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A Message from the Director

We are glad to present the *ARTESOL ESP Journal* volume 3, issue n°2. This year, our expectations were surpassed because we received more papers than the previous year so we decided to publish two issues. This one includes original studies and analyses in ESP that constitute significant contributions to the understanding and/or improvement of educational processes and outcomes. It publishes research papers discussing a wide range of academic issues using different research methods. We hope this refereed publication will play a major role in rethinking the discipline and that it will encourage ESP teachers to participate in coming issues.

The editorial board of the *ARTESOL ESP Journal* would like to thank Susana Tuero, PhD, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Selva Sondón, M.A., Universidad Nacional de La Pampa and María Eugenia Orce de Roig, PhD, Universidad Nacional de Tucumán for their expertise referate.

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Organization of the Journal

Contributions

Short articles published by prestigious ESP specialists.

Research Articles

This section is devoted to the publication of research articles that will be refereed by three renowned researchers.

Pedagogical experiences in ESP

This section includes the description of new experiences (strategies, techniques, course design) within ESP.

Reviews

This section includes reviews of books and journals published by Universities, Teacher Training Colleges and other institutions interested in the development of ESP courses or studies.

Those articles, pedagogical experiences or reviews that do not meet the requirements of this journal, will be reconsidered by the editorial board for publication on the ESP Web page.

ARTESOLESP E-journal receives submissions of unpublished manuscripts on any topic related to the area of ESP. Four categories of manuscripts will be received: contributions, research articles, pedagogical experiences in ESP, and reviews.

All accepted articles will be published within two years after their submission.

Please see our Submission Guidelines for more information.

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The Relevance of Medical ESP Textbooks In Terms of Content and Needs Achievement in Reading and Writing

Shiva Ghalandari; Mahboube Nakhle; Seyyed Abdullah Razav; Mohammad Naghavi

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ABSTRACT

Teachers, course designers, and materials writers must be aware that for successful ESP learning, the incorporation of learners' needs is considered to be a vital part of the syllabus. Furthermore, analyzing the specific needs of a particular learner group serves as the prelude to an ESP textbook evaluation. Hence, this article first aimed to investigate the relevance of ESP textbooks in terms of content and needs achievement in Reading and Writing of Medical Students in Shiraz Medical School, through a quantitative-qualitative study. A total of 82 junior students (43 females, and 39 males) answered a questionnaire administered to find out the students' needs, abilities and facilities of the English language teaching and the availability of audio-visual aids. Extensive qualitative and statistical analysis of the data revealed that although learning special terms and expressions, among others, seem to be of absolute priority according to needs analysis, a big portion of the book was devoted to reading comprehension, grammar drills and throughout various forms of writing exercises. Speaking English with colleagues, pronunciations, and translating English into Persian, have been treated marginally. Hence, considering students' needs, four ESP textbooks are appropriate books for the purpose of medical English for Iranian physicians, so that advantages where the content and the students' needs are compatible cannot be ignored.

Keywords: ESP learning - Textbook evaluation - Quantitative-qualitative study - Students' needs - Statistical analysis

1. Introduction

"Needs" has been a key word in the area of ESP since the first studies began to appear. Actually needs analysis is of primary importance in an ESP context. So, it is important to see what is meant by needs analysis, why it is valuable and important, and how it can be more practical. Learners have 'multiple identities' and bring into a foreign language classroom "their own experience of learning and of life ... and their own particular needs that they hope to see satisfied" (Wright, 1992, p.5).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) explain that with ESP, all decisions on content and method are based on the learners' language needs, which in their view can be defined as "target needs" and "learning needs". These concepts have been widely used in literature. Target needs are understood as what the learner needs to do in the target situation, and learning needs are what the learner needs to do in order to learn. The analysis of target needs involves identifying the linguistic features of the target situation or learner necessities (what is English needed for), lacks (what learner does not know), and wants (what learner feels s/he needs).

In the course of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), students face demanding tasks of learning subject-matter through English. The cornerstone of ESP is unfamiliar lexis and subject-matter concepts. In order to succeed, students need to develop proficiency in reading and writing. The access to high-tech allows learners to perform reading and writing online and keep improving their performance by editing their own work.

Reading and writing are interrelated skills not only in general language but also in ESP and should be exercised together. The novelty of this study is an application of Information and Communication Technology to the ongoing online reading of professional materials at student's own pace and at their own convenience time followed by downloading written summaries or essays in the weblogs, which can be viewed and read by any member of the Internet users.

This paper addresses, first, students' attitudes to reading and writing online and, second, to self-evaluation of proficiency in these skills. The investigation aimed at gathering verbal and

written data from the students at university and making informed decisions what techniques can help to improve performance in reading and writing.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 General Overview

Farhady (1995) points out that it is necessary to examine the existing ESP materials in order to evaluate their correspondence to a specific model. He suggests that in preparing a textbook, needs-analysis should be conducted, specifications at different levels should be made and appropriate materials should be developed.

According to Aglaia (1999) there are various methods of language needs assessment. These methods range from conducting direct research on a given population using questionnaires to relying on past research, conducting interviews, and/or using case studies. Approving an ESP textbook involves issues such as what to teach, how to teach or whom to employ to teach.

Based on this integrated approach, the present study aimed at performing in terms of content and needs achievement of medical students and carrying out an evaluation of their ESP textbooks. To this end, Hutchinson and Waters framework (1987) was used. The scheme attempts to evaluate the selected textbooks regardless of how they are used in the classroom. It tries to be in-depth by analyzing the individual activities in detail and in connection with important features.

2.2 Origins of ESP

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) when the Second World War ended, new scientific, technical and economic demands grew and English became the international language. Therefore, language teachers were pressed to meet the demands of people outside the teaching profession. Furthermore, a dramatic change took place in linguistics, which demanded focus on communicative aspects of language and learners' needs in specific contexts. The ESP movement, according to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) originated from the massive expansion of scientific, technical, and economic activities on an international scale in the 1950s and 1960s.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divided the history of ESP into four phases. The first phase can be traced back to the 1960s and the early 1970s when ESP researchers and teachers concentrated on the lexical and grammatical characteristics of academic/professional registers at the sentence level. The second phase stretched from late 1970s to early 1980s when the focus became more rhetorical and researchers and practitioners began to examine the organization and function of discourse at a number of levels of abstraction. The third phase integrated the discoveries of Phase 1 and Phase 2 when researchers centered on systematic analyses of the target situations in which learners' communicative purposes were more attended to. Recently, in the last phase, researchers have shifted their emphasis on learners' strategies for their effective thinking and learning.

2.3 Definitions of ESP

Wright (1992) says ESP is the study of a particular aspect of language so as to be able to accomplish certain tasks. Smoak (1996) considers ESP as English instruction based on actual and immediate needs of learners who have to successfully perform real-life tasks unrelated to merely passing an English class or exam.

Celani (2008) declares that the basic tenets of an ESP approach involve one or more of the following features:

- Considering learners' reasons for learning and their learning necessities;
- Building basic capabilities and abilities for defined purposes;
- Using previous knowledge, or what the learners bring to the learning situation,
- Allowing learners a voice; making language use meaningful; enabling students to see reasons for learning;

-
- Helping students develop sound individual strategies for learning; changing unhealthy study habits; breaking the old tradition of memorization and repetition of teacher-transmitted knowledge.

In short, she continues, ESP means learning for a purpose and learning within a framework which makes reasons for learning not only clear, but also meaningful at the outset both for learners and teachers.

2.4 Benefits of Needs Analysis

According to Yazdjerdi (2000) making decisions about students' grouping, learning objectives, course content, teaching methods, and program evaluation without reliable or unreliable reference to students' needs is very difficult.

Silva (2002) mentions needs analysis assists the teacher in identifying the learners' future target tasks and, adapting the syllabus to the learners' specific needs, what learners know and what they need to learn in order to address these needs. As long as learners' needs are satisfied, the goals of ESP courses are more likely to be achieved. In 1991 Munby asserted that needs analysis is an important factor for the specification of a course. For providing syllabus content he gives an exhaustive list of macro-skills from which the shorter list of particular skills can be gathered (Yazdjerdi, 2000).

Courses designed according to learners' needs are more motivating and thus educationally more effective (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). To be precise, a successful ESP course or project should start with the learners' needs. In sum, the information gleaned from needs analysis can be used to help teachers define program goals.

2.5 The English Language Needs of Medical Students

Mazdayasna and Tahririan (2008) did a survey in Yazd University. This study aimed to investigate the foreign language learning needs of junior students of medical sciences studying in faculties of medicine in Iran. The study which was designed on a qualitative-quantitative basis used questionnaires and a general medical article. The survey revealed that most of the students believed they needed to master the foreign language before attending their specialized courses.

Also, students stated that the course did sufficiently take into account their:

- (1) Learning needs
- (2) Present level of foreign language proficiency
- (3) Objectives of the course
- (4) Resources available in terms of staff, materials, equipment, finances and time constraint
- (5) The skill of the teachers and the teacher's knowledge of the specific area.

Likewise, Silva (2002) declared that in deciding what to teach and how best to go about implementing pedagogical-driven choices it is essential to gain an understanding of the needs of our learners. Their paper aimed to explore the needs of junior medical students based on their ESP text books on reading and writing skills.

Yamanaka (2000) explains that physicians today need to learn English and communication skills as well as necessary medical jargon in English. On the other hand, patient records are now written out in English. So, physicians are required to write descriptions and reports in simple language as well as present information orally to their peers. Also, to obtain information, they need to listen to talks, lectures, and view multimedia resources.

However, according to the curriculum prepared by the Iranian Ministry of Science, High Council of Planning, the purpose of ESP for the students of medicine is their familiarity with scientific texts, understanding, and employing technical books and research journals as well as the lexicon and necessary expressions related to medicine. (Rahimi, 2008)

3. Objectives of Study

Since English language instruction and English for Specific Purposes are important in Iran, conducting research on Iranian students' language needs and their English language textbooks are of great necessity. The main purpose of most ESP courses in Iran is to teach the students in universities how to read their texts in the major field of studies.

However, Crawford (1994) mentions that we live in a multimedia age and educational materials need to be of an adequate level of sophistication if the language class and learner are not to be devalued. What is learnt, and indeed, learnable, is a product of the interaction between learners, teachers and the materials at their disposal. According to Farhady (1995), in order to prepare a textbook, need-analysis should be conducted, specification at different levels should be made and appropriate materials should be developed. Thus if needs become clear, the learning aims can be expressed more easily.

To this end, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the most important language needs of medical Iranian students?
- 2- To what extent do the aims and objectives of the textbooks correspond to the student's needs and goals achievements?
- 3- To what extent ESP textbooks are relevant to the needs of the learners' reading and writing skills?

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

The total number of students participating in this study was 82, and they were selected from among the junior undergraduate medical students at College of Medicine who had passed the ESP courses. It was assumed that this group were aware of the English learning needs of medical students because they were completely familiar with the present status of ESP courses in their field of study and had some knowledge about their lacks and wants toward the English language.

The distribution of students who answered the needs analysis questionnaire is presented in table 1 according to their 'sex', 'educational level', 'age', and 'job experience'.

Table 1 Characteristics of the Participants

Table 1. Characteristics of the Participants								
Sex		Educational level			Age			Participants with Job experience
		freshman	sophomore	Junior	20-24	25-29	30-34	
Female	44	1	17	26	43	-	-	7
Male	38	-	16	22	37	1	-	6

As it is shown, 44 females and 38 males took part in this research. A notable point about these 82 students is that all of them were in the age range of 20-29. It is worth mentioning that common to all of these participants is at least four years of exposure to EFL instruction at high-school and pre-university levels. Accordingly, in Shiraz Medical College, students pass eight credits of general English, divided into two levels which are two times more than most of other universities giving just four credits of general English through one level. During these two four-credit courses of General English students get familiarized with the basics of English language such as grammatical points and the four skills of language particularly the reading comprehension and writing skills. Details are shown in figures in the attached file.

4.2 Instrumentation

The data needed to answer the first question of the study- a question about the most important language needs of medical students. Students were invited to complete a questionnaire which was written in Persian in order to minimize any kind of unconscious feeling of linguistic discrimination. To answer the second and third questions the evaluation of their four ESP textbooks based on Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) framework was done.

