

Teaching English Reading Strategies to Students of Other Majors at the University of Costa Rica

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Abstract

This article will provide an overview of the course LM-1030 Reading Strategies I, its role and importance for future professionals from different faculties in the University of Costa Rica. It will describe the different stages of the course by focusing on the most important monitoring and metacognitive strategies applied to develop proficiency in the reading process in L2 contexts. Some research methodologies about teaching reading comprehension strategies will also be discussed. It will also mention the importance of the LM-1030 Reading Strategies I and the lasting effect on professionals whose main goal is researching in their fields.

Key words: reading comprehension strategies, second language learner, metacognition context, cognates, word families, implicit, inference, purpose, tone, critical reading

Resumen

Este artículo proveerá una visión general del curso Estrategias de Lectura I LM-1030, su desempeño e importancia en los futuros profesionales de las diferentes facultades de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Describirá las diferentes etapas del curso enfocándose en lo más importante que es el monitoreo y las estrategias metacognitivas aplicadas para desarrollar la competencia en el proceso de lectura en contextos de una segunda lengua. Algunas metodologías de investigación sobre la enseñanza de las estrategias de lectura y comprensión de lectura serán discutidas. Se mencionará también la importancia del curso LM-1030 y su efecto multiplicador en los profesionales de nuestra universidad cuya meta es la investigación en sus campos.

Palabras claves: estrategias de comprensión de lectura, segunda lengua, metacognición, contexto, palabras transparentes, familias de palabras, implícito, inferencia, propósito, tono, lectura crítica

Review of Literature

In traditional reading comprehension instruction, many methodologies have come to light so that ESL teachers have learned how to teach them with the main objective to help ESL readers to read effectively and to motivate them to continue doing it throughout their lives. One, as Spanish native speaker, may remember how our Spanish teacher taught us how to read fluently while we were facing the written language for the first time. For example, some teachers had students use some archaic strategies such as a piece of paper with punched holes in order to make them read accurately. Pupils could cluster the words and read them aloud. At the end of the sentence, they could say in our own words what was the main idea of that sentence. Since we already knew the spoken language, it was easy for us to explain those main ideas and details. By contrast, learning to read English as a second language has a level of complexity that has to do with different strategies that we use mostly unconsciously. To mention one, the reader makes comparisons with languages, the mother tongue and the second language. The reading learner feels that in this way, it is easier to understand a text. Besides applying strategies related to the mother tongue, the reader must be aware of using other strategies to read and understand second language texts. Teaching English reading to a student who has never read English is challenging and it makes the instruction a complex process.

The process of applying reading strategies starts with using the

simplest one which is the recognition of cognates to using the most complex ones which are analyzing the author's perspective of the text, and personalizing the topic. To begin with, we must become aware that the role of background knowledge in reading is relevant when a reader faces a text for the first time. This knowledge triggers motivation to read on readers. Reading comprehension depends heavily on the awareness of this knowledge of the world. Weaver, Constance Heinemann (2002) and Neufeld (2005) mention that "Good readers use background knowledge to *make sense* of their reading and make *connections* about the reading focus on background knowledge as very relevant in the reading process", and state that "that limited background knowledge or weaknesses in word-level processes are major impediments to comprehension." Furthermore, students' level of comprehension varies depending on what it is being read, speculations and connections they can make using inference, and becoming metacognitively aware of other strategies (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997). Hence, monitoring for meaning and using schema which are the mental patterns one has about the world to get it, come together to help students understand what they are reading (Keene, 2008).

The role of the professor is paramount in the process of teaching college students how to read effectively. The reading professor has to be aware of the different strategies available to implement their goals. Researchers have discussed if modeling reading strategies for the students is a good strategy, or if students have to manage themselves to recognize these strategies when they are provided by

opportunities to value their application (Pressley, 2002c, 241). So, many researchers agree that “comprehension strategy instruction has a significant and lasting effect on students’ understanding” (Keene & Zimmerman 1997, 69-73, 2007, 109-119). Among the most relevant strategies mentioned in different sources in the last decades (Keene, 1997, 69-73), we focus on some of the most useful such as inferring, predicting, asking questions, creating images, making decisions about which ideas are important and those which are less important, and synthesizing a text. The ability to develop those strategies and the motivation vary from reader to reader. That process also shows potential differences in the quality and flexibility of students’ strategies use when learning to read fluently (Chamot, 1999). Though teaching reading strategies has been successful in many students (Presley, 2002a), though they are not in others.

To teach or not to teach reading strategies implicitly or explicitly is the professors’ choice. Sometimes, the students’ do not need explanations of a strategy because they become aware that they use it automatically in their mother tongue. The strategies that have been taught by the professor explicitly provide permanent instruments to be handled appropriately to achieve understanding when reading (Keene, 2010). The professor has to use his or her own strategies to understand students better because according to Keene (2010), “If we want to help students become better readers, we must think aloud about our own comprehension processes and give students tools they can use in new reading situations.”

Some English professors overestimate the importance of being proficient in reading English. They argue that speaking English as a second language is basic to get a job or to get a postgraduate scholarship overseas. They do not understand that besides learning oral English, there is a necessity to do research in their fields to go beyond. Doctors need to read the most recent research in order to be better at work and to learn more. A good professional must be updated in his/her field latest research in order to better. As it is stated by Neufeld (2006), “The end is helping students become expert comprehenders of challenging texts”. Hence, they will achieve the ground to construct further research. We all know that the most recent research carried out in any field is published in the English language in the forefront and then, in other languages. Most professionals need that newly-published information be at hand to go forward and be successful.

