

ARMY POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES

**APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN ENGLISH
PROGRAM**

**FORM VERSUS CONTENT IN THE COMPREHENSION OF
SECOND LANGUAGE READING TEXTS WITH THE STUDENTS
OF FOURTH LEVEL OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF THE
SUPPORT CENTER N° 19 “COCA”.**

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JULY - 2007

QUITO - ECUADOR

LEGAL FOUNDATION

Pto. Francisco de Orellana, Octubre 5, 2006

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De mis consideraciones

Por medio de la presente muy comedidamente solicito, en vista haber terminado la Malla Curricular en la Facultad de Idiomas de la Escuela Superior Politécnica del Ejercito, siendo como requisito previo para la obtención del título de Licenciado, la elaboración de un proyecto investigativo en el área de Ingles, se me conceda autorización para realizar la (s) encuesta (s) la cuál sustentará mi proyecto de tesis el mismo que se aplicaría con los señores estudiantes de Cuartos Niveles de la Suficiencia del Idioma Ingles de la institución educativa que usted acertadamente dirige.

Por la atención favorable que se digne brindar a la presente, anticipo mis más sinceros agradecimientos.

Atentamente.

Jorge Luis Salinas Valencia

Sgop. de Trp.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank especially Msc. Juan Donoso, and Lic. Sandra Cabezas, Director and Codirector of my Thesis, for their encouragement and patience throughout the development of this project. I would also like to thank Dr. Oswaldo Villa, who was the initial instigator and early on provided advice and encouragement.

I would like to deeply thank the people who, during the several months in which this endeavor lasted, provided me with useful and helpful assistance. Without their care and consideration, this project would likely not have matured.

Thank you four women so much for all you have done for me and for putting up with me. You have all made such a difference in my life. I don't know where I'd be without you. Thanks.

DEDICATION

I am grateful to all our friends for their support. I would specially like to thank Monica my wife for his valuable advices. I would like to dedicate this document to my family, because they were who motivated me to finish this thesis.

CERTIFICATION

We, Msc. Juan Donoso, Director, and Lic. Sandra Cabezas, Co-director, duly certify that the thesis entitled: *Form versus Content in the Comprehension of Second Language Reading Texts with the Students of Fourth Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “COCA”*, has been reviewed and found it apt for oral sustain.

Sincerely,

.....
Msc. Juan Donoso

Director

.....
Lic. Sandra Cabezas

Co-director

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding second language acquisition (SLA) has been a topic of study for many years. Second language reading has been studied from many different perspectives such as the importance of first language transfer in learning to read in a Second Language, mental translation as a second language reading strategy, social influence of Second Language reading development, and understanding the limited knowledge of second language readers in relation to cultural and contextual factors.

The purpose of this study is to investigate second language text comprehension from the perspective of language processing within the field of cognitive science, especially with reference to attention resources. The role of attention in second language acquisition with regard to the notion of detection is a crucial aspect of Second Language aural and written comprehension. As a function of attention, detection selects specific elements found in the input to be registered in working memory where they are subject to further processing by the Second language learner. During attention, more specifically detection, posits that form and meaning, which are not independent of one another, compete for the limited cognitive resources available to the adult Second language learner, especially, in the early stages of second language acquisition. Consequently, in these early stages, the demand of comprehending a message deplete the attention system making it more difficult for Second language learner to process for linguistic form and content or meaning at the same time. The overall purpose of this thesis is to determine the effect of attention to form versus attention to meaning while processing input for meaning during the advanced stage of second language acquisition. It includes conclusions and recommendations and the proposal, to be applied at the Support Center N° 19 “Coca”.

Many students can read, write and understand American English, but they always face situations in which their pronunciation interferes with clear and effective communication. This research is designed for students to improve their reading so they will be able to communicate confidently and be understood with relative ease.

Finally, I consider that student's attitude is an important element improvement his reading-comprehension.

CHAPTER I

1. THE PROBLEM

➤ 1.1 Establishment of the Problem

➤ 1.1.2 Problematical Situation

The Support Center N° 19 “Coca” It is located in Francisco de Orellana, at North West of the Amazon Region. This city (Coca) is capital of Orellana Province. Coca is surrounding by Petroleum Foreign Companies. People who work in these Companies need to read and analysis books, magazines, and texts in English language, and they need to know what the real meaning of this kind of material is in a deep sense because there are foreign people there, and it is a prerequisite for entering at the factories. Then the workers will need to communicate each other to understand catalogs of tools and machines used in their jobs.

The Support Center has an excellent infrastructure it has one building of five stories, and about 130 square meters of construction. This Support Center is controlled by the Army Polytechnic School that is legally establish and recognized by the law, being part of the National System of Superior Education and it directs its efforts to the improvement of the conditions of life of the country and to impel its development. It has teachers of different levels who complete various functions.

There are 280 students and who come from middle and high economic - social status families. The students are going to participate in this research project are 38. They belong to Fourth Level of English Proficiency.

In My opinion the Support Center N° 19 “Coca” has suitable educational personnel in order to develop their pedagogic functions.

➤ **1.1.3 SECONDARY PROBLEMS**

- Do you believe that a fundamental reason for learning a foreign language is to be able to read the literature written in the target language?
- Do you think it is important to learn about the target language?
- Should culture be viewed as consisting of literature and the fine arts?
- Is answering reading comprehension questions of the type described here helpful?

➤ **1.2 OBJECTIVES**

➤ **1.2.1 General Objectives**

- To investigate the form versus content in comprehending second language reading texts from the perspective of language processing within the field of cognitive science, especially with reference to attention resources with the students of the Fourth Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca”, is located in Francisco de Orellana (Coca) city, Orellana Province, during the Semester October 2006 – March 2007.
- To help students read and appreciate foreign language literature and grow intellectually with good mental exercise which helps develop their minds during the advanced stages of second language acquisition?

➤ **1.2.2 Specific Objectives**

- To understand the methodology about use of idea unit analysis will test whether instruction which focuses on text structure will improves comprehension with readers with poor comprehension at the IV Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca” during the semester October 2006- March 2007.
- To identify the methodology used by teachers in order to transmit student’s reading-comprehension in Second language learning at the IV Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca” during the semester October 2006- March 2007.
- To determine the effect of attention to form versus attention to meaning while processing input for meaning during the advanced stage of second language acquisition at the IV Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca” during the semester October 2006- March 2007.

➤ **1.3 JUSTIFICATION**

➤ **1.3.1 Project Justification**

The Support Center N° 19 “Coca” is located in the downtown of Coca; there are many Petroleum Foreign Companies. There are about 13.000 inhabitants in this city. Most people who live there come from different parts of our country, about 99% of students that study in the Support Center come from high status families that work in Petroleum Companies and some of them have their own business, and the 1% of students are indigenous. People who live in Francisco de Orellana city have a common language and they have different elemental such as beliefs, values and behavioral elements and so on. But they have a great desire that their sons and daughters become better than them.

I have seen the necessity to elaborate a read-comprehension's activities to encourage students to learn English. Most people who live in Francisco de Orellana are professionals that need their student have the best education. They are always worried about the student 's knowledge.

This project is a proposal to improve reading-comprehension English Language where I will apply and obtain positive results because, students have understood that English is very important nowadays, and then they have a great interest, and increase their knowledge in learning English offer. The students will have many opportunities to find a good job. Moreover, students also have to understand that technology is changing everyday and English is the most spoken Language around the world.

Many University students want to work in different Foreign Petroleum Companies. In these places the workers must have a Basic knowledge in English Language, before that they enter to work in those companies; they have to approve an English Test before to be an employee.

Finally, it is for the above reasons that lead me to investigate to what extent the reading-comprehension techniques that have been used, accepted or simply unknown by the English teachers, I also want to find out if teachers are capable of encouraging students with this type of strategy, I know how to outline alternatives that they could use and improve the results in the educational process.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

➤ 2.1 Antecedents

➤ Puerto Francisco de Orellana

Francisco de Orellana (Coca) City is a tourist place too. It is visited by Foreign People from different countries some of them stay in this city, and another stay in different tourist places in the jungle. They develop research works about animals, plants, flora and fauna.

The colorful streets of Francisco de Orellana are full of business and artisans who have emigrated here from all over the country. The native populations, on the other hand, maintain their traditional lifestyle in the jungle. From here boats depart to Iquitos, Peru; Puerto Leticia, Colombia; and Tabatinga, Manaus, and Belón in Brazil. The fascinating route down the Napo through the dense jungle comes alive with the sounds of animals as you glide down the river.

“Support Center N° 19 Coca” has a goal to give to the community professionals with an efficient education and we as English teachers we have been worried to improve the English Language.

➤ 2.2 Introduction

➤ 2.2.1 L2 Reading

Understanding second language acquisition (SLA) has been a topic of study for many years. Second language reading has been studied from many different perspectives such as the importance of first language transfer in learning to read in a second language, mental translation as a second language reading strategy, social influence of L2 reading

development, and understanding the limited knowledge of second language readers in relation to cultural and contextual factors.

The purpose of this study is to investigate second language text comprehension from the perspective of language processing within the field of cognitive science, especially with reference to attention resources. The overall purpose of this thesis is not to establish that second language acquisition results from conscious and subconscious process, but is necessary to determine the effect of attention to form versus attention to meaning while processing input for meaning during the intermediate and advanced stages of second language acquisition.

➤ ***2.2.2 A Cognitive Perspective on Second Language Aural and Second Language Text Comprehension***

Bouden Greenslade, & Sanz (1999, p. 69) claim that Second Language learners approach both listening and reading tasks with a number of First Language processes, skills, and strategies that can be transferred to an Second Language context with the ability to assist in decoding and comprehending information. This often involves a complex interaction between lower-level processes such as subconscious phonological recognition of words as well as accessing lexical entries and higher-level metacognitive processes such as interpretation and making inferences. Due to the limited capacity to attend to a large amount of input at one given time, not all incoming input is able to be processed. While this is apparent in one's First Language, it becomes more obvious in second language listeners and readers when limited attention abilities must complete between processing for meaning and processing for form (Van Patten, 1996, p.16). If

the limited attention capacity of Second language learners must process for meaning and form, what effects will this have on their comprehension?

There are a number of studies that have examined this problem. Lee (1998) investigated the relation between comprehension and input processing with beginning level Second Language learners of Spanish to determine if they are affected by morphological characteristics of verbs in the input (such as subjunctive morphology versus non-subjunctive morphology) and found that the subjunctive morphology adversely affected comprehension while non-subjunctive morphology did not. Doughty (2002) investigated deriving meaning from focus on form. Deriving meaning from focus on form involves drawing the early stage Second Language learner's conscious attention to linguistic elements of a text such as lexical and grammatical items, as a way to derive further meaning from a text after an initial sense of meaning of a Second Language text had been established.

More specifically Doughty (2002) proposes that focus on form is an instructional expedient for addressing pervasive, systematic, remediable or persistent Second Language learning problems. Van Patten (1990) examine the problem of detection of Second Language aural comprehension to determine if comprehension would be affected if a Second Language learner was obligated to focus conscious attention on lexical items or grammatical items while listening for meaning in Spanish.

Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) carried out a conceptual replication of Van Patten (1990) in order to test the results of his study with Second Language text comprehension instead of Second Language aural comprehension. The purpose of the

present study is to build on Van Patten (1990) and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1990) by testing conscious focus of attention on content and form using Second Language learner's English in Ecuador.

