

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA**

**CUR– MATAGALPA**



UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL  
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NICARAGUA,  
MANAGUA  
UNAN-MANAGUA

**DEPARTAMENTO DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES**

**GRADUATE SEMINAR**

**Submitted to the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua in fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Teaching**

**General topic:**

**DIDACTIC STRATEGIES APPLIED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF SECONDARY  
EDUCATION STUDENTS, MATAGALPA, II SEMESTER 2024**

**Specific topic:**

**Use of mobile Apps to improve English reading skill in ninth grade students at El Hular School, El  
Tuma – La Dalia, Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024**

**Authors:**

- Snr. Christopher José Gaitán Flores
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**Tutor:**

**MSc. David de Jesús Vallejos Rodríguez**

**Matagalpa Nicaragua, November 2024**



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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated firstly, and foremost to God, above all things, for having given us the understanding, wisdom and strength to carry out this work.

To those who have given us their support throughout our lives and have been an example of work and improvement for us.

To the teachers who throughout our career have been a valuable guide for us and great people who inspired us in the study of English.

Moreover, to our university UNAN-Managua, CUR-Matagalpa, which has given us an excellent education in every sense of the word.

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## ENDORSEMENT LETTER



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*¡Universidad del pueblo y para el pueblo!*

**Noviembre 2024**

El presente Seminario de Graduación, desarrollado por los bachilleres José Adonis Valle Bracamonte carnet N° 19604373, Joel Antonio Urbina Sánchez 20602382 y Christopher José Gaitán Flores 20602118; remitido como requisito para optar al título de Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación con Mención en Inglés, con el tema **Didactic strategies applied in the learning process of Secondary Education students, Matagalpa, II semester 2024**; bajo el subtema “**Use of mobile apps to improve English reading skill in ninth grade students at El Hular School, El Tuma – La Dalia, Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024**” cumple con los requisitos del proceso de investigación metodológica de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua - UNAN Managua - CUR Matagalpa, con la relación adecuada entre objetivos, variables, fundamentos teóricos, diseño metodológico, resultados y conclusiones.

El proceso de análisis y discusión de resultados se llevó a cabo tomando en cuenta las variables de estudio, instrumentos de recolección de información, objetivos y referencias bibliográficas confiables.

La presente investigación es el resultado del esfuerzo, la dedicación y el conocimiento adquirido y puesto en práctica por los estudiantes, el cual cumple con todos los requisitos académicos e investigativos. Por lo tanto, se considera completa y lista para su defensa.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David de Jesús Vallejos Rodríguez'.

**MSc. David de Jesús Vallejos Rodríguez**  
**Profesor/Tutor**  
**UNAN Managua, CUR Matagalpa**



## **ABSTRACT**

This research addresses didactic strategies applied in the learning process of secondary school students, Matagalpa, II semester 2024; focuses specifically on the use of mobile apps to improve the English reading skill in ninth grade students at El Hular School, municipality of El Tuma – La Dalia, Department of Matagalpa during the second semester 2024. The study seeks to analyze the mobile Apps that have positive effects to improve the reading difficulties students present in the reading skill. This research has significant importance in the educational field and in the teaching-learning process, since the information provided will be of notable help both for students seeking self-study and for innovative teachers who intend to implement new teaching tools and strategies in their class. After extensive research and analysis of information, it was found that students present some specific difficulties in reading skills, concerning to vocabulary and comprehension. For that, mobile Apps provide an excellent alternative, promising positive effects in the improvement of these difficulties. For this reason, some Apps are proposed to be used by teachers and students.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This study is based on the didactic strategies applied in the learning process of secondary school students, Matagalpa, II semester 2024; specifically in the use of mobile Apps to improve the reading skill on high school students. This is of great importance for the presentation of students in terms of English as a foreign language and the development of their critical thinking and reading comprehension in said language.

When learning English as a foreign language, there are several challenges in any of the main skills or all of them. In the reading ability, the difficulties arose are related to lack of vocabulary, analysis, and production of answers. This research project aims to provide a list of mobile apps with extensive reading content, offering students and teachers new alternatives to improve their reading skills

The methodology used to carry out this research is the following: the **design is phenomenological**, for it wants to describe a phenomenon that is experienced by a group of people, from their point of view. It is specifically related to the **interpretative paradigm**, since this seeks to know the opinions of a certain social group in any context, in this case in the educational environment. It has a **qualitative approach** with quantitative influences. The **type of study is cross-sectional**, since data is collected once in a period of time and **descriptive** in depth, since the information and opinions collected from the participants is narrated and analyzed without manipulating it.

**The Population and sample:** belongs to a total of 16 individuals (6 women and 10 men) in ninth grade at the El Hular school in the El Tuma - La Dalia municipality, Matagalpa department. The study used a convenience sample where participants were selected based on their availability and accessibility to the researcher

**The techniques and instruments** applied to collect information are an interview to the teacher, a survey to students, and an observation guide during an English lesson. **The method** used to analyze the information is the **analytical -synthetic**, in order to analyze each variable individually and then together. The information was analyzed, processed and presented by using Microsoft word and excel.

## **II. JUSTIFICATION**

This study is developed under the topic the use of mobile apps to improve the English reading skill in ninth grade students at El Hular School, municipality of El Tuma – La Dalia, Department of Matagalpa during the second semester 2024.

This research aims to identify and evaluate mobile applications that can effectively enhance English reading skills among learners who struggle with basic reading comprehension. By addressing this common challenge, we hope to contribute to the development of English language proficiency.

