



# Pre-reading skills in early childhood children

## Habilidades prelectoras en niños de educación inicial

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### Abstract

Pre-reading skills are important because they allow developing from an early age the necessary foundations to achieve a clear and fluent understanding of information. This leads the child to infer, analyze and synthesize written texts in various playful situations that stimulate said ability, differentiating written or verbal knowledge, emerging writing and linguistic awareness are gradually being perfected, until the child reaches the skills necessary for the development of literacy. The research described the findings obtained from a comparative study of two educational institutions of the Initial level of the Constitutional Province of Callao and the San Martín de Porres district of Lima. The state of the art is based on the contributions of psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology on the learning of initial reading. A sample of 86 children was considered, the approach was quantitative, non-experimental design. The findings show that there is no significant difference regarding the level of pre-reading skills between both samples. The study's contribution points out the relationship between the development of reading and writing, since by interacting with its various elements, the capacity is developed so that it matures to achieve learning from the reading of written media.

**Keywords:** Capacity; Dexterity; Inference; Initial Reading; Pre-Reading Skills; Psycholinguistic Process; Cognitive Process.

### Resumen

Las habilidades prelectoras son importantes porque permiten desarrollar desde temprana edad los cimientos necesarios para lograr una comprensión clara y fluida de la información. Esta lleva al niño a inferir, analizar y sintetizar textos escritos en diversas situaciones lúdicas que estimulen dicha habilidad, diferenciando el conocimiento escrito o verbal, la escritura que emerge y la conciencia lingüística poco a poco se van perfeccionando, hasta que el niño alcance las destrezas necesarias para el desarrollo de la lectoescritura. La investigación describió los hallazgos obtenidos de un estudio comparativo de dos

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instituciones educativas del nivel Inicial de la Provincia Constitucional del Callao y del distrito limeño de San Martín de Porres. El estado del arte se basa en los aportes de la psicolingüística y la psicología cognitiva sobre el aprendizaje de la lectura inicial. Se consideró una muestra de 86 niños, el enfoque fue cuantitativo, de diseño no experimental. Los hallazgos muestran que no existe diferencia significativa respecto al nivel de las habilidades prelectoras entre ambas muestras. La contribución del estudio señala la relación que hay entre el desarrollo de la lectura y la escritura, ya que al interactuar con sus diversos elementos, se consolida la capacidad se desarrolla para que vaya madurando para lograr el aprendizaje desde la lectura de medios escritos.

**Palabras clave:** Capacidad; Destreza; Habilidades Prelectoras; Inferencia; Lectura Inicial; Proceso Psicolingüístico; Proceso Cognitivo.

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## I. Introduction.

The acquisition of reading in children is a long-term process, whose purpose is to improve communication, understand symbols and finally, exercise understanding of the text. According to the psycholinguistic-cognitive approach, skills are required, such as remembering words and verbal elements, decoding the sounds of letters typical of oral language, as well as letter recognition activities. For this, it is required that in the first years of schooling, decoding skills are stimulated, guaranteeing success in understanding by putting into practice various didactic strategies that enable the articulation of prior knowledge with the ideas expressed in the text itself. It should be sought that children have access to knowledge of the written language under conditions of equity (Ferreiro, 2002).

Among the pre-reading language skills most cited in studies of preschool children are phonological awareness, name recognition, letter sounds, and vocabulary acquisition. Canales and Porta (2016), argue that while phonological awareness and knowledge of the sound of letters contribute to the identification of infrequent written words in first and second grade (Ehri et al., 2001; Porta and Difabio 2012), vocabulary and oral comprehension of sentences favor the processes of reading comprehension in later grades (Anderson and Freebody, 1981; Dickinson and Tabors, 2001). In short, not knowing the importance of stimulating pre-reading skills in school is related to the comprehension problems that boys and girls will present later on.

In Peru, 10.1% of children are at level III in reading comprehension. Most fail to understand some element of the text and say their answer; 44.8% are at level II, since they have poor understanding and 45.1% are at level I, and only achieve the simplest activities (MINEDU, 2013). In addition, the Junyent (2016) study concluded that boys perform lower than girls; the results of students residing in rural areas are lower than those of those who live in urban areas; and students in public schools show disadvantages compared to those in private schools. Thus, to form the habit of reading from an early age, it is necessary to develop phonological and alphabetic knowledge, the speed of metalinguistic knowledge, linguistic skills and certain cognitive processes, such as memory and attention (Sellés 2006).

Cognitive psycholinguistics shows that preschoolers are competent to recognize the characteristics of words, interpret a text or rather give meaning to what they read. According to Jiménez and O'Shanahan (2008) conceptualize that the psychology of language allows access to two patterns of mental operations through the understanding of reading, one of them is to investigate the meaning of words and the other is to interpret the text.