➤ *2.2.3 Motivation of Research and Methodological issues*

The motivation for this thesis is to investigate attention to form versus attention to content in the comprehension of Second Language reading texts. The purpose of exploring this issue is to contribute to the overall body of knowledge with regards to the role of attention in second language acquisition, especially during detection; and to gain a fuller understanding of working memory and its limited processing capacity of detected Second Language input. This will also attempt to test and to contribute to a greater understanding of Van Patten's (1996) two principles of Second Language input processing with regard to written Second Language (see Section 2.3.4 of this chapter).

This study is a conceptual replication of Van Patten (1990) and Bouden, Greenslade, and Sanz (1999), altering various features of the original study such the Second Language being tested, the experimental and warm-up text, and the number of subjects (Van Patten, 2002, p.779). While both of the previous studies were carried out with Second Language learner, they only examined Second Language acquisition with native English speakers learning Spanish.

This study contributes to a complete account of the issue by examining advanced Second Language English learners. Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz ((1999) and Van Patten(1990) posit that in the early stages of second language acquisition, attention to

form and to content will compete for the limited cognitive resources available because the process of comprehension a message in a Second Language has not yet been automatized. This study has examined advanced Second Language text comprehension with Second Language English learners to address this issue.

➤ **2.2.4 Research Question and Overall Design**

Does processing for form and content compete advanced Second Language learners of English? Since this study is a conceptual replication, it follows the methodological precedents of Van Patten (1990) and Boudien, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999). The methodological design of the previous studies is experimental research and will be reviewed later in sections 3.1 and 2.6.1 of this chapter.

➤ **2.3 Theoretical Background**

This section provides an account of language processing and text comprehension (section 2.3.1) with regards to how they relate to input processing and the processing of input in working memory (2.3.2), the derivation of intake from Second Language input, and the role of the attention/detection in comprehension of Second Language input.

➤ **2.3.1 Language Processing**

Understanding language processing is crucial to understanding how Second Language learners acquire a Second Language. From the psycholinguistics perspective, processing can be described in terms of levels. Processing of language starts with input,

occurs in working memory, and is handled by a number of functionally specialized processors known as a modules, although there is disagreement about how these modules are connected and how they function (Harley, 2001, p.20). Language processing can be defined as the perception, comprehension or decoding of input, and the production of language (Carrol, 1986, p. 50; and Truscott, 2004, p. 1).

The phonological code is the speech sounds that are represented in the mind (Harley, 1995, pp. 38-41). By way of the phonological form representation in the mental lexicon, word recognition occurs. The mental lexicon contains all information about a recognized word such as its phonological form representation, its syntactic frame representation, and its semantic information, which is the underlying concept behind a word's meaning (Harley, 1995, pp. 53-58). After all lexical information has been identified and each word's syntactic category is determined such as a noun, verb, adjective, etc., this information is used to form the syntactic structure of a sentence. The syntactic component is responsible for organizing the words in a particular phrase structure according to a particular language's grammar. This process of computing the syntactic structure of a sentence is known as syntactic parsing (Harley, 1995, p. 140).

In the syntactic parsing stage of language processing, there are two differing views on how the syntactic frame representation and semantic conceptual information are used in syntactic parsing: the autonomous model and the interactive model. According to the autonomous' perspective, the semantic information of a particular word or sentence can only begin to be processed after a major syntactic unit has been parsed, according to the interactive model, the construction of a semantic representation occurs simultaneously and is used to guide syntactic parsing(Harley, 1995, p. 297). Once syntactic parsing as well as semantic processing has occurred, the linguistic information must now be

integrated into a mental representation. The end of language processing and the beginning of representing new information in memory begins with propositional representation (see Section 1.2.3), which is vital to the comprehension of speech and of text (Harley, 1995, pp. 225-226).

Comprehension of linguistic information involves computation in working memory and storage or representation of that same information involves long-term memory. The next section will describe working memory and long-term memory.

➤ **2.3.2 Memory**

Working memory is a limited-capacity memory system that places a constraint on how input is managed. The function of working memory is to extract from the input anything relevant for ongoing comprehension (Skehan, 1998, pp. 43-45). Although working memory can process a number of computations simultaneously, if the task demands exceed the available working memory resources, the storage capacities of working memory and the computation functions within it degrade, causing input available for ongoing comprehension not to be comprehended. For example, as already mentioned detection is a sub process of attention and detected information interferes with processing of other information and will exhaust a large amount of resources (Van Patten, 1996, p.16; Tomlin and Villa, 1994, p. 192). Working memory is a temporary memory where knowledge of specific events or linguistic information is present for a short period of time. Depending on the processes that occur in working memory and the task demands placed on it, linguistic information processed in working memory will either be lost or stored in long-term memory (Skehan, 1998, p.57).

While working memory is where comprehension and production of ongoing language occurs, long-term memory contains a rule-based analytical knowledge system, a memory-based formulaic system, and knowledge of grammar, lexical information, and general schematic knowledge. Long-term memory is also where concepts or mental representation are stored, the same mental representation that is the underlying concept behind a word's meaning. Long-term memory interacts with working memory to change or represent new information (Skehan, 1998, p. 58). When there is new information in working memory, changes may occur in long-term memory and old information may be altered in accordance with this new information. This new information may or may not become a mostly permanent representation in long-term memory (Harley, 2001, p. 275). An important aspect of First Language and Second Language text comprehension is how information from text is processed by working memory and stored in long-term memory.

➤ **2.3.3 Text Comprehension**

Text comprehension is the way that information from within a text from different sentences is integrated into a single representation (Stevenson, 1993, 103). In this study, text is defined as printed or written material that consists of a number of sentences. These sentences must somehow be processed by working memory into a single representation that may or may not eventually be stored in long-term memory as a concept (Harley, 2001, p. 311). When text is understood its meaning is processed and a mental representation of its semantic information is constructed (Noordman and Vonk, 1992, p. 373). From the psycholinguistic perspective, it is assumed the text is represented in two basic stages: The first is a propositional representation and the

second is Johnson-Laird's (1983) notion of "Mental Models" (Garnhan, 1987, pp. 158-159 & Stevenson, 1993, p. 104).

A proposition or propositional structure is the simplest complete unit of thought encoded by language with the literal meaning of linguistic expressions (Feinstein, Garfield, Baker-Ward, Rissland, Rosebaum, Stillings, & Weisler, 1989, p.23). A proposition is believed to be held in a middle-memory between working memory and long-term memory where with some minimal inferences; the information in the text is constructed (Harley, 2001, pp. 327-328). Their structure is not equivalent to the words and phrases that they represent. They are considered to be the sense of the words and the phrases that they represent and have a rapidly fading linguistic form (Johnson-Laird, 1983, p. 148).

Propositions with some minimal inferences form a text-based representation. Studies of text recall have shown that people generally do not recall a linguistic expression used but recall propositions as complete semantic units (Kintsch, 1974, cited in Stevenson, 1993, p. 106). For example:

Tim ate pizza off of Mr. Jones' head. 1(a)

In the case of example 1(a), a person would be likely to recall this particular proposition as a whole unit by possible saying: *From Mr. Jones' head, Jim ate pizza was eaten by Jim from Mr. Jones' head*, regardless of how implausible that it may seem and regardless of the phrase's linguistic structure. So what get processed as a propositional unit gets recalled as a single semantic unit (Stevenson, 1993, p. 106).

Mental models are the second kind of text-representation that is believed to assist in the integration of text into a single representation and concerns the comprehending of text by way of the making of inferences (Stevenson, 1993, p. 104). Johnson-Laird (1983) posits that an organism carries a small-scale model of their environment that allows it to look for alternatives to its current situation, choose options that are conducive to a particular situation, react to future situations before they arise, utilize the knowledge of past events to deal with future situations, and react to a situation in a competent manner. Similarly, these models of reality need neither be wholly accurate nor correspond completely with what they model in order to be useful. This is the central insight of what is known as the theory of Mental Models (Johnson-Laird, 1993, p. 3). Carreiras, Garnham, & Oakhill (1996) suggest that if the theory of Mental Models allows for an interaction between superficial and content-based representation and is an appropriate framework for understanding how people comprehend text.

Understanding text requires inferences that relate to the propositions in the text and to the reader's knowledge of the world (Noordman and Vonk 1992, pp. 375-376). Inferences are formulated as a text is being read and are necessary to establish a coherent reading of it (Garnham and Oakhill, 1992, p. 199) inferences demonstrate that the listener or the reader is going beyond the initial information communicated to him or her by the text and has begun to form a representation of the text in long-term memory (Harley 2001, p. 311).

Johnson-Laird (1983) suggests that there are two major forms of inferences in Mental Models: implicit *bridging* and explicit *elaborative inferences* (Garnham and Oakhill, 1992, 199). And implicit bridging inference is made to establish coherence

between a present piece of text and a preceding text. An explicit elaborative inference is drawn to embellish textual information. For example:

Tim rode to New York. (2a)

The bicycle got a flat tire in Stroudsburg. (2b)

In (2b) there is no antecedent for the definite noun phrase *the bicycle*. In order to construct a mental model of the situation, it is necessary to infer that it was a bicycle that Tim rode and not a horse. This is a bridging inference (Stevenson, 1993, p. 112). Implicit *bridging* inferences are necessary to understand written or spoken discourse. In fact, without these inferences, discourses would be beyond anyone's competence to understand (Johnson-Laird, 1983, p. 128). Explicit inferences on the other hand are made only if the reader needs to answer some question about the text and are not necessary for the comprehension of the text (Garnhan, 199 and Oakhill, J p. 199). For example:

Jim put a large rock on Tina's finger. (3a)

One might make an inference from example (3a) that Jim and Tina are getting married even though that information is not necessary to understand the text. In summary, propositional representation together with the making of inferences is the way in which text is represented and comprehended (Stevenson, 1993, p. 104-105).

➤ **2.3.4 The importance of reading in foreign language teaching**

There are three reasons for ensuring that reading has a prominent position in the design of a foreign language teaching programme. These concern *reading techniques*, *language acquisition and motivation*.

➤ **Reading techniques**

Learners of a foreign language, especially at elementary and intermediate levels, are rarely efficient readers in the foreign language. This has to do not only with deficiencies in linguistic knowledge, but also with the strategies employed in reading. Furthermore, efficient reading in the native language is rarely an accurate indicator of how the reader tackles reading in the foreign language.

Experience shows that the simple transfer of skills from native to target language rarely occurs. Learners all too frequently read a foreign language text with a painstaking dedication to deciphering every word in a linear fashion, frequently spending more time looking in a dictionary than reading the text. The result is at best a highly imperfect translation, at worst frustration and incomprehension (Revell & Sweeney, 1993).

Some advanced learners may already read well, mainly through sheer exposure or professional necessity. However, while remembering that inefficient reading is by no means rare even in educated people reading in their own language, we should recognise the benefits for intermediate level learners in developing reading skills.

Efficient reading has been described as a kind of sampling process and teachers should aim to develop learners' skills in this respect. However, the sampling process is complex and involves many factors:

The first language reading process has been characterised as follows: the fluent reader does not examine every word in a linear fashion, but rather samples various linguistic cues (graphic, syntactic and semantic), and uses knowledge of the world to arrive at a hypothesis about the meaning of the text. The reader then tests this hypothesis in various ways (reading on, re-reading). Good readers, in other words, use many sources of information (Goodman, 1967).