This study used 2 types of questionnaires for students as follows:

Needs Analysis Questionnaire

The needs analysis questionnaire is an adapted form which was previously used by Shahini, (1998), Yazdjerdi, (2000) and Khaksari, (2002). To ensure that it should well be suitable for medical students, some changes appropriate to their particular context were made. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative section was designed to obtain information about the present status of English language instruction, and some information about students' needs, lacks and motivation related to English language. A block of questions on age, job experiences, gender, etc... was also included in this section. In addition, this part contained 53 items in the form of Likert Scale. Students faced several questions about the importance of the English language, their abilities and difficulties to use it, and the availability of audio-visual aids. To answer the questions, they had five choices, and the scores ranged from 1 (little) to 5 (very much).

The qualitative part contained two open-ended questions which sought for students' ideas about the present status of the English instruction and the effective means to improve it. In sum, the items in the questionnaire included:

- (a) The importance of English language use and skills for medical students
- (b) The difficulties of the English language use and skills for medical students
- (c) The importance and availability of audio-visual aids to improve medical students' English language.
- (d) The required motivation to learn ESPs.

Medical Article

In addition to our question "to what extent are the ESP textbooks relevant to the needs of learners reading and writing"?, all students, after one week interval from the first questionnaire, received a general medical article, '*Strike a Pose to Reduce Anxiety*' by Jennifer Gibson (1892) to read and write a summary of it in two paragraphs for 25 minutes. Then, they were qualitatively checked and graded from (Very Little, Little, Average, Much, Very Much) related to the main summery checked by professors.

Administration of the Questionnaires

The needs analysis questionnaire was given to 82 junior students of medicine. According to the fact that junior students of medicine do not have many theoretical classes and should be visiting in different wards of Shiraz hospitals, clear instructions were provided for the respondent to minimize unpredictable problems.

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Before giving the needs analysis questionnaire to each of the students, its reliability was evaluated. To this end, 35 medical students were chosen to answer the adapted needs analysis two times with an interval of two weeks, and then a correlation was run. The result which is shown in Table 2 indicated the acceptability of the adapted needs analysis.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation between the Two Administrations of the Questionnaire

Pearson Correlation	.871**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	35	35

Data Analysis

The next step was to analyze it using a set of mathematical procedures called 'statistics.' When the initial required data for this study was collected, it was analyzed to find out what the learners needs were. To this end, descriptive statistics determining the frequency and percentages of students' answers indicating their needs and lacks was used to summarize and describe the sample data.

It should be noted that the findings were checked against the contents of the book to see how far the book meets the needs. The analysis of the textbooks was based on Hutchinson and Waters' framework through an in-depth analysis, so the methodology is in fact a mixed type of approaches as it combines the qualitative and quantitative analyses.

It is obvious that learners have their own needs. For successful ESP learning, the incorporation of learners' future needs, or what is known as 'real world' needs, is considered to be a vital part of the syllabus. Furthermore, analyzing the specific needs of a particular learner group serves as the prelude to an ESP textbook evaluation. Also, research has shown that teaching a foreign language focusing on learners' needs helps to motivate the participants in the ESP learning process (Kavaliauskiene & Užpaliene, 2003).

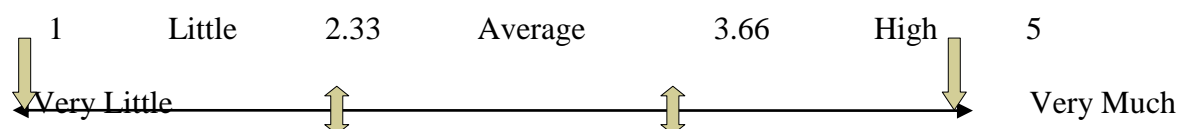
5. Results

To fulfill the objectives of the study, the following statistical analyses were carried out based on students' answers to the needs analysis questionnaire and medical article. The following tables display elaborately the distribution of students who answered the needs analysis questionnaire. Also, each table is followed by the results and their discussion based on Mohammadi's (1383) scale. It should be mentioned that the order of the results of statistical analysis is observed:

1. Needs Analysis Questionnaire

2. Medical Article

Mohammadi's (1383) Scale



In this scale the values between "1 to 2.33" are little, ones between "2.33 to 3.66" are average, and finally the values between "3.66 to 5" are high. It is worth mentioning that the first question related to personal information was omitted.

Needs Analysis

Q No 2--What language are your textbooks in?

The second question was raised to get information about the students' textbooks and references. In particular, what was important for the researcher was to know about the language in which the materials were written.

According to students' answers 51.2% of textbooks are in English and Persian.

Q No 3-How much do you need to learn English to improve your scientific level?

According to students' answers 91.4% of students believed that they need to learn English to improve their knowledge. So, the next step was to ask about their needs, abilities, and difficulties in English regarding their profession. In sum, Table 5 (below) shows that the Mean and Standard deviation of all students' questioned needs, abilities, and problems.

Table 3. The Mean and Standard Deviation of All Questioned Needs, Abilities, and Problems

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Values
Q4NEEDS	82	1.00	5.00	3.8460	.63323	High
Q5ABILITY	82	1.00	5.00	3.23	.74487	Average
Q6PROBLEM	82	1.00	5.00	2.66	.84171	Average

The data obtained from needs analysis served to determine Medical students' needs, difficulties, and strengths in language learning. In sum, their responses revealed that medical students have the most need in learning special terms and expressions, translating English into Persian, reading and comprehension, pronunciation, and writing in English.

On the other hand, students' answers indicated that their problems were in speaking and writing. Also, the research pointed out that in other areas such as translating, grammar, and reading students faced average difficulty. It is worth mentioning those students' abilities in reading comprehension and English grammar skills were high. In sum, the following tables display elaborately the students' needs, difficulties, and strengths in language areas included in the questionnaire.

Q No 4- How much do you need the following regarding your profession?

Table 6 and Figure 5 indicate that among the students' needs, speaking English with a patient is not important. However, it expresses there is a little and average need to speak English with a patient' visitor(s) and colleagues.

Table 6. Students' Ideas about Their Needs for English Language

Aspects	Values	
1- Speaking English with a Patient	2.24	Little
2- Speaking English with a Patient's Visitor	2.15	Little
3- Speaking English with Colleagues	3.47	Average
4- Reading and Comprehension in English	4.58	High
5- Writing In English	4.26	High
6- English Grammar	3.82	High
7- Special Terms and Expressions	4.60	High
8- English Pronunciation	4.24	High
9- Translating Persian into English	3.92	High
10- Translating English into Persian	4.22	High
11- Writing Report In English	4.21	High
12- Writing Article In English	4.20	High
13- Writing Project In English	4.14	High

According to the findings of the study, the rest of aspects such as learning special terms and expressions, reading comprehension, writing, grammar and pronunciation in English are believed to be the most important needs by students.

Q No5 Taking ESP courses in medicine, to what extent are you ready to do the following? Table 7 and figure 6 indicate that students have an average level of ability in speaking English with a patient or his/her visitor(s), writing articles, and projects in English, besides, they have high level of ability in English grammar and reading comprehension. The findings of the study also show that students have average level of ability in other areas.

Table 7. Students' Ideas about their Abilities in English Language

ASPECTS	VALUES
1- Speaking English with a Patient	298 Average
2- Speaking English with a Patient's Visitor	2.96 Average
3- Speaking English with Colleagues	3.27 Average
4- Reading and Comprehension in English	3.72 High
5- Writing in English	3.31 Average
6- English Grammar	3.80 High
7- Special Terms and Expressions	3.57 Average
8- English Pronunciation	3.58 Average
9- Translating Persian into English	3.07 Average
10- Translating English into Persian	3.49 Average
11- Writing Reports in English	3.15 Average
12- Writing Articles in English	2.98 Average
13- Writing Projects in English	2.89 Average

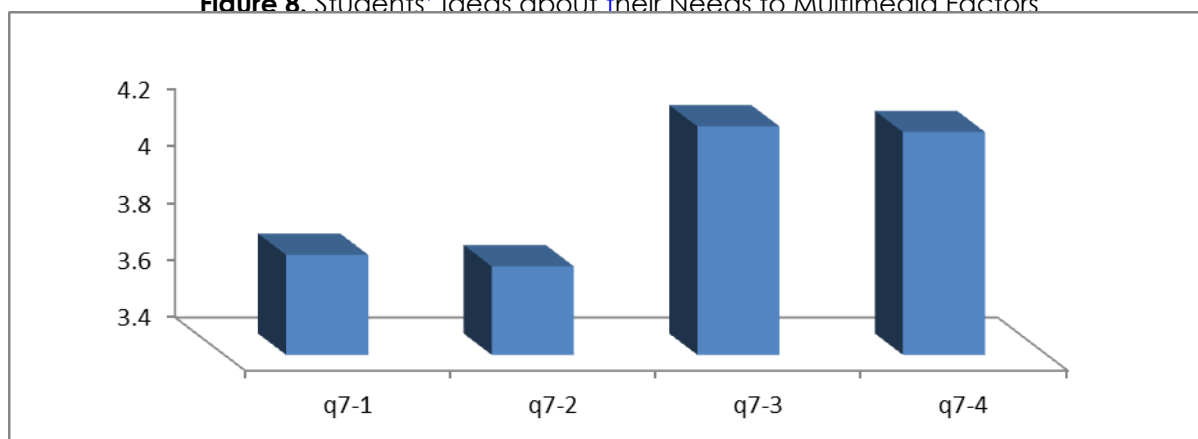
Q No 6. How difficult is the following for you in English?

The figures in Table 8 indicate that all aspects have the same level of difficulty for students but it is worth mentioning that their values toward problems were less than 3.00 so they didn't have much difficulty in all aspects.

Table 8. Students' Ideas about Their Problems in English Language

ASPECTS	VALUES
1- Speaking English with a Patient	2.79 Average
2- Speaking English with a Patient's Visitor	2.80 Average
3- Speaking English with Colleagues	2.71 Average
4- Reading and Comprehension in English	2.22 Average
5- Writing in English	2.64 Average
6- English Grammar	2.74 Average
7- Special Terms and Expressions	2.44 Average
8- English Pronunciation	2.37 Average
9- Translating Persian into English	2.83 Average
10- Translating English into Persian	2.47 Average
11- Writing Reports in English	2.88 Average
12- Writing Articles in English	2.88 Average
13- Writing Projects in English	2.87 Average

Figure 8. Students' Ideas about their Needs to Multimedia Factors



Q No7- In order to improve your knowledge in English, how much do you need the following?

Q No 8- During ESP training, how much did you get access to the following?

Table 9, Figure 8 and Figure 9 indicates that students' need to use computer, internet, teaching aids, and also attending seminars and conferences in English or listening to their recordings is much more considerable than their access to these areas. On the other hand, students' answers reveal that they have much opportunity to use multimedia factors

Table 9. Students' Ideas about their Needs and Access to Multimedia Factors

ASPECTS	NEEDS Figure(4.7)	ACCESS Figure(4.8)
1.Attending Seminars and Conferences In English	3.75 Much	2.16 Little
2.Using Teaching Aids	3.71 Much	2.55 Average
3.Using Audio-Visual Equipments	4.02 Much	2.10 Little
4.Using Computer and Internet	4.18 Much	3.80 Much

Q No 9- How much did your motivations in English learning improve through learning ESP?

Q No 10- How much did English teachers improve your motivation in English learning?

Q No 11- How much did your motivations improve, through finding a decent job and continuing education in English learning?

Q No12- How much do you think your motivation will increase if real physician's notes, thesis, and reports are used?

According to students' answers, Learning ESP was the least motivating areas for English learning. Analyzing the answers of Q12 revealed that using ESP textbook covering real physicians' notes, theses, and reports is one of the most important motivations to learn ESP.

At the end of the questionnaire, there are two open-ended questions. Most of the answers to Q No.13 were "yes". Although students found it difficult to comment on their answers, some of them are rewritten here:

"We have an appropriate book, and teaching method was satisfying." "The book was so helpful that I understand how it wanted to be useful", "I took and passed these courses during 5 semesters, it had so many effects on me."

7. Discussion

According to data, most of the students believe that they need English to improve their knowledge. In sum, their responses to the fourth question revealed that medical students have the most need in the following areas:

- Learning special terms and expressions
- Translating English into Persian
- Reading and comprehension
- Pronunciation
- Speaking English with colleagues
- Writing in English

Their responses to Q Five and Six shed light on learners' strengths and weaknesses in a foreign language. Fortunately, students' abilities in reading comprehension and grammar were perfect, but in other areas were satisfying, and according to their answers they didn't have the most difficult area, their problems have an average level.

