*Departamento de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa*

# III JORNADAS DE ACTUALIZACIÓN EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

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# INDICE

**I- Plenarios**

**II- Ponencias**

**III- Talleres**

**Palabras de las Editoras**

En el marco del Bicentenario del Natalicio de Domingo Faustino Sarmiento nos planteamos crear un espacio de reflexión acerca del impacto de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, hecho que contribuye al desarrollo de un pensamiento más flexible y promueve una cosmovisión más amplia del mundo en su diversidad. Por tal motivo, se convocaron y organizaron las *III Jornadas de Actualización en la Enseñanza del Inglés* que contaron con la presencia de profesores de las distintas áreas y niveles de nuestro medio, quienes compartieron e intercambiaron experiencias áulicas y de investigación, en el ámbito de la Lingüística General como de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en particular.

"Educar es acercarle el mundo a otra persona. Cuando un niño pregunta ¿qué es eso?, en realidad quiere decir dámelo. Pide que le entreguemos la realidad y nosotros debemos hacerle ese obsequio", expresa el filósofo español Fernando Savater. En este sentido, como profesionales de la educación, asumimos el desafío de reflexionar y reorientar nuestras prácticas como un aporte ciudadano en respuesta a las necesidades concretas de nuestro tiempo. Enseñar una lengua constituye una instancia privilegiada para la formación de ciudadanos abiertos al diálogo comprensivo y enriquecedor con el otro, desde el respeto de la diversidad.

Nuevamente la respuesta a esta convocatoria ha excedido nuestras expectativas, hecho que refleja la intención de estar mejor equipados para hacer frente a las demandas y requerimientos de las nuevas generaciones.

Myriam Arrabal
Andrea Leceta

# PLENARIOS

# CONTENT, CREATIVITY AND BEYOND: TEACHING RESEARCH THROUGH LITERATURE

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## Abstract

This workshop will present some reflections on the need to include research-oriented activities in our classroom. The emphasis will be on literary research, though the underlying concepts may be applied to any other area of interest to the attendants. The presentation will be based on examples taken from actual teaching at the undergraduate level in Teacher Training College, though research teaching may be applied to all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary institutions). Preparing students for their future performance at university, in jobs, and in everyday life implies that they start actually doing research early. This means that teachers can open up their syllabi to include research-oriented activities, in order to guide students in their approach to (literary) studies. In so doing, students will be able to realize that studying literature goes beyond the analytical stage, in order to reach a deeper, creative research activity that will later be central to their work as graduates. After an initial presentation of some theoretical concepts, attendants will work on the possibility of teaching research to their students, and will start developing material to work with them.

## Doing research

We do research all the time, though not necessarily in academic terms. Think of your own experience: When you do your shopping, you ask friends and visit several stores before deciding which one offers the best quality for the lowest price. If you have kids, it is highly probable that you did some research before choosing where to send them to school. Before starting college, you probably attended an educational opportunities fair and inquired about the different careers you had in mind. And don't we all conduct Internet searches? (the word is close to research in form and etymology). The list of examples might go on for hours, and each of you, I'm sure, may provide his/her own. If this type of informal research is part of our daily lives, we may start by ascertaining the value of research in educational contexts as well. Whether we teach at primary, secondary or tertiary/college level, we may all work with our students to help them develop research skills that will help them in their academic and/or working future. It is well known that these days most people who finish a college degree will pursue graduate (master or doctoral) degrees, where research is a basic skill. We have also mentioned the example of the Internet: no matter what our students will do in the future, they will certainly use the web as one of their main (if not the most) central

sources of information. So we may as well start working with them towards understanding what is serious, reliable information, and what is not.

What follows is a reflection on the importance of teaching academic research, based on my experience with British Literature students at Teacher Training College (UNCuyo) in Mendoza. As we have said, though, research teaching may be applied to all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary institutions). Preparing students for their future performance at university, in jobs, and in everyday life implies that they start actually doing research early. This means that teachers can open up their syllabi to include research-oriented activities, in order to guide students in their approach to literary studies (which is the field from which I will draw my examples). In so doing, students will be able to realize that studying literature goes beyond the analytical stage, in order to reach a deeper, creative research activity that will later be central to their work as graduates. After an initial presentation of some theoretical concepts, we will work on the possibility of teaching research to students, and will start developing material to work with them.

**The four stages**

Gotthelf and Vicente summarize the four stages of any type of research: choice of topic; heuristics, or search of information; hermeneutics, or analysis and interpretation, and synthesis and actual writing of results. (Gotthelf; Vicente, 1995: 26-27)

Since the four steps of research do not happen chronologically, but are interrelated, some aspects of the choice of topic are considered in the heuristic moment too. Depending on what we teach and at which level, we may assign different activities for students to choose a topic for research. A language class in which a character from history or literature is mentioned may open the path to an enriching, creative research process. Just a name, or a song, or a poem, or a story may awaken students' interests to look for information about the past, about a distant place, about customs and cultures different from our own...

In relation to this, on many occasions students skip visits to the library and substitute them by Internet search. Yet, they seldom know how to distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources, and feel surprised –and thankful- when they are told about the existence of Google Scholar or other academic search engines.

We may also encourage our students to consult other "sources of information". They may interview other teachers, family members, neighbors, etc. This is very helpful since it fosters communication, enabling students to get into contact with people they may have never talked to otherwise, or to talk to them about new topics, to go beyond their circle to learn about other people's interests and activities, many times done within their same institution.

According to Gotthelf and Vicente, this is the "moment of research which implies four closely connected intellectual activities: reading, analysis, recording and critical interpretation of the material found in the heuristic moment".  (105) As we can see, in fact this moment may have already started in the previous steps. Considering my experience teaching literature, in order to prepare future researchers who are able of providing original views of their object (their literary object), students are encouraged to read the texts and provide their own interpretation, not just that which they would tend to download from the Internet. It is probably at this point when they come to fully realize that doing research implies looking for a deep truth, going to the roots of something, following a method, and producing a logical, coherent result. (Gotthelf; Vicente: 23-25)

Reading (in the case of literary research, but also in other areas, as well as interviewing people, watching movies or TV, searching the Internet) results in decoding a message, at a point in which the author's intentions and the reader's/interviewer's/spectator's interpretation meet. This allows for multiple interpretations, or readings, and thus, research results, which come to enrich the science (understood as knowledge. Many times we think of science as something far from our daily lives; yet, the word science means knowledge, and we all need knowledge about the world around us to survive, to learn about ourselves, to understand our neighbor). And if we do research (if we are interested in that world around us and ask ourselves and others questions about it), we may all contribute to a better understanding, even on topics that we thought were closed down for discussion. In my literature class, students may choose to write their final papers (after carrying out the research process) on texts about which much has been said, but which may still speak to them in new voices.

Finally, the results of all research should be communicated, which in my class means students are expected to write a final paper to pass the course. Depending on the level you teach, communication may be done in several ways, not just a paper. Students

may prepare a class presentation, a poster, an article for the school paper, a public class to which parents and students and teachers from other classes are invited, etc. Experience shows that the results are usually highly acceptable; that students get involved with their topic and produce well rounded-off papers with interesting conclusions that may lead to future research projects of their own, in later stages of the academic process. As I am referring to the work I do with college students who aim at becoming researchers, I will provide as an example the case of a student who read one chapter from the South African Nobel Prize winning writer Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*. She also read a poem by Greek writer Konstantin Kavafis, from which the novel takes its title, in a very interesting intertext. The, she attended office hours, to ask for some guidelines into the poem, some historical ties which might help understand it (though it is not specifically set in time or place), and discussed with the teacher the connections between different literary pieces. She felt so moved by both the poem and the chapter that she decided to read the whole novel and do some research on Border Narratives for her final paper. To do this, she visited the library, searched for information in the Internet, and talked to a teacher who had attended a graduate course on Border Narratives. This is the ideal case, in which a student's intellectual curiosity prompts him/her to bridge cultures, languages, subjects, etc, in search of a deeper knowledge, that is, in search of the (literary) truth.

**Why teach literary research?**

The question might well be preceded by a similar one: Why teach literature? The answer is that we (foreign language teachers) find in it "the best delights we have to offer" (Vendler, 1988: 16). We teach literature because it shows us who we really are; because in it we may find images, reflections of our self –or selves. And we teach it because "nothing is more lonely than to go through life uncompanioned by a sense that others have also gone through it, and have left a record of their experience." (Vendler: 24)

So this presentation should have started by pointing out the value of literature, not just that of research. Yet, as we said, since many times we think of research as something far from us, literature may help bridge the gap, provide enjoyment as well as beautiful ways of approaching the foreign language, and the need to go beyond the text and do research.

In a book meant for undergraduate students who start their literary studies, Kelley Griffith states that, "by studying literature, you 'see' more of it to appreciate. And you

often learn that … good literature pleases by reflecting and clarifying the real world and by helping you define your place in it." (Griffith, 1994: 3)

This leads us to another consideration, which in turn will answer the first question. As Harry Levin points out,

> … if we are still in the habit of reading literature as a record of the human condition, their apperceptions [those of critics and scholars) might well change our minds or alert us to something that we had missed. They can present some fresh and fairly extensive grounds for reinterpretation. (1988: 39)

By teaching students to do research, we teach them to think critically about the literary works (or the world), to develop their own ideas and interpretations, to produce knowledge and to share it with others, and to "appropriate" the texts and/or the world in a way that will leave an imprint on their lives and, why not, on that of others as well.

When we teach our students how to do research, we are teaching them to go deeper than mere intuitions. They will probably start at the level of intuition and subjective appreciation –which is fine. Yet, as Hebe Molina states, "A researcher must be, above all, a good reader." (Molina: 238) This means that we have to be aware that intuitions are just the beginning, and that we should go deeper in our desire to understand the world around us (or the books on our shelves). It is our responsibility to guide students into the acquisition of some concepts. Among them is this basic difference between theme and problem. If they succeed in grasping it, and are able to produce a result (whether a paper, a presentation, an article, or a report)  in which they apply the basic methods and principles of research, we will have succeeded in our role as teachers teaching research.