In addition, they report that children are also aware of certain characteristics of letters, and are able to name some of them. They can tell the difference between a word, a letter, and a number.

For learning to read, prerequisites must be met for the child to develop: verbal working memory, metalinguistic skills, and oral language. This learning has no studies or researches that specify how to develop these variables, but it is known that they are linked to neurological maturity according to their age. In kindergarten, teachers use strategies and teachings to train children through playful activities, experimentation in a fun and meaningful way (Carmena et al., 2002). So, not only should the teacher's interaction with the child by reading stories be strengthened, but this activity should be encouraged in the initial institutions, with recreational resources, supported by images and above all, according to their age, in the search for the strengthening that lead them to the achievement of the competition..

It should be noted that pre-reading skills are skills that are reinforced in the initiation to reading, whose development occurs progressively and, this approximates the situations of their environment, which allow to naturally stimulating this process, by indicating skills such as visual and auditory discrimination in achieving this ability (Fernandez, 2016).

Another feature that this study covers are the dimensions of pre-reading skills, the first of which is perceptual; that exercises these skills through the sensory stimuli that occurs when collecting information and then building new knowledge. In this sense, Vallés (2005) infers that they are the ones in charge of collecting the information that the brain will channel for processing and interpretation, since their function is to capture information. Within this context, two senses are considered: visual and auditory; each of them encompass different skills that favor pre-reading. Likewise, Fernández (2016) refers that visual and auditory perception, rhythm, the construction of laterality and phonological awareness are the processes directly involved in the reception of information (p. 9).

The lexical dimension explains that when learning occurs, it is integrated into the lexicon, which is a store of words known or to be known. For this reason, the lexical process is the set of procedures necessary to achieve learning of the words they read; and these words are stored in the lexicon that mobilizes a part of the nervous system and each time it generates learning, a word will be registered in this area of the brain (Aragón, 2011).

In the syntactic dimension, words are recognized for the formulation of sentences or a sequence of words. It is the relationship that exists between words to form sentences and get a written message, these grammatical structures agree with the sequence of words that manage to obtain information to formulate a preposition (Vallés, 2005). Knowledge of the words or syntax helps to discriminate each sentence, achieving the meaning of the sentence and in turn is linked to the words to better understand the message of the sentence (Fernández, 2016). In such a way that to provide new information it is important to join several words and complete those by giving it structure when forming a sentence.

El objetivo de la investigación fue: comparar el nivel de las habilidades prelectoras en los niños de cinco años de una institución inicial del Callao y San Martín de Porres 2019. La hipótesis que se consideró fue: Existe diferencia significativa del nivel de las habilidades prelectoras; nivel perceptivo; léxico y sintáctico entre una institución inicial del Callao y una en San Martín de Porres.

## II. Method.

The study was of a quantitative approach, a type of basic research. It consists of broadening knowledge, carrying out and deepening theories to understand reality, thus it is also possible to transform or develop theories (Sáez, 2017). The study level is descriptive because it will specify the research problem, describe reality, and it will also observe behavior without affecting it; Added to this, it is a comparative investigation as it will describe the realities. The design was non-experimental because the variable was only observed in its natural environment without being manipulated.

The population is established by 182 children from an institution in Callao and another in San Martín de Porres (Peru). Non-probabilistic-intentional sampling was chosen, because the researcher will choose the elements that are representative, which he must know to the population to define the categories that can be valued and interpret the phenomenon being analyzed (Tamayo, 2004). A checklist was applied in the September-October 2019 period, obtaining the response of 88 students, but two eliminated because they were incomplete, obtaining a final sample of 86 boys and girls from the two institutions.

For data collection, a checklist of 25 items prepared by Valverde (2013) and adapted for the investigation was used, with a measurement scale of three categories: (3) = Yes, (2) = sometimes, (1) = no.

## III. Results.

From the descriptive results of the pre-reading skills in the two educational institutions, 2.3% of the children of San Martín de Porres are at the beginning level of pre-reading skills, the opposite happening in Callao, where no individuals were found located on the home level. Regarding the process level, it was found that 2.1% of the children of Callao are located at this level of pre-reading skills, similar to 81.4% of the children of San Martín de Porres. On the other hand, 27.9% of children from Callao are at the level of achievement of pre-reading skills, while 6.9% of children from San Martín de Porres are also at this level.

The results of the perceptual level of pre-reading skills in the two educational institutions show that 7.0% of the children in Callao and 20.9% in San Martín de Porres are at the beginning level. Regarding the process level, it was found that 65.1% of the children in Callao are at this level of pre-reading skills and 62.8% of the children in San Martín de Porres. On the other hand, 27.9% of children in Callao are at the level of achievement of pre-reading skills, and only 16.9% of children in San Martín de Porres are also at this level.