We must develop learners' reading strategies in ways which reflect the reading process in the native language. This requires that we focus on meaning and on solving relevant problems, and not solely on interpreting individual words one after another. Smith (1978:126-7) emphasises the pre-eminence of meaning and the essentially implicit nature of questions that we constantly ask in order to build up a general pattern of comprehension. He claims that such skills are not even expressly taught, but where foreign language readers are concerned there has been a traditional tendency to focus on 'comprehension questions', often of a 'WH-' variety, which remove the implicit nature of meaning and actually force readers into detailed and inefficient strategies and are quite contrary to the natural reading process.

➤ *Language acquisition*

Krashen's theory of the Natural Approach, based on building competence through exposure to comprehensible input, indicates the value of reading. Krashen is in little doubt that reading makes a useful contribution to developing language acquisition, benefiting both learners' confidence and competence. He states that

Reading may contribute significantly to competence in a second language. There is good reason; in fact, to hypothesize that reading makes a contribution to overall competence, to all four skills (Krashen & Terrel, 1983:131).

Theories of language acquisition as well as language learning clearly accept that improved 'passive' understanding of English leads to an increase in active knowledge.

There is no reason to suppose that this truism for spoken English cannot also apply to written English.

Reading benefits grammatical knowledge and vocabulary development and therefore overall competence increases. A practical observation is that where the vagaries of prepositions or phrasal verbs are concerned, the learners who make the fewest mistakes are those who read the most.

➤ ***Motivation***

Thirdly, reading should be enjoyable and learners will feel motivated to read more if they feel they read well. If the reading texts are carefully selected and therefore contribute to motivation, the process of language learning will be greatly helped.

Language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages, not when it is explicitly taught for conscious learning (Krashen & Terrell, 1983:53).

A further perhaps obvious point is that reading is a means to knowledge, not only about the target language but perhaps more importantly about the world. Students should be encouraged to use the target language as a tool in their wider learning.

The following section will discuss how comprehended input, aural and written, is vital to second language acquisition.

➤ ***2.3.5 Input/Intake and Comprehension in Second language Acquisition***

Van Patten (1996) claims that input is a critical aspect of Second Language acquisition and that one might think there are many studies about input. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The main concern of input processing research is how Second

Language learners derive intake from input regardless of the language being learned and regardless of context (Van Patten, 2002, 757). Intake is input that is detected by working memory and that has been comprehended by the Second language learner, after which it is made available for second language acquisition. Wong (2003) points out that the field of second language acquisition is witnessing an increasing interest in the idea that drawing learner's attention to the formal, grammatical features of Second language input to derive intake is beneficial, and in some cases necessary for optimal Second language development.

In regards to Second Language learning, Krashen (1985) claims that Second Language learners and humans in general, acquire language by receiving and understanding messages from comprehensible input. Mac Whinney's (2001) Competition Model is a functional model of Second Language acquisition that is designed with regards to input. Mac Whinney (2001) posits that language comprehension is based on the detection of a series of First Language cues and that the reliability and availability of these First Language cues determine the degree to which a Second Language message is comprehended. The Competition Model recognizes the importance of surface phrase structure, but relates all sentences processing to cue detection and interpretation. Because the First Language cues are highest in reliability and availability, they will be the ones that most affect language comprehension. In second language acquisition, Second Language learners may use First Language cues to derive intake from the Second Language input that has been received (Mac Whinney, 2001, pp. 69-71).

In recent years, there has been a focus on discovering strategies used by Second Language learners during the decoding of message (LoCoco, 1987, P.119). There is a consensus among second language researchers that input and more importantly the derivation of intake is an essential component in second language acquisition, and learners use input to construct a mental representation of the grammar that they are acquiring (Van Patten, 1996, p. 13). Although there are differing opinions, Schmidt (2002) posits that attention must be directed toward the evidence that is relevant for a particular learning domain. In other words, the receiving of input in the Second Language and the derivation of intake from that input is essential to acquire phonology as well as vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and meaning by way of contextual information.

As mentioned previously, Second Language learners do not process all of the input that they receive, and comprehended input is reduced to a subset of input called intake, which is made available for Second Language Acquisition (Van Patten, 1996, 13). The derivation of intake from input occurs because the Second Language learner unconsciously considers some forms of input more important than other forms of input. The input that Second Language learner unconsciously considers more important will be attended to and detected by working memory, through which it will become available to become intake (Schmidt, 2002, p. 32). Krashen (1981) suggests that intake is essential to First Language learning as well as Second Language learning and that intake is the first of all input to be understood. Krashen (1985) takes the Universal Grammar approach and claims that second language acquisition does not require attention to form in the input in order to incorporate new material into a developing interlanguage system, while Schmidt (2002) takes an opposing position, arguing for a

central role for conscious processing of grammatical forms in the input. In either case, attending to incoming information is effortful and only so much data can be attended at a given time because of the limited attention capacity of working memory.

Van Patten (1996) posits that attention is an important construct for learning, especially Second Language Learning, and that learning takes place by way of it. Since unattended stimuli persist in working memory for only a matter of seconds, attention is a necessary and sufficient condition for intake to be derived from input and for long-term memory storage to occur (Schmidt, 2002, p. 16). So if input is not attended to or detected by working memory, intake will not be derived from the input and the input will be lost. At issue is that detecting input takes effort and that working memory has only a limited capacity to deal with stimuli. Moreover, the human cognitive activity of language comprehension consumes a great deal of attention resources (Van Patten, 1996, p. 16).

As mentioned, detection is a process by which data are registered in working memory and is what makes a particular piece of data available for further processing (Tomlin and Villa, 1994, p.192). Detection is a sub process of attention, which is the aspect of input processing that most directly relates to the derivation of intake. However, detection causes inference with the processing of other information, and is occupies a large amount of attention resources. So not all input that is attended to or detected will become available for the derivation of intake. It is also important to note that even if incoming Second Language information is comprehended or understood, it may not become available for the derivation of intake (Van Patten, 1996, p. 16). Van Patten (1996) posits that because not all incoming linguistic information becomes

available for intake, Second Language learners may have a subconscious preference for the processing of Second Language information.

From this idea Van Patten (1996) developed two principles of Second Language input processing:

Principle 1:

- Second Language Learners process input for meaning before they process it for form. This means that if a Second Language learner with basic comprehension is attempting to get meaning out of the input, he or she will most likely process for the meaning in the input before processing formal features of language.

- Second Language Learners process content words in the input before anything else.

For example:

John is the owner of the car. (3b)

In example (3b), the Second Language learner will process the words that best express the meaning of the utterance such as *John*, *owner*, and *car*.

- Second Language Learner prefers processing lexical items to grammatical items for semantic information. For example:

Yesterday John studied his boots. (3c)

In example (3c), the Second Language learner will process the lexical item *yesterday* instead of the bound morpheme – *ed* to figure out that the action took place in the past (Van Patten, 1996, pp. 17-19).

Principle 2:

For Second Language learners to process form that is non-meaningful, e.g. third person –s, they must be able to process informational or communicative content at no or little cost to attention resources. For example:

John looks tired (4a)

In example (4a), the Second Language learner must be advanced enough in his or her second language to understand the meaning of *John*, *look*, and *tired* in order to process the bound morpheme –s with little or no cost to comprehension. A number of studies have been carried out to determine how Second Language learners process for input and meaning in their Second Language, and these are summarized in the following section.

➤ 2.3.6 *Input and intake*

Learners' most direct source of *information* about the target language is the target language itself. When they come into direct contact with the target language, this is referred to as "input." When learners process that language in a way that can contribute to learning, this is referred to as "intake."

Generally speaking, the amount of input learners take in is one of the most important factors affecting their learning. However, it must be at a level that is comprehensible to them.

➤ **2.4 Relevant Studies in Aural and Text Comprehension**

➤ **2.4.1 Major Studies on Second Language Aural and Text Comprehension and Input**

Van Patten (1990) explores the question of whether or not Second Language learners can focus conscious attention on both form and meaning when processing Second Language input. Van Patten (1990) hypothesized that if Second Language learners have difficulty directing attention toward both content and form, then a task involving the conscious focus of attention on a non-content grammatical item in the input will negatively affect comprehension. If these same Second Language learners perform a task involving the conscious focus of attention on a content lexical item, comprehension will not be negatively affected. Lastly, he hypothesized that more advanced learners should be more able to direct attention to form and attention to content at the same time since they are better equipped to attend to content.

Van Patten (1990) tested these hypotheses using beginning level, intermediate level, and advanced level of Spanish. The students were assigned to one of four groups:

- (1) Listen to the passage only (Task I),
- (2) Listen to the passage and make a checkmark for any and all occurrences of the content word *inflación* (Task II),
- (3) Listen to the passage and make a checkmark for any and all occurrences of the definitive article *la* (Task III)
- (4) Listen to the passage and make a checkmark for any and all occurrences of the verbal inflection *-n* (Task IV). After listening to the passage, the subjects carried out a free writing recall, from which, an idea analysis was used to obtain the subjects mean recall scores which represented the idea units that the subjects were able to recall from

the experimental text. Mean Recall Scores from Van Patten (1990) are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Van Patten (1990) Mean Recall Scores by task and level

	Task I	Task II	Task III	Task IV
Beginning	9.13	6.90	3.75	2.75
Intermediate	10.13	10.00	5.50	6.96
Advanced	19.15	16.35	13.07	6.27

Note. From “Attending to form and Content in the Input”, by Bill VanPatten (1990), *Studies In Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 287-301. Copyright 1990 by Cambridge University Press.

At the beginning and intermediate levels, Van Patten (1990) found that the mean recall scores demonstrated a pattern of higher recall rates for Task I and Task II when compared to Task III and Task IV. At the advanced level, Van Patten found a similar pattern to that of the beginning and advanced levels. Task I and Task II received the highest recall score while Task III and Task IV demonstrated a pattern of lower recall scores.

The mean recall scores, as well as a statistical analysis, seemed to support Van Patten’s (1990) hypotheses. Lower level beginning and intermediate Second Language learners appeared to have difficulty attending to meaning and form when consciously focusing attention on a non-content grammatical item. However, these same learners did not appear to have difficulty attending to meaning and form when consciously focusing attention on a content lexical item. As mention previously, Van Patten predicted that advanced level learners will not exhibit the same patterns of performance on the tasks as they early stage learners.

The mean recall scores and a statistical analysis offered mixed support for this hypothesis. In the case of Task III, comprehension was not negatively affected. At the

advanced level, the mean recall scores of Task III when compared to that of the mean recall scores of Task III at the beginning and intermediate levels demonstrated that advanced level Second Language learners were able to focus attention on a non-content lexical item, while the lower level Second Language learners were not, offered evidence to support Van Patten's hypothesis. However, Task IV received significantly lower recall scores than Task I, Task II, as well as Task III and demonstrated the same patterns found at the beginning and intermediate levels, offering evidence that does not support Van Patten's hypothesis.

The evidence found suggests that lower level Second Language learners have difficulty directing conscious focus of attention on meaning and on non-content grammatical form, a non-content lexical item and a bound morpheme, at the same time. At the advanced level, the evidence found in Van Patten suggests that Second Language learners may or may not have difficulty directing conscious focus of attention on meaning and on non-content grammatical form depending on which non-content grammatical form is being focus on.