Main objective of teaching LM-1030

The main objective of Reading Strategies I (LM-1030) is to teach students from other majors at the University of Costa Rica the most important strategies to read English fluently in short and long current texts with the main purpose to grow professionally. To achieve this main objective, we have to start by making students aware of the meta cognitive strategies such as predicting, using prior knowledge, guessing meanings of words, using cognates, and other processes that they apply in their mother tongue. That is, they “think about thinking”.

The process begins when they predict what the text will be about. Then, they monitor what they understand. Also, they adjust the speed of what they are learning to make sure they understand, and finally, they check the overall understanding of the text. In order to do that, we give the students simple and short texts. The training starts with a discovery of the relevance of the senses when facing the text. In other words, they find out how, throughout the reading, they “feel the text” by involving all senses to a better understanding of the author’s words and message. They discover that simple words such as apples, water, birds, imply the use of the different senses such as sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste. This finding makes the readers enjoy and feel satisfy when they realize that they understand a text in a second language. We may mention here those strategies that readers use to memorize (vocabulary that includes frequency words such as articles, verbs, transitions), to respond to an author’s perspective, to criticize an entire text, and to take a position in favor or against what the writer is describing. In this instance, readers learn that writers use different kinds of strategies to convince the readers about their viewpoints.

LM-1030 professors use different activities to help readers understand the strategies. We use crossword and team games, puzzles and videos about the different topics, and Power point presentations. We know that the degree of students’ motivation and the contact they have had with the second language (L2) help them understand quickly the gist of the authors in different kinds of texts. As mentioned by Paul Neufeld (2008), “the important

point to remember here is that both what the reader brings to the text (i.e., knowledge of the topic) and the ideas conveyed through the words printed in the text are important to the entire comprehension process.”

Maturity and exposure to the L2 during the first years of school mark an important issue in college students when they have to learn how to read English efficiently. What we do is to review the most important English language structures and basic vocabulary to help them get more familiarized with English. We emphasize, in this way, that the main reason to teach reading comprehension to college students is the need to synthesize information from a variety of sources in order to do research and go beyond on their fields (Keene, 2010). Professors in LM- 1030 choose updated texts from different sources such as newspapers, journals, and books to have their students read them in a confident way and learn about what is new on their fields. Most schools in our university are certain that this course fulfills the ultimate objective of their majors which is further research. That is the reason they require their students to take the course (Appendix 1). As they learn that this is the ultimate goal of the course, they get motivated to achieve the specific objectives of the course (Appendix 2-3).

The outcomes at the end of each school period in the evaluations done by students to assess the course itself (Appendix 10) tell us that the course gives them confidence to read any kind of text and triggers motivation to continue reading even for pleasure, and that “over time, helps them learn to use such strategies in a flexible, coordinated, and self-regulated fashion.”

(Neufeld, 2006). Thus, teaching reading comprehension strategies will help students in postgraduate courses to read more complex texts and develop into them the importance of research in their fields. Consequently, the main purpose of this course is that when facing a text, college students become aware of those different reading strategies to be a competent reader and, consequently, an outstanding researcher in their fields.

It is appropriate to mention that there is a big difference between reading and speaking English as a second language because when you speak a language, you pay attention to utterances, pronunciation and communication of thoughts, and the message goes directly. But, when you read, you analyze the information the author is communicating; there is a transaction between reader and writer. The reader takes a position towards the information and lots of ideas come to his or her mind to understand the message of the writer and to elucidate his/her positive and negative thoughts.

Information technology has changed society and it has become accessible everywhere. It has influenced people lives, and the language and the scope of research in any field. People get information in different languages; however, English is the mostly used language in software. For instance, many books, journals, and research reports have not been translated into Spanish yet; this fact makes people look for that information in English. The needs of students in the 21st century have made educators worry and have encourage them to find solutions to “develop effective instructional means for teaching reading comprehension and reading

strategy use” (Drayer & Carl, 2003). Indeed, more successful research will be achieved to demonstrate that reading is an outstanding skill to learn more about the world. Our main purpose is to help students become successful and motivated strategic readers. As stated by Alexander (2001, 89-92), “they need systematically orchestrated instruction or training.” Thus, we, Reading Strategies I professors, have worked to organize the course in such a way that students become more competent readers and motivate them to keep on reading throughout their lives.

We also focus on the organization of a text. Most texts are written in a way that the readers identify the main purpose of the author in the introduction, the details in the development, and in the conclusion, they reinforce what it is explained in the introduction. That is the reason why some learners read the first and last paragraph to find out what the text is about. This is a strategy that may not function for other learners. Readers choose the best strategy to help them become dynamic with the text by exchanging ideas and understand it better.

Teaching Reading Strategies

LM-1030 courses are divided into two important parts: teaching reading strategies and reading comprehension itself. The first part is focused in reading strategies that give the students confidence and the ground to continue the comprehension of an English text in detail. First, they are able to recognize details, main ideas, and secondary ideas to ask and answer questions about the text. What we mostly use in

this stage is Wh- questions that learners use before, during and after reading the text.

