

UNIVERSIDAD MAYOR DE SAN ANDRÉS
FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN
CARRERA DE LINGÜÍSTICA E IDIOMAS



ESP: METACOGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES TOWARDS
READING COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH MEDICAL TEXT
AT THE MEDICINE SCHOOL OF MAYOR DE SAN ANDRES UNIVERSITY

INGLES CON FINES ESPECIFICOS: METACOGNICIÓN EN ESTRATEGIAS DE
LECTURA HACIA LA COMPRESIÓN DE LECTURA DE TEXTOS TECNICO-
MEDICOS EN INGLÉS EN LA CARRERA DE MEDICINA DE LA
UNIVERSIDAD MAYOR DE SAN ANDRES

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Trabajo dirigido:

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DE TEXTOS TECNICO-MEDICOS EN INGLÉS EN LA CARRERA DE
MEDICINA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD MAYOR DE SAN ANDRES”

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This work is dedicated to my loving mother, Yasmin Rojas:

Mami, you have taught me by your example to do things honestly and passionately to the utmost. And that is what I have intended to do ever since.

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APPENDICES

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ABSTRACT

The herein *Trabajo Dirigido* was a seven-month English for Specific Purposes project launched at the Medicine School of Mayor de San Andres University that consisted of developing a reading course for medical text in English addressed to fourth and fifth-year students with a beginner English proficiency level. Its making was characterized by a rigorous needs analysis of the context, which brought about specifications by way of present and target situation analyses and a language audit, that helped tailor the course design to ensure not only appropriateness at thematic and grammatical levels but also sensitivity to the particularities, necessities, wishes and lacks of the beneficiaries. Based upon such contextual characteristics as a starting point, the course design then followed theoretical reflections which consisted in making conceptual, epistemological, and methodological considerations, all of which made up the construct that served as rationale for the working methodology. This, in turn, synthesized into a proposal that -holding a scientific discourse approach, drawing on task-based language teaching and grammar-translation method frameworks as used for the teaching/learning and assessment processes respectively and resorting to metacognitive reading strategies as well as learning principles such as meaningful learning, learner autonomy, authentic assessment and scaffolding for didactic praxis- aimed at enabling the students to perform reading comprehension at an upper-intermediate level, a quite ambitious and promising pursuit given both the limited time availability and the students' initial English level. Achieving high levels of reading proficiency in a relatively short period of time was, however, possible since the course was designed by having insight

theoretically and contextually and taking advantage of favorable conditions, which was proven by the mid and end results as the students who had initially had a beginner English proficiency level and successfully managed to complete the course demonstrated full reading comprehension of, at least, upper-intermediate-English-level medical text.

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo dirigido fue un proyecto de siete meses de inglés con fines específicos que creó, aplicó y evaluó un curso de lectura de textos médicos en inglés dirigido a estudiantes de cuarto y quinto año con un nivel inicial de inglés de la carrera de Medicina de la Universidad Mayor de San Andrés. Su desarrollo se basó rigurosamente en un análisis de necesidades del contexto que resultó en la descripción de situaciones presente y meta, y el tipo de lenguaje meta, lo cual direccionó el diseño del curso con el fin de proveer tanto pertinencia gramatical y temática como también un ambiente sensible a las necesidades, carencias y deseos de los beneficiarios. Así mismo, el curso se diseñó en base a reflexiones epistemológicas, conceptuales y metodológicas que resultaron en el constructo específico del proyecto. La propuesta adopta como concepción del lenguaje a enseñar el enfoque del discurso científico, recurre a la enseñanza de idiomas basada en tareas y la traducción como métodos de enseñanza, aprendizaje y evaluación, aplica como principios de aprendizaje el aprendizaje significativo, la autonomía, la evaluación auténtica y el andamiaje, dando como resultado estrategias meta-cognitivas de lectura que capacitan a los estudiantes a alcanzar una lectura de comprensión de texto técnico médicos en inglés a un nivel intermedio superior, un objetivo prometedor dada la disponibilidad de tiempo y el nivel inicial de los estudiantes. Sin embargo, el objetivo fue alcanzado gracias al diseño del curso, teóricamente profundo y sensible a las condiciones contextuales, lo que se evidencia en los resultados parciales y finales de los estudiantes participantes, quienes en un principio tenían un nivel inicial de inglés

y, habiendo completado el curso y aplicado las estrategias meta-cognitivas, demostraron una lectura de comprensión completa a nivel intermedio superior de los textos médicos en inglés.

INTRODUCTION

More often than not, due to the widespread use of the English language for display of new advances and findings in scientific inquiry, there seems to be a pervasive need for university students to be knowledgeable of this language in order to excel academically and professionally. This is the very reason Mayor de San Andrés University, by means of specialized school in teaching English, offers English language teaching to its several faculties so that the student body can achieve foreign language competency, thus bringing about an academic community capable of being up-to-date with new discoveries shared in the English language.

Since most valuable scientific and academic information is now published in the English language and access to specialized medical discovery is not an exception, medicine students too ought to be able to cope with this language to excel in their domain, for when it comes to comprehending English medical text, their academic success or failure will be determined by their English language proficiency level by practically coping with any given language task at issue.

On account of this issue and as a result from this compelling trend, the Linguistics and Languages School and the Medicine School at Mayor de San Andres University agreed on signing a partnership so that there is mutual cooperation to exchange scientific knowledge and academic assistance proper to either domain.

Consequently, by way of the existing partnership, I, Linguistics graduate student, launched the present project in the shape of an academic proposal, putting knowledge and experience into application, to respond to the academic core need the medicine students at the School of Medicine at UMSA have, in this regard, which is to achieve reading comprehension of medical text written in English. The report of such undertaking is meticulously described as follows:

CHAPTER I

MEDICINE SCHOOL SETTING

Since the project was launched at the Medicine School at Mayor de San Andres University, insight into the nature and dynamics of this institution must be described in order to understand the setting and particularities of the beneficiaries of such project.

1.1 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

1.1.1. History and identity

Mayor de San Andres University's school of Medicine history dates back to the eighteenth century when Juan Antonio Burgunyo, the then Mayor of La Paz City, on June 9, 1800 sent to La Plata a note remarking the importance of fostering Medicine and Mathematics instruction. On April 4, 1826 Marshal Antonio Jose de Sucre issued a decree to promote instruction in medicine.

Then, in compliance with the resolution passed by the senate, the decree of January 24, 1834, endorsed by Marshal De Santa Cruz and the minister Jose Maria de Lara, stated the creation of the General Medical Science School in the city of La Paz at the facilities of San Simón de Ayacucho School. The General Medical Science School started instruction in medicine, surgery, pharmacy, chemistry and physics.

In this day and age, the Medicine School, yearly enrolling a great quantity of students who look forward to getting a degree in health, is one of the most representative schools in the university system which throughout time and due to

the current field demands has been constantly updating not only thematic content but also their organizational structure and the institutes dependent on it.

The Medicine student receives education on moral and ethical values and respect for life, the environment, plurality and diversity, provided the contextual setting of our country. The student is thus equipped with effective research capability and health problem-solving skills in human groups both in urban and rural areas, which help foster development in Bolivia given that health is an issue worth being handled by the best professionals.

1.1.2. Institutional profile

There is complete agreement by the commission of the Faculty of Medicine on the general recommendations with regard to the professional profile to be adopted as the mission/vision statement of the general medicine graduate trained and instructed by the Bolivian university, and this is as follows:

“The proficient general medicine graduate is knowledgeable of the country’s social, economical and cultural realities, politically committed to them and capable of preventing and solving health problems and pathologies in the country and its regions drawing on the scientific method and research. The medicine graduate is willing to take the lead, educating her/himself and the others, handling a vast repertoire of know-how in organization, planning and administration of health care in a efficient way that is notable for its interaction with the community socially, fairly and sympathetically. On top of all, the medicine is qualified to inter-disciplinarily devise clinic-epidemiologic programs required locally and regionally in Bolivia within the framework of ethical medical praxis.”

Mission: The medicine school is an excelling institution that prepares medical doctors who are socially committed and capable of promoting and recovering health, preventing illnesses with ethics and quality for the benefit of the Bolivian population; it also performs medical research and cultural and social interaction, within the national health political framework.

Vision: The Medicine school at Mayor de San Andres is the humanistic, ethical, excelling, science-committed socially-bonded academic institution leader in undergraduate and postgraduate medical training that offers assistance in medical services in its facilities with high quality, equality and efficiency.

Its organic structure is hierarchical and organized in this order: on top of all is the Honorable Faculty Council, followed by the Faculty Dean and Vice-Dean. Then, the Medicine school Dean who comes to manage it internally also supervises the work of the heads of each study year.

1.1.3. Academic profile

The study at the Medicine School lasts six years including one devoted to internship. The current study plan of the school of Medicine, devised in the 90's, is being reshaped with new curriculum design techniques aiming to bring about a socio-critical model of higher-education.

Currently, the curriculum content is updated and methodologically well-designed. The faculty is constituted by professors specialized in didactics and psychopedagogy with emphasis on health. Despite these improvements, the contents are still overloaded with theory for several subjects in undergraduate studies comprehend such broad content that it could easily constitute content for post-graduate studies.

The achievement of professor and student work is displayed through the task and program execution. Some departments, like that of surgery, are assessed daily, weekly and monthly via evaluation cards filled out by the professors. The evaluation of hospital activity is on-going and utilizes quantitative and qualitative means. The completion of time and work is carried out through execution and attendance to field-work.

Designed in accordance with international standards and local needs, the curriculum is prescribed as follows: In the first year, the medicine students are to cover Human Anatomy, Histology, Embryology and Medical Practice. In the second year, the subjects to cover are Physiology - biophysics, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Parasitology, and Public health I. Then, in the third year of

theoretical instruction, Physiopathology, Semiology, Surgery, Pharmacology, Pathophysiology and Medical psychology are the subjects in the year.

The study in next three years denotes an emphasis on more specialized subjects as Medicine II, Surgery II, Neurology, Traumatology, Psychiatric Psychopathology, Public Health II are then covered. The fifth and last year of theoretical instruction the medicine students go over Medicine III, Surgery III, Legal Medicine, Pediatrics, Gynecology-obstetrics and Public Health III. Upon successful completion of the above mentioned five study years, it is imperative that the medicine students do medical training during a one-year rotating internship among the areas of Surgery, General Medicine, Public Health, Legal Medicine, Pediatrics and Gynecology – obstetrics

The curriculum content of Medicine denotes up-to-date standardization with medicine schools throughout the Latin-American region; by surface comparison of subject matter, it is likely to be concluded that its content can be nearly equated with that of medicine schools in other countries.

The issue, however, as far as foreign language instruction is concerned, comes to be the lack of a systematized curriculum-based academic response to the constraint the medicine students are kept under when facing the challenging task of coping with reading medical text in English for scientific update.

1.1.4. Statement of the problem

Particular compelling reasons highlight the pervasive need for English language learning in this context. Two of the most remarkable are latest medical literature written only in English and assessment of English reading comprehension skills in international exams to apply for a medical residence, work field practice without which the students cannot complete their professional preparation thoroughly.

The former consists of reading homework on medical articles in English that is typically assigned in most subjects. These articles, in turn, are of great value to the students because of their scientific novelty, yet if their English reading skills

are poor, they are compelled to look for translated versions, most of which, to the detriment of the students, are nonexistent provided that the latest translation of medical articles is usually that which was written at least 8 years after.

The latter is not less important since all medicine graduates, upon finishing the years of study required, are to look for opportunities through which they can get a medical residence. And, as it will be shown later on, most of these exams provide applicants with a section assessing their skills in English reading comprehension of medical articles, task for which they have gone under no formal training whatsoever.

Last but not least, roughly speaking according to data coming from the Medicine school direction by way of informal interview, out of 100% available international scholarships offered to the Medicine school, only 10% are seized by the students. This occurs mainly due to their limited competency in their English language. In the absence of a response to this problem, the student body will simply be doomed to not seize all these academic opportunities.

Nonetheless, in pursuit of a way to tackle this problem, the Medicine School direction has realized about the need to provide its student body with the training solution of teaching them the English language so that they can achieve competency in reading English medical text, objective that was already set and responded to by a group of former Linguistics graduate students in 2011.

This training solution is expected to become an enduring one for the coming medicine student generations, every year being carried out by new Linguistics graduate students that will be to devise innovative ways in this regard to perfect the project.

Therefore, the academic proposal hereafter devised consisting of a course on Reading English medical text meets the core need that medicine students have by enabling them to tackle this academic, or else professional, problem whenever it might come about.

Upon benefiting from the course by learning how to make do when facing reading materials in English and based on the practical experience and autonomy

achieved by the end of the course, the medicine students who successfully complete it will be on their own competent to make the most out of any English medical text in order to both continue their on-going professional development and updating, and readily cope with reading tasks requiring competency in the English language at all times.

1.1.5. Macro objectives

Because of the issue's consistency, the perceived problem and the general solution are clear to the Medicine school direction and the Linguistics graduate students who might look to undertake this project.

Thus, regardless of those who happen to perform the task, the formulation of macro objectives, which do not deprive them of applying innovation but only attempt to show the aim, should invariably echo the core problem cited above. In accordance with the essence of the statement of the problem, the macro objectives are herein described as follows:

General objective:

- Enable the medicine students to succeed in reading comprehension of English medical text

Specific objectives:

- Identify the immediate needs the medicine students have regarding the English language
- Devise an academic methodological proposal
- Design a syllabus of functional, thematic and linguistic content
- Apply the proposal implementing academic innovation in reading comprehension
- Evaluate the reach of the proposal both along and at the end of the unfolding of the academic proposal

1.1.6. Beneficiaries

The course was held in the Medicine school facilities teaching around forty-five fourth and fifth-year Medicine students, whose average age ranges between twenty and thirty, from the Medicine school of Mayor de San Andres University who enroll in and successfully complete the course are the immediate beneficiaries of the project. Classes were held in the Medicine school classrooms every Saturday morning for three hours from 7:30 a.m. through 11:00 a.m. during approximately seven months.

The knowledge, experience and practice acquired throughout the course was thought to enable them to perform satisfactory reading comprehension of English medical text not only facilitating solutions to immediate academic needs in reading situations but also compelling them to go beyond their borders when applying for academic opportunities such as scholarships, seminars and workshops, all offered in the English language.

The secondary beneficiary of the project was the Medicine school since all experiences and development in this undertaking, properly recorded and systematized, constitute practical foundations to solidify and reinforce the existing partnership between the Medicine school and Linguistics and Languages school at Mayor de San Andres University, and theoretical foundations to refine or devise new projects following this compelling trend towards what represents a yearning at Medicine school: training all medicine students in competency of the English language for on-going academic and scientific growth.

1.2. NEEDS ANALYSIS

Complying with procedures in the English for Specific Purposes focus due to the technical-scientific nature of the project, it was imperative that needs analysis be

carried out in order to pinpoint the core problem so as to come up with an appropriate academic proposal. This, in turn, provided valuable data, information and knowledge of the students' both present situation and the intended target situation. The development of the needs analysis followed this sequence: planning, execution and interpretation whose specifications are detailed as follows:

1.2.1 Planning and methodology

The planning of the needs analysis consisted of a review of theoretical and methodological bases to come up with an appropriate conception of the task to carry out. For its execution, a methodology useful for identifying the necessities, wants and lacks of the project beneficiaries was implemented. Necessities were established in order to set the proposal general objective and directed all undertakings accordingly. Taking into account the principle of participatory planning, it was also relevant to identify wants -the outcome students themselves want to achieve- to tailor the proposal more authentically and specifically. Finally, the finding of lacks too helped determine situations that might pose a potential hindrance to the effective unfolding of the project as well as the achievement of the established objectives.

The three elements above mentioned –necessities, wants and lacks- came to be methodological foundation for the needs analysis execution and certified a comprehensive analysis of the problem nuances. Along with the literature review to settle the methodological foundations for the execution came about concepts of paramount importance. Not only were necessities, lacks and wants crucial in the planning of the proposal, but the student profiles, at the beginning and end, also had to be specified and systematized.