The results of the lexical level of pre-reading skills in the two educational institutions show that 2.3% of the children in one institution in Callao and 4.7% of the children in the other institution in San Martín de Porres are in the start level. Regarding the process level, it was found that 72.1% of the children in Callao are located at that level of pre-reading skills and 81.4% of the children in San Martín de Porres. On the other hand, 25.6% of children in Callao are at the level of achievement of pre-reading skills, while only 14.0% of children in San Martín de Porres are also at this level.

The results of the syntactic level of pre-reading skills in the two educational institutions show that 58.1% of the children in Callao and 76.7% in San Martín de Porres are located at the process level of pre-reading skills. On the other hand, 41.9% of children in Callao are at the level of achievement of pre-reading skills, while 23.3% of children in San Martín de Porres are at that level.

### Comparison of samples.

In relation to the results that verify the study hypotheses, the following was found: in the test statistics, where the U Mann Whitney value is 619,500 with a Z of -2,641; Likewise, the p-value of 0.008 is lower than the p-value ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), which establishes rejecting the null hypothesis, that is, there is a significant difference in the level of pre-reading skills between boys and girls from an initial institution in Callao and another from San Martin de Porres.

Table 1

*Ranges and test statistics of pre-reading skills in five-year-old children of the I.E.I. Callao and San Martin de Porres*

School	Rank			Test statistic	
	N	Average range	Sum of ranges	Test	Value
María Auxiliadora	43	50.59	2175.50	U	619.500
Manitos creativas	43	36.41	1565.50	Z	-2.641
Total	86			p	0.008

Likewise, the results of the table are observed in the perceptual dimension where the U value is 667,000 with Z of -2,236. Likewise, the p-value of 0.025 is less than the Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05, establishing that the alternative hypothesis is admitted, that is, there is a significant difference in the perceptual level of pre-reading skills between an initial institution in Callao and one in San Martin of Porres.

Table 2

*Ranges and test statistics of the perceptual level of pre-reading skills in five-year-old children of the I.E.I. Callao and San Martin de Porres*

School	Rank			Test statistic	
	N	Average range	Sum of ranges	Test	Value
María Auxiliadora	43	49.49	2128.00	U	667.000
Perceptual Manitos creativas	43	37.51	1613.00	Z	-2.236
Total	86			p	0.025

Consequently, in the results of the table of the lexical dimension we have the test statistics, where the U value is 763,000 with Z of -1,410; There is also the p-value of 0.159 greater than Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) 0.05, establishing the acceptance of the null hypothesis. That is, there is no significant difference in the lexical level of pre-reading skills between both samples.

Table 3

*Ranges and test statistics of the lexical level of pre-reading skills in five-year-old children of the I.E.I. Callao and San Martin de Porres*

School	Rank			Test statistic	
	N	Average range	Sum of ranges	Test	Value

	María Auxiliadora	43	47.26	2032.00	U	763.000
Lexicon	Manitos creativas	43	39.74	1709.00	Z	-1.410
	Total	86			p	0.159

Consequently, the table results in the syntactic dimension according to the test statistics, where the U-value is 616,500. On the other hand, there is a p-value of 0.007, establishing that there is a significant difference in the syntactic level of pre-reading skills between an initial institution in Callao and one in San Martín de Porres.

Table 4

*Ranges and test statistics of the syntactic level of pre-reading skills in five-year-old children of the I.E.I. Callao and San Martín de Porres*

		Rank			Test statistic	
	School	N	Average range	Sum of ranges	Test	Value
	María Auxiliadora	43	50.66	2178.50	U	616.500
Syntactic	Manitos creativas	43	36.34	1562.50	Z	-2.707
	Total	86			p	0.007

#### IV. Discussion.

The findings indicate significant differences in the level of pre-reading skills in children aged five years between an initial institution in Callao and another in the district of San Martín de Porres. These results are supported by Fernández (2016) who indicates that the development of reading and writing are related because they are committed to each other, and this learning needs various elements to acquire efficient skills for reading and writing, such as discrimination, memory and visual identification among others, to obtain the ability to read these skills are needed; Compared with other research that has a difference with Candiotti and Paucar (2014) who show that the results of the general hypothesis: there is no difference of significance in the leveling of pre-reading phonological metalinguistic skills in the minors of said institutions of this study. Therefore we deduce that there are differences with their study, since the level of pre-reading skills are different compared to the other study, a similarity was found in both institutions.

