this study were 19 EFL students from the extension courses at a public university in Bogotá. The class, a beginners English level, was made up of 13 female students and 6 male students whose ages ranged from 16 to 40. In general, the target participants were professionals or students of different majors.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection procedure was made up of class observations that were carried out during the four reading aloud activities, the students' written samples, summaries of the stories read, and a semi-structured interview at the end of the semester. Data analysis aimed at describing the incidence of the reading aloud activity regarding students' language development and also to determine their narrative template. To this end, I used a coloring code in order to see the common patterns in all the instruments applied.

**FINDINGS**

In order to analyze the data gathered, I took written samples that the students had completed after the reading aloud activity was carried out (see one sample in annex 1).

In addition, I used class observation sheets (see annex 2) and three interviews (see annex 3). The chart below displays the categories found in order to answer the two main questions.

Narrative components	Language issues	Interactions
Abstract Characters Goal and problem Steps to resolve the problem Climax and resolution	Speaking Pronunciation Writing Listening Grammar Vocabulary	Teacher-student Student-student

**Table 1.** Categories found when analyzing the data

**Narrative Components**

In the table above we can see that for the first category the students included in their written texts only four of the seven components of the universal narrative template proposed by Labov. With few exceptions, the samples included an abstract: “Summary of the story ‘Leo and Pip’.”<sup>1</sup> There was always the introduction to the characters: “*They are a family; there are three billy goats...*” Although in some of the samples the students incorporated the time and setting, it was only in a few of the retold stories that these components were included. The stories always presented a goal, a problem and, therefore, a hero: “*Three billy goat, They are hungry... The small billy goat sees grass*”. In addition, the written samples showed cohesion through the components of the steps to resolve the problem: “*The*

*hunter ran and he found a fisherman they planned to catch the lion with the fisherman’s net and fish. Leo fell in the net and her mouse friend cut the net with the teeth*”. In reference to the climax or resolution, I saw that the students considered it an important component as a way to bring the story to a conclusion. “*He hits the troll and continues his road.*” Finally, the last component of the narrative template, the coda, was barely included in some of the papers.

In short, the written samples showed that the students took into account what they considered most important to retell the story in writing. For example, they ignored some characters that are not significant for the development of the story or omitted places and actions that would scarcely affect the meaning of the story. This finding was also validated through the interviews in which they talked about the beginning, the plot and a resolution:

<sup>1</sup> During the class I read four stories: “Leo and Pip”, “Going to School”, “The Raven and the Fox” and “The Three Billy Goats Gruff”.

- *¿Qué aspectos debe tener una historia para que sea fácil de entender o para poderla narrar?*

*What aspects should a story have for it to be easy to understand or narrate?*

- *“Hay unos personajes que hay que definir, qué pensamos acerca de ellos y qué pueden hacer... Una historia tiene un inicio, que es donde se atrapa a la persona para crear interés y un problema principal; una trama, que es lo que acontece para desenredar el problema principal y un desenlace, un final feliz para los buenos.”*

- *“There are some characters that we need to define, and say what we think about them and what they can do... A story has a beginning which is where the interest of the person is captured and where there is a principal problem; there is a plot that happens to disentangle the principal problem, and there is a resolution that is a happy ending.”*

*(Interview in Spanish)*

This interview also showed that the setting and the time were not a concern in the kind of narrative template that they dealt with. Although not all of the summaries included the setting and the time, they were accurate in describing and contextualizing the reader in order to guide her/him through the process of finding a goal, a problem, some steps to resolve the problem and a resolution.

By the same token, the coda is not mentioned as an important factor in the development of a story. This one component could tell more about the amount of reflection that a story stimulates when

listening to it or when retelling it. In general, the lack of reflection displayed in the writings uncovers the shallow or literal kind of reading and interpretation that students do when they are involved in this kind of literacy event. This outcome represents a call for teachers to consider critical reading an important tool in the development of reflective minds that go beyond what is at first sight visible in a written or oral text.

To sum up, I would assert that the narrative template posed by Hatch is to a certain point universal, yet it is shaped by the different literacy processes that make up the experience of every learner of a given culture.

### Language Issues

Now I will concentrate on the second category –language issues. The analysis of the students' written samples and their dynamics during the reading aloud shed light on this category and sub-categories. Considering that the second question refers to the role of reading aloud in the students' language development, I came up with the sub-categories of speaking, pronunciation, writing, listening, grammar and vocabulary.