**Conclusion**

Research is a highly specialized activity, but these days, more and more people are involved in it. Teachers who reflect upon and do research on their teaching practice, teachers-researchers who, funded by the university or other organizations, produce knowledge in several disciplines; all this shows that research has become a central part of our profession. Thus, it is necessary that our students get in contact with this activity as early as possible, so that they get the guide they need for their first –and later- steps in the research field, or in their jobs, whatever they might be.

To round off, we teachers have the responsibility of strengthening –or awakening- in our students enthusiasm in having an inquiring mind that wishes to interpret the questions the world posits. The main challenge consists of making them aware of the specificity of the area we teach (for example, aesthetic pleasure in the case of Literature); of supporting their ideas and projects; and of giving them the tools that may help them in the research activity: namely, basic information and methodological concepts that will enable them to reflect upon literature, or upon the world. Such is the goal of teaching research.

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# Workshop: "Content, creativity and beyond: teaching research through literature"

This is a guide to help us get together in groups and work towards the possibility of implementing research activities in our classroom, based on literary texts (whether we teach literature or something else).

1. Think of different situations in which we need to have a critical attitude, make inquiries, draw conclusions or show any other attitude which, in an academic context, would be related to research.

2. Read the following short texts and choose the one(s) you find most suitable for your group of students, according to age, level, interests, etc. and try to create as many questions / problems that may call for research on the part of students.

*The next three texts are prose poems by Charles Simic, an American poet born in Yugoslavia in 1938.In 2007 he was appointed Poet Laureate of the Library of Congress. In 1990 he had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his collection* The World Doesn't End*, from which I have taken these poems:*

The time of minor poets is coming. Good-by Whitman, Dickinson, Frost. Welcome you whose fame will never reach beyond your closest family, and perhaps one or two good friends gathered after dinner over a jug of fierce red wine . . . while the children are falling asleep and complaining about the noise you're making as you rummage through the closets for your old poems, afraid your wife might've thrown them out with last spring's cleaning.

It's snowing, says someone who has peeked into the dark night, and then he, too, turns towards you as you prepare yourself to read, in a manner somewhat theatrical and with a face turning red, the long rambling love poem whose final stanza (unknown to you) is hopelessly missing.

_____

I am the last Napoleonic soldier. It's almost two hundred years later and I am still retreating from Moscow. The road is lined with white birch trees and the mud comes up to my knees. The one-eyed woman wants to sell me a chicken, and I don't even have any clothes on.

The Germans are going one way; I am going the other. The Russians are going still another way and waving good-by. I have a ceremonial saber. I use it to cut my hair, which is four feet long.

_____

It was the epoch of the masters of levitation. Some evenings we saw solitary men and women floating above the dark tree tops. Could they have been sleeping or thinking? They made no attempt to navigate. The wind nudged them ever so slightly. We were afraid to speak, to breathe. Even the nightbirds were quiet. Later, we'd mention the little book clasped in the hand of the young woman, and the way the old man lost his hat to the cypresses.

In the morning, there were not even clouds in the sky. We saw a few crows preen themselves at the edge of the road, the shirts raise their empty sleeves on the blind woman's clothesline.

*The next texts are lyrics of songs by Canadian poet, novelist and singer Leonard Cohen, who has just been awarded the Prícnipe de Asturias Award for Literature (both for his books and for his songs, which have been described as poems set to music).*

Sometimes I find I get to thinking of the past.
We swore to each other then that our love would surely last.
You kept right on loving, I went on a fast,
now I am too thin and your love is too vast.
But I know from your eyes
and I know from your smile
that tonight will be fine,
will be fine, will be fine, will be fine
for a while.

I choose the rooms that I live in with care,
the windows are small and the walls almost bare,
there's only one bed and there's only one prayer;
I listen all night for your step on the stair.

But I know from your eyes
and I know from your smile
that tonight will be fine,
will be fine, will be fine, will be fine
for a while.

Oh sometimes I see her undressing for me,
she's the soft naked lady love meant her to be
and she's moving her body so brave and so free.
If I've got to remember that's a fine memory.

And I know from her eyes
and I know from her smile
that tonight will be fine,
will be fine, will be fine, will be fine
for a while.

_____

"The Partisan"

When they poured across the border
I was cautioned to surrender,
this I could not do;
I took my gun and vanished.
I have changed my name so often,
I've lost my wife and children
but I have many friends,
and some of them are with me.

An old woman gave us shelter,
kept us hidden in the garret,

then the soldiers came;
she died without a whisper.

There were three of us this morning
I'm the only one this evening
but I must go on;
the frontiers are my prison.

Oh, the wind, the wind is blowing,
through the graves the wind is blowing,
freedom soon will come;
then we'll come from the shadows.

Les Allemands e'taient chez moi, (The Germans were at my home)
ils me dirent, "Signe toi," (They said, "Sign yourself,")
mais je n'ai pas peur; (But I am not afraid)
j'ai repris mon arme. (I have retaken my weapon.)

J'ai change' cent fois de nom, (I have changed names a hundred times)
j'ai perdu femme et enfants (I have lost wife and children)
mais j'ai tant d'amis; (But I have so many friends)
j'ai la France entie`re. (I have all of France)

Un vieil homme dans un grenier (An old man, in an attic)
pour la nuit nous a cache', (Hid us for the night)
les Allemands l'ont pris; (The Germans captured him)
il est mort sans surprise. (He died without surprise.)

Oh, the wind, the wind is blowing,
through the graves the wind is blowing,
freedom soon will come;
then we'll come from the shadows.
 (*The song actually includes the lines in French; here a translation into English is provided*)

3. Let's recall the four stages in the research process:

- CHOICE OF TOPIC
- HEURISTICS, or search of information
- HERMENEUTICS, or analysis and interpretation
- SYNTHESIS and actual writing of results.

Now predict how these moments would actually take place in your classroom / with your students, considering the text you have chosen.

4. Let's read again:

*We teach literature because in it we find "the best delights we have to offer"* (Vendler, 1988: 16).

*And we teach it because "nothing is more lonely than to go through life uncompanioned by a sense that others have also gone through it, and have left a record of their experience."* (Vendler: 24)

Please discuss and prepare the group's interpretation of these two phrases in relation to the text you selected and to the research that may start with it.

# FALLING-RISING INTONATION PATTERNS
# IN SITCOM ENGLISH

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## Abstract

Intonation has traditionally been defined as the way our voice goes up and down in different parts of our message as we speak...but what happens when we go down and then up in the SAME part of the message? English speakers make extensive use of what is usually known as falling-rising intonation patterns, but...how many are there? What do they mean? How do we represent them in transcription? This talk will introduce the falling-rising patterns of English, outline frequent uses identified in sitcom English, show you how speakers making meanings through them, and offer you ways of representing falling-rising patterns in transcription when you hear them.

## 1. Why falling-rising intonation?

Falling-rising intonation is typically English and every English language professional must be able to recognise it, and use it meaningfully.

- It's "very characteristic of Southern (British) English and is well worth the trouble spent in acquiring it" (Armstrong & Ward, 1926:65, my brackets).

- "Tone 4 (fall-rise) is the second most common of the English tones, being considerably more frequent than any except tone 1 (fall)" (Halliday, 1970:27, my brackets).

- The falling ⊇ and the falling-rising ∴⊄(tones) (…) are by far the most frequent in our data…' (Brazil et al., 1980:13, my brackets).

## 2. What *is* falling-rising intonation?

- Pitch **falls** and then **rises**, either on one syllable or over a succession of syllables.

- Widespread **consensus** on the existence of a **unitary** ‖ **v** ‖ pattern, but

**considerable disagreement** on variant forms: **Unitary** ‖ ‖ vs. **binuclear** ‖ ＼ ╱ ‖ or ‖ ＼ ∣ ‖.

The fall-rise ↘↗

ʃi wəz ˈver i ˅kæʒ u əl əˈbaʊt ɪt
or
ʃi wəz ˈver i ˈkæʒ u əl ə↗baʊt ɪt

## 3. Transcriptions proposed here

- **Falling-rising nuclear tone 1 (UNITARY)**: Falling-rising movement realised *on final syllable* (=Fall and rise on the same syllable!) ‖ ˅ ‖



Phonetic shape 1

bi ˈkeə fl̩ ˈnɒt tə ˅fɔːl

- **Falling-rising nuclear tone 2 (UNITARY)**: Falling-rising movement realised *on non-final syllable of final lexical item, including compound words* (=Fall on nuclear syllable, rise on next/last (full-vowelled) syllable!) ‖ ˅ ‖



Phonetic shape 2

ʃiz ˈver i sə ˅fɪst ɪ keɪt ɪd

- **Falling-rising nuclear tone 3 (BINUCLEAR):** Falling-rising movement realised *across several lexical items* (Fall on nuclear syllable, rise on last full-vowelled syllable). ‖ ╲ ‖

Phonetic shape 3

> **Suggestion**: Teaching falling-rising intonations without concern for the behaviour of the rise (whether gradual or final), and transcribing them by using a **unitary stress mark |v|** if the **the last lexical item** is involved, and a **separated \ and /** if the movement is **spread over two or more lexical items**, the latter according better with tonetic reality (This facilitating acquisition, in my view, by providing more accurate visual support for production).

**4. Some more examples in transcription…**

- ‖ ᵛMine ‖
- ‖ I ˈdon't think it's ᵛmine ‖
- ‖ ᵛAlmost ‖
- ‖ \Mine, you⁄mean ‖
- ‖ ᵛFortunately | she was \wasn't ‖
- ‖ She was a ˈgreat ᵛstateswoman ‖
- ‖ It's getting \hotter in⁄here ‖

**5. We'll now watch some scenes from *Coupling*, a popular British sitcom, where the speakers use falling-rising patterns:**

Steve: she ought to know by ˅now². I've dumped her the last four times I've ˅seen her².