At the beginning of the course, the students must start predicting the content of the text, based on title, subtitles, nonlinguistic clues, cognates and prior knowledge that the text will develop. The reader is involved in making predictions about the text. He/she is also constantly thinking ahead, revising, and verifying his or her predictions to review those well-founded predictions. Moreover, this strategy also helps students to make connections between their prior knowledge and the text. They start using data and evidence from the text to support or refute their predictions. Throughout the text, students verify, and justify predictions by checking the validity of their thinking. This thinking goes beyond toward material not yet read. While reading, they find clues to compare their ideas with the author's. Hence, "predictions become hypotheses to test as the student is reading" (Neufeld, 2006). We can see that 60% of students in the survey carried out in I-2015 (Appendix 13) recognize prediction of great value when reading the text for the first time.

After predicting what the text will be about, professors introduce the idea that typographical clues are effective for comprehension when the transaction of ideas between reader-writer takes place. Clues such as the use of boldface, italics, capitalization, symbols and punctuation marks help authors convey the message. Writers use different strategies to attract the readers' attention to those ideas they want to express or convey in the readers' minds. Thus, the uses of these typographical clues help them get the gist

(overall idea) of what they read. They help readers understand the content of the text. Lorch, Robert F & others (1995) mention how "the effects of typographical cues on memory are mediated by effects on attention during reading". We are, absolutely convinced that teaching students the function of typographical clues in a text, quotations, commas, semicolons, dashes and ellipsis help them to go deeper on the author's thoughts. (See Appendix 3)

The use of cognates is a basic strategy that most students do automatically. Cognates are those words used in two languages that share a similar meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. While English may share very few cognates with a language like Chinese because it belongs to an Indo-Chinese linguistic family, the linguistic relationship between English and Spanish make the use of cognates a good strategy to recognize. Indeed, English and Spanish belong to the Indo-European family. This strategy is used automatically by the readers when they start reading for the first time a text in the English language. Many students are not aware of the use of this strategy, but when we teach the strategy, they take it as a bridge to understand the whole text. Some examples of real cognates may be *family, radio, center, class, desert, magic, gorilla*, and others.

They also discover that there are false cognates which are words that are commonly thought to be similar to the reader's language. However, after a linguistic examination, they are unrelated. That is the case of the word "embarrass" that is defined as "avergonzado" in English. In Spanish, this word is similar to "embarazar" which has a very different meaning. These

false cognates can confuse the reader; however, awareness is the key to avoid this confusion. Some of the most common false cognates are: actual, college, disappointment, soap, pregnant, large, lecture, disgrace, deceives, disgust, embarrassed, rope, pie, and others.

Besides teaching the most important reading strategies, we are aware that the English language structure is the backbone of learning it appropriately. The course has a section devoted to review the English syntax by recognizing and understanding the subject and predicate in sentences into a text. Most of the time, when students read a long sentence, they do not understand the complete thought of that sentence because it has some other embedded sentences. As soon as they are aware of the importance of the subject and the predicate as basic to get the whole message of a sentence, they start being fluent readers. Professors start reviewing how a sentence is formed and how different parts, such as dependent clauses and adverbs, are added to make that sentence more complex. Since English and Spanish share the same basic sentence pattern S+V+ O (2015), it is easier to visualize it when facing a complex sentence. This becomes an important strategy that helps readers understand a text; specifically, when they need to find a detailed piece of information. Since most of our students know the basic structure of English, and they have not had any contact with English for a long time, we review the most pertinent grammar detail of the English language including the different kinds of phrases, simple and complex sentences, and different tenses.

We also bring into focus the function of words in a sentence. That is, if

the word functions as a noun, adjective, adverb, preposition, pronoun or verb. If they recognize the function, it will be easier for them to guess the meaning of the unknown words. Let's look at the following example: *The naked man in the soccer field was **conspicuous**.* The word **conspicuous** may likely be an unknown word for readers; however, if they identify the part of speech and take into account the context, it will be easy to guess the meaning of the word. Since the verb to be is basic, students know that the subject is being described by that unknown word. The definition given by the dictionary is **something that is obvious or easy to see** and the function that fits in this context is *adjective*: easily seen and noticed, striking. Readers immediately will relate the word with *naked* : being without clothing. Obviously, they can guess the meaning of the word with no problem. (Appendix 4)

To develop awareness of the use of pronoun references or antecedents is crucial when readers are following a text. Students acknowledge that recognizing the antecedent or a reference is valuable. In the survey, 60% of students see this strategy as important. Appendix 5 shows an example of the importance of following the referent in a text. Students have to learn that when they are distracted, they can miss the sequence of events and the reference of the pronouns or phrases mentioned before.

We also focus on an important fact about learning a language: the morphology of the English words. Linguistically, morphology is the study and description of how words are formed in a language, especially the consistent patterns of inflection and derivation

that have to be observed and classified. We generally emphasize on derivation because students are already familiarized with inflectional patterns that have to do with the particles we add to the word to show present, past, plural. E.g.: books speaks writing.

LM-1030 professors also train students to identify the different suffixes and prefixes of a word. They are faced to a long list of words that comes from Latin and Greek and are common in English, Spanish and other Romance languages. When readers know that those suffixes or endings such as **-ous-ity-** **ism** help them guess the meaning of the words, they become better readers. There are many words that come from Greek such as **hyper** meaning *over* or *in excess* like **hyperactive**, **hypersensitive**. Besides, Latin prefixes such *dis-* meaning *not*, *not any* : **disbelief**, **discomfort**, **discredit**, **disrespect** are very similar to Spanish. Indeed, this strategy helps students read and prevent them to waste time when looking up words in the dictionary.

