

**FRANCISCO GAVIDIA UNIVERSITY**

**SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY**



**“READING AND ITS IMPORTANCE AS A FUNDAMENTAL PROCESS  
IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR FIVE  
YEAR OLD CHILDREN AT PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN SAN SALVADOR,  
EL SALVADOR.”**

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## **SUMMARY**

The present bibliography investigation is based on academic books, articles, researches, and documents that analyze and compare cognitive aspects to support the general objective of the investigation that is: “To demonstrate the importance of including reading as a fundamental process in English as a foreign language learning for five year old children at private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.”

The document starts with the statement of the problem, this chapter describes why the topic was chosen for the investigation, general and specific objectives, and the expectations related to the investigation.

Through the document it is described with substantial information how the general teaching-learning process should be managed for five year old children, but specifically, while learning English as a foreign language. It starts describing learning theories related to five year old children, their way of learning, how their brains associate information in order to process new knowledge, general characteristics teachers expect to observe at this age, the influence of the environment and the importance of the educator in their learning process.

In the reference framework, the learning theories and approaches are going to be related to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language process, how educators should motivate students to develop reading habits and it also explains the importance of using the correct approaches and techniques while teaching them a foreign language. After, it will be also described the theoretical information that supports the process, experiences of teachers and students in other countries that already have reading as a fundamental process in their curriculum programs and practice reading activities with their five year old children.

To conclude, a relation between learning theories, teaching English as a foreign language for five year old children, and including reading as a fundamental process in

the current curriculum program, it is presented in order to verify the accomplish of the objectives presented since the beginning.

The Conclusions and recommendations are presented as important suggestions to the private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador and their teachers in order to improve the teaching –learning process, and benefit the children in their learning of a foreign language.

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## INTRODUCTION

“Books and doors are the same thing. You open them, and you go through into another world”. – Jeanette Winterson.

Reading is considered one of the most essential process in the development of humans begins due to the complexity of the process and the skills related that can be developed while practicing reading such as: memory, comprehension, increasing vocabulary, phonology, pronunciation, imagination and among others; it is also considered an excellent tool while learning a foreign language because it introduces the language in an enjoyable way. Because of those facts, this bibliographic investigation centers on the importance of including reading in the learning English as a foreign language process for five year old children.

In chapter I, the Statement of the Problem presents the problematic situation, which is the lack of a systematic and specific way of using reading as one of the fundamental processes and objectives to achieve in the current methods or methodologies programs used for five year old children in private preschools in San Salvador, El Salvador. It also contains the way the investigation is going to be followed and the main objectives attempted to achieve along the bibliographic research.

In chapter II, the Reference Framework contains all the theoretical information that supports children learning process and the environmental influence to achieve it. There, three main theories are explained: Piaget’s Constructivist Cognitive theory, Vygotsky Social Cognitive Theory and Bandura’s Social Theory in order to explain why it is so important to attend child needs based on their own characteristics at any particular age, background and maturity. As well, existent as the relation between the learning theories described, the reading process and the incorporation of the foreign language; how educators should motivate students to develop reading habits and it also explains the importance of using the correct approaches or techniques while teaching them a foreign language.

Chapter III, presents the precedents and references of the proposal , which is a brief view of the importance that English as a foreign language is taking around the world, how it is taught in other countries, some models of curriculum programs and projects and how they are getting success, to make a comparison between those designs and the ones applied in El Salvador, to take into consideration the characteristics that could be beneficial for including reading into the current Salvadorian Programs starting to be develop in the private school but aiming to be use in every Salvadorian preschool in the future.

Chapter IV, shows the Description of a Proposal, a relation between learning theories for teaching English as a foreign language for five year old children, and the inclusion of reading as a fundamental process in the current programs or projects in the private preschools. This is presented in order to verify the accomplishment of the objectives presented in the investigation; and with the idea of proposing some activities that respond to the approaches and techniques described during the investigation.

Chapter V presents Conclusions and Recommendations. This chapter contains the conclusions and recommendations that the investigator considers appropriate to offer at the end of the investigation, and respectfully recommend to take into consideration in order to improve and benefit the teaching –learning process of foreign language for five year old children in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

**CHAPTER I**  
**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

# CHAPTER I

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

### 1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Unfortunately the educational aims in El Salvador are not considered in the Plan of the Nation because most of the time when a new government or political party is elected the previous plans are redirected, losing in this way the target previously proposed and this situation does not permit the continuity of programs or the development of good ideas that the Ministry of Education in El Salvador may have. (Chacón, 2014) Due to the programs do not have continuity many of the private schools need to change their institutional programs to follow the new guidelines given by the Ministry of Education of El Salvador, therefore learning processes are affected and many weaknesses lie at this point.

In the past 8 years, the Ministry of Education in El Salvador has looked for the way to integrate the processes that are related to the development of children into the educational plans specifically for preschool education; “The curriculum for the first infancy is a response to a process of social mobilization, generated from the development of the Social, Educational plan " Vamos a la Escuela" 2009-2014, which raises the ineluctable need to provide an integral response and a new meaning to the topic of the development of the first infancy in El Salvador” (Ministry of Education in El Salvador, 2013) therefore, there are many non-profit organizations, public and private institutions that work for better solutions and programs for improving the quality of instruction in children.

According to that idea in the Social Educational plan just mentioned before, the Ministry of Education in El Salvador created “The National Policies of Education and Integral Development for the First Infancy” (*Política Nacional de Educación y Desarrollo Integral para la Primera Infancia* (Education, 2013); the main idea of this policy is that the community creates the atmosphere that helps children to learn more and in a better way since they are babies to six years old, principles that based on the World Declaration of Education for All and the Action to Satisfy the Basic Needs of Learning,

approved by the World Conference on Education in Jomtiem, Thailand, March 1990 (Education, 2013) both Declarations state that the government has to guarantee that children must have access to the basic needs related to health and education, and that their communities and families have access to everything in their favor, in agreement to his convenience and possibilities in the environment.

According to the idea of the policies and in relation to our educational system, the Ministry of Education of El Salvador introduced in 2013 the Programs of Education and Development divided in two parts: first, for the first three years of infancy (newborn to three years old); and second, for the last three years of infancy (three to six years old). Nowadays, teaching English should be one of the principal objectives that all of the schools need to implement in El Salvador, there are also two different programs that run in the classrooms, one regarding Spanish instruction and the second one aimed to English classes specifically for the preschool programs, the ones that are going to be fundamental in the development of this investigation.

The Program of Education and Development has general guidelines for preschool education: curricular adaptations, methodological guidelines, learning assessment, objectives matching the age and characteristics of children, specific topics for the curricula and objectives that teachers have to develop to work with children in the classrooms, all the ideas and guidelines based in the Policy of the Integral Development for Children.

But, after internalizing the main idea of the programs that the Ministry of Education provides and if these ones are deeply read, analyzed and compared, teachers might easily identify some deficiencies or missing processes that would be helpful for the integral development of the children and their learning a foreign language process too. So, the deficiency mainly identified and the reason of this investigation and proposal is the lack of incorporation of the reading skill inside the English programs. This area hasn't been fortified in the national curriculum programs for preschool education, for consequence, it is also considered as a missing element in the programs or projects of each one of the schools. Sometimes it is lightly included with weak or missing specific proposals, objectives, systematic and organized activities to increase children's

capacity of analysis and creativity. Then, knowing that the reading process has some deficiencies or missing processes that could be taking in account to have better results in children learning a foreign language; the main point of this investigation and proposal is to demonstrate the importance of including reading as a fundamental process in English as a foreign language learning for five year old children, providing useful information about how to use reading as a fundamental tool to develop foreign language learning; and also suggest activities about how to use reading as an important tool to develop foreign language learning with the idea that private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador can adjust this type of activities to their currently English programs.

Therefore, the specific topic to describe in this investigation is how the reading strategies help children to improve in their general learning processes and the influence that has on the learning of a foreign language. Taking into consideration that the reading learning process starts at the five year old age in most of the private schools in El Salvador, and because “Recent studies indicate that the best time for a child to learn a foreign language is in the first or four years of life.” (Ministry of Education El Salvador, 2013) The center of attention, in this investigation, is going to be five year old children.

Five year old children need to be stimulated in general areas such as motor, language, affective and cognitive aspects that can be supported throughout reading activities that connect brain functions with the already mentioned aspects that can involve each of the characteristics or areas in which children learn more. For that reason it was considered necessary to start this investigation with chapter 1, to link this with the learning theories, to refresh teacher’s memories and illustrate parents about how the kid’s brain works when acquiring new things by themselves and by the influence of their environment too.

For most of the children, learning begins with an environment full of stimulation. Learning involves conscious activity, which means that the acquired knowledge during this process is normally related with a description that a learner can verbally do through reading or sounds get from the environment.

For instance, an individual can memorize vocabulary, observe typical characteristics and the rules of grammar when learning to speak a foreign language these are the same abilities that can be developed during a good reading activity or project as it is suggested in the Education and development curriculum program for preschool education of El Salvador. (Ministry of Education El Salvador, 2013)

During this bibliographic investigation, there are some general concepts that are going to be involved:

- Reading as the process of recognizing written or printed words and understanding their meaning. (McMillan Dictionary, s.f.) In the present investigation the reading concept is going to be considered as an activity that children should do by themselves and also to be conducted by teachers. When five year old children start their reading process, it is suggested that teachers read with them, but when the year and process go by it is expected that they start to read by themselves.
- Cognitive skills, the ability to perform various mental procedures. The ability to understand and generate language or apply knowledge of rules to solve a problem or communicate with others.
- Learning a foreign language as a conscious process in which we learn how to communicate with others, reading and speaking in a different language. It happens when we focus on communication. (McMillan Dictionary, s.f.)

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

How important is to include reading as a fundamental process in the English program for five year old children in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador? Is this situation going to help children in their learning of a foreign language process?

### **1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM**

After internalizing and comparing the Educational Programs for preschool education in El Salvador and their progression it is easy to conclude that they present a weak cognitive sequence to internalize the previous academic knowledge and experiences with the new ones; therefore, learning processes are affected, and many vulnerabilities are observed in the classroom due to the students did not follow an appropriate academic progression, and the way they learned was not significant. It is not just about the time teachers use programs, but also about the sequence and connection that the programs need to have in order to develop specific abilities, according to the age and children's brain maturity. Because of that, during the investigation learning theories and previous studies about child development and maturation stages are going to be presented. Many pedagogues had made researches before that demonstrated the necessity to respect and work based on the children abilities and capacities according to their ages.

Regarding the idea of having continuity in time and progression, and looking for better developmental activities for kids, it was thought to work on a bibliographic investigation that might provide the private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador better foundations to modify the academic vision and the cultural background about the importance of reading in the initial schooling process to state the basis for English specific programs with clear objectives and reading activities related to the age and backgrounds of kids; as well as, to identify relevant academic changes to include in the current methods and methodologies used in private schools to develop learning English as a foreign language.

Even if the current curriculum programs respect the maturation and progressive activities for kids it was though that reading should be one of the most important skills to develop in preschool instruction. So the main idea of the research is to provide academic proposals, offering a variety of meaningful ideas to integrate in projects to work with five year old preschoolers, which will help them in their learning of a foreign language process, incorporating reading as the central strategy in the acquisition of a

foreign language. Based on theories, studies, programs and ideas that are working in other advanced countries.

There is a real necessity to redirect the way teachers work and guide the little students showing them how to increase reading skills in the first years of school. It is necessary to go through the theories and previous studies that reveals the best way that children learn and how to develop their skills in the exact moment that they need to.

This investigation is expected to guarantee the development of comprehension and analysis skills in kids at the same time they can use these abilities to learn and maximize the practice of another language.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES**

### **1.4.1 General Objective**

- To demonstrate the importance of including reading as a fundamental process in English as a foreign language learning for five year old children at private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

### **1.4.2. Specific Objectives**

- To justify the importance of reading in the development of mental processes that facilitate the English as a foreign language learning for five year old children.
- To provide useful information about the importance of reading habits in five year old children and the relationship with learning a foreign language processes.
- To suggest activities about how to use reading as an important tool to develop English as a Foreign Language Learning process in five year old children.