Sally: So you said you had a fantastic \time last week⁄end.³ Maybe he's thinking, you know...

Susan: One swallow doesn't make a ˅summer⁴

Steve: So \last time I ⁄dumped her⁵, we had amazing, fantastic, borderline illegal sex.

Sally: Every ˅morning⁶; your face has slipped a little bit more. Since thirty I've had to put a daily \limit on facial ex⁄pressions.⁷ (...) The only reason I ˅work⁸ is so I stop worrying about my hair.

Steve: I'll be just about to ˅leave⁹ thinking I'm finally ˅out²⁰ and she just leans over and looks me in the eye and goes 'I'm wearing stockings'.

Susan: \Hi ⁄Patrick.¹¹

Steve: No, no you \can't not ac⁄cept it.¹²
Jane: Well if I don't get a ˅say in it¹³, then I don't accept it.

Patrick: I can tell from the way she ˅acts around me¹⁴ that she finds me attractive
Sally: Is there any form of female behaviour that you \don't interpret as finding you at⁄tractive¹⁵

Susan: If you two are ˅finished...¹⁶
Patrick: Yeah, yeah I do. (To sally) Can you \give us a⁄minute?¹⁷

Susan: I didn't mean to hurt your ˅feelings.¹⁸ I mean it's not as if we're being ˅faithful or anything.¹⁹ (...) We were only seeing each other once a ˅week...²⁰ that's not exactly a ˅sex life.²¹

Jane: They worked at it. \That's the real lesson of the ⁄Cripins.²² (...) Well yes e˅ventually.²³

Susan: I'm not saying it wasn't ˅good.²⁴

*Each instance above has a number. With the person sitting right next to you (or alone if you prefer), match the numbers with the uses of falling-rising intonation suggested below:*

I. Concession, contrast, implication:
_____

II. Theme highlighting/imcompleteness:
_____

III. Major idea + minor (circumstantial, anaphoric, subsidiary) idea:
_____

IV. Request:
_____

**6. Now listen to extracts from The Big Bang Theory and mark fall-rise patterns in the places you hear them.**

**Raj**: Ok. In Avatar, when they have sex on Pandora, they hook up their pony-tails. So we know

their pony-tails are like their junk.

**Howard**: Yeah, so?

**Raj**: So, when they ride the horses and fly on the birds, they also use their ponytails.

**Howard**: What's your point?

**Raj**: My point is, if I were a horse or a bird, I'd be very nervous around James Cameron.

**Sheldon**: It amazes me how you're constantly obsessed over fictional details when there are more important things in the real world to worry about. For example, why wasn't William Shatner in the new Star Trek movie?

**Leonard**: Hey, Sheldon. I was up in the administration office, and I happened to overhear the name of the winner of this year's Chancellor's Award for Science.

**Sheldon**: And you want to rub my nose with the fact that my contributions are being overlooked again? I am the William Shatner of theoretical physics. All right, I'll play. What self-important, preening fraud are they honoring this year?

**Leonard**: Oh, I'm so glad you asked it like that. You!

**Sheldon**: I won?!

**Leonard**: You won.

**Sheldon**: I won! This is astonishing! Not that I won the award-- no one deserves it more. Actually, I guess I misspoke. It's not astonishing; more like inevitable. I'm not sure what to do first. Maybe I should call my mother. Wait! I know-- I'm going to conduct an interview with myself and post it online.

**Raj**: Well, good for him.

**Howard**: The one thing the William Shatner of theoretical physics needed was an ego boost.


**Here are a few more examples from the episode:**


Sheldon: \Mute, /please. (...) Yes, I was ex\pecting your /call. Three ∨years ago. (...) Well, you've got \that tied up in a neat little /bow. (...) ∨Thank you. (...) I \can't give a /speech!

Howard: What you \can't /do is shut up.

Raj: Yeah, before the ∨movie, you did 20 minutes on why guacamole turns brown.

Sheldon: Oh, I doubt \that. I \haven't figured out a /way, and I'm much smarter than all of ∨you. (...) Oh I'm sorry, that is what I ∨meant.

Penny: Your ᵛproblem is you're trying to do this all by yourself.

Sheldon: I do like the ᵛX-Men. (...) That's not exactly a muᵛtation that would get you into Xavier's School for Gifted ᵛYoungsters, but go on.

Leonard: I thought I could try to ᵛanalyze you and get to the root of your anxiety. (...) My mother is a highly regarded psyᵛchiatrist, and I've been in ᵛtherapy ever since she accused me of breast-feeding co-dependently.

Sheldon: Well, I asᵛsume, since the rest of you have set the bar so ᵛlow, you're saving the most imᵛpressive contribution for last.

Penny: So, what do you \say, ⁄Sheldon?

Sheldon: Since I am Sheldon ᵛCooper, you will be my C-Men.

## 8. Bonus! Spot the one occurrence of falling-rising intonation!

FRAN: Hello I'm Fran Fine, your "Shades of the Orient" cosmetics representative. Oy, what a loser.

FRAN: Hello, I'm Fran Fine.

NILES: Yes, come in. We've been expecting you.

FRAN: Oh you have?

NILES: You are here for the Nanny position?

FRAN: I could be… Wow, this place is nicer than my Uncle Jack's condo in Boca and ya know he bought the model.

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### Summing up...

- Sticking **only** to a **unitary fall-rise tone mark in transcription** seems to fall short of helping students pronounce longer tone groups with an early nucleus. Separated fall + rise marks will probably lead to a less **foreign-sounding** fall-rise.

- Speakers' falling-rising intonations do mainly 4 main things: a) they **imply** more that the mere words or **point out a contrast**, b) they **highlight initial elements** in utterances (whether marked or neutral), c) they state a major idea with appended additional info or an afterthought, and d) they may sometimes –and probably ever more frequently– signal some sort of **request**.

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# PONENCIAS

# REFLEXIONES SOBRE LA EXPANSIÓN DEL INGLÉS EN EL MUNDO

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## Abstract

En este trabajo presentamos un nuevo proyecto de investigación, que se ubica en el marco teórico-metodológico de la sociolingüística variacionista: *Anglicismos en San Juan: uso y actitudes.* Se analizarán tanto el empleo de anglicismos como las actitudes de los hablantes respecto a la presencia de estos préstamos léxicos en los intercambios verbales cotidianos, entre miembros de la comunidad sanjuanina. Actualmente, nos encontramos en la etapa de lectura de bibliografía focalizada en esa temática. En esta oportunidad nos referiremos al concepto de anglicismo y a algunas clasificaciones de los mismos realizadas por varios autores, así como a diversas razones propuestas por los especialistas, en relación con el fenómeno de la expansión del inglés en el mundo y su influencia en el léxico de otros idiomas.

## Introducción

En esta ponencia presentamos algunas reflexiones sobre ciertos aspectos de nuestro proyecto de investigación *Anglicismos en San Juan: uso y actitudes,* que se sitúa en el amplio campo de la sociolingüística, la cual abarca la sociología del lenguaje, la etnografía del habla y el variacionismo. El presente estudio se encuadra en esta última línea de trabajo, que sostiene como principio fundamental el hecho de que la lengua no es homogénea, sino que está estructuralmente ordenada dentro de la gran heterogeneidad que presenta el  comportamiento lingüístico de los hablantes. En esta investigación, estudiaremos el uso de anglicismos y las actitudes de los hablantes sanjuaninos respecto a la presencia de esos préstamos léxicos en los intercambios verbales cotidianos.

## Influencia entre lenguas en contacto

El empleo de los anglicismos está relacionado con el fenómeno de las lenguas en contacto. Esta situación se da en muchas partes del mundo en las que se da la

convivencia de dos o más lenguas en una misma comunidad de habla. Así, es frecuente que una de ellas -generalmente el sistema lingüístico más poderoso desde el punto de vista político y económico- ejerza su influencia sobre la otra, en mayor o menor grado.

El contacto entre lenguas puede ser directo -como en zonas fronterizas o en países bilingües o multilingües- o indirecto, también llamado virtual, diferido o a distancia (López Morales, 1993). Este es el tipo de contacto que tienen el español y el inglés en la Argentina, donde la lengua anglosajona tiene una fuerte influencia sobre nuestro idioma.

Es necesario aclarar que los préstamos lingüísticos no se refieren tan sólo a los extranjerismos léxicos aislados, sino también a cualquier rasgo lingüístico que deja su huella en otros niveles de la lengua. De esta manera, la influencia de un idioma se puede observar tanto en las estructuras léxicas de la lengua receptora, como en las gramaticales y fonético-fonológicas. No obstante, el más frecuente fenómeno interlingüístico de influencia entre lenguas en contacto es el de los préstamos léxicos. Rodríguez Medina considera que *"se trata de una tendencia sociolingüística duradera que no responde a modas efímeras"* y observa que *"su uso se empieza a apreciar en el lenguaje coloquial, especialmente entre los jóvenes*" (2004:106).

Según Poplack y Sankoff, "*una forma que pasa de una lengua a otra pierde poco a poco su carácter de elemento extraño para convertirse en uno incorporado (…) Esta transición puede durar meses, años o generaciones"* (en Lastra, 1992:189). Esta última autora propone cuatro criterios para describir el grado de incorporación de los préstamos a la lengua receptora:

1. Frecuencia de empleo: cuantas más personas y con mayor asiduidad utilicen un extranjerismo, más integrado estará en la lengua destinataria.
2. Desplazamiento del vocablo equivalente en la lengua receptora.
3. Integración morfo-fonémica y sintáctica: el vocablo se considera incorporado, si se emplea con la forma fonológica, los afijos y las funciones sintácticas propias de la lengua que los adopta.
4. Aceptabilidad: el préstamo ya forma parte del léxico cuando los hablantes nativos lo consideran apropiado para designar algo y no tienen conciencia de su lengua extranjera de origen.

Por último, uno de los criterios para considerar que un término importado está "oficialmente" integrado a la lengua receptora es que ya aparezca incluido en los

diccionarios, especialmente en los elaborados por la Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española, en el caso de nuestro idioma.