Lee (1998) examined a similar question by investigating the relationship of verb morphology to second language reading comprehension and input processing. Lee's research question states: "Are comprehension and input processing affected by the morphological characteristics of the input?" Subjects for the study were enrolled in a second semester Spanish course at a Midwestern university in the United States. The subjects consisted of 71 individuals in four different classes. Three versions of a passage were used in the experiment. In passage (A), nine targeted verbs appeared in their original subjunctive form. In version (B), the nine targeted verbs were substituted

with their infinitive forms so that they would maintain their semantic value but no longer be morphologically encoded. In version (C), the nine targeted verbs were substituted with invented morphological endings. The verbs still maintained semantic value because the stems still carried lexical meaning. The subjects were given three packets of material to read and were instructed to read for 20 minutes without reviewing what they had read. The students were then asked to do a written recall that was scored with an idea unit analysis (Lee, 1998, pp. 37-42).

What Lee found was that linguistically and contextually appropriate verb forms yield significantly lower comprehension than infinitival and substituted verb forms with invented morphological endings. This may have occurred because the subjunctive verb forms were more varied and linguistically richer than the infinitival and the substituted verb forms (Lee, 1998, pp. 41-42). Lee posited that noticing and detecting the subjunctive verb form occupied a large amount of attention resources, and because of this, the subjects were not able to focus on the text's meaning even though the subjects were not directed to focus conscious attention on the subjunctive morphology.

This seems to support Van Patten (1990), demonstrating that the detection of a grammatical item, in this case a bound morpheme, may cause comprehension to be negatively affected. Lee (1998) and Van Patten (1990), demonstrating that the detection of a given form does not mean that it will be comprehended and that detected information causes inference with comprehension of aural or written input (Lee, 1998, p. 42). Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) tested the results of Van Patten (1990) by investigating the effects of conscious focus of attention on a grammatical item or a lexical item in the comprehension of Second Language reading text. Bouden,

Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) hypothesized that, at the early stages of Second Language acquisition, processing for meaning and processing for form compete for the Second Language learner's limited attention capacity and that when Second Language learners are instructed to focus attention on a lexical content item in the text, their comprehension will not be negatively affected. Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) was a conceptual replication of Van Patten (1990) because while using the same experimental text and task groups as used in Van Patten (1990), Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz used written instead of aural as the primary form of input. They also only tested intermediate Second Language learners of Spanish while Van Patten tested beginning, intermediate, and advanced. The subjects were assigned to one of four groups:

(1) Read the passage for content only (Task I),

(2) Read the passage for content and circle any and all occurrences of the content word *inflación* (Task II),

(3) Read the passage for content and circle any and all occurrences of the definitive article *la* (Task III),

(4) Read the passage and circle any and all occurrences of the verbal inflection *-n* (Task VI).

After reading the passage, the subjects carried out a free writing recall in their native language, from which an idea analysis was used to obtain the subjects mean recall scores, which represented the idea units that the subjects' were able to recall from

the experimental text. Mean Recall Scores from Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) are displayed in the Table 2.

Table 2. Bouden, Greenslade, and Sanz (1999)

Mean Recall Scores by task and level

	Task I	Task II	Task III	Task IV
Intermediate	22.50	18.00	12.79	13.73

Note. From “Attending to form and Content in processing L2 Reading Texts”, by Bouden, L. Greenslade, T.A., & Sanz. C. 1999, Spanish Applied Linguistics, A Forum for Theory and Research, 3, 65-89. Copyright 1999 by SAL.

At the intermediate level, the mean recall scores demonstrated higher recall scores for Task I as well as Task II and demonstrated lower recall scores for Task III and Task IV. This was similar to what the mean recall scores of Van Patten (1990) demonstrated. As in Van Patten (1990), the mean recall scores were submitted to statistical analysis (ANOVA and Turkey’s HSD). A significant difference was found between Task I and Task III as well as between Task I and Task IV. A significant difference was also found between Task II and Task III as well as Task II and Task IV. No significant difference was found between Task I and Task II or between Task III and Task IV. These results reflect the results of Van Patten (1990) at the intermediate level.

The results of the study seem to confirm their hypotheses (Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, 1999, pp. 76-77). At the early stages of Second Language acquisition, processing for meaning and processing for form compete for the learner’s limited attention capacity. As in the Van Patten study, when meaning and form competes for attention resources, comprehension is hindered because of attention constraints in the detection of input. However, in the early stages of Second Language acquisition, conscious focus of attention on a content lexical item in the text does not produce the

same detrimental effects on comprehension as conscious focus of attention on a non-content-grammatical item, even though attention resources may be diverted.

The results of Van Patten (1990), Lee (1998), and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) are important because they demonstrate that during the early stages of Second Language acquisition, conscious or subconscious focus of attention on form can detrimentally affect Second Language aural and text comprehension. However, Van Patten found conflicting results at the advanced Second Language level, Lee only tested lower level Second Language learners, and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz only tested the intermediate Second Language level.

➤ **2.5 Hypothesis**

➤ **2.5.1 Hypotheses**

Based on the literature review and the above mentioned studies, the following hypotheses have been formulated to better understand conscious focus of attention on form and content at the advanced level.

HO: A Second Language reading task requiring conscious focus of attention on a lexical content item will not adversely improve Second Language reading comprehension when compared to the same Second Language reading task that does not require conscious focus of attention on a lexical content.

While advanced Second Language learners of English will demonstrate higher reading comprehension scores than intermediate Second Language learners of English,

consciously focusing attention on a lexical content item will not adversely improve intermediate and advanced level Second Language reading comprehension.

H1: A Second Language reading task requiring conscious focus of attention on a grammatical item will adversely improve Second Language reading comprehension as compared to a Second Language reading task that does not require conscious focus of attention on a grammatical item.

Consciously focusing attention on a grammatical item will adversely improve (*affect*) both intermediate and advanced level reading comprehension.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

➤ 3.1 *Methodological Precedents*

The methodology of this thesis was the use of an idea unit analysis to test whether instruction which focuses on text structure improves comprehension with readers with poor comprehension. To test this, I conducted a study with a heterogeneous group of 25 high-intermediate proficiency ESL students, IV Level, enrolled in the intensive English program for students at the Support Center N° 19. The students that participated in the study were asked to read a number of naturally occurring texts that were selected from a variety of sources. Schemata effects were controlled for having the subjects read about relatively unknown issues. The test consisted of reading each text, writing an immediate free recall, and identifying the text's overall organization by answering an open-ended question. Then the text recall was scored by counting the quantity of idea units recalled. The idea units consisted of a single clause, which was main or subordinate and included adverbial or relative clauses. Also, each infinitival construction, gerundive, nominalized verb phrase, conjunct, and optional and/or heavy prepositional phrases was identified as a separate idea unit.

The test was carried out by asking Second Language Spanish learners at the advanced level to listen to a short passage on inflation in their second language. There were 25 students in total and an average of 6 students per task. The students were assigned to one of four groups:

- (1) Listen to the passage only;
- (2) Listen to the passage and note any and all occurrences of the content word *inflación*;

- (3) Listen to the passage and note any and all occurrences of the definite article *la*;
- (4) Listen to the passage and not any and all occurrences of the verbal inflection *-n*.

Having the students attend to a specific lexical item or grammatical item was operationalized by having the subjects make a check mark, a slash, or any other mark on a blank sheet of paper each time they heard the target item. The passage was constructed so that the content word, the definite article, and the verbal inflection were evenly distributed throughout the passage. After reading the text, the students completed a free writing recall of the text.

The instruments and procedures were used, and noting the grammatical item as well as the lexical item was operationalized by underlining, circling, or putting a check mark next to the target item. After filling out the background questionnaire, the students were asked to read warm-up paragraph at the same level of grammatical and lexical complexity as the experimental passage in order to prime the subjects to read the experimental text. The students were then given the experimental text to read and asked to note a specific lexical item or grammatical item. The students were given 2 minutes and 30 seconds to read the experimental passage in order to avoid backtracking of the text. This was done to insure that the passage would be read in a linear fashion in order to compensate for the linear nature of aural input as a continuous speech stream (Reading a text is not considered to be a linear activity). The administrator of the experiment gave subjects the relevant schematic information before the experimental text was administered to insure that a lack of this information would not interfere with their reading comprehension. This was done by telling the subjects about the basic content contained in the text. The passage was about "Inflation in Latin America". After

completing the experimental task, the students were asked to do a free writing recall, which was analyzed using idea unit analysis. The test passage contained 53 semantic and syntactic idea units. Each participant's score was computed according to the raw number of idea units contained in the written recall. After data from all tasks groups were scored, the mean recall scores for each task group were calculated. The raw scores were submitted to two separate one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA), one on Text Scores and another Recall scores with Task (*control, inflación,-n, la*) as the independent variable. The Alpha was set at .05 levels. The ANOVA on the text scores or the number of the marked words was to used determine if there were significant differences between the groups on the number of the target item noticed in the text. The ANOVA on Recall scores was used to determine if there were significant differences between groups with respect to the number of idea units recalled from the passage. Scores were then compared post hoc wherever significant factors were identified by means of a Tukey's Test for the Honest Significant difference with the Alpha set at the .05 level (Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, 1999, pp. 73-74)

➤ **3.2 Design**

➤ **3.2.1 Design**

The design of this study is based on the methodology used on Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) as well as in Van Patten (1990) and is a conceptual replication of both studies. Both studies hypothesized that focusing a Second Language learner's conscious attention toward lexical content item would not affect comprehension while taking the opposite position in regards a definite article and a bound morpheme or a verbal inflection. Van Patten included four tasks, and the form of input used in this study was

aural with his students being Second Language Spanish learners. Bouden, Greenslade, and Sanz were a conceptual replication of Van Patten and the input used was written. Task I was the control task and consisted of listening to a passage for content. Task II consisted of listening to the passage for content and simultaneously noting a key lexical item. Task III consisted of listening for content and simultaneously noting a definite article. Task IV consisted of listening for content and simultaneously noting a bound morpheme or a verbal inflection.

➤ **3.3 Subjects/Population**

➤ **3.3.1 Subjects/Population**

A total of 25 students were selected from an existing population of advanced L2 English learners at the Support Center 19 Coca. One level of classes was chosen for this study: IV Level. The students that participated in the study attended advanced level L2 English classes, which consisted of intermediate university level development of reading comprehension, writing, listening comprehension, and speaking in English. In total, five intact classes were used to carryout the experiment.

As in Van Patten (1990) and, Bouden, Greenslade, and Sanz (1999), students were chosen from intact classes for testing instead of using volunteers in order to assure a more accurate sample of typical college-level language students. The students were given the option not to participate in the study. All students were selected in accordance with the following criteria:

Criteria for Subject Participation of advanced L2 English learners:

- I. The student must be attending advanced L2 English classes at the Support Center.

II. The student must complete a background information questionnaire in order to show that he or she has no significant reading disabilities.

III. The student must be a native Spanish speaker.

25 students participated in the study. (See Table 3 for numbers of subject according to task groups).

Table 3. Number of Subjects per task by level.

	Task I	Task II	Task III	Task IV
Advanced Level	6	6	6	7

➤ **3.4.1 Instruments**

The first instrument was a questionnaire (see Appendix A). The purpose of the questionnaire was to assure that the students had no significant reading disabilities, that they were native Spanish speakers, and that they were at the appropriate advanced Second Language level to participate in the study. Students were also asked for their last two digits of their List's identification number, which was put on the upper-right hand corner of all instruments so that all instruments used in the study could be matched to the questionnaire.