## **1.5 RANGES AND DELIMITATIONS**

### **1.5.1 Ranges**

The present investigation will be of benefit for five year old preschoolers and for teachers that are in charge of planning and teaching in private preschools in San Salvador, El Salvador. This bibliographic investigation justifies the importance of including reading as a fundamental process in the learning a foreign language process and provide useful information about the reading habits for five year old children, as well.

It was considered that significative and joyful activities related to reading skills development during the learning a foreign language process can be combined with the actual curriculum programs for preschool education, currently English programs use in private school, and, as a result, will provide better tools to guarantee the integral development or learning in Salvadorian children as expected in The National Policies of Education and Integral Development for the First Infancy.

### **1.5.2 Delimitations**

The investigation started in October 2016 and finished in May 2017, it is a bibliographic investigation that proves based on: academic book, investigations, works, researches, articles, studies, and curriculum programs from other countries; the real need of including reading as an important process to develop in Salvadorian preschooling curriculum programs; and how the systematic activities and projects related to the development of reading as a primary skill that provides benefit while learning a foreign language.

**CHAPTER II**  
**REFERENCE FRAMEWORK**

## CHAPTER II

### REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Learning theories

Learning involves acquiring and modifying knowledge, information, experiences, attitudes and beliefs. Children learn better when they are stimulated and motivated through their feelings and senses, they start learning a simple level and increase their knowledge based on experiences and information provided by their learning models that can be anybody such as the family, teachers or even friends.

This chapter is about how learning occurs in children, how environments influence them, how they acquired or develop their cognitive skills, theories that support the development of those skills; and also the approaches that study and teaching reading have in the learning processes. Even if the information provided in this chapter describes the general development of children around the world, it has a deeply connected with the expectations, that the preschool curriculum programs of El Salvador have about how the child development should be developed and how educators should be working with them in order to attend their necessities and curiosity attending the statement in the “Curriculum Foundations of the First Infancy”, El Salvador 2013, page 32 “recognize the infancy as a fundamental stage in the development permit educators to construct a curricular vision that respects and take into consideration the particularities that children present as needs, interests, paces, and skills; observing and activating their possibilities of advance, but without forcing or pressing the process.”

There are a lot of theories related to the way that children learn and the influences they have while learning, most of the precursors of learning base their theories on the main characteristics that children develop, their maturation processes and also the experiences around them. It is known that educators, parents, peers and environments are the principal responsible of how learning occur in children. In that way these theories also help teachers, educators and parents to have better solutions and answers to children´s demands in knowledge.

Because reading is the main point of this investigation, it is considered important to start describing theories that contribute significant information about teaching, developing skills and that also help teachers to know how to create a culture of reading in children with the idea of helping them to improve this weakness in the current preschool curriculum programs in El Salvador. In the measure of connecting the terms and with the intention of understanding how children evolve in learning environments develop their cognitive skills from the simplest levels up to their own productions and self- evaluations, there are three cognitive theories that support this investigation and provide important information about how children can be motivated to create a reading culture and how this way of learning also helps them during learning a foreign language. The three theories are: Piaget´s Cognitive Theory, Bandura´s Social Cognitive Theory, and Vygotsky Social Cognitive Theory.

### **2.1.1 Piaget´s Constructive Cognitive Theory**

The fundamental postulate of this theory summarized the ideas that the development of intelligence in human brains is a course of constructing structures, which depends on progressive internal growth and information acquired through experiences.

Even if the Piaget´s theory was not related to education since the beginning now researchers have discovered that this theory and the ability of children to learn is extremely connected, “Because Piaget's theory is based upon the biological maturation and stages, the notion of 'readiness' is important. Readiness concerns when certain information or concepts should be taught. According to Piaget's theory children should not be taught certain concepts until they have reached the appropriate stage of cognitive development.” (McLeod, Simply Psychology, 2015) This reaffirms the idea that children learn best through doing and actively exploring. Many countries have had significant modifications in their curriculum programs based on the Piaget´s theory.

This cognitive theory expresses that as the child starts to construct and understand the world, the developing brain creates schemas or mental representations that organize knowledge, those mental representations change according to the maturation and experiences of human´s learners. In the adulthood, they have constructed an enormous

number of diverse schemas. The following chart represents the schemas that Piaget's insist that every human development since the infancy:

Schemas according with Piaget's theory	
<u>Assimilation:</u> incorporation of new information into existing knowledge.	Patty (4 years old) knows what a book is because her mother always read at her, but she never touches the book so she doesn't know how to pass the pages. The teacher is going to show them today how doing it.
<u>Accommodation:</u> adjusting schemas to fit the new information and experiences.	Learning how to pass the pages of a book is for Patty and <u>assimilation</u> . At the end of the class the teacher provides each of the students with a new book, they can interact and "read" the book. Passing the pages by herself
<u>Organization:</u> grouping isolated behaviors into a higher – order, arranging of items into categories.	Is now an <u>accommodation</u> for her. When the class finishes the teacher sits with the children and read a book for them. Patty now knows what a book is, how they look like and how to pass the pages, this is her <u>organizational</u> schema she is classified in her mind, her experiences with books and what is she able to do with them. At the beginning she
<u>Equilibration:</u> how children move from one stage to another.	only knew what a book was because she has some at home, but now she also knows how to pass the pages and how to interact with the book ( <u>equilibration</u> ).

The develop of this schemas according with Piaget's means that children move into different stages in the cognitive development of children, the characteristics in each of the stages depends on the other, developed before, and relate to the abilities that children are capable to do allowing with maturation and brain connections. Jean Piaget four stages during childhood development are:

Sensorimotor stage: since birth - two years old. Learning processes through their senses and manipulation of objects.

Preoperational stage: two – seven years old. Children develop memory and imagination. Learning processes introduce them in the symbolic and temporary situations.

Concrete operational stage: seven – eleven years old. Children stop being egocentric and understand external events. They can understand internal things in their brain and realized that everybody have different thoughts, beliefs or feelings.

Formal operational stage: eleven and older. Children learn how to use logic and abstract concepts to solve situations and daily problems, during this stage they start looking the surroundings and make plans for the future.

The ones that are going to be useful for this investigation are the sensorimotor and the preoperational stages, because this investigation makes emphasis in five year old children.

According to Piaget's theory five year- old children, who are in the pre- operational stage, have the ability to focus on one thing at a time; they start to use symbolic representations that means they can make a thing or a word goes real just by using their imagination and giving them a meaning. In this process children use a lot of their language skills playing or making things look like real, even if they are in an egocentric moment they like to play or interact with others so they often pretend to be people they are not and may play these roles with accessories that symbolize real life objects (role playing). Children may also invent an imaginary playmate. All these activities that seems to be just enjoyment at the end represents learning processes and knowledge to them that is why it is considered as one of the best ways to learn, practice and increase vocabulary, imagination, attention, comprehension, association, and more cognitive skills that also can be developed during reading activities when the teacher expose the students to different situations in a story or permit them to predict what is going to happen in a fairy tale.

Unlike Piaget's notion that children's development must necessarily precede their learning, Vygotsky argued that, "learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function"

(1978, p. 90). In other words, social learning tends to precede development.” (McLeod, Simply Psychology, 2014) It was already mentioned in the Piaget’s theory that the five year – old children are in an egocentric moment but they also like to be in social environments, they learn due to social experiences and contact with others for that reason it was considered important to take into account for the investigation the Vygotsky’s Social Cognitive Theory and the Bandura’s Social Cognitive theory as another way to see children’s learning, because it expresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition.

### **2.1.2 Vygotsky’s Social Cognitive Theory**

Vygotsky believes that children are curious and actively involved in their own learning, they like to discover and develop new understandings and the influence of the social environments always gives them more opportunities to learn. This theory placed more emphasis on the social interaction and constructing of knowledge based on the environment, “much important learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skillful tutor.” (McLeod, Simply Psychology, 2014) It reveals the importance that the instructor or teacher has during the learning process, it is important to help, model or give clear instructions to the child that are working with (scaffolding).

“The child seeks to understand the actions or instructions provided by the teacher then internalizes the information, using it to guide or regulate their own performance.” (McLeod, Simply Psychology, 2014) This connects with the zone of proximal development, this term make reference to the range of tasks that are too difficult for the child but they can learn with the correct guidance. The lower level on the ZPD are the things that the child can do by themselves and the higher level are the ones they can reach and learn with the assistance of a capable instructor. Another important term in the Vygotsky theory is the scaffolding, the idea that teachers of advanced peers change the level of support, it is always used to give the learners upper limits of their ZPD. “Asking probing questions is an excellent way of scaffolding students learning and help them to develop more sophisticated thinking skills” (Stantrock, 2011)

As it was described before the Vygotsky theory expresses that students' learning would have more succeeded if it is influenced by the environment and a correct guidance of a teacher; in relation to this and knowing that language is part of our social development, Vygotsky also made a great contribution about language and thought.

According to his theory, language plays an important role in children's development, they not only use it for social communication, but also to help them solve tasks. In this theory, it is said that language and thought initially develop independently of each other and then it changes "children can start using language to communicate with others before they can focus inward on their own thoughts." (Stantrock, 2011) It has been proven that children who have more internal communication also have better social communication skills.

As well as Vygotsky, Albert Bandura also expressed in his theory the importance of the social relations to have better results in learning; nevertheless, his perspective is theory make more emphasize in human behaviors and the response or consequences of the actions.

### **2.1.3 Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory**

This theory stresses the idea that learning occurs best in a social environment. "By observing others, people acquire knowledge, rules, skills, strategies, beliefs, and attitudes." (McCormick, 1994) This kind of learning is very common during childhood, children are learning from their environment and people around them. Not all the time they have to experience the situation to know they are doing it well or not, sometimes they just see others and learn from their situations (vicariously learning). For example a five year old boy who saw that his brother screams to his mother and she does not tell him anything is going to believe that screaming to their parents is not a bad situation and probably will be imitated. But if the case was different and the mother didn't permit that behavior, obviously the small one would learn that behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable. This is one of the ways kids learn how to get knowledge, communicate and solve daily situations with others. This kind of learning is similar at school when the

teacher instructs students how to do things by modeling or by trying themselves. Teachers should do things in the correct way and try to be coherent between their saying and acting, in that way students are going to recognize how to behave, communicate and transmit experiences with others.

Albert Bandura works on this Social Cognitive Theory and expresses three expectations about learning and the performance of behaviors in humans: the reciprocal interaction between people, behaviors, and environments; how learning occurs, and also the important role of self-regulation or the capacity to evaluate themselves according with what they see in others and what they want to learn or become. According with Bandura's an observational learning provides better ways to apply learning in cognitive, motor and social skills and also helps the learners how to improve themselves.

The Social Cognitive Theory explains that the relation between the person, the environment and the behavior are codependent each other, the factors always interact with any particular order and always influence the learning situation. In a classroom where the teacher believes in his/her students and is always giving them advices and good reinforce, the students are going to be confident and their behavior is going to be in accordance with this; they are going to treat others with the same respect and trust themselves as the teacher does with them. That means the environment created by the teacher with confidence and trustfulness help the students behave and learn better (environment influences people). And scenario that expresses how people influence the environment can be in a school where the teachers and students create a "green campaign" and start planting trees in the community every weekend. By the end of year the community is full of trees, even if it is not a benefit that they will have in a couple of months, it is something they will enjoy in a long term (people influence environment). The main fact of this and to consider in this reciprocal interaction is the importance that the relation between people and environments is fundamental to facilitates the learning and development of skills for students.

“Learning is largely an information processing activity in which information about the structure of behavior and about environment event is transformed into symbolic representations that serve as guides for action.” (Bandura, 1986) In continuity with this Bandura's theory is important to know that the theory infers that the learning can occur in students in two different ways: enactive learning, is the kind of learning that people develop by doing; and, the vicariously, the kind of learning that people develop only my looking at others.