## Anglicismos y su clasificación

Los préstamos provenientes de la lengua inglesa son los que se denominan *anglicismos*. A la hora de definirlos, nos encontramos con disparidad de criterios. El Diccionario de la Real Academia Española (2008:8) los define como "*vocablo o giro de la lengua inglesa empleado en otra".* López Morales (1993) amplía este concepto ya que para él abarca no sólo palabras procedentes directamente del inglés sino también aquellas que proceden de otras lenguas, pero que han entrado al español a través de esta lengua anglosajona. Por su parte, Pratt (1986) los caracteriza como los diferentes elementos lingüísticos o raíces lingüísticas que se utilizan en una lengua extranjera y que tienen como étimo inmediato un modelo inglés, ya sea que se adapten o no a la lengua receptora.

En cuanto a la clasificación de anglicismos, los autores adoptan diferentes criterios. En una primera aproximación, en la bibliografía especializada  es frecuente que se los divida en **generales,** que corresponden al uso general del idioma (*shopping, jean(s), boxer*) y **específicos***,* que se inscriben en áreas particulares del conocimiento (por ejemplo, en el campo de la informática, *software, Wi Fi, escanear;* o en las ciencias económicas, *holding, dumping, leasing).*

Pratt (1980) propone contrastar entre los anglicismos de ***étimo último*** y de ***étimo primario o inmediato,*** para distinguir entre aquellos que vienen directamente del inglés como lengua original (*drugstore, rollers, fashion)* y los que -proviniendo de otra lengua- entran por medio del inglés, que se comporta, en este caso,  como lengua transmisora o mediadora del préstamo. El autor  cita, como ejemplos de estos últimos, los términos: *té* (del chino), *club* (del nórdico antiguo), *kayak*  (del esquimal), *picnic* (del francés), *bikini* (de la lengua que se habla en el atolón del mismo nombre).

Este mismo autor diferencia, además, entre: ***sintácticos y léxicos.*** En cuanto a los primeros, se copia algún aspecto del modelo sintáctico inglés, dando como resultado un sintagma poco frecuente o incorrecto en español. Así, por ejemplo, nos encontramos a menudo con nombres de negocios en los que se altera el orden normal de las palabras en español y, por ejemplo, en vez de decir *Boutique Girasoles* –con   el rubro del negocio primero  y luego su nombre propio- se prefiere *Girasoles Boutique.* Asimismo, se observa el empleo del *apóstrofe* + s ('s) del caso posesivo típico del inglés, en el nombre de comercios, tales como: *Don Ruben's, Josefina's Regalería,*

*Turko's Lomos*. Con respecto a los anglicismos léxicos, se trata de la influencia de la lengua inglesa en el campo del vocabulario español; así, aparecen en intercambios hablados en español términos como: *delivery*, *freezer, mouse.*

Concerniente a estos préstamos léxicos, Pratt (1980) los subclasifica, a su vez,  en **patentes** *y* **no patentes.** Los primeros son palabras que -ya sea que se usen sin sufrir modificaciones o se empleen ya adaptadas al español- tienen un origen inglés identificable; por ejemplo, *lifting, sidecar* o *ranking*. En cambio los no patentes resultan difíciles de reconocer como formas de procedencia inglesa, dado que se trata de términos que ya existen en español. Aquí la influencia se produce a nivel semántico: los vocablos incorporan una nueva acepción. Se dan diferentes casos, entre los que figuran:

a) Los **anglicismos semánticos paronímicos**, los cuales son  palabras españolas que agregan a su  acepción original otra nueva, proveniente de un término inglés; la forma de ambos vocablos es muy similar, dado que están etimológicamente relacionados. Así por ejemplo, *graduación* (por 'ceremonia académica de entrega de diplomas'), *conferencia* (por 'congreso' o 'jornadas') *agenda* (por 'orden del día'), *ascendencia* (por 'predominio moral' o 'influencia'), *firma* (por 'empresa'), *balance* (por 'saldo'), convertible (por 'descapotable'), *América* (por 'EEUU').

b) Los **calcos**, que consisten en la traducción española de una palabra inglesa, sin que haya una relación etimológica directa entre ambos términos; tal como *estrella* (de *star,* para designar a personas), *mariposa* (de *butterfly,* en el sentido de un estilo de natación), *cumbre* (de *summit conference*, para referirse a una reunión de estadistas),  *canal* (de *chanel,* en relación con la TV), (*en*) *vivo* (de *live,* para designar  las grabaciones transmitidas en el acto).

Por su parte, Barcia (2005) propone otra clasificación de los anglicismos: los **innecesarios o superfluos** y los **necesarios**. Los primeros han sido adoptados del inglés, a pesar de existir un vocablo equivalente en español, mientras que los segundos incluyen términos ingleses para los cuales nuestro idioma no tiene una palabra con el mismo significado. Alfaro (1970), adoptando el mismo criterio, contrasta los que él denomina **viciosos e injustificados** con  **los** ***extranjerismos y neologismos,*** cuya adopción enriquece la lengua receptora. Haciendo un paralelismo con estos autores, Lorenzo (2001) habla de anglicismos ***nocivos vs. fecundos.*** Entre los primeros figuran *diet ('dietético')*, *free ('gratis')*, *sorry ('lo siento")*; y entre los segundos, *rock, software y chatear.*

Por último, Lorenzo (2001), atendiendo a su grado de adaptación a la lengua receptora, agrupa los préstamos ingleses en: anglicismos **crudos** (los que conservan la grafía y pronunciación original), **en período de aclimatación** y **asimilados** (aquellos que están adaptados parcial o totalmente a las pautas ortográficas y/o a la morfosintaxis de la lengua receptora). Entre los primeros se incluyen: *ticket, parking, shorts, slogan*, *e-mail* y entre los últimos, *tipear, rosbif, suéter, estándar, faxear.*

**Algunas causas de la presencia de anglicismos en el español actual**

En las últimas décadas se ha acentuado  un fenómeno lingüístico-cultural de gran relevancia: la difusión mundial del inglés. Desde el punto de vista geográfico, esta lengua anglosajona es el idioma más extendido y el segundo más hablado del mundo, luego del chino mandarín. Alrededor de 377 millones de personas utilizan el inglés como lengua materna y un número similar lo emplea como segunda lengua o lengua extranjera (*Guinness World Rec*ords, 2010).  Se emplea mayoritariamente en el ámbito de las comunicaciones, el comercio internacional, el turismo, la difusión científica, los deportes, entre otros.

 Esta expansión del inglés se traduce en su  fuerte incidencia en el  léxico  de otras lenguas, tales como el español. En este proceso de paulatina adopción de anglicismos se  pueden establecer tres etapas principales, que coinciden con las épocas de mayor contacto anglohispano: 1) el siglo XVIII, período en que los intelectuales españoles son los principales receptores de la influencia tanto de la literatura, como de la vida social y cultural británicas; 2) el último cuarto del siglo XIX, caracterizado por el desarrollo tecnológico que acompañó a la Revolución Industrial y 3) el siglo XX,  la etapa más prolífera en cuanto a préstamos, particularmente después de la II Guerra Mundial (Rodríguez González, 1999).

 Resulta interesante destacar que existe una relación muy estrecha entre el predominio político, cultural y económico de una potencia sobre otras, y la proliferación de modas y usos  extranjeros, que van más allá de lo estrictamente lingüístico. Lorenzo, refiriéndose al término *anglismo* (acuñado por Rodríguez Adrados), propone que se reserve *para  "abarcar todas esas influencias de orden social -moda, religión, deporte, comportamiento, etc- que (…) designan objetivamente cuanto consideramos irradiación del fenómeno cultural anglosajón"*  (1996:261). Así,  en los últimos años, comemos *fast food*, recurrimos al *delivery* para que nos lleven pizza a domicilio*,* nos ponemos remeras con inscripciones en inglés, usamos zapatillas y  prendas deportivas

en una variedad de ocasiones -que van más allá de la mera práctica de deportes-, celebramos *Haloween* y San Valentin y, últimamente, hasta organizamos *baby showers,* todo lo cual, desde luego, excede lo meramente lingüístico.

En cuanto a los motivos de la adopción de préstamos ingleses**,** los distintos autores señalan una diversidad de causas.  Fernández García las agrupa en tres tipos: a) las de orden psicológico, como *"la imitación, la admiración de lo extraño, la afectación, el afán de novedad y la pereza intelectual"*; b) las que incluyen la aparición de un nuevo orden social, como las corrientes migratorias, el turismo y  el comercio internacional, y c) las de carácter científico, tales como el atraso científico-tecnológico de algunos países, las malas traducciones, la lectura de publicaciones extranjeras y la urgencia de renovar el idioma (1972:13).

Con respecto a Alfaro (en García Morales, 2009),  hace una presentación más general de las causas,  según la cual los anglicismos se introducen en otras lenguas debido, por un lado,  a los medios de comunicación masiva, las empresas multinacionales y la prolífera industria cinematográfica de habla inglesa, y, por otro lado, a la enorme preponderancia económica, científica y política de los Estados anglosajones, en el mundo contemporáneo.

Además de estos motivos, hay autores como Haensch (2005) que consideran que  la penetración del vocabulario inglés en otras lenguas se deben fundamentalmente a cuestiones de tipo lingüístico, tales como: la exactitud de muchos términos anglosajones, la economía lingüística asociada al inglés, el empleo de palabras inglesas a modo de eufemismos y  la cursilería de los hablantes que los adoptan por considerarlos lingüísticamente más atractivos.

En síntesis, podríamos concluir que  las causas de este fenómeno  responden  tanto a cuestiones extralingüísticas como lingüísticas. Entre las primeras -enunciadas  en términos más amplios- pueden incluirse: el colonialismo británico de los siglos XVII, XVIII y XIX, que favoreció la expansión del inglés por todos los continentes; la hegemonía  política,  económica y  científico-tecnológica de Estados Unidos, especialmente a partir de la década de los 40; y el fenómeno de la globalización, que es el resultado del extraordinario avance en las comunicaciones y se traduce en un profuso intercambio entre diversas  culturas.