This research will have a positive impact on education, since it is investigating how these mobile apps can improve academic performance in schools. Nowadays the world is changing and people must adapt to these changes, using them to their advantage and convenience.

The content of this research will be useful for high school students and teachers of English as a Second Language, presenting a strategy as a guide to improve their language learning. Above all, it will be very useful for all English teachers in early childhood, primary and secondary education, so that they can apply this strategy and make the most of these media, adapting to the new technologies that emerge in the world and that can be made available in each school. Moreover, it will serve to future researchers as a reference on this topic and field.

### **III. OBJECTIVES**

#### **General objective**

Analyze the use of mobile apps to improve English reading skill in ninth grade students at El Hular School, El Tuma – La Dalia, Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024.

#### **Specific objectives**

1. Identify mobile applications suitable for enhancing English reading skills in ninth-grade students
2. Describe the incidence of mobile apps to overcome the difficulties of reading skill in English as a Foreign Language learners.
3. Propose a list of mobile Apps to improve English reading skill in ninth grade students of El Hular School, in the municipality of El Tuma – La Dalia, department of Matagalpa during the second semester of 2024

## IV. DEVELOPMENT

This chapter presents information regarding the incidence of mobile apps to improve English reading skill. The first variable to develop is “mobile Apps” and the first objective to meet is to identify different kinds of mobile Apps that can be used for reading purposes.

### 4.1 Mobile apps

#### 4.1.1 Definition

A mobile app (or mobile application) is a software application developed specifically for use on small, wireless computing devices, such as smartphones and tablets, rather than desktop or laptop computers” (Terrell and Wigmore, 2023).

In short, a mobile application is a program designed solely for mobile devices, whether smartphones or tablets.

Nowadays, there are various programs designed for mobile devices that are vital for developing many tasks, whether in the educational, work, or simply entertainment field. We must use this software properly to take advantage of their maximum potential and performance

According to the results of the applied instruments, the teacher shared that mobile apps are a very important tool for motivating student learning. Concerning what was expressed by Terrell and Wigmore (2023), “A mobile app is a program used on mobile devices, today in the educational system it is a reliable alternative to carry out different activities in an attention–grabbing way”.

#### 4.1.2 Characteristics

Microsoft (2024) states that "A successful mobile app should provide an excellent user experience and help you reach your business goals. It should also be easy to use and give some added value to the user that they wouldn't get from a standard website, plus bring data together to help you improve customer experiences."

That is to say, those mobile applications must provide that leap forward to achieve the goals of their users so that the best possible experience is lived in the process. Just as each mobile application must be unique and special, different from any other common application, and above all, easy to use.

In today's modern world, mobile apps have seamlessly integrated into our everyday lives. They simplify tasks, provide entertainment, and transform the way we engage with technology. However, not all mobile apps achieve success. Certain unique qualities elevate specific apps above others.

According to the response provided in the applied interview, one of the main characteristics of the applications is that they can be adapted to the needs of the students and are interesting for them. On the other hand, in the survey directed to students, the use of applications is widely accepted for class activities development. Moreover, it was observed during the class that using Apps to perform some activities is very useful in the English subject.

#### ***4.1.3 Use for Educational Purposes***

According to Arinova, B., Pyatkina, D., Latysheva, V., & Stroiteleva, N. (2022). "The use of mobile applications has a positive effect on expanding learning opportunities, as the teacher can use interactive technologies to visualize theory and show the possibilities of its practical application. Students, in turn, can not only find the information they need with the help of mobile phones, but also watch all kinds of videos and lectures, take tests or complete assignments online, which makes learning easier and more varied."

Mobile applications open a large window of diverse learning opportunities in the educational field, since the teacher obtains a great variety of tools to be able to develop his class, likewise, the students can not only investigate information but they can also perform assigned multitasks supported by these programs, in this way education and learning become more diverse and fun.

Today, mobile applications help us make it easier to achieve different goals. We must all take advantage of and cultivate these programs to obtain their maximum performance and efficiency, and use them properly to enjoy the various tools they offer for education and work.

Returning to the opinions obtained in the teacher interview, the student survey and the observation guide for the class, mobile apps are useful in the teaching-learning process. In relation to the idea of Arinova, B., Pyatkina, D., Latysheva, V. & Stroiteleva, N. (2022), these provide a positive impact and offer better opportunities when used in the educational context.

Therefore, it is important to mention that supporting on this information above related, the use of mobile Apps in education is a great advantage in any field of study, especially in the English language learning

process, since there is a bunch of Apps that serve as support, practice and consultation for improving competencies in the language.

To conclude, mobile Apps in the education field enrich the learning process and provide opportunities to research specific information, do homework, connect with other people, find specific information, create multimedia material and share it with others, and practice language learning, choosing from a wide variety of these Apps, totally free.

#### ***4.1.4 Types of Mobile Apps***

King, M (2024) defines three different types of mobile apps: native or platforms, web mobile, and hybrid.

First, native app development serves a single operating system or platform. They use a programming language that is specific to that platform or operating system. This is usually a choice of iOS, Android, or Windows Phones.

Secondly, web mobile apps are types of apps that draw from web-based technologies. They are accessed through a mobile device's web browser, so they avoid any download or installation onto a device. They are also internet-enabled which gives added flexibility and a more responsive design that can work on any mobile device or operating system.

Finally, of all the different types of mobile apps, a hybrid app is a combination of a native and a web app. In practice, it is developed as a web app in a native app container. By leveraging certain native platform features and device hardware, hybrid apps offer the benefits of a native experience while flexing to non-native environments.