1) Inactive Learning: the social cognitive theory expresses that this way of learning is based on one's experiences, in contrast with the conditioning theories that believe people learn just by doing, this inactive learning makes reference to how people learn by living the experiences and relate them with the consequences. Learners act connecting the consequences they want to have as a result of their behavior. For example, a girl who plays during the class knows that if she doesn't finish her work on time, she is not going to have a break. When the teacher reminds the group that they only have 5 more minutes left, she starts running, trying to finish everything, she doesn't want to experience the same as yesterday when she spent the recess time in the classroom while her friends were in the playground. Based on a previous uncomfortable experience she knows what the consequences would be, which she doesn't want to experience again. The inductive learning occurs in situations related with behavior of students, but also in academic situations, that means students also have learning situations in class in which they can evaluate the consequences they will have if they not complete or make an effort while working in different tasks.

2) Vicariously Learning: this type of learning use sources like people experiences, television, books, representations, radio, etc. it permits that learners know and manipulate information just by knowing it. It's the most common way of learning, people catch the information through the environment and it is not necessary to go into the experience. The best example for this type of learning is the previous one, mentioned in this chapter, in which the small boy saw that his mother punished the older brother after screaming at her, as a result of that experience that he only saw, he don't want to

do it and be punished too. The vicariously learning can be related to positive and negative situations.

The truth is that learning, most of the time occurs through a combination of both. Learners see and experiment the situations and based on that, they concluded which are the best options or opportunities for them. In the academic area students are able to manipulate the information and learn it, then they show their acquirement and capacity during a test or in a performance. Teachers need to be prepared and facilities their students tools or strategies that involved them in a learning environment and these types of learning situations. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory also asserts that learning and performance are distinct processes, even if the one of the ways that students learn well is by the influence of motivation, interest, creativity or incentives. The reinforcement, the belief that every human can do the things they want affects their performance, that's why the confidence and desire to succeeded is also a main tool to make things happen. (Self-motivation). Here is where the self- regulation or the capacity to evaluate themselves according with what they see in others and what they want to learn or become take place in the theory, it is known that learners try to take control of everything that's happening in their life, but according to this theory, the truth is that the self- regulation permits that humans accommodate the situations with the vision of accomplish their goals. In the academic area, learners need to have different options that permit students to evaluate their possibilities to choose the one that is going to help them to solve the situation better. Students follow three steps during the self – regulation: self- observation, self- judgment, and self – reaction, these steps permit them to learn and concluded what is the better way to do it or evaluate the way they are working so they can make changes in the short term.

These three theories make reference to children development: how they acquire or develop cognitive skills, what are they interesting in at certain age and what they should be doing by that age, how and why the environment is so important in the learning process, how they learn, what are the stages or characteristics they need to improve, etc. so educators can have an idea of how they should be facilitating or helping students

to learn and grow their potential according with their age, maturation and background. But why are these theories important for the research if it is making emphasis on reading skills and learning a foreign language processes? The answer is, it was considered important to start with in this chapter with the learning theories and how learning occur as a resume of ideas for teachers, instructors or parents that are going to be the beneficiaries with the results of this investigation, so they can have a panorama of why it is so necessary to develop certain activities or facilities for children of five years old. It is also important to mention what are the characteristics they should have by that age so it can help them to improve if it is necessary.

In the same way, and in order to help educators how to develop and improve cognitive skills in children, and in deeply connection with the main point of the investigation, it was consider important to mention that literature is consider one of the best way to interact with children, help them to increase their interest in things or situations around them, because they can play with imagination and create new stages, even if they are in the same place while working with a story, educators can make them feel as part of the story. So, then the connection between the theories of cognitive learning and the objective of justifying the importance of including reading as a fundamental process, in the current English programs for five year old children in San Salvador, El Salvador.

The oncoming information describes reading as one of the fundamental processes in children cognitive development, therefore it is necessary to describe three approaches that will be important in the study and teaching of reading: cognitive, expressivist and social-cultural.

The cognitive approach refers to the information processing model in which the readers actively draw on their previous knowledge to be able to process new texts or information. It can be observed in a classroom where a teacher starts asking questions to the students before she reads the book, to know their previous ideas of the reading; the capacity that children have to understand and relate their previous knowledge with the new ideas at the end of the book, is what the cognitive approach is making it a

reference. “The cognitive approach emphasizes the necessity of giving the students the correct reading ideas and background so they can develop correct readings of a text.” (McCormick, 1994)

The expressivist approach sees reading primarily as an activity in which readers create their own “personal” meanings of the texts they read. This is a typical way to work reading with children, educators read to them, but also encourage them to imagine and create new stages, situation or even endings to the stories; the idea is to develop imagination and creativity. “The expressivist approach emphasizes the richness and uniqueness of students”. (McCormick, 1994)

The social – cultural approach is the one that privileges the cultural context in which reading occurs. This approach refers that reading is not only a primary activity at school to comprehend, create, imagine or learn, but something deeper that’s improved our knowledge in context and society. Learners can be part of history and social situations through reading activities.

So the main idea of having this approach in the investigation is to trace specific roads where the investigation is going to grow through the idea of reading as a fundamental process in child development.

## **2.2 Reading as a fundamental process**

Due to the fact that this is a bibliographical investigation, it supports the provided information in the summary of data, experiences and situations developed in different countries' classroom activities. This information has been obtained by reading, and investigating books, articles, curriculum programs, and researchers related to the topic. The obtained information has been achieved to analyze and contextualized to the reality of El Salvador and tries to justify why is reading a fundamental tool in the learning a foreign language process for five year old children in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Then that learning is one of the most fundamental process that the human beings can develop, even is this process is so important there are so many views on the causes, processes and consequences of learning. There is no one definition of learning that is universally accepted by theorists, researchers, and practitioners (Shuell, 1986) and it

can be more difficult to define if it refers to children learning since the development of skills must be considered always one of the bases of learning for them. However the following is a general definition of learning that is consistent with the topic of this investigation: Learning is an enduring change in behavior and knowledge, which results from practice or other forms of experience. When it refers to the development of a new language is important to mention the difference between learning a foreign language, referring to the development of the language in a classroom following a curriculum program and objectives according with the age or previous knowledge; and the acquisition of the language referring to a natural process where children learn from the environment, society and experiences that they are exposed to. For the investigation the appropriate term to use is learning a foreign language, because the five year old students are learning a new language, but their environment outside the school continuous being full of Spanish.

In the previous section, the learning theories, main Cognitive theories: Piaget's, Vygotsky and Bandura's, were described by the idea of being a theoretical base, related to child cognitive development and ways of learning of this bibliography investigation and also to provide a specific way that this investigation is going to follow in the measure of relate learning, reading skills and learning a foreign language process, since the information obtained has been collected from other researchers, books, experiences or situation, taking place in other countries and related with the topic and the reality of learning a foreign language process in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Learning, in general, will always be related to these three concepts: change, knowledge, and experiences. Children that express significant changes or acquisition of new knowledge, demonstrate the effective and significant learning they experimented, this can only happen as long as the experiences that educators propose to them are according to their necessities and levels of learning, because it is known that students develop and practice skills, combined with appropriate feedback to promote better learning. It is also important to remark that while teaching English in an environment full of Spanish speakers and incentives outside the classroom, it is

necessary to create the correct atmosphere in which students can learn, practice and develop the language in order to have an adequate children's engagement with the process. That means, even if the schools try to expose their students in many English stimuli, outside the school their environment is going to be surrounded by Spanish stimulus, so the approach they develop at school is the key to have better results.

In the same idea, the cognitive theories acknowledge the role that the environment conditions influence the learning and emphasize the importance of learners' thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and values during the learning process, just as it explained Vygotsky and Bandura in their theories approach mentioned in the previous chapter. Imbedded in this understanding it is known that children's development and learning is best understood as the interaction of linguistic, sociocultural, and cognitive knowledge. Five year old children come to school with previous knowledge of their mother tongue language and some other communicative skills developed at home then "a more appropriate perspective of development and learning, then is one that recognizes that development and learning is enhanced when it occurs in contexts that are both sociocultural and linguistically meaningful for the child." (García & García , Understanding the language Development and Early Education of Hispanic Children, 2012). Taking into consideration these ideas of learning processes, the influence of the environment, previous knowledge, and remembering that one of the main objectives of the investigation is the learning a foreign language process, it is important to center the attention in what skills and special techniques should five year old children must be developing and working on, in order to guarantee significant learning, and accomplishment of objectives and development of skills at this age. It is known that not all the children are the same, some develop early, some later and some of them develop gradually completing stages as it is expressed in Piaget's theory, but there are some others that can do in different ways. It is not possible to say that at a certain age all the kids are going to be at the same level or capability to do the same exact things. But it is possible to set out some standard characteristics of children, which educators and parents should be aware of and take into account while teaching them. For the intentions of this investigation is important to list some of the expected characteristics

that five year old children should have and the ones that are relevant to language teaching.

General characteristics of what a five year old children can do or should do with their own in their mother tongue language, in regular environments, with the appropriate motivation and stimulation, related to cognitive and communication skills:

- They can talk about what they are doing, or what they have done; at this age, they are capable to communicate with others and describe their activities. They can use present and past verbs to express the actions they are doing and the ones they did before.
- They can plan activities, it is very common for them to plan what they are going to do or what they are expecting from the activities. They like to have general ideas of what they are going to do in a specific period of time.
- They can argue and explain what they think, they start having their own thoughts about what is going on or giving opinions about situations; they trust adults, but also like to have their own opinions and that others respect them.
- They can use their imagination to create new things or predict situations. They always have many opinions and options to create new panoramas or situations. Because their capacity to imagine and create new worlds is big, the difference between real world and fiction is not always clear for them, so they can imagine a lot of things and truly believe that there are real. The innocence and imagination play a big role in this. Therefore, it is important to have the appropriate influence in them to help them distinguish of what is their imagination and which are the real situations.
- They enjoy their relationship with others and interact with peers; even if most of the time they like to play alone, they always want to be in the company of others. That is why social relationships are fundamental in this stage, they like to be surrounded by people, have attended, talk and share everything.
- They know there are rules to follow, they already understood that every behavior have a justification and that there are rules to follow, ways to do things, correct

answers to certain situations; they are learning what is correct and incorrect through following social rules of behaving.

- They start using language before they can even notice or understand it. By the influence of the environment they start constructing new phrases, increasing vocabulary, and expressing in a better way their ideas. They can't understand the grammatical structures of the language, but they start using them as a natural form of communication; learned from conversations with others or through reading.
- They are very logic and follow sequences.
- They have very short periods of attention, at five years old is normal to have 5 to 10 minutes of full attention, focus on the activity they are doing. This is the mind reason of what they have to be motivated and espouse to different kind of activities in order to have their attention.
- They love to play and learn best when they are enjoying; experiences are meaningful for them. Their learning is always better when they can experiment while learning, that's why they are enthusiastic and positive about learning. (Scott & Ytreberg), among others.

So, it is necessary to analyze why these characteristics are so relevant to plan learning strategies. The answer is, because they refer to children's general language development, and because these characteristics will be the foundation for the cognitive development and early learning that will permit to introduce English as a foreign language in Salvadorian child's environment in which their mother tongue has been is Spanish during their first five years, that means they have developed all these foundations in their language, but now how can the educators increase or work on it in order to teach them a foreign language?.

So far nobody has found a universal way or pattern of language learning which everyone agrees and learn. Much seems to depend on the methodology, techniques, motivation, approach, instruct, and social/ emotional factors in the child's background. In the same way, it is important to remark that even if is known that there are many similarities between both languages such as the alphabet letters, some of the sounds of letters, the way we write left to right, and even some of the grammatical rules can be

combined; because up to this moment they cannot understand the structures or grammar, teachers should never teach them grammar as an structural way of learning a language, however they can start teaching it through automatism and inductive grammar using imitation and repetition exercises.

Therefore, what is meant to educate in a foreign language, and what should educators take into account while teaching:

Words are not enough, not rely the spoken world. While teaching five year old children movements and sense should be included in all the activities. They need to be stimulated through different incentives such as objects, images, songs, and surroundings, and appealing to the sense will always help the students to learn best.

There are different options in the classroom, since their concentration and attention periods are very short, educators should prepare a variety of activities and organization, variety of options. However the variance is going to help them to be always motivated, having routines and follow a system is also necessary. The five year old children know that is important to follow the rules so knowing and practicing them is essential. Have systems, have routines, organize and plan the lessons in advanced.