We also review how to use a dictionary appropriately; even though they learned in school how to use it in their mother tongue. When guessing the meaning of unknown words, the students must know the function of the word, that is, if the word is a noun, an adjective, a pronoun, a verb or a pronoun. After they know the function of the word, they try to guess the meaning using the context. The context may include synonyms or antonyms that most of the time an author uses to clarify the meaning of that unknown word that he/she knows it will cause hesitation on the reader's mind. The dictionary becomes the ultimate alternative. 93.3% of the surveyed students reported that

this strategy is very important (Appendix 10). Thus, most readers use the sentences read before or the ones that come next in order to guess the meaning of a word. For instance: *The lawyer's remarks **triggered** bitter debates in the court room. The judge had to stop the trial.* The word that helps readers understand the meaning of **triggered** are: **bitter debates** and so does the sentence that follows: **the judge had to stop the trial.**

Teaching Reading Comprehension

In the second part of the course, learners start understanding and analyzing the content of the text carefully. Writers use different text structures to develop their ideas. Those structures (rhetorical patterns) such as definition, cause-effect, comparison-contrast, description, and classification are organizational structures used for good writers for the sake of making the reading more interesting. The text could be a mere description of a process or an exposition of an argument with pros and cons. The writer uses certain patterns to achieve persuasion and a motivation to what he/she wants to communicate. The objective of the professor is to help students identify the organizational structure of a text to facilitate the comprehension process. The readers learn that there are words that take them to understand what the author is explaining. To illustrate, that is the case of a cause-effect paragraph where you identify words such as **the cause is, the effects are disastrous, the storms caused floods in the nearby regions.** In the case of a comparison-contrast paragraph, readers will find

the useful words used by the author to get the message like **on one hand, on the other hand, on the contrary, whereas**. Students memorize those transitional words and phrases to get the rhetorical patterns that will help them get the gist of the text.

Once readers understand the author's intention, professors encourage them to create a summary about what they have read. Armbruster et al. (1987) state that "Teaching students to summarize what they have read is another strategy that has been shown to improve their overall comprehension". The students may write a summary or may use graphic organizers to be completed with the information they read (Appendix 6). That is why these researchers have also written about the importance of framing information when reading using graphic organizers or visual representations of text structures. Readers get motivated when they can complete charts, outlines, semantic webs, Venn diagrams (two different fields that share the same information), and completion exercises to show the understanding of the text. At this point, the different rhetorical patterns come into play and the readers will be able to identify the kinds of patterns the author is using to convey his/her ideas. Our reading students go deeply into the understanding of a whole text by using paraphrasing, that is, to say in their own words what the author is communicating. This strategy is very important because it gives readers confidence to say what they understand. In this stage, students use citations which they consider of importance in the text. We emphasize here that if a reader paraphrases, he/she avoids plagiarism which is to steal

or pass out others' ideas as one's own. They know that plagiarism is punished in most colleges and universities. Readers learn that when they paraphrase or quote from a source, they have to cite that source immediately. Thus, they give credit to others' ideas. 60% of students in I-2015 rank paraphrasing with 60% of importance placing summarizing in first place with 66,6%.

While reading the text, our students are facing the author's ideas that can be facts or opinions. Considering that facts are those elements that are backed up with evidence, or data that were proven in a study or research, readers find them important by comparing facts with opinions, ideas, or beliefs of the writer. Professor train students to make a difference between sentences with facts and opinions, or a mixture of both. At this point, critical thinking becomes the climax of the whole process. Readers take a position in favor of or against the author's ideas by recognizing the purpose and tone of the author when writing the text. In fact, when students involve feelings and emotions while reading, they may describe the tone as sad, romantic, gloomy and so on. Then, if they get the gist of the text or the purpose of the author, they are able to determine it as of persuasion, inform or entertain. Readers may agree or disagree about what the author says. At this moment, they feel free to criticize negatively or in a positive way the author's point of view. In the survey, reading students rank it with 93.33% as the highest rank. (Appendix 10). Moreover, our students are trained to make inferences about the writer's message by recognizing the explicit and implicit information. For example:

Read the following paragraph and write I for Implicit information or E for Explicit information next to the sentence below.

1. And they grow much of their own food. Taking one look at the gardens kept by Okinawan centenarians, Greg Plotnikoff, a traditional-medicine researcher at the University of Minnesota, called them “cabinets of preventive medicine.” Herbs, spices, fruits, and vegetables, such as Chinese radishes, garlic, scallions, cabbage, turmeric, and tomatoes, he said, “contain compounds that may block cancers before they start.”

The food grown in Okinawans’ gardens contributes to the prevention of diseases.

In this example, students draw inferences about the way of living of the Okinawan people by using the explicit information. The sentence below does not explain explicitly what the text says; however, the students imply that the food from the Okinawans’ gardens contributes to the prevention of diseases. 53.3% of our survey students considered that these strategies are very useful when analyzing the text (Appendix 10).