The Present Situation Analysis highlighted strengths and weaknesses at various dimensions, whether they be academic or material, and helped determine the starting point from which the graduate student carrying out the proposal could trigger its unfolding; this brought about the Learning Needs, what was needed to be done for the students to learn. These referred to psychological conditions such

as learning setting, background, habits and motivation as well as physical conditions like material resources, facilities and classroom setting. This Present Situation Analysis consisted of determining factors and specifications that helped tailor the academic proposal and narrow down its scope.

The Target Situation Analysis, in turn, displayed the objectives to reach by the end of the course as a result of effective completion. In like manner, this sort of analysis materialized and systematized both the demands made by the students and director as for the end outcome and the target language research done by the Linguistics graduate student. It served as fundamental guidelines which directed all possible action in this academic endeavor.

The Present and Target Situation Analyses too included the target language component, in the shape of English language-level placement in the former and formulated as language competencies and course objectives in the latter. These descriptions of language constituted the Language Audit, which was the specification of the profile of present ability in the target language and the target profile of language skills and the gap between them. The qualitative comparison of the two situations helped determine the quantity, metaphorically speaking, of language instruction required to be drawn on during the course unfolding. Being of great importance, this stage was carefully elaborated since the type and amount of language the students will encounter in the course had to, appropriately, reflect their demands and the Academic direction's. Ultimately, these analyses, given the right value and paid good attention, were evidently crucial for the creation of the academic proposal in virtually all its features: the length of the course, the linguistic content, the thematic content, the language competencies, the methodology, the approach, and the like.

Consequently, the needs analysis had a great impact on the development of the proposal. The question then was that of what presumably useful information must be searched for and by what means this can be done in a comprehensive and efficient way. The former referred to analysis outcomes that were but the data constitutive of the profiles to develop the proposal and the latter consisted of the instruments through which the task was performed.

A number of choices were made and considerations taken in order to cope with the issue of what information to gather. For one thing, a set of general principles of data selection was drawn on (Robinson, 1991:4). The most significant mainly stated that the information outcomes must

a) not only focus on the description of goals but also provide processes and strategies that can be suitable for the learners, b) mirror the language skills to employ in academic or work situations, and c) represent a valid display of linguistic analysis of target level text,

i.e. the types of text to read and the modes for reading employed for them. These, as we can see, deal with choosing appropriate activities, content and materials when creating the course, most of which are expressed in the Language Audit.

As for the Present Situation Analysis, specifications of the student situations not only academic, in terms of their English language competency, but also contextual were necessary. What is meant by contextual situations is the learning environment in which the English course was likely to be taught. The Target Situation Analysis, in turn, set out the linguistic and functional profile meant to achieve, denoting a materialization of the needs expressed. It was then subsequent to decide on data collection instruments suitable for the specifications and concerns in this phase.

1.2.2. The instruments

Three instruments were utilized for information collection: a multiple-choice and open-question questionnaire, a multiple-choice grammar and reading diagnostic test and an open-question interview.

To know the expectations and wants students have, the questionnaire was applied. This questionnaire provided information such as individual and collective language competency, expected thematic content and context specifications, all of which helped identify a quite specific and unique learning setting. The multiple-choice grammar and reading diagnostic test informed about linguistic

competency by showing grammar and reading levels, concentrating on language lacks, which establish not only the starting points but also grammar items to go over and reinforce and reading skills to work on. In order to determine the core need, i.e. why they need the English language, and its nuances, the interview was applied; this information then was a paramount constitutive part of the general objective.

Finally, all the information brought forward by way of the three tools is cross-checked and constituted the wants, lacks and necessities of the target community which are used to devise a framework of competencies, language and content which will be shared to the Medicine school direction. Next is a description of each instrument selection, development and validation.

1.2.2.1 The questionnaire

A questionnaire is meant to be an instrument applicable to a great number of people. Not only can it provide qualitative data brought about by open-ended questions, but it can also provide substantial quantitative data when applied at a large-scale. There being around one-hundred eighty students enrolled in the English course for reading medical text, this instrument seemed suitable to satisfy the need to get useful information from them. Two major factors were taken into consideration during the making of the questionnaire: content and format.

The content entails aspects of their English level profile, their objective with the language, the learning conditions and the thematic content requested. These are in accordance with the four questions stated by Hutchinson & Waters (1987): why the language is needed, how and where the language will be used, and what content should be drawn on. As for format, multiple-choice questions were used where the information to be collected was thought of being limited and known by the Linguistics graduate student, whereas open-ended information questions were used to find out about specifications unknown to the Linguistics graduate student.

To check on validity, a number of suggestions by Robinson (1991) were followed. The questionnaire should be administered to a large number of people to make valid generalizations and observe substantial differences, the questions should be comprehensible and use language intelligible to the medicine students, needless to say that they must be formulated in the Spanish language, and the answers elicited must be easy to analyze and compare.

Following these guidelines for format, content and validity, and looking to grasp useful data for the specification of the Present and Target Situation Analyses, after careful thinking, the questions to constitute the questionnaire were formulated (Appendix A).

1.2.2.2. The diagnostic test

Provided that the academic proposal dealt with teaching English for reading medical text, it was necessary that the English language proficiency of the medicine students be identified. By measuring their proficiency level, grammar-wise, a starting point could be specified. It is assumed that no students graduated from high school in the local educational system have a true beginner English level since the English language must have been taught to them in elementary and high school as it is a compulsory subject in school curricula. Therefore, the question at issue was not whether to start the English language instruction from the very beginning but at what proficiency level other than true beginner the participants had to be placed. Accordingly, an English-grammar diagnostic test whose rubrics and scoring denote language proficiency level was the most preferable.

In like manner, and due to the reading focus of the course, it was just as important to assess reading ability. In this regard, both the text linguistic features and the reading ability-testing items had to not only accurately specify the applicants' current reading ability but also compare it with the intended reading outcome, "target level tasks" in Robinson's terms, so that the amount of training in reading skills was estimated.

So crucial a concept is test discrimination that by being reliable and validated, the test scores can be easily interpreted. (Hughes, 2003). This consists of the quality of a test to mirror the students' differences in performance, which are pinpointed by way of rubrics. Given rubrics that accurately categorized the students into language proficiency levels according to their scoring, the diagnostic test used was of vitally relevant importance for it helped "*identify students' strengths and weaknesses to ascertain what further teaching is necessary.*" (p.14)

Otherwise, the planning of the course can become a task of remarkable uncertainty and the outcome may as well turn out to be inappropriate for "*failure to obtain an accurate idea of the students' initial level of ability can lead to serious problems and the hasty redesign of a course*". (Op. cit. p.34)

Upon the considerations above, the diagnostic test included two parts: grammar and reading sections. For the grammar section, a free-use downloadable diagnostic test by the Maastricht University Language Centre was employed. This included 99 questions whose grammatical content gradually glided from elementary to advanced. Being multiple-choice the type of questions, it assured that students have a limited number of options to choose and prevented them from confusion as when dealing with questions such as cloze exercises or sentence writing. Furthermore, this test also proved suitable since it included both a grammatical guide to test specifying the grammar items being tested in each question and the rubrics to place the students at respective proficiency levels based on their scores.

For the reading section, the criteria for article selection to pick out the reading samples were grammar level, text length, discourse specificity and reading comprehension suitability. Four medical articles were used, each being gradually more challenging than the former by including use of higher grammar structures, more words, more specific technical vocabulary and more-demanding reading skills; so was the case that the first and fourth articles differed greatly in their

criteria positioning since the former was artificially developed by the examiner whereas the latter was an authentic medical article excerpted from a real source.

1.2.2.3. The interview

While both the questionnaire and diagnostic test brought about numerous pieces of information useful to the course design, it was only by way of the interview (i.e. the interactional and somewhat spontaneous communicative act between researcher and informant) that novel information could be accessed, thus giving insights into aspects that might have been overlooked by the interviewer, aspects whose mere existence contributed to the perfecting of the proposal.

Moreover, another factor in deciding on the interview as an instrument was its binding nuance; by means of participatory needs analysis in the shape of the interview, the Dean took part in the discussion on their needs and made recommendations as to what should happen in the resultant course (Robinson, 1991). As a result, due to the effective unfolding of the interview, two benefits stood out: feedback and realization.

Firstly, the data collected by means of the questionnaire and interview was shared with the Dean in what constituted the feedback on the needs analysis and its interpretation. What was interesting about the feedback is that it ended up being bidirectional. Not only did the Dean receive feedback out of the needs analysis report, but so did the interviewer through the Dean's perceptions and responses to the interpretation; these, in turn, had a determining impact on the course design as well. Secondly, when reported on the needs analysis interpretation, the Dean, on behalf of the medicine school, realized not only the actual justification of the core problem but also the several features that characterize it.

Being the reasons for and benefits of choosing the interview acknowledged, the procedure was arranged. First, the Dean, together with a group of course student

representatives, was shown the test scores and questionnaire results along with their interpretation. Then, they were asked the following three questions:

1. *¿Por qué se vio conveniente establecer un convenio interinstitucional entre la carrera de Medicina y la carrera de Lingüística e Idiomas?*
2. *¿Por qué la carrera de medicina expresa una necesidad del aprendizaje de inglés como requisito de desarrollo académico y profesional?*
3. *¿Cuál es el objetivo inmediato para el cual la carrera de medicina necesita el aprendizaje del inglés?*

The first question looked to identify what triggered the signing of the partnership between the School of Medicine and the Linguistics and Languages Department. The aim of the second was to enquire about insights into the generalization that they needed training in the English language. The third ensured understanding and agreement on the short-term objective to teach English at the medicine school. Finally, these three questions were succeeded by a series of rather spontaneous questions whose answers and synthesis too provided vital specifications for the academic proposal in the shape of a course design.

1.2.3 Execution

As explained in the methodology of needs analysis, all of its component elements were purposely interwoven. While performing its execution, the different types of needs, carefully identified by proper application of the instruments for data collection, derived in the specification of the situation profiles. The instruments were applied in a different order, provided information for the three different types of needs and constituted specifications of different aspects in the Present and Target Situation Profiles. These dynamic relations illustrated the execution of the needs analysis (Fig.2). It is necessary to mention that the Needs Analysis Matrix (Velasco, 2014) was a valuable framework that facilitated interpretation due to its logical and systematic organization of data. It materialized the theoretical as well as procedural principles for effective needs analysis by providing specifications of the situation profiles.

NEEDS ANALYSIS MATRIX					
Need	Instrument	Order	Situation profiles		
			Present situation analysis:	Language audit:	Target situation analysis:
Necessities	<i>Interview</i>	<i>3rd</i>			<i>Target needs (revised)</i>
	<i>Questionnaire</i>	<i>2nd</i>			<i>Target needs</i>
	<i>Document review</i>	<i>4th</i>		<i>Target profile of language skills</i>	<i>Target needs</i>
Lacks	<i>Diagnostic test</i>	<i>1st</i>	<i>Present ability profile: Grammar and reading skills</i>	<i>Learning needs (language)</i>	
Wants	<i>Questionnaire</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>Setting Learning needs (learning setting)</i>		<i>Target needs (why, how, what content, where) Content areas</i>

Fig. 2: Needs Analysis Matrix

1.2.3.1. Results

1.2.3.1.1 Diagnostic test

The grammar and reading comprehension Diagnostic test provided data (Appendix A) whose analysis informed that, regarding English grammar proficiency, out of 83 students, that was 100% of examinees, 54 (65%) stood at a beginner level, 21 students (25% of examinees) were situated at an elementary level. As noticeable as it gets, most of the Medicine students seemed to have achieved only the proficiency level of a basic user. The remaining 8 students (9.5%) had achieved an intermediate level, which only reinforced the fact that around the 90% of all examinees had had little meaningful and significant training in English language.

As for reading comprehension, the facts and figures differed a little from those in the grammar section. Out of these, 19 students (22.8%) had a beginner level (*nivel inicial*) while 50 students (60.2%) stood at an elementary level (*nivel básico*). Only 14 students (16.8%) achieved an intermediate level. The sum of percentages in beginner and elementary levels overshadowed the minority achieving an intermediate level.

1.2.3.1.2. The questionnaire

As for the question: “*¿Hasta qué nivel estudió inglés anteriormente?*”, the information suggested that the 32% holding a beginner level be upgraded to elementary because most of the informants (50%) held the latter, thus bringing forward a student community whose uniform grammar level could be the starting point. This information seemed useful to determine grammar content.

In order to identify time availability for homework and reinforcing activities outside the classroom as well as the reach of class objectives, the question: “*¿Cuánto tiempo por semana tendría para hacer las tareas del curso de inglés?*” was used, which informed that the students could only make use of an average time of 4 hours a week for English work.

In order to have insights into a teaching methodology preferred by the students the question was: “*¿Qué metodología preferiría usted para el curso de inglés?*” According to the information provided by the informants, they found classes with an interactive group methodology most satisfying. Two other practices to take into account were the need for personal individualized assistance and the use of some lecturing. These two questions provided valuable insights for the course development and the class planning.

In order to learn about the reason(s) the students had to learn English, however obvious it might have seemed at this point from the view of both the linguistics graduate student and the Dean, the following question was used: “*¿Cuál es el objetivo inmediato que desea lograr con el idioma inglés? (Sea específico)*”.

Surprisingly, the primary reason consists of achieving competency in oral proficiency (literally “speak” English), which conflicted with the demand stated by the medicine school direction which was to achieve reading comprehension of medical text in English. The latter, in turn, was ranked second by the informants. It is also necessary to mention that among their reasons for English language instruction were self-updating and taking scholarships abroad, presumably in English-speaking countries.

Last but not least, a question to find out about thematic content was used. This was of major importance since the students were able to not only know they were involved in the planning of the course but also be highly motivated, based on their assumption that the course would truly address their specific purposes. In this respect, the question to be used was: “*¿Qué contenidos de medicina le gustaría abordar en el curso de inglés?*”. Here the information stressed the preference they had for medical specializations. Medical terminology was also reported to be of importance to them.

All in all, the underlying message was that they really wanted English for medical purposes and the planning of the course should somehow reflect realization of their wants; this, of course, was not to be neglected if true ESP was meant to be carried out. Therefore, the English course thematic content, to some extent, did include technical medical language and, in turn, drew on medical articles that display use of English for specific medical purposes.

1.2.3.1.3. The interview

After the diagnostic test and the questionnaire were applied, the interview was used as the last data collection instrument. This was utilized in the Medicine school director: the Dean was to be the major informant. Prior to interviewing him, he was presented the test and questionnaire scores and feedback.

This was done by showing him several documents, *Resultados Encuesta con tabulación y análisis de información* (see Appendix A). Having then established a sense of knowledge of the needs analysis for the execution of the interview, the

interview was carried out by the interviewer's asking the Dean the three questions, which presented as synthesis of the answers was as follows:

Within the framework of inter-institutional cooperation at UMSA and its Faculties, it had been agreed to sign a partnership between the School of Medicine and the Department of Linguistics and Languages in order to give birth to an academic and extracurricular instance. The school of Medicine whose contents and academic and professional development are constantly updated called for suitable means to fulfill this function. One of the most essential means for updating and specializing is the English language, and in as much as the Department of Linguistics and Languages is that which supplies human resources with extensive training in language teaching, it proved suitable for the job.

In contrast with the objective stated by most students in the questionnaire which was to "speak English", the paramount objective of the project was confirmed as a result of the interview. Since professional development in medicine is vastly carried out by reading medical text in English, the Dean nodded in agreement that the academic proposal concentrating on developing reading comprehension of English medical text was the one objective to reach.

1.2.3.1.4. Document review

Another determining factor in the development of the proposal arose while having informal conversations with medicine students about why they need English language instruction. Some of them mentioned that, in order to get the diploma, they need to get a medical residence.

The application for a medical residence might be a complicated process since testing is involved and only those who scored the highest get the residence. In exams for a medical residence administered in some countries, not only medical knowledge but also English language proficiency are assessed since out of the 450 questions in the test, 50 assess the student's English language competency. Most of the Spanish-speaking medicine students who look to apply for a residence abroad decide on Mexico as a destination due to their high academic quality, the language and the prestige.