As documented earlier, during the learning a foreign language, with five year old children, the environment in which the learning is taking place is fundamental, creating a confident atmosphere and letting them know everybody is learning there and that the educators are a support for them, is essential since the beginning “considering the effects on children’s acquisition of language and verbal literacy, the quality of the communication between teachers and children in preschool and primary grades has a decisive impact on language development” (García & García , Understanding the language Development and Early Education of Hispanic Children, 2012) for those reasons another good recommendation is to create an environment full of communication, cooperation, involvement and togetherness instead of competition. Try to group the children together whenever possible and work a lot with pair work, talking times and sharing experiences. Play with the language combine different activities make up rhymes, sing songs, and create stories. Playing with the language, talking and creating new things, even with nonsense words and experimenting new ways of

communication is very natural in the first language development and very common to use in the first stage of learning a foreign language too.

Children have an amazing ability to absorb language through play and other activities which they find enjoyable. How good they are in a foreign language acquisition is not dependent on whether they have learnt the grammar rules or not, however, it might say that grammar is not necessary for them, their cognitive processes still do not understand the dimension and complexity. Nevertheless, the educators must include it in their educational activities, they should note the structures and functions that the students already know and the ones they have to learn, and teach the basic of grammar using strategies like storytelling, histories, sequences, creating new sentences, etc.

Language should not become something separate from the event taking place in the environment. “Teachers also need to extract meaning from what they were learning and related it to their other experiences in the past, present, and future” (García & García , Understanding the language Development and Early Education of Hispanic Children, 2012) Most of the five year old children already have a lot of words in their vocabulary so mixed the words they have with the ones they are learning in a foreign language sometimes turns out to be a little bit complicated; nevertheless, if they can relate to something meaningful, having a good instruction, and accompaniment children can achieve it. There are many activities that can help to improve the communicative and cognitive skills related to the learning a foreign language process: listening, oral expression, and all of them related to the main one for this investigation reading, with the idea of increasing the capacity to understand and growth in the language acquisition.

❖ Listening:

It is known that listening is the skill that children acquire first, especially if they not yet learn to read. When children start to learn a new language they are more sensitive about what they are hearing and the motivations they have on the surroundings, of course it is also necessary to give them as much as visual back – up as possible through facial expression, movements, mime and pictures. Because when something has been said, then it disappears, attending the stage of development for five year old

children and remembering they have a short attention span it is important to repeat what the educators are saying, say things clear and follow a logic sequence in which they can understand what is meant. Listening can be one of the easiest ways to start getting involved with learning a new language, but it is possible to relate the listening with the benefits of reading and acquiring a foreign language? Of course it is, through different activities such as:

Mime storytelling, in this activity the educator reads the story and children do the actions. It provides physical movement and gives the adult a chance to play along with pupils at the same time that permits the educator to make emphasize in certain words, new vocabulary or structures.

Listening to stories should be part of growing up for every child. "Time to time again educationalists and psychologists have shown that stories have a vital role to play in the child's development, and, not least, in the development of language." (Scott & Ytreberg) Consequently is important to create a routine for story – telling activities, establish a moment every day for this kind of activities, creating a proper atmosphere to enjoy the moment: if it possible sit all together, trying to have eye contact, children should be relaxed and comfortable to guarantee that they are more open to what they are going to hear from the story- telling, this activity allows them to form their own inner pictures using their imagination.

The educator should not moralize or explain what is happening, although, discussion is very important. Telling or reading stories to five year old children means that educators can adapt the vocabulary to their level, go back and repeat and also use facial expressions in order to help them to increase vocabulary and understand better what is the story talking about. There is a difference between telling and reading a story; telling a story is more like inventing and using the imagination to create their own story, while reading a story is more like following the stages in a written book and continue in the same exact sequence, even if there is a difference between them; the story – telling activity in general and structure of stories itself helps children to imagine, acquire new knowledge, and create their own stories.

### ❖ Oral expression

In their own language children are able to say, explain and communicate everything they want, but while learning a foreign language, they get a little bit confused and sometimes afraid of using words and expressions in the correct way, so it becomes more challenging for educators to develop this skill in students.

As it was mentioned before, playing with the language is absolutely necessary to acquire new vocabulary so part of the advantage of working with kids is that they want to experiment the experiences even if they are afraid or confuse, hence educators have to continue motivating, and making them believe that a new language is the better way to communicate with others, therefore they will start to express themselves in the new language, even if it means trying to guess or predict what are they trying to say and most of the time they are going to mixed words in their own language with new vocabulary, what it is important in this point is finding the balance between giving them new words to use and communicate and letting them try to find the way to communicate better by themselves.

In this moment of the learning a foreign language process corrections is essential, educators have to pay more attention to what children are trying to say and the meaning of what they are saying. Even if it is common that children use words that they heard from grownups when they start trying to communicate or do tasks with their own at some point after trying and practicing, they are going to express themselves in different ways so educators should be there to make the corrections needed, is important to know that the best moment to do it is after all the children's interaction; is not recommended to do it in the middle of the talking.

“Language has to go in before it can come out.” (Scott & Ytreberg) That means children need to be given language before they can produce it by themselves, important to take as a reference of why it is important that the environment expose the children to different sounds, conversation, song, stimulus in English, and it is normal that they are going to understand before they can produce by themselves. By this point educators know what their students have learned, what they can say or produce from their own, so they can help and potential their communicative skills and oral expression using

some activities to develop it better, for example: using puppets or characters to create stories, drawing, guessing, role playing, pair work and many others.

#### ❖ Reading

Books open human's minds up to a new world and situations, which is making reading an enjoyable activity and a very important part of the language learning experience. Reading is probably the main source while learning a new language, because many of the five year old children are in the process of learning how to read in their own language too, it is essential to promote reading skills in both the languages. It is considered an advantage to have the same exact alphabet in English and Spanish because it becomes it a little bit easier for children.

In the previous section, the learning theories, three approaches of reading while learning a foreign language were described: cognitive, expressivist and social-cultural as the way that educators and students focus in the reading activity, however, this section will be taking into consideration four new approaches or creative techniques, of how to introduce reading in a foreign language, that means how educators should teach children to read in a foreign language and making these processes a fundamental activity while learning it.

#### ❖ Phonics

The phonological awareness is the ability to detect and manipulate the sounds in words independent of word meaning, so this approach teaches students to work with letters, their sound's and how to combine them to conform new words, it means this approach is based on letters and sounds. It also improves school readiness skills and must be taught as a first step when children are learning how to read; although phonics can become complicated as the pronunciation is a useful way to start working with children in their reading process. Phonics should be taught systematically, sequentially, and explicitly to guarantee that there is not going to be any confusion in pronunciation, especially for Salvadorian children that have the exact same alphabet as the one that is being taught.

As a conclusion, in the phonic approach the relevant aspect is that children learn how to identify the written letters and related to their sounds; at the end they have to be

capable to recognize it in the speaking and written words. The order to teach the letters from the alphabet depends on many different aspects, but it suggests this way to guarantee that students can start forming new words at the same time that they are adding new letters to their vocabulary.

Teaching week	Phonic to teach
1 <sup>st</sup>	s m t a p
2 <sup>nd</sup>	f c r b l
3 <sup>rd</sup>	i g n d h
4 <sup>th</sup>	j k w o u
5 <sup>th</sup>	v y z x q e

❖ Look and say

This approach is based on words and phrases; for this approach written words and visual representations of them are fundamental. It is important to show the children, as many times as possible, written words which are familiar to them; the educator show the word by pointing it and the children have to repeat it, this happen several times with each word or phrase. This kind of approach takes just a little time to work with the children, but is very helpful to learn new vocabulary words and grammar structures. There are a lot of games which can be done, examples: matching cards, guessing, pointing objects, etc. so this approach encourage the kids to recognize words and phrases before reading a complete text; and it is suggested to work as a second step in the English learning process.

❖ Reading complete sentences

After teaching children about phonics and association between images and written words, as a third step it is suggested to work with complete simple sentences. In this approach the educator helps the students to identify, from books or other written material, one or more sentence that have meaning or are interesting for them. After reading it, they have to give them a significant, and try to recognize each of the words. Afterward doing this exercise a couple of times with the educators, children are able to

identify many words in other type of text or sentences and it can help them to start reading small books of their own. The main idea is to start looking for words they have learned before and then trying to read the whole sentences in which the word is placed, after doing the exercise with the educator they will be able to do it by themselves.

#### ❖ Experiences and language

Consider as a fourth step, this approach consists in sharing meaningful situations or experiences about the children, and create complete sentences with them. Then the educator joins the “look and say” strategy, helping the kids to recognize the word and their meaning written in the sentence they create. It becomes easier for the kids, because they are using important expressions for them. This kind of approach can help children to read a whole story after being familiar with a lot of different words.

Because the investigation is related to five year old Salvadorian children that are starting their reading learning process in Spanish as a first language and English as a foreign language, which of these approaches is expected to be the best one to use in the private preschool classrooms?

The answer is, if there were only one method to teach children how to read, it is obvious that none of the others would exist. So, taking into consideration the similarities that Spanish and English language have these three approaches are considered as an excellent way to work in a progression, since the phonics to the experiences and language, as simple four step strategy that can help either educator or students to introduce reading as one of the cognitive skills while learning a foreign language.

While using these suggested approaches is important to take into account that during this learning process it is possible to have some code – switching situations; this mean that mixing words or language expressions while communicating with other is very common to observed in children learning how to read in their language and in a foreign language. It is even considered a common phenomenon; however, it is also known that with the appropriate instruction, children can competently learn two languages at a time. So, for the purpose of the investigation the main part while using them is that the educator must be present and bring total attention to the students, their principal role

is to help them by making corrections and teaching the children how to identify the difference between the languages.

Because most of the five year old children are starting their reading process in their own language, it is likely to take longer to read in a foreign language.

Because all these approaches or strategies suggest educators to introduce the children in the literature world it is really important to remember that some of the children are just starting the school or being familiar with books; par consequence educators have to go through the process of doing reading activities such as teaching the kids how to turn the pages, reading from left to right, going back and reading the same page again before trying to read in a foreign language this as extra suggestions while developing reading activities with the students.

As it was mentioned before, five year old children learn through the stimulus, senses and manipulation, so a great idea is to introduce them with picture books with or without text. It is an invaluable way of being part of a story for the children at this stage, because they start practicing “decoding reading” which refers to the activity in which they give meaning to what they see in the pictures and trying to create the story at their own way using just the images they have in the book. It is a good opportunity for educators to accompany them and start teaching them words and using them in context, perfect as an activity to practice “look and say” approach.

As the same way in which the approaches are important to have an idea of how to introduce children into the literature world with an interesting and convenient way while also teaching a foreign language, the techniques to teach the language are essential, therefore, two techniques, of how to read at the five year old children, or teach them how to read; are considered important to guarantee that this skill is an excellent source while the teaching English as a foreign.

#### ❖ Reading aloud

Is a traditional technique use in most of the classrooms. It refers to the action in which teachers read a written information to their students, it can be books, magazines, etc. they are just listening. It can be useful to use with small children or beginners in a new

language. For the five year old child's classroom it can be a good idea to use at the begging when they don't know how to read yet, but when the time goes by it can also be an interactive activity to do when the teacher is reading at loud to them, children can have the same book, and try to follow the reading. When they are able to do it, it can be a child the one reading to the rest of the class, this can be a great opportunity for teachers to help them improve pronunciation and intonation.

#### ❖ Silent reading

Suggested for more experimented children. It refers to the personal activity that readers do by themselves, it helps them to improve concentration and immersion in the lecture. It is impossible to use it with five year old children because they still need the educator's attention and help while identifying and recognizing words; and they need even more attention, and stimulation if they are in a foreign language learning process; however, teachers should motivate their students to work on this reading skill because it will help them in the future, so do in it with picture books without words can be an idea of how to take advantage of this technique with five year old children.

