The influence of the CommonLit platform on the development of reading skills as an academic reinforcement for A2 students

La influencia de la plataforma CommonLit en el desarrollo de las habilidades lectoras como refuerzo académico para los alumnos A2

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ABSTRACT

Ecuador, a country of privileges due to its geographical location, has varied socio-ideological and cultural influences that significantly impact the learning and acquisition of a foreign language. Few students are aware of the importance of English. However, many do not feel a real interest in or the need to use the language in their daily activities in a society where they only try to cover a momentary requirement. The complexity of mastering a new language like English is even worse because learners have to face environmental, and emotional difficulties, as reflected in the quantitative study carried out, which suggests energizing their learning acquisition using the qualitative method that promotes their voluntary interest in reading comprehension, as stated by a survey and class observation carried out in the First "A" of Accountancy at the Isabel de Godin Educative Unit in Riobamba. Therefore, the implementation of the CommonLit platform will determine academic progress and reading proficiency as the main tool to improve their reading skills by addressing challenges according to different levels of

English proficiency. In this sense, with the platform's interactive activities, adaptive learning tools, and variety of interesting information, participants' reading abilities significantly improve, according to the findings. Therefore, the CommonLit platform is a useful tool for students who intend to achieve A2 in their reading development since it enhances the academic level and cultivates an enduring enjoyment for reading.

Keywords: commonlit platform, level a2, reading skills

RESUMEN

Ecuador, un país privilegiado por su ubicación geográfica, tiene variadas influencias socio ideológicas y culturales que impactan significativamente en el aprendizaje y adquisición de una lengua extranjera. Pocos estudiantes son conscientes de la importancia del inglés. Sin embargo, muchos no sienten un interés real o la necesidad de utilizar el idioma en sus actividades diarias en una sociedad donde sólo se intenta cubrir un requerimiento momentáneo. De hecho, la complejidad de dominar un nuevo idioma como el inglés es aún más complejo porque los estudiantes deben enfrentar dificultades ambientales y emocionales, como lo refleja el estudio cuantitativo realizado, que sugiere fortalecer su adquisición mediante un método cualitativo que promueva su interés voluntario. en comprensión lectora, así lo afirma la encuesta y observación de clases realizada en el Primero "A" de Contabilidad de la Unidad Educativa Isabel de Godín de Riobamba. Por lo tanto, la implementación de la plataforma CommonLit determinará el progreso académico y el dominio lector como principal herramienta para mejorar sus habilidades lectoras abordando desafíos según los diferentes niveles de dominio del inglés. En este sentido, las actividades interactivas de la plataforma, las herramientas de aprendizaje adaptativa y la variedad de información interesante mejoran significativamente las habilidades de lectura de los estudiantes, según la investigación. Por lo tanto, La Plataforma CommonLit es una herramienta útil para los estudiantes que desean alcanzar A2 en su desempeño lector, ya que mejora su nivel académico y cultiva el placer duradero por la lectura.

Keywords: plataforma commonlit, nivel a2, habilidades lectoras

INTRODUCTION

The academic learning of the English language requires a process of social inclusion in a globalized world that incorporates dynamic communication through motivated behavior and involvement in technological advances as a contribution to education. Therefore, it is timely to address an innovative and novel research topic: The influence of the CommonLit Platform on developing reading skills as an academic reinforcement for A2 students.

The purpose of this research is to determine academic progress and reading proficiency as the main tool to improve the students' reading skills by studying the theoretical support of the problem and object of the research, verifying the actual state of the Isabel de Godin Educative Unit, implementing the CommonLit Platform on the development of reading skills and validating or evaluating the scientific article.

This research explores three relevant theories that shape language learning: Krashen's

input hypothesis, which puts pressure on students to learn material that is just a little bit beyond their current comprehension level. The CommonLit Platform accommodates this theory as it offers different levels of difficulty, teachers can choose challenging texts for their students, consequently, new knowledge is solidified using additional resources such as comprehension questions and vocabulary exercises.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory highlights the social interactions and help structures available in the Zone of Proximal Development. Students learn from the advice of more experienced peers or professors when working within their ZPD. Through the discussion of various viewpoints, clarification of concepts, and joint meaning-building, this collaborative approach allows students to acquire a greater understanding of the material. Because they are supported by the collective knowledge and abilities of their classmates, they can also attain a higher degree of understanding and analytical thinking than they might on their own.