Their responses to Q No 7 and Q No 8 show how much students believe that there is a great need for attending seminars and conferences, using teaching aids, audio-visual equipments, and computer and internet. Nevertheless, the mentioned equipment is available just a little. Finally, students asserted that an ESP textbook covering real physicians' notes, theses, and reports can be very motivating.

In the next part of this chapter, through a qualitative research study Medical Article was analyzed.

7.1 Medical Article Results

In addition to our question "To what extent are ESP textbooks relevant to the needs of learners' reading and writing?", all participants, after one week interval from the first questionnaire, received a general medical article, "*Strike a Pose to Reduce Anxiety*" by Jennifer Gibson (1892) to read and write the summary of the article in two paragraphs in 25 minutes. Then, they were qualitatively checked and graded (Very much, much, average, little, very little related to the main text) based on the summary checked by professors. The details are presented here.

It is shown that out of 82 students who summarized this article, more than 70% wrote efficiently so it is obvious that their ESP textbooks were satisfying in developing reading and writing and could be helpful for them to use.

8. Conclusion

Speaking English with colleagues is one of the skills needed by the medical students. In some cases, related to their vocational life, physicians need to listen to English programs on TV or other media. On the other hand, speaking in English with patient and patient visitors are the least emphasized, reading comprehension skills and English grammar are the best developed abilities students have. Skills such as reading comprehension, writing in English, English pronunciation, use of special terms and expressions are the most needed and they are moderate difficult skills for the students. On the other hand, most of them believe that their ability for other skills in English is fair.

Writing is another most difficult and needed skill for the students. According to the findings of the study, it is believed to be of great importance by 77% of the students that can utilize this skill well. Grammar is a moderately emphasized, rather difficult and highly needed skill for the

students. Special terms and expressions is the most needed aspects of language for medical students. In fact, it is one of the most essential constituents of the scientific texts.

Pronunciation is also considered an almost important need by the students. Besides, English into Persian translation is one of the most emphasized needs according to students; however, Persian into English translation is lower average necessary skill than English to Persian.

Finally, taking part in seminars and conferences in English, using teaching aids, audio-visual equipments, and computers are also much needed and are rarely provided by the university. Concerning the students' ideas, books seem to have interesting and authentic material, texts, topics, and reports demanded by students and also, an attractive layout. While studying general texts and articles in medicine would be boring and frustrating, learning about medical history, concerns, interests, successes, and some of the texts, words and jargon which are currently used in information technology can be motivating. According to students' answers, for selecting the appropriate, interesting, and relevant content, real physicians' notes, thesis, and reports can be very helpful.

Hence, considering students' needs only 4 ESP textbooks in medicine are appropriate books for the purpose of medical English for Iranian physicians, and the advantage that the content and the students' needs are compatible cannot be ignored, but also findings related to their summary writing based on a reading article shows that textbooks are satisfactory.

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The Impact of Metacognitive Strategies on ESP Learning

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ABSTRACT

This research work will try to demonstrate that learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can be enhanced if metacognitive strategies are developed and their use is sustained in time. Considering that the principles underlying the learning process are the same for both ESP and English for General Purposes, this work is framed within both a sociocultural approach which highlights the importance of mediation and a metacognitive approach which understands teaching as a self-regulated process in which the student acts as the protagonist, constructor and administrator of his own learning process. The quantitative analysis performed on data obtained from tests administered to an experimental and to a control group during an academic year shows that the development of strategies has an impact on students' performance. A qualitative test helped appraise the students' perception of the methodology used. We expect our findings may have further pedagogical implications.

Keywords: Autonomy, Cognition – Metacognition – ESP - Strategies

1.Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been one of the main concerns in the field of Second Language Teaching. During the last decades authors have provided different definitions of ESP in an attempt to compare it and/or differentiate it from General English. The fact that ESP is no longer considered as a specialized variety of English that requires a particular way of teaching has led to a revision of the theoretical principles underlying its learning-teaching process. Nowadays, ESP is neither understood as a different way of referring to General English (GE) nor treated as a methodology in itself (Widdowson, 1983). Along these lines, both ESP and GE share the same principles of effective and efficient learning though they differ in the contents to be taught, the objectives set and the way to reach those (Hutchinson & Waters, 2002, p.19). This means that the second language learner will make recourse to his cognitive capacity no matter what is being learned or which skill is being developed.

According to Lantolff's sociocultural perspective (2000, 2002), the second language learner is the centre of the learning process, being capable of constructing meaning and knowledge through interaction with the environment, other individuals and his own self. It should be noted that the importance of interaction does not lie so much on its communicative dimension as on its cognitive dimension since it is through language that learning processes are fostered. Under this view, learning is understood as a semiotic mediated process. This means that the mere construction of knowledge does not guarantee learner autonomy. Reaching a high level of autonomy and self-regulation will be the result of social mediation (Little, 1991).

For the learner to improve his own capacity to learn, he should be able to take control over his knowledge by being led to develop metacognitive strategies that allow him to plan, monitor and evaluate not only the content being learnt but also his own learning process (Zimmerman, B.J. & Shunk, D.H., 1989). Metacognition (cognition over cognition) is a deliberate, planned, intentional and purpose-driven mental process that can be used to carry out cognitive tasks (Flavel, 1971, 1987) and needs to be developed through the explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies. Under this view, learning becomes a self-regulated process in which the student acts as the protagonist, constructor and administrator of his own learning process. This means that any instance of practice devised by the teacher should

include the use of self-regulating tools that promote awareness and reflection upon both the language and the learning process. Those elements in the learner's environment that allow him to move from his present cognitive level to a higher one (for example, the teacher's performance, other students', a self-evaluation profile, a portfolio, language awareness boxes) can be considered self-regulating tools (Perry N. E., Phillips, L. and Hutchinson, L.R. 2006). This sociocultural-cognitive approach, thus, not only provides solid theoretical grounds that cast light upon the learning process but it also has clear pedagogical implications that can give rise to an autonomizing methodology.

This research work is framed within the two-year interdisciplinary project "*La enseñanza del inglés en las ciencias exactas e ingenierías y el uso de las TICs*" (The Teaching of English in Exact Sciences and Engineering and the Use of ICTs) carried out in the School of Exact Sciences, Engineering and Land Surveying (FCEIA –Universidad de Rosario, Argentina). This paper will present the results obtained in the first year of this project during which a particularly devised methodology was implemented in the classroom.

The aim pursued was to find out whether those students who develop metacognitive strategies and sustain their use in time are able to work more efficiently and become more autonomous. To corroborate this hypothesis, the project was divided into two stages. The purpose of the first stage was to measure the effect of the development and use of metacognitive strategies on learning. The second stage was meant to evaluate the effect of sustaining their use in time.

To reach the objectives, two groups were formed - the experimental group and the control group. Data was gathered at two specific moments through qualitative and quantitative tools.

2. Method

2.1 Research Context and Participants

This study was conducted at The school of Exact Sciences, Engineering and Land Surveying FCEIA where English is a subject delivered in all the engineering undergraduate courses with the objective of developing reading comprehension and translation as the main skills. The selection of these skills responds to an analysis of the students' academic and professional needs. Students attend classes four hours a week during an academic year, which is divided into two four-month modules. Module I reaches a pre-intermediate level, and Module II an upper intermediate level. This organization into modules allows those students with pre-intermediate knowledge to start Module II after having passed a placement test.

The universe of this study consisted of a total of 103 students, all of them adults and Spanish first language speakers. The 56 students of the experimental group had recently passed Module I during which they had been exposed to an autonomizing methodology.

Taking into account our particular teaching context, the only possibility of having a control group was considering those students who were starting Module II after having passed the placement test. These tests corroborated that the students could interpret texts and translate them at the required proficiency level. Besides, a questionnaire was implemented before selecting these students in order to confirm that they had not been exposed to an autonomizing methodology and that they had experienced teacher-centered lessons (Appendix A). As a result, the control group was formed by 47 students. Both groups, the experimental one and the control group, started Module II separately, but the same autonomizing methodology would be applied.

2.2 Procedure

The data was gathered at two moments of the research work. The same quantitative test was administered to experimental and to control groups before they began Module II and after

they had finished it. The first data gathering was aimed at assessing the impact of being exposed to an autonomizing methodology for four months. The information obtained at the end of the academic year, four months after the first measuring, was intended to evaluate both the impact of the use of the same methodology in both groups and the effect of sustaining it in time. The data quantitatively obtained was supplemented with information drawn from a qualitative test which showed the students' perceptions of their learning experiences.

2.2.1 Detailed description of the pedagogical strategy followed in the experimental Group

The experimental group worked throughout the course following an autonomizing methodology. The material consisted of a booklet which was divided into lessons, especially designed for the purpose and which included different self-regulating tools (language awareness boxes, reflective peer-work activities, self-evaluation questionnaires, among others). Different authentic discourse types were selected for the contextualized presentation of structures. After a brief lead-in to activate previous knowledge, the text was read and comprehension was checked. Immediately after that, the students were led to discover the new structure by filling in language awareness boxes which helped them become aware of the semantic, structural and pragmatic aspects of the linguistic item. These self-regulating tools also guided them to notice the differences in behaviour between both English (L2) and Spanish (L1). All throughout the booklet the activities suggested were carefully organized following a gradually increasing level of cognitive and metacognitive complexity. The teacher acted as a tutor or guide providing opportunities for reflective practice, promoting continuous use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, helping proceduralize strategies and facilitating the transfer of control over knowledge (see sample lesson Appendix B).

The same methodology was applied to the control group once they had started Module II.

2.3 Materials and Task Design

The quantitative test consisted of a written translation test that aimed at measuring the effect of the development of metacognitive strategies upon learning. The students had to translate a complex noun phrase. The difficulty of the task lay in the structures selected rather than in the vocabulary, which was general and transparent. The phrase "*Donna L. Hoffman and her distinguished British colleagues at Eaton University's Post-graduate Schools of Mechanical and Civil Engineering*" contained three different structures that did not have any equivalence with L1 structures (the genitive, a pre-modification consisting of a hyphenated noun acting as an adjective, coordinated pre-adjectival pre-modification). Thus, the correct translation implied exercising control over L2 competence and the knowledge of both languages. To quantify the degree of control over each of the structures, the students had to state which cognitive strategies they had applied to carry out the task. In this way, it would be possible to establish the correlation between the degree of explicitness (metacognition) and the degree of correctness when translating. The ultimate aim was to find evidence to demonstrate that a higher degree of reflection and self-regulation would result in a higher degree of autonomy and in a better performance.

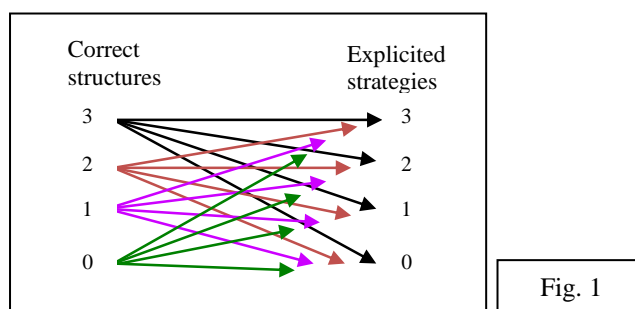
A qualitative test (an introspective questionnaire consisting of seven multiple choice questions) was administered at the end of study to both groups with the purpose of gathering information about the individual perception as for motivation, personal expectations and the importance of self-regulating instruments (Appendix C).

2.4 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The data collected through the translation task was manipulated in the following way. First, the number of structures accurately translated by each student was quantified to evaluate the students' performance (dependent variable). Next, the number of times that the students explained the strategy applied to translate each structure was quantified as well. In this way the independent variable (metacognition) was operationalized. The quantification of

correctly or incorrectly translated structures did not prove difficult. However, a criterion needed to be adopted to decide which explanations could be considered acceptable. Only those that comprehensibly described the strategies used were taken into account (see table Appendix D).

One of the problems encountered was the wide range of possibilities that were opened as a student could have correctly translated the three structures explaining three, two, one or none of the strategies, correctly translated two structures explaining three, two, one or none of the strategies, and so on as it can be seen in figure 1.



For this reason, two categories were proposed. Category A would contain those translations having three or two correct structures since they had a high degree of accuracy and were comprehensible. Category B grouped those translations with one or no correct structures, which made the final product incomprehensible.