Even though some children have this natural interest in reading and they will read books, even when educators do not demand it, in the other hand, there are some others that need motivation or the presence of the educators to do it; for that reason it is recommended to educators to be part of the activities and spend time building up confidence and reading habits with the whole class, paying especial attention to those children that need it or do not show too much interest in the activity.

Through reading children build knowledge, develop skills, and understandings about language so, having a reading habit help them to become better and better in this acquirement; besides it also facilitates a lot their communication skills. "Case studies, correlational studies and experimental studies have all confirmed that more reading results in a better reading ability, better writing, large vocabularies, better spelling and better control of complex grammatical constructions." (Bland & Lütge , 2014) Hence it is a great idea to help children to increase their motivation about reading through enjoyable activities and by using the appropriate material and making it look interesting.

Once the children are in the reading road it is important that they can have different choices available to read or to be read from others.

Janice Bland and Christiane Lütge in their book “Children’s Literature in Foreign Language Education” compile information and bring over of many studies and investigations that base their information on the importance of reading in the learning a foreign language process. Many of the studies are released to students of high school they have expressed the need to include reading processes since the beginning of the school life.

Consequently, based on the information provided from Bland & Lütge, and the studios and investigation, they described, it was considered important to take into consideration some of the reading techniques or activities that educators in those studies used to help students to increase their language learning processes and develop better skills through that experience.

#### ❖ Free Reading and Listening to stories

Having the possibility to decide what kind of stories, which book to read or to be read from others; is one of the most enriching experiences for kids. It is known that the more interested children are in the reading activity the most attention and learning processes going through in their mind. The pleasure of reading make children feel more connected with the reading activity, this permit them to have all of their attention, then they can start identifying the language involve in the activity, learn about structures, vocabulary and other communicative skills without even notice it. It has been demonstrated that reading or listening to stories is probably the best option to develop significant learning and also a good way to teach them how to express themselves.

#### ❖ Reading Picturebooks

As it was mentioned before, five year old children in a private school in El Salvador are learning how to read in their mother tongue, so the idea of reading by themselves or being able to decode the information from the picture they are “reading” is significant for them. It makes them feel capable to read by themselves and motivate them, they

learn how to read from left to right, identify the characters, feelings, actions, and characteristics of the characters; at the same time that they are using their imagination, follow sequences in the scenes, and situations from the book.

Based on a picture book project developed in a Germany Primary classroom of English as a foreign language class, Bland and Lütge express that by using the picture-book reading activity in the classroom, children read a large number of texts, they can start reading for themselves, learn how to choose books based on their own interests, it also helps them to start making the difference between what is fiction and what is a real situation specifically at this age in which they can easily confuse both of the situations because of their big capacity to imagine so many things and their belief that everything can be real. The picture book activity in the class can help students to develop competences in the following areas: reading motivation and confidence, reading competence and language competence; and during the process children are capable of:

- ✓ Learn how to interpret pictures: children use the illustrations as a support for them to understand the story. At some point this helps them to recognize some key words from the story, start to recognize words in the books just by relating them with the pictures and create their own stories based on what they see.
- ✓ Predict: “apart from supporting the understanding of key words and the plot of the story, the illustrations in the picture books also play an important role in the strategy of prediction. At various points, the pictures prompt the students to predict the continuation of the story, using them as the basis, making suggestions about what could happen next.” (Bland & Lütge , 2014)
- ✓ Use audio books: while using audio books and picture books, students follow the recording of the text in the books; this helps them to link the oral presentation and the written form of the story. The exercise potential their listening and reading skills at the same time that increase their pronunciation and way to express themselves in another language.
- ✓ Reading aloud: during the picture book activities most of the time kids try to read aloud their books with other classmates or they try to share the experience of

having the book, it is totally normal that they can have problems in pronunciation or even using the proper words to read and describe the situation that is happening in the book, remember they are trying to put their knowledge in practice but still learning a new language and new vocabulary. It is also good when they start comparing their pronunciation, expressing and sequences of the stories because they are learning how to do it better or model to or from others.

- ✓ Guessing from context: children are going to learn how to follow sequences, connect the images with key words and start reading small sentences by using picture books; but during the process guessing from context, it will always be a good strategy to use, it means if they cannot understand a word or they don't know what the picture represents or what the sentence mean they should try to relate the context of the words in order to understand the meaning of the situation in general, try to explain it or say it with other words. At the end, students become aware that for understanding the stories, they do not have to understand every single word, but the situation in general that is happening in the story. Using this strategy with 5 year old children will probably take time, but it will definitely help them to use it when they cannot understand meanings or new words vocabulary.

Small children definitely enjoy, learn and have fun with picture books. In the process of engaging with the texts, they make use of a variety of comprehension strategies and is a fact that students increase their capacity to read, associate key words with pictures, and rise in reading motivation, confidence, language practices and reading competence. Picture books and fairy tales have been the favorite books of the children since forever; without any doubt it helps them to create different worlds and situations in their imagination and apart from that, it also facilitates them new learning abilities and the development of many cognitive skills at the same time that is a good way of entertainment and have a fun time, despite the next activity is related to fairy tales, learning how to use imagination and learning vocabulary at the same time that is important to make them have a great time.

#### ❖ Fairytales with new endings

This is the most common kind of stories that parents used to read at kids since they are really small in order to enrich their cognitive skills. Then, there are many common fairy tales that children love and actually know how the story goes, before they have contact with the book or know how to read it by themselves; because of that when they are able to read the story everything make sense, and they enjoy it even more. Most of the time they already know what is the sequence of the story, the main characters and how the story is going to end; however, this activity still potential their capacity to imagine and create new scenarios from the stories so the idea is to take advantage of the manage they have about the story and expose them to an activity in which they can practice vocabulary and imagination.

Then, after a couple of other activities with books, song, and contact with the English language now students are able to use new vocabulary words, they can create small sentences and they can use their communication skills so it's time to create new endings for the fairy tales they already know. The main point of the activity is that kids can imagine, create and express new situations or endings for the stories; this help them to increase their oral ability, it permits that the educator helps them with pronunciation and new vocabulary words. When with five year old children that are learning English as a foreign language, but their stimulus is most of the time in Spanish is really important that the teacher takes time to help the student to recognize new words and learn how to express themselves before using this activity in the class; in that way it can guarantee the enjoyment and learning while doing it.

The three just described activities demonstrate how reading activities help students to increase and improve their cognitive skills and facilitates their learning a foreign language process. Those activities are suggested for educators to work with small kids that are learning a foreign language, specifically for five year old children because they are learning how to read and the whole process, they are experimenting can help them to connect and improve their knowledge, it is also a way to introduce a playful process involving imagination and experimentation to the learning a foreign language process. With a caring educator scaffolding, Vygotsky's way to explain the approach that

educators should have with kids depending on their individual necessities; and support in situations such as: imagine, reading and expressing, students will certainly be able to express themselves within the new language context, the feeling of recognizing how to do it by themselves leads to motivation and more self- confidence, which are essential requirements for the learning a foreign language process. That perfectly link with the last point to describe that specify the importance or effect that reading has on the self – esteem and positive attitudes of the children.

Children are capable to do so many things, but sometimes they are afraid to try new activities or to participate in new situations because they not have enough confidence; using reading strategies in the classroom also permit to develop confidence and par consequence determination and self – esteem in children. Therefore, practicing reading as one of the main processes in a classroom where students are learning a foreign language can help them to increase in the self- confidence, self- esteem and also influence them in having better positive attitudes inside and outside the class. “School can play an important role in affecting student’s emotional development and in the English classroom the use of the children’s literature can be a great help in fostering positive feelings.” (Bland & Lütge , 2014)

This section of the chapter makes emphasis on the importance and influence that reading has on the learning a foreign language process for five year old children, it goes from the ways of teaching them how to read, help them how to find significant differences between Spanish and English language; and activities to potential English learning language and reading skills. So, children can learn how to read and communicate themselves in both of the languages parallel.

It also bring ideas of strategies or techniques that teachers should use with kids in the classroom in order to develop cognitive skills and facilitate them tools to guarantee better results in the learning a foreign language process, at the same time that they are developing new skills for their global learning process; for the objectives of this investigation it is consider fundamental information to support the importance of including reading as a fundamental process in the English program for five year old Salvadorian children in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

**CHAPTER III**  
**PRECEDENTS AND REFERENCES OF THE PROPOSAL**

## CHAPTER III

### PRECEDENTS AND REFERENCES OF THE PROPOSAL

The previous chapter has shown theoretical information that supports the main idea of this investigation and provide useful evidence that proves the importance of reading as a fundamental process while learning English as a foreign language, how it helps students to improve their communicative and social skills, and how this can be adapted for Salvadorian five year old children in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

This chapter describes the approach that the current curriculum programs for preschool education in El Salvador have related to English as a foreign language learning process in schools, and support why this investigation was thought for private school primarily because of the weakness of sources to develop this kind of programs at public schools. It also presents experiences from more developed countries, how are they improving their education after including reading practices in preschool English learning programs. At the end it also presents a comparison between El Salvador and other countries, to support that is such a good idea to include reading as a fundamental process to develop with children in private preschool education in El Salvador; even if El Salvador is not a developed country, it already has some ideas in the curriculum program of how to improve the learning a foreign language program, so it is just a matter of using the correct approach and practicing.

It is important to mention that even if this part of the investigation will provide information about curriculum programs suggested to be used with all the students in preschool education in El Salvador, the country it is not ready to provide all the necessities and sources for that. As expressed in the “Guía del Presupuesto General del Estado para el Ciudadano 2016” (Dirección general del Presupuesto , 2016) a public document that provides information about the budget of the country year by year, the Ministry of Education in El Salvador try to accomplish a lot of necessities and improvements in the area, but none of them related with the improvement in a foreign language process, therefore, the investigation is taking into consideration only private schools under the thought that these schools, or at least the majority of them, can afford the expenses

that this kind of programs implies (English material, teachers, activities, school supplies, etc.) since its economic resources come from the payments of the families.

Continuing with the main idea of the investigation and as it was mentioned since the beginning, in spite of the new curriculum programs which try to attend the basic needs of Salvadorian children, reading has not been considered to be a fundamental process or taken into consideration as a strategy while teaching and learning a foreign language; for that reason it is suggested and proposed to private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador that it is a good idea to include it as part of their English program.

The previous chapter provides information about all the advantages that this could bring to the children mixed with ideas of how educators should work with them. So, now the way that it is working nowadays in El Salvador it is going to be described, as well as how other developed countries are actually using it in their curriculum programs and practicing at classrooms; so at the end a new proposal of activities following approaches and strategies is going to be the final point of the investigation.

#### ❖ El Salvador

El Salvador has Spanish as a primary language, however, as many as other countries is trying to include English in their Educational Curriculum programs due to the influence that the language has in the world and the opportunities that bilingual students can get nowadays. Their Curriculum Program for Preschool Education has had modifications in the past few years, until 2013 when the current version of the document was presented. (Ministry of Education El Salvador, 2013)

This program was created based on the document “Política Nacional de Educación y Desarrollo Integral para la Primera Infancia”, the main idea of this policy is that all the parts involved in the child’s education: parents, schools, teachers, and community have to create an atmosphere that helps children to learn more and in a better way, attending all their necessities and respecting their individuality since they are born to 6 years old. (Ministry of Education, 2013)

The current document has the Curriculum Foundations for the First Infancy and the Programs for education and development divided in two, the first book has the information related to First Infancy (born to three years old) and the second book has

the information for children from four to six years old. “The Preschool Curriculum is developed with flexibility and relevance taking into consideration children’s reality, needs, motivations and interests.” (Ministry of Education El Salvador, 2013) And it presents in a very organized way the foundations, areas of development, methodology, and main objectives that educators have to work with children, taking into consideration their maturation, experiences, development areas, emotions, environment, etc. Parallel to this document written in Spanish, there is also an exact same document my translated into English that contains general guidelines for preschool education and the Education and Development Curriculum for Preschool 4, 5, and 6 in English the one that is recommended for English teachers to work with students in the area. This document allows teachers to look for areas of interest in which dialogue, exploration and discovery may offer children opportunities to practice and produce language. (Ministry of Education El Salvador, 2013) However, they have a document for English classes, it is important to notice that the document is only a translation from the original one written in Spanish, and, as it was mentioned in the previous chapter even if the languages have similarities is necessary to teach them with the appropriate methodology to guarantee better learning from students, another important fact to mention related with the Salvadorian Curriculum Program and the main objective of this investigation is that reading is do not take into consideration as one of the fundamental processes in the preschool curriculum, so there is also consider that the planifications in the private schools do not take it into consideration either. There is only a small reference of reading in the Written or Graphical Expression and Comprehension section of the curriculum program but only as an approximation with reading and writing skills, the objective of that mention is more related to the motivation that students should receive in order to learn how to read, but there are not specific objectives to develop, approaches to follow, activities to progress or a globalized way to relate them with the English as a foreign language learning process.