In the instruments applied, the following applications are mentioned as Apps used by the teacher and students to perform different tasks: roulettes, ABC app, Translators, dictionaries, and Duolingo. In relation to King, M (2024) opinion, these native applications can be downloaded and installed on mobile devices (cell phones and tablets).

All in all, the different kinds of mobile Apps that can be used for reading purposes in education are those without payment, such as native or platforms, web mobile, and hybrid.

So far, the first variable concerning to mobile Apps has been analyzed, along with the first objective. Now, it is time to treat the second variable which is reading skill. Therefore, the second objective "to explain reading skill difficulties for English as foreign language learners" is addressed.

## **4.2 Reading Skill**

### ***4.2.1 Definition***

“A reading skill is a cognitive ability which a person is able to use when interacting with the written text. In the taxonomies... some skills seem more inclusive than others” (Bojovic, 2010).

It can be reasonably deduced that reading is a skill that each person develops by following a certain process in order to perfect the skill. This skill ranges from knowing letters to discovering the meaning in a set of letters forming a word. Reading, more than a skill, is an art because it allows you to travel in another world through the lines presented by the writer; it allows you to fill yourself with knowledge to create meaningful learning.

Reading as a cognitive ability is an advantage all students of English as a foreign language need to master in order to succeed in their class activities and personal situations where this skill is needed. Today it is evident how teachers in each school are implementing techniques daily to develop reading skill in students.

### ***4.2.2. Importance***

Bulut, (2015) asserts that the functional importance of reading instruction with regard to society and individual is an undeniable fact. One of the essential goals of education is to actualize reading instruction, which has a very important role in adopting the values of the contemporary civilization. Considering teaching, these educational goals that are based on a solid ground, reading instruction plays a very important role. With its philosophical, physiological, social, and anthropological aspects, reading is all the activities undertaken throughout life. Reading socializes.

Said differently, there is no denying of the practical significance of reading instruction for students and other people. Implementing reading instruction is one of education's primary objectives since it is crucial to embracing the ideals of modern society. When it comes to teaching and these well-founded educational objectives, reading instruction is crucial. Reading encompasses all of life's activities, including philosophical, physiological, sociological, and anthropological ones. Reading fosters social interaction too.

In this case, teaching reading is a skill is an important issue, in order to literate student in the receptive ability of reading. It is very useful in our daily life, since it is present at any time and wherever you go. Written material in English is abundant nowadays and understanding it must be a goal for educational



institutions. If you need to travel to another country, you will not be able to move if you do not read directions, this is just an example of the importance of reading skill.

The data collected with the instruments applied demonstrates that both, students and teachers, value the importance of reading skill, considering it as a key issue to learn in the language students are learning.

#### ***4.2.3 Key Points of Reading Skill***

According to Lee (2014), some people think that the act of reading is an easy skill to master. In reality, it is a complex process that requires many different skills. All of these skills together lead to the ultimate goal of reading: comprehension. Reader (understands what has been read).

That is to say, the ability to read is a process that requires several more complex steps. They will lead to a true and good reading comprehension of what is being read. When reading, people believe that saying a text quietly or out loud dominates the act of reading, but this is not the case; a whole set of steps or stages are needed to follow to perform and have correct reading ability.

Nowadays, students must master the skill of reading and teachers throughout the entire course from primary to secondary school have the duty to teach this ability as part of the four fundamental skills of the English language. This is why it is so important in the study plan in English class.

According to the instruments applied, it was found in the survey that students master some of these points such as decoding, comprehension and vocabulary. The teacher affirms in the interview that the students have a better command of vocabulary and in the observation guide; it was observed that the students have developed these key points.

Analyzing the data obtained and comparing it to Lee (2024) theory about it, it can be concluded that these points are important for good reading comprehension and in some cases, students may present difficulties in any of these points, as any new learner might.

##### ***4.2.3.1 Decoding.***

Lee, (2014) states that "Decoding is a fundamental step in the reading process. Children use this skill to pronounce words they have heard before, but have not seen in writing. The ability to do this is the foundation of other reading skills."

For this reason, decoding is an essential part of learning to read or doing it correctly; it requires knowing the relationships between letters and sounds to be able to understand the words in writing. Decoding is a fundamental basis for reaching other levels of reading, such as analysis and comprehension.

Nowadays students, mainly children who are just beginning to read, try to decode the relationship that exists between the letters and the sounds they make when put together. This is a misconception of how the English language works, because it is being compared to Spanish. Decoding also refers to pronouncing words just by listening to them, but they are unable to recognize them when finding them written.

#### ***4.2.3.2 Comprehension.***

“Reading comprehension is the process by which we understand the texts we read. It is the purpose of reading, why we teach it, and why we care about it. It is also the prerequisite for meaningful learning from text”. (John R kirby)

In other words, comprehension refers to a specific process during which the reader can internalize and analyze based on certain data provided by reading a text, in a way that allows him to construct a clear and precise message of what he has read to be able to express it and provide correct information

Then, comprehending something means understanding it, managing to explain it and being able to use it somehow. In reading, comprehension is about understanding the meaning of words in context, following the organization of a passage, identifying antecedents and references, drawing inferences from the passage, identifying the main thought of the passage and asking and answering questions about the text.

#### ***4.2.3.3 Fluency.***

Lee, (2014) say that to read fluently, children need to recognize words instantly, including those they cannot spell (known as sight words). Fluency increases the speed at which they can read and understand a text. It is also important when children encounter irregular words, such as of and the, that do not follow the pronunciation rules.

This means that reading quickly and understanding what you are reading at the same time is called fluency, a skill achieved by recognizing words at the same time, instant. This skill is based on the previous skill "Decoding" and have a good vocabulary so that when reading there are no awkward pauses to spell a word.