Based on this preference, the ENARM (*Examen Nacional de Aspirantes a Residencias Médicas*) was regarded as a valuable document since it displays the description of target language needs and a skill profile required of the applicants. In the English section in the ENARM, the language skill assessed is that of reading comprehension of medical text in English at levels B1 (intermediate) and B2 (upper intermediate) according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (See Appendix B).

Only reading comprehension of informative medical text in English used to be assessed, yet, as of 2012, there has been a change in scoring and content since medical cases are now part of the content in the test and the number of questions is reduced to 45. This also led to inquiry about the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and its respective levels and descriptors since, in this day and age, this is the most-embraced standard measure to assessment language competence and it provides specific descriptions of the abilities foreign language students acquire at different levels which also serve as parameters to establish language objectives for instructional purposes.

As stated above, the language competence level expected in the ENARM is B2 according to the CEFR. Selecting only the receptive aspect of the skill, in this case reading, it can be claimed that students taking this test have to be able to “*understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.*” (Appendix B)

1.2.4. Interpretation and conclusions

This stage followed the premise that analysis and synthesis of the collected data supplies information constitutive of the project content. The information was subjected to interpretation in order to engender knowledge. This knowledge, which served as a portal to the students’ academic universe -be it linguistic, thematic or functional- was then what precisely supplied multi-faceted action guidelines for the making of an appropriate, authentic, case-specific academic proposal.

Having executed the needs analysis and obtained valuable information from various sources and by way of different research instruments, the Situation profiles section (Fig.3) in the Needs Analysis Matrix (Velasco, 2014) was now filled out in the following way:

Situation profiles		
Present situation analysis:	Language audit:	Target situation analysis:
		<i>Target needs (revised):</i> Reading comprehension of medical articles in English
		<i>Target needs:</i> Fluent reading comprehension of medical text Specialization and updating Scholarships
	<i>Target profile of language skills:</i> Independent user B2 Upper intermediate: reading competency	<i>Target needs:</i> Examen para Residencia Médica
<i>Present ability profile: (Grammar and reading skills)</i> Grammar-wise: Most students are situated in a Basic user A1 beginner level Reading-wise: Most students are situated in a Basic user A2 elementary level but some students are situated in A1	<i>Learning needs (language):</i> A2 Elementary grammar	
<i>Learning needs (learning setting):</i> Interactive group work Time-effectiveness		<i>Content areas:</i> Medical articles-terminology

Fig. 3: Situation profiles

Thus, the information collected, interpreted by the participants and shared with the Medicine School Direction, in an accurate and participatory way, equipped the Linguistics graduate student to draw the decisive conclusions coming next.

Grammar-wise, it was mandatory that the collective grammar level be uniformed towards achieving an upper basic grammar level, taking into account the specifications supplied by the text and questionnaire. This served as a starting point from which, then, a language objective could be stated and the language instruction determined.

It was agreed to establish reading comprehension as the general objective in order for students to achieve autonomy in performing this task provided that at the end of the present course it was unlikely to have follow-up activities or academic settings that could solidify the formal English language learning acquired. Thus, the students will have to rely on the knowledge, experience and practice obtained during the course, which are thought to be sufficient to performing the task.

Consequently, an upper intermediate reading competency level was sought for, taking into account external factors such as class time availability, facilities and methodological limitations, and internal factors such as student' accessibility to materials, time availability and English competency level. Synthesizing and utilizing all the information and knowledge just brought about by way of the needs analysis and its interpretation, the academic proposal was then to be devised.

CHAPTER II

ACADEMIC PROPOSAL

2.1. FOUNDATIONS

Given the nature of the core need as well as that of the participants, this proposal draws on an English for Specific Purposes approach to develop the academic proposal. Featured by multilateral, participatory and procedural planning, such approach regards context and needs analysis its major premise. Aiming to enable the medicine students at UMSA to succeed in reading comprehension of English medical text, the planning and unfolding of the present academic proposal, are procedural and participatory based mainly on present and target situation analyses which served as a starting point to first set the objectives and then the syllabus and methodology of the academic proposal including, in like manner, evaluation which should accordingly assess the competencies regarded as paramount, thus causing the satisfaction of students' needs.

It is assumed that satisfaction of students' needs will occur only if true needs analysis, after being seriously carried out, conducts every single step during the syllabus design and the class development. Nevertheless, the information itself elicited from the needs analysis will not manage to design the syllabus per se, nor will it provide all there is to know to devise the academic proposal. It is, then, the Linguistics graduate student who is to design it not only using this valuable information but also making decisions on every aspect during planning in order to define the nuances of a course that will prove to be most beneficial to these students.

That the Linguistics graduate student designs the syllabus is not a simple automatic task either for, because of his humanity and uniqueness, the design will be greatly dependent on his objective and subjective education conceptions; the conceptions of language and language acquisition can greatly influence the development of the syllabus. (Brumfit & Bowers, 1991) Our judging and functioning are based on a given mindset and imaginary constructed out of experience and background knowledge. It is here that analysis of the influencing factors should be performed in order to account for the decision-making process

for syllabus design. The four realms where determining factors abide are hereafter described as conceptual, epistemological, theoretical and methodological foundations.

2.1.1. CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1.1.1. READING

Reading is, according to Palincsar & Perry (1995), the process of thinking, reasoning and problem-solving using written material to achieve a set of objectives. This definition comes from cognitive theory, a psychological perspective to approach human mental activity. A more global definition of the reading process is given by Lou & López (2001) asserting that it is like a dialogue (interaction) between reader and text (writer's instrument), in a given context, in the pursuit of a meaning shared by both of them. In this respect, Beers (2003) comments that a transaction is necessary between the information the reader holds when reading and the information in the text in order to construct meaning.

It is also claimed (Op. cit., 201) that for reading to occur effectively a number of factors must interact properly, among which we can list the reader's abilities, the text and the context (that of the activity, rather than the linguistic context inside the text). Reader's abilities consist of background concepts, language proficiency, linguistic awareness and that of objectives, visual and auditory perception of discrimination of linguistic signs and cognitive capacities.

The text itself can condition the outcome as it can have a given physical format, a linguistic structure, a discourse structure and a specific thematic content. Likewise, the context in which the reading activity takes place has an effect on the reading comprehension due to aspects such as personal attitudes towards reading, family and social assessment of the reading activity, school or academic demands, teaching methods, classroom environment and even teacher enthusiasm.

Finally, among many theorists one of which is Aaron (1995b), the reading process is believed to follow three steps: decoding -when written codes are deciphered visually, comprehension and meta-comprehension.

2.1.1.2. READING COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension occurs when the reader, drawing on background knowledge and experience, elicits meaning from the text. Reading comprehension, in turn, entails an ability to recall the text, pinpoint the core content of the text, make inferences and apply knowledge acquired from the text. (Palincsar & Klenk, 1992)

In the reading comprehension process, constituting the object of comprehension there are two linguistic dimensions: comprehension of word meaning and global comprehension of the text. Comprehending word meaning is also referred to as access to lexicon. Decoding, whose end objective is the comprehension of words, is important in as much as it facilitates access to lexicon in, as it was said above, a direct visual way; this, in turn, can be ensured if meaning, usage and access to words are not troublesome.

Global comprehension of the text occurs by way of making inferences, prediction and validation of hypothesis, comparing mental representations with the intention of the author. (Lou & López, 2001) All these processes take place when, in simple more common terms, the students understand the message of the text.

With respect to reading in English for Specific Purposes, Wilson (1986:45) states that

“(...) reading is irrelevant unless it is generated by a higher order need, such as a faculty requirement, the aim where possible is to ensure that students work on real tasks which are generated by their academic programmes.”

2.1.1.3. MAKING INFERENCE

An inference is the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to create an educated guess. (Beers, Op.cit.) Similarly, inferences are conclusion drawn from evidence in the text or reasoning about the text. The purpose of making inferences is to draw meaning from text by way of both

implicit and explicit information. Since the connection between the text and prior knowledge and experiences enables students to guess properly, the comprehension of subtle meanings and implicit details is a key comprehension skill they acquire. (Fenner et. al., 200)

Roughly speaking, being an inference an ‘educated guess’, it is important to notice that the students can guess at a text at different levels such as word, phrase and sentence levels. In addition to developing awareness of these aspects, they can also make inferences as for word meaning and structure, i.e. semantic and grammatical information. As Wilson (1986:47) put it,

“The approach to reading for information involves asking students to perform reference tasks of an appropriate level and nature. Among the many skills involved in reading/reference tasks are the ability to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items, and familiarity with those devices which give a text cohesion and coherence.”

2.1.2. EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

ORTHODOXY VS APPROPRIATENESS

To explain the epistemological foundations, a case analysis will be applied. This, in turn, will help exemplify the guidelines that conduct the thinking process and the assumptions that underlie the present project.

An excerpt from an anatomy book will be used as the case; now that the specification of the students and their needs is known (A1 beginner-level medical students learning English to read medical text), imagine the following text is being considered for classroom use as a reading activity.

The lungs provide an alveolar surface area of approximately 40 m² for gaseous exchange. Each lung has: an apex which reaches above the sternal end of the 1st rib; a costovertebral surface which underlies the chest wall; a base overlying the diaphragm and a mediastinal surface which is moulded to adjacent mediastinal structures.

Structure: the right lung is divided into upper, middle and lower lobes by oblique and horizontal fissures. The left lung has only an oblique fissure and hence no middle lobe. The lingular segment represents the left sided equivalent of the right middle lobe. It is, however, an anatomical part of the left upper lobe. Structures enter or leave the lungs by way of the lung hilum which, as mentioned earlier, is ensheathed in a loose pleural cuff. Blood supply: the bronchi and parenchymal tissue of the lungs are supplied by bronchial arteries-branches of the descending thoracic aorta. Bronchial veins, which also communicate with pulmonary veins, drain into the azygos and hemiazygos. The alveoli receive deoxygenated blood from terminal branches of the pulmonary artery and oxygenated blood returns via tributaries of the pulmonary veins. Two pulmonary veins return blood from each lung to the left atrium.

(Source: Faiz & Moffat (2002) *Anatomy at a Glance*. Blackwell Science Ltd, p.17)

During this planning phase and after analyzing the language of this excerpt carefully, the teacher might probably ask her/himself, “Will it be possible (and sober) to use this article as a reading comprehension objective with these students, most of which stand at a beginner level?” If the answer is a *no*, most will agree because it seems rational provided that the text shows a good number of advanced grammatical structures and a highly technical lexicon which is unlikely to be used in any reading material even at an advanced level of English, let alone at an intermediate level in any regular English program.

It is commonly believed that for general English students to be able to exercise effective reading comprehension at this level of difficulty, they will need to have taken English language instruction for at least a couple of years, mastered the general linguistic properties of the English language to an advanced level and specialized in this technical discussion.

Thus, based on their basic English level, it can be assumed that none of the students participating in the present project will be able to exercise reading comprehension with such a complex text in as little time as 6 or 7 months, length of time the course is meant to last. The logical answer is *no*. On the contrary, if the answer were a *Yes*, immediate justification and explanation would be demanded; otherwise, the thinking process to arrive at that conclusion could be generally labeled as not serious.

Nonetheless, the “rational” answer yes is not only so because it is logical. Rather, its being “logical” is conditioned by and asserted from a particular point of view: the notion of a structure-oriented (structural) graded syllabus as an indispensable prerequisite for learning English as a foreign language (i.e. to learn English the student has to be presented all the basic grammar first and upon mastery then he can progress gradually to the more advanced; any learning process that attempts to follow a different course is doomed to fail).

As it is evident, taking a page of Brumfit’s book, the conceptions teachers have, in this case, of language acquisition may greatly influence the development of the syllabus by suggesting to them what is right and wrong, possible and impossible, doable and unthinkable. Whether these conceptions hinder or boost the development of the syllabus, and ultimately the appropriateness of the learning process, is the question at issue.

Coming back to the example of the text excerpt being used as a case analysis, it is noticeable that the question is mostly mechanically answered without reflection, because of the notion held explained above. This dogmatic thinking in language learning that automatically counts out other views or conceptions about the various aspects conforming methodology can be categorized as orthodoxy.

The problem with orthodoxy, in language learning, is that it makes teachers blindly accept its premises and regard them as sacred. They prescribe the “rules” for language learning and teaching. Orthodoxy, however, does not act by itself, nor did it come to existence on its own. It is teachers who first created it by overvaluing the premises and principles of a given methodology which usually achieved momentum and became the teaching trend at the time. In this respect, Widdowson (1984:64) asserts:

*... “the **concept** of communicative or notional syllabuses as a new creed (...) was only a stimulating speculation with which to open a debate. Unfortunately, it has been widely adopted as a conclusion and people are busy not investigating but implementing it. Most of the real problems of applying a communicative approach are, in consequence, left unexplored.”*

It has been the commonality among the ELT community that CLT has had the power to become orthodoxy for many language teachers, because they not only

intend to practice its principles faithfully but also think only in its terms and rationale, thus directing all their interpretations and value judgments regarding language teaching and learning.

What Widdowson, the advocate of communicative language teaching believed to be one of the most influential philosophers in ESOL, calls for is critical thinking when choosing and applying language teaching approaches and methodologies, be it CLT or others, bearing in mind that the a-priori dogmatic characterization of a given approach will not necessarily ensure effective teaching and learning ipso facto.

Both the structural type of syllabus and *communicative language teaching* are generally widely accepted as the panacea to solve the problem of learning English as a foreign language, for, as far as general English is concerned, they have proven somehow effective.

However, focusing the present project under these two scopes will not suffice, not because of the scopes themselves but because other modes of approaching the project and, more importantly, thinking about it are required if an appropriate methodology is intended to be devised, one that looks to primarily meet the needs in a tailored design and entails aspects that are context-specific, meaningful, goal-oriented and contextualized.

This type of approach, which is based upon the belief that the most important criterion to take into account for its selection and successive steps should be appropriateness, is bound to submit to the needs. In other words, an approach selected as a result of needs analysis, not prior to it, highly shows to be in accordance with the spirit of English for specific purposes.

2.1.3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Both the approach and method should be aligned with the focus and specifications of the project. It should be remembered that the theory to draw on

has to ideally facilitate a better understanding of the problem and help elaborate a theoretical construct to tackle it.

Knowing that the project aims to enable the medicine students whose English proficiency level is A1 to succeed in reading comprehension of English medical text and that all of its elaboration depends mainly on the specifications elicited by way of the needs analysis, a specified literature research has been carried out. After going over different and differing approaches for English for specific purposes, one has been the object of most of my consideration due to its sense of appropriateness for it has been devised only to cope with ESP projects.

2.1.3.1 ESP APPROACH: SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE APPROACH

It has been customary to make use of dichotomies as a framework of reference to carry out linguistic study; for instance, *langue/parole*, and competence/performance. Another dichotomy which, in turn, is of great importance for this project is discourse/text.

A good number of scholars concentrate on these two to understand and analyze linguistic phenomena. Of course, there are many conceptions, views and axes of the dichotomy discourse/text as there are specialized researchers studying it, needless to say, only within the scope of the linguistic discipline because the relevance of, at least, the term discourse is notorious in many other social and humanities disciplines such as political science, psychology, philosophy and the like.

In the face of such a vast repertoire of discourse study characterizations, it was necessary to pick on one focus to ensure the specificity of the project as well as its theoretical and scientific validity. The working definitions and conceptions of text and discourse that best suit this project are that text is the formal properties (structural), the linguistic structure, whereas discourse is the communicative function (rhetorical) of language use (verbal and non-verbal). (Widdowson, 1982)

To clarify the distinction, the terms surface and deep structure can be used respectively. In a communicative act, what we do with language comes to be the

deep structure (rhetorical) and the language used is the surface structure (linguistic).