Entre las razones lingüísticas de la expansión del inglés,  figuran: su gran dinamismo para crear nuevas palabras,  su morfología flexional  comparativamente  más simple que la de otra lenguas y su gran economía lingüística.

En relación con  esta capacidad de concisión, Bordelois expresa:

> *"Borges dice que el inglés es invencible en cuanto a la velocidad lingüística con que cuenta. Esa velocidad está dada por el gran número de palabras monosilábicas que posee, lo cual asegura una enorme densidad de información en una mínima extensión de tiempo. Naturalmente, en el mundo global y computacional en que habitamos, esta indiscutible ventaja relativa a la velocidad -baluarte crucial de nuestra cultura- es invalorable."* (en Agostini, 2008: 21)

Todo esto llevó al inglés a convertirse en un instrumento comunicativo de gran poder político, ideológico, económico, científico y tecnológico, de ahí que funcione como una *lingua franca,* necesaria para el intercambio -a escala mundial- de una sociedad totalmente globalizada.

Finalmente, queremos destacar que esta invasión de anglicismos ha sido muchas veces motivo de humor por parte de algunos escritores, entre ellos Aguinis, quien afirma:

> *"Cuando se preparaba la canasta del picnic se usaba la vieja fiambrera que, por elegancia, ha sido reemplazada sin hesitación por el 'tupperware' (la fiambrera suena a ordinario y hace recordar las moscas).El gimnasio se dice 'gym' y los ejercicios que mejoran la capacidad respiratoria, 'aerobics'. Caminar es mucho más efectivo si lo calificamos de 'footing'. Y, si nuestra capacidad física nos impulsa a desplazarnos entre arbustos, troncos, piedras y abismos, practicamos algo tan sofisticado que merece llamarse 'trekking'"* (…)

El autor concluye diciendo: *"Los mismos que no renuncian a la fobia antiyanqui se la pasan haciendo buches con anglicismos de cualquier ralea."* (2001:182)

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# SHARING REFLECTIONS ON ELT COURSEBOOK COMPONENTS

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## Abstract

Within the framework of a research project being conducted at the School of Languages of the National University of Cordoba, several foreign language coursebooks (CBs) are being analyzed. Some CB aspects, such as the table of contents, titles of units, rubrics and some graphic design elements are being studied following Halliday's language model (Halliday, 1985, 1994, 2004). In all cases, the question is posed whether such elements - verbal and graphic- are the way they are because of the functions they are expected to serve. Our analysis of verbal components is inspired in SFL's metafunctions and our exploration of graphic elements relies on findings from multimodal studies (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Bateman, 2008). In this paper, some of the project's guiding premises are presented, together with some preliminary results with the purpose of promoting teachers' reflection and a more critical use of CBs.

## Introduction

As part of a research project being conducted at the School of Languages of the National University of Cordoba, we are analyzing several aspects of a set of foreign language coursebooks (CB) with the purpose of developing greater awareness about how meanings are made and exchanged in this now complex artifact.

The choice of a CB is one of the most important decisions made in relation to what will happen in an EFL class. The CB usually has a direct impact on the contents to be discussed, the grammar points covered, the vocabulary presented and the type of activities carried out. Richards (2001:1) very clearly presents the advantages associated with the use of a CB not only for teachers but also for students and teacher trainees:

> Textbooks […] may provide the basis for the content of the lessons, the balance of skills taught and the kinds of language practice the students take part in. In other situations, the textbook may serve primarily to supplement the teacher's instruction. For learners, the textbook may provide the major source of contact that they have with the language apart from input provided by the teacher. In the case of inexperienced teachers, textbooks may also serve as a form of teacher training -they provide ideas on how to plan and teach lessons as well as formats that teachers can use.

There are many other considerations that come into play at the time of selecting a CB. Again, following Richards, we may consider cultural aspects, such as: How close to or removed from the learners' experience are the materials presented in the CB?; Is the coverage of grammar points suited to the teacher/institution needs?; Is the CB affordable to the students (and teachers in our context)?; Is it challenging enough? Does it lend itself to be used with the class size that the teacher needs?; Can the students use it on their own for out-of-class activities?

From the perspective of teachers, no single CB ever meets the needs of one particular educational context, and teachers often find themselves supplementing, replacing or transforming CB materials to accommodate them to their specific contexts. This adaptation effort is recognized in Richards's statement: "*Learning how to use and adapt textbooks is hence an important part of a teacher's professional knowledge*" (2001:1).

We believe that an awareness of how CB components are deployed and how they make meaning can aid teachers to make more critical use of CBs in general. The research we are conducting is intended to help us develop a better understanding of such components. Guided by the conception of meaning making afforded by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, 1985, 1994, 2004), we are studying the table of contents, headings and sub-headings of units, rubrics and some graphic design elements displayed in the CBs under analysis. Based on an SFL orientation, we have raised questions directly related to the functionality of CB components. In all cases, our aim is to find out whether such elements -verbal and graphic- are the way they are because of the functions they are expected to serve.

This paper presents some of the tools for analysis that we have designed and used, together with some preliminary results obtained so far. Since this is an ongoing study, in some cases we simply make reference to the current stage of development of the process.

**An SFL - Multimodal Orientation**

We have adopted the SFL framework as our main point of reference on the basis of its meaning making orientation and its focus on language use in social contexts (Halliday, 1994, Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). SFL views language as being intrinsically functional (Martin, 1999). It is precisely this functional orientation that we have relied on in our own exploration.

In a study on material design published in 2003, Singapore Wala brings this functional orientation to the study of CBs. Adapting the famous Hallidayan premise that claims that "language is as it is because of what it has to do" (Halliday, 1978:19), Wala states: "A coursebook is what it is because of what it has to do." Inspired by her research, we pose the same question to the CB components selected and explore some of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings that are created.

Our selection of CB components led us to extend our exploration beyond strictly verbal elements. Unlike CBs several decades ago, modern CBs often display sophisticated arrays of colors, pictures, tables, photographs, icons, etc. To address the meaning making power of such elements we resorted to the analytical tools afforded by Multimodal Studies, which explore the way/s in which various modes of communication are used concurrently to create various types of meanings (Iedema, 2003; Royce, 2002; Jewitt, 2008; O'Halloran, 2011). Although in the case of CBs these non-verbal modes are mainly visual, it should be pointed out that multimodal studies are not limited to visual elements but include a multiplicity of expressions, such as sound, movement, flow, etc.

Our exploration of Multimodality is primarily based on Kress and van Leeuwen's work on images (1996) and also on findings from Unsworth (2001) and Bateman (2008), among others. It should be noted that a multimodal approach is strongly linked to an SFL orientation, as many of the categories used for language description in SFL are applied to the description and interpretation of images. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), there is *a grammar of visual design* and every choice at the level of graphic representation makes meaning, just as happens in language. They apply and adapt Halliday's metafunctional approach and identify the elements that create ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning in images.


**CB components under analysis:**

*1. Table of Contents*

In our analysis of tables of contents we asked some basic questions which resonate with the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions.

   a. What information does the table of contents include? (*ideational focus*)

   b. Who is that information for? (*interpersonal focus*)

   c. How is it organized? (*textual focus*)

In response to the first question regarding information contained, we encountered a very wide range of answers. Some tables of contents consist of a simple list linking unit number to page number, while others take the form of very comprehensive grids

including topics, activities, grammar points, cultural references, with a high level of detail. Confronted with this variety of findings, we sought for a dictionary definition and found that the expression 'table of contents' refers to "*a list of divisions (chapters or articles) and the pages on which they start*". The word index, in turn, was defined as "*a more or less detailed alphabetical listing of names, places, and topics along with the numbers of the pages on which they are mentioned or discussed…*" However, in some of the CBs we are studying, the table of contents is not a list of items, and the page numbers are not always given. From the ideational perspective, the tables of contents appear to be closer to a typical course plan or syllabus, including a detailed description of contents, activities and sequencing of every unit in the book.

When we raised the interpersonal question "Who is the table of contents for?" we could not help but feel that although we are dealing with students' CBs, the information presented and the way in which it is displayed seem to be tailored to the teacher's needs, rather than the students'. This disjunction seems to warrant attention from CB designers and users.

From the textual point of view, we found that the table of contents often makes use of several graphic elements, mainly tables/grids and color. The central question that derives from this profuse use of alternative modes of meaning in the table of contents is related to a potential *reading path*, which is the concept created to describe the trajectory of the viewer's eyes as he/she explores a page (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996:218). In multimodal texts, the linearity associated with verbal language is challenged (Bateman, 2008), so we wondered: "How should these tables of contents be read?"; "Is there a preferred entry point or trajectory?" These are some of the considerations which have led us to consider the idea that the intended reader of some of our CBs is actually the teacher, who, aided by the facilitation afforded by the spatially organized information, can at a glance have an overview of grammar points, topics, and activities contained in a CB.

**Headings and Sub-headings of Units**

For our exploration of headings and subheadings, we focused on ideational considerations, and asked a basic content question: "What is the heading about?" As soon as we started gathering data from our corpus, a main distinction in terms of choices of headings emerged. Some headings present a central *topic* or a *thematic orientation* for the unit, such as

- Values (Unit 3 - CAE Expert)
- Music (Unit 9 - Oxford Heroes)

- We are family (Unit 1,C - New English File, Intermediate)

Other headings, however, are an *illustration of a lexicogrammatical aspect of the language in focus*, such as the use of comparatives or interrogative forms:

- I've read the book, I've seen the film (Unit 9B - New English File, Elementary)

- His name, her name (Unit 1C - New English File, Elementary)

- I wish, I wouldn't (Unit 7A - New English File Upper Intermediate)

This simple finding made us more aware of the type of choices that have to be made in CB design, and they also led us to rethink our own practices. What do we want our guiding principle to be in the development of a unit? If we actually have a focus on communication and interaction, can the illustration of a grammar point say much about a communicative situation?; Do teachers use the names of units as a tool for the organization of their teaching practices?