Currently, most students cannot read fluently in English, since achieving this sub-ability is difficult because for this it is necessary to have interacted with the language for a long period of time, and also having a high range of vocabulary to use. Fluency is not just reading with certain flow when doing it aloud, but also being able to find specific information all through the text.

#### ***4.2.3.4 Vocabulary.***

Lee, (2014) explains to understand what you are reading, it is necessary to understand the most of the words in the text. Having a wide vocabulary is essential for reading comprehension. Students can be taught vocabulary, but usually they learn the meaning of words through daily experience and reading.

In brief, having a large vocabulary rich in words makes it easier to read more quickly and, above all, understand everything at once. Teachers teach their students essential vocabulary in different subjects, and they are in charge of relating them to daily life and when reading.

Currently, students master a certain number of words, they have some vocabulary they can use appropriately and some they cannot. Having a good vocabulary is extremely essential for any student to be able to understand what they read. Every lesson, teachers in primary and secondary education, introduce and practice and approximate of seven words. This helps students build a bank of words and phrases they learn.

#### ***4.2.4 The Function of Reading Skill***

“The function of reading is to approach an interpretation very similar to that of the author. This interpretation is done indirectly since the only thing we have when reading is the information presented by the text” (CNB, 2017).

In effect, the function of reading is for the reader to interpret what the author wants to make known through the written text. Although each one will have his or her own criteria, we seek to make an interpretation that is as precise as possible, to the message that the writer wanted to give in order to have clear and complete information on the topic being read.

On the part of students or people who like to read, they all make use of this skill and, as its function says, they try to interpret all the information presented in written form to reinforce their knowledge or to make arguments about reading. Teachers can use different techniques to teach this skill, but above all, in each lesson they must highlight its importance in the educational training of each student. Therefore, the

function of reading skill has to do with understanding, interpreting, analyzing and responding to written texts, whether they are academics or not.

For English as second language learners, English reading comprehension has some challenges, even if they have an advanced knowledge and practice in the language.

#### ***4.2.5 Main Difficulties in Reading Skill***

##### ***4.2.5.1 Comprehension.***

According to VICTORIA State Government (2022), Issues with reading comprehension occur when students struggle to understand the meaning behind words, phrases and other texts.

Signs that may indicate a reading comprehension difficulty include:

- Trouble with letter and word recognition
- Difficulty understanding words and ideas
- Slow reading speed and fluency
- Limited vocabulary or underdeveloped oral language skills
- Difficulty answering questions about or discussing a text.

Therefore, difficulties in reading comprehension appear very often in English language students due to various factors. Vocabulary is one of the main limitations when trying to understand a message; a word can have several meanings or appear in a sentence in a different context. This makes it difficult to understand what a reading is trying to teach, or to answer questions and exercises about the message of a text, when students are beginners.

Students need to handle a wide vocabulary to produce critical responses, argue the information read and respond to reading comprehension exercises. It is a fact that without understanding what they are reading they will not be able to make a judgment related to it, therefore, understanding what they read will be a problem or difficulty if they do not seek to improve in this aspect.

##### ***3.2.5.2. Answering Question***

As expressed by Adler (2007), questions can be effective because they:

- Give students a purpose for reading.
- Focus students' attention on what they are to learn.
- Help students to think actively as they read.

- Encourage students to monitor their comprehension.
- Help students to review content and relate what they have learned to what they already know.

In short, searching for information alone is not very helpful if you do not know how to find what you need, which is why it is necessary to learn to find what you need in a text without wasting time on parts of reading that are not necessary. They will help nothing.

Finding information for students can be complicated if they do not have a good reading foundation, mastering all its aspects, which is why it becomes a difficulty that must be improved since a student often performs reading comprehension exercises in which You must find substantial and accurate information.

### **3.2.5.3. *Pronouncing***

In her research papers on ELF, (Seidlhofer, 2013) emphasizes that “non-native speakers often struggle with English pronunciation because they may not be familiar with specific phonemes that are present in English but absent in their native languages.”

Non-native speakers face significant challenges when learning to pronounce English due to the presence of phonemes that may not exist in their native languages. This lack of familiar sounds can lead to mispronunciations, which in turn may result in communication breakdowns and misunderstandings. Furthermore, the anxiety surrounding pronunciation can discourage learners from speaking, as they might feel self-conscious about their accents.

This phenomenon highlights the importance of understanding pronunciation in the context of language acquisition and effective communication. This is something very familiar in Nicaragua context, where mother tongue interferes with the new language learning, due to lack of expertise and not enough interaction with the language.

### **3.2.5.4. *Finding Information.***

As stated in University of Suffolk (2024), in today’s information-driven world, information skills are more important than ever. With an overwhelming amount of information available at the click of a button, the ability to effectively locate, evaluate and use information is crucial in life, learning and work.

In other words, searching for information alone is not very helpful if you do not know how to find what you need, which is why it is necessary to learn to find what you need in a text without wasting time on parts of reading that are not necessary. They will help nothing.

Finding information for students can be complicated if they do not have a good reading foundation, mastering all its aspects, which is why it becomes a difficulty that must be improved since a student often performs reading comprehension exercises in which You must find substantial and accurate information.

In the interview to the teacher, it was found that the students present difficulties in comprehension, response production and pronunciation, while in the observation guide and the survey show evident information that not all students have the four key points required in reading.

It is a well-known fact that finding specific information in readings is a difficulty that most students in the public education have. For this, some factors such as the complexity of the topics and vocabulary are possible, as well as low vocabulary mastering.