Then, at defining scientific discourse, he claims (Op. cit., 51-61) that “*(it) is a universal mode of communicating, or universal rhetoric, (including concepts and procedures of scientific inquiry)*” which is realized by scientific text in different languages by the process of textualization. He also asserts that

“scientific exposition (discourse) is structured according to certain patterns of rhetorical organization which (...) imposes a conformity on members of a scientific community no matter what language they happen to use”. (Op. cit., 61)

These patterns of rhetorical organization can be considered universal features of scientific discourse in general; some of these are description, exemplification, generalization, hypothesizing and cause-effect relations. All of these represent communicative functions carried out in various scientific disciplines and depending on the target language in use they ought to be textualized according to its language forms. Consequently, from this perspective, universal scientific discourse is not a type of English the ESP students do not know and have to be taught but a discourse they already have knowledge of, yet textualized in their mother tongue.

For instance, imagine two senior theology students are to learn English. If the course were general English and they were true beginners, they would probably have to learn the traditional way: grammar and vocabulary from basic up respecting the structural syllabus. They would be taught the fundamentals of English grammar and vocabulary thought to be useful in basic communicative situations. However, if these two senior theology students had to read theology books in English, the approach could be different.

They would not need to be taught the vocabulary in English because they would have full mastery of the theological discourse in their mother tongue. What they would really need to do is realize how the knowledge they have, scientific discourse, is expressed (textualized) in a language other than their mother tongue, for instance the English language. Provided that the emphasis here would

be on meaning, the analysis and study of language forms (meta-language), if any, should serve only the purpose of grasping that meaning.

These conceptions of language, language learning and teaching have major implications for they greatly influence the development of a syllabus. And not only do they have a visible consequence on the syllabus, they determine every step taken during the planning and execution of the project for, as it has been said before, these conceptions make the mindset upon which the teacher perceives the problem and proposes a solution.

2.1.4. TENETS

To ensure philosophical consistency, all the resulting methodology should be devised and executed in accordance with the above epistemological and theoretical foundations. To facilitate the making of the construct and characterize the proposal of the project, the foundations have been synthesized in the shape of tenets, all of which work as underlying guidelines. The tenets are presented as follows:

- Knowledge of the scientific discourse: The students might not know the language forms that well but are, indeed, familiar with the universal scientific discourse.
- Shift from emphasis on meta-language to that on meaning (use over usage): Teaching (learning) meta-language with the aid of a simulated context is not an objective but comprehending meaning in spite of language forms, with the aid of meta-language if necessary. Thus, meta-language comes up when needed rather than as previously sequenced and graded.
- Focus on training in skills rather than teaching language forms: They should not be taught (as if they did not know anything) a “type” of English (new vocabulary). Rather, their discourse knowledge should be students to

help the students discover the realization of the discourse in the target language (how the discourse is textualized in English).

- Different sequencing and grading of syllabus design: The syllabus is not structure-oriented but goal-oriented. Thus, it is not pre-sequenced; its language forms are not pre-determined but learned/taught as they emerge.
- Timing varies: Under a structural approach, achieving an intermediate level takes around two years of formal teaching, but under a discourse approach students can perform reading comprehension of intermediate level text in less time.

To summarize, instead of basing the elements of the course design on teaching language forms (grammar and vocabulary) following a structural syllabus that focuses on the meta-linguistic purpose of demonstrating the formal properties of the English language system as presented in a typically graded, sequenced EFL structural syllabus, I chose to focus on the scientific rhetoric the medicine students participating in the project will need to handle and be competent at, on the assumption that they do not need to develop meta-linguistic competence as a primary goal for they already are knowledgeable of the medical scientific discourse (concepts, functions, procedures, etc.) which will be utilized to figure out its textualization in the English language, to ensure successful reading comprehension is achieved.

2.1.5. METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1.5.1. SYLLABUS DESIGN

A first distinction between approaches to syllabus design that I consider of relevant use in this project is that of synthetic and analytical approaches (Wilkins, 1976). They differ in that synthetic approaches look to simplify learning by breaking content into its constituent parts so that they can be easily taught step by step in a gradual sequenced process aiming at “mastery” learning, whereas analytical approaches “do not rely on prior analysis of the language into

its discrete points but look to present learners with holistic chunks of language so that they can analyze them” (Nunan, 2004).

Following this suggested theoretical dichotomy, a number of syllabi have been devised, each with a different focus but possible to be categorized into either of the two approaches. The other well-known syllabus dichotomy, which is referred to by its practical implications, is structural and functional-notional syllabi. These, in turn, are said to conflict with each other, for in the former language items are arranged in terms of the grammatical structure they belong to but in the latter language items, hence the course of language instruction, can be grouped and sequenced in terms of the language function they equip the learner to perform.

Based on this distinction between the two syllabuses, the functional-notional type of syllabus proves to suit best the spirit of the proposal. In an attempt to characterize functional-notional syllabi more fully, Shehadeh (2005:6) proposes their underlying logic, assumption and philosophy as follows:

- **Logic:** Language content will be context-dependent. Therefore, communicative language functions are the leading element, with structural organization being largely determined by the order already established by the functional sequence.
- **Assumption:** The learner’s needs, motivations, characteristics, abilities, limitations and resources are the point of departure. The specification of language-learning objectives must be made according to what it is that the learner wants to achieve through language.
- **Philosophy:** It is developed from a sociolinguistic viewpoint with the primary purpose of identifying the elements of a target language which its learners, as members of a particular group and with particular social and occupational purposes in mind, most need to know.

Surprising as it might seem, the three explained above strongly relate with the statement of lacks, wants and necessities in the needs analysis, and more specifically in the needs analysis matrix. In this proposal, the language content

and its sequencing depend on the context; some of that language content, however, can be categorized as a lack due to contextual present situation, thus representing a learning need. The students' wants are taken into account for the present and target-situation profiles. And what they need to do with (and know about) language is formulated as a target need in the target situation profile.

To summarize and conclude, the spirit of the English for specific purposes focus in this proposal, and syllabus design, can be faithfully shown by display of the following sequence (Dangerfield,1985:23):

STUDENTS NEEDS – SYLLABUS – AIMS OF LESSON – LESSON PROCEDURE – ACHIEVEMENT OF LESSON AIMS – ACHIEVEMENT OF SYLLABUS OBJECTIVES – SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS' NEEDS

2.1.5.2. LANGUAGE TEACHING/LEARNING FRAMEWORKS

Having defined the working conceptions here used of language and language learning, a language teaching methodology is the next undertaking. The literature review proved that no formal language teaching/learning method devised intentionally for ESP has yet caught on (a euphemism meaning that no ESP method has yet been invented).

This might be in part due to the heterogeneous nature of the object of study in ESP, i.e. the technical-scientific language to learn and teach, because it is always steeped in a specific discourse; to devise a formal prescriptive method for each technical-scientific discourse will be too resource-consuming and demanding a task, and to prescribe the one and only method for all technical-scientific discourse will be too broad and decontextualized a focus.

Rather, the decision here made was to go over existing teaching frameworks in order to pick out that (or those) which not only can be used in accordance with the tenets out of the epistemological and theoretical foundations but also will manage to take into account the specifications provided by the needs analysis.

2.1.5.2.1. TASK-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING

In task-based instruction, the meaning of language learning has to do with a cognitive view of language acquisition. In this respect, Skehan (1996a:18) asserts:

“The contemporary view of language development is that learning is constrained by internal processes. Learners do not simply acquire the language to which they are exposed, however carefully that the exposure may be orchestrated by the teacher. It is not simply a matter of converting input into output.”

Not being considered a method itself, yet sometimes an approach, the objective of task-based language learning agrees with a tenet in the project’s theoretical foundation on that the language outcome is used to do something, so teaching a language concentrates on doing something through language rather than focusing on the study of language form, thus making the nature of methodology goal-oriented. Accordingly, Richards & Rogers (1986:175) assert:

“Engaging learners in task work provides a better context for the activation of learning processes than form-focused activities, and hence ultimately provides better opportunities for language learning to take place. Language learning is believed to depend on immersing students not merely in “comprehensible input” but in tasks that require them to negotiate meaning and engage in naturalistic and meaningful communication”

In accordance with a tenet in the theoretical foundation, what is sought for is a shift from meta-language to meaning-negotiation. Needless to say, tasks are considered activities that are carried out using language. Thus, there is use of language, meaningful and natural, in task-based language teaching/learning.

To confirm this, Richards & Rogers (2014:180) claim that in language learning in a task-based framework is:

(...)“determined by learner internal, rather than external, factors. Learning is promoted by activating internal acquisition processes. Learning is not the mirror image of teaching but is determined by internal mental processes. Hence, meaning needs to be constructed by the learner.”

Following is a list of task-based language teaching features (Richards and Rogers, 1986:176) which are in harmony with the tenets and both epistemological and theoretical foundations:

- Activities and tasks can be either those that learners might need to achieve in real life or those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.
- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus are sequenced according to difficulty.
- Success in task is evaluated in terms of achievement of an outcome, and tasks generally bear some resemblance to real-life language use.
- The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its right own.
- Language is primarily a means of making meaning.
- Task activity and achievement are motivational. They require the learners to use authentic language, call on the learner`s past experience, and tolerate and encourage a variety of communication styles.
- Learning difficulty can be negotiated and fine-tuned for particular pedagogical purposes. Specific tasks can be designed to facilitate the use and learning of particular aspects of language.
- The learner role is that of a risk-taker and innovator, for many tasks will require learners to create and interpret messages for which they lack full linguistic resources. The skills of guessing from linguistic and contextual clues may also need to be developed.
- The teacher role is to promote consciousness-raising. If learners are to acquire language through participating in tasks, they need to attend to or notice critical features of the language they use and hear.

When referring to task-based language learning, and more specifically to the approach to reading in ESP, Wilson (Op. cit., p. 47) asserts that

the activity (reading) is mastered by actual performance, each successive performance more nearly approximated to the idealized objective, the equivalent in reading is an appropriately structured task. (...and) that the need is to present students with suitable texts as inputs, structure the task required of the students and provide the students with adequate guidance and support.

How to provide the students with adequate guidance and support has to do directly with the didactic classroom component which is later presented in learning principles and meta-cognitive reading strategies.

2.1.5.2.2. GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD

It is sometimes considered a fact that the grammar-translation method conflicts with modern language teaching methodologies, approaches and/or frameworks and that these cannot be reconciled, precisely because the latter are a response to the mishaps of the former. While these might not be reconciled at a theoretical level due to both their mismatch in language or language learning conceptions and methodological orthodoxy in language teaching, at a practical level in ESP, whose methodology can be devised according to needs analysis, it is possible to draw on resources and activities from several methodologies, approaches and frameworks, which, of course, must be carefully studied prior to implementation.

That some resources proper to the grammar-translation method are useful to this project methodology is a fact that ought to not be overlooked, let alone mechanically discarded due to mere methodological orthodoxy. It is in that sense that the grammar-translation method, not used as the underlying methodology but providing only pragmatic activities such as translation just for post-reading and assessment is being taken into account in this project.

As a matter of fact, there are principles on which there is agreement between the methodology of the course and grammar-translation method (GTM). The principles that constitute the conceptual framework of GTM (Richards & Rogers, 1986) are a good number, and not all of them are consistent with the principles and/or tenets in this project. Thus, only the grammar-translation principles that intersect principles of the methodology of the course are listed as follows:

- In GTM, the goal of foreign language study is to read its literatures, thus little or no systematic attention is paid to listening or speaking.
- In GTM, vocabulary selection is based on the reading text used (or aimed at)
- In GTM, grammar is taught deductively (in this course, at the beginning)
- In GTM, the students' native language is the medium of communication

These methodological principles proper to GTM are also present in the methodology of the course, yet, with respect to the actual technique of

translating, an explanation is necessary. Above it has been said that task-based language teaching/learning will be the framework to use as classroom methodology and that is so. The students will have to approach the text and make sense of it by way of the activities and principles included in and attached to this framework.

However, after the teaching-learning process is carried out, assessment is yet to be realized or else the learning process will be incomplete. It is, therefore, important to stress that in the methodology of this project translation is done as a means of assessment, sometimes in the shape of achievement tests, which is always to take place after the teaching/learning process (after either a class or the whole course) has been carried out.

Therefore, word-by-word translation, like using a grammar textbook and a dictionary whenever coming across new language structures and new vocabulary while reading, is not employed to approach the text and grasp its meaning. Rather, writing down what the students have understood in their mother tongue Spanish to verify understanding is done only after a number of other techniques have been used to perform reading comprehension. This issue of writing samples by translating what has been understood from a text as a form of assessment will be elaborated more fully later.

Upon that clarification, we can shift to the various direct and indirect benefits from employing translation for assessment. By translating a text in its entirety, students certify they have achieved full reading comprehension to the teacher and, most importantly, to themselves. It is assumed that when most of the students deal with English text in their real-life situations such as work, they will not use reading comprehension questions in English nor will they write summaries in English to demonstrate their comprehension, for they will just use translation to verify their comprehension.

Besides, the activity as well as overall learning in the course proves meaningful because they feel what they are doing by going over medical text in English brings them immediate positive results of academic growth (i.e. they realize what their learning does work). Furthermore, when the students feel satisfaction as

seeing their progress and performance in reading comprehension, an authentic intrinsic motivation is thus brought about.

Last but not least, since writing (here translating) to demonstrate full comprehension of a text is used as a means of assessment, to know how fruitful, in terms of effect, this type of assessment is is an important issue. Hughes (2003) asserts that, "*The effect of testing on teaching and learning is known as backwash.*" and that, "*Backwash can be harmful or beneficial.*"

If the assessment is aimed to be authentic rather than non-supportive of good learning, then beneficial backwash should be achieved. This can be done, for instance, in a number of ways (Op.cit. 43-45), which are strongly taken into account in the proposal of using translation as a means of assessment, as it will be shown in more detail in the next chapters. The two most important and relevant to the project are the following:

- Testing only the abilities whose development we want to encourage (the ability I want to encourage is reading comprehension, not writing in English)
- Using direct testing: "*If a course objective is that students should be able to read scientific articles, then we should get them to do that in the test.*" (et.al. 43)

Above it has been justified how translation, as seen from the grammar-translation method, is utilized as a resource for authentic assessment in the methodology. There is no inconsistency between the use of the translation technique so as to demonstrate reading comprehension and the application of the course methodology, but rather a handful of benefits that reassure the functionality of the technique.

2.1.5.3. LEARNING PRINCIPLES

Having worked this much on epistemological and theoretical foundations, including methods and syllabus design, the planning of the project can still be incomplete if making practical didactic suggestions is neglected. By not employing, arranging and applying suggestions of this kind, the academic

proposal lacks a realization in classroom application, thus being no more than a mere philosophical consideration whatsoever.

Therefore, not only the language learning/teaching methodology but also the learning/teaching principles and strategies are important for the development of a course if effective achievement of objectives is going to be ensured conceptually and didactically in classroom implementation.

Reinforcing the methodology and suiting the essence of the project at both axiological and practical levels and applicable to the language learning/teaching frameworks, the learning principles and strategies considered for use in this proposal and believed to be, to different extents, in harmony with it are: meaningful learning, scaffolding, learner autonomy, authentic assessment and meta-cognition. These, in turn, give raise to the didactic strategy particular to the project: meta-cognitive reading strategies.

2.1.5.3.1. MEANINGFUL LEARNING

Much has been said about learning. While the many theories about learning might at times differ from one another, sometimes radically, I believe there should be some flexibility to cope with the issue of learning due to its complexity since human learning is precisely that of humans who are, in turn, complex beings always in pursuit of insight into their nature, too complex a task to simplify. Among those theories, a principle suitable for the construct in this project is that of meaningful learning. Ausubel (1967:10), proponent of cognitive psychology (within which a cognitive theory of learning is dealt with), states that meaningful learning is:

“a clearly articulated and precisely differentiated conscious experience that emerges when potentially meaningful signs, symbols, concepts or propositions are related to and incorporated within a given individual’s cognitive structure.”

There must be a given cognitive structure to which what is to be learned should be related. Therefore, for learning to occur meaningfully (not mechanically) two, say, items -one from the existing system and the other from the new system- must intersect. When learners have to call on past experience as in task-based learning activities and their familiarity with the universal scientific discourse is

prerequisite of success as in the discourse approach, meaningful learning is notably present.