As a wrap up strategy and in order to put into practice what they have learned, the course includes the presentation of a project whose main objective is to challenge the learners to apply what they have learned (Appendix 7). They work in groups and look for an article of their choice related to their fields. They introduce it to the class and prepare a set of exercises including pre-reading, strategies and reading comprehension items to work in class. The students always analyze it by

using visual aids and making up different exercises to see if their classmates understand the text. As one can see in the guidelines to perform the project, the reading students will show to what extent they have understood the main goal of the course by telling the class the importance of reading English in every field, and by putting into practice all they have learned in the course.

Conclusion

The previous description of LM-1030 gives you a complete overview of the importance of teaching reading strategies and reading comprehension to students at the University of Costa Rica. They may not speak the language fluently; however, it is a necessity to read it fluently because they might want to do research and go beyond their majors.

For many years LM-1030 courses have been taught in Spanish because our students come from different English levels. Since the very beginning of the class, we know that some students know the English language at a low level, that others come from private schools, or that they speak English fluently. Based on this situation, we thought on offering students the Proficiency Exam which gives them the opportunity to pass the course. Furthermore, the Section of Teaching English to Students of Other Majors (SIPOC) saw the necessity to teach the course in the English language targeting those students who speak the English language fluently and want to improve their reading skill for further research in their fields. That is the reason why SIPOC has opened LM-1030 in English since I-2014. Due to the demand,

two more courses in English have been opened since then. Moreover, LM-1030 courses in Spanish opened as bimodal in II-2015, which use the METICS system. Further studies will show the effects of them on our university community.

Teaching English reading is a very challenging task at college level because the professors' main goal is to prepare students to make research in their fields and go further in this process. The survey in Appendix 13 shows the results of students who passed the course in 2012, 2013, 2014. Most academic schools in the University of Costa Rica consider this course very important for the students. That is the reason to have it as a requirement to graduate. They are certain that their students need to read English fluently in order to do research and go beyond their professions.

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Appendix 1

LM-1030 as a Requirement

- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Música con Énfasis en Instrumentos
- Bachillerato en Física
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Meteorología
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Matemáticas
- Bachillerato en Ciencias de la Educación con Énfasis en Orientación
- Bachillerato en Bibliotecología con Énfasis en Ciencias de la Información
- Bachillerato en Bibliotecología con Énfasis en Bibliotecas Educativas
- Prog. Esp. Bachillerato Bibliotecología con Énfasis en Bibliotecas
- Bachillerato en la Enseñanza de la Educación Física
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Contaduría Pública
- Bachillerato en Estadística
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Comunicación Colectiva
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Psicología
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Ciencias Políticas
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Historia
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Trabajo Social
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Ingeniería Agronómica con Énfasis en Fitotecnia
- Bachillerato en Ingeniería Agronómica con Énfasis en Economía Agrícola
- Licenciatura en Ingeniería Industrial
- Licenciatura en Ingeniería Química
- Licenciatura en Arquitectura.
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Computación e Informática
- Bachillerato en Ciencias Médicas y Licenciatura en Medicina y Cirugía
- Bachillerato en Terapia Respiratoria
- Bachillerato en Imagenología Diagnóstica y Licenciatura Imag. Diagnos. y Ter.
- Bachillerato y Licenciatura en Salud Ambiental

Licenciatura en Odontología
 Licenciatura en Microbiología y Química
 Clínica
 Licenciatura en Farmacia
 Bachillerato en Informática Empresarial
 Bachillerato en la Enseñanza de las Cien-
 cias Generales
 Bachillerato en Laboratorista Químico

Appendix 2

Programa de Curso

Nombre: Estrategias de Lectura en Inglés I
 Sigla: LM-1030
 Créditos: 4
 Horas semanales
 Trabajo presencial: 6
 Extra clase: 6
 Nivel a alcanzar: intermedio alto (lectura)

Requisitos: ninguno
 Correquisitos: ninguno
 Ciclo I-2014
 Tipo: curso de servicio

I. DESCRIPCIÓN

El curso de LM-1030 está diseñado dentro de un marco esquemático y transaccional, tendiente a ayudar al lector a usar una variedad de estrategias de lectura que le permitan participar en la construcción del texto de forma activa y lógica. Al finalizar el curso los estudiantes serán capaces de interactuar activamente con textos de diversos contenidos y patrones retóricos aplicando las destrezas de lectura apropiadas para entender, analizar el contenido de los textos y a la vez tomar una posición ante la perspectiva del autor.

II. OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS:

- Dado un texto, los lectores podrán:
- Aplicar los esquemas culturales y formales para identificar su género.

- Hacer predicciones acerca de su contenido y comprobarlas.
- Adivinar palabras desconocidas por el contexto.
- Reconocer cuándo y cómo usar el diccionario.
- Identificar los patrones retóricos.
- Puntualizar las ideas principales.
- Reconocer detalles o ideas secundarias.
- Responder críticamente a un texto mediante:
 - una evaluación de la perspectiva del autor
 - inferencias a partir de la información explícita o implícita
 - identificación de hechos y opiniones
 - discriminación de ideas (principales y secundarias)
 - emisión de juicios sobre lo leído