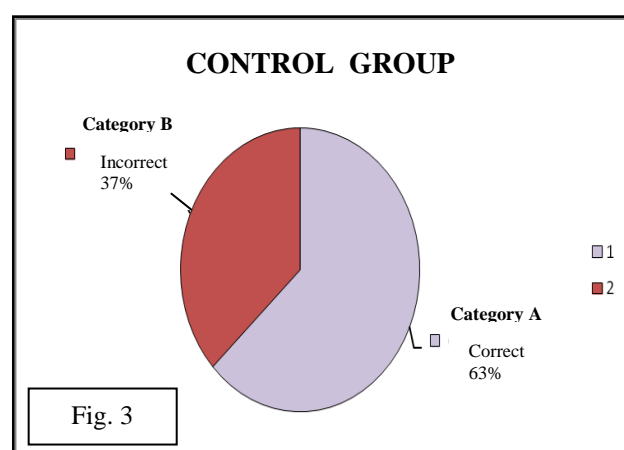
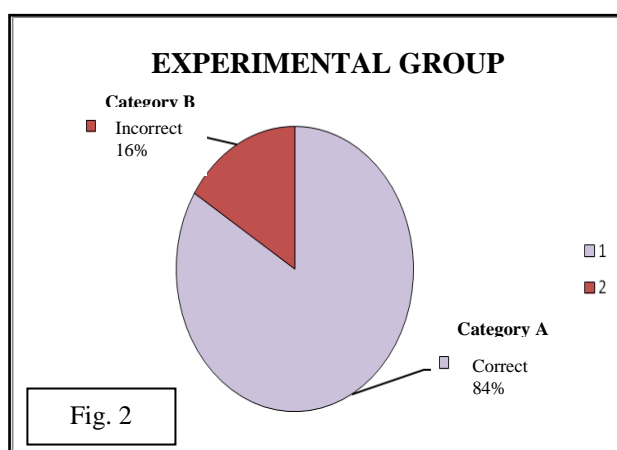
To analyse the degree of explicitness of strategies, only category A was taken into account for two reasons, the translations in category B did not only have a very low degree of accuracy but also strategies had, in most cases, not been made explicit.

The next step was to group those students in category A (with three or two correctly translated structures) according to the number of times they had explained strategies. This resulted into Category Y, which included individuals who had written three or two explanations, and Category Z, which had one or no explanations. This was necessary in order to co-relate the degree of explicitness and of accuracy in both groups.

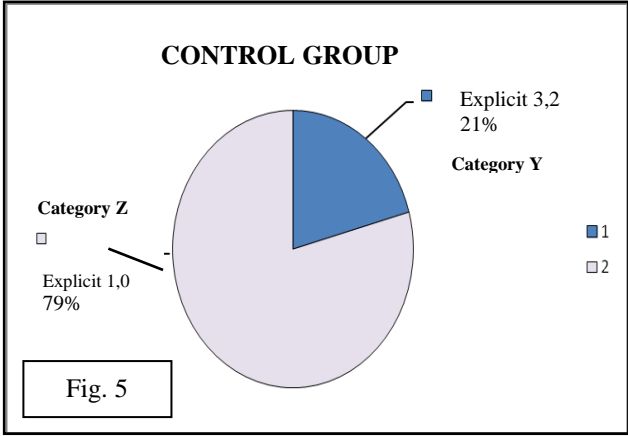
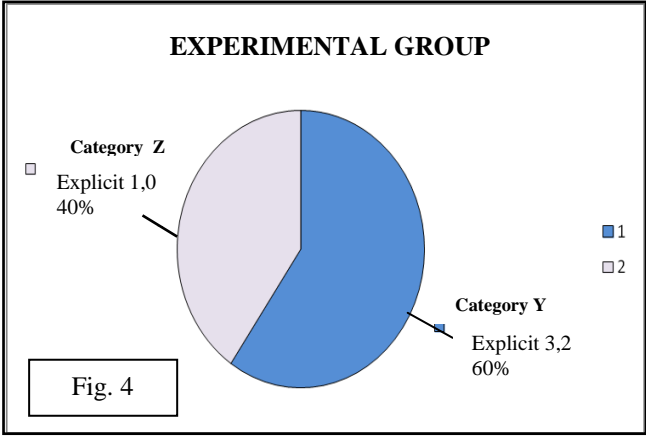
The results of the introspective questionnaire were used to gather an in-depth understanding of the students' perceptions and relate them with the results quantitatively obtained.

3.Results

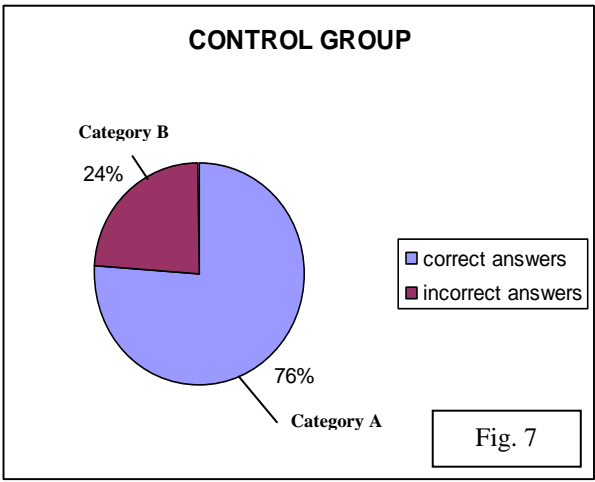
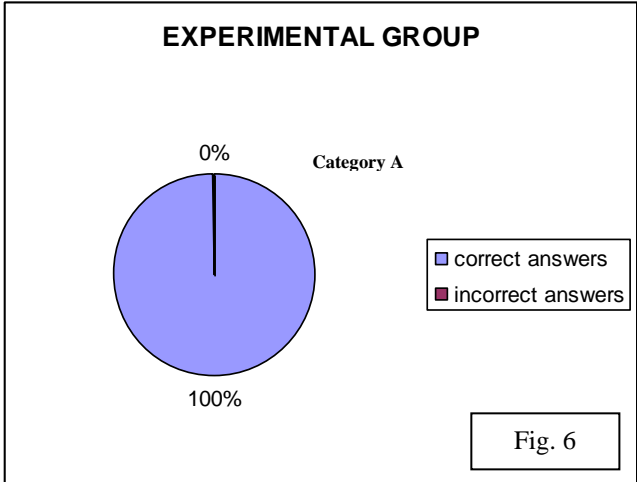
The results obtained in the first data gathering before the beginning of Module II showed that 84% of the individuals of the experimental group had been able to translate with a high degree of accuracy and, therefore, belonged to Category A (fig.2) while 16% of the individuals corresponded to Category B; 63% of the individuals of the control group resulted in Category A and 37% in Category B (fig.3).



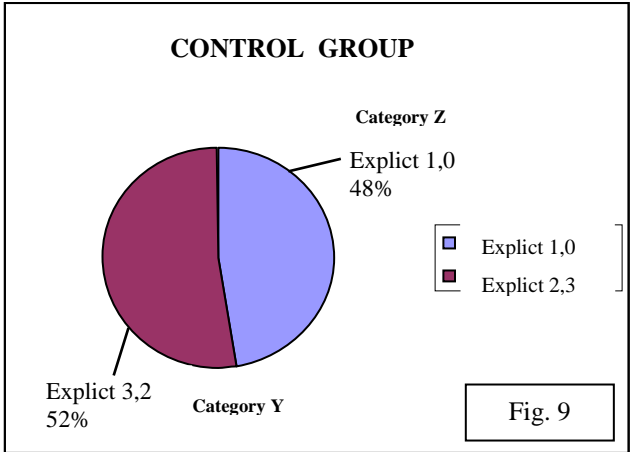
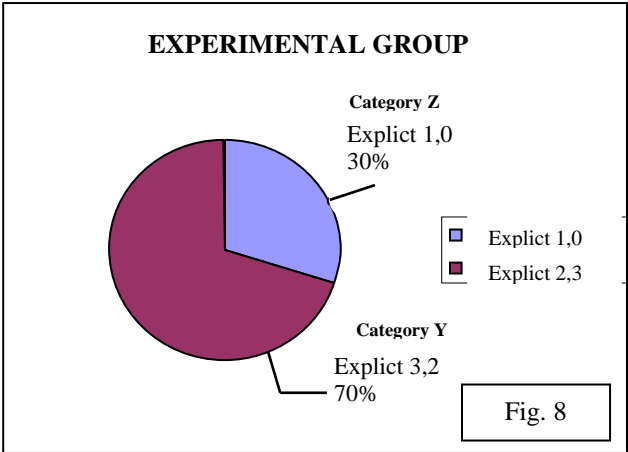
As regards the degree of explicitness, 60% of the individuals of the experimental group were able to explain the strategies used to translate the structures, thus belonging to Category Y. Category Z was made up of 40% of the individuals who just included one or no explanation at all (fig.4). The control group had 21% of the individuals in Category Y and 79% in Category Z (fig.5).



The results obtained in the second data collection at the end of the academic year showed that 100% of the individuals of the experimental group had been able to translate the noun phrase with a high degree of accuracy (fig.6) while 76% of the students in the control group had performed similarly (fig.7)



As for the degree of explicitness, 70% of the individuals of the experimental group corresponded to Category Y and 30% to Category Z (fig.8) whereas 52% of the individuals of the control group belonged to Category Y and the remaining 48% to Category Z (fig.9)



Comparing the first data obtained in the first and second gathering, the experimental group showed a **20%** increase in the degree of correctness, reaching 100% of accuracy while the control group showed a rise of 13% (fig.10). Similarly, both groups obtained higher percentages in the degree of explicitness during the second gathering. There was an increase of 10% in the performance of the experimental group and 27% in the control group (fig.11).

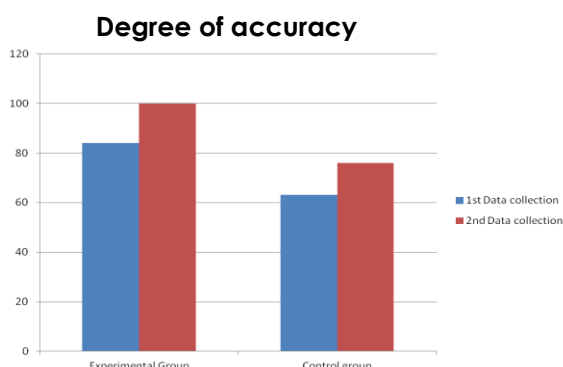


Fig. 10

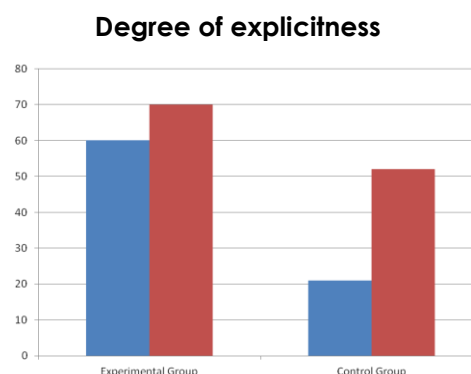


Fig. 11

The introspective questionnaire showed the following results: 73% of the students preferred to be guided to discover the grammar rules and 27% chose the deductive approach by means of which the teacher presented the rules explicitly; 91% considered that the scaffolding process in the English classes had helped them understand the new grammar items; 100% confirmed that in most of the other subjects at the faculty the professors presented topics in a lecture fashion with little or no intervention from the students; 91% considered the contexts used for presentation of great use and the same percentage of students found the self-regulating tools very useful. As regards personal expectations of achievement, 73% considered that they had been highly fulfilled, 24% perceived that their expectations had been fulfilled as they had expected and only 2.3% said that their expectations had not been fulfilled. Concerning motivation, 81% of the individuals found the methodology applied interesting and useful whereas 14% found it boring but useful. Only 3.5% considered it interesting but not so useful.

4. Discussion

The findings corresponding to the first data gathering clearly show that there is a correlation between the development of metacognitive strategies and a better performance as the students of the experimental group outperformed those of the control group in the first stage of this research work. The former group revealed a higher degree of accuracy which was also accompanied by a higher degree of explicitness. This result could have been caused by the type of learning experience in which the students were immersed. The fact that both the teacher and the material designed placed the students of the experimental group in the centre of the teaching-learning process and assigned them the role of protagonists, constructors and administrators of their own learning process could be the most plausible explanation for such findings. The pedagogical strategies used which directed the students' attention both to language and processes, which triggered a state of awareness and which provided repeated opportunities to exercise control over both the content to be learned and their own learning could have helped the students to face cognitive challenges more autonomously and efficiently.