The second and third instruments were the warm-up text (see Appendix B) and the experimental text (see Appendix C). The purpose of the warm-up text was to familiarize the students with the overall procedure of the experiment before beginning the experimental task and to allow the students to focus on comprehension in their Second Language before performing the task. As in Van Patten and Bouden,

Greenslade, & Sanz, the warm-up text was shorter than the experimental text and comparable in level of lexical and grammatical complexity to the actual experimental text. While reading the warm-up text, the subjects performed tasks similar in complexity to those that they would perform during the reading of the experimental text. The control group read for comprehension only. The lexical content item selected was the word *education*, the bound morpheme chosen was *-ed*, and the non-content lexical item chosen was the word *of*. Different lexical and grammatical items were chosen to be marked in the warm-up text and the experimental text to ensure that no one group would have an advantage over another when working with the experimental text. This was not done in Van Patten, and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz and might have inadvertently increased the recall scores of the experimental groups in those studies that marked the same lexical or grammatical item in both the warm-up and the experimental text over the recall scores of the experimental groups that did not. Results from the warm-up text were not used in the final scoring and analysis of this experiment.

The experimental text was designed based on the length, the number of sentences. And the word count of the original Van Patten experimental text. As in Van Patten, and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, the experimental text was designed with an average of 22.6 words between the individual lexical and grammatical item found throughout the text. The lexical and grammatical items marked throughout the text by the students participating in the experimental groups are as follows: Lexical content item *commerce*, which occurred ten times; the bound morpheme *-ing*, which occurred thirteen times; and the non-content lexical item *the*, which occurred eleven times. An attempt was made to assure that each lexical and grammatical item would occur the same number of times, but in some cases it was found that the text's syntax would be

altered if a specific grammatical or lexical item was removed. This did not appear to adversely affect the results of the study because the number of target items marked by each student was less than 10 (see Chapter 4 for more detail).

The fourth instrument was the Data Elicitation Protocol (see Appendix D). The Data Elicitation Protocol provided the researcher with a consistent set of instructions to follow while applying the instruments in order to ensure uniformity between the different classes that participated in the study. It also provided instructions about the time limit that the students had to read for both the warm-up and experimental text. Lastly, in order to ensure that the students (native Spanish speaker) and the researcher (native English speaker) thoroughly understood the procedures, the Data Elicitation Protocol consisted of instructions in Spanish and in English.

The fifth instrument was the written instructions for the students that participated in the study (see Appendix E). There were four sets of written instructions, one for each task group, designed in Spanish using the verb form *tú* in order to avoid misinterpretations of the instructions that can occur while reading instructions containing the verb form *usted*. The verb form *tú* is used in Spanish informal speech and the verb form *usted* is used in Spanish formal speech. Unlike Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, it was decided to give aural as well as written instructions to the subjects in order to allow the researcher to administer all four tasks in a single classroom. This permitted a more representative sample to be selected from the individual classes participating in the study. Also, the researcher was able to apply the instruments to an additional group of subjects from the advanced level Second Language English classes in order to ensure that each task group consisted of at least 6 subjects.

The final instrument was the Idea Unit Analysis (see Appendix F). The Idea Unit Analysis was designed to identify the idea units within the passage in order to score the subjects' comprehension using their free written recalls. This assessment has been shown to be a valid experimental evaluation of reading and listening in Carrel (1985), Van Patten (1990), Lee (1996), and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999); however, a modified protocol was used in the current study to provide a more rigorous analysis of the free writing recalls. The idea units were taken directly from the experimental text and consisted of single clauses, which were main or subordinate and included adverbial or relative clauses, infinitival constructions, gerundives, nominalized verb phrases, conjuncts, and optional and/or heavy prepositional phrases. After identifying the idea units found in the texts, semantic and syntactic heads were then identified within the each idea unit in order to facilitate the coding of the free writing recalls. There were 47 idea units in total (see Chapter 4 for more detail).

➤ **3.5 Procedure**

➤ **3.5.1 Procedures**

The procedures were based on Van Patten (1990) and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999). One researcher administered the experiment, which consisted of four task groups of advanced Second Language English learners. For each group, consistency was assured for the administration of the questionnaires, the warm-up paragraph, the experimental text, and the free writing recall by means of a standardized data elicitation protocol and individual group instructions, which were strictly followed for each task group (as detailed in the previous section).

Because the modality for the experiment was written rather than aural, it was necessary to establish a reasonable exposure time for the warm-up and the experimental text. This was done in the Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) because a reading time compensates for the differences between aural input, which is a linear speech stream, and written input, which can be non-linear if the students backtrack (Bouden, Greenslade, and Sanz, 1999, p. 73). In order to establish a reading time, a pre-pilot study was conducted in which six advanced level Second Language English learners volunteered to read the warm-up and experimental text while being timed. Based on the results of pre-pilot, the time established for the warm-up text was two minutes, and the time established for the experimental text was three minutes. To ensure that the procedures, the instructions, and the Data Elicitation Protocol were methodologically valid, the instruments were piloted with an intact class of Second Language English learners. Of the twenty five volunteers that participated in the pilot study, one failed to follow the instructions properly. The reading times were also shown to be valid as all of the participants in the pilot study agreed that they had enough time to read both texts but did not have enough time to backtrack. The participants in the pilot study informed the researcher that they did not understand the target lexical item *trade* in the experimental text. As a result of the pilot study, the target lexical item *trade* was replaced with the target lexical item *commerce*. This was done because *commerce* is a close synonym of the word *trade* and would be better understood by the subjects because it is a cognate of the Spanish word *comercio*.

Summary of tasks:

Task I: Read for content only (control task), no independent variable

Task II: Read for content while noticing a key content word

Task III: Read for content while noticing a verb morpheme

Task IV: Read for content while noticing a non-content word (definite or indefinite article)

The experiments were carried out at the Support Center in irregular classes' times and room during a week period from January 15, 2007 to January 25, 2007. Afternoon classes were used in the experiment in order to ensure that subjects' emotional and physical state at different times during the day would not adversely affect the results. The students first read and completed the assigned tasks using the warm-up. Next the subjects carried out the assigned task using the experimental text. As in Van Patten and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, schemata were controlled for by giving the subjects a brief description of the text in Spanish. Immediately after the subjects read and completed the assigned task while reading the experimental text, the subjects then carried out free writing recall in their native language describing everything they remembered about the experimental text without giving their opinion. This was to ensure that the subjects' actual comprehension was accurately reflected and as a control for the subjects' limited Second Language writing ability (Lee, 1986, p. 38).

➤ **3.6 Task Group Codes**

In order to more easily explain the results of this study, the following codes were assigned to the four task groups that participated in this thesis.

➤ **3.6.1 Advanced Level**

A-NoMarking	Advanced L2 English Level Task Group I
A-Content	Advanced L2 English Level Task Group II
A-BoundMorph	Advanced L2 English Level Task Group III
A-NonContent	Advanced L2 English Level Task Group IV

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF SURVEYS

Results and Analysis

➤ 4.1 Scoring and Analysis

➤ 4.1.1 *Recall Scores*

After the experimental stage was completed, the recall protocols were scored according to the number of idea units recalled (Carrel, 1985; Lee, 1986; Van Patten, 1990; & Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, 1999). The experimental text contained 47 semantic and syntactic idea units. Each subject's score was computed according to the raw number of idea units contained in the written recall (see Appendix F). A drawback of the original Van Patten (1990) and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) studies was that recall protocols were scored based on the researcher's subjective opinion that an idea unit found in the free writing recall was similar to one found in the experimental text, with no other way to verify that it was actually the same idea unit. In order to remedy this problem, a point system was developed to more rigorously score each individual idea unit. The selection of an individual idea unit within the free writing recall was based on the following criteria:

- a) The similarity of the idea unit written in the free writing recall to that of one of the 47 idea units found in the experimental text (Van Patten, 1990; & Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz, 1999).

- b) The number of semantic heads, which are content words found within an idea unit that the idea unit's meaning is built around, and syntactic heads, which are syntactic categories found in an idea unit that the idea unit's phrase structure is built around, contained within a particular idea unit.

Example 1.

36) (Countries) that **opened** their **markets** to global **commerce**

- a) *que **abrieron** algo. (Similar to Idea Unit 36. 33.3% of syntactic or semantic heads identified, 0 points)*
- b) *que **abrieron** sus **mercados**. (Similar to Idea Unit 36. 100% of syntactic or semantic heads identified, 1 points)*
- c) *que **abrieron** sus **mercados** al **comercio**. (Similar to Idea Unit 36. 66.6% of syntactic and semantic heads identified, 2 points)*

After an idea unit had been identified, the number of semantic and syntactic heads found in the idea unit was counted. If the idea unit from the free writing recall contained less than fifty per cent of the syntactic and semantic heads found in that of the idea unit from the experimental text such as in Example 1a, the subject received no points for that particular idea unit. If the idea unit from the free writing recall contained more than fifty percent but less than one hundred percent of the syntactic and semantic heads found in that of the idea unit from the experimental text such as in Example 1b, the subject received one point for that particular idea unit. If the idea unit from the free writing recall contained one hundred percent of the syntactic and semantic heads found in that of the idea unit from the experimental text such as in Example 1c, the subject received two points for that particular idea unit.

After the data from the eight task groups were scored, the number of recall units was determined, and the mean recall scores for each task group were calculated. This procedure is consistent with Van Patten (1990) and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) studies.

➤ **4.1.2 Text Scores**

As in Van Patten (1990) and Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) mean text scores for each group were determined by calculating the average of the number of target items marked per task group. The target items were the content lexical item *commerce*, the grammatical item *-ing*, the non-content lexical item *the* marked by the subjects while reading the experimental text for content.

➤ **4.2 Results**

➤ **4.2.1 Recall Scores**

Advanced level mean recall scores are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Advanced Level Mean Recall Scores

Task Group	n	Idea Unit	Std. Dev.
A-NoMarking	6	13.917	6.708
A-Content	6	14.667	7.011
A-BoundMorph	6	10.500	5.018
A-NonContent	7	11.154	4.652

At the advanced level A-Content received the highest recall score, A-NoMarking received the second highest recall score, A-NonContent received the third highest recall score, and A-BoundMorph received the fourth highest recall score.

For statistical analysis of advanced recall scores, this study adopted an alpha level of $p < 0.05$. at the advanced level, the results of an ANOVA revealed no significant differences between tasks for the advanced level recall scores ($F(3,45)=1.449$,

$P < 0.0001$). This suggests that the variation between tasks was not greater than expected by chance. The results of a post-hoc Tukey's .HSD revealed no significant differences between tasks at the advanced level ($p < 0.05$).

➤ **4.2.2 Text Scores**

Advanced level text item-detection scores are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. Advanced Level Text Item-Detection Scores

Task Group	n	Item	Std. Dev.
A-Content	6	9.917	0.2887
A-BoundMorph	6	9.917	3.029
A-NonContent	7	8.231	1.964

Advanced level text scores are displayed in Table 5. The advanced level text scores demonstrated a similar pattern to that of the mean intermediate text scores. A-BoundMorph yielded the highest text score, A-Content yielded the second highest text score, and A-NonContent yielded the lowest text score.

