

**SCREENING OF VERBAL COMPREHENSION IN THIRD AND  
FOURTH GRADE SCHOOLS OF EBP OF AN EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTION IN SINCELEJO – SUCRE**

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**ABSTRACT:**

The objective of the research was to describe the receptive vocabulary in children of 8 and 9 years of an Educational Institution in Colombia. The research is descriptive, with a quantitative approach, non-experimental and cross-sectional design. A sample is composed of 86 children, according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. Results showed that the population obtained low, moderately low and very low scores. The data acquired lead us to conclude that when children live in culturally impoverished environments or with a family that is emotionally neglected, they will study with a poor vocabulary and telegraphic language. Therefore, in the short and medium term children will manifest problems related to basic skills for learning, specifically, with reading and writing issues that generally are closely linked to other difficulties of the language and vocabulary skills. As well, it is important to get on the specific components that give the identification, the concept and the categorization of the proposed stimulus, this should be studied in the sample and the relationship between the vocabulary analyzed and reading comprehension established.

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Language is a cognitive function, according to the Royal Academy of Language, it allows to understand, to transmit and to elaborate ideas and feelings through sounds, gestures and symbols. Language is a communication system that enables interaction (Ríos-Flórez et al., 2016). In the matter of oral language, the comprehensive component is a process linked to word's decoding, both in characteristic and distinctive visual features and in the phonological decoding that makes easy the word's recognition and the establishment of high-level semantic networks. The interpretation of this coming on its meaning from the acquisition of oral language itself (Bohórquez Montoya et al., 2014), which finally leads to the assumption of a vocabulary or typical lexicon of the human being that is enriched as it interacts with its environment. Concerning to vocabulary, it is described like the set of words that a person knows and it is showed in two ways, the active or expressive one that is used on speaking or writing skills and the receptive one which is the one we perceive when listening or reading (Salazar & María, 2018). The second one is the aim of study in the present investigation. The school is a stage that allows children to enrich their vocabulary related to verbal comprehension or receptive lexicon, in addition to their family context. School is the location in which they attend and share with peers and follows adult guidance during the first part of the day on its first life cycle. This is when the language development becomes one of the specified and adapted purposes of the educational system in the main objectives of the school curriculum, it is elaborated for each of its stages by defining the capacities expected to be developed by all students throughout their learning process (Moran Alvarado et al., 2017). Verbal comprehension is also a factor that precede the reading process, it highlights how important of its adequate development in students, especially in those who have already advanced towards the second primary school stage.

A study made by an elementary school students of an Educational Institution in Santiago de Chile, searched about the verbal decoding and reading comprehension of the students, evaluating the receptive lexicon or verbal comprehension within its variables. The researchers concluded from their results that vocabulary provides an additional variance in reading comprehension, once other measures of listening comprehension were controlled. (Coloma et al., 2015)

A Researchers group in Cali, Colombia, who studied the ability of verbal comprehension in school children, found that in the group of eight and nine-year-old children have lower performances were evidenced in the Vocabulary subscale, which could explain the difficulties that presented to access the meaning of verbal concepts (Bohórquez Montoya et al., 2014).

In this same city, an investigation about language alterations in preschool children was carried out finding that the vocabulary area is the one with the highest prevalence in the deficient level according to the application of the TECAL test (Rojas et al., 2019)

As has already been pointed out, there are many elements that surround the development of oral language, and the problem reveals the limited assumption of vocabulary or verbal comprehension in some school children, and that this induce to possible difficulties in oral reading, the present study tries in a first advance, to describe the receptive verbal state or

lexical comprehension in a group of elementary school students aged between 8 and 9 years.

## **2. METHODOLOGY:**

### **2.1 Type and focus of the investigation:**

The research is descriptive, under a quantitative approach, with a non-experimental and cross-sectional design. In this study, the receptive vocabulary was described in children of 8 and 9 years of a Primary Basic Educational Institution in Sincelejo City.

### **2.2 Participants and evaluation instruments:**

A probability sampling was used, implementing the OPENEPI version 3.0.3 epidemiological calculator using the formula for finite populations  $n = [EDFF * Np (1-p)] / [(d2 / Z21-\alpha / 2 * (N-1) + p * (1-p)]$ , with 95% confidence and 5% precision, finally selecting 86 students who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria established in the present study. In the sample, the PEABODY III Imaging Vocabulary Test (Arbeláez et al., nd) was applied. The instrument was subjected to a pilot test in a population with characteristics similar to that of the sample, then the coefficient was applied to the results Crombach's alpha to check its reliability and internal consistency, finding a result of 0.90, which suggests that the instrument used has good reliability for its application in the study population.

Once the assessment instrument was applied, the tabulation was implemented, Database was created in accordance with the variables under study, which were stored in a capture form designed in EPI INFO. The database was kept in a file in xls format. For the processing information, the SPSS version 23 statistical package was used. The estimators were evaluated by age and sex, in order to control the confounding variables.

For the presentation and analysis of the results, univariate and bivariate tables were used, and frequencies and percentages were used according to the objective of the study.