Up to this point, the second variable regarding to reading skill has been detailed, concluding that reading skill difficulties for English as second language learners are related to comprehension, finding specific information, low range of vocabulary mastering, words recognition, difficulty understanding unusual or complex phrases, slow reading speed and fluency, mispronunciation, and difficulties for answering questions or discussing a text.

After analyzing second variable, discussing about reading challenges for non-native speakers, it is time now to talk about the incidences that mobile Apps have in reading skill in EFL students, presenting theoretical information and proving it with data obtained from the study group.

### **4.3 Incidence of Mobile Apps in the Reading Skill Development in EFL Students**

Mobile apps play a crucial role in enhancing reading skills, particularly for EFL students and struggling readers. Here are some key ways in which they contribute to reading development:

#### ***4.3.1. Foster Reading Comprehension***

According to English (English EFL, 2024) "One of the most complex mental activities we can engage in is reading. When you look at brain scans taken while the subjects are reading you see many of the areas of the brain lit up with activity. As we read, we are simultaneously using our knowledge of sound segments (phonemes) and the connection between sound and letters (phonics) to make meaning of the text (reading comprehension). This last element is the most important and most challenging to develop. Parents and teachers need to explicitly teach reading comprehension skills while at the same time encouraging young readers to keep practicing and honing their skills."

Reading is one of the most complete activities that a human being can perform when it comes to mental activities. Normally, the brain uses a certain percentage to perform daily tasks, while when reading, a person activates certain parts of the brain that are not used in daily tasks. When reading, we simultaneously use the knowledge of sound segments and the connection between sound and letters to give meaning to the text. The most important and difficult element to develop is the connection between sound and letters.

Parents and teachers have long been responsible for teaching children the activity of learning to read, and with it the skills of reading comprehension. The latter is the most difficult to develop, but today there are different and multiple means and platforms to encourage, develop and perfect these skills.

#### ***4.3.2. Critical Reading Abilities***

According to (CSU, 2024) critical reading means that a reader applies certain processes, models, questions, and theories that result in enhanced clarity and comprehension. There is more involved, both in effort and understanding.” When you critically read a text, you are able to look beyond the surface of what is being said. Critical readers ask questions as they read. They engage and analyze their reading from different perspectives.”

Critical reading involves the subject carrying out activities that promote active reading skills, since when reading a text or writing critically the subject is able to create and maintain one or more perspectives beyond the literal writing. Critical readers analyze and ask questions while developing their reading.

Currently, there are children who have a more advanced level of interpretation than others when carrying out the reading activity. In other cases, some have certain difficulties but these are skills that can be developed with the active practice of reading. This will turn them into critical readers, capable of interpreting the writings and the reality about them from different perspectives.

#### ***4.3.3. Personalized Learning Experience***

Many apps utilize Artificial Intelligence and voice recognition to tailor the learning experience to individual needs. This allows students to receive immediate feedback on their reading, helping them improve at their own pace. As noted by (Nandbox, 2023), “mobile apps revolutionize education, enabling unprecedented personalized learning. They cater to individual needs, styles, and pace, fostering engagement, retention, and academic achievement. With evolving technology, mobile apps’ role in personalized learning will expand, reshaping how we learn and teach.”

According to the author`s idea, mobile apps today are equipped with artificial intelligence that can be developed on a mobile device, that is, a cell phone, complementing the individual needs of each student, especially facilitating and helping to obtain feedback. Immediate information about the reading you have read, since these applications allow you to configure them so that you can develop them hand in hand with your learning pace.

In the educational context, it has been confirmed that most students nationwide choose to carry out activities from a cell phone, due the convenience it provides them. That is why teachers, updated in the use of new technologies, promote the use of mobile apps so that the cell phone becomes another tool to improve academic performance in the teaching-learning process.

#### ***4.3.4. Engagement Through Interactive Features***

Apps often incorporate **interactive games and activities** that make learning to read more enjoyable. For instance, programs like Reading Eggs focus on phonics through engaging gameplay, which can motivate students to practice more frequently. According to Nandbox (2023), “interactive features in mobile apps significantly increase student engagement and motivation in reading tasks.”

The main objective of a mobile app is to provide students with interactive activities that capture the attention of users, for example: games that arouse the interest of each individual to generate learning, in this case it would be to improve reading skills and consequently it is used more frequent.

The impact that the use of mobile apps has had through interactive functions has been very important in schools, especially in primary education. They have allowed students to leave behind the fear of oral participation in the classroom, on the contrary, they feel motivated to put into practice what they have learned, it helps to complement, analyze express their ideas.

#### ***4.3.5. Skill Reinforcement***

Mobile applications provide opportunities for extra practice of previously taught skills, such as phonics, spelling, and comprehension.

As stated by (Chakravarthy, 2020) mobile apps seem to be the powerful support for acquiring reading skills and interpreting comprehension which are the two challenging aspects of language learners... They also enrich readers with vast opportunities and provide a stress-free environment that aids them to improve their reading skills.”



As mentioned above, the use of mobile applications provides students with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge through interactive activities with the aim of improving extracurricular skills, especially in the acquisition of English as a second language. This way, students can configure it out according to their learning rhythm; they allow you to increase the level of learning day by day, exercising different skills and especially comprehensive reading.

Nowadays, students and people interested in learning English as a second language rely on these applications since it allows them to clarify doubts that arise during the language acquisition process, above all it facilitates the performance of different tasks, interactive practice to improve the skills it requires.

#### ***4.3.6. Comprehensive Literacy Development***

Many apps are designed to teach a variety of literacy skills, including the connection between letters and sounds, sounding out words, and spelling. “A holistic approach to literacy development ensures that students build a well-rounded set of reading skills” (Chakravarthy, 2020).