Hymes' theory of communicative competence emphasizes appropriate language use in various social circumstances. Each theory offers valuable insights into language acquisition, but their limitations demand a more integrated and nuanced approach to language education. The CommonLit Platform offers texts not only on Linguistic understanding but also texts that invite students to reflect on values, culture, and diverse social situations about their own social and cultural context.

Indeed, one English skill is reading, which is the key to the personal and intellectual development of the human being because it is a fundamental ability for communication, the acquisition of knowledge, the development of imagination, and creativity.

By incorporating this hypothesis, CommonLit into their academic practice, A2 students will see significant improvements in their reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and general literacy skills.

Previous literature in this field has laid a solid foundation for the current study, with research at international, national, and local levels that has explored various aspects related to the topic in question, including the effectiveness of the use CommonLit platform to develop teaching-learning process of reading skills in a better way.

(Masuhara, 2013) distinguishes conventional reading education as a method that stresses understanding through the post-reading questions which carry on the deficit in reading skills at a general level in both the mother tongue and a second language is highly worrying (Qarqez, 2017), as is shown in our school, where no one handles an important tool such as the CommonLit platform that allows students to develop their reading skills in a better nor teachers improve their reading comprehension and ICT skills since the lack of training and experience makes them uncomfortable with the technology, (Noordan, 2022), Therefore, learners have difficulty in acquiring the fundamentals of reading, such as a lack of exposure to a variety of texts, a lack of differentiated instruction and guided instruction, a lack of opportunities for feedback and evaluation, and a lack of engagement opportunities.

In this sense, the following concerns should be addressed: How does it influence the development of reading skills? What are its didactic and methodological contributions? What are the reading skills that must be developed to improve reading?

Clearly, (Oroujlou, 2012) his article The Importance of Media in Foreign Language Learning, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) refers to a wide range of information management, transmission, and exchange technologies. By giving students access to real-world communication possibilities with native speakers, interactive learning environments, and authentic language resources with the help of the technological tool CommonLit. These technologies are essential to the teaching of foreign languages. Students can participate in flexible and immersive learning experiences that improve their language competence and acquisition by integrating ICT.

(Norman, 2023) states effective global literacy interventions are essential for improving these educational outcomes. In this sense, a virtual learning environment or online learning space and a collection of computer tools facilitate interactive teaching methods so that students can perform activities that are inherent to the student's interest scope, like speaking, reading, writing, and completing exercises, as well as questionnaires for themselves their partners or groups. (Dung, 2020), that is why, accessible from anywhere and, currently, also from any device.

Thus, (Maffea, 2020) states to the absence of appropriate resources, students may find limitations in their ability to comprehend concepts, practice skills, and apply what they have learned as well as (Suárez, 2015) refers to CommonLit as an appropriate strategy for a comprehensive reading that allows students to predict the text, formulate propositions, analyze the concepts expressed explicitly or implicitly in the text, and expand their ability to think to satisfy the university's objective of improving learning competency, this plan incorporates sociocultural components and the Common European Framework of References for Language (CEFR) into the language (Novawan, 2023).

In addition, these scientific contributions were crucial to carry out a comprehensive analysis and validating the independent and dependent variables, along with their respective dimensions and indicators. The most relevant studies in this area are presented below.

According to (Özdemi, 2017) his article emphasizes the variables that were used in research like the independent variable that is selected by the dependent variable and is supposed to provide insight into a problem's solution. For this reason, the CommonLit Platform is the variable that scientists test or examine to evaluate the impact of changes made to the dependent variable, the teaching and learning process of reading skills. It stands for the outcome, response, or effect that is being investigated in this study.