### **2.3 Ethical Considerations:**

The investigation was framed in the World Declaration of Helsinki amended at the 64th General Assembly in Fortaleza, Brazil. It is governed by the provisions of Resolution 008430 of 1993 of the Colombia Health's Ministry and the informed consent was completed for the population to participate in the study. (WMA - The World Medical Association-Declaration of Helsinki of the WMA - Ethical principles for medical research in human beings, s. F.) (REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA MINISTERIO DE SALUD RESOLUCIÓN No 008430 DE 1993, s. F.).

## **3. RESULTS**

According to the information obtained after interviewing the children and then evaluating the receptive vocabulary, the results of the study are presented below.

### **3.1 Sociodemographic distribution of the study population:**

The distribution of the sociodemographic data of the study population (Table 1) shows that most of the sample is made up of 9-year-old children (61.6%), while the remaining 38.4% is 8 years old. male sex prevailing in 59.3%. The same proportion (59.3%) are in 3rd year and 40.7% 4th year of EBP. A large number of these belong to socioeconomic stratum 1 (51.2%) and 2 (47.7%). Regarding the educational level of the parents, 44.2% of the children are the children of parents with a bachelor's degree, followed by a level of basic primary education (40.7%).

**Table 1. General information of the population**

		Frequency	%
AGE	8	33	38,4
	9	53	61,6
	Total	86	100,0
SEX	FEMALE	35	40,7
	MALE	51	59,3
	Total	86	100,0
GRADE	3°	51	59,3
	4°	35	40,7
	Total	86	100,0
SOCIOECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	1	44	51,2
	2	41	47,7
	3	1	1,2
	Total	86	100,0
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS	SECONDARY EDUCATION	38	44,2
	PRIMARY EDUCATION	35	40,7
	UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL	4	4,7
	TECHNICAL	5	5,8
	TECHNOLOGIST	4	4,7
	Total	86	100,0

### 3.2 Assessment of verbal comprehension (receptive lexicon)

From the evaluation of the receptive vocabulary (Table 2), it was found that the largest number of 8-year-old children scored very low (33%). It is important to highlight that only 1 child qualified in the highest score of the test (moderately high. In contrast to this fact, in the group of 9-year-old children it is evident that a large part of these are located in the category of high (37%), presenting scores higher than the 8-year-old group. However, a significant number that includes more than half of these subjects (60.4%), is distributed in the categories with the lowest scores of the test, qualifying as low, moderately low and very low. This allows us to delineate that, despite the good

performance evidenced in the vocabulary of the majority of children with 9 years, the results show a receptive vocabulary lower than the average in both ages.

**Table 2. Assessment of receptive vocabulary**

Assessment	8 years		9 years		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
MODERATELY HIGH	1	3,0	1	1,9	2	2,3
MODERATELY LOW	5	15,2	10	18,9	15	17,4
HIGH	8	24,2	20	37,7	28	32,6
LOW	8	24,2	10	18,9	18	20,9
VERY LOW	11	33,3	12	22,6	23	26,7
Total	33	100,0	53	100,0	86	100,0

#### 4. DISCUSSION:

The results outlined in this study reveal a reality that is almost little approached from the educational contexts of the city, since the low level of vocabulary assumption is evident in the evaluated ages. The behavior shows a knowledge and a vocabulary use at lower levels, which is compatible with a study made up in Mexico, by CáceresZúñiga in 2018, in which it was obtained as a result that 37.5% of the children studied are below the normal category referring to the vocabulary test used (CáceresZúñiga et al., 2018). The data obtained also lead us to conclude that if children live in culturally impoverished or emotionally neglected family environments, they will study with a poor vocabulary and telegraphic language (Pedraza & López, 2006).

Likewise, researchers in Peru, showed in a recent study, after applying the Peabody PPVT - III Test that 70% of the EBP children evaluated were located in the percentiles from 1 to 49, which indicates a low level receptive vocabulary (Salazar & María, 2018).

The findings described in the study of verbal comprehension executed in Cali, Colombia, indicate that a low performance in the Vocabulary scales, which measure the semantic competence of oral language, is related to low performance in reading tasks because this competence semantics includes in the recognition of the written word (Bohórquez Montoya et al., 2014).

This is how the 8 and 9-year-old children evaluated in this comprehensive component of oral language (verbal comprehension or receptive lexicon) whose results express possible difficulties present due problems related to basic skills for specific learning according to calculation, reading and writing, in short and medium term, they are generally closely linked to other difficulties, especially linguistic, being even more specific at the vocabulary level (Aguilar-Valera & Medina, 2018).

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS:

In conclusion, due to the place where the participants of the present study are, the opinion for the researchers group is it shall to continue with a more complex approach in terms of

methodologically scaling the problem of knowledge, in such a way that it not only describes the findings in the verbal comprehension variable but express the components in addition to the identification, the concept and the categorization of the proposed stimulus are studied in greater detail and the relationship between the analyzed vocabulary and comprehension skills is established in turn reader by age and grade level.

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