Due to the lack presence of reading as a fundamental process to work and develop with the five year old children and the absence of a relation between the regular learning process and the learning of English is that this investigation was thought. With the objective of giving general ideas to educators of how to plan and practice reading

activities to improve the learning of a foreign language in children, create and suggest activities and useful projects to help educators to use this skill in the regular classes and also to support with substantial information the importance of including this process as one the main objective to work with five year children in El Salvador.

In the same idea it is considered important to describe methodological design and foundations; processes and strategies that are being implemented in more developed countries, which have had very good results and that can be used as examples for the purpose of this investigation proposal of including reading as one of the fundamental processes in the current English programs and planifications for private preschools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Before beginning to describe the processes and strategies used in these developed countries, it is important to justify the selection of these countries in particular due to the impact that English had in their culture at the very moment their educational system decided to incorporate the language in their educational curriculum program, the situation compared to what it is happening nowadays in El Salvador.

As it was mentioned before English and the global relationship between the countries has influenced them to include the language in their educational curriculum programs. Bilingual people nowadays have more opportunities to find a good job, activity or better connections with people in other countries, that is why the countries that are interested in teach English as a foreign language are also paying attention on the way they are teaching it, so they can guarantee significant learning to their students and as a result better opportunity in the future.

The Education First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) is a standardized text for measuring and tracking adult English proficiency over time. The EF EPI adds to ongoing discussions about the strategic importance of English in the world today. "In their sixth edition, from tests taken in 2015, 72 countries were rank and divided into different categories depending on social, economic, resources, innovation, education, geography and some other characteristics between the countries participating". (Education First Company, 2016) But the importance about this for the current investigation are the results and conclusions that this research provided and how this

information can help and support the main idea of the investigation about the importance of include reading as a fundamental strategy in the learning English as a foreign language process for five year old children in El Salvador.

The EF EPI identified that the way that English education is taken place in some of the countries is one of the reasons of the good or bad results in this test. Even if it is a text taken by adults the results demonstrate the need to improve basic skills such as reading comprehension, vocabulary in context, reading techniques, analysis, writing with meaning, and a couple more. So where do these countries need to pay attention? The answer is in the begging of the educational processes that means since preschool.

Unfortunately El Salvador is the last country in the ranking of Latin America countries that took this standardized text (EF EPI) and is the number 63 in the total of 72 countries submitted with the research. (Education First , 2016) Then, it is considered important to take into consideration the recommendations that the investigation gives after evaluating the results; specific the ones that express that it is essential to give importance to the teaching/learning English practice if one of the objectives of the countries is developing as a foreign language, is necessary to increase reading and writing skills since the beginning of the processes, try to provide the required resources for the classes or learning English programs, invest in teachers training so they can be able to respond to the necessities of students in their own environments, and also focus on practicing communication skills day by day.

This is probably just one research related with the teaching English as a foreign language process and a comparison between countries, but it is not a mystery that El Salvador needs to improve its educational system and practices in order to guarantee better results and significant learning for their students, so this definitely support the idea of the importance of including this process since the begging of the educational system in order to help students and teachers to have better results and at the end benefits for the whole country. Due to the information provided by the EF EPI investigation English proficiency, Europe remains the strongest in the world by the wide margin, with Northern European countries occupying the top five positions. (Education First Company, 2016) Then, the question now is: what are these other countries doing

to have better results? Which are the strategies they are using? It can help the Salvadorian Educational System to improve? Is there any possibility to take them as an example and adapt their programs to El Salvador education?

#### ❖ Netherlands

Number 1 in the rate of 72 countries according with the EF EPI investigation English proficiency. Education in foreign languages in the Netherlands started in the end of the eighteenth and begging of the nineteenth century, due to the fact that foreign language were not mandatory to me taught at schools during that time teaching it was not the priority of the Ministry of Education in Netherlands; however, because of the globalization, and the increase of relationship between countries it was consider necessary to teach different languages to students in the European countries therefore the educational system in the Netherlands adjust the foreign language as mandatory at schools. They first started teaching different language such as French, German and some other options; meanwhile the impact that English has around the world since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century provoked that they decided to change, so now English is the main foreign language schools must teach students.

At first, English was taught only in the secondary schools, but due to many investigations made through the years reported by Edelenbos, Van der Schoot and Verstralen (2000) it was considered a good idea to include English since the begging of the educational system with the idea that it will be better to support students' education and their development of skills related with the language learning. Educators noticed the evolution that students had in the communicative skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary, ways of communicating, etc. between those who received English classes since the first levels of education and those who just started in the secondary schools. (Edelenbos, Van der Schoot, & Verstralen, 2000)

According with Bonnet 2004 and Elsen 2009 the general pictures about teaching English methods in the Netherlands is largely a traditional way, with varying limited use of resources and most of the time using textbooks as the main tool. Even though they have had good results in the standardized tests made to their students in the English Language, they have discovered that introducing a new method or ways to teach the

language can be more motivating for students, so it was considered a good opportunity to increase more their potential. (Houwer & Wilton, 2011)

Due to the idea of changing the method of teaching English and also with the intended to introduce the language since the early education, parents and educators start looking for solutions to their concerns. As a result nowadays students in the majority of schools in the Netherlands received half of their classes in English, except for Dutch; they also started using computer programs and application on the Internet as a parallel tool to practice and develop some other skills after or during classes.

Related to the preschool education, important information for the current investigation, it is known that in some of the preschool children have the opportunity to learn English since the four year old. The curriculum program, nowadays, offer children the opportunity to develop English as a Foreign language since they are small kids so they can develop cognitive skills such as reading, writing, phonics, expression, and some others to increase children's knowledge at the same time they are practicing the language and preparing to the future, when they are going to be exposed to English during their school experiences. (Goorhuis-Brouwer)

As well as in the Netherlands there are some other European countries that have experienced changes through the years, situations and time, so their educational system changed to adapt to these new necessities or demands from students and teachers according with the social environment. Nowadays, English as a foreign language is taught in most of the European countries as a result of different experiences, but with the similarity of having good results in the learning process, because of the method or methodology that they are practicing, that is why is important to mention what they are doing to learn from the experience of others and take the strategies or tools that can be useful to include in the Salvadorian Educational System. Another country of reference is Finland.

## ❖ Finland

Number 5 in the rating of countries measured by the EF EPI investigation English proficiency.

Since the beginnings Finland has had influence of many countries such as Germany, Denmark, Sweden, etc. therefore Finnish population did not have a universal language. It was not until the Second World War ends, as a result of The United States winning, and also because Finland had a radical turn from an agrarian society to a heavily industrialized society with better relations and communication with other countries; that, English becomes to be a necessity because it was the language which Finnish people stay in touch and communicate with others outside Finland's borders, consequently English also began to be the second official language of the country.

As a consequence, nowadays all the schools in the country must have English as a foreign language in their curriculum since the preschool levels. "Currently, a child in Finnish school has both the right and obligation to study three languages: the mother tongue (Finnish or Swedish), another official language of Finland (Swedish or Finnish) and a foreign language. (Piippo, 2009.)" (Jaatinen & Saarivirta, 2014) Therefore the majority of the people in Finland can speak English as an advantage they do not only used the language to communicate with people from other countries or in specific situations, they also try to include it in the daily activities, then it is not only a foreign language but learning English as a second language. Many of the students are exposed to the language, even outside of the classroom, this helps them to improve their communicative skills and practice more what they are learning at school.

For the purpose of this investigation is also important to mention that Finland was chosen as a reference first because it's a country that has English included in their curriculum program in general for all the grades; and also because as their slogan says "Education for all" Finland educational policy guarantee high levels of Education for every student in the country independently of the social or cultural. Year by year Finland evaluate how their educational system is working testing their students and training

their teachers. Some of the characteristics that best describe why the educational system of Finland has so good results are:

- ✓ Equality, all students has the same level of education regardless of their socioeconomic background. They all are provided with free education, including all of the materials they need.
- ✓ Comprehensive schooling, related to the equality between students, all the students in Finland attended to the same type school independently if they have any disability or learning problems. All the students in this country are treated the same way, nevertheless, there is personalized attention to those who need it.
- ✓ Early intervention for learning difficulties, those who need more support with learning difficulties are provided help as early as possible.
- ✓ Teacher´s profession and education, teachers in Finland are highly motivated in their profession, also they have to be in constant training and continues education programs.
- ✓ Self-evaluation of schools, different from many other countries, Finnish schools are surveyed by the Finnish National Board of Education, they have to provide statistics to the municipalities, which are in charge of providing basic education for residents. Tradition in reading, as Linnakylä and Malin, 2006 mentioned “Reading and writing have been recognized as basic human needs for the last 100 years and there is a cultural tradition of reading” (Jaatinen & Saarivirta, 2014). People in Finland have a very good reading culture and is often learned before entering into the school system. It is known that in Finland people borrow more books from libraries per capita than any other country in the world. (Jaatinen & Saarivirta, 2014)

According with the National Curriculum Guidelines on Early Childhood Education and care (ECEC) in Finland “as the child grows up, the function of language in supporting cognitive processes grows in importance in terms of problem solving, logical thinking and imagination” ( Ministry of Education in Finland , 2003) that is why they don’t only have the immersion of a foreign language as part of the educational curriculum program since preschool, they also have reading as one of the fundamental process in their educational system, definitely supportive information related to this investigation.

In the section 3.6 “The Role of Language in ECEC” of the same document ( Ministry of Education in Finland , 2003), it is described the importance of literature in the development of language in children, the way educators develop cognitive skills through dairy activities, storytelling, role playing, reading with images and many more creative activities; also in the same document, but in the section 6.3 “Language immersion, ECEC in a foreign language, and ECEC activities based on an alternative pedagogy” they explain the way that a foreign language is taught to children after first working in their mother tongue language skills.

Knowing all the benefits that reading activities provide to children, the way it facilitates the learning a foreign language process as it was mentioned in the previous chapter, and having these rules to follow in a curriculum program for children is definitely one of the main reasons of why Finland has one of the first places in the ranking of English proficiency in the European countries and also the main reason of why it was taken as a reference for this investigation.

Even if El Salvador, nowadays, can't afford all the sources, and don't have the policies that run in these countries; taking them as an example of how the education can be developed or the approach that these countries have related to the learning a foreign language process can be useful for El Salvador.

The Netherlands and Finland are countries which their mother tongue is not English, just as in El Salvador; however, they were included it in their educational programs, practiced good approaches with their students and guaranteeing significant learning. Both of them have the culture of self-evaluating and had excellent results on standardized tests but, also in evaluation taken by international agencies such as the Education First English Proficiency Index, a standardized text for measuring and tracking adult English proficiency over time by the English First agency. Besides these two countries, it was considered important to describe how English is developed in the United States, even if English is their mother tongue, being one of the most multicultural countries require from them the necessity to raise in their educational curriculum programs ways and strategies to attend the needs of the students that know English,

and also those students who need to learn the language and to develop the regular curriculum program as well.

#### ❖ United States

Since their independence from Great Britain in 1776 the United States has been a country with influence of many other countries of the world, people got there at the begging, immediately after the independence, because it was a new place to go, explore and set down; nowadays people get there with the idea of finding new opportunities and a different style of life; however through the time English has been always there primary language.