In that respect, (Perdomo, 2022), examines the impact and effectiveness of CommonLit as a digital educational tool, particularly in the context of the shift towards online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the effectiveness of the platform in improving the skills of reading comprehension besides its recognition and use by a wide range of educators, librarians, students, and parents. Positive feedback on how it impacts students' learning has been received. Its adaptability to remote learning environments, together with its ability to offer captivating resources and easy transitions, has made it a crucial tool in keeping education going during the pandemic.

Meanwhile, (Osorio, 2021), refers to the teaching-learning process as a modeled process that guides the development of the learning procedure and is constantly evolving based on the student's intellectual maturity. and the individual requirements of individuals participating, both objective and subjective, with the teachers and students acting as the process's primary protagonists. The teaching-learning process adapts to students' needs as they proceed to make sure that what they learn is successful, tailored to them, and effective in promoting both their intellectual and personal development.

Furthermore (Spante, 2018) focuses on digital competence, which refers to people's capacity to use digital tools, resources, and technologies ethically and effectively to access, manage, assess, integrate, create, communicate, and share information in a variety of contexts. It includes all the abilities, actions, attitudes, and knowledge required to succeed in the digital age. While (Zhu, 2022) refers to enhancing the learning process with various tools and features such as interactive word practice, multimedia components, and glossary pop-ups. These resources help students acquire crucial reading skills, fluency, and comprehension while also keeping them engaged.

As stated by (Park, 2012) reader response helps students find the pleasures of reading while also helping them to read these texts critically and decipher them more effectively. Using a text to understand and question the self, others, and the world means that when students interact with texts from their point of view, they not only enjoy reading because they can relate to the content on a personal level but they also gain critical reading abilities (Zin, 2022)

Meanwhile, (Faucett, 2021) mentions Michelle Brown, the founder who highlights the effectiveness of the CommonLit educational platform. It is recommended by the Ministry of Education, it is a nonprofit organization offering a free reading comprehension platform for teachers, students, and

parents. It aims to influence the Commonlit platform on the development of reading skills as an academic reinforcement for students. In this context, learners are required to integrate the communicative skills of the English language with those of reading comprehension and the necessary ICT. She used an approach that allows her to customize training to each student's needs using online reading functions, texts of excellent quality that are in line with guidelines, and data analyses. With a combination of conventional

and electronic tools, this method ensures a comprehensive approach to learning where students not only become more proficient readers but also more proficient language users overall.

Teaching the learning process of reading skills involves a range of methods and ideas proposed by many writers. According to (Collins & Smith, 1980) many school reading courses do not aim to teach the kinds of prediction skills and comprehension monitoring that we have covered. Instead, the curricula emphasize the reader's ultimate interpretations, including the author's objectives, important ideas, and the significance of individual words and sentences. This specific focus results from attempting to teach reading as a process (i.e., the development of an interpretation) as opposed to reading as a product (i.e., the interpretation) (Lyon, 1998)

In addition, (Lemov, 2016)states that focusing on precise and perceptive reading is essential for effectiveness so that it can be taught and acquired. Teachers must promptly detect the needs and difficulties that students have in reading, give them confidence, and motivate them through decoding, analysis, interpretation, and classification of information. Thus, reading becomes an effective and meaningful process (Gedik, 2022)

(Tomlinson, 2023) in his book Developing Materials for Language Teaching refers to

Masuhara reviewed six international coursebooks for adult learners released in 2012 and discovered that comprehension questions continue to be a common part of most published materials. These include gap-filling, matching activities, and test selection, all of which foster critical thinking and conversations. Furthermore, this will be even more valuable if we employ our recommended interactive apps. Reading comprehension focuses on the interactive model of reading comprehension, which is a top-down process that interacts with bottom-up processes such as word recognition. This point of view emphasizes the significance of previous reading experience along with word recognition skills in influencing comprehension. (Holmes, 2009).