III. CONTENIDOS

Aspectos estructurales

1. La oración
2. Formas nominales del sujeto
3. Formas del plural (-s, -es e irregulares)
4. La función adjetiva
5. Formas verbales (present tense, present progressive, past progressive, future tense, present perfect y past perfect) en oraciones afirmativas, negativas e interrogativas, en voz pasiva y activa
6. Frases preposicionales de tiempo y de lugar
7. Los pronombres en función de complemento directo e indirecto (Ej: he-him) y pronombres posesivos vs. adjetivos posesivos
8. Los verbos auxiliares (do-does-did/to be) y modals: (Ej: would-could-should-may-can, etc)
9. La función adverbial en palabras, frases o oraciones subordinadas
10. Formas comparativas y superlativas (-er, more than, -est, the most)
11. Expresiones de transición (however, since, then, furthermore, entre otros)

12. Conectores lógicos (but, and, or, entre otros)
13. Afijos: prefijos y sufijos
14. Los referentes gramaticales: pronouns.
15. Las formas expletivas (IT- THERE)

B. Estrategias de lectura

1. Aplicar la técnica del vistazo usando claves tipográficas
2. Distinguir las formas léxicas de las no léxicas
3. Adivinar por contexto palabras desconocidas
4. Incorporar (internalizar) vocabulario nuevo
5. Usar eficientemente el diccionario
6. Ignorar estructuras para extraer la idea principal
7. Distinguir las ideas secundarias de una idea principal
8. Identificar los sinónimos y antónimos que nos llevan a entender una idea central
9. Identificar los patrones retóricos
10. Aplicar la técnica del detalle
11. Organizar la información del contenido en mapas conceptuales
12. Sintetizar en resumen o parafraseo del texto
13. Identificar el propósito del autor en el texto
14. Determinar el tono del autor al presentar el texto

IV. METODOLOGÍA

El curso contempla la lectura de textos de corta y mediana extensión (mínimo una página, máximo tres páginas para trabajo regular y pruebas cortas; incluso cinco páginas para pruebas parciales y finales de evaluación. Dichos textos son genuinos, por lo que no se les hace ninguna modificación en cuanto a composición, redacción, puntuación, ortografía y vocabulario se refiere. El curso no se limita a la pasiva recepción del texto sensorial o expresamente impreso, sino que estimula una participación

activa del lector en una negociación significativa con el texto. El acto lector se aborda desde las perspectivas de interacción y transacción, en donde el lector(a) y el texto proponen aspectos que propician el análisis y la síntesis durante las fases de pre-lectura, lectura y post-lectura. La dinámica de clase está constituida por actividades enfocadas en la exposición, la ejemplificación, la puesta en práctica y la evaluación de la teoría, el uso de las destrezas y las estrategias inherentes al proceso de lectura a través de proyectos. Los estudiantes trabajan en pares, grupos y en forma individual para comprender y analizar los textos.

V. EVALUACIÓN

Examen Parcial	25%
Examen Final	35%
Pruebas cortas	30%
	(cuatro lo mínimo)
Proyecto Final	10%

Todo estudiante de todo curso queda sujeto al Reglamento de Evaluación de la Universidad de Costa Rica.

VI. BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Flemming, Laraine. *Reading for Results*. 8th ed. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 2002.
- Moore, John. *Reading and Thinking in English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Kerszner, Laurie & Stephen R. Mandell. *Patterns for College Writing*. 8th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2001.
- Antología SIPOC.

Appendix 3

Typographical clues

Read paragraphs II and III and choose the appropriate function for each statement according to the context.

II. Reporting in the *Journal of Endocrinology*, researchers led by Ladan Eshkevari, assistant program director of the nurse anesthesia program at Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies, mimicked chronic stress in a rat model and documented how stimulating certain body points with acupuncture can alter stress hormones.

III. The body's stress response is triggered by two main pathways, one of which involves the HPA axis, or hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis, in which these areas of the brain are activated to release peptides and proteins such as corticotrophin-releasing hormone (CRH). They, in turn, launch the production of other hormones such as cortisol and norepinephrine that rev up the anxiety meter. Once activated, the system causes the heart to beat faster and the senses to go on alert. It also diverts the body's energy away from background operations such as digestion to prime and fuel the muscles into a state of readiness.

From the article **Needle This: Study Hints at How Acupuncture Works to Relieve Stress** By Alice Park March 15, 2013.

Read more: <http://healthland.time.com/2013/03/15/needle-this-study-hints-at-how-acupuncture-works-to-relieve-stress/#ixzz2NdlrJdQJ>

1. In Par. II, line 1, the italicized words show a(n)_____.

a. emphasis b. name of a source c. a foreign term

2. In P. II, line 1- 3, the commas indicate a(n)_____.

a. irony b. clarification c. emphasis

3. In P. III, line 1, the single apostrophe indicates _____.

a. extra thought b. addition c. possession

4. In P. III, line 4, the abbreviation indicates a(n)_____.

a. restatement b. contracted form of a phrase mentioned before c. extra thought

AK. 1. b 2.b 3. c 4. b

Appendix 4

Meaning from context

Read paragraphs VII, VIII, and IX. Choose the alternative with the closest meaning to the **boldfaced** word. (4 pts.)

VII. To monitor levels of the stress hormones and their **precursors**, she and her colleagues also collected blood from the animals on the first day and again on day seven and 14 of the study. These levels were compared to those of control animals that were not treated to the ice bath.

VIII. As expected, the animals that were only treated to the cold-stress showed higher levels of CRH and other stress hormones after their exposure. And the sham animals showed similar levels of activated stress hormones. But those that were pre-treated with acupuncture showed no such **spike** in these hormones. In fact, their CRH levels were similar to those of the controls who hadn't been exposed to the ice bath at all.