2.1.5.3.2. SCAFFOLDING

Sawyer (2006:11) claims, “*Scaffolding is the support given during the learning process which is tailored to the needs of the student with the intention of helping the student achieve his/her learning goals.*” For the students to fully achieve the course objectives, a thought about how to help them do so is mandatory. This, in turn, has implications as for the teaching “style” to draw on. Whether the support the students need is better given to them as lectures or as more student-centered instruction is an issue to critically reflect upon.

This support is shown throughout the course unfolding and it takes the shape of coaching, recommendations, resources, strategies, activities, self-assessment and even class content. However, scaffolding is not permanent; the support should be gradually removed as the students achieve learner autonomy. This is why, for instance, at the beginning of scaffolding direct, instruction and/or training might be necessary until the students have achieved some autonomy, point at which the teacher can withdraw intervention, thus replacing it with a less intrusive guidance.

Thus, scaffolding is a means to an end. It will be shown later, in the action strategy, how scaffolding is a vital learning platform upon which the syllabus has been designed.

2.1.5.3.3. LEARNER AUTONOMY

Since scaffolding is meant here to seek to develop learner autonomy, learner autonomy is part of the course objective. The students who will receive little instruction in English and whose instruction will be disrupted due to their time availability had better be equipped with the presumably most useful training so that they can keep their learning on in a more independent way by making use of what they were given during the training period. It is here that teachers “*have a crucial role to play in launching learners into self-access and in lending them a regular helping hand to stay afloat.*” (Sheerin, 1991:97) Therefore, “*The ability*

to take charge of one's learning", as expressed by Holec (1981), is the goal of the teaching process in the project.

This concept, however, has been used in many ways, so it is mandatory to precise that which will be used here. Benson and Voller (1997:75) describe five ways in which the term autonomy can be used with respect to educational phenomena, among which one is of particular interest here: *"a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning."*

Learner autonomy, however, occurs upon the existence of conditions which promote it rather than hinder it. This is the reason that cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, motivation, teaching methods and even educational systems must be all in accordance to support the development of learner autonomy.

2.1.5.3.4. AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

Only if assessment is carried out after the teaching/learning process has been carried out will the teaching practice be completed. Assessment is crucial for several reasons. It provides information about the students' language ability, it informs about the achievement of objectives and it also provides a kind of common measurement with which comparisons of students' performance can be made. All this, in turn, can equip teachers to draw conclusions and ultimately make several types of decisions.

Nevertheless, assessment is criticized due to the forms it can take which can sometimes be more harmful than beneficial. As a response to the problem, the term authentic assessment is being used. Authentic assessment, O'Malley (1996:2) says, refers to

"the multiple forms of assessment that are consistent with classroom goals, curricula, and instruction (and) that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructionally-relevant classroom activities."

In order to perform authentic assessment suitable forms must be employed, forms that serve the purpose of identifying student outcomes faithfully rather than those that bring about little and insufficient information. One of these forms which is used here mainly due to the nature of the course objective, is writing samples.

Typically, assessment of performance in reading comprehension is realized by the use of multiple-choice comprehension questions. I, however, conclude that using comprehension questions is too simple an instrument to check comprehension in this project for mainly two reasons: multiple-choice questions can be guessed at and they only evaluate comprehension of some parts of the text; comprehension questions are not comprehensive. The concerning issue is how to perform assessment of the students' performance in reading comprehension; how can it be best assessed? O'Malley (Op. cit.) claims:

"While this type of test (the multiple-choice test) has been a mainstay of educational programs, educators from all backgrounds have raised concerns about its usefulness as a primary measure of student achievement and are seeking alternatives through multiple forms of assessment."

To check full reading comprehension of all the information in a text, translation, where students cannot guess the answers, like in multiple-choice questions, but rather have to literally and verbally show how much they understand, can be a most practical and appropriate tool.

This assumption is confirmed by O'Malley (Op. cit.) when it is mentioned that among the numerous types of authentic assessment is writing samples which can be generated after completing readings on a subject and can be scored not only on language components but also on content.

It is important to note that under their scope writing samples are referred to as the compositions students make in the target language, which is English, whereas in this project these writing samples are the compositions students make in their mother tongue, as Mahmoud (2006:5) claims:

"Some post-reading exercises also assess how well the students have comprehended the reading material (...) Summary writing requires the students to express in writing a text's main ideas and conclusion in a specified number of words and paragraphs. Depending on the level, this task can be difficult for students, especially if they have to write in their L2. (...) By its very nature, translation offers many opportunities to emphasize the specific details and main ideas of a translated text, especially those that may not have been correctly understood by students."

2.1.5.3.5. METACOGNITION

“Meta-cognition refers to one’s knowledge concerning one’s own cognitive processes or anything related to them, e.g., the learning-relevant properties of information or data. For example, I am engaging in meta-cognition if I notice that I am having more trouble learning A than B; if it strikes me that I should double check C before accepting it as a fact.” (Flavell, 1976:232)

The project cannot unfold properly if student meta-cognition is not exercised. Meta-cognition is paramount if principles or philosophies such as meaningful learning, learner autonomy and task-based learning are professed, for when the learners play a central role in the learning process, what they do as well as how they do it is crucial to success. What they do is learn, and both how they learn and what they do to learn are the question at issue. It is here that meta-cognition plays a decisive role as it is

“an appreciation of what one already knows, together with a correct apprehension of the learning task and what knowledge and skills it requires, combined with the agility to make correct inferences about how to apply one’s strategic knowledge to a particular situation, and to do so efficiently and reliably.” (Taylor, 1999:34)

Consequently, when the students know of cognitive processes and understand how to regulate them to boost their learning, the need for a teacher minimizes, thus bringing about a type of students who get used to exercising their learning autonomy.

Besides, not only does meta-cognition trigger a start in autonomous learning, but it also increases student motivation by letting them know of the fact that they can be self-sufficient and that they can intervene in their learning process to improve it when needed.

2.1.5.4. METACOGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES

The core of the proposal is the concept, as well as the implementation, of meta-cognitive reading strategies. It all comes down to these strategies. They are the methodological didactic component thought to ensure the course objectives are achieved.

Because meta-cognition depends on awareness of the cognitive processes involved in learning and controlling these processes, it is essential that the student know didactic strategies to control her/his cognitive activity and how to employ them. The student can also learn that these strategies can be applied along the whole cognitive process (i.e. at the beginning, during and at the end of the reading activity) by, for instance, recalling background knowledge of the topic in the reading, relating new information to prior knowledge and summarizing all the text content.

The teacher plays a decisive role by introducing the concept and practice of meta-cognitive reading strategies to the student so that she/he can get started in this venture. Palincsar & Perry (1995) mentioned the following general principles to take into account when teaching meta-cognitive strategies to students:

1. Explain to the student why the strategies must be learned, in which contexts they should be used and how they differ in reading
2. Exemplify the use of the strategies by way of problem-solving and by “thinking aloud”, which is verbalizing the functioning of the thought processes
3. Guide the students as they put the strategies into practice
4. Get the students to make use of the strategies, at ease, using the very classroom materials and responding to real objectives
5. Help the students assume the usefulness of the strategies and encourage them to find new situations for application

Therefore, while there is formal teaching of the course content in the teaching/learning process, here there is a need, as well, for explicit teaching of the strategies that will be effective to achieve the course objectives. This explicit teaching entails verbalizing, explaining and thinking aloud about how a strategy is used in a given situation. In this respect, Peirce (2003) suggests what instructors can do to teach reading to students as when drawing on meta-cognitive strategies:

1. Demonstrate how to do the assigned writing tasks
2. Provide models

3. Provide feedback
4. Make the students' reading goals clear: read for general or detailed comprehension, read critically, or read for insight

This practical stage of demonstrating how to implement meta-cognitive strategies is of paramount importance given that the academic intervention, from a cognitive viewpoint, aims at strategy acquisition and self-control on behalf of the students. (Jitendra, 2000) Meta-cognitive strategies are many, and so are meta-cognitive reading strategies.

Therefore, the selection and application of appropriate meta-cognitive reading strategies will depend on the context where the reading activity is going to take place as well as the type of reading comprehension being exercised. The strategies can be used for word meaning comprehension, for phrasal, sentential or paragraph comprehension, and for global text comprehension.

After analyzing the context features of the reading activity in the present project along with the information elicited from the needs analysis and in accordance with all the foundations, I thought the meta-cognitive reading strategies presented below to be the most fruitful. Each helps develop a given reading sub-skill -for whether word meaning, sentence or global text comprehension- and takes place in a given stage of the reading process promoting meta-cognition.

2.1.3.3.1 COGNATES

The awareness and comparison of cognates can facilitate word meaning comprehension. Cognates are defined as words from two different languages "*related by the same root or affixal element in a recorded or assumed ancestral language*". (Merriam-Webster, 2007) Cognates may not only have shared morphological features. Rather, they can share a similarity in meaning in as much as cognates in two languages might make reference to the same mental image. Likewise, some cognates having similar morphological characteristics might also greatly differ in meaning; this is the case of those called false cognates.

If cognates in two different languages share a similar or the same (if possible), meaning, then access to word meaning comprehension will be facilitated. By

knowing the meaning of a given word in their mother tongue, the students can assume that a new word being its cognate in the target language shares a similar meaning, thus having no need to resort to other strategies because the use of cognates seems to have sufficed.

For instance, when the medicine student comes across the word *injury* when reading, they can easily infer the meaning in Spanish being “*injuria*” as it is mostly known in medical jargon, or “*lesion*” in common Spanish.

2.1.3.3.2. SEMANTIC ASSOCIATION

Another strategy to access reading comprehension is semantic association which consists of analyzing words (i.e. lexical items, borrowing from semantic theory) belonging to a semantic field. The term lexical terms is used in semantic theory to differentiate words that may have the same spelling (morphological features) or pronunciation (phonological features) but have a different meaning.

Semantic association aims to pinpoint the relationships between a word (lexical item) and its semantic correlates (antonyms, homonyms, synonyms, etc.). (Lou & Lopez, 2001) The semantic correlates used as a meta-cognitive reading strategy are antonyms, synonyms, hyponyms and meronyms.

These strategies, however, are mostly presented to the students in simple terms, not in their original names in order to avoid confusion and gain practicality. The students and teacher will refer to these strategies during class unfolding as ‘*related words*’, words that have some relationship in their meaning and can help understand meaning of unknown words.

2.1.3.3.2.1. ANTONYMS

Traditionally antonymy has been regarded as ‘oppositeness of meaning’. This concept is reshaped (in semantic theory) into ‘sense incompatibility of two lexical terms’ (Hurford, 1990), and has been sub-categorized into different types of sense incompatibility, which for the present work is unnecessary to draw on.

Practically, when referring to a word whose meaning is unknown, knowledge of its opposite can help grasp the meaning of the unknown word by inferring its

opposite meaning. If both a word and its antonym are presented in a text, the student can be trained to identify meaning by making comparison and inferences.

For example, the notion of antonyms can be used in reading when describing anatomy: At times antonyms are used like in the expression: *Her waist was neither too big nor too narrow*. While students can be familiarized with the word *big*, they might not know the word *narrow*, yet they can easily interpret its meaning as opposite of *big* when they understand the structure “*neither ... nor*” is used to introduce to opposite words.

2.1.3.3.2.2. SYNONYMS

Synonymy is the relationship between two predicates (i.e. lexical items, borrowed from semantic theory). They both have what is called the conceptual meaning of the word, which is the same sense. (Kempson, 1996)

In a text, a similar or the same conceptual meaning of a lexical item can appear. This may be done for a number of reasons such as stylistic variations, reiteration or specification. When a lexical item is substituting another and the students understands that it is referring to the original meaning, they can infer that both share a similar or the same meaning, hence an effective understanding of new word meaning.

An example is when students come across a sentence like: “*His wife, too, could never be described as thin or slim.*” In this sentence, *thin* and *slim* are used as synonyms connected by the coordinating conjunction *or* and it is sufficient for students to understand the meaning of one word in order to come up with the meaning of the other.

2.1.3.3.2.3. HYPONYMS

*The principal semantic relationship involved is that of **hyponymy** (x is a hyponym of y means x ‘is a kind’ of y, e.g. melon is a hyponym of fruit. (Halliday, 2007:11)*

This is such a practical and important concept provided the nature of scientific medical text. This type of text usually refers to things or phenomena and its kinds and variations or cases. In medical text, words like medication, diseases,

body parts, symptoms and the like are found; these words represent categories under which a number of types (hyponyms) are located.

If the students understand that a given unknown word is a type of another word they do know, they might come to an understanding of the unknown word by making predictions, even if they have not seen it before or it looks strange. Checking here is necessary for confirmation, which can be done by peer-correction, teacher assistance or use of a technical dictionary.

For instance, when students, who do not know the meaning of the word *thumb*, read something like: “*You hold the object in the palm of the hand with four fingers on one side and the thumb on the other.*”, they can come up with the meaning when they understand it is the finger against the other four; they can easily assume it means “*pulgar*”.

2.1.3.3.2.4. MERONYMS

Another (semantic) relationship, which may be used for classification, Halliday says (Op.cit.), is that of meronymy that means (‘is part of’). Just like hyponyms, a meronym shares a very strong relationship with related words because, for instance, when talking about the medical area, phenomena seem to always be related provided that they are all part of systems and organisms.

By knowing a given system medicine-wise, the students have knowledge of all its constitutive parts. Therefore, even if the students do not know the meaning of a word, they can access its meaning by way of the other constitutive parts (words) they know, thus sort of completing the missing element with help of the existing ones.

For instance, students might have never known the meaning of the word *lobe* in advance when they were asked about the meaning, but when they are presented a sentence like: “*The left lung has only an oblique fissure and hence no middle lobe.*”, and they know the meaning of the word *lung* and that the sentence is referring to the parts of it, they can resort to their scientific discourse knowledge and associate the word *lobe* with a part of the lung that is in the middle, thus coming up with the meaning and translating it into their mother tongue.

2.1.3.3.3. MEANING FROM CONTEXT CLUES

A word in a text is always presented in a context and has a sort of relation with the surrounding words and structures at semantic, syntactic and discourse levels. To convey word meaning, the strategy, or didactic resource, of meaning from context can be applied because *effective readers use their knowledge about words and text structures, and their prior knowledge about a subject, to help figure out unfamiliar words and concepts in new contexts.* (Fenner et. al., 2001) The context “clues”, as introduced by Fenner (Op. cit.), which are utilized as meta-cognitive strategies in this proposal are the following:

2.1.3.3.3.1. PARENTHETICAL NOTES

When referring to some vocabulary believed to be either of significant importance or unfamiliar, writers may consider further explanation is necessary and opt to specify the concept by way of a clarification which comes in between parenthesis. This is called a parenthetical note.

Parenthetical notes provide the readers with whether words, phrases or clauses that explicitly aim at facilitating access to the new word meaning. By being aware of this function of parenthetical notes, the students who come across unfamiliar vocabulary can immediately refer to the description or explanation provided in between the parenthetical note, thus utilizing the context to get meaning without having a compulsory need to resort to translation.

For example, see the sentence: *“The object is usually held by the soft parts of the fingertips (below the fingernails) of the three fingers .the thumb, the index finger and the middle finger.”* If the students wonder what fingertip means, they can read the parenthetical note that says it is below the fingernails and visualize the position of these parts to access word meaning.

2.1.3.3.3.2. DEFINITIONS

Likewise, in a written text itself, a new word can bear a definition in its sentence or in the preceding or following sentences. This can be signaled by an adjective clause or a qualifying phrase both in between commas, or a sentence containing

verb “to be”, “mean”, or others that introduce a complement to the subject, the matter in question.

Since the new word is presented along with a definition, attention switches to the words in the definition which mostly draw on the discourse knowledge that the intended reader is supposed to have. Definitions are overtly presented in a text, hence easier for the students to identify and utilize than strategies that rather have an underlying bearing upon word and meaning.