According to current demands, strategies are crucial tools and techniques that teachers and students should use to support comprehension, problem-solving, and skill development. (Afflerbach, 1990), states the metacognitive methods of proficient readers, which track comprehension while the material is read, heavily rely on prediction. By helping readers to make connections between the text and what they already know, prediction stimulates active

engagement with the material. Similarly, readers keep track of how well they always comprehend the material. As readers evaluate the text, formulate theories, and update their predictions considering new information, they develop critical thinking abilities. (Shihab, 2011) asserts that prior experience is

crucial to reading comprehension because it allows us to make predictions, compare, determine, and analyze. This is necessary for meaningful and productive critical thinking.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study applies a non-experimental design because it focuses on observing and measuring variables without intervention. It employs the qualitative and quantitative approach which enables the tabulation of results and the creation of a database based on the analysis and data collection. This approach proves essential in addressing the problem formulation and verifying the stated goals and hypotheses.

The CommonLit Platform was employed as an independent variable with (ICT), analytical thinking abilities, academic performance, and task outcome, and the teaching and learning process for reading skills was used as a dependent variable in this descriptive correlational study with Instruction, Methodology, and Reading comprehension as their dimensions respectively.

Even more, the study of these variables regarding the impact of the Commonlit Platform on improving A2 student´s reading skills.(Creswell, 2007) refers to using non-numerical data such as words, pictures, or observations. By using techniques such as class observations, surveys and text analysis, it focuses on investigating meanings, experiences, and viewpoints.

(Ramos, 2010), states students' perceptions of the CommonLit platform's effectiveness in helping them improve their ability to read. They examined topics such as its usefulness and confidence instill. By analyzing this, they discovered how students' perceptions of the platform can differ and how it impacts their learning**.**

The methodology of the work, due to the dynamism of the variables involved in the study focused on an active and innovative learning process, uses theoretical-practical and metacognitive methods that help analyze other variables in learning such as school performance, technical of study, language, personality, motivation, self-concept, sociability and communication habits (Vega Caro y Vico Bosch, 2022, p. 365); part of the scientific method to shape its structure based on qualitative -quantitative methods that provided

analytical and numerical information on the problem posed, thus justifying the sequence in the monitoring of the process and guaranteeing the dissemination of the work and its results through the contextualization of the topic.

To evaluate the efficacy and effects of this research, some methodologies have been used to collect information on user experiences and assess learning objectives, these strategies make use of quantitative techniques like surveys to students and teachers. Qualitative approaches, such as in-class observations, offer comprehensive perspectives on participant experiences and practical applications. Consequently, mixed approaches integrate both qualitative and quantitative data to provide thorough insight. Studies like control-group comparisons evaluate the platform's efficacy over time.

Additionally, a systemic and functional approach is used to understand how the CommonLit platform functions within the educational system and how each component students, teachers, and technology- interact to contribute to the overall goal of improving reading skills. Furthermore, a descriptive method a survey, and an observation class were applied in this research.

Moreover, the study was carried out in the academic year 2023-2024

Scheme of the design of the variables

S = sampling

IV = Independent Variable: The CommonLit Platform

DV= Dependent Variable: The teaching-learning process in reading skills

R = Relation

Population, sample, and sampling

The data collection applied was in the First A Accountancy with 24 students between 15 and 16 years and researchers have opted for whole population sampling, or census sampling, which offers a comprehensive perspective of the population. Besides, the researchers are educators, who have direct access to this particular student population within the school setting, ensuring thorough observation and sufficient data gathering.

The selection of this sample of the student population was supported by its proximity and privileged access, which enable a more accurate assessment of the connections between the problem researched and the characteristics of the students.

Population: 24 students of First A Accountancy specialty

Researchers have used an observation class format in the classroom that allows them to see how the students manage tasks and whether they are actively engaging. Thus, investigators observed and evaluated the students' behaviors, interactions, and engagement levels during class activities methodically. This provided an extensive understanding of managing tasks as well as student participation in the classroom.

Similarly, a survey was employed to learn more about their shortcomings and strengths. Researchers get a clear image of the general skills and challenges of learners by examining the survey responds to find common variations and trends.

To illustrate the challenges and strengths associated with each metric, statistical data is gathered and presented in tables and graphs. It also illustrates the relationship between the two variables under investigation: the dependent variable, which focuses on understanding what was being read, and the independent variable, (Rice, 2007) are used for practical, descriptive instruction that emphasizes computational methods.