The results obtained in the second data gathering clearly establish the same correlation observed in the first data gathering since both groups were able to perform better after four months. The students of the control group were able to get better results once they were exposed to the same autonomizing methodology that had been previously applied to the experimental group, thus, reinforcing the hypothesis that the development and use of metacognitive strategies enhances learning. Simultaneously, a positive change was also

observed in the experimental group. The fact that this group not only performed better than in the previous stage but also outperformed the control group once more could be explained by the fact that the use of metacognitive strategies was sustained in time. Providing students with further opportunities to apply cognitive and metacognitive strategies may have helped to internalize and proceduralize them and improve their performance.

These results can be enriched by the students' perceptions of their own learning experience obtained through the qualitative instrument. Students seem to be aware of the fact that the methodology used in the English classes was student-centred and clearly differed from other teacher-centred classes they had experienced. The fact that most students stated that they preferred to be guided in the learning process may explain why they easily adapted and adopted this way of working and thus improved their performance. This is also reflected in the students' positive evaluation of the self-regulating tools. Apparently, the students had profited from this pedagogical experience as this methodology not only suited their preferences, but also fulfilled their expectations and motivated them instrumentally and intrinsically.

The results obtained at both stages seem to be consistent with the socio-cultural perspective which highlights the role of social mediation (Lantoff, 2000, 2002) and with the importance assigned to the explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies (Flavel, 1971, 1987) to foster intentional, planned and deliberate action, thus contributing to learner autonomy (Zimmerman, B.J. & Shunk, D.H., 1989).

The limitations of this research work lie in the reduced number of individuals that formed part of the universe of this study and in the fact that for institutional and academic reasons the methodology applied could not be discontinued to corroborate what could have happened if the use of strategies were not sustained in time. The only possibility was to analyse how the performance of the control group would change if exposed to a different way of working and of contrasting its performance to that of the experimental group at the very end of the study.

5. Conclusion

The results of this experimental research work are motivating. We conclude that the teaching and the continuous practice of cognitive and metacognitive strategies may have a positive impact on the students and their learning process. These findings, though still preliminary, show the need to revise ESP teaching practices in terms of a methodology which stimulates reflective and self-regulating processes thus contributing to learning enhancement and student autonomy.

It would be interesting to repeat this study with larger groups of students with the possibility of discontinuing the autonomizing methodology to further confirm the results obtained in this work.

A new step to follow, which we are about to start as part of the whole interdisciplinary project "La enseñanza del inglés en las ciencias exactas e ingenierías y el uso de las TICs" (UNR), is to evaluate the effects of incorporating this methodology in blended learning so as to evaluate whether the benefits shown when metacognition is fostered in the classroom are replicated when the teaching-learning process is also mediated using the ICT's.

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Reading Social Science Research Articles in English: Understanding Obstacles for Spanish-speaking Undergraduate Students

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with undergraduate students' difficulty to identify rhetorical moves (indicating a gap) in English-written research article introductions in the social science field. Students' empirical data will be analyzed and interpreted in the light of discourse and language cognitive considerations.

Keywords: : L2 reading – Undergraduate level – Rhetorical organization
– Research articles – Cognitive academic language proficiency –
Pseudonegative words

Academic literacy requires not only understanding subject matter content but also gaining an awareness of the specific genres that convey such content (Carlino, 2005). When the focus of university courses is reading academic text in a second language (L2) at undergraduate level, the explicit teaching of formal schemata should be emphasized. Such is the case at the English Chair at the School of Social Sciences, Universidad de Buenos Aires, where this study was carried out. Students are provided with explicit instruction on typical rhetorical moves found in research articles (RA), which offers them strategic clues to identify the author's purpose, hypothesis and stance and to build the main idea while downplaying the obstacles posed by technical or specific subject-matter content and L2 limitations. This paper is concerned with one such rhetorical move typically found in the introduction section of RAs, specifically, when the researcher intends to establish a niche or signal a topic that has not been studied yet: indicating a gap (Puigatti de Gómez, 2005).

Researchers have to persuade their audience into accepting the truthfulness and relevance of their claims through elaborate rhetorical moves in which they must create a research space for themselves by signaling limitations in previous studies and theoretical models (Swales, 1990). Some linguistic exponents used to signal such limitations tend to be problematic for non-proficient L2 readers as many are not overtly negative. It is claimed that words such as 'lack', 'scant', referred to as non-cognate pseudonegatives, do not offer any clue regarding the negative component of their meaning (González, 2008), which may prevent readers from identifying part of the argumentative chain that leads to the author's purpose. In this sense, reading comprehension failure may be linked to a language problem, so explicit instruction is necessary to ensure comprehension.

However, our informal observation of students' performance appeared to indicate that students still have trouble identifying this rhetorical move despite relevant instruction or even when this move was signaled by cognate pseudonegatives, not believed to pose a language problem. Therefore, the aim of this study is to empirically explore this informal observation and gain an understanding of the reasons for this failure.

In an initial approximation, we presume this difficulty partly stems from the characteristics of this genre, task type and the reading situation as it involves performance on a cognitively demanding task in a context-reduced situation, which is typical of academic literacy. Academic literacy is explained by Cummins (2000) as an aspect of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), one of the two dimensions of language proficiency. The other dimension is related to Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), which encompasses conversational aspects of language use, i.e. language use typically found in face-to-face

encounters where there is rich contextual support such as gestures, facial expressions, among others. On the contrary, CALP describes language use supported primarily by linguistic cues that are largely independent of the immediate communicative context so that meaning is derived from language exclusively, thus successful interpretation of the message depends heavily on knowledge of the language itself.

Other authors also distinguish between two dimensions of proficiency. Bruner (as cited in Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, Power and Pedagogy: Bilingual Children in the Crossfire*. p 61), defines analytic competence as competence that involves the 'pro-longed operation of thought processes depending exclusively on linguistic representations' and is developed by means of formal schooling. Vygotsky (1962) makes a distinction between spontaneous and scientific concepts, the latter being representative of academic proficiency.

These authors warn us not to underestimate the challenge imposed by the mastery of the academic functions of language since their use requires high levels of cognitive involvement and are only minimally supported by contextual or interpersonal cues. Under conditions of high cognitive demand, it is necessary for students to stretch their linguistic resources to the limit to function successfully. In brief, academic language proficiency is essentially the ability to make complex meanings explicit in either oral or written modalities by means of language itself rather than by means of contextual or paralinguistic cues such as gestures, intonation. In the case of reading, task demands may vary in terms of cognitive demand: for example, just locating specific information in a text requires low cognitive involvement while building the main idea, identifying the author's thesis or arguments is more cognitively demanding. However, these demands are a function not just of the tasks themselves but also of the characteristics and background experience of individual learners.

We believe that reading is a strategic process as is geared toward collecting certain information from the text according to the purpose that monitors the reader's cognitive activity (Carlino, 2005). In this process, knowledge of discourse structure may strategically aid L2 readers, in particular those with limited English proficiency (LEP) as it encourages them to move from linear reading to a more strategic approach in which they actively and selectively search for information in specific sections of the text. In this sense, knowledge of the abstract representation of different text types will allow readers to identify key paragraphs that introduce new concepts or synthesize ideas while skipping those with known information or secondary ideas. Readers are encouraged to pay attention to textual markers that guide them regarding the development of text content and its organization.

In the context of our chair, students receive instruction on global and local organizational patterns of RAs and the linguistic means to signal such organization. This genre, when used to publish empirical studies, is usually divided into 4 sections: introduction, method, results and discussion. This study deals with the rhetorical structure of the introduction section, which is defined by Piuatti de Gómez (2005) as the superstructure category that reproduces those processes that precede the research activities per se. She argues that it is mainly argumentative because it aims at highlighting the need for the study. The niche, a topic that has not been researched into, motivates and justifies the work. Swales states that the introduction represents "the need to re-establish in the eyes of the discourse community the significance of the research field itself; the need to 'situate' the actual research in terms of that significance; and the need to show how this niche in the wider ecosystem will be occupied and defended" (Swales (1990) *Genre Analysis: English in academic and research settings*. p 142). His model divides the introduction into 3 rhetorical moves: 'establishing a territory', 'establishing a niche' and 'occupying the niche'. In this presentation we are mainly concerned with 'indicating a gap' as a step within 'establishing a niche'. In this step the researcher points out the insufficient or limited results of previous studies which justify a new study. In doing so he or she tends to resort to negative devices that may be more or less overtly negative allowing for a more or less overtly critical stance.

Swales classifies these devices into 'negative or quasi-negative quantifiers' (e.g. no, little), 'lexical negation' (e.g. fail, lack, failure, misleading) and 'negation in the verb phRase' (e.g.

not, rarely). Yet, for the aim of this study we would like to focus on the classification made by González (2008) as it is more relevant to comprehension in L2. González (*ibid.*) states that there is high concentration of linguistic means used to express negation in rebuttal paragraphs and in paragraphs in which the author compares points of view, models or paradigms to show limitations. She makes a distinction between explicit negation and negation that is expressed by non-explicit means. Authors may rebut other authors' results or positions through the use of negation at sentence level (e.g. have not retained sufficient importance) or through negative units which present a negative particle (e.g. unsatisfactory). She argues that whereas these negating devices are usually recognized by L2 readers, non-cognate pseudonegative words semantically convey an idea of negation which is not explicit in the word's morphology (e.g. rejection, avoid, seldom). Readers tend to overlook them, failing to identify different paradigms or points of view while reading. In turn, difficulty in processing these rebuttal or contrastive paragraphs may lead to incorrect abstraction of main ideas as they fail to expose the various opinions or paradigms present in the text. From this point of view, failure to recognize this rhetorical step may be attributed to a language problem, which according to Bernhardt (2005) explains 30% of reading performance.

Our initial approach to this reading problem relied on the assumption that L2 students failed to identify a 'gap in knowledge' due to lack of L2 knowledge, in particular, of non-cognate pseudonegative words; however, after instruction of rhetorical aspects of RAs and pseudonegative words, we had the impression that students still had difficulty in this respect. Therefore, in this study we intend to verify our informal observations empirically by answering these research questions:

- Do undergraduate students actually fail to identify a gap in knowledge in social science RAs in English?
- If they do fail, is this failure the result of L2 deficiencies, in particular, in the knowledge of pseudonegative words?
- Does explicit instruction on the rhetorical organization of RAs' introductions and linguistic means to signal its rhetorical moves have an impact on subjects' ability to identify a gap in knowledge? If this is not the case, what explanation may be put forward?

Method

This study was carried out in the Chair of English at the School of Social Sciences at the Universidad de Buenos Aires in the third level of the subject. Our students come from various majors such as Communication Science, Industrial Relations, Political Science, Sociology and Social Work. The main aim of the Chair is to teach students to read academic texts in English, which is assessed through their first language (L1). This is done in three term levels which are organized around authentic texts that may initially be 200 word-long and in the last two levels; students read 2000 word-long. Students may not attend regular courses and take a final exam instead, which is the option chosen by students with an intermediate level of English. Those students who attend our courses have lower English proficiency LEP. The Chair strongly recommends that students who have passed at least six subjects, which together with general breadth courses make twelve academic subjects, should attend level 1. This ensures that students have some prior knowledge of the subject matter and some academic literacy skills. Yet, they are still not quite familiar with RAs. In level 3, however, they are already acquainted with RAs as a result of instruction in the previous levels of the subject.

Our research approach is non-experimental and exploratory in nature. It was conceived in response to the observation that students struggled to identify certain rhetorical moves in RAs' introductions despite instruction. It focuses on subjects' ability to identify a rhetorical step in RAs' introductions, a gap in knowledge, signaled by various negative linguistic devices, after an instructional process aimed at raising subjects' awareness of the discourse structure of RAs introductions and the linguistic devices used to signal these rhetorical moves.

A sample of 38 subjects participated in this study. Their level of English ranged from elementary to upper intermediate. However, most subjects (n=28) had an elementary level of English, and the rest (n=9) ranged from pre-intermediate to intermediate, which is quite

representative of the overall population that attends our courses. The total population of students that attend level 3 consists of 140 students on a term basis. Students' proficiency was determined by their own self-assessment according to prior experience as indicated in a questionnaire. Their level of proficiency was compared with correct or incorrect gap identification.