First of all, I will deal with the sub-category of speaking. The application of the model proposed by Ellis and Brewster (2002) to carry out the reading aloud activity Plan (pre-activity), Do (while-activity) and Review (post-activity), represented the best strategy for students to improve their oral skills. The pre-activity allowed students to recall previous knowledge in terms of experiences and predictions; and because of this activity,

they used vocabulary, structures or expressions they knew beforehand. The while-activity exposed them to new grammatical structures, lexicon, stress and intonation patterns where they interacted asking and answering different kinds of questions. During the post-activity, the students discussed and gave their opinion about the story and finally wrote a summary of it. The reading aloud model applied served the purpose of increasing the students' oral interactions. This is one excerpt taken from the first reading activity of the story "Leo and Pip":

- *Teacher (T): (Showing the cover of the book) What do you see?*
- *Student (S): A lion and a mouse.*
- *T: (reads the title) "Leo and Pip". Who is Leo and who is Pip?*
- *S1: Leo is the lion and Pip is the mouse...*
- *T: What is the story about?*
- *S1: The lion and the mouse friends.*
- *S2: The lion eats the mouse.*
- *T: What do you imagine when I say lion?*

*(They all started recalling different words as long as the teacher wrote them down on the board: big, furious, wild, jungle, hunter...) ... What happened to the hunter? (The teacher asked individually)*

- *S3: The lion eat the hunter.*
- *S4: The hunter run...*
- *S5: Escape...*

The excerpt shows how the students participated using what they knew about the L2 and feeling free to take risks and make mistakes since the teacher was not overcorrecting. Additionally, we observe how

they inferred, guessed, agreed or disagreed when constructing meaning through negotiation. Thus, the dynamics of participation and inquiry about new vocabulary enhanced the possibility for them to improve their pronunciation. In general, all the unknown words were written on the board and were pronounced by the teacher. The students asked for repetition either of the teacher or of their classmates or they looked up the words in the dictionary. At the end of every activity the teacher often required the students to read the words aloud by themselves. He would only correct when it was necessary.

*"Finally, I ask for the repetition of the words that I wrote down on the board. They read them and I only have to correct the pronunciation of the words: anxious, disease and rabies."*

*(Excerpt from the first class observation)*

In brief, they achieved better results in terms of their oral production and pronunciation. They interacted among themselves and with the teacher and that helped them improve in terms of their accuracy and fluency.

The next sub-category shows that their listening understanding increased during the process. Although this ability draws upon other language issues such as knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, I consider their level of understanding grew not only when they listened to the teacher's register but also to their partners' register. Moreover, another indicator is their capacity to rephrase what the teacher had just read. In the two last reading aloud activities the use of the board was not very necessary on

account of the understanding they were depicting as the reading was being done. This is one extract from a class observation:

*"... the students are not asking me to write the words on the board as they used to. Some of them write what they hear and confirm with their classmates."*

In regards to the writing sub-category, I would say that this aspect of the literacy process in L2 experienced a major improvement. The students were always making notes on what I read or wrote on the board. They asked for the spelling when they did not know how to write a word. However, the part that most contributed to their improving their writing skill was the post-activity of the reading aloud exercise. During this phase they were asked to write a summary of the story which they successfully did. Writing is the conjunction of what one knows about grammar and vocabulary and it also constitutes a way to check on students' understanding through their cohesion and coherence.

Due to the relevance of vocabulary and grammar for the writing task, I will address these other two sub-categories. The summaries of the different stories comprised the best source of information to find out about grammar and vocabulary. The reading aloud served as the means to introduce new syntactical items and vocabulary related to them. The students tried to make use of the structures learned in class:

*T: Where is the lion?*

*S4: Near the tree.*

*S5: Behind the tree.*

*(Other students nod their heads agreeing with him)*

The excerpt above describes how the students used prepositions, one of the topics that had been studied the previous classes in the reading aloud activity. In addition, they utilized a great deal of the vocabulary introduced during the reading:

*"Once upon a time three Billy Goats Gruff in the forest.*

*They are very hungry, but in this place there is no food.*

*They have to cross a bridge because in the other place there is grass green.*

*However, in the bridge is the troll, a hungry monster..."*

This passage from the third read-aloud presents different issues related to vocabulary, grammar and management of written devices such as cohesion and punctuation. Although the introductory sentence needs the inclusion of the expletive "there is", we can see the use of the narrative device "once upon a time" that the students retained from the reading aloud. Besides, this group of students used connectors such as "but" and "however" as well as punctuation and capitalization in order to give cohesion to the story. By the same token, there is a considerable use of vocabulary like Billy Goats Gruff, bridge, troll and grass taken directly from the story read. The written production shows how students profit from the readings-aloud to reinforce or approach new vocabulary, grammar and written devices. This is also expressed through the interviews:

*T: "¿Qué opinión tiene de las actividades de lectura en voz alta?"*

*What do you think of the reading aloud activities?"*

S: *“Muy bien, muy acordes con el nivel que estamos utilizando, poco a poco se introdujo el vocabulario. Con las últimas historias era mucho más fácil participar y se entendía más.”*

*“Very well, very in accordance with the level we are dealing with, little by little the vocabulary was presented. In the last stories it was much easier to participate and more understandable.”*

T: *¿En qué manera relacionas el uso de estas actividades (lectura en voz alta) con respecto a tu aprendizaje del inglés?*

*How do you relate the use of these activities (reading aloud) regarding your English language learning?*

S: *Enriquece el vocabulario, crea estructuras básicas para crear oraciones, se relacionan imagen y palabra y se utilizan. La pronunciación también mejora.*

*“Vocabulary is enriched, basic structures are provided to create sentences; image and words are related and used. Pronunciation is also improved.”*

T: *¿Te ayudó a mejorar en esos aspectos, cierto? ¿En algún otro aspecto?*

*It helped you improve in those aspects, right? Any other aspect?*

S: *“La escritura con la actividad (la escritura del resumen), el habla uno se atrevía a decir cosas, a inventar, a inferir. También, la pronunciación y la escucha cuando se narra la historia”.*

*“The writing with the activity (The writing of the summary), the speaking, one dares to say things, invent, infer. Also, the*

*pronunciation and the listening when the story is narrated.”*

*(Interview in Spanish)*

Broadly speaking, the reading aloud activity contributed as the means to promote the development of the students' receptive and productive skills. Likewise, it helped them approach English language in an unconventional way so as to have a more accurate and fluent command of it. Compared to previous classes that I had, there was more improvement regarding language issues such as speaking, pronunciation, writing, listening, grammar and vocabulary. I could see how throughout the process of the reading aloud the students began to write and utter longer and better constructed sentences: *“There are three goats and they are hungry...”*. *“They have to cross a bridge because in the place there is grass green”*. They made fewer spelling mistakes and showed more listening understanding as long as the reading-aloud activities were carried out. On the other hand, the sense of achievement that students experienced fostered different interactions in the classroom that I discuss in the third category.

### **Interactions**

The third category that I established was interactions. There are two sub-categories that underlie this last category: student-student and teacher-student interaction. During the read aloud activities the students' interactions tended to be more collaborative and supportive. They felt confident to ask questions among themselves. An excerpt from a class observation illustrates this:

"Some of them are asking the partners for any meaning of words". Not only did they interact to ask their classmates about a word's meaning or pronunciation, but also to play jokes about the reading. There was a lively and enthusiastic environment that facilitated their participation and promoted cooperative learning among the students. For instance, when they gathered in groups to write the summary of the story, they helped each other and divided the tasks such as using the dictionary, drawing and writing. Also, they clarified doubts among themselves or shared different experiences related to the story.

The interaction depicted in the classroom allowed the students and I to see ourselves playing a different role as participants of an educational process. I acted as a facilitator and promoter of an appropriate classroom environment. The aim of the reading was to encourage students to participate in an informal and voluntary way since they were not being graded or overcorrected. In this sense, students perceived me as a support during the classes where I would sit down to work with them as another participant of the work group. As a whole, I found myself as a co-participant (Wells, 1995) who should provide a suitable context for students to interact in the L2 without any kind of pressure.

To conclude, I would like to quote some extracts from two interviews where the students refer to my participation and their roles:

*S1: "Me sentí bien, traté de participar, hubo un buen ambiente. Su actitud frente a la*

*narración fue muy buena entonces uno se siente seguro de participar."*

*S2: "...bien, todos participaban y uno pone atención."*

*S1: "I felt good, I tried to participate, it was a good environment, your attitude towards the narration was very well so one feels confident to participate."*

*S2: "... good... everybody participated and one pays attention."*

*(Interview in Spanish)*

There is a positive outcome concerning the last category of student-student and teacher-student interactions. Students accomplished a different role where they supported each other cooperatively. They considered the teacher an important factor in the encouragement of a favourable environment for the class. Therefore the role of the teacher was that of a facilitator for students to improve as language learners and human beings. The experience helped the teacher grow as a professional. Besides, it provided both the teacher and the students with a different view of how to approach foreign language teaching-learning.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study has provided information regarding students' narrative components through the use of reading aloud activities in the language classroom. The written samples analyzed showed that students omitted narrative components which would not affect the general understanding of a story. On the other hand, it described how the use of reading aloud activities improved

the students' learning process of L2. The data collected pointed out that students made progress in order to handle different language aspects like speaking, pronunciation, writing, listening, grammar and vocabulary. In short, read alouds helped determine the student's narrative template; nevertheless, it can also be used to enhance the inclusion of the elements that students disregard when they retell a story. It can become a way for students to enrich the way they handle the narrative genre and represent another source for language improvement.