A typical example is a fill-in-the-blanks exercise like:

1. *You hear with them. _____ (nose, teeth, ears, eyebrows)*

Imagine the student do not know the meaning of the word *ears*, but by counting out the other options based on their physiological function and with aid of the definition, they can eventually understand it is the ears that they used to hear, thus coming up with the meaning of *ears* in their mother tongue.

2.1.3.3.3. EXAMPLES

In addition to parenthetical notes and definitions, examples can be also used as a meta-cognitive reading strategy to convey meaning from context. Examples are provided by use of surrounding words or expressions like “such as”, “for instance/examples”, “including”, etc. The new word is then exemplified and its meaning becomes easier to access. Examples express a more concrete manifestation of the concept referred to, usually an abstraction or a more abstract term that its example. Moreover, the words introduced by the expressions are believed to be known by the intended readers, thus providing them with the chance of drawing inferences so as to convey the new word meaning.

See the following sentences: “*Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, our ancestors could hold things in only one way. This is called the power grip. The power grip is used, for example, to hold a hammer or a piece of wood.*” The word *grip* is not a common one, yet students can understand its meaning by how they hold a hammer or a piece of wood with their hands.

2.1.3.3.4. CONCIIOUSNESS-RAISING

Now for both word and phrase or sentence structural comprehension, a number of grammar-based resources have been suggested by Lou & Lopez (2001): doing morphological word analysis as for roots to obtain derived words and, recognizing the grammaticality of the structures, categorizing structures, and breaking down complex sentences into its propositional components. Therefore, meta-language in the shape of grammar awareness is a crucial component to promote reading comprehension.

To identify the ways teachers approach grammar in the classroom two terms have been coined: deductive and inductive grammar. In deductive grammar, students are given formal explicit grammar instruction, usually following a presentation-practice-production cycle. In contrast, in inductive grammar, students are provided with a language excerpt, usually written, from which they can elicit grammar rules by noticing and generalizing.

Both ways are part of a teacher's repertoire to facilitate grammar comprehension and are advocated by theorists zealously and supported with large amounts of research and evidence, thus making them valid for classroom use but under profound methodological considerations. In this respect, Krashen (1981) was for inductive grammar, grammar discovery, by stating that for successful second language acquisition to occur students have to be exposed to comprehensible input in a stress-free environment.

Besides, these two also differ in their learning premises because in the former students are given input, which would be considered behavioristic, whereas in the latter students processing and comprehension skills, which are cognitive, are intended to be used, which is regarded as constructivist.

In accordance with learner autonomy and meta-cognition, where students decide on which strategy to employ for what purpose depending on the features of the learning problem, consciousness-raising comes to be another meta-cognitive reading strategy. In consciousness-raising the attention is given to correct grammatical forms when they are by highlighting or emphasizing in some way (Hendricks, 2010), and can be also referred to as linguistic problem-solving, language awareness, awareness raising, grammar interpretation tasks or grammar

discovery, with slight variations respectively, because the definitions are alike and share the same spirit as.

For instance, Carter (2003:64) refers to language awareness as *“the development in learners of an enhanced consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language.”* Accordingly, Bourke (2008:21) stated that:

“Language awareness occurs by means of certain types of formal instruction or task-based learning, where learners do grammar tasks in groups. It can come in many different forms and vary greatly in degree of explicitness and elaboration. It is not the same thing as practice. It is about input processing, noticing certain patterns or relationships, discovering rules, and noticing the difference between one’s current interlanguage and the target language system and as a result subconsciously restructuring one’s still evolving grammar system. (...) (...the applied perspective of language awareness) for teachers means helping learners effectively explore, internalize and gain greater understanding of the target language. The basic assumption here is that all learners have to be actively involved in discovering features of the language. They are not given the rule, but rather work inductively from structured input to arrive at their own understandings. It is a process-oriented approach, which includes steps of discovery, investigation and understanding, which contrasts markedly with the traditional product-oriented approach in which one is told the rules and has to drill and memorize them, a method found even in recent grammar books for teaching purposes.”

This somewhat autonomous consciousness of the forms and functions of language is what is sought for in using consciousness-raising as a meta-cognitive reading strategy. A key concept in this consciousness is noticing. Ellis (1997) claims noticing grammatical features is a pre-condition for learning. Likewise, Schmidt (1993) regards noticing as sufficient a condition in order to make intake out of input. After experiencing the new language (i.e. the input) the students reflect on it and its structuring; this reflection stage leads the students to make inferences or generalizations whereby they can start verbalizing their own understanding, which can, of course, be contrasted for correction when necessary.

This strategy is of paramount importance in a context where scaffolding is applied towards achieving learner autonomy because if the students are equipped with strategies to cope with new language (grammar input) whenever it comes out, overdependence on both a teacher and deductive grammar instruction is somehow reduced.

2.1.3.3.5. TECHNICAL DICTIONARY

The use of dictionaries can be neither the only strategy nor always the first to resort to but one more to access word meaning comprehension. Regarding word meaning comprehension in foreign language teaching and learning methodology, traditionally there has been a concern about an overreliance on dictionaries because, some believe, the use of a dictionary does not allow students to make use of other ways to grasp meaning, thus making them dependent on this tool whenever they come across new vocabulary.

While there might be a tendency to become over-dependent on a dictionary due to its practicality and accessibility, it is not the dictionary itself that causes students to always rely on it for (new) word meaning comprehension but the conception and approach the students (and the teachers) have towards dictionary use.

Whereas some may completely ban the students from using dictionaries when learning a foreign language in a formal class –thus ironically sometimes causing dependence on the teacher who, honestly speaking, cannot always provide the students with all the vocabulary in a language unless the teacher does use a dictionary himself-, sound uses of dictionaries can also be made by learning more about first them and then their proper use. Furthermore, being as useful to students and as commonly used by them as dictionaries are due to accessibility and technology -a situation sometimes overlooked or denied-, teachers would rather reflect on sound ways to use them in classroom methodology than to neglect their implementation.

Besides the typical dictionary components of the headword, its pronunciation, its word class and its definition (phonological, grammatical and semantic information respectively) which enable the students to learn about how and when to use a dictionary by noticing and becoming familiar with patterns of word class use and lexical structuring, dictionaries have a number of properties such as interconnectedness, the use of technical or theoretical terms and precision. (Hurford, 1990)

Due to the dictionary quality of interconnectedness, the students are presented with semantic fields where they might find synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, hypernyms and meronyms, all of which call for meta-cognition for word meaning comprehension as well. Moreover, by having technical and theoretical terms in the definition, a monolingual technical dictionary can facilitate understanding of the headword because the students can identify and conceptualize the terms and the definitions, thus making sense of the headword without needing to resort to translation. Being the last strategic resource to facilitate access to word meaning, the dictionary as well ensures comprehension is achieved.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

- Enable medicine students at UMSA to apply meta-cognitive reading strategies in reading comprehension of English medical text

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Design a syllabus based on the context specifications and needs analysis
- Draw on an appropriate working approach and methodology
- Devise content-specific and medical reading materials for classroom use
- Raise awareness of application of meta-language, technical vocabulary and meta-cognitive reading strategies to cope with specific English medical text
- Provide the students with graded practice towards achieving comprehension of authentic English medical text
- Evaluate the application of meta-cognitive reading strategies by way of full reading comprehension of authentic English medical text

2.3. SYLLABUS

2.3.1. COURSE DESIGN

Three major situations have influenced in the decision-making regarding the content of the proposal. These are: the nature of the need, the context in which students might make use of what they learned, and the length of the present project. The nature of the need expresses that the medicine students need the English language primarily for reading comprehension of specific technical text. Therefore, the approach to be elected is English for Specific Purposes. A proper methodology will narrow down to such focus, so task-based learning has been elected bearing in mind that the students need actual practice in what they will be doing on their own.

The context where students will make use of English is that of reading for self-updating, which is characterized by their approaching English medical text alone and on their own with a specific objective when studying. Accordingly, the syllabus picked out is of a functional notional type because it concentrates on and provides students with individual practice in the sub-competencies/functions students will achieve or perform which can certify satisfactory autonomous reading comprehension is achieved.

The length of the present course lasts for about seven months, after which the participant students are not likely to continue formal study of the English language. If formal English classes are then discontinued, the students might come to the conclusion that they still need more classes and their learning process has been hindered. Nevertheless, if students learn how to develop autonomy in reading comprehension during the unfolding of the course via accurate application of case-specific reading strategies, by the end and after the course has finished they will not feel the need for more classes but the opportunity to put into practice the strategies they were taught and they exercised consciously. Thus, awareness of what strategies to use, how and when, is paramount to fostering their autonomy. Consequently, the students will feel that

the course content has sufficed to enable them how to cope with any English medical text. These contextual considerations, those elicited from the needs analysis and the foundations brought about all the specifications out of which the course has been designed in order to achieve the stated objectives. Before going on to the practical description of implementation, it is mandatory to explain how all the elements above articulate with one another to form an axiomatic pedagogical whole.

Next is a diagram (Fig.4) (Velasco, 2014) to represent the interaction of all the components coming into play at the conceptual level of course design and its explanation to get across the academic proposal, i.e. the solution to the agreed problem, which, needless to say, is the need the medicine students have to learn English to cope with reading comprehension of English medical text. These, in turn, serve as bases for the understanding of the practical implementation in syllabus design and ultimately course unfolding.

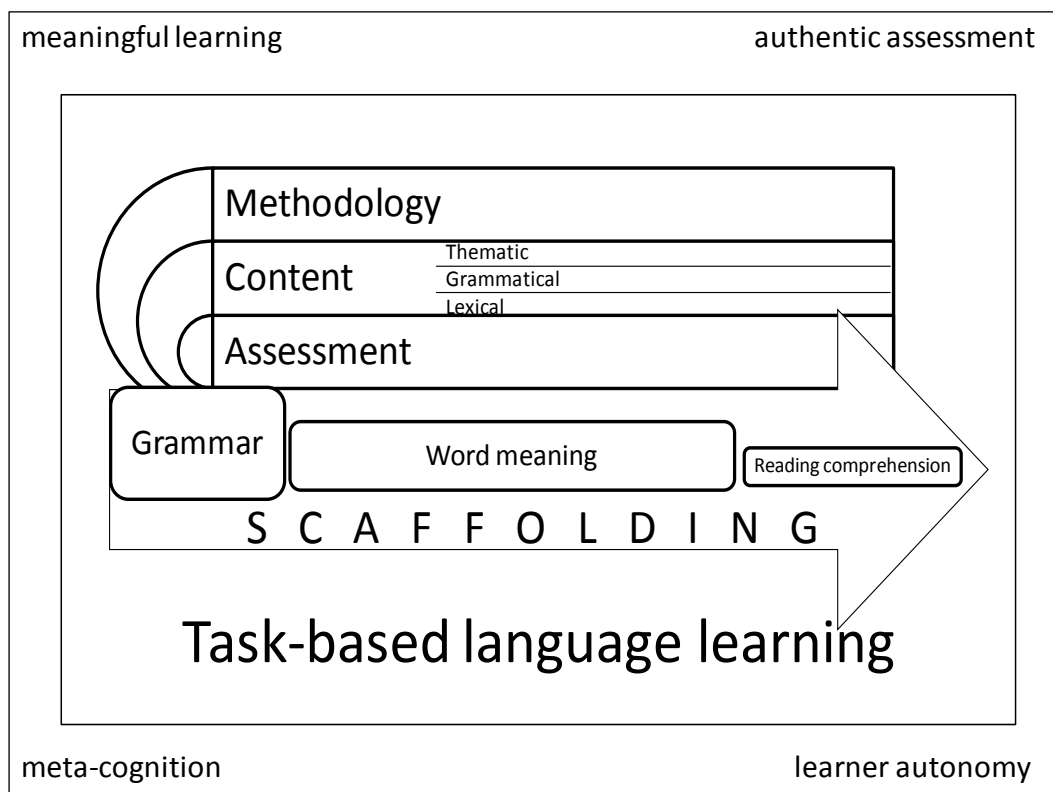


Fig. 4 Conceptual course design

All class actions during the course under the scope of this project are comprehensive tasks or parts of a comprehensive task rather than a succession of single activities as in a presentation-practice-production cycle. Accordingly, the whole course longitudinally resorts to task-based language learning as the language teaching/learning framework (“method”) and all that is done from beginning to end should be viewed under such scope; since the main objective is to achieve reading comprehension, contextualized reading tasks are presented from nearly the very beginning until the end, making sure that all learning is intended to be meaningful.

Another determining component in the proposal is scaffolding. The process of gradually decreasing teacher intervention in students learning in order to foster their learner autonomy has been ensured via the sequencing of three major stages, mirroring the first three levels of language competence according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), in which the students are believed to be developing the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in reading comprehension of English medical text, thus achieving upper intermediate level according to CEFR.

First, in order to achieve English level standardization, the students are taught fundamentals of English grammar which served as foundation for on-coming structures, yet deductive grammar instruction is finished once this stage is completed, thus leaving grammar inquiry, whenever it comes up, to a more inductive approach: consciousness-raising.

Then, relying on the students’ grammar competence and, more importantly, their knowledge of scientific medical discourse, it is assumed that they are ready to move onto discourse meaning, for which the semantic aspect becomes of paramount importance. The issue of vocabulary in reading is addressed by way of both gradually guiding the students in the use of strategies to access word or phrase meaning and letting them apply these strategies autonomously in terms of when, how and which, thus applying meta-cognition. Here, the teacher

intervention becomes less than in the first stage provided that students have much more practice and classes are now more practical than instructional.

Finally, after that much practice, the students are believed to need very little help or teacher intervention to exercise successful reading comprehension of English medical text. Accordingly, in the third stage they are just provided with readings without the aid of pedagogic activities upon the assumption that they can now decide what to do, when and how to convey text meaning without teacher's help whatsoever.

The unfolding of methodology, content and assessment along the course is also worth mentioning because their processes are compatible with the scaffolding and the flow of the course. Besides task-based language learning, the methodology also consists of practical classroom didactics within which I can point out learning by doing and using the students' mother tongue for instruction and guidance. All activities are practical and intended to be student-centered because emphasis is placed on what the students do and how. Furthermore, since effective communication is necessary to ensure these processes and there is no need to promote the productive skill of speaking, Spanish, the students' mother tongue, is used as the means of communication in the classroom.

The content during the course is divided into three main categories: thematic, grammatical and lexical. The thematic content draws on what text (and discourse) meaning the reading will convey. Provided the present ESP course is designed for medicine students, the thematic content is scientific medical discourse. Therefore, all readings refer to medical issues and these gradually increased in terms of technicality and specificity. This also has a repercussion in materials selection because they had to be carefully selected in order to ensure gradual level increase.

The grammatical content glides from the fundamental tenses in basic English grammar, which are the present and past tenses including all their specifications in verb use and structuring as or sentence and question construction, presented in

a deductive way to recurring grammar structures, grammatical structures commonly found in medical articles such as present participles and the passive voice, noticed in an inductive way as they come up during the reading activities.

The lexical content first draws on general vocabulary that has some relation with medical vocabulary, then body parts at two levels: a simple pedagogic vocabulary of body parts and a more scientific description included in anatomy. The third stage draws on anatomy and physiology, within which highly technical medical vocabulary is found, and finally a medical case.

Analyzing the whole construct presented in this academic proposal, it can be certified that its spirit is in harmony with the four absolute and two variable aspects of ESP illustrated by Strevens (1988) which state that ESP:

1. is intended to meet the learners' specific needs.
2. is related in its themes and topics to particular disciplines.
3. is centered on appropriate discourse analysis of the discourse.
4. is placed in contrast with General English.
5. may be limited as to the learning skill to be learned.
6. may not be taught in terms of any predetermined methodology.

2.3.2. RESOURCES

The resources respective to the course are categorized in three groups: teacher resources, student resources and facilities. Student resources are a portfolio to register progress and note-taking, text handouts, general bilingual dictionaries and specialized medical dictionaries. Teacher resources are in-class resources like adapted and authentic medical texts, general dictionaries, specialized dictionaries, a syllabus and a lesson plan, and methodological resources such as reading materials, grammar textbooks, specific vocabulary databases, specialized medical content files, ESP theoretical frameworks, and files for course design, needs analysis and evaluation. Among the facilities to count on are classrooms, desks, chalkboards.