RESULTS

The following Class Observation Sheet (see Table 1) was used with 24 students in First A Accountancy Baccalaureate. It contains fifteen indicators for Pre-reading activities**,** during, and after a

reading class which offer a thorough framework for assessing comprehension of text and student participation during the lesson. These metrics are intended to evaluate students' reading readiness, their engagement with the text during instruction, and their ability to apply and report on their learning thereafter.

Table 1
Class Observation Sheet

UNIDAD EDUCATIVA "ISABEL DE GODIN"
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Juan de Velasco y Alfonso Villagómez
inspecciongeneralueisabelg@gmail.com
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Class Observation Sheet					
Date:					
Course: FIRST BACCALAUREATE A ACCOUNTING					
Content:					
Aim:					
References: 1=excellent 2=adequate 3=moderately adequate 4=poorly adequate 5=not possible to observe					
Stage of Reading Lesson	1	2	3	4	5
Pre-reading activities					
1. Activating prior knowledge					
2. Generating Questions					
3. Previewing Text Features					
4. Making Predictions					
5. Setting Reading Goals					
While-reading activities					
1. Demonstrate Understanding					
2. Synthesize ideas					
3. Encourage Participation					
4. Utilize Various Activities					
5. Use Additional Materials					
Post-reading activities					
1. Discuss Main Ideas					
2. Reflect on Learning					
3. Provide Feedback					
4. Extend Learning					
5. Assess Comprehension					

Researchers noticed that the instructor did not use the necessary resources, techniques, or strategies to help students learn how to read. They did not make use of any technological resources that enhance the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, they cannot make assumptions, analyze the text, or evaluate the ideas either directly or indirectly stated in the text.

When the sample was chosen, the survey technique was used for both the independent variable and the dependent variable, with their respective dimensions and indicators. It contains ten statements about the development of reading skills in a normal class with the CommonLit platform. They aim to assess many facets of the platform-assisted learning of reading skills, such as engagement, critical thinking, and comprehension.

Table 2
Results of the student survey

Results of the survey for students

This survey is applied to students First A Accounting Baccalaureate in the Educative Unit Isabel de Godin in Riobamba.

Age:_____ Gender:_____ Male   Female   _

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree: N/A (Not provided in the table)
Q1: I have difficulties understanding due to a lack of vocabulary reading	4%	8%	21%	42%	25%
Q2: I have to translate word by word to understand the text.	4%	4%	25%	42%	25%
Q3: I struggle with reading comprehension exercises.	4%	8%	21%	38%	29%
Q4: I understand the main message of the text and relate it to the information I have already known.	4%	8%	21%	33%	33%
Q5: I communicate my ideas about the reading I have read.	4%	8%	25%	38%	25%
Q6: The application of CommonLit has made reading more engaging and interesting for me.	4%	17%	13%	33%	33%
Q7: The CommonLit platform allows me to develop my reading comprehension.	4%	8%	13%	38%	38%
Q8: I improve my analytical thinking abilities during English reading comprehension focusing tasks and activities on CommonLit.	4%	4%	17%	33%	42%
Q9: The CommonLit platform has positively influenced my ability to comprehend English grammar rules within texts.	4%	8%	29%	25%	33%
Q10: The CommonLit facilitates the integration of communicative English abilities.	4%	8%	13%	29%	46%

Based on the responses provided by three individuals to the 10 questions, it can be concluded that there is generally a positive perception of the CommonLit platform and its impact on the development

of reading comprehension and English communication skills. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements related to the utility of CommonLit in improving reading comprehension, facilitating the integration of English communication skills, and making reading more engaging and immersive. However, there was some variability in the responses, particularly in questions related to specific aspects such as the influence on the development of analytical skills or understanding of English grammar rules. This suggests that while CommonLit appears to be beneficial in many aspects, its impact may vary among users and in different areas of language proficiency. Overall, the responses reflect a positive perception of CommonLit as an effective tool for enhancing reading comprehension and fostering the development of English communication skills.

Furthermore, the chi-square (refer to Table 3) was used to tabulate the data and establish the probability between the information collected in the surveys. The chi-square measures findings were used to compare the various student survey statements, and the results established the correlation and likelihood that represent the various values.