In the world of new technologies, especially those that have artificial intelligence, you can find a wide variety of mobile apps; however, it is important to promote the use of these that are aimed at the educational context, since through the use that they are intended for, gives you can develop and improve the skills necessary to acquire a new language.

Nowadays, the use of mobile apps that different people resort to is notable, since it is a main tool to complement many activities, especially to improve skills such as reading, in this case it can be mentioned that on the part of the students it is It is common to use an English to Spanish translator to complete assigned school tasks.

#### ***4.3.7. Accessibility and Convenience***

Mobile apps allow students to practice reading anytime and anywhere, making it easier for them to integrate reading practice into their daily routines. This flexibility can lead to increased practice time and improved reading proficiency. As highlighted by Nandbox (2023), “the convenience of mobile apps encourages more frequent reading practice outside traditional classroom settings.”

The use of mobile apps allows students to practice reading skills from wherever they are, from the comfort of their home, even if they are traveling. The accessibility they provide gives them better opportunities to grow daily.

On the other hand, it is important to mention that the person who practices their skills through the use of mobile apps can easily mix what they learn through artificial intelligence with the social context that surrounds them on a daily basis.

According to the teacher's opinion in the interview, mobile apps can improve comprehensive literacy development. On the other hand, the majority stated that mobile reading apps could help them reinforce the topics studied.

In conclusion, using mobile Apps is crucial for reading skill development, mainly in EFL students, by allowing students to practice reading anytime and anywhere, making it easier for them to integrate reading practice into their daily routines, providing engagement through interactive features, and offering personalized learning experience.

Now that the benefits of mobile Apps have over reading skill in English as a Foreign language are known, it is time to propose a set of them to practice and help students develop this ability, based on (Google Play, 2024) suggestions.

#### **4.4. Mobile Apps to Improve Reading Skill in Students**

##### ***4.4.1 Learn to read: Reading.com App***

Reading.com is the innovative children's reading app and phonics program brought to you by Teaching.com, a global leader in education helping over 75 million students and 1.7 million educators worldwide. Reading.com is a fun, shared play experience designed by educational experts to help your child learn to read – with the love, care, and joy that only a parent and child can share.

##### ***4.4.2 Duolingo***

Duolingo is a game-style language-learning tool that is based online. It offers a digital way to learn a whole host of new languages for students of varying ages and abilities. Thanks to smart algorithms, this can even adapt to help specific students in areas they need.

It could say that, with this app, users can improve their skills in the desired language or simply focus on the desired skill, in this case the reading ability of the English language. Being an online learning

application that can be an excellent tool in teaching the language or in self-learning for people who need to improve.

Duolingo can also be used in the classroom to create teaching strategies incorporating the use of smartphones in a responsible and controlled manner by teachers so that students perform practical tasks according to the indicated activity. This activity is created from the benefits that the app offers.

#### ***4.4.2.1. Duolingo ABC.***

Duolingo ABC is the fun, hands-on way for your child to learn to read and write in English! From preschool through first grade, engage your child with delightful children's stories and short lessons that teach the alphabet, phonics, sight words, vocabulary, and more. Duolingo ABC is the fun, hands-on way for your child to learn to read and write in English! From preschool through first grade, engage your child with delightful children's stories and short lessons that teach the alphabet, phonics, sight words, vocabulary, and more.

#### ***4.4.3 Beelinguapp***

Learning languages is fun and free with Beelinguapp! Learn a new language with Beelinguapp, the app that lets you read and listen to stories in different languages in parallel. Read the text and listen to the audio in the language you are learning, and read the same text in your language as a reference.

#### ***4.4.4 Storytime AI***

Discover the charm of Storytelling reimagined with Storytime AI – now with enhanced read-aloud video capabilities, perfect for boys and girls! Our innovative educational app not only lets you create personalized AI-powered children's books, but also lets you bring these stories to life through engaging AI videos. Using Airplay, effortlessly stream these educational videos to your TV, offering hours of guilt-free educational screen time for kids in a curated playlist. Discover the charm of Storytelling reimagined with Storytime AI – now with enhanced read-aloud video capabilities, perfect for boys and girls! Our innovative educational app not only lets you create personalized AI-powered children's books, but also lets you bring these stories to life through engaging AI videos. Using Airplay, effortlessly stream these educational videos to your TV, offering hours of guilt-free educational screen time for kids in a curated playlist.

#### ***4.4.5 Smart book***

Smart Book is a parallel book reader. The application provides the ability to view the author's translation of any paragraph in one click. Parallel text is easy to read and translate. You can select any part of the text for translation and translate it with a translation service that suits you.

That is to say, the smart book application offers the possibility of reading a countless number of books and listening to them simultaneously, in addition to having the translation of any word in the book available with just one click to reinforce vocabulary and better understanding of reading, all this available from a mobile phone.

In addition to improving reading, students or any user of this app can perform reading comprehension exercises such as true or false, answer questions, etc. Pronunciation can also improve by listening to what is being read and familiarizing the sounds with each word and knowing the meaning of each unknown word with the translation system offered by the app. All of this can be a great advantage in schools, because teachers can use this app to improve the teaching of students' reading skills.

The data found through the survey and the interview affirm that both the teacher and the students know few mobile apps, but are interested in learning about others. Furthermore, the teacher says that she would use them as teaching materials for reading in English and reading comprehension exercises.