**Rubrics**

For the analysis of rubrics used in the CBs under study, our search was again guided by SFL's metafunctions. However, as was the case in our analysis of the table of contents, we started our study by looking for a definition of the word 'rubric' and found that a rubric is "*a set of instructions or an explanation in a book, examination paper, etc.*" Within EFL, a rubric is normally understood as the directives given to students so that they perform a certain activity. We then explored whether the rubrics used "are as they are because of what they have to do."

Ideationally, we explored the *type of processes* that rubrics sought to trigger in the students. Our focus on processes ('*verbs' in traditional grammar*) is based on SFL's claim that it is mainly through the processes we choose -together with related participants- that our experiences of outer or inner reality are represented. With rubrics being, as we have noted, directions or orders on procedures to be followed, most of the instructions surveyed contained verbs that referred to material processes, i.e., verbs that express the concrete process of doing something (write, complete, etc). To a lesser degree, we also found verbs that realize mental processes -think, look- and verbal processes -tell, express- but they are usually part of a longer rubric containing other processes involving concrete actions, as illustrated in the following example:

Look at the painting *At the Moulin Rouge*. In pairs ask and answer the questions
New English File (Pre-Intermediate, p.8)

Since this study is oriented towards a pedagogic application, we tried to see which language ability -listening, speaking, reading, writing- the rubrics addressed. We found a great disparity among the books in our corpus; however, a common characteristic

found was that CBs do not show evidence of a balanced distribution of rubrics around language abilities. For instance, in some units, emphasis is placed on certain skills rather than others. Again, findings prompted new questions: How are rubrics thought out?; Is the type of process in the rubric relevant? At the moment of writing a rubric, do material designers think first about the type of language involved or other aspects such as conciseness or length?

Interpersonally we asked questions based on the mood choices made in the rubrics. The congruent realization, if we keep the definition of rubric in mind, would be the use of imperative forms through which students would be asked to provide some information or perform some kind of 'service' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). We set out to identify the speech roles assigned through the rubrics and also to identify the actual addressee/s of such instructional language. Following Halliday's distinction between various speech roles, the questions posed were: Is the CB user being asked for information, or for goods and services?; Is he/she being given information, or goods and services?; Is there a single addressee or are several people involved?; Is the addressee always the student or is the rubric sometimes intended for the teacher?

To gather data from our corpus on the basis of these considerations, we produced the following chart:

| Type of clause used in the rubric (MOOD choice) | Clause function (congruent /non congruent*) | Adressee/s | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Imperative** | Command (demands services) | 1 student (2nd person singular) | T |
| | | 2/+ students (2nd person plural) | E |
| | | First person plural | A |
| | | Other forms: | C |
| **Interrogative** | Imperative function * (demands services) | 1 student (2nd person singular) | H |
| | Other functions | 2/+ students (2nd person plural) | E |
| **Declarative** | Imperative function * (demands services) | 1 student (2nd person singular) | R |
| | Other functions: | 2/+ students (2nd person plural) | ? |
| **Infinitive** | Imperative function * | | |

The frequent use of imperative clauses was evident in most CBs. However, it was quite common to find these imperative clauses accompanied by interrogative or declarative clauses to provide information. For example:

Read Daniel´s advert. Would you like to be his penfriend? (Oxford Heroes 1)

36

It is not always evident if the rubric appeals to one or more people, for example: "Ask and answer about Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt" can be interpreted as being directed to one or more people. In most cases, this type of interpersonal meaning is created by means of circumstantial expressions such as 'with a partner' or 'in pairs'.

Our analysis of rubrics made us better aware of the language choices made to engage students in the various activities proposed by the CBs. We believe this awareness can serve as a basis for future material design initiatives.

**Aspects of Graphic Design**

Some reflections on graphic/visual elements were already presented in our discussion of the characteristics of the Table of Contents above. However, we extended our exploration of visual elements to other parts of each CB under study. The analysis of elements of graphic design posed the greatest challenge in our investigation, partly because we -as is likely to be the case of many EFL teachers- were not trained in the interpretation of modes of meaning beyond verbal language.

A simple comparison between CBs published in the 1950's, 60's and 70's and modern CBs can show the tremendous shift from the mostly verbal content that was typical of the older CBs to the multimodal contents of today's CBs, characterized by the use of colors, pictures, tables and charts, creative layouts, among other features. In O'Halloran's terms, there has been a "paradigmatic shift away from the study of language alone to the study of the integration of language with other resources" (2011:3). In view of this transformation, it was natural to assume that a strictly verbal approach to the analysis of CBs would be limited, so we embarked on an exploration of Multimodality to be better able to deal with these graphic features.

In our ongoing research, we have only started to explore the multimodal meaning potential of the CB components selected for analysis. Guided by some recent studies, we are trying to apply a multimodal lens to our corpus. A number of questions emerge as part of our research process:

- What graphic/visual elements are used?
    - Special typographical features (font/ size / color)
    - Photographs (size / color / framing)
    - Tables/charts/ grids (open / closed / colored / framing)
    - Drawings/pictures (size / color / framing)
    - Lines/ arrows / bands ( size / color / continuity)

- Does any of the above features seem to be dominant?
- What part of a unit is the graphic/visual element used in?

- How prominent or salient are the graphic/visual elements on the page? Do these features cross page boundaries?

- Is the graphic/visual element connected to the verbal component? If so, is the connection explicit or implicit?

- Does the graphic/visual element appear to serve a functional purpose in the unit or does it seem to be rather decorative?

- Are the graphic/visual elements related to one another?

- Are the graphic/visual elements culturally compatible with the student's world?

- How do the graphic/visual elements interact with the CB user?

- Are there special graphic/visual elements connecting / separating the different parts of the unit?

- Does the layout seem inviting or off-putting? What specific elements create this effect?

There is an endless number of questions that emerge when we embark on a study of the multimodal universe. Although our search for answers is only just starting, the awareness that we are gaining in the process of exploration is telling us that this area definitely deserves attention in teacher training and teacher development programs. We need to become multimodally literate so that we can discover the multiplicity of meanings that emerge in the combination of the verbal and the visual worlds. Once we acquire this literacy, it will be our duty to pass it on to our students.

**Closing remarks**

By sharing these reflections on some CB components, we would like to invite readers to take a fresh look at the CBs they are using. We believe these reflections can help teachers view teaching materials in a new light. We encourage teachers to join us in the exploration…the potential is enormous.

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# INTRODUCING AND TRACKING PARTICIPANTS IN DISCOURSE: AN EXAMPLE FROM A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON ARGENTINA

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## Abstract

As part of a research project currently being conducted at the English Language Department of the FFHA, UNSJ, we are studying the discursive construction of Argentina and its people in English-speaking media. Our exploration is conducted on the basis of text analysis tools afforded by Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday 1985, 1994, Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). This paper seeks to illustrate the process of participant identification and tracking (Martin and Rose, 2007) in a newspaper article on Argentina. An instance of this tracking process is presented in the form of tables containing 'lexical chains' (Eggins, 2004) which operate as strong cohesive elements. Through this illustration, we expect to raise awareness of some linguistic choices having a direct impact on participant construction and texture creation. We encourage the use of similar text analysis tools in the classroom and invite critical reflection on the representation of our country in foreign media discourse.

## Introduction

Within the framework of a research project being conducted at the School of Philosophy, Humanities and the Arts of the National University of San Juan, entitled "The representation of Argentina and its citizens in the discourse of English speaking media" we are analyzing newspaper articles published in recognized on-line media with the purpose of discovering how our country is portrayed to the rest of the world and identifying the linguistic resources used in such representation/s.

   This paper presents a brief analysis of some aspects of the article called *Down among the underclass. A prelude to a dirty campaign*, which is part of the corpus of our research. The 5- paragraph 377-word article was published by the British magazine 'The Economist' on January 6th 2011 (Texto disponible en http://www.economist.com/node/17851493). It presents the socio-economic and political situation of Argentina in the short period between the death of Mr. Nestor

Kirchner (late October 2010), Argentina's president's husband, and the beginning of the election campaign in 2011[1].

The focus of the analysis, which draws on some of the theoretical and methodological tools afforded by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is on the identification and tracking of participants in the text as powerful elements in the construction of reality and in the creation of cohesion in the text. Various tables are described and presented in an attempt to illustrate the aspects under study and to serve as potential tools for analysis in an EFL reading class.

## 1. Some theoretical considerations

SFL is a theory of language in use developed by Michael Halliday, which sees language as a meaning making resource operating in a social context (Halliday, 1985, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). The theory behind this approach is functional rather than formal, i.e., it considers language as a resource used for communication, and not as a set of rules. An essential tenet of the theory is that every instance of language use implies choices from a network of options (Richards *et al*, 1995:371), and that each text is immersed in a context of situation and a broader context of culture. Of special interest to text analysts is the fact that SFL is not only a theory of language but also a methodology for analyzing texts (Eggins, 2004). Its aim has always been the study of language "*in its entirety*" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:19) taking into account its various dimensions.

Central to the SFL model of language and particularly relevant to this analysis is the notion of metafunction, through which Halliday puts forward the idea that every time we use language we make three types of meaning at the same time: ideational,

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[1] References to events taking place around the time of the publication of the article include:
- Nestor Kirchner's death in October, 2010.
- Immigrants' occupation of a park demanding housing from the government.
- Macri's attribution of responsibility for this incident to the President, Cristina Fernández.
- The creation of a new security ministry by the President.
- The enforcement of new measures by the new security minister, Nilda Garré.
  The following background information is also presented:
- The growth of Argentina's economy under the Kirchners.
- Argentina's large underclass.
- Argentina's large inflation.
- The poor class representing 1/3 of the population.
- Mortgages' scarcity.
- Rents rising by 3/5 between 2007 and 2009.
- Shantytowns' expansion.
- Beginning of 2011 election campaign.

interpersonal and textual meaning. The construal of these meanings through the metafunctions can be summarized as follows (Richards *et al*., 1995):

- The **ideational metafunction** "organizes the speaker's or writer's experience of the real or imaginary world, i.e., language refers to real or imagined persons, things, actions, events, states" (Richards *et al*., 1995:151). It involves an *experiential* component, realized through the choice of participants, processes and circumstances (the transitivity system) in every instance of language use, and a *logical* component, realized through grammatical resources which combine elements and signal the relationships between them in the text (Eggins, 2004).