For statistical analysis of advanced text scores, this study adopted an alpha level of $p < 0.05$. Unlike the intermediate text scores, the results of an ANOVA revealed no significant differences between advanced level text scores ($F(2,34) = 2.750$, $P < 0.0001$).

This suggests that the variation between means for the text scores greater than expected by chance. The results of a post-hoc Tukey's .HSD revealed no significant differences between tasks for the text scores at the advanced level ($p < 0.05$).

➤ **4.3 Scoring and Analysis: Adjusted Recall Scores**

➤ **4.3.1 *Rational for Adjusted Recall Scores***

A further drawback of the original Van Patten (1990) and, Bouden, Greenslade, & Sanz (1999) studies was that the analyses and the results of these studies were based principally on the recall scores and not on the text scores. Although both studies submitted their text scores to an ANOVA and a Tukey's Test for Honest Significant Difference, they did not address how a lower or higher text score of a particular task group might affect that task group's mean recall scores.

For example, in this study, I-BoundMorph had a lower recall score than I-NonContent. However, I-BoundMorph had a significantly higher text score than I-NonContent. According to the recall scores it appears as though I-NonContent performed better than I-BoundMorph in regards to the number of idea units recalled for the experimental text. But, did I-NonContent acquire higher recall scores because that group marked less target items than I-BoundMorph, or did I-NonContent acquire higher recall scores than I-BounMorph because the target item that was market while reading the experimental passage for content caused less of a strain on attention resources in working memory? To resolve this issue, the recall scores and the text scores must be combined in order to better compare the mean recall scores. So to reliably compare the recall scores between the experimental task groups, the text scores must be balanced and the recall scores must be adjusted according to the differences found between the mean text scores of each task group. This must be done to account for the differences between the text scores in each experimental group.

➤ **4.3.2 Adjusted Recall Scores**

The formula for the adjusted recall scores was developed while working with a statistician. Adjusted recall scores were calculated by multiplying the recall score of a particular task group by the text score of that same task group and then dividing that number by the highest average text score at a given level (see Example 2 for details). The recall scores I-NoMarking and A-NonContent were not adjusted because they did not receive the treatment, but were included in the adjusted recall scores in order to make comparisons between the control group and the experimental groups that received the treatment.

Example 2. Formula for Adjusted Recall Scores

$\text{Recall Score} \times \text{Text Score} / \text{Highest Average Text Score} = \text{Adjusted Recall Score}$

➤ **4.4 Results of Adjusted Recall Scores**

➤ **4.4.1 Adjusted Recall Scores**

Advanced level mean adjusted recall scores are displayed in Table 8 and Table 4 has been repeated in order to facilitate a comparison between advanced level mean recall scores and advanced level adjusted recall scores.

Table 4. Advanced Level Mean Recall Scores

Task Group	n	Idea Unit	Std. Dev.
A-NoMarking	6	13.917	6.708
A-Content	6	14.667	7.011
A-BoundMorph	6	10.500	5.018
A-NonContent	7	11.154	4.652

Table 8. Advanced Level Adjusted Recall Scores

Task Group	n	Idea Unit	Std. Dev.
A-NoMarking	6	13.917	6.708
A-Content	6	14.667	7.011
A-BoundMorph	6	10.500	5.018
A-NonContent	7	9.255	3.857

A-NoMarking received the highest adjusted recall score, A-Content received the second highest adjusted recall score, A-BoundMorph received the third highest adjusted recall score and A-NonContent received the lowest adjusted recall score. The advanced adjusted recall scores appear to demonstrate a similar pattern to that of the advanced mean recall scores. A-NoMarking and A-Content yielded the highest recall scores for both the recall scores and the adjusted recall scores. Additionally, A-BoundMorph and A-NonContent yield the lowest recall and adjusted recall scores. However, in the adjusted recall scores, A-BoundMorph yielded the third highest adjusted recall score and A-NonContent yielded the lowest adjusted recall score. In the recall score, A-NonContent yielded the third highest and A-BoundMorph yielded the lowest at the intermediate level. These patterns in the adjusted recall scores appear to hold for both proficiency levels.

For statistical analysis of advanced adjusted recall scores, this study adopted an alpha level of $p < 0.05$. At the advanced level, the results of an ANOVA reveal no significant differences between tasks for the advanced level adjusted recall score ($F(3,45)=2.559$, $P < 0.0001$). This suggests that the variation between tasks was not greater than expected by chance. The results of a pos-hoc Turkey's. HSD revealed no significant differences between tasks for adjusted recall scores at the advanced level ($p < 0.05$).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECONMEDATIONS

➤ 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- The students that belong to the Proficiency in English Program don't have the ability to understand the real meaning of certain categories or objects.
- The Distance education mode doesn't facilitate that the students acquire this ability.
- The students need to have an English tutor that helps them to clarify or to define these categories.

➤ 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Offer the students the facility of learning by means of the use of certain techniques and helps of understanding.
- Motivate the student's practice in understanding reading.
- The Support Centres need to have an English tutor permanent and properly qualified so that the students go and improve the ability of understanding.

CHAPTER VI

PROPOSAL

➤ 6.1 PROPOSAL

“Form Versus Content in Comprehending Second Language Reading Texts with the students of Fourth Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca”.

➤ 6.1.1 JUSTIFICATION

Most people who live in Francisco de Orellana are professionals that need their students have the best education. They are always worried about the student´s knowledge.

This project is a proposal to improve reading-comprehension English Language where we will apply and obtain positive results because, students have understood that English is very important nowadays, and then they have a great interest, and increase their knowledge in learning English offer. The students will have many opportunities to find a good job. Moreover, students also have to understand that technology is changing everyday and English is the most spoken Language around the world.

Many University students want to work in different Foreign Petroleum Companies. In these places the workers must have a basic knowledge in English Language, before that they enter to work in those companies; they have to approve an English Test before to be an employee.

➤ **6.1.2 OBJECTIVES**

- To investigate second language text comprehension from the perspective of language processing within the field of cognitive science, especially with reference to attention resources with the students of the Fourth Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca”, is located in Francisco de Orellana (Coca) city, Orellana Province, during the Semester October 2006 – March 2007.
- To determine the effect of attention to form versus attention to meaning while processing input for meaning during the intermediate and advanced stages of second language acquisition at the IV Level of English Proficiency of the Support Center N° 19 “Coca” during the semester October 2006- March 2007.

➤ **6.1.3 HOW TO USE**

We can use this investigation using an idea unit analysis to test whether instruction which focuses on text structure improves comprehension with readers with poor comprehension. The test consists of reading each text, writing an immediate free recall, and identifying the text’s overall organization by answering an open-ended question. Then the text recall is scores by counting the quantity of idea units recalled.

➤ 6.2 TEACHING SECOND LANGUAGE READING STRATEGIES

➤ 6.2.1 Introduction

Teaching Second Language Reading Strategies can be used for EFL classes to teach reading strategies. The objectives are that the students should be able to understand the text structure of a particular genre, find the main idea in the text, learn new vocabulary and learn effective reading strategies to develop their reading comprehension.

In classroom interaction, a shift between teacher and learner focus is made to provide the teacher's support and guidance at earlier stages and gradually withdraw the teacher's focus to assist students in becoming more independent learners. As some students may be shy when speaking and afraid of making mistakes in front of the class or peers, whole class, groups, and pair discussion are implemented at the earlier stages to minimize their anxiety.

➤ 6.3 Pre-reading Activities

➤ 6.3.1. *Signpost Questions (As a Whole Class)*

The teacher asks questions to motivate the readers and activate their background knowledge.

- How do you come/go to work/school? (By bus, subway, train, bicycle, or on foot?)
- How long does it take to come/go to school/work? (Less than 30 minutes, one hour, or more?)
- What do you usually do on the bus, subway, or train? (Read books, sleep, or nothing?)

- What else can you do on the bus, subway, or train? (Chat with other passengers, use a mobile phone, or something else?)
- Where do you study English? (At school, library, home, office, train or elsewhere?)

➤ **6.3.2 Prediction Activities (As a Whole Class)**

The teacher shows only the title of the text (and photographs if available) at this stage, and asks the students to predict the topic based on the previous questions, prior knowledge, and the title of the text.

Based on the learners' prediction, some questions will be asked by the teacher to focus on the main point when reading the text.

Questions such as these might be asked:

- What was the event?
- When did the event occur?
- Where did the event occur?
- Who was involved in the event?
- How did the event occur?
- Why did the event occur?

Then, the teacher asks the students to predict the style/tenor of language and the schematic structure of the text.

Questions such as these might be asked to identify and clarify textual information:

- Who wrote the text?
- Who was the text written for?

- What style of language might be used?
- How might the text be structured?

Active participation of the students is encouraged to draw on their background knowledge to assist reading comprehension. Therefore, to raise as many ideas as possible, the above three activities are conducted as a whole class. Oral interaction with the teacher and peers could assist reading as giving and sharing background knowledge.

➤ *6.3.3 Skimming in Groups*

At this stage, the teacher shows the whole text printed on a large sheet put on a board to the students. Firstly, the teacher models skimming strategies to assist the readers.

After the modelling, the teacher asks the students some questions such as:

- What is the text about?
- How do we know about the topic of the text?
- What is the purpose of this type of text? (i.e. to provide information, to recount an event, to explain?)
- How the text is organised? (identify major stages such as background events, sources)

Next, the teacher asks the students to skim through the text and discuss the above questions in groups.

The skimming strategies are introduced to get an overall picture and to ascertain the genre and field of the text. Discussion with peers and the teacher at this stage might

provide general information about the topic and structure of the text, and the students might be able to predict further what the text is about.

➤ **6.3.4 Scanning (In Groups)**

Scanning activities are introduced to teach strategies of finding appropriate information in the text that would be necessary for successful reading comprehension. With this exercise, the students might be able to locate specific information about the topic of the text.

To assist the scanning, the teacher asks the students to answer the questions designed at stage three of prediction activities, then, write down the responses on the board. Answering the previously designed questions confirm or disconfirm the readers' prediction.

➤ **6.3.5 Breaking up the Text (In Groups)**

The teacher provides handouts, which is the text broken up into each section, to each group and asks the students to summarize the texts in the groups. After finishing the summarizing of the texts, the students are encouraged to present their summaries to the other groups of students. This activity allows the students to analyse more detail in each section, obtain specific information more closely, combine information of the sections, and understand the main idea of the text. Moreover, reporting the summaries to the class provides the students opportunity to speak English.

Skimming, scanning, and breaking up the text are introduced as group's activities to develop and confirm the readers' understanding further. Reading strategies and language use by the teacher and students who have higher proficiency in English might work as a model and suggest ways of using vocabulary, explaining, and classifying, comparing, exemplifying, questioning, and pronouncing words.

➤ **6.3.6 Brain Storming (As a Whole Class)**

By conducting this process, the teacher is able to confirm the students' understanding by checking responses answered at the fifth stage and summaries reported at the sixth stage. If more ideas arise after summarizing each section, write these responses on the board.

➤ **6.3.7 Pre-teaching Important Words (As a Whole Class)**

Before moving into actual reading activities, teaching new and important words for reading comprehension is necessary. The readers are able to prepare and acquire the new vocabulary or terminology which would be necessary to understand the text before tackling reading practice. Vocabulary items are categorized as those which could be or could not be guessed from the context, and essential or less important to understand the text.