This is related to the theory in the following way: In mobile reading apps, you can find texts and books on different topics that can be analyzed by students to carry out activities and develop English reading skills.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the use of mobile apps to improve English reading skill in ninth grade students at El Hular School, El Tuma – La Dalia, Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The different kinds of mobile Apps that can be used for reading purposes in education are native or platforms, web mobile, and hybrid.
2. Using mobile Apps is crucial to face reading difficulties and improve this skill, mainly in EFL students, by allowing students to practice reading anytime and anywhere, making it easier for them to integrate reading practice into their daily routines, providing engagement through interactive features, and offering personalized learning experience.
3. In order to develop reading skill in students of English as a Foreign Language, the following Apps are recommended: Learn to read: Reading.com App, Duolingo, Duolingo ABC, Beelinguapp, Storytime AI, and Smart book, which are free and useful.

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## Appendix 1. Descriptors Matrix

Variables	sub variables	Sub categories and descriptors	
4.1 Mobile apps	4.1.1 Definition		
	4.1.2 Characteristics		
	4.1.3 Use for educational purpose		
	4.1.4 Types of mobile Apps		
4.2 Reading Skill	4. 2.1 definition		
	4. 2.2 Importance		
	4. 2.3 Key points of reading skill	2.3.1 Decoding	
		2.3.2 Comprehension	
		2.3.3 Fluency	
		2.3.4 Vocabulary	
4. 2.4 The function of reading skill			
4. 2.5 Main difficulties in reading skill	4.2.5.1 Comprehension. 4.2.5.2. Answering question 4.2.5.3. Pronouncing 4.2.5.4. Finding information.		
4.3 Incidences of mobile Apps in reading skill development in ESL students.	4.3.1. Foster reading comprehension		
	4.3.2. Critical reading abilities		
	4.3.3. Personalized Learning Experience		
	4.3.4. Engagement Through Interactive Features		
	4.3.5. Skill Reinforcement		
	4.3.6. Comprehensive Literacy Development		
	4.3.7. Accessibility and Convenience		
4.4. Mobile apps proposed to improve reading skill	3.1 Learn to Read		
	3.2 Duolingo & Duolingo ABC		
	3.3 Beelinguapp		
	3.4 Storytime AI		
	3.5 Smart book		



## Appendix 2. Variables Operationalization

	variable	concept	Dimensions	Indicators	Questions	Scale	Instruments	To whom
	Mobile apps	“A mobile app (or mobile application) is a software application developed specifically for use on small, wireless computing devices, such as smartphones and tablets, rather than desktop or laptop computers” (Terrell and Wigmore, 2023)	Definition		What is your opinion about mobile apps in teaching English?	<b>Open</b>	Interview	Teacher
				What apps do you consider are important to enhance English skills?	<b>Open</b>	Interview	Teacher	
				Have you ever used mobile Apps to develop students’ reading skill? If so, which one/s?	<b>Open</b>	Interview	Teacher	
			Characteristics	There is use of mobile apps for English reading purpose during the class.	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Observation guide	Class	
				Have you used mobile apps to study English?	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Survey	Students	
				Have you used mobile apps to understand a reading or answer a reading exercise?	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Survey	Students	

			Use for educational purpose		What Apps have you used to answer questions from a reading?  How do you consider the use of mobile Apps to improve reading skill?  There is evidence of the use of Apps during exercises to answer them.	<b>Open</b>  <b>Closed</b> Useful Regular Not useful  <b>Closed</b> Yes No	Survey  Survey Interview  Observation guide	Students  Students Teacher  Class
	Reading skill	“A reading skill is a cognitive ability which a person is able to use when interacting with the written text. In the taxonomies given in the following paragraph some skills seem more	Definition  Important Key points of reading skill	Decoding Comprehension Fluency Vocabulary	How are the students’ reading skill levels in this group?  What is your level of reading comprehension?  What are the students good at when reading?  What are you good at when reading? Students show strengths in	<b>Closed</b> High Medium Low  <b>Closed</b> High Medium Low  <b>Closed</b> Decoding Comprehension Fluency Vocabulary  <b>Closed</b> Yes	Interview  Survey  Interview  Survey Observation Guide	Teacher  Students  Teacher  Students Class

		inclusive than others” <b>Fuente especificada no válida.</b>			decoding words when reading.	No	Observation Guide	Class
			The function of reading skills	<b>Comprehension.</b> <b>Producing answers.</b> <b>Pronouncing.</b> <b>Finding information.</b>	Students show strengths in comprehension when reading.	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Observation Guide	Class
			Main difficulties in reading skill		Students show strengths in fluency when reading.	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Observation Guide	Class
					Students show strengths in vocabulary when reading.	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Interview	Teacher
					What is the main function of reading skill in ESL students?	<b>Open</b>	Interview	Teacher
					What difficulties do students have when reading?	<b>Closed Comprehension.</b> <b>Producing answers.</b> <b>Pronouncing.</b> <b>Finding information.</b>	Survey	Students
					What difficulties do you have when reading?			
	Incidences of mobile Apps in reading skill development		Foster reading comprehension		What are the incidences of mobile Apps in students’ reading skill?	<b>Closed</b> ● Foster reading comprehension.	Interview	Teacher
			Critical reading abilities					

	in ESL students.		Personalized Learning Experience				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Critical reading abilities development.</li> <li>● Engagement.</li> <li>● Reinforcement.</li> <li>● Comprehensive Literacy Development.</li> <li>● None</li> </ul>	Survey	Students
			Engagement Through Interactive Features				What are the incidences of mobile Apps in your reading skill?		
			Skill Reinforcement						
			Comprehensive Literacy Development						
			Accessibility and Convenience						
variable	Concept	Dimensions	Indicators	question	Scale	instrument	To who		
Mobile apps to improve reading skill	According to Gunnell, M. (2024) Techopedia. "The simple mobile application definition is a type of software designed specifically for use on a mobile device."	Learn to Read Duolingo & Duolingo ABC Beelinguapp Storytime AI Smart book		Do you know any mobile App to improve reading skill?	<b>Open</b>	Interview Survey	Teacher Students		
				How would you use a mobile app during a class to improve reading skill?	<b>Open</b>	Interview Survey	Teacher Students		
				Are you interested in knowing other Apps to help you develop reading skill?	<b>Closed</b> Yes No	Interview Survey	Teacher Students		