IX. "The acupuncture seemed to help **recalibrate**, or normalize the [stress] hormone levels, at least in this model using the rat," says Eshkevari.

1. precursors (VII, line 1)
 - a. stress hormone levels
 - b. preliminary results
 - c. descendants
2. spike (VIII, line 4)
 - a. fortification
 - b. perforation
 - c. change
3. recalibrate (IX, 1)
 - a. readjust
 - b. vary
 - c. destroy

1.c 2 c 3 a

Appendix 5

Read the following excerpts and write the **referents** for the underlined words.

I. Just like organ donors, those that bequeath their medical implants can bid farewell to the world with the knowledge they offer a stranger a second chance at life, be it a man with a heart defect in India, a woman undergoing a hip replacement in America, or a child with a missing limb in Ghana. And it's not just donors and recipients that have something to gain from the process. The Metro Davidson County Detention Facility is just a few minutes' drive from Peter's home, and every so often he visits the inmates working in the limb disassembly workshop. As they chatted, one prisoner told Peter what the Standing With Hope project meant to him. "He had tears in his eyes and said to me: 'I get to do something positive for the first time with my hands. I've never done anything positive with my hands,'" Peter recalls. "How rewarding is that?"

http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20140311-body-parts-that-live-after-death?ocid=global_future_rss

1. those _____
2. their _____
3. they _____
4. it _____
5. it _____
6. that _____

7. the process _____
8. he _____
9. they _____
10. him _____
11. he _____
12. his _____
13. me _____
14. I _____
15. my hands _____
16. that _____

AK

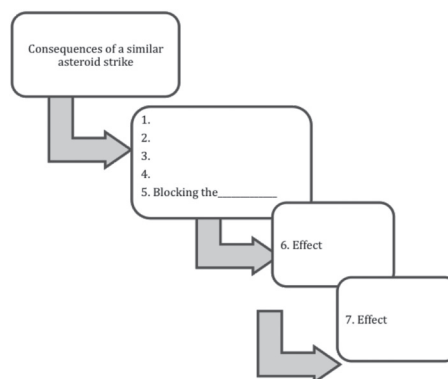
Organ donors- organ donors- organ donors-
E-to donate-Peter- people- prisoner-
prisoner's-Peter-prisoner-prisoner's-
the situation with the prisoner

Appendix 6

A graphic organizer sample

Complete the graphic organizer with information from the paragraph.

An asteroid of that size striking the Earth would have had devastating consequences, including destructive pressure waves, global wildfires, tsunamis, and a "rain" of molten rock reentering the atmosphere. Additionally, "much additional particulate matter would have stayed afloat in the atmosphere for weeks, months, perhaps years, blocking incoming solar radiation and thus killing plant life and causing catastrophic drops in temperatures," explained Hans-Dieter Sues, a paleontologist at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.



Appendix 7

LM-1030 Project Guidelines and Rubric

Durante el curso los estudiantes tienen que llevar a cabo un proyecto con un valor de 10% en el que deben poner en práctica lo que van aprendiendo durante el mismo. Los siguientes lineamientos los ayudará a que lleven a cabo un buen proyecto.

- Es trabajo grupal dependiendo del número de estudiantes por carrera. Se agrupan por especialidad para buscar una lectura en inglés (3 o 4 estudiantes).
- Deben entregar una lectura y serie de ejercicios en inglés a cada estudiante el día que el profesor les asigne la presentación.
- Pueden usar audiovisuales: Video beam, grabadora, video u otro con el fin de hacer más amena su presentación. Avisarle al profesor con anterioridad lo que necesitan para que pueda solicitar la sala o el equipo para tal fin.
- Deben entregar al profesor el trabajo final con las respuestas de los ejercicios y lectura para que constate si analizaron correctamente la información.
- Deben poner mucha atención a la gramática y ortografía de preguntas y ejercicios. Para esto se sigue el formato que la antología les ofrece, o bien crear nuevos. En este caso, el profesor les dará retroalimentación antes de la presentación, ya sea tiempo lectivo o en sus horas de oficina.
- Debe tener una introducción o motivación del tema que escogieron en la lectura. No es presentar el contenido de la lectura, sino motivar para que los demás compañeros sientan interés por el tema.
- La lectura debe ser reciente con su debida fuente o dirección de la página Web donde la tomaron.
- Al finalizar la lectura y ejercicios, deben cerrar la presentación con una actividad, ya sea un crucigrama, rompecabezas, adivinanzas o algo que concluya el tema.
- La presentación es en español, por supuesto, ya que el curso no es inglés conversacional sino de aprendizaje y uso de estrategias para leer en inglés.
- El tiempo máximo de la presentación es de media hora, puede extenderse dependiendo de los ejercicios que se prepararon.
- En caso de que algún miembro del grupo no ha trabajado en el proyecto (se han dado casos) el profesor (a) debe rebajarle la nota en alguno de los rubros previa consulta con los demás miembros del grupo.
- El siguiente formato de evaluación será entregado con el trabajo final.