By introducing and explaining the above language features of the text, the students are able to expand and relate their current knowledge and gain new knowledge of the genre.

➤ **6.4 During Reading Activities**

➤ **6.4.1 The Text (As a Whole Class)**

This activity shows the students how the text is structured to achieve its genre. At this stage, the teacher guides the class in discussing the feature of the text; the genre of the text (recount of an event in the newspaper article), the social purpose (to inform readers about events which are considered newsworthy and interesting), schematic structure and language features of the genre.

- **Headline**; explains the story in a short telegraphic way.
- **Newsworthy events**; describes the events in summary form.
- **Background event**; recounts what happened, in what circumstance by expert.
- **Sources**; introduces comments on the events by authorities.
- **Background event**; elaborates what happened, to whom and in what circumstances.

Finally, the teacher informs the students that language features typical of the genre are as follows:

- Material processes in past tense are employed to retell what happened in the past.
- Verbal processes are used to project the comment by expert in Sources stage.
- Many circumstances are applied to tell when, where, and how the events happened.

By introducing and explaining the above language features of the text, the students are able to expand and relate their current knowledge and gain new knowledge of the genre.

➤ **6.4.2 Stop and Think (In Pairs)**

After the modelling, the teacher asks the students to read the text in pairs. In each paragraph, the students are encouraged to talk and discuss what they have just read, paraphrase it, identify the main ideas, and generate questions in pairs. This activity offers the students more opportunities to practice listening, speaking, and helps them to activate background knowledge and relate it to the new information, and confirm their understanding of the text.

➤ **6.4.3 Reciprocal Teaching (As a Whole Class)**

At this stage, the whole class has a discussion to generate questions, make summaries, predict and clarify the text. This is to clarify the purpose of reading, direct attention, activate background knowledge again, and also to evaluate content, monitor predictions, and draw conclusions. The teacher is able to monitor the students' performance and confirm whether the students are able to use new vocabulary, express ideas and concepts and link ideas.

➤ **6.4.4 Finding the Main Idea (As a Whole Class)**

The teacher asks the students to find the main idea in a paragraph or whole text. This activity is to identify and distinguish the important information from the less important information in the text, summarize the concepts, confirm the understanding of

the content, and as a review of the previous activities. The students are able to avoid misunderstandings about the topic by sharing the idea with peers.

➤ **6.4.5 Signal Words (As a Whole Class)**

Signal words used to indicate a particular text pattern are taught to show how these words function in the text. For instance, 'so' indicates a cause and effect, and 'after' indicates sequence of events in the text. Teaching these words and the function might give the readers new or different ideas to approach the text.

➤ **6.4.6 Key Words (As a Whole Class)**

The teacher asks the students to identify key words to distinguish the important words from the less important words in the text. The students are asked to identify the words by asking:

- What was the event?
- When did the event occur?
- Where did the event occur?
- Who was involved in the event?
- How did the event occur?
- Why did the event occur?

➤ **6.4.7 Developing Data Banks (As a Whole Class)**

Words and discourse markers which are useful, important and frequently appear should be added to individual or class data banks to assist the students' vocabulary development. Writing these words on a sheet on the wall or students' notebooks assists the students' reading practices in future classroom activities.

➤ **6.5 Post-reading Activities**

➤ **6.5.1 Cloze Passages (As a Whole Class)**

This activity is designed to assist the readers in developing vocabulary, understanding cohesion in the text, and investigating the text further. Reading abilities might be improved by identifying chains in the text and recognizing how the chains are used to make the text coherent. Showing how the teacher or the readers who have higher proficiency complete the passage works as a model of good reading strategies and assists the learners who have difficulties in reading comprehension to deepen and expand knowledge of the context.

➤ **6.5.2 Comprehension Questions (Individual)**

Comprehension questions are asked to the students to confirm their understanding of the content of the whole text and to monitor the understanding of each student. Question sheets containing various questions are provided for each student to work on individually.

➤ **True or False Questions**

- Computer training is offered on the trains. True or False?
- The training is offered on morning trains. True or False?
- The trains run from Houston. True or False?

➤ **Alternative Questions**

- Was the first lesson on March 26 or March 30?
- Was the first lesson English or Russian?
- Was the first lesson a successful or not successful?

➤ **WH-questions**

- Who is taking the training?
- How many students signed up for the lessons?
- How many languages are taught on the trains?
- What languages are taught on the trains?
- What does the teacher have to do before the lesson?
- What do the students have to do before the lesson?
- What is difficult to do on the trains?
- What happened on the first day of the lessons?
- Where is Riihimak?
- Why are the lessons given on the trains?

After the students complete the activity, the teacher checks their answers with the class to confirm their understanding of the context before moving onto the next activity.

Information collected at the stage is used not only to find the learners' language proficiency but also to present evidence of their advancement to various stakeholders. The teacher is able to improve the curriculum by using the information collected at the stage in the future course.

➤ **6.5.3 Discussion (As a Whole Class)**

Discussing about the topic helps the readers to relate the theme of the text to their experience, and develop their understanding. Questions such as the following are designed to lead the discussion in the class.

- Do you want to study language on trains? Why?
- Do you think language training on trains is a good idea? Why?
- What kind of lessons can we offer other than language? Why?
- What else can we do on trains? Why?
- Do you want to take lessons on trains? Why?

The answers are not in the text; therefore, the students have to think of their own idea about the topic.

➤ **Summary**

The students are expected to be able to read and understand newspaper articles, on topics familiar to them, without depending on dictionaries. These activities help the students to reflect on written texts critically and to progress from an intermediate to an advanced level of proficiency.

➤ 6.6 Reading Techniques

Throughout your career as a Curtin student you will be required to read a variety of texts and to gather material from them for assignments. Here are some guidelines for effective reading.

- Preview
- Question
- Take notes
- Summarise
- Review and reflect

➤ 6.6.1 Preview

Preview the text to be read by skimming it. Skimming is the technique of allowing your eyes to travel rapidly over a page, stopping here and there to register the main idea. When skimming, you should follow the procedure below, adapting it to your purpose

- Read the title.
- Note the writer's name.
- Note the date and place of publication.
- Read the first paragraph completely.
- Read sub-headings and first sentences of remaining paragraphs.

As you read, pick up main ideas, key words (words that tell you who, what, when, where, how many, and how much), and transition markers (words like 'however', 'alternatively', 'additionally', and so on), which suggest the direction of ideas in the text.

➤ 6.6.2 *Question*

Effective reading is active reading. To turn reading from a passive into an active exercise, always ask questions.

To do this, you must be clear about the purpose of your reading. If you are reading a text which you will be critiquing in detail, your questions will be different from those you would ask if you were reading a number of texts for background information. If you are gathering material for an essay, formulate some tentative ideas about the approaches you might take, modifying them as you accumulate material.

During the preview, note as many questions as you can about the content. For instance, turn headings into questions and try to anticipate possible answers the writer may offer. Always actively look for connections and relationships. Look at the ways ideas are structured and developed.

The object of the preview and questioning steps is to determine the writer's thesis, that is, her/his main idea and purpose in writing.

As you read, list all the words about which you are uncertain; look them up in the dictionary and write down their definitions.

➤ 6.6.3 *Take notes*

Some reasons for taking notes are:

- to maintain attentiveness as you read,
- to focus your attention,

- to familiarise yourself with primary and secondary material on a given subject,
- to analyse the assumptions and rhetorical strategies of the writer,
- to provide you with a summary of the material.

Some hints for taking notes:

- Always record bibliographical details of the text from which you are taking notes.
- Write on one side of the paper only.
- Leave a wide margin for comments and cross-references.
- Use headings, subheadings, and diagrams.
- Keep notes brief but full enough to still make sense to you in six months' time.
Make sure they're legible.

➤ 6.6.4 *Summarize*

A summary is a collation of your notes, recording the main points the writer makes.

Making a summary from your notes has two main benefits.

- It allows you to test yourself on your understanding of the material you have been reading - sometimes it is only when you try to put the writer's ideas into your own words that you uncover difficulties.
- It provides you with a compact account of the text for further reference.

➤ **6.6.5 Review and reflect**

To capitalize fully on the time you've spent reading an article or chapter, it's important to review and reflect upon what you've read. This enhances your understanding and helps you to commit important facts and ideas to your long-term memory.

Here are some review and reflection exercises you may find useful:

- Test your understanding of the material by trying to answer your preview questions without referring to your notes.
- Write down the meaning and usefulness the material has for understanding other concepts and principles. Indicate what other ideas the material substantiates, contradicts, or amplifies.
- Evaluate the text in terms of its informativeness, soundness of argument, relevance, and so on. If you are gathering material for an essay or report, decide which points you want to use and think about how you can use them.
- Start a reading journal in which you keep all reading, review, and reflection notes.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

ESCUELA POLITECNICA DEL EJÉRCITO

La información de este cuestionario es solamente para uso del investigador y no será compartido con nadie que no este involucrado en esta investigación.

Cuestionario

Datos Personales

¿Cuál es tu nivel de inglés? _____

Edad: _____

Información de Idiomas

¿Cuál es tu lengua materna?

Cuantos años llevas tomando clases de inglés? Favor de incluir los años que has estudiado ingles en la primaria, la secundaria, y la universidad.

¿Has pasado periodos largos de tiempo en un país de hablantes nativos del idioma inglés?

Si respondiste a la pregunta anterior con un si, ¿Cuántos años tenías y por cuánto tiempo?

Información Miscelánea

¿Has sido diagnosticado con algún tipo de discapacidad de aprendizaje que afecta tu habilidad para leer? _____

Si respondiste a la pregunta anterior con un si, ¿Cuál es tu discapacidad?

APPENDIX B

The Cost of Education

Trying to secure good quality education is a very expensive business. Worse still, the cost of education in many countries is expected to continue rising faster than the average inflation figures. Some elite private colleges in the USA believe that it costs them over \$60,000 per year to educate a single student. Parents cover a good portion of this cost, whilst gifts, endowments, the taxpayer, etc. cover the rest of the cost. The earnings which students have to sacrifice while getting an education is another problem, and an often neglected cost factor, especially for students attending graduate programs.

Yet, despite high costs of education, demand for places in good colleges remains high and places are always in short supply. Strangely, even poorer students somehow find the money to pay what appear to be exorbitant fees. Naturally, the budgets of parents are strained often to breaking point, and many students are forced to go into massive debt to obtain a good education.

APPENDIX C

Equity and Commerce

Increase global commerce means faster economic growth, rising standards of living and poverty reduction. Rather than seeking to restrict international commerce, the real task is to reduce the barriers to such commerce in order to expand the benefits to both the developed and the developing world.

Although wealthy nations talk about the importance of trade liberalization, they maintain a system of agricultural subsidies and residual tariffs that cripple the ability of many developing countries to export their agricultural commodities. This does not permit these nations to participate fairly in global commerce.

Making commerce rules fairer so that developing countries could compete equally in the global economy would generate more income in those countries. Economists estimate that with fairer global commerce rules, African countries could earn six times what they receive in assistance from wealthy countries every year. If all these countries' share of world commerce increased by just one percent, their income growth would lift 128 million people out of poverty.

Focusing heavily on exports has proven a successful way for some countries to build modern economies and dramatically improve living standards for millions of people.

According to the World Bank, countries that opened their markets to global commerce in the last two decades grew five times faster than those that kept their markets closed.