## Appendix 3. Interview to Teacher



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### CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO REGIONAL MATAGALPA

#### I. General Data:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Introduction

Dear teacher, we are doing some research based in the use of mobile apps to improve English reading skill, as a requirement for graduating as Bachelors of Arts in English. For this, we need your valuable collaboration. Please answer the following interview. Thank you in advance.

#### III. Objective

Analyze the use of mobile apps during the English learning process to improve reading skill in ninth grade secondary students, at El Hular School, municipality of El Tuma – La Dalia, department of Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024.

#### IV. Development

1. What is your opinion about mobile apps in teaching English?
2. What apps do you consider are important to enhance English skills?
3. Have you ever used mobile Apps to develop students' reading skill? If so, which one/s?
4. How do you consider the use of mobile apps to improve reading skill?
  - a) Useful
  - b) Regular
  - c) Not useful

5. How are the students' reading skill levels in this group?
- High
  - Medium
  - Low
5. What are the students good at when reading?
- Decoding
  - Comprehension
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
6. What is the main function of reading skill in ESL students?
7. What difficulties do students have when reading?
- Comprehension.
  - Producing answers.
  - Pronouncing.
  - Finding information.
8. What are the incidences of mobile Apps in students' reading skill?
- Foster reading comprehension.
  - Critical reading abilities development.
  - Engagement.
  - Reinforcement.
  - Comprehensive Literacy Development
  - None
9. Do you know any mobile App to improve reading skill?
10. How would you use a mobile app during a class to improve reading skill?
11. Are you interested in knowing other Apps to help you develop reading skill?

## Appendix 4. Observation Guide



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### CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO REGIONAL MATAGALPA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

#### I. General Data:

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Observant name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Objective:

Analyze the use of mobile apps during the English learning process to improve reading skill in ninth grade secondary students, at El Hular School, municipality El Tuma – La Dalia, department of Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024

#### III. Development

Indicators	Yes	No	Comment
There is use of mobile apps for English reading purpose during the class.			
There is evidence of the use of Apps during exercises to answer them.			
Students show strengths in decoding words when reading.			
Students show strengths in comprehension when reading.			
Students show strengths in fluency when reading.			
Students show strengths in vocabulary when reading.			

## Appendix 5. Survey to Students



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### CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO REGIONAL MATAGALPA

Dear student, we are students of the fifth year of English as a foreign language (EFL) Degree of UNAN Managua, CUR Matagalpa. We are conducting a survey with the purpose of gathering useful information to analyse how mobile apps help to improve English reading skill in ninth grade secondary students, at El Hular School, municipality of El Tuma – La Dalia, department of Matagalpa, during the second semester 2024. For this, we need your valuable collaboration. Please answer the following survey. Thank you in advance.

#### I. General Data:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Community where you live: \_\_\_\_\_

Area: Urban / rural

#### II. Development

**Please answer the following questions:**

1. Have you used mobile apps to understand a reading or answer a reading exercise?

- a) Yes
- b) No

3. Have you used mobile apps to understand a reading or answer a reading exercise?

- a) Yes
- b) No

4. What Apps have you used to answer questions from a reading?



5. How do you consider the use of mobile Apps to improve reading skill?

- a) Useful
- b) Regular
- c) Not useful

6. What is your level of reading comprehension?

- a) High
- b) Medium
- c) Low

7. What are you good at when reading?

- a) Decoding
- b) Comprehension
- c) Fluency
- d) Vocabulary

8. What difficulties do you have when reading?

- a) Comprehension.
- b) Producing answers.
- c) Pronouncing.
- d) Finding information.

9. What are the incidences of mobile Apps in your reading skill?

- a) Foster reading comprehension.
- b) Critical reading abilities development.
- c) Engagement.
- d) Reinforcement.
- e) Comprehensive Literacy Development
- f) None

## Appendix 6. Activities Timetable

Phase	Activity	Date	Responsible
<b>I</b>	Select the theme	August 17 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>II</b>	Select the general and specific objectives, justification recollect information	August 24 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>III</b>	Working on the framework	August 31 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
	Elaborate description matrix and variable operationalization	August 31 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>IV</b>	Analyze the different techniques for gathering information	September 7 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>V</b>	Progress in the theoretical framework with the reading levels	September 21 <sup>st</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>VI</b>	Develop instruments for collecting information	September 28 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>VII</b>	Collect and analyze information	October 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>VIII</b>	Discuss results	October 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>IX</b>	Review the results obtained from the field work and their relationship with the objectives proposed in the research.	October 12 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>X</b>	Preparation of conclusions, recommendations, references and annexes.	October 19 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>XI</b>	Review the conclusions of the work developed and its relationship with the objectives.	October 26 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>XII</b>	Review of references and citations within the text, using APA standards.  Review introduction, dedication, acknowledgments and summary.	November 9 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group
<b>XIII</b>	Review the structure of the Graduation Seminar according to UNAN Managua regulations.	November 16 <sup>th</sup> 2024	All the group