Due to the diversity of culture and language of people living in the country and because they pay special attention to their education, it is considered a country with a good educational system that try to guarantee education for all their students. Par consequence the U.S. department of Education has the necessity to focus in two big requirements, the necessities of the students who has English as a first language, and also those who need to learn the language parallel to develop the regular curriculum program. Those that were mentioned at the end can be from different countries in the world, but most of the time they are Spanish speaking students due to the large traditional immigration from the Latin American countries to the States.

According with the statistics presented in the book “Understanding the Language Development and Early Education of Hispanic Children” (García & García, Understanding the Language Development and Early Education of Hispanic Children, 2012) in 2005 Hispanic population living in the United States had reached nearly the 43 million (14.4 % of the population) and they are expecting that this number can grow significantly for 2050. Though their educational system has to be prepared to attend the necessities that students in this population needs. To attend the incorporation of foreigners speaking students in regular school class they have the Dual Language Programs (DL), this kind of programs are relatively new in the United States and expect to provide high- quality instruction for students who come to their schools speaking primarily a language other than English. “School offering DL programs thus teach children language through content, with teachers adapting their instruction to ensure

children's comprehension and using content lessons, reading and writing skills to convey vocabulary and language structure." (García & García, Understanding the Language and Early Education of Hispanic Children, 2012) As it was cited, reading and learning a foreign language is related again, with the idea of guarantee better significant learning. Then the approaches, motivation and instruction the students received from their guidance is going to be the main point to guarantee the expected results. As it was mentioned in chapter II educators have to combine organizational, environmental, educational, and motivational elements to provide strategies and tools that are going to help their students to practice reading activities and take benefits from that. For the five year old children it is also necessary to involve them in a reading culture, due to the fact that they are learning how to read expose them in environments where reading is a fundamental process make them develop cognitive skills in a better way.

As a response for that concern the U.S. department of education creates in 2010 the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) program, the main objective of this is to create a comprehensive literacy program to develop advanced literacy skills in U.S. student from birth to 12 grade. The program includes: pre literacy skills, reading and writing. Because the U. S. work has federal laws, but also there are some internal decisions, depending on the state reglamentation; this program has general objectives to complete, but it also depends on the state if it is stricter or better developed; year by year they are testing their schools to measure the success or fulfillment of the objectives. At the end, the most important thing to take into consideration is the main objective of having this program in a national dimension, and it is to expose all the students into a reading and writing culture that facilities their communication skills and increase their knowledge.

Consequently, the United States is another country that has in their educational curriculum programs specific documents that support the importance of reading as a fundamental process in the learning processes of students since the early education and because of the diversity of the country, it also has programs that develop the skills with students that has another language, then English as a primary language, but they

try to incorporate them as soon as possible to the regular curriculum program in order to have higher education for all their students.

After all the information provided about educational programs in other developed countries; it is easy to realize based on their experience that what is developing in El Salvador has more sense; probably it is not the moment yet to suggest to follow this educational practices in the general educational system, for public and private schools, but it is consider a possibility to be worked in private schools because most of the time they can have the resources and the opportunity to begin the development of a program orientated to the learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, in the future, it might manage to be an aim of the national education. Many are the existing differences between these developed countries and El Salvador but the truth is that we are not so far away from implementing programs that bring benefit to our students, rather it is necessary to evaluate and restructure the educational practice.

The following chapter is going to relate the concepts explained in the previous ones and suggest activities and projects to work with five year old children attending all the concepts that have been taken into consideration for this investigation: learning theories, development of cognitive and communication skills with five year old children respecting their personal development, learning and development of the language, methodologies for teaching English as a foreign language and the relation between reading and learning English in order to have better results, successful experiences in other countries, etc. in order to support the main objective of the investigation and also with the idea of helping educators how they can develop reading as a fundamental process in the learning development of children and at the same time how they can join it with the learning English process. In other words, a proposal of activities and projects that can be added to the programs or current planning of teaching and learning English as a foreign language methods used in the private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**A NEW PROPOSAL**

## CHAPTER IV

### A NEW PROPOSAL

#### 4.1 Relation between the reference framework and the new proposal

All the information that supports the document is based on academic books, articles, researches, and documents that analyze and compare cognitive aspects to support the general objective of the investigation that is: “To demonstrate the importance of including reading as a fundamental process in English as a foreign language learning for five year old children at private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador”

As it was mentioned before, chapter III is going to relate all the theories, concepts, developmental skills and characteristics described during the whole investigation to prove the accomplished of the objectives purposed since the begging of the investigation.

Moving forward, in order to verify the accomplished of the specific objectives of the investigation is relevant to highlight that since the beginning, in chapter II learning theories were described as essential in the children learning in order to described their mental processes and guarantee integral development, attending necessities and respecting each of the students own way of learning with the purpose of justify the importance of reading in the development of mental processes that facilitate the integral learning of five year old children. As noted in chapter III the current Educational Curriculum programs in El Salvador considers the child as the center of the educational process, the national curriculum approaches center in the humanistic, constructivist and socially engaged way of learning. Humanistic, in order to contribute in the integral development of children as a person facilitating them the learning process; constructivist, following Jean Piaget theory that children develop in different stages, in agreement to their age and maturation; and socially engaged, based in the belief that the development of the children also contributes to the development of the society. This affirmation admits that in education it is necessary to recognize the background of the student and their relations with others in the community.

The approaches, just mentioned, refer to the design of the curriculum for the current program of education and are completely related with the three learning theories described in the second chapter of this investigation: Piaget's Cognitive Constructivism theory, Vygotsky's Social Cognitive Theory, and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory; and acknowledge the importance that has to respect the development stages and the influences of the social environment in the learning processes, more specific for five year old children because they are learning from the surroundings and people next to them. Due to that point the preschool curriculum program is even more specific and determinate the children's human rights and the integral development approaches, also based on Piaget's and Vygotsky Theories (Ministry of Education, 2013). Therefore, the current curriculum program for five year old children already take into consideration the approaches considering the integral development of children at that age.

So, there is a relation between the theories used during the investigation and also the current Salvadorian curriculum program for five year old children; the substantial information provided justify the importance of reading in the development of mental processes that facilitate the integral learning of five year old children; in the same chapter II, three important approaches in the study and teaching of reading: cognitive, expressivist and social-cultural and their relation with the integral development of cognitive and communicate skills in children show the influence that the appropriate practice of reading with the children help them to work on, and increase their cognitive skills.

The learning theories were related with the characteristics that five year old children have to have in this age, and it also connects the development of cognitive and communicative skills with the learning English as a foreign language process so as to provide useful information about "the importance of reading habits in five year old children and the relationship with learning a foreign language processes"; it also takes into consideration the three most important areas of development while learning a foreign language: listening, oral expression and reading. It is explained that even if reading is a complex process, and it is known that five year old children are starting to learn how to read; it is a fundamental process in the learning development in order to

improve creativity, spontaneity, increase vocabulary, practice pronunciation, predict and create new scenarios with children, as well as work some other skills that help to offer them an integral development; and so the approach that educator take is really important for the learning a foreign language process.

Throughout the investigation, information that supports the idea of including reading as one of the fundamental processes for five year old children learning English as a foreign language is given, explain and describe; in order to justify its importance. Even if there is a section that considers the introduction to literature for five year old children in the current curriculum program; still it doesn't take into account as a fundamental process.

After exposing all the advantages that this has and the benefits that it generates in the learning a foreign language process, it is possible to conclude that the incorporation of reading is necessary in order to guarantee better learning and performance for the five year old children. In this measure, and with the idea of helping the educators or parents that are going to be benefited by this investigation to have an idea of how to incorporate reading in the current method they are using English to teach as a foreign language, there are some activities to suggest. The activities were planned based in the learning theories explained in the investigation, the approaches that teachers should take into consideration of how to introduce reading in a foreign language, that means how educators should teach children to read in a foreign language, and making this process a fundamental activity while learning it, the expected characteristics for the five year old children, and also related with the approaches in the current preschool curriculum program for five year old children, using as a reference the successful experiences from other countries with the pertinent adjustments for El Salvador.

## 4.2 A proposal

**A PROPOSAL OF ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS INCLUDING READING AS A FUNDAMENTAL PROCESS WHILE TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUGGESTED TO BE USED IN PRIVATE PRESCHOOLS IN SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR.**

**Objective:** To suggest activities about how to use reading as a fundamental tool to develop English as a Foreign Language in five year old children.

**Description:** the following proposal is a set of skills, approaches, techniques and activities that combined can be used in the teaching English as a foreign language process. With the proper implement guarantees significant learning in the students. The activities were thinking for five year old children in a private school English classroom in San Salvador, El Salvador. As in the current Educational Curriculum Programs from preschool education in El Salvador; objectives, contents, abilities, areas, skills, approaches, and techniques are going to be suggested as a list of possibilities in order to create learning situations for the children; then it will be based on the teachers' creativity, design and globalization the better way of how they can use it.

The suggestion is to pick one of the objectives, one of the skills to develop (because of the purpose of the investigation the examples are going to be related to reading); and one of the sub skills/ approaches/ activities/ or strategies in order to create a new activity or project that can be globalized with any of the topics already suggested by the Ministry of Education of El Salvador in their Educational Curriculum Programs.

**Objectives:**

- ❖ Develop communicative skills (listening and oral expression).
- ❖ Identify phonics, sounds of the letters.
- ❖ Identify written letters in short sentences.
- ❖ Identify new vocabulary.
- ❖ Memorize new vocabulary
- ❖ Create short sentences in English.
- ❖ Experience and play with the language.
- ❖ To interpret stories and their sequences.
- ❖ Be able to predict in a story.
- ❖ Learn how to read small stories.
- ❖ Read aloud.
- ❖ Be able to guess from the context (new vocabulary).

**Skills to develop while teaching English:**

1. Listening
  - 1.1 Mime storytelling
  - 1.2 Listening to stories
2. Oral expression
  - 2.1 Playing with puppets
  - 2.2 Create new characters for the stories
  - 2.3 Drawing and guessing
  - 2.4 Role playing
  - 2.5 Pair work
3. Reading
  - 3.1 approaches to teach how to read (phonics, look and say, reading complete sentences, experience and language)
  - 3.2 Techniques using while reading (reading aloud, silent reading)
  - 3.3 Activities that help increase the learning of the Foreign Language (interpretative, predict, audio book, reading aloud, guessing from the context)

### 4.3 Examples of activities

<b>Objective:</b> Identify phonics, sounds of the letters.	
<b>Skill to develop:</b> reading	Approaches to teach how to read: phonics
<b>Name of the activity:</b> “The Letter of the day”	
Objective of the activity:	To learn a new letter each day, through globalized fun activities that are related to the other topics that children are working with during the day; in order to identify sounds and written letters.
Description	<p>In the phonic approach the relevant aspect is that children learn how to identify the written letters and related to their sounds. At the end they have to be able to recognize the letters in the speaking and written words. The order to teach the letters from the alphabet depends on many different aspects, for this activity, it is suggested to follow this order:</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup>: s m t a p  2<sup>nd</sup>: f c r b l  3<sup>rd</sup>: i g n d h  4<sup>th</sup>: j k w o u  5<sup>th</sup>: v y z x q e</p> <p>It suggests this way to guarantee that students can start forming new words at the same time that they are adding new letters to their vocabulary. This activity has to be planned in advance, in order to know what is going to be the general topic that students are going to be working each of the mornings. In the grouping time, the teacher should introduce the letter, its sound and examples of words that have it. It is recommended to add a song, a riddle or a game related with the letter, so students can be in touch with the letter during the entire morning.</p> <p>During the class the teacher can work in other vocabulary or general topic proposed in the curriculum program, but making emphasis in the “letter of the day”.</p>
Important to take into consideration	It is suggested as a globalized activity related with another topic from the curriculum in order with the “crosscutting themes” to develop in the preschool level. Educators have to make emphasis on the sound and written letter. It is better to work it at the beginning of preschool 5 when the children are just starting their reading and writing process so they can start to recognize the sounds and letters.