- The **interpersonal metafunction** refers to the enactment of social relationships. It includes mood choices, modality and evaluation, appraisal resources, sources and their effects (Eggins, 2004).

- The **textual metafunction** enables the creation of texts as such. It has to do with the organization of the message and with the creation of texture. Choices within the theme/ rheme system and the system of cohesion serve to construe this metafunction (Eggins, 2004).

This paper focuses on some of the elements which construe ideational and textual meaning, namely, the identification of participants and the subsequent tracking of such participants once they have been identified. In SFL terms, participant identification is part of the experiential analysis of texts, while participant tracking corresponds to the textual analysis. Needless to say, the exploration process presented here is not exhaustive. It simply illustrates the way in which some SFL tools can be used to bring to light the way/s in which meanings are created in texts. In this case, such meanings are related to the representation of Argentina and its people.

## 2. Types of participants

The participants in a text basically correspond to who and what is being dealt with. Participants can be broadly classified into *human* and *non-human* (Martin and Rose, 2007).

*Human participants* can be further classified according to number (individuals or groups), gender (male or female), age (age groups), social roles, etc. Reference to human participants can be made in various ways, using both proper and common nouns (including references to participants' names titles, and/or affiliation), pronouns (personal, objective, reflexive) or possessive forms (possessive adjectives, possessive case). Additionally, references to the positions participants hold, their relationship with

other participants, their roles in society and the activities they perform are other ways for writers to refer to participants.

*Non-human participants*, i.e., places and things, realized by means of both common and abstract nouns, play an important role in the construction of meanings in a text. In some cases these participants stand alone; in others, they are preceded and/or followed by other words in a nominal group structure, functioning as modifiers. These modifiers can be articles (a, an, the), demonstratives (this, that, these, those), descriptive adjectives, numbers, time/place phrases, etc.

However simple this human/non-human dichotomy may seem, classification problems often arise. One such case presents itself when participants are *Institutions*, as they often involve human and non-human participants. A similar problem arises with respect to the *names of speech acts*, such as 'a reminder' or 'some advice', which Martin and Rose (2007) regard as a separate participant category.

These two broad participant categories can be further subdivided into more detailed types, with the degree of delicacy depending on the purpose of the analysis being conducted. In the case of Human participants, the Social Actor Theory proposed by van Leeuwen (1996, 2009) offers a very rich system based on a socio-semantic classification.

The identification and tracking of participants as a text unfolds can help develop a better understanding of how the meaning of a text is construed. This process implies spotting the first reference to a participant, and then looking for and recording all other references to it in the text.

## 4. Identifying and tracking participants in the text under analysis

A central participant in the text under analysis is Ms. Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner. The text introduces her in the first paragraph by mentioning first her position - Argentina's president- and then her maiden name. From the references used, it is clear that the author assumes readers know who is being talked about.

Subsequently, several other references to Mrs. Fernandez are introduced, making it possible to track this participant: In the first paragraph, she is referred to in various ways: (i) as 'the beneficiary of a wave of public sympathy', (ii) through the objective pronoun 'her', (iii) by means of possessive forms such as 'her supporters' and 'the president's way'. In the third paragraph, she is presented as 'Ms Fernandez', 'the president' and 'the government'. In the fourth paragraph, she and her husband become 'the Kirchners'. In the fifth paragraph, this participant is referred to again as 'Ms Fernández', and through the personal / reflexive pronouns 'she / herself'.

In similar fashion, other participants can be identified and tracked. To simplify the process, tables can be used to list each reference to specific participants selected for analysis and identify their location in the text. Depending on specific research objectives or preferred methods, vertical or horizontal forms of participant display can be selected as illustrated below (Human participants in vertical display in Table 1, and non-human participants in horizontal display in Tables 2 and 3).

The human participants in Table 1 have been selected for analysis, given their relevance in the political scenario presented. It is clear that Cristina Fernández, Argentina's president, is the most dominant participant, appearing in 4 out of 5 paragraphs, followed by Mr. Kirchner (her deceased husband) and Mr. Macri (the mayor of the city of Buenos Aires), who are mentioned in 2 out of 5 paragraphs. The last column on the right includes references to groups of people who are not identified by specific names but rather by their roles, positions or other descriptive references.

| Para. | Human participants | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| . | The president | Nestor Kirchner | Mauricio Macri | Nilda Garré / Duhalde | Other people |
| 1 | Arg.'s president Cristina Fernández the beneficiary her (possessive) her (objective) the president | husband predecessor Nestor Kirchner | | | supporters respecters |
| 2 | | | | | squatters x 2 immigrants from Bolivia and Paraguay them/they/one more (squatters) the police residents |
| 3 | Ms Fernández the president the government | | Mauricio Macri capital's opposition mayor | a new security ministry the minister Nilda Garré | commanders of the federal police the force military police many Argentines groups that support the government |
| 4 | the Kirchners | the Kirchners | | | a large underclass the poor 1/3 of the population drug traffickers other criminals |
| 5 | Ms Fernández she herself the government | Mr Kirchner his death | Mr Macri | Eduardo Duhalde a former president | the underclass pundits diehard allies opponents Argentines |

Table 1: Distribution of human participants in the text under analysis (Vertical display).

A key function served by repeated references to the same participants is the creation of lexical cohesion, as one of the elements that provide texture to a text. Their graphic representation, in turn, can assist the analyst in identifying those participants which are given a more prominent role in the development of a text.

Sustained references to *Non-human participants*, places and things, contribute to the texture of the text as much as human participants do. Some of these non-human participants are places (a park in Villa Soldati, villas -shantytowns-, havens); others are abstract nouns (death, sympathy, inflation).

The two tables below list non-human participants selected for analysis and they also show the paragraphs in which these participants appear in the text. One of the main advantages of this type of tracking is that it makes it possible to identify certain patterns in a text. Just a quick glance at Table 2, for instance, will reveal the construction of a rather negative and violent picture in the text under analysis.

| Para. | *Non-human participants* |
|---|---|
| 1 | *death, sympathy, term, election, grief, problems* |
| 2 | *park, clashes, aid* |
| 3 | *debacle, firearms, crime, fear, tolerance, protests* |
| 4 | *unrest, reminder, growth, inflation x 2, statistics, incomes, mortgages, rents, shantytowns, havens* |
| 5 | *grip, patronage, threats, death, approach, signs, theories, campaign.* |

Table 2: Distribution of non-human participants in the text under analysis (Horizontal display)

Alternatively, the participant tables can be made to include modifying elements, thus making it possible to reinforce the analysis of trends of meaning in the text. The inclusion of modifying elements can be extremely useful to explore evaluative force in any given text.

| Para. | *Non-human participants with pre/post-modifiers* |
|---|---|
| 1 | *sudden death, public sympathy, second term, an election due in October, private grief.* |
| 2 | *a park, a poor district, offers of aid* |
| 3 | *fear of crime, the government's tolerance, disruptive or violent street protests* |
| 4 | *unrest at Villa Soldati, rapid economic growth, high inflation (x 2), doctored official statistics, the incomes of the poor, scarcity of mortgages, havens for traffickers and other criminals* |
| 5 | *grip on the underclass, his death, a more conciliatory approach, signs of that, conspiracy theories, election campaign, dirty campaign.* |

Table 3: Distribution of non-human participants with pre/post modifiers in the text under analysis (Horizontal display)

Tables for the identification and tracking of participants can be modified depending on the researchers' goals. For instance, additional columns can be created to record the type of processes associated with each participant, and thus find additional patterns in the creation of experiential meaning. Also columns can be added to record the type of evaluation associated with each participant, complementing ideational with interpersonal analysis.

## 5. Resources used to introduce and to track participants

According to Martin and Rose (2007), a number of linguistic resources can be used to introduce and track participants in discourse. A brief summary is presented below, with examples drawn from the text under analysis:

*To introduce participants:* The indefinite article 'a-an' is used to introduce participants. 'A-an' tell us this is somebody or something whose identity we cannot assume. Thus, a participant with 'a-an' is commonly known as 'indefinite'.

> *a* ministry (l.13); *a* large underclass (l.19); *a* former president (l.29)

On the other hand, the article 'the' tells us that we can assume an identity, so a participant preceded by 'the' is commonly known as 'definite'.

> *the* underclass (l.25); *the* police (l.9); *the* mayor (l.12); *the* president (13)
> *the* minister (l.13); *the* commanders of *the* federal police (l.14); *the* force (l.15)
> *the* poor (l.20)

Once the participants have been introduced or identified, the main strategy for tracking their identity is with personal/reflexive/possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives. These pronouns and adjectives work like *the, some, this, that, these, those* to tell us which participants we are talking about (Martin and Rose, 2007:160).

Martin and Rose (2007) explain that when the possessive is used, there may actually be two identities present: one is realized by the possessive adjective (e.g. *her*

husband) and the other by the thing/person that is 'possessed' (e.g. her *husband*). The possessive adjectives always presume an identity, but the thing/person that is 'possessed' may or may not have been previously mentioned.

> - referring to C. Fernández: *her* husband and predecessor (l.1); *her* supporters (l.3)
> - referring to Néstor Kirchner: *his* death (l.26)
> - referring to Argentines: *their* summer holidays (30)

Participants can also be identified by describing various specific aspects. In our text, for instance, some participants are associated with expressions of support/opposition, and also with ethnic origin.