The US needs to keep pushing to reduce barriers to commerce. Eliminating tariffs and other protective barriers will increase worldwide commerce and reduce poverty while creating long-term economic benefits of \$200 billion per year for poorer countries.

Words:	252	10 bound morpheme <i>-ing</i>
Sentences:	11	10 lexical content item <i>commerce</i>
Average words per sentence:	22.91	10 unbound morpheme <i>-the</i>
Average syllables per words:	1.77	
Average syllables per sentence:	41	

Syllables in each sentence

1:	27	
2:	50	
3:	72	
4:	22	
5:	39	
6:	41	
7:	34	
8:	47	
9:	38	
10:	16	
11:	54	Equals: 440

APPENDIX D

Data Elicitation Procedure

1. Pass out questionnaires and then instruct the students to be sure to put “los últimos cuatro números de su número de estudiante y que contesten todas las preguntas.
2. Collect questionnaires and begin testing instructions:

Ustedes van a recibir dos textos para leer, primero uno y después el otro. Favor de leer cada texto para mayor entendimiento porque después, les voy a pedir que recuerden en forma escrita todo lo posible del texto sin ver el texto de nuevo. Además lo van a escribir en español y en molde (letra de imprenta). También, mientras que leen, van a marcar una palabra o un ítem gramatical de una palabra específica cada vez que la vean. Les voy a decir cual van a marcar antes de que empiecen a leer cada texto. Finalmente, por favor lean cada texto solo una vez.

Text 1 (Warm-up)

El primer texto que van a leer se trata del costo de la educación universitaria en Estados Unidos. Favor de poner los últimos dos números de su número de lista en la parte superior de la página ahora. (Wait 5 seconds) van a tener 2 minutos y 30 segundos para leer el texto. Mientras que leen el texto para mayor entendimiento, van a marcar _____ claramente un círculo. ¿Están listos? Ya pueden empezar a leer.

Time when students began _____ time when they finished _____

(When time is up): Por favor, dejen de leer, volteen las hojas, y escriban en la parte de atrás, en español y en letra de imprenta, todo lo que recuerden del texto sin ver el texto de nuevo. Cuando terminen, dejen sus lápices en el escritorio. Collect the papers when they are finished.

Text 2

El segundo texto que van a leer se trata del comercio internacional. Favor de poner los últimos cuatro números de su número de estudiante en la parte superior de la página ahora. (Wait 5 seconds) Van a tener 3 minutos y 30 segundos para leer el texto. Mientras que leen el texto para mayor entendimiento, van a marcar _____ Claramente con un círculo. ¿Están listos? Ya pueden empezar a leer.

Time when students began _____ time when they finished _____

(When time is up): Por favor, dejen de leer, volteen las hojas, y escriban en la parte de atrás, en español y en letra de imprenta, todo lo que recuerden del texto sin ver el t4exto de nuevo. Cuando terminen, dejen sus lápices en el escritorio. Collect the papers when they are finished.

APPENDIX E

Favor de revisar las instrucciones con cuidado antes de empezar a leer los textos

Instrucciones/Task Group 1

1. Por favor ponga el nivel de Inglés que actualmente está estudiando en la parte superior derecha de todas las páginas.
2. Vas a recibir dos textos para leer, pero trabajarás en cada uno por separado.
3. Escribir en español y con letra de imprenta.
4. A continuación, cada texto contiene instrucciones del trabajo que tienes que realizar. Finalmente, favor de leer cada texto solo una vez.

Instrucciones del Primer Texto, *The Cost of Education*

1. Favor de no leer el primer texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El primer texto que vas a leer se trata del costo de la educación Universitaria en Estados Unidos. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Favor de leerlo con atención.
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

Instrucciones del Segundo Texto, *Equity and Commerce*

1. Favor de no leer el segundo texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El segundo texto que vas a leer se trata del comercio libre en el mundo actual. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Favor de leerlo con atención.
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

APPENDIX E

Favor de revisar las instrucciones con cuidado antes de empezar a leer los textos

Instrucciones/Task Group 2

1. Por favor ponga el nivel de Inglés que actualmente está estudiando en la parte superior derecha de todas las páginas.
2. Vas a recibir dos textos para leer, pero trabajarás en cada uno por separado.
3. Escribir en español y con letra de imprenta.
4. A continuación, cada texto contiene instrucciones del trabajo que tienes que realizar. Finalmente, favor de leer cada texto solo una vez.

Instrucciones del Primer Texto, *The Cost of Education*

1. Favor de no leer el primer texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El primer texto que vas a leer se trata del costo de la educación Universitaria en Estados Unidos. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Mientras que lees el texto con atención, vas a marcar la palabra *education* claramente con un círculo cada vez que la veas.
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

Instrucciones del Segundo Texto, *Equity and Commerce*

1. Favor de no leer el segundo texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El segundo texto que vas a leer se trata del comercio libre en el mundo actual. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Mientras que lees el texto con atención, vas a marcar la palabra *commerce* claramente con un círculo cada vez que la veas.
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

APPENDIX E

Favor de revisar las instrucciones con cuidado antes de empezar a leer los textos

Instrucciones/Task Group 3

1. Por favor ponga el nivel de Inglés que actualmente está estudiando en la parte superior derecha de todas las páginas.
5. Vas a recibir dos textos para leer, pero trabajarás en cada uno por separado.
6. Escribir en español y con letra de imprenta.
7. A continuación, cada texto contiene instrucciones del trabajo que tienes que realizar. Finalmente, favor de leer cada texto solo una vez.

Instrucciones del Primer Texto, *The Cost of Education*

1. Favor de no leer el primer texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El primer texto que vas a leer se trata del costo de la educación Universitaria en Estados Unidos. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Mientras que lees el texto con atención, vas a marcar el sufijo *-ed* claramente con un círculo cada vez que la veas. *Ej. He studied in school.*
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

Instrucciones del Segundo Texto, *Equity and Commerce*

1. Favor de no leer el segundo texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El segundo texto que vas a leer se trata del comercio libre en el mundo actual. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Mientras que lees el texto con atención, vas a marcar el sufijo *-ing* claramente con un círculo cada vez que la veas. *Ej. John is running.*
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

APPENDIX E

Favor de revisar las instrucciones con cuidado antes de empezar a leer los textos

Instrucciones/Task Group 4

1. Por favor ponga el nivel de Inglés que actualmente está estudiando en la parte superior derecha de todas las páginas.
8. Vas a recibir dos textos para leer, pero trabajarás en cada uno por separado.
9. Escribir en español y con letra de imprenta.
10. A continuación, cada texto contiene instrucciones del trabajo que tienes que realizar. Finalmente, favor de leer cada texto solo una vez.

Instrucciones del Primer Texto, *The Cost of Education*

1. Favor de no leer el primer texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El primer texto que vas a leer se trata del costo de la educación Universitaria en Estados Unidos. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Mientras que lees el texto con atención, vas a marcar la palabra *of* claramente con un círculo cada vez que la veas. *Ej. It is made of lemon.*
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

Instrucciones del Segundo Texto, *Equity and Commerce*

1. Favor de no leer el segundo texto hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
2. El segundo texto que vas a leer se trata del comercio libre en el mundo actual. Vas a tener dos minutos para leer el texto. Mientras que lees el texto con atención, vas a marcar la palabra *the* claramente con un círculo cada vez que la veas. *Ej. The man eats food.*
3. Cuando termines de leer el texto, vas a escribir en la parte trasera de la misma hoja, todo lo que recuerdes del texto.
4. No voltees la hoja hasta que el instructor te lo indique.
5. Después de leer el texto, puedes empezar a escribir todo lo que recuerdes de la lectura. *Favor de no dar tu opinión, solamente pon lo que recuerdes.*
6. Cuando termines de escribir, favor de adjuntar el texto al cuestionario utilizando el clip.

APPENDIX F

Idea Unit Analysis: Consists of main or subordinate clauses including adverbial or relative clauses, infinitival construction, gerundive, nominalized verb phrase, conjunct, and optional and/or heavy prepositional phrases.

Equity and Commerce

- 1) **Increase** global **commerce** **means** (2,3,4) *Main clause*
- 2) faster economic **growth** *Conjunct, main*
- 3) **rising** **standards** of living *Conjunct, main*
- 4) and **poverty** **reduction** *Conjunct, main*
- 5) Rather than seeking to **restrict** international **commerce** *Sub. Clause*
- 6) the real **task** is *Main clause*
- 7) to **reduce** the **barriers** to such **commerce** (it) *Infinitival construction*
- 8) in order to **expand** the **benefits** *Infinitival construction*
- 9) the both the **developed** and the **developing** world *Heavy Prep. phr.*
- 10) Although **wealthy** **nations** talk about the **importance** of **trade** **liberalization**. *Sub. Clause*
- 11) they maintain a **system** (13, 14) *Main clause*
- 12) of agricultural **subsidies** and (of) residual **tariffs** *Heavy Prep. phr.*
- 13) that **cripple** the **ability** of many **developing** **countries** *Sub. Clause*
- 14) to **export** their agricultural **commodities** *Infinitival construction*
- 15) This does **not** permit these **nations** (16) *Main clause*
- 16) to **participate** **fairly** in global **commerce** *Infinitival construction*
- 17) Making **commerce** rules **fairer** *Gerundive*
- 18) so that **developing** **countries** could **compete** **equally** *Sub. Clause*
- 19) in the global **economy** *Heavy Prep. phr.*
- 20) (17) would **generate** more **income** *Main clause*
- 21) in **those** **countries** *Heavy Prep. phr.*
- 22) **Economists** **estimate** (24) *Main clause*
- 23) that with **fairer** global **commerce** **rules** *Sub. Clause*
- 24) **African** **countries** could **earn** six times *Sub. Clause*
- 25) what they **receive** in **assistance** from **wealthy** **countries** *Sub. clause*
every year
- 26) If all these countries' **share** of world **commerce** **increase** *Sub. clause*

27) by just one percent	<i>Heavy Prep. phr.</i>
28) their income growth would lift 128 million people out of poverty	<i>Main clause</i>
29) Focusing heavily on exports	<i>Gerundive</i>
30) (29) has proven a successful way	<i>Main clause</i>
31) for some countries to build modern economies	<i>Inf./Heavy Prep. phr.</i>
32) and dramatically improve living standards	<i>Conjunct</i>
33) for millions of people	<i>Heavy Prep. phr.</i>
34) According to the World Bank	<i>Gerundive</i>
35) countries grew five times faster	<i>Main clause</i>
36) that opened their markets to global commerce	<i>Sub. Clause</i>
37) in the last two decades	<i>Heavy Prep. phr.</i>
38) than those that kept their markets closed	<i>Sub. Clause</i>
39) The US needs (40, 41)	<i>Main clause</i>
40) to keep pushing	<i>Infinitival construction</i>
41) to reduce barriers to commerce	<i>Infinitival construction</i>
42) Eliminating tariffs and other protective barriers	<i>Gerundive</i>
43) (42) will increase worldwide commerce	<i>Main clause/conjunct</i>
44) (42) and (will) reduce poverty	<i>Main clause/conjunct</i>
45) while creating long-term economic benefits	<i>Sub. Clause</i>
46) of \$200 billion per year	<i>Heavy Prep. phr.</i>
47) for poorer countries.	<i>Heavy Prep. phr.</i>