Negative devices that signaled a "gap in knowledge" were classified as explicit negation (negation in the verb phrase, cognate pseudonegative) and non-explicit negation (non-cognate pseudonegatives) according to the classification made by Swales (1990) and González (2008) respectively. In the texts used, for instance, *scant* is an example of a non-cognate pseudonegative whereas *ignore* is an example of a cognate pseudonegative word, which as a cognate L2 readers should be able to identify. *Do not feature* is an example of negation by explicit means.

The data analyzed in this study is taken from students' performance on two midterm tests. In a 14-week term, students were assessed at week 7 and at week 14. The first test consisted of the introduction section of a RA of 1150 words and the second test administered 6 weeks later was also an introduction of around 1400 words. In both tests one of the questions they were asked was to identify a gap in knowledge. In the first text there was only one instance of such step whereas in the second text there were four. Identification of this rhetorical step was operationalized through the following instruction in order to avoid the use of technical metalanguage such as *gap in knowledge*: "Throughout the text the author mentions some limitations in knowledge or in studies about the topic that is being discussed. Mention ONE of them."

In the first test, the gap in knowledge was worded as follows: "Current literature on modern pharmaceutical industry is dominated by multinational corporations, committed to maintaining control over the products they produce, while the close relation between health, economic justice and local demands *is ignored*". In the second text the following 4 gaps appeared: 1. "This article argues that two areas in particular *have not retained* sufficient importance on the academic agenda, namely social exclusion, and its effects on fandom, and supporter responses to football's transformation." 2. "Certainly, the changing nature of the crowd, the increasingly diverse ways of following and interacting with football, and the factors that construct and mediate such fandom, *do not feature* on the agenda Moorhouse (1998) outlines." 3. "This *ignores* the control exercised over most phone-ins by radio stations, to the point where they lose most, if not all, social and cultural significance: no matter what value should be attached to fanzines, it clearly seems inappropriate to equate these independent, active, cultural spaces (active players in nearly every major fan campaign since the mid-1980s) with restricted, controlled radio phone-ins." 4. "Systematic analysis of the forces that create exclusion, and more importantly its consequences on fandom, has been *scant*."

In in-between tests, subjects received further instruction (6 hours) on the rhetorical organization of RAs and linguistic means to signal its rhetorical moves and steps, in particular, 'a gap in knowledge'. The results on both tests were then compared in order to empirically identify the number of students that had failed to accomplish the task. We intended to verify if further instruction on pseudonegatives given in in-between tests rendered any significant results and to explore possible reasons for students' failure by recording and analyzing incorrect answers. In test #2 we also analyzed which gaps were chosen and the implications of this choice.

Results and Discussion

Our first objective was to check if our informal observation on the level of difficulty of this task was appropriate. Secondly, we aimed to verify if there had been any significant gain in ability to identify a gap in knowledge from time #1 to time #2. The results in Table 1 compare and contrast subjects' performance on both tests:

Table 1- *Identification of rhetorical step (gap in knowledge)*

	Test #1	Test #2
Number of students	38	38
Correct gap identification	24 (63%)	24 (63%)
Good Comprehension	15	18
Poor Comprehension	9	6
Incorrect gap identification	14 (37%)	14 (37%)
Mean score on test	6.7 (67%)	7 (70%)

We can observe that the number of students that were able to identify a gap in both tests was surprisingly the same: 63% of the subjects. Within this 63%, answers were classified according to whether they showed good or poor comprehension. That is, in some cases subjects were able to identify the gap but their comprehension of the limitation being addressed was poor.

How may these results be interpreted? Firstly, the fact that gap identification was more successful than expected according to our initial informal observation as 43% is not a very low level of failure but compared with the mean obtained by the whole group on the overall performance on the test (70%), it becomes somewhat lower in perspective. This percentage (43%) although it is similar to the one obtained by high school subjects (Private schools: 27.7% and public schools: 37.9%) with regards to unsuccessful building of main ideas in L1 (Peronard, 1997), a task that may be deemed more cognitively demanding than the one under discussion.

Secondly, what stands out is the fact that the number of students that were able to identify a gap remained constant in the second test. Although they received further instruction on linguistic exponents associated with this rhetorical move as well as knowledge on its rhetorical characteristics, students seemed to be "unresponsive" to instruction. In Table 2 we gain a more detailed picture of the effect of instruction.

Table 2 -*Comparison of gap identification per subject in tests #1 and #2*

1NO / #2 YES	8
#1YES / #2 NO	8
#1YES / #2 YES	16
#1 NO / #2 NO	6

The data in the table above do not show any clear pattern regarding the effect of instruction if we consider subjects on an individual basis. Eight students were not able to identify a gap in test 1 but they identified the gap in test 2, whereas other 8 students did so in test 1 but failed in test 2, in this way showing a decline in their ability. As for the rest of the students, there was no knowledge gain. In sum, 8 students out of 38 (21%) showed some gain after instruction, which is a significantly low percentage regarding our expectations.

Such a low figure raises the question of the effectiveness of instruction, at least, in a short period of time (6 weeks, adding up to a total of 6 hours of specific instruction on this topic). These results are in accord with those in Ellis (1984), that is, 3 hours of instruction on Wh-questions resulted in no significant increase in children's ability partly attributed by the author to the limited time of instruction. On the other hand, our results also focus on Cummins' (2000) understanding of CALP. Using language with little contextual support and in cognitively

demanding tasks seems to require further opportunities for extensive practice for linguistic tools to become largely automatized, which in turn should lower the active cognitive involvement required for appropriate performance. Understanding of RAs places heavy cognitive demands on the reader in the processing of knowledge in terms of propositional units of information, as RAs tend to be written for readers who already have expertise in the field or line of research so that a great amount of knowledge is considered to be shared between author and audience. In addition, Piuatti de Gómez (2005) states that the introduction and discussion sections of RAs tend to be on the argumentative end of the expository-argumentative continuum. Identifying the different voices the author uses to highlight limitations and create a research space places an additional burden on cognitive processing.

Table 3 presents an analysis of subjects' choice of gaps in test #2:

Table 3

<i>Test #2: Gaps chosen by subjects</i>	
	Linguistic exponents included in correct and partially correct answers
Cognate pseudonegative	14
Non-cognate pseudonegative	1
Explicit negatives	13

In the text used in the first exam, there was only one instance of a gap and it was signaled by a cognate pseudonegative. In the second test, the text presented 4 sections that indicated a gap in knowledge: 2 were signaled by explicit negation (*do not feature* and *have not retained sufficient importance*) and two were pseudonegative words: *ignore* and *scant*. According to González (2008), *scant* should present problems for LEP students. This is the case in our study: *scant* was only chosen by one subject, which is in line with results presented by González (ibid.). Non-cognate pseudonegatives hinder detection of sections in which the author challenges other authors' results, paradigms or points of view. However, it called our attention that in the first test 37% of the subjects were unable to detect this rhetorical step although it was signaled by a cognate pseudonegative (*ignore*). Again, we believe CALP poses cognitive demands that may partly account for this failure though an analysis of students' incorrect answers may provide unthought-of explanations.

To further explore the role of L2 in the detection of this rhetorical step, we took into account the students' level of proficiency to verify whether there was a consistent pattern between level of proficiency and successful detection or not. The results presented in Table 4 depict the typical composition of our classes: most students have LEP (76% have an elementary level).

Table 4 - Gap identification in both tests according to L2 level

L2 level	Subjects (n)	Gap identification (n)	Ratio
Above elementary level	9	14	1.5
Elementary level	29	33	1.1

The ratio between above elementary level students and number of gap identifications is 1.5, which means that every student identified 1 and a half gaps whereas elementary level students were able to identify fewer gaps: a gap per student. Although this is not a significant difference, it shows a slight difference in favor of proficiency level suggesting that L2 knowledge does play a role, but to a certain extent. This is consistent with the 30% of variance attributed to L2 knowledge according to Bernhardt's 2005 model.

Our last objective was to analyze incorrect answers to see if there was any consistent pattern that led to a further understanding of subjects' failure. In text #1 many subjects were able to identify the rhetorical move, the illocutionary act, but did not understand its propositional meaning due to lack of knowledge of L2 as shown in their wording in L1. In particular, the noun phRAse "the close relationship between health, economic justice and local demands" was misunderstood by 20% of the subjects. Some examples to illustrate how it was wrongly interpreted are presented:

- a. ...mientRAs que las cerradas relaciones entre salud, la justicia económica y las demandas son ignoradas.
- b. ... cerrando e ignorando la relación entre salud, justicia económica y ...
- c. ... el cierre de las relaciones entre salud, economía, justicia y demandas locales es ignorado.
- d.teniendo una relación cerrada entre salud economía y que son ignoradas.

What seems to be the problem is partly lack of vocabulary depth, in this case of the word 'close'. Bernhardt (2010) highlights the importance of teaching various meanings of multiple-meaning 'easy' words such as 'run' or 'issue' given that students tend to access the most frequent meaning. On the other hand, heavy noun phRAses tend to pose a reading challenge to L1 and L2 readers of English for their conceptual load as these structures admit a high accumulation of information; besides, Spanish-speaking readers may suffer from L1 interference and may fail to identify the head noun thus distorting the overall meaning of the structure.

Another set of incorrect answers (n=6) in text 1 shared a common feature. In this case subjects identified a limitation, but it was a limitation- in the sense of problem- of the reality being described. Somewhat they were anticipated in the title of the article: "Law, Politics and Access to Medicines in Developing Countries". The text actually dealt with the lack of access to medicines so the students did not address limitations on how authors or the specific literature generally deal with the problem but they addressed the problem itself. An example of this type of answer: "Este artículo se propone investigar el por qué de las limitaciones al acceso de medicamentos para tratamiento de enfermedades pandémicas como HIV/AIDS". Once again, this type of misinterpretation of instructions appears to show how students struggle with the level of abstraction typically found in RAs and the obstacles that pose such complex rhetorical moves both in terms of cognitive demand and lack of contextual support.

Conclusion

This study was designed to answer certain empirical questions about university students' ability to identify a rhetorical step (a gap in knowledge) in RAs' introductions in English as L2 and thereby to clarify the concomitant role of different negative linguistic devices and the impact of the instructional process.

The first question we asked was whether university L2 readers actually fail to identify a gap in knowledge in RAs or not. The results of this study show that in comparison to their overall reading performance, the recognition of this rhetorical step is significantly more difficult; however, when compared to the ability of high school students to make summaries of L1 texts (Peronard Thierry, M., Gómez Macker, L., Parodi Sweis, G. & Nuñez Lagos, P. (1997), it reflects the level of difficulty of higher order skills in reading, that is, reading skills characteristic of CALP.

The second question we asked concerned the reasons for this possible failure, in particular, whether this failure was based on linguistic shortcomings in terms of LEP and/or on lack of knowledge of non-cognate pseudonegative words. Our findings are in line with previous studies; they show that LEP subjects failed to a somewhat larger extent than non-LEP subjects and non-cognate pseudonegatives preclude recognition of key argumentative sections of RAs introductions (González, 2008). Analysis of incorrect answers stresses the difficulty that noun phRAses in academic text may pose to Spanish-speaking readers of English and the need to explicitly teach various meanings of 'easy' words.

The third question we asked was whether explicit instruction on rhetorical organization of RAs' introductions and linguistic means to signal its rhetorical moves had an impact on subjects' competence to identify "a gap in knowledge". Our results suggest that instruction in a limited period of time does not seem to have a significant effect, at least, when reading tasks and texts are associated with CALP. This dimension of language use seems to require further instruction.

All in all, these findings indicate how language and reading variables come together to account for reading in L2 according to with Bernhardt's 2005 model (2010). L1 literacy and L2 knowledge seem to explain 50% of reading performance in L2. Further research is necessary to provide a more detailed picture of how these variables may weigh differently in specific reading contexts. This study intended to explore this issue in the context of reading academic text in L2 at undergraduate level yet its findings are limited due to its exploratory nature and to a small sample size. In addition, to comply with Bernhardt's (2010) requirements for sound research in reading in L2 a measure of L1 literacy could be added.

To conclude, this study underscores the difficulty that academic language use entails in particular when reading L2 academic texts, even after long periods of instruction, which is the case of this study as subjects were attending their third level of English and had at least passed a minimum of 20 academic subjects. As stated by Cummins (2000), these are considerations we should bear in mind when selecting instructional texts, determining objectives and designing tasks for our curriculum and classes. This poses the question of the suitability of RAs to be used in L2 reading comprehension courses at undergraduate level.