The interaction among and between the students and the teacher; and the learning-teaching process projected a sense of classroom community. There was a supportive and cooperative environment that played a significant role in students' motivation. They learned in a social constructivist way sharing and helping each other. As a result, this small-scale research provides worthwhile input for further study and poses some pedagogical implications that I discuss below.

First of all, there seems to be a belief that reading aloud is an activity exclusively regarded for children. It is easy to find masses of literature about reading aloud for children; however, it is not so for adolescents or adults. Perhaps there is a belief that only children enjoy this activity and consequently, that it is uniquely used in the process of first language acquisition. The experience described illustrates how this kind of activity motivates students and provides another way to approach language. Likewise, it is necessary to pinpoint the relevance of read alouds to promote the reading literacy

process in L2. It constitutes the point of departure for learners to start negotiating meaning, constructing knowledge and reaching an understanding of what reading is conveying.

There are some other issues that are to be considered regarding reading aloud. First, we need to bear in mind the role of the teacher. The teacher as the reader will in part determine the students' role. His/her attitude toward the activity of reading aloud has to aim at the creation of an enjoyable atmosphere. The use of different intonation and kinesthetic patterns as strategies will contribute to the students' understanding and enrollment in the activity. Second, it is advisable to think about the type of reading. Illustrated books of short stories can provide a good source for introducing or rehearsing grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation items. As a third aspect, using a reading procedure helps obtain better response from the students. For this purpose, Ellis and Brewster's (2002) model for reading aloud may supply an organized and logical sequence for the activity.

Time is another component that needs to be addressed. In this specific study, time constituted a constraint. I had initially planned five reading aloud activities but only four were carried out due to the little space that a daily one-hour class leaves for other activities different from the completion of a textbook's units. Although reading-aloud can be adapted to any English learning program, it is necessary to make a balance between the amount of time the teacher spends on this activity and the fulfillment of the program of any institution. Thus, read-alouds

can work as a very valuable complementary activity for any program. This article only presents the results of the implementation of read-alouds as a complementary activity in an English program that uses an EFL text. It opens the doors for further research to explore on the development of a reading aloud-based program.

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ANNEX 1: SAMPLE OF A SUMMARY

ONCE UPON A TIME THREE BILLY  
 GOATS GRUFF IN THE FOREST.  
 THEY ARE VERY HUNGRY, BUT  
 IN THIS PLACE THERE IS NO FOOD.  
 THEY HAVE TO CROSS A BRIDGE  
 BECAUSE IN THE OTHER PLACE  
 THERE IS GRASS AND ALL.  
 HOWEVER, IN THE BRIDGE IS  
 THE TROLL, A HUNGRY MONSTER.  
 THE TROLL WANT TO EAT THE  
 BILLY GOATS BUT FOR THIS  
 REASON THEY ARE VERY NERVOUS.  
 IN FIRST TURN, PASS THE BILLY  
 GOAT AND THE TROLL DOESN'T  
 HEAR. AFTER THAT THE OTHER  
 BILLY GOAT AND THE TROLL LET HE PASS  
 TOO.  
 FINALLY, THE BILLY GOAT PATRIK  
 PUSH THE TROLL AND THE  
 TROLL DEAD.

STORY: The Three Billy Goats Gruff (Used with permission)

**ANNEX 2: OBSERVATION SHEET**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Class Observation No. \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of students \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_  
 Activity \_\_\_\_\_

**OBSERVATIONS****ANNEX 3: INTERVIEW \***

Objetivo: Saber acerca de las percepciones de los estudiantes con relación a las actividades de lectura en voz alta de cuentos que se realizaron a lo largo del semestre e identificar los componentes del modelo narrativo que son mencionados como necesarios para narrar una historia.

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene de las actividades de lectura en voz alta que se realizaron en clase?
2. ¿Cómo se sintió durante este tipo de actividades?
3. ¿En qué manera relaciona el uso de estas actividades (lectura en voz alta) con respecto a su aprendizaje del inglés?
4. ¿En qué habilidades o áreas del Inglés cree que mejoró?
5. ¿Qué aspectos debe tener una historia para que sea fácil de entender o para poderla narrar?

\* The interview was of a semi-structured type; therefore, these questions only constituted the general guidelines for the interviewer. This format was not submitted to the interviewee.