2.3.2.1 MATERIALS

Classroom materials are of paramount importance given the spirit of the present academic proposal which entails an ESP methodology and course design. Since ESP courses are aimed at definite objectives and addressed to particular groups of students, the materials design has to have appropriateness in both content and structure. Accordingly, the materials used in this project have been designed bearing in mind the objectives of the course. The materials used can be categorized in three groups: present-situation diagnosis materials, teaching materials and both summative and formative assessment materials.

For the diagnosis, a diagnosis grammar and reading multiple-choice was used. The grammar section drew on grammar question which assessed the students' linguistic competence from basic grammar structures to advanced, testing their proficiency from level A1 through B1 respectively. The reading section in the test consisted of four medical articles which glided from easy and general to difficult and specific being the last a highly specialized medical report. As a result, the students' right answers help determine their levels of proficiency and competence in both reading and grammar to locate them in a respective level.

The teaching materials were all handouts used throughout the unfolding of the teaching and learning process. These too went from easy to difficult making sure scaffolding was implemented. The nature of these materials was quite different though, depending on the stage at which they were implemented. Since the course followed a gradual logic introducing first deductive and inductive grammar, followed by word-meaning strategies and perfected with reading comprehension practice, the materials had to be tailored accordingly.

First of all, grammar charts and fill-in-the-blanks deductive grammar handouts were given to present the simple present, simple past and present continuous tenses, yet, after being completed, grammar-in-context handouts were given as well to notice the use and form of such structures in actual text. These texts, in

turn, drew on general medical topics to get started on medical discourse from the very beginning.

Secondly, handouts to introduce reading strategies were used. These were reading handouts on body parts adapted to suit particular needs. By means of these readings, reading strategies such as meaning from context, semantic association, consciousness-raising were introduced and put into practice. Furthermore, once knowledgeable of the strategies, the students learned how, when and why to use them. These reading materials which centered about anatomy and serve the purpose of practicing metacognitive reading strategies were of paramount importance to the unfolding of the course towards the achievement of objectives.

Finally summative and formative assessment materials were to be used. Formative assessment consisted of authentic medical text excerpts which were adapted into the shape of quizzes for students to exercise reading comprehension by applying meta-cognitive reading strategies. These texts drew on highly technical medical discourse on anatomy and physiology, thus giving the medicine students the chance of exercising contextualized learning in classroom activities by using and exploiting medical text in their learning process.

2.3.3. EVALUATION

Formative evaluation: In order to assess progress gradually along the duration of the course the assessment consists of administering vocabulary and grammar quizzes, reading quizzes, structured presentations, reading summaries and portfolios.

Summative evaluation: In order to assess students' performance quantitatively, a mid-term test and an end-term test will be administered. Class active participation was also taken into account. Special attention was paid to formative evaluation provided scaffolding is procedural and the one way to assess progress in a sequenced way is via formative assessment for it allows on-going evaluation at each and every stage of the course.

2.3.4. SYLLABUS SEQUENCE

ESP COURSE: METACOGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES TOWARDS READING COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH MEDICAL TEXT AT THE MEDICINE SCHOOL OF MAYOR DE SAN ANDRES UNIVERSITY (Velasco, 2014)

OBJECTIVE: Enable medicine students at UMSA to apply meta-cognitive reading strategies in reading comprehension of English medical text										
Stage	Session	Reading competency	Task	Content			Activities (strategy applied)	Resources	Evaluation	
				Thematic	Grammatical	Lexical			Formative	Summative
Learning needs (lacks): Metacognitive strategies to interpret grammar in text	1 2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance	Understands use and form of the simple present tense		Simple present – use and form		Metalanguage. Deductive grammar Grammar explanation and drills	Simple present handouts	Multiple-choice Grammar quiz	
	3	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance	Interprets the use and form simple present in context-specific text	Dementia	Simple present - ing forms	General medical vocabulary	Awareness raising through text: noticing Cognates Inductive grammar	Adapted Reading on dementia	Group Translation	

	4,5	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance	Understands use and form of the simple past		Simple past – use and form		Metalanguage: Deductive grammar Grammar explanation and drills	Simple past handouts	Gap-filling grammar quiz	
	6	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance	Interprets the use and form of the simple past	Survival without a Heart	Simple past – use and form -ed forms	General medical vocabulary	Awareness raising through text: noticing Cognates Grammar discovery and inductive grammar	Adapted reading on medical miracles	Group Translation	
	7	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance	Interprets the use and form of the simple past	Birth from Ovary Transplant	Simple past – use and form -ed forms	General medical vocabulary	Awareness raising through text: noticing Cognates Grammar discovery and inductive grammar	Adapted reading on medical miracles	Individual translation	
Learning need: Metacognitive strategies to access word meaning	II 8,9	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.	Identifies meta-cognitive reading strategies	Anatomy	Simple present	Body parts: parts of the face	Meaning from context: definition, examples, Semantic association: meronyms, hyponyms Awareness raising through text: noticing	Reading Words in Context handout	Individual revision	

	10,11	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc	Identifies meta-cognitive reading strategies	Anatomy	Simple past	Body parts: body size and body parts	Meaning from context: definition Semantic association: antonyms, synonyms, meronyms Awareness raising through text: noticing	reading Words in Context handout	Individual revision	
	12,13	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc	Identifies meta-cognitive reading strategies	Anatomy	Simple present/ past	Body parts: arms and hands	Meaning from context: parenthetical notes, examples Cognates Semantic association: meronyms, synonyms Awareness raising through text: noticing	reading Words in Context handout	Comparison and feedback	
	14,15	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc	Identifies meta-cognitive reading strategies	Anatomy	Simple past	Body parts: legs and feet	Semantic association: meronyms, hyponyms Awareness raising through text: noticing	reading Words in Context handout	Comparison and feedback	
Target need:	III	Can understand the	Applies	Anatomy	Simple	Lungs	Metacognition in	Authentic	Comparison	

Meta-cognitive strategies towards full reading comprehension	16,17,	main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization	various meta-cognitive strategies to cope with grammar, vocabulary and text meaning	and physiology	present Passive voice		reading comprehension Vocabulary strategies	medical text	n and feedback Group correction	
	18,19	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization	Applies various meta-cognitive strategies to cope with grammar, vocabulary and text meaning	Anatomy and physiology	Simple present Passive voice	Pericardium	Metacognition in Reading comprehension Metalanguage Consciousness-raising Vocabulary strategies	Authentic medical text	Directed modulated translation	
	20,21	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in	Applies various meta-cognitive strategies to cope with grammar, vocabulary	Anatomy and physiology	Simple present Passive voice	Shoulder	Metacognition in Reading comprehension Metacognitive Reading strategies	Authentic medical text		Preliminary Formal exam Modulated translation

		his/her field of specialization	and text meaning				<p>Metalanguage</p> <p>Consciousness-raising</p> <p>Vocabulary strategies/recalling</p>			
	22	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization	Applies various meta-cognitive strategies to cope with grammar, vocabulary and text meaning	Medical history	<p>Simple present/past</p> <p>Passive voice</p> <p>-ing forms</p> <p>-ed forms</p>	Renal-cardiovascular	<p>Cognates</p> <p>Semantic association</p> <p>Meaning from context</p> <p>Consciousness-raising</p> <p>Technical dictionary</p>	Authentic case-history		<p>Final formal exam</p> <p>Modulated translation</p>

CHAPTER III

PROJECT UNFOLDING

The application of the Project started at the beginning of July, 2012 and finished on December 15th, 2012. It was carried out in the facilities of the Medicine school at UMSA with fourth and fifth year students. There were 240 registered students whose age ranges between 20 and 30. They, in turn, were sorted into 6 parallel courses, each with up to 40 students since three teachers were assigned to teach two parallel courses each. The classes were held in Medicine school classrooms every Saturday morning with two parallels being taught from 7:30 a.m. through 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. through 11:00 a.m. respectively. This course lasted about 6 months and took three hours per class every Saturday morning making a total of 23 sessions with 4 academic. The amount of time and hours dedicated to the overall project is specified as follows:

Stages	Category	Hours per category	Hours
Literature review	Theoretical and methodological development of needs analysis	10	50
	Academic proposal development	20	
Selection, construction and validation of evaluation and intervention instruments			30
Needs analysis	Data collection	10	30
	Interpretation and analysis	20	
Proposal construction			30
Proposal application	Materials design	50	212
	Class planning	40	
	Teaching process	4x23=92	
	Correction and assessment	30	
Information processing and analysis of experience			20
Project result interpretation and analysis			30
Final report writing			376
			778

3.1 ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

First of all, the call to apply for the project of teaching English at the Medicine school at UMSA was made. I applied stating the blueprint proposal which has the same spirit as the present proposal: develop an ESP course for teaching reading of English medical text. After being accepted, I proceeded to follow the subsequent steps. Given the objective of the project which is to massively train students in big groups, two other linguistics partners were accepted as well.

After a first meeting of the project participants, action guidelines were devised; these consisted of agreeing on the nature of the project including general goals, developing a needs analysis methodology including criteria, instruments and execution and interpretation, and outlining the development of the project.

In a second meeting, the ideas and assigned work, which included a literature review about ESP needs analysis design, were discussed, thus bringing about a shared conception of the work to do. Accordingly, the general stages of the project were agreed on and planned. Following the action plan, the needs analysis scheme had to be developed including aspects such as stages, materials, timing and doers.

It was then time to proceed with the needs analysis execution. Here a meeting with the Dean of medicine school was necessary to inform about the main ideas of the project and to organize the execution of the needs analysis. Once the organization was set, the process started. First, rolls were made at the Medicine school to have an estimate of students willing to take be part of the course which eventually was around 270. Then, considering their time availability, diagnostic testing days were scheduled for the students to take both confirming their true intention of taking up the course and showing a display of their English language level. Right after the tests were taken, the students were given a questionnaire for the teachers to have valuable information as for potential contextual factors of the course.

Now, there were around 240 diagnostic tests and questionnaires to check and organize. After analyzing and systematizing the information, interpretation could be made so as to determine the component elements of the ESP course design, yet

to make sure the conclusions to take action were authentic and democratic, the interpretation was cross-checked by being shared with the Medicine academic direction where, after reporting and complementing, the nuances and guidelines of the project were refined, and logistic and organizational aspects such as procedures, schedules and classrooms were touched on.

Having the needs analysis, now time for the academic proposal should be set aside individually. It was mandatory that each teacher participant propose her/his own particular academic project. Accordingly, I had to review literature on the issue of ESP course and syllabus design including methodology and other pedagogical and didactic aspects in order to devise my formal academic proposal. Once the elaboration of pedagogical and methodological foundations of the academic proposal was provided, the actual implementation of the academic proposal was next. This consisted of planning, materials-development, the teaching process and evaluation. Planning mostly took place at the beginning with some modifications and additions along the project. Nevertheless, materials-development, the teaching process, of course, and the evaluation, by way of formative assessment, came along the unfolding of the course, whereas summative evaluation took place at definite times near and at the end of the course.

Planning took place at different levels: conceptual levels such as pedagogical and methodological, and practical levels such as those of course unfolding, class teaching and activity sequencing. Then, to put into practice the actions determined in the syllabus, developing suitable materials was necessary; this was carefully done in accordance with the foundations of the academic proposal for these materials were to guarantee the project and syllabus objectives are achieved.

With a scheme and materials to use, the teaching process was carried out as expected following the guidelines faithfully thus consolidating the theoretical and methodological proposition of the project, followed by evaluation performed which, in turn, resulted in grading the students' performance and progress in the course so as to list passing grades and issue diplomas.

3.2 INITIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

The initial changes brought about by the unfolding of the activities are cognoscitive, attitudinal and of the atmosphere. As for the first stage in the course, grammar level standardization, full attendance was perceived; this resulted into satisfactory achievement of class and syllabus objectives, thus bringing along a student community whose grammar level became optimal to be a starting point. Furthermore, given the dynamic and practical methodology of classes, groups were formed where the students had the chance to experience cooperative learning, peer correction, improvement and feedback. All of these fostered their motivation, and eventually created a good working environment.

Regarding the second stage of the course which is the training in the use of meta-cognitive strategies to access word meaning, two achievements stand out: a sense of usefulness of the strategies and student commitment to course completion. As the students familiarized with the strategies, understood their essence and practicality, they saw their relevance to their needs. When time is a valuable resource, the activities and objectives in a course have to be purposeful, or else they will lack interest in the course, yet when they feel what they do in class is valuable to them, their commitment stabilizes.

Consequently, when a drop-out rate went up, due to some students' time unavailability and facility logistic disorganization –aspects described later in experiences, the students showed their commitment by attending classes with regularity in spite of irregularities.

In the third stage, course and syllable objectives were achieved –indicators shown later in results, which brought about achievement of course completion including its every sub-stage; this resulted into a finished collective experience constructed by the students and the teacher, whose unfolding means a turning-point in the academic life of both.

Upon completion of the course, the students are believed to be satisfactorily equipped to cope with reading English medical text autonomously and the teacher has put into application his particular academic proposal testing its feasibility and appropriateness. If a student is asked to perform reading comprehension of

medical text in English, they will do the task with no difficulty by resorting to the strategies they learned to use and applying the linguistic knowledge they came across during the course.

Materials have played a key role in the achievement of course objectives because, given the spirit of the academic proposal, the materials had to be designed in a way they could make sure mediation was carried out properly. In like manner, the way the students made use of the materials had an impact on their learning, manifesting a dialogic relation between the students and the materials in which effects can be pinpointed as well.

By making the meta-cognitive approach to learning explicit (particularly learning to read medical text in English), the students were equipped with a different conception of the learning process and, therefore, a different approach to study. They could learn that one's own learning can be conducted and systematized. That is why they realized their learning could be in control and they could take action towards an end product, as they started to apply the meta-cognitive reading strategies into class reading tasks.

Whenever they had to cope with class reading tasks, they, then, were able to function based on an understanding of cognoscente and cognitive aspects towards achieving autonomy in their learning. Since they now felt they could function "on their own", their self-confidence increased assuring a sense of independence and capability to exercise reading of medical text in English in academic or professional contexts.

3.3 EXPERIENCES

Undertaking this project has been a source of fruitful experiences, all of which have been great for learning. First of all, by getting to know the facilities, students and director of the medicine school at UMSA I had the chance to observe another student lifestyle and another academic environment different from the linguistics school, for each school and faculty has its unique personality.

One of the first new experiences I had was to learn how to manage big crowds of people since, for instance, there were around 300 students registered for the courses, so making lists, groups, tests, questionnaires and materials, as well as logistics, was a colossal work.

Teaching itself was the next relevant experience. I had been accustomed to teaching general English in a communicative English-only type of class when I started this ESP project. The methodological characteristics now were different due to the contextual specifications of the environment and the students, i.e. the nature of the project. In this case, for instance, Spanish was the medium of communication unlike a typical “communicative” kind of class where English must be spoken at all times.

To me this was so enlightening an experience for I had always been told (and influenced) to teach English in a rather by-the-book methodical way which, by some, is believed to be the one and only way to teach English: the in-fashion communicative approach when perceived as a method whose slightest deviation in practice implies failure to teach English well. This too was a very constructivist experience since I could put into practice what I researched about teaching English and, more specifically, ESP.

Therefore, I myself was able to make meaning and construct grounded theory from practice by contrasting and confirming the theory written regarding ESP with the actual unfolding of my ESP project. In short, after I had read about an alternative way to teach English for specific purposes -the scientific discourse approach to teach English for specific purposes, I put it into practice and learned that there are various and, at times, diametrically opposite ways to approach the issue of teaching English and ESP, which have vital implications in practice and theory.