Finally, most students acknowledged that their reading comprehension, vocabulary growth, and overall literacy skills increased because of using the Commonlit platform. This feedback indicates that the platform is appropriately targeting important elements of literacy development by providing varied examples and tasks. In addition, it allows that students are able to comprehend and interpret texts, increase their vocabulary in a better way.

Table 3
Individual test statistics

Estadísticos de prueba

	D	NAND	A	SA
Chi-cuadrado	6,200	2,000	2,000	2,600
gl	2	4	4	6
Sig. asin.	,045	,736	,736	,857

The previous table shows the results of the chi square test for the indicators of the variables listed in Table 2 individually, which can be summarized in Table 4 in a general way.

Table 4
Chi-square test

| Chi-square test					
Value		gl	Asymptotic significance(bilateral)	Exact significance (bilateral)	Exact meaning (unilateral)
Pearson chi-square	20,160[a]	1	<.001		
Continuity[b] Correction	16,503	1	<.001		
Probability Ratio	25,253	1	<.001		
Fisher exact test				<.001	<.001
Lineal by lineal Associate	19,320	1	<.001		
N of valid cases	24				

Considering the research questions

Does the use of the CommonLit platform influence the development of reading comprehension skills? Which becomes the hypothesis that must be subjected to a non-parametric statistical test or goodness-of-fit test, called Chi-square (χ^2). SPSS software has been used to perform this test. A significance level of 0.05 has been considered, with 36 degrees of freedom, and the results obtained in SPSS are the following:

The calculated value, or critical value, for the chi-square in our research is $\chi_c^2 ==12,800$. Instead, the tabulated value for the chi square, with α = 0.05 and 36 degrees of freedom is $\chi_t^2 = 50,998$. Since $\chi_c^2 < \chi_t^2$ accepts our research hypothesis; This is because χ_c^2 is in the limits of acceptance, as can be seen in the following figure:

Figure 1

Probabilidad
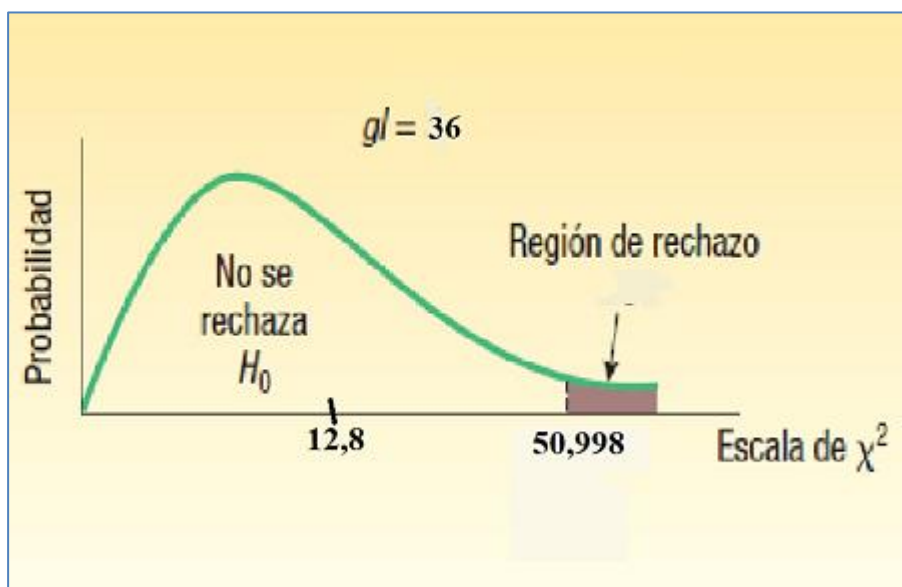
Therefore, the use of the CommonLit platform influences the development of reading comprehension skills since the analysis of the outcomes for the various strategies used is beneficial, as they help to determine academic progress and reading proficiency. The Commonlit platform as the main tool to improve the reading skills of students in the First Year of Accountancy at the Isabel de Godin Educative Unit, reinforce A2 proficiency in English.

Moreover, the employment of this tool as an educational support instrument remarkably develops the reading abilities of A2 students in comparison with traditional methods of reading instruction.

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