<b>Objective:</b> Identify written letters.	
<b>Skill to develop:</b> Reading	Approaches to teach how to read: look and say
<b>Name of the activity:</b> <b>“Matching”</b>	
<b>Objective of the activity:</b>	Recognize written word through exercises of repetition and association.
<b>Description:</b>	<p>To work on this activity at first the educator has to have a list of words that is going to work with, it is suggested to use vocabulary that is part of their daily routine, interests, topics from the class, etc. the idea is that the educator can show children the written words, pronounced the word and related them with a picture to make it more significant.</p> <p>Children should repeat the word as many times as the educator suggests, then the educator give the students the cardboard or they can flip them from the floor; the idea now is that students have to try to recognize the words that they were repeating and try to match them with the picture. Every time they do it correct the teacher should recognize that they are doing it great, is it important to make reinforcement to make them feel confident while playing and remembering the vocabulary. The idea is to introduce them with new vocabulary at the same time they are practicing pronunciation and social skills working as a team.</p>
<b>Important to take into consideration</b>	<p>This is an activity/game to do certain times with children; should be a good idea to introduce a new topic, it can me related to other topics suggested in the current curriculum program and consider as a globalized activity. It should be better to do it with children at the begging of the school year when they are starting their reading and writing process.</p> <p>The activity can be a little more complex while they increase in reading skills and vocabulary, at first it can be words but then teachers can do it also with phrases.</p>

<b>Objective:</b> Experience and play with the language.	
<b>Skill to develop: Reading</b>	Approaches to teach how to read: experience and language.
<b>Name of the activity:</b> “What did I do yesterday?”	
<b>Objective of the activity:</b>	Recognize new words from sentences created after own experiences in order to increase vocabulary and learn daily expressions
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The main idea of this activity is to help children to express their own experiences at the same time they are practicing vocabulary. Teachers can motivate them with introductory sentences, examples and their own experiences. Let the children think about “what did they do yesterday?” remember is important to help them to structure of the sentences but without telling them rules or grammar explanations. They can create two or three sentences each, all depends on the amount of students they are, at the end they can share with the class. Sharing is a good opportunity for the teacher to correct pronunciation or make emphasis in some words that they have been working on.</p> <p>To make this activity a little bit more complicated, and if students are in the capacity to do it, they can write short sentences on paper and make drawings to represent the actions, so at the end each of them is going to have a small book that talks about their experiences.</p>
<b>Important to take into consideration:</b>	Teachers can help children with pronunciation, written and new words while during the activity. It is suggested to add this small kind of stories in the library or book shelf of the class in order to give more significant to their work.

<b>Objective:</b> Learn how to read small stories	
<b>Skill to develop: Reading</b>	Activities that help increase the learning of the Foreign Language: interpretative
<b>Name of the activity:</b> <b>“Reading is enjoyable”</b>	
<b>Objective of the activity:</b>	Develop cognitive skills while reading nice stories and interesting books in order to add vocabulary words, pronunciation skills and share their own thoughts.
<b>Description:</b>	<p>Because this strategy except for motivated students to read while catching their attention through nice stories and interesting books it is suggested to have a small library or bookshelf in the classroom in order to offer different options to students. The idea is that educators have to establish one moment of the class for the “free reading time”, in which students are going to be free to select the book they want and read it. Remembering that probably most of them are not going to be ready to read by themselves, it is also important to highlight that the teacher should help them to learn how to read images and predict what is going on just by looking at them.</p> <p>The more interested children are in the reading activity the most attention and learning processes going through.</p> <p>Then, teachers should select a period of the class to let the students choose the book they want, read aloud to them some of the options that they have, help them to read images and predict situations, share at the end of the activity what do they read and any other comment that is going to be significant for them about the experience.</p>
<b>Important to take into consideration:</b>	Teachers must help students understand how to use a book, how to read images and predict, prepare a space for the activity and establish a period of time to do it.

<b>Objective:</b> To interpret stories and their sequences.	
<b>Skill to develop: Reading</b>	Activities that help increase the learning of the Foreign Language: predict
<b>Name of the activity:</b> “Picture books are fun”	
<b>Objective of the activity:</b>	Motivates students read through images and pictures, follow sequences and predict situations while learning new vocabulary and developing cognitive skills.
<b>Description:</b>	<p>One of the most motivated and attractive ways to introduce children through the reading habits is through images and pictures. Five year old children learn from their environment and the stimulus that educators or parents have to offer them, then it is considered important to use this technique since the begging of the year so they can learn how to use the book, reading images, pay attention to details, introduce new vocabulary through stories situations and some other skills at the same time they are going to be motivated to read.</p> <p>The main idea of this activity is to expose the children to read books and stories through the understanding of situations based on images and pictures; books with a lot of images and few words, or even better books only with images and any words on it. It is important to establish one moment during the class where students can take a book and read by themselves. The suggested procedure for this activity is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make sure there is a mini library or a book shelf with interesting books for the children.</li> <li>2. Establish a reading time during the class, so students can go chose and read a book. Is important to design a space for the activity where children feel free, comfortable and confident.</li> <li>3. At the begging educators should teach students how to read from left to right, how to turn the pages and treat the books. Imitation is suggested, so students can see and do.</li> </ol>

	<p>4. Students can share books, work in groups or have individual reading time and then share the stories with their classmates.</p> <p>5. In order to globalize the experience, it is suggested to work with books that are related in content to the topic that is being developed in the class.</p> <p>Make sure that they are decoding and reading through the images in order to know what is going on in the story, this will help them to increase vocabulary, predict and create new scenarios.</p>
<p><b>Important to take into consideration:</b></p>	<p>-</p>

<b>Objective:</b> Be able to predict in a story.	
<b>Skill to develop: Reading</b>	Activities that help increase the learning of the Foreign Language: predict
<b>Name of the activity:</b> “Reading and having fun”	
<b>Objective of the activity:</b>	Develop oral expression skills giving their ideas of new endings for stories they have read.
<b>Description:</b>	<p>Previous to this activity educators should read stories with the children in the classroom, they can share what they learned and also new ideas for a new ending from those stories. Educators should help them asking questions such as: what would be a different ending for you? Did you like the end of the story? If you have the opportunity to chance something want would you do? It is the perfect moment for educators to make feedbacks, work pronunciation, and introduce new words to their vocabulary.</p> <p>In order to make the activity more interesting, educators can join students together so they can discuss and create together a new ending, they can draw pictures of the new ideas or if they are in the capacity they can also write short sentences about the new ending.</p>
<b>Important to take into consideration:</b>	This is an activity suggested to work with children that have been practicing some of the vocabulary word, the ones that have a general idea of how to express themselves using short sentences and also the ones that are familiarized with the stories. For that reason, it is recommended to practice it in the middle or at the end of the school year

All these activities are just examples of how to develop reading while teaching and learning English as a foreign language following approaches, development of skills, activities and strategies in order to guarantee significant learning in the children attending their needs, age and interest. These are just suggested activities; teachers should create more and expose children into learning situations depending of their own objectives and stages in the learning process. The main point of this investigation was to provide useful information for educators about the importance of including this ability in the method they are using to teach the language in order to guarantee better results.

To conclude, it is important to remember that, as indicated before, with a proper use of the environment and the correct approach used by educators, the English learning as a foreign language for children is going to be an easy and enjoyable process; guaranteeing better results.

**CHAPTER V**  
**METHODOLOGY OF THE INVESTIGATION**

## **CHAPTER V**

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE INVESTIGATION**

#### **5.1 Kind of Investigation**

Due to the particularity of this investigation, it is considering a bibliography and descriptive investigation. Bibliography because all the information provided in the entire investigation is based on academic books, articles, researches, and documents that were analyzed and compared in order to achieve the objectives of the investigation. And, descriptive because it describes with useful information the importance of the topic, how it is going to benefit the population, at the same time that the problem has been described during the whole document.

#### **5.2 Population**

The investigation was focused on teachers and students of private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador as a general population. Based on the characteristics of this investigation, there is no sample or specific group to relate; it pretends to benefit the general population as a group based on common characteristics identified by the investigator based on previous professional experiences.

#### **5.3 Techniques for data gathering**

As a bibliography investigation all the information provided in the whole document was gathered through reading books, articles, investigation, magazine, websites; as well as investigative researches, making comparisons between methods, searching for experiences, analyzed and the own written production of the investigator.

#### **5.4 Procedure**

It is considered important to mention that this investigation was made outside of the country by a virtual tutoring. Then, the investigation begun in November 2016 with many books to read and a lot of information to process. The investigator main way of working was reading, comparing, adapting information and methods to the reality in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador, after it the investigator proceed to write

the document. If need it more reading and researching was done too. As it is not a specific group or a place where the investigation was taking place, it was taking into consideration the population with common characteristics and needs, as a whole general group.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

1. The current Educational Curriculum Program for five year old children in El Salvador does not consider reading as one of the fundamental processes in their learning. It does not include a specific proposal with objectives, systematic and organized activities related to reading in order to increase children's capacity of analysis, critical thinking, creativity and increasing vocabulary. That missing part can be reflected as a problem in the future learning process for children related to general cognitive skills development, but also with the ability to learn English as a foreign language.
  
2. Reading is one of the most successful tools used to develop cognitive skills and introduce children to the learning of a foreign language due to the capacity to imagine, create new scenarios, learn new vocabulary, follow sequences; at the same time that can be used to learn about the topic that is related with the reading.
  
3. Reading is an activity that can be globalized with all the other topics propose to work in the curriculum program. It helps to develop in children cognitive skills, but also social and emotional skills while working in groups and sharing experiences.
  
4. According to the information documented in the investigation: maturation, the environment, reading as an essential part of the process and the appropriate approach for the educators can help children to learn a foreign language in a significant way.
  
5. In the learning process is important to respect the stages and ways that students learn in order to accomplish the needs that each of the students have.

6. Based on experiences from educationally developed countries, including reading as a fundamental process in a preschool classroom and during the learning a foreign language process will increase children's capacity to perceive and produce language in general. Guaranteeing this way, better results while teaching a foreign language.
7. Even if El Salvador has so many differences with the countries taking into consideration for the investigation (Netherlands, Finland, United States) the attempts, from the Ministry of Education in El Salvador, of improving the educational programs, the desire to advance, and to improve the educational levels is clear. For this, it is considered a great opportunity for private schools to modify their methods or methodologies related to the teaching and learning English as a foreign language process, with the idea of guaranteeing better academic results, and hoping that in the future it can be managed with all the schools of the country.
8. Create and incorporate globalized activities taking into account the current curriculum topics, but always including reading will be one way to start introducing the skill in the five year old preschool classroom.
9. Including reading and reading habits as a fundamental process, and as one of the principal processes expected to be developed at the end of the preschool 5 in private schools in San Salvador, El Salvador will help students to develop their cognitive and communicative skills, at the same time they can improve their English learning process and start to develop a reading culture.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Private Preschools in San Salvador, El Salvador**

1. Even if in the Educational Curriculum programs for Preschool Education provided for the Ministry of Education of El Salvador doesn't consider reading as a fundamental process to develop while teaching English as a foreign language, it is recommended to include a reading program, projects or activities as one of the fundamental process to developments in the five year old preschool classes while teaching English as a foreign language based on all the advantage described during the investigation.
2. It is suggested to follow the proposal provided in this investigation in order to use the correct approaches, strategies, skills, and activities to start the creation of their new program or project based on reading as a fundamental process.
3. To create globalize activities that include reading as a fundamental process, but also contents of the Educational Curriculum Programs to develop with five year old children while teaching English as a foreign language,
4. It is recommended to include more reading time in the schedules, even if the students at five year old are starting their reading and writing process, it is essential that the educators read to them and include as much as possible reading activities in order to take advantage of the process.

### **Teachers**

5. Teachers should take advantage of reading in order to develop cognitive skills in children, including more reading activities in their lesson plan, activities in which students are going to feel comfortable, interested and curious to learn.
6. Motivate students through enjoyable reading activities to express themselves and practice the language. Try to find the appropriate moment to make corrections or feedbacks if they are playing with the language.

7. Promote in the child's enthusiasms for reading, create in them reading habits, establishing formal schedules and activities that allow them to feel motivated at the same time that educators respect the stages and ways in which each of the students learn, in order to accomplish the needs that each of the students have.
  
8. Take advantage of any resource that they have to learn more about the reading process and how this increase child learning while developing cognitive, social and emotional skills.

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