Having the chance to interact with and learn from the medicine students enrolled in the course is one other experience that changed my life as a teacher. There are particular differences between heterogeneous and homogeneous groups of English students; being the class a homogeneous group of medicine students, it provided a cooperative learning platform where learning could be easily fostered and

contextualized and where each and every student spoke the same language, the language of scientific discourse which was used as foundation for teaching. Not only did I learn how they interact as a group and observed superficial types of behaviors, but I also had the chance to actually learn about their discourse, i.e. the medical discourse.

By being surrounded by 4th-and-5th- year medicine students, one has got to learn something about them and their knowledge. Consequently, I learned a bit more of the medical science in terms of, for instance, some technical terms to name diseases, symptoms, body parts, etc.-both in English and Spanish, some medical processes in the body or even how some of them can perceive life and health.

In making materials I had to investigate about appropriate materials which could make effective aids for the teaching and learning processes, yet I found out that ESP materials for medicine are somehow scant and difficult to find. Therefore, I myself had to develop handouts and worksheets that could suit the class objectives and procedures. In this respect, I had to resort to the service of a copy shop where the materials were left for the students to pick up for the next class. This procedure, however, was sometimes hindered when either the copies were delivered in time by the copy shop or the students neglected to pick their copies for the due time.

The students were also very helpful and willing to give medical advice when necessary; once, due to a strong flu I had, I even had to get a penicillin injection in the facilities of the medicine school. To sum up, there were remarkable personal academic and social experiences during the unfolding of the project.

As for the downside, the most significant aspects are the increasing drop-out rate and logistic organization. At first, all of the students enrolled in the class showed regular attendance, yet as time went by, some of them stopped coming to class although they orally expressed high interest in continuing the course. Showing up later one or two classes after, they claimed that because of their studies and practices they could not come regularly to class. This occurred because not all of the students in the course had the same academic schedules; rather, they were taking different subjects and also had to rotate and fulfill roles at different

hospital specialization facilities, roles that, unfortunately, took place mostly on Saturday mornings.

Furthermore, due to a poor logistic organization; provided that other activities, natural to the school of medicine, eventually also had to take place in the facilities of the school, the classroom assigned for the class had to be occupied by others more than once. This made us look for somewhere else to continue our classes. Had the using of classroom on those busy days been thought over in advanced, alternative solutions would have been proposed to not disrupt the regular course of the project, yet, once more, the medicine students enrolled in the course showed great commitment to the project by still caring for it and attending until the very end regardless of these uncomfortable situations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This last chapter deals with the outcomes, conclusions and recommendations derived from the overall making of the project, including its planning, execution and evaluation. These brought out to light priceless findings which constitute insights that not only did contribute to the experience of the teacher and the broadening of his practical and theoretical frameworks but also can contribute to the methodological discourse of ESP projects and course design in its various aspects theoretical and practical aspects.

4.1 OUTCOMES

The outcomes of the project fall into the categories of objective achievement, course attendance and completion, test scores, systematized products and reading performance, certificates and passing lists, changes in students, impacts on institution and limitations, problems unsolved or negative changes.

Regarding course attendance and completion, it must be said that high compromise with the proposal and perseverance were key factors since the medicine students enrolled in the course more often than not had to attend internships or extra classes, which left them with little time available; hence those who successfully completed the course had to strive for no dropping out but setting aside time to be in class whereas the drop-outs might have had only difficulty in finding time to attend the classes regularly, for motivation in taking the classes was a commonality among all the students.

As it was said before, two parallel courses were taught, with sixteen and six students respectively. These numbers differ from those of students registered at

the beginning of the courses since, for the reasons above stated, some students had to quit taking the course, yet all those who successfully completed the course, twenty-one students overall, managed to complete the course, and more importantly achieve the reading proficiency level intended, which was proven by their performance in last tests, exams and assignments (Appendix G).

This resulted in medicine students who, by being independent users, *can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization*; hence upper intermediate proficiency level, as stated level B2 in the Common Framework of Reference for languages, was certainly achieved.

Upon this, a passing roll was made, which listed the students' names of both parallels who completed and passed the course successfully. This roll, along with a report, was sent to the Direction of the Medicine School for acknowledgement. Next, once the results were reported, completion certificates were made and signed by both the Medicine School Dean and the Linguistics School Dean, and the teacher of the ESP reading course. Finally, the completion certificates were issued at the medicine students' center.

Other than receiving a completion certificate in an ESP reading course, the students benefited from the course in significant ways such as confidence, interest, and application. Upon completing the course and, more importantly, achieving a proficient reading level of medical text in English, the students gained confidence in approaching the English language provided that with the understanding of strategies to tackle English learning problems, they could perform autonomously bearing in mind that to grasp meaning from a text is a possible task given their medical scientific discourse background and their experience in doing these tasks practically.

They too became interested in learning English in a deeper and more complete way since, nearly at the end of the course, a number of students asked, how and where they could continue their studies of the English language not only to know how to read but also to be proficient in skills such as listening, speaking and writing.

Likewise, more than a couple of students showed to be making practical application of what they were learning in the course as they were also performing English-related tasks at work or school such as reading specialized material for the internship or texts assigned by their professors in given subjects.

It can be concluded that those who successfully completed the course got lucky to not have other academic activities that could overlap with the schedule of the project. Consequently, those who stayed until the end showed high-class commitment to completing the course well, fact which can be seen by observing their progress by way of their portfolio and exams.

To certify the truthfulness of all these assertions, it was imperative a formal report be written. This is known as “Informe de Conformidad” (Appendix H), which is a completion and sufficiency written report issued on May 21, 2013 by the Director of the School of Medicine and addressed to the Director of the Linguistics Department.

It summarizes the unfolding of the project “INGLES CON FINES ESPECIFICOS: METACOGNICION EN ESTRATEGIAS DE LECTURA HACIA LA COMPRENSIÓN DE TEXTOS TECNICO-MEDICOS EN INGLES EN LA CARRERA DE MEDICINA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD MAYOR DE SAN ANDRES”, which started on July 7, 2012, and certifies all procedures were carried out in a satisfactory and expected way.

This report informs that all the stages presented at the beginning of the project were accomplished, that the stage of teaching only, besides those of planning and needs analysis, lasted six months, that the teacher’s assistance was punctual and complete at all times. It also claims that, regarding project planning and materials design, actions were taken in advanced in order to demonstrate a serious work and commitment that strengthened the teaching process, which, in turn, was participatory, appropriate and also provided feedback.

Finally, it states that the making of the project was based upon the application of an exhaustive needs analysis which accurately reflected both the then English proficiency level of the medicine students and the learning contextual situations

in order to carry out authentic and appropriate teaching aiming at solving weaknesses and foster strengths for optimal learning.

All in all, the reports says, the stated general objective of enabling the students to perform effective reading comprehension of authentic medical text in English was reached. This is expressed in the scoring that is given to the project which is 65, the highest score possible.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

As it has been demonstrated in the previous section of outcomes, the project reached its objectives. After a careful needs analysis, a theoretical inquiry was carried out so as to lay foundations to meet the needs by defining an appropriate approach to work with, the scientific discourse approach, and a methodology, one based on task-based language teaching and embedded with grammar-translation method principles.

Then, the syllabus was designed. It consisted of rigorous criteria to go along with the theoretical and practical principles of the project. Materials and contents were designed in accordance with the scientific discourse and language abilities the students needed to master, thus providing them with meaningful learning in every class.

As for the didactic procedure, in order to ensure they could achieve an upper intermediate English level in technical medical English, strategies that resorted to metacognition to perform reading comprehension of medical text were presented and exercised. After gradual introduction and practice of the strategies, the students developed criteria to know when, why and how to use them according to their cognitive needs when approaching medical text in English.

To conclude, it must reiterated that the main achievement of the present ESP project, thus the objective of the course, consisted of enabling the medicine students who enrolled in the course, whose English proficiency level at the needs analysis stage was Beginner-A1 (Appendix A), to achieve reading comprehension proficiency at level Upper intermediate B2 (Appendices B & G). The achievement

of the general objective is successfully proven throughout all this report and also helps draw the important following conclusions.

A major conclusion to draw is that an ESP academic proposal to teaching is greatly supported and accurately carried out by a proper needs analysis and such understanding is fundamental to develop language learning/teaching programs that look to meet the academic and learning needs of the beneficiaries. This too proves to not only be sensitive to contextual conditions during unfolding but also encourage and motivate students as they understand the learning process is meaningful and highly productive.

If the real necessities, lacks and wants as expressed by the beneficiaries and brought about by a rigorous needs analysis are truly to be taken into account, there must inquiry about the conceptions of course, syllabus and class design which entails rethinking methodologies, methods, contents, skills and their ways of presentation.

Another crucial point is the evidence that the discourse approach to teaching English for Specific Purposes proved to work successfully. When scientific medical text was shown to students, they resorted to their medical discourse knowledge and used it to access word and text meaning by going beyond form to grasp content, for, at times, it looked like the more technical and specialized in medicine the text, the easier for the students to grasp meaning deductively. This is in part due to the fact that the medicine students, being familiar with scientific exposition, can easily identify scientific discourse structure.

Consequently, this explicitly points out that learning the English language, as well as reading comprehension of text in English, can be made possible by means of not only linguistic structure such as grammar but also discourse, i.e. a teacher can either follow a traditional structural syllabus for English language teaching or opt for drawing on the meanings in scientific discourse that students have knowledge of and use them as the underlying structure where learning takes place.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Out of the knowledge acquired by means of the experiences and results in this project, a number of recommendations can be made with respect to theoretical, didactic in logistic issues in the stages of planning and conceptualizing, needs analysis and organization.

When it comes to planning and conceptualizing an ESP course or project, it is imperative that an appropriate framework of reference be resorted to. This has to do with methodological foundations that can be integrated into ESP. This is of paramount importance provided that if solid approaches, theories, and principles are established, the course designer and teacher will have confidence in the decisions to make and actions to take.

Needless to say the needs analysis is a vital factor in any ESP course given that it differs from general English and, thus, its methodological components can and should be designed based on insights into the context where English is needed and will be used. To do so, the selection of instruments such as questionnaires and tests are of great help, for they can be applied massively to a great number of informants in order to have access to a great deal of information validated by the majority.

Although the questionnaire and the test are useful instruments to collect data, an instrument which can bring about insights such as perceptions and beliefs is necessary as well. This was the interview whose application is highly recommended since in this project it proved to be a key instrument to access to critical issues that had not come out during the application of the former two instruments.

Another important stage is organization that is the process by which all the actors involved in the project decide on the steps to follow to carry out the project. Here it is really necessary to make sure all aspects are taken care of because if something, however insignificant, goes wrong, it will have an effect on the flow of the project.

Some troublesome issues in organization are the following: schedules that overlap and prevent students from attending to classes, classroom availability which certainly ruins the stability of the classes since without a classroom classes cannot be taught, access to materials for the fact that, for instance, a copy shop which does not have the material ready for the students will definitely hinder the learning process, and poor communication which not only poses conditions for misunderstandings and confusion but also portrays an impression of informality and seriousness.

All in all, such undertakings as carrying out ESP projects in the Medicine School should be highly encouraged and progressively perfected and continued. It has been clear to not only me but also the Medicine School Dean that a more thorough action plan should be made to tackle the problem of low English proficiency level of the medicine student body at UMSA given their compulsory need to read medical text in English for academic and professional growth.

It is recommended that such action plan should be made for both the short and the long run since starting projects all over every year means discontinuity of both learning and organizational processes resulting in bureaucratic procedures that benefit the students only during a seven-month period. If a long-term program were made, however, under which yearly ESP projects were carried out, the students could have access to continuing education.

This will not only benefit students but also the Medicine School as each project will not be isolated training attempts but components of a coordinated program that will strength over time and aim at ensuring a medicine student profile proficient in, at least, reading medical text in English -a program that capitalizes on previous feedback and systematically looks to equip each and every medicine student with English language skills, in other words, a more ambitious educational action regarding teaching English for Specific Purposes at the Medicine School at UMSA.

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APENDICE

The CEFR categorizes learners into three broad groups divided, in turn, into six levels:

A Basic User:	A1 Breakthrough or beginner	A2 Waystage or elementary
B Independent User:	B1 Threshold or intermediate	B2 Vantage or upper intermediate
C Proficient User:	C1 Effective Operational Proficiency or advanced C2 Mastery or proficiency	

The description of the skills the learners acquire in reading, listening, speaking and writing at each level is presented as follows:

A1 Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

A2 Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

B1 Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

B2 CAN UNDERSTAND THE MAIN IDEAS OF COMPLEX TEXT ON BOTH CONCRETE AND ABSTRACT TOPICS, INCLUDING TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS IN HIS/HER FIELD OF SPECIALIZATION. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

C1 Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

C2 Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

BLUEPRINT LESSON PLAN

Teacher: Miguel Angel Velasco Rojas	Title of Course: ESP – reading comprehension of medical text	Student Age/Level: 20-25
Title of Lesson: Metacognitive reading strategies – meaning from context	Number of Students: 16	Length of lesson: 90 minutes
I. Overarching goal of the lesson:		
Enable students to access lexical meaning by applying the strategy <i>understanding meaning from context</i>		
II. Prerequisites:		
At the beginning of this lesson, students are expected to already know the use and form of basic English tenses such as simple present, simple past and present continuous. They are expected to own knowledge of the scientific discourse drawn upon in the text. They are expected to know how to approach medical text in English by analyzing structures and meaning. They are expected to have already worked on modulated translation of simple medical text.		
III. Instructional Objectives for the lesson:		
	Materials	Strategy
1. Given an authentic medical text on the pericardium, the students will identify the scientific discourse topic pinpointing the vocabulary unfamiliar to them that prevents full reading comprehension.	Authentic text: excerpt on the pericardium	Understanding meaning from context
2. Given the concept and use of the meta-cognitive reading strategy Understanding meaning from context , the students will approach the new vocabulary implementing the strategy to access lexical meaning	Authentic text: excerpt on the pericardium	
3. Given the practice and feedback in application of the strategy, the students will make a written translation conveying the text meaning in detail	A blank piece of paper	
IV. Lesson Description:		
1 st The students individually skim through the authentic medical text individually and activate their scientific discourse		
2 nd the students scan the text for unknown words and circle them		
3 rd the students and the teacher thin of structural, lexical or semantic solutions		

- 4th the students think of possible meanings of the word by associating them with the topic drawn on and resorting to their scientific knowledge
- 5th the students and the teacher substitute the possible meanings in the sentences where vocabulary is unknown
- 6th the students individually complete the sentences making their predictions of meaning to access sentence meaning
- 7th the students construct complete text with their predictions to access text meaning
- 8th the students are supported to verify how appropriate their predictions are
- 9th the students resort to other possible solutions and associations if meaning is not complete
- 10th the students now individually proceed to make a written translation into Spanish focusing on text meaning rather than form
- 11th the students and the teacher altogether check text meaning by going over the translations and agreeing on scientific meaning
- 12th the students individually correct their predictions
- 13th the students and the class altogether discuss the application of the strategy by raising awareness of its usefulness
- 14th once the discursive meaning of the text has been accessed to, the students and the teacher go over language structures or linguistic features typical of the text that are new to the students

V. Relationship between the meta-cognitive strategies and the lesson—Tell us how these strategies are suitable to this lesson.

Clearly explain how the ideas are developed and practiced in the lesson

In this sample lesson, a number of strategies and principles are put into practice. First, the students themselves are encouraged to develop their autonomy by approaching the text and make meaning of it individually. Then, reinforcing learner autonomy the students are asked to identify their vocabulary problems, thus making meaningful learning as the material used is highly relevant to their discourse and needs. To provide scaffolding, the first three activities are accompanied and guided by the teacher, but then they are asked to think of the problems and possible solutions, evaluate the solutions and implement them. This certifies they exercise meta-cognition. Furthermore, they implement the strategy “understanding meaning from context” and, therefore, understand the paramount importance of the strategy as they use it to solve vocabulary problems. All these activities center about their completing one task which is to access the discourse meaning of the text on the pericardium whose comprehension is made visible when they make a written translation of the meaning. This is an example of how the class integrates the strategies and principles, as well as the language frameworks and theoretical foundations are put into application in an ESP course.