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Music to the Rescue in Academic Writing

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ABSTRACT

Theme-based curricula work effectively in ESL preparation for foreign students to enroll in American universities. However, once students receive content instruction, they experience difficulties in providing adequate support in persuasive and problem-solution papers. ESL teachers are always in search of effective techniques to help ESL/ELL students master a skill to develop writing progression using details and examples, and it seems that different art forms inspire better writing. Writing instructors often incorporate in their teaching art forms that help students concentrate on the detailed argumentation and support in descriptions. The experiments involving the utilization of music in helping students understand how to develop and support their statements prove the power of music in making ESL writing meaningful.

Key words: Music- Academic Writing - Writing Progression –
Development - Emotion

Teachers of academic writing in English are in constant search of effective techniques that can help ESL/ELL students understand the importance of developing their writing by incorporating appropriate details and examples. According to Hans Ostrom et al. (2001), one effective way to help students improve their writing is through art because the use of different art forms inspires students' imagination and results in richer and more productive writing. ESL instructors may use paintings and sculptures to help students concentrate on the details and nuances needed to effectively develop and finesse descriptive writing. However, what happens in academic writing – persuasive-argumentative essay writing, for example, in which support and development are essential, and in which specific descriptions do not apply in convincing a reader? In these essays, only solid facts and refutation of opposing opinions illustrated by clear and attention-grabbing examples are effective. In this type of academic writing, ESL students face a major challenge—detailed argumentation and factual support of their premises are often shallow and insufficient. Students do not have enough either background or interest in their topic to write a convincing, well-supported and developed academic paper. Experiments involving another art form – music – are proving its power in making ESL academic writing more meaningful.

Research shows that many elements are involved in a successful writing process, such as “cultural, social and physical contexts” as well as writers’ “interests, needs, values, beliefs, knowledge, requirements, limitations and opportunities” (Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky, 2006). What is purposefully ignored is the role of emotions in academic writing. Academic writing teachers usually instruct students to be as impartial in their opinions as possible and conceal their personal emotions so that they do not expose any bias. A common attitude in this respect is that “emotion” is usually not a word associated with academic essay writing (Walton, 1992), and the use of “emotive language” is discouraged (Ahmad, R. and McMahon, K., 2006). Nevertheless, more and more often researchers are admitting the role of emotions in academic writers themselves, and the positive effects that result in their writing.

Such innovative assertions have inspired new teaching approaches, and one of these approaches focuses on teaching academic writing using music as the art form that extracts the highest level of emotion. Experiments developing academic writing through music at the Intensive American Language Center (IALC) at Washington State University have proven this approach to be indisputably effective, and as a result, “emotions” should be added to Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky’s elements involved in the writing process.

Academic writing teachers often present their students with topics that reveal unresolved problems. These topics may be about global issues such as human rights, discrimination, climate change, or professional ethics. Instructors may provide reading materials to help students understand the main clashes of opinions and carry out in-depth class discussions so that students can establish their positions on particular issues. It all seems smooth and clear until the students actually try to persuade their readers of the assertions they have made. When they write, they support their statements with dry facts, little or no discussion of those facts, and practically no illustrations or examples. Their "persuasion" is vague, too generalized and non-convincing. Such critical situations inspired IALC teachers to turn to music and the emotional depths it reaches to motivate ESL writers. They developed an activity that is easy to perform in any class in which it is possible to play three pieces of music on a CD, MP3 player or by using "you tube" links.

The first piece of music in this activity should be intellectual, boring, and non-emotional. The IALC teachers used H. Lachenmann's *Salut für Caudwell*, which is famous for its "anarchic musical constructions" (Kalitzke, Johannes & Lachenmann, Helmut (2013). *Salut für Caudwell*; Les Consolations; Concertini/Review. <http://www.allmusic.com/album/helmut-lachenmann-salut-f%C3%BCr-caudwell-les-consolations-concertini-mw0001409534>). Students were asked to write their opinion on this music as they listened to it, "Do you like it?", "Do you know anything about it?", "How does it make you feel?". This particular music elicited exactly the same response that many students have when being asked to write about an academic topic in which they have no interest or background. The music was unpleasant, intimidating, and uninspiring. They detached themselves from this piece of music and could make no emotional connection to it. Students had difficulty coming up with things to say – just as they do with academic topics for their research papers that daunt them, and they have to come up with things to write.

In contrast, the second piece of music chosen for this activity was Caccini Ave Maria performed by Andrea Bocelli. Again, the students were asked to write their opinion on this piece of music as they listened to it, "Do you like it?", "Do you know anything about it?", "How does it make you feel?". Ave Maria is universally recognized and very familiar. The students found it easy to express their feelings about it. It was comfortable, beautiful, emotional and easy to talk about – easy to give details of experiences and history associated with the music – easy like personal descriptive writing.

After listening to both pieces of music, students discussed the different experiences they had; they began to understand the meaning and goal of the activity, and how it was connected to their writing. In this discussion, they focused on the fact that writing about the second music selection was easier because it was more connected to their feelings and personal experience than the first selection.

The third piece of music used in this activity was *Time to Say Goodbye* performed by Sarah Brightman and Andrea Bacelli. Once more, students were asked the same questions to express their feelings about the music as they listened to it, "Do you like it?", "Do you know anything about it?", "How does it make you feel?". This piece of music is longer and less familiar. The students had less recognition or prior knowledge about it, but it was extremely emotional and drew them in. They wanted to talk about it, to learn more about it, to describe the emotions they felt while listening to it. The piece clearly demonstrated progression in sounds, gradual addition of new instruments and voices, volume and sound intricacies, culminating in glorious and strong final chords. It was a perfectly developed "academic" composition

After listening to and responding to the third piece of music, students were excited to discuss the whole process of this activity. The best proof of the effectiveness of this approach was demonstrated in the students' evaluations of this class. They wrote, "My favorite activity this session was to write about the music;" "When I had to write how I felt about the music, I understood how to support my opinion;" "The music activity was very useful; now I know how

to explain what I think or know," and "Now I finally understood that my teacher wants me to write the way the third piece of music developed."

The final result of this experiment was that students' writing progression, support of their assertions, and illustration of their points turned from shallow to deep and meaningful without traces of "emotive" language. They found emotional connections to their academic topics, and they used these experiences and feelings to engage in topics which would have been intimidating. As it is rightfully pointed out by Jeannette Vos (in Dryden Gordon & Vos J., 2005 *The New Learning Revolution, Network Continuum*), "Music is a stage-changer and can be used effectively to get students into an effective learning state... Music is a universal language."

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Are Students' Attitudes towards Reading in ESP Courses Field-dependant?

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ABSTRACT

Attitudes have been reported as an important variable that influences learning in a foreign language. For adult students coping with ESP reading courses at college, attitudes can account for either failure or success, and are thus worth considering. This study aimed at contrasting the attitudes of students majoring in History and Agricultural Sciences towards the reading of field-specific texts in English. Findings indicate that students from both fields of study similarly perceive the usefulness of reading in English for their professional development. More attention should be paid to course **design** in ESP courses to foster students' efficacy and motivation to read.

Key words: English for Specific Purposes – Reading – Attitude – discipline - motivation

Introduction

Learning a FL has been proved to be a complex phenomenon, involving much more than just the mastery of the linguistic code of the target language. Despite traditional approaches privileging the role of the cognitive domain over the affective one in FL learning, more recent research findings have identified several other factors influencing FL learning and the development of the main macro skills implied in such process; among them, issues such as personality, learning styles, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, prior learning experiences and attitudes towards the learning process and the TL have been raised. As Picard *et al* (2004: 253) highlight, "affective functions (of the brain) and cognitive ones are inextricably integrated with one another".

Given the scope of affectivity and the several tenets and implications it may have, it is of great importance for educators to engage in a genuine search for the many variables that may affect their students' feelings and attitudes to learning. For Guthrie and Greaney (1991) it is the level of satisfaction or pleasure derived from previous experiences which determines attitude. Cubas Barrueto (2007) has further pointed out that it is affectivity -represented by a person's feelings towards a certain object or situation- what moves a person either towards or against such object or situation. Needless to say, these concepts hold true for the learning of a foreign language.

As far as students' attitudes towards reading in a TL are concerned, Grabe and Stoller (2002) found that they are affected both by prior experiences with the FL and by the perceptions students have about the usefulness of reading. Day and Bramford (1998) consider attitudes towards reading in the mother tongue and towards the people, language and culture of the target language to be paramount. If, as Oxford (1994) points out, attitudes affect the selection of appropriate learning strategies, then students who have a negative attitude will tend to use inappropriate strategies, which could in turn hamper the process of reading comprehension. Based on previous findings, getting to know our students attitudes will not only provide useful insights but also, and most importantly, it will help teachers adapt their teaching practices so that learning will be favored. In this study, the attitudes of students majoring in History and Agricultural Sciences towards the reading of field-specific texts in English were contrasted in an attempt to determine whether attitudes are field-dependant.

Participants and Methods

Subjects for this study were 86 undergraduate college students taking the English comprehension course offered in their curricula. Out of the total number, 55 learners belonged to the school of Agricultural Sciences and are majoring in Agricultural Engineering (G1) whereas the remaining 31 studied at the school of Humanities where they are majoring in History (G2).

Data about their motivations for Reading, and their attitudes towards Reading, and towards the target language were collected through the Foreign Language Reading and Motivations Scale (Erten et al, 2010) which measures learners' attitudes in terms of four main factors. Factor 1 addresses the intrinsic value attributed to reading (items 1 to 23, Appendix 1), factor 2 assesses the learners' self-perceived reading efficacy, (items 43 to 51, Appendix 1) factor 3 deals with the extrinsic utility value attributed to reading in English (items 37 to 41, Appendix 1) and factor 4 measures the linguistic utility of the TL as perceived by the learners (items 27, 33, 35 and 36, Appendix 1). Students' responses to the FLRAMS were analyzed and expressed hereinafter as percentages. A five-point Likert scale was used, where 1= definitely inappropriate for me, and 5= very appropriate for me, as suggested by the authors of the instrument in order to quantify the information provided by the learners.

Results

The average attitudes per factor on the FLRAMS of students in G1 and G2 are presented in Figure 1. Attitudes and motivations in the four factors proved to be more positive in G2, as compared to G1, although a very similar trend was observed in both groups in the average scoring per factor. The intrinsic value of reading (Factor 1) received an average score of 3.47 and 2.57 in G2 and G1, respectively, which shows a marked difference of 0.90 on a 1-5 scale. A difference of 0.63 was found in the learners' perceived reading comprehension efficacy (Factor 2) with 2.29 and 2.92 scores for G1 and G2. Factors 3 and 4 on the FLRAMS, intended to measure the influence reading in English may have for professional or personal development (Factor 3), and the linguistic utility of reading in English for the development of other skills in the TL (Factor 4), received the highest scores in both groups. Very slight differences between G1 and G2 (Factor 3= 0.02 and Factor 4= 0.16) were observed for the last two factors on the FLRAMS, with average scores of 3.90 and 3.92 for Factor 3, and 4.21 and 4.37 for Factor 4, in G1 and G2, respectively. Average scores per factor along with standard deviations are provided in table 1.