In fact, the results of this study reveal that the most outstanding level is that of the process, with an average of 76.7% from both institutions, as stated by Roche and Jiménez (2000) that to reinforce pre-reading capacities in initial education, it is necessary to develop basic aspects of motor and perceptual maturation, which is discrimination of form and sounds, the psychomotor, spatial orientations, spatio-temporal ordering, rhythm, and the neuro-cognitive which is attention, concentration, memory and imagination; as potential generators of the boy and girl to acquire reading skills. This is different from the results in the Pucarami-Ascensión and Santa Bárbara-Huancavelica schools, showing that 100% of the children have an achievement level, due to pre-

reading skills and knowledge. These skills or knowledge must be built through previous experience or knowledge, as the theory of constructivism explains. Saldarriaga et al. (2016) mention that it is the construction of knowledge that occurs through cognitive and social factors every day, and is acquired in the experience that the child has when interacting with their environment. The optimal level of these skills cannot be obtained in pre-school children without properly reinforcing them.

Regarding the results of the first perceptual dimension, there is a significant difference in the perceptual level of pre-reading skills. At its percentage level, it shows that 14.0% of children are at the beginning level; Outlining 64.0% of students are at the process level; and 22.1% of students at the achievement level. On the other hand, there are differences with the studies by Rojas (2018) who obtained that 76% of the children performed above what is adequate; 16% of children are at the appropriate level. Finally, 8% of children are in the level below adequate. In other words, these children lack basic visual perceptual skills that favor access to literacy learning.

Bautista (2010) argues that the reading method is based on these principles: (a) it fosters early stimulation and attention to progress in the learning and teaching succession, (b) it reduces developmental deficiencies, (c) children can and want to read from the early stage, children's brains have the ability to absorb a lot of information, (e) learning to read has to be entertaining. Therefore, the difference between the two studies is that the children analyzed here have a better level of perception for pre-reading. Similarly, there are differences, when comparing these results with the findings of Pino and Bravo (2005), who indicate that in visual perception, concentration and memory, it was obtained that 56.92% were located in the achievement level, for they also have a better level of perception; which are similarities found with other studies. In this regard, Vallés (2005) explains that these capacities are in charge of collecting information to transfer it to the brain, process it and interpret it. This information is perceptual, since it is produced through the senses.

In the results obtained in the lexical dimension of pre-reading skills, 19.8% of the subjects were obtained at the level achieved, with no significant difference between an initial institution in Callao and one in San Martín de Porres, establishing a difference with Silva et al. (2018), who show that in the pretest measurement, 50% of children reach that level of achievement. This is justified by Doman's theory; who explains that the main thing in the early ages is that, at an older age, it is more difficult to learn single words, but the individual will advance to another phase; The words are produced according to the age of the child, as well as with time, it passes with the books, to achieve attention towards reading (Chaparro, 2010). This lexical dimension will help to recognize words or learn new words according to the age of the child; As Aragón (2011) indicates, the lexical process is a set of procedures necessary to achieve a learning of the words they read; and these words are stored in the lexicon that is located in a part of the nervous system, and each time we learn a word it will be filed there.

According to the results of the syntactic level of the pre-reading skills, there is a significant difference in the scores of the syntactic level of the pre-reading skills. It should be said that, in the two institutions, an average of 67.4% of children are located at the process level and 32.6% of children are located at the achievement level. Therefore, unlike the statistical results of Camacho (2006) in his article metalinguistic skills in literate children of low socioeconomic level is located; Sixty-six percent of five- and six-year-olds have the ability to organize sentences coherently, the remaining thirty-four percent do not evidence of difficulties of form. For this reason, they have the support of constructivism according to Saldarriaga et al. (2016), who related to this refer that constructivism is the construction of knowledge that it produces through cognitive and social

factors every day, this is acquired in the experience that the child has when interacting with their environment. This ability allows him to be able to join words to form sentences, or phrases, so that he can structure them in a longer sentence according to his age. In this regard, Aragón (2011), clarifies that this development strengthens the relationship of very basic words with a structure according to their age.

## V. Conclusions.

The level of pre-reading skills was determined by comparing both institutions, the results of which show significant differences between the scores of the sample from an initial institution in Callao and others from San Martín de Porres. Therefore, 76.7% of children from the two institutions are at the process level.

Regarding his first specific hypothesis, the perceptual level in both institutions was compared. There are significant differences between both samples. Therefore, the percentage average shows that 64.0% of the boys and girls from both institutions are located at the process level.

Regarding the other hypothesis of the lexical level, there is no significant difference between the scores obtained from both institutions. As for the percentage average, it shows that 76.7% of children from the two institutions are at the process level.

Regarding the last of the hypotheses at the syntactic level, it is revealed that there is a significant difference between the sample of an initial institution in Callao and that of San Martín de Porres. Therefore, 67.4% of children from the two institutions are at the process level.



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