Profesor:

Miembros del grupo:

Título de la lectura:

Nota Final:

Fecha:

Aspecto	Valoración	Observaciones
Introducción (10 puntos): La introducción incluyó una motivación relevante al tema de la lectura. Los recursos empleados en introducción contribuyeron a despertar en interés de la audiencia. Se invitó a la audiencia a participar en la introducción. El estudiante mostró total conocimiento del tema al contestar en forma coherente sin titubeos, las preguntas hechas por los estudiantes.	() Excelente (de 8 a 10 puntos): () Muy Bueno (de 5 a 7 puntos): () Regular (de 2 a 4 puntos): () Insuficiente (de 0 a 1 punto):	

Relevancia del texto escogido (10 puntos): El grupo presentó una lectura reciente, relevante a su(s) área(s) de estudio y de o en su defecto una lectura de interés general si el grupo estaba conformado por estudiantes de carreras distintas. Los estudiantes mostraron conocimiento de las temáticas expuestas en la lectura y presentaron una postura crítica ante ellas motivando así a la audiencia.

- () **Excelente** (de 8 a 10 puntos):
 () **Muy Bueno** (de 5 a 7 puntos):
 () **Regular** (de 2 a 4 puntos):
 () **Insuficiente** (de 0 a 1 punto):

Desarrollo de Ejercicios (40 puntos): El proyecto incluyó ejercicios de pre-lectura, lectura y post-lectura que fueron de utilidad en las diferentes etapas del proceso de lectura. Los ejercicios de lectura fueron variados y se aprovechó la totalidad de la lectura. Los ejercicios se plantearon siguiendo el orden cronológico de la lectura y se corrigieron conforme a la realimentación dada por el profesor con el fin de evitar errores al desarrollarlas en el grupo.

- () **Excelente** (de 32 a 40 puntos):
 () **Muy Bueno** (de 22 a 31 puntos):
 () **Regular** (de 10 a 21 puntos):
 () **Insuficiente** (de 0 a 9 puntos):

Dinámica de Trabajo (40 puntos): La dinámica de trabajo elegida facilitó la integración y la participación de todos los estudiantes. La presentación del proyecto fue fluida y tuvo un orden lógico. Los presentadores fueron puntuales, estuvieron preparados para la presentación y revisión del proyecto y usaron el tiempo efectivamente. Las actividades elegidas no se centraron meramente en la competencia, sino en la comprensión de lectura.

- () **Excelente** (de 32 a 40 puntos):
 () **Muy Bueno** (de 22 a 31 puntos):
 () **Regular** (de 10 a 21 puntos):
 () **Insuficiente** (de 0 a 9 puntos):

Puntos Totales:

Appendix 8

Percentage of students who got a passing grade in LM-1030

Years 2012 to 2014

	I ciclo	II ciclo	III ciclo
2012	89,5%	86,4%	95%
2013	91%	89,2%	94,6%
2014	93,3%	90,1%	90,2%

Source: Modern Languages School, University of Costa Rica

Appendix 9

Survey LM-1030 Carrera del estudiante:

a. When was the last time you took an English course? Where?

b. Do you like to read?

In Spanish: _____ In English: _____

c. Why is LM-1030 a requirement to get a degree in the University of Costa Rica?

d. Mark (X) the strategies that help you be more effective when reading English.

1. predicting
2. scanning
3. skimming
4. discovering the function of typographical clues (commas, abbreviation)
5. guessing meaning of unknown words from context
6. finding synonyms/antonyms
7. using cognates
8. getting the word functions in the text (nominal, adjectival, verbal, adverbial)
9. forming words (prefixes/suffixes, roots, compounds)
10. finding referents
11. finding the topic and topic sentences of paragraphs
12. setting the chronological order of the information
13. outlining making inferences

14. completing information organizers
15. recognizing rhetorical patterns
16. paraphrasing
17. summarizing
18. critical analysis
19. finding the purpose and tone of the text
- e. Write the numbers of the most important strategies that really helped you?
- f. Academically, are you satisfied with the course? Yes: ___ No: ___ Why?
- g. Did you learn anything from project? Yes: ___ No: ___ Why?
- h. Do you feel more interested in reading english? Why?
- i. Mark with an X. Did you like to read ____.
1. current newspaper articles: ___
2. short stories: current __ classical __
3. novels: new: __ old: ___
4. advertisements: ___
- j. What suggestions can you give to add new sources to your reading material?
- k. What topics can you add to read in class?

Appendix 10

RESULTS LM-1030 in English

Ciclo: I-2015

N° of students: 15

	Strategy	Students Who Chose	Percentage
1.	Predicting	9	60%
2.	Scanning	8	53,3%
3.	Skimming	4	26,6%
4.	Discovering the function of typographical clues (com- mas, abbreviation)	3	20%
5.	Guessing meaning of unknown words from context	14	93,3%
6.	Finding synonyms/antonyms	10	66,6%
7.	Using cognates	4	26,6%
8.	Getting the word functions in the text (nominal, adjec- tival, verbal, adverbial)	8	53,3%
9.	Forming words (prefixes/suffixes, roots, compounds)	4	26,6%
10.	Finding referents	9	60%
11.	Finding the topic and topic sentences of paragraphs	8	53,3%
12.	Setting the chronological order of the information	6	40%
13.	Outlining making inferences	8	53,3%
14.	Completing information organizers	3	20%
15.	Recognizing rhetorical patterns	5	33,3%
16.	Paraphrasing	9	60%
17.	Summarizing	10	66,6%
18.	Critical analysis	14	93,3%
19.	Finding the purpose and tone of the text	8	53,3%