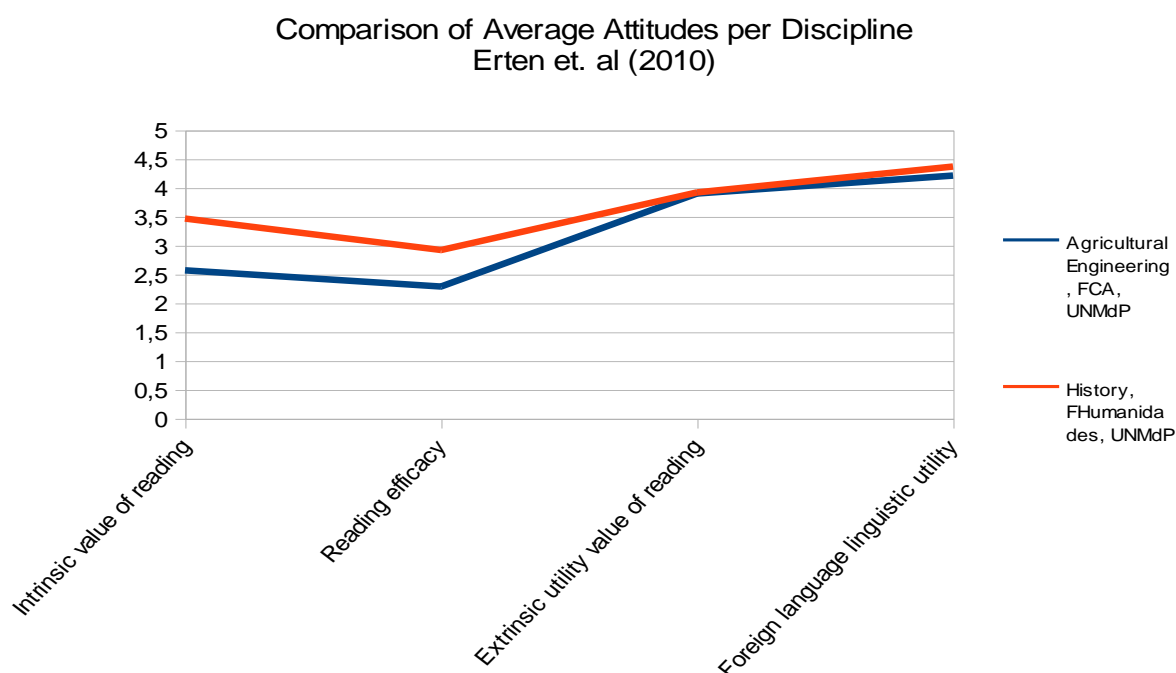


Figure 1: Comparison of average attitudes in the FLRAMS per discipline

Factors in the FLRAMS	Agricultural UNMdP	Engineering,SD	History, UNMdP	SD
F1. Intrinsic value of reading	2,5687398667	0,60	3,4677419355	0,70
F2. Reading efficacy	2,2879781421	0,86	2,9208	0,99
F3. Extrinsic utility value of reading	3,9016393443	0,67	3,92	0,74
F4. Foreign language linguistic utility	4,2131147541	0,56	4,36875	0,56

Table 1: Average scores and standard deviations per factor and discipline, as quantified through the FLRAMS

In addition to the average attitudes per discipline of study, as reflected by the learners' answers to the FLRAMS, their responses to each individual item per factor were quantified. Average values per item are presented in Figure 2, where G1 and G2 are contrasted.

Comparison of Average Scores per item in the FLRAMS Ertan et. al (2010)

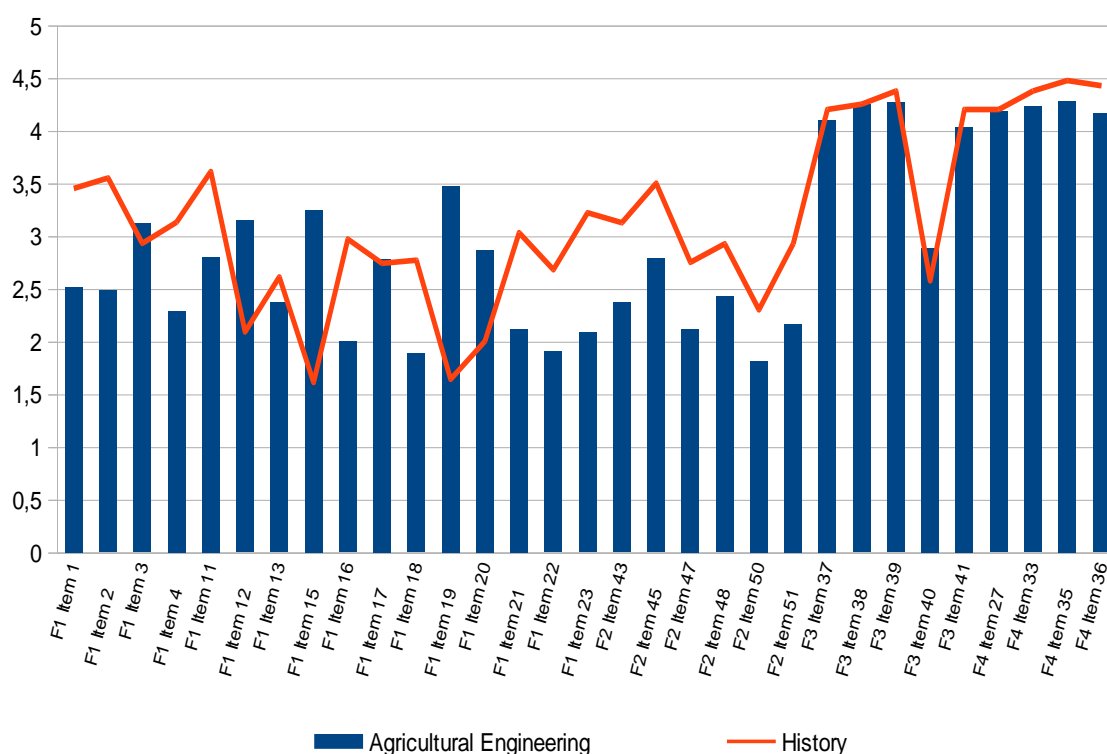


Figure 2: Learners' average responses to each individual item per factor on the FLRAMS, per discipline of study.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, the responses to individual items on the FLRAMS by learners majoring in Agricultural Sciences were collected and quantified. Those items receiving the highest scores, and thus showing the most positive attitudes, were items 35 (4.27), 39 (4.26) and 38 (4.24) of Factors four and three on the FLRAMS. As reflected by each of those items, students in the school of Agricultural Sciences consider that reading in English contributes to improving their writing skills in that language. In addition, as suggested by the high scores given to items 39 and 38, students in G1 highlight the usefulness of being able to read in English for preparing themselves for a better future; they consider that they will be able to get a better job provided they know how to read in English. Next on the scale were items 33 (4.22), 27 (4.18)

and 36 (4.16), all of which are part of the fourth factor measuring the linguistic utility of the TL. This indicates that students in G1 believe that their grammar, vocabulary and oral skills might be improved by reading in the TL. Despite such linguistic relevance attributed to reading in English, and even when students in G1 highlight the role the TL may have in their future personal and professional development, it is also clear by their answers to some of the items in Factor 1 that they do not like reading in English (Item 19 -3.47- "Reading in English is like torture"; item 15 -3.24- "I dislike reading in English"; item 12 -3.14- "I would never read in English if it were not compulsory"; and item 3 -3.11- "Reading in English is boring"). Finally, as indicated by the lowest scores given to items 50 (1.81), 18 (1.88) and 22 (1.90), learners in G1 do not consider themselves to be efficient readers in the target language, nor do they devote time to reading because such a task does not make them happy.

In addition to the responses provided by students in G1, data presented in Fig. 2 show the responses given by students in G2 majoring in History and thus belonging to the School of Humanities. For this group, the highest scores on the FLRAMS were registered in items belonging to the third and fourth factors, as it was also true for G1. Average values of 4.47 and 4.42 were found in items 35 and 36 (factor 4), both of which assess the possible linguistic impact of reading in TL on the development of either writing skills or grammar, as perceived by the FL students. Next were items 33 (factor 4) and 39 (factor 3) with average scores of 4.37 on the Likert scale. As it can be seen by the scoring in item 33, learners in G1 perceive reading in English as an essential tool to enlarge their vocabulary. In addition, the high scores given to item 39 on the FLRAMS shows that not only the linguistic utility but also the instrumental relevance of the target language is highlighted as they state that reading in English help them get prepared for a better future.

Discussion

Although the overall trend was very similar, regardless of the discipline of studies learners belonged to, the attitudes of students in G2 as reflected by their answers to the FLRAMS tended to be more positive than those of learners in G1. Such difference was only slight for the items in Factors three and four, but it was noticeably more pronounced for Factors one and two. Issues such as preference for reading (Items 1, 2, 11, 21 and 22), attitude and commitment (items 4, 16, 18 and 23) and self-perceived efficacy as readers (items 43 and 45) are aspects which distinguished students in G2 from those in G1, the former being more open to the reading in the TL, better equipped in terms of reading efficacy and more dedicated to reading than the latter, with differences ranging between + 0.72 and + 1.14.

Similarly, scores given to items 15 ("I dislike reading in English"), 19 ("reading in English is like torture") and 12 ("I would never read in English if it were not compulsory") were significantly lower in G2 in contrast with G1, with notorious differences ranging from -1.05 to -1.83. Current findings might be then in agreement with Grabe and Stoller (2002) concerning the role prior experiences with the FL may play in the attitudes reflected by learners. It might be the case that prior negative experiences have led students in G1 to see the reading in English as torture, and even to perceive themselves as inefficient or unable to successfully read in the TL. Such negative image of both the TL and themselves as possible readers of the TL should be fought against with appropriate pedagogical interventions by teachers. If, as Cubas Barrueto (2007) has asserted, affectivity can move a person either towards or against such object or situation, a more positive attitude on the part of the learners should be promoted, so that this might in turn have a more positive impact on their achievement in ESP/ EAP courses. Teachers might draw upon the relevance attributed by the learners in both groups to reading in English for their future professional development to design courses and material to better meet their students' demands and needs.

Conclusion

Findings from this study suggest that, concerning Reading attitudes and motivation, the responses provided by students majoring in Agricultural Sciences and those majoring in History present a similar trend. In both disciplines, the extrinsic influence of the target language and

the implications reading in English may have in the students' future lives, in terms of personal and professional growth, have been highlighted. This clearly indicates that students are well aware of the increasing role of English as a Lingua Franca, regardless of the discipline or field of studies chosen. By developing their command of the TL, students believe they might gain access to better job opportunities and, in turn, have a better future. The notorious contrast between the self-perceived poor reading efficacy on the one hand, and the influence attributed to reading on FL and professional development is quite telling for us teachers; alternative paths and further research efforts should be carried out if we wish to provide our learners with more efficient learning and reading strategies which will help them be better equipped in their future professional lives.

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FACTORS/ITEMS

FACTOR ONE: *INTRINSIC VALUE OF READING*

1. Reading in a foreign language is enjoyable.
2. I like reading in a foreign language.
3. Reading in a foreign language is boring.*
4. I feel peaceful while reading in a foreign language.
11. I have a great desire to read in a foreign language.
12. I would never read in a foreign language if it were not compulsory for my courses.*
13. I never read in a foreign language unless I have to *
15. I hate reading in a foreign language.*
16. I read in a foreign language even if I do not have to.
17. I'd rather do something else than reading in a foreign language.*
18. I spend time to read in a foreign language.
19. Reading in a foreign language feels like torture.*
20. I do not read in a foreign language even if I have time.*
21. I love reading in a foreign language.
22. Reading in a foreign language makes me happy.
23. The more I read in a foreign language, the more I want to read.

FACTOR TWO: *READING EFFICACY*

43. I can read in a foreign language fluently.
45. I can comprehend most of what I read in a foreign language.
47. I comprehend the texts in a foreign language at first reading.
48. I have no problems with comprehending a foreign language text.
50. My reading skill in a foreign language is at an advanced level.
51. I am successful at reading in a foreign language.

FACTOR THREE: *EXTRINSIC UTILITY VALUE OF READING*

37. Reading in a foreign language is beneficial for self development.
38. Reading in a foreign language helps to find a better job.
39. Reading in a foreign language helps to prepare a better future for ourselves.
40. Reading in a foreign language helps us to become better individuals.
41. Reading in a foreign language provides us with better education.

FACTOR FOUR: *FOREIGN LANGUAGE LINGUISTIC UTILITY*

27. Reading in a foreign language helps fluency in speech in a foreign language.
33. Reading in a foreign language is the essential instrument to enlarge our vocabulary.
35. Reading in a foreign language contributes to the development of the writing skill in a foreign language.
36. Reading in a foreign language contributes to the development of grammar in a foreign language.

* Negative /reversed items

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ARTESOLESP Journal follows the guidelines of the fifth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association published by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2001. <http://www4.uwsp.edu/psych/mp/APA/apa4b.htm> Manuscripts submitted to *ESP Journal* must conform to APA format

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- The underlying theoretical framework.
- A description of the methodological tradition in which the study was conducted.
- Research hypotheses or questions.

4- Method section:

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- A detailed description of data collection and analysis procedures.
- Description of the apparatus or materials used.
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- Linking the results obtained in the study to original hypotheses.
- Presentation of the implications and any limitations of the study.

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- Suggestions for further research

8- References in APA format.

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- * Publication date
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- * Publisher City and Country
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