- Cristina Fernández: the *beneficiary* of a wave of public sympathy (2)
- Macri and Dualde: *opponents* (28)
- …*squatters*, many of them *immigrants* (7)

*To track participants:* The author uses synonymous and contrasting expressions, whole-group relationships and repetition of lexical items to track human participants, e.g.,

- synonyms: '*Nestor Kirchner = her husband = predecessor'*;

- contrast: *allies ≠ opponents*

- whole-group relationships: '*1/3 of the population'*;
  *opponents-Macri & Duhalde*;
  *criminals-drug traffickers*;
  *the government-the ministry*;
  *the federal police-commanders*
- repetition: '*squatters - squatters'*.

To track non-human participants the author uses:

- contrast: '*threats, conspiracy theories ≠ conciliatory approach'*;

- synonyms: *disruptive (street protests) = violent street protests; police = the force*

- repetition: '*inflation - inflation'*.

   It can be said that resources that introduce people are *presenting reference*, and those that track people are *presuming reference*. Words like *a/an/someone* are used for presenting reference. Words like *the/that/he/we* and *names* like Nestor K, M. Macri, the Kirchners are used for presuming reference (Martin and Rose, 2007).

## 6. Lexical cohesion and lexical strings

The tracking of participants is closely related to the creation of what is known as *lexical strings* or *lexical chains*. According to Eggins (2004), a *lexical string* or *chain* is a list of all the lexical items occurring sequentially in a text, which can be related *in meaning* to an immediately prior word, if possible, or to a 'head' word. It should be noted, however, that a lexical string can include any type of linguistic form, not just those used to realize participant roles, which are the focus of this paper. All kinds of participants can be part of lexical strings. In addition, a participant can be part of more than one string provided it is related in meaning to the head words of those lexical strings or chains, independently of the relations set up by the grammar (Eggins, 2004).

   Semantically-related lexical items (be they nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) and event sequences (chains of clauses and clause complexes) help maintain a clear focus of development in the text by creating strong cohesive links. Lexical strings or chains

are also directly related to the expectations a text often creates, with every item in the chain either confirming or contradicting such expectations.

In the text under analysis, several lexical strings can be identified. By way of illustration, if the term "*authority*" is selected as a head-word, a lexical string might look like this:

*Authority:  (head word)*

*president - police - mayor - ministry - minister - commanders of
 federal police - military police - the government*

When a lexical item can be linked to more than one string, it is recommended that it be displayed in all the relevant strings because it will be contributing texture to the text through different semantic associations, e.g.,

| Head-word | Lexical string |
|---|---|
| Crime | *killed - died - clashes - the use of firearms -  military police - fear – violent - drug traffickers - criminals - threats - conspiracy -* |

Table 4: Lexical string - Crime

| Head-word | Lexical string |
|---|---|
| Violence | *killed - evict - died - clashes - angry residents -the use of firearms - military police - crime - fear - disruptive or violent street protests – unrest - drug traffickers - criminals - threats - conspiracy - subverting the government - dirty* |

Table 5: Lexical string - Violence

| Head-word | Lexical string |
|---|---|
| Poverty | *underclass – squatters – immigrants from B&P – poor district – erode the incomes of the poor – villas – shanty towns -* |

Table 6: Lexical string - Poverty

For the most part, the lexical strings identified, confirm the trends of violence and negativity revealed by the participant tables (Tables 1, 2 and 3) .

## 7.  The representation of Argentina and its people

Through this brief exercise in the identification and tracking of participants, as well as through the description of some lexical strings present in the text under analysis, we have explored the way in which Argentina, its government and a significant part of its population are represented in an article published by a renowned international magazine. The analysis reveals that the most dominant figures are the President and her deceased husband, followed by representatives of the opposition, presented in a relation of constant conflict as is shown by some of the lexical chains described. The

picture portrayed is one of violence, confrontation, poverty, injustice and corruption (Tables 1 through 6).

It is true that the same conclusion can be reached by a relatively experienced reader without engaging in the type of analysis undertaken here. The value of the analysis lies in the possibility of exploring some of the linguistic resources deployed in the creation of meanings. In addition, the analysis can be drawn on to support text interpretations beyond the level of intuition or first impressions.

The question remains as to the truth value of the representations. The text presents information about specific events (see Note 1) which give the text an aura of truth; however, it should be remembered that the way in which a text portrays reality is a 'construction' of that reality. Any supporter of the Kirchners' government is likely to hold a different view of the same events and information, and would produce an entirely different text based on the same apparently objective data, which reminds us of the ideological nature of any text, especially media products.

## 8. Pedagogical implications

The process of tracking participants in a text can allow readers to have a better understanding of a text's development. By exploring the lexical relations among words, students of English as a foreign language can become more aware of the tools used in the construction of a cohesive and coherent text. To assist in this process, SFL provides analytical tools that students can use to develop greater awareness of texture and cohesion in a text.

In terms of classroom practice, the exercise of identifying and tracking participants in a text can serve as an 'excuse' for revisiting the same text several times. This activity, as well as the construction of lexical strings, can help students to explore a text in more depth than they normally would, and to focus not only on main ideas but also on secondary ones. Students can acquire practice in clustering or associating related vocabulary, thus enhancing their lexical development.

Both activities, the identification and tracking of participants and the construction of lexical strings, can be performed by students working individually, in pairs or in groups, with no special technology required. At more advanced levels, students can compare and discuss ideas with classmates about the relevance of including a certain word in a string or chart. An additional advantage of these activities is that they can be adapted to texts of any level and any topic, and assigned to students of various ages. It can even become a game or competition, the winner being, for example, the student or group that finds the largest number of lexical items in a given lexical string, or the

largest number of references to the same participant. The potential is open to the teachers' imagination and creativity.

Additionally, these tools for language analysis can be used for research purposes, as illustrated in this paper, in order to reveal the way in which discourse creates an often one-sided representation of reality.

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# LA MODALIDAD DESDE LA TEORÍA DE LA VALORACIÓN

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## Resumen

En el marco de la Lingüística Sistémico Funcional (LSF) y en base a las nociones de dialogismo propuestas por Bakhtin (1981), este trabajo se inscribe en la Teoría de la Valoración (TV) que considera al lenguaje desde una perspectiva social. Como teoría de selección, la TV ofrece las opciones semánticas y las realizaciones léxico-gramaticales con las que la voz textual se alinea o se distancia de su audiencia, reconoce o ignora la diversidad de puntos de vista que se ponen en juego en el contexto comunicativo. El objetivo de este trabajo fue profundizar en el conocimiento de los recursos evaluativos comprendidos en uno de los sistemas de la TV, el Sistema de Compromiso, en la sección Conclusión en artículos de revistas científicas sobre Educación en inglés publicados en *SAGE Journals Online*. Desde una perspectiva pedagógica, las categorías de análisis adoptadas, resultaron apropiadas en cuanto proporcionan una mejor comprensión de la distribución de los significados interpersonales en los textos.

## I. Introducción

La experiencia de dictar cursos de Lectura en Inglés con Propósitos Académicos nos hace coincidir con Parodi (1999), cuando afirma que son numerosas las investigaciones sobre lectura comprensiva de textos en lengua extranjera que dan cuenta de las dificultades de los estudiantes en relación con su competencia lingüística; por ello ha sido nuestra preocupación profundizar en el análisis lingüístico de textos académicos del área de Educación en el presente trabajo.

Con esta investigación esperamos lograr un conocimiento que nos permitirá reflexionar y hacer reflexionar a nuestros alumnos sobre las opciones semánticas y las realizaciones léxico-gramaticales con  las que la voz textual se alinea o se distancia de su audiencia, o  reconoce o ignora la diversidad de puntos de vista que se ponen en juego en sus proposiciones.

En este trabajo hemos elegido como objeto de estudio la sección **Conclusión** del artículo de investigación científica (en adelante, AIC). Según  Gillen (2004), el AIC es una excelente herramienta para promover un aprendizaje activo y puede impulsar al pensamiento científico auténtico. Además, el AIC goza de la consideración de toda la comunidad científica y como lo define Swales (1990:125), es: "*the key product of the knowledge-manufacturing industry.*" [2]

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[2] *El producto clave de la industria del conocimiento.* Traducción de la autora.

El análisis se orientó por la hipótesis general de que en las secciones finales del AIC, es decir, las Conclusiones, es donde el autor presenta los resultados a partir de las evidencias obtenidas en su investigación empírica y, en efecto, parecería revelar más abiertamente no sólo el grado de compromiso y de certeza respecto del contenido que expresa, utilizando recursos de persuasión, sino también su voluntad de reconocer o ignorar la diversidad de puntos de vista del lector, lo cual constituye una característica retórica de fundamental importancia, sobre lo que el alumno debe reflexionar para poder interpretarlas críticamente.

## II. Marco Teórico

Este trabajo de investigación tiene como fundamento teórico la Lingüística Sistémico Funcional (Halliday y Matthiessen, 2004) y, fundamentalmente, la **Teoría de la Valoración** (*Appraisal Theory*) (Martin & White, 2005) la cual constituye una extensión de la metafunción interpersonal, ya que incorpora nociones sobre dialogismo propuestas por Bakhtin (1981).

### 2.1 La Modalidad

Es relevante aclarar que la Modalidad fue nuestro punto de partida inicial, pero luego tuvimos la necesidad de ampliar nuestro análisis más allá de la Modalidad por razones de actualización. En otras palabras, en desarrollos recientes la Modalidad opera desde un enfoque diferente, como parte de una perspectiva evaluativa en el Sistema de Compromiso propuesto por la Teoría de la Valoración.

### 2.2 La Teoría de la Valoración

La Teoría de la Valoración es uno de los principales recursos semántico-discursivos y puede dividirse en tres sistemas que interactúan: actitud, compromiso y gradación. La actitud (=*attitude*) se relaciona con nuestros sentimientos, incluyendo reacciones emocionales, juicios de conducta y evaluación de los objetos. El compromiso (=*engagement*) se refiere a los recursos tales como la modalidad, polaridad, concesión y diversos adverbiales de comentario, por medio de los cuales los hablantes/escritores negocian un espacio interpersonal para sus posiciones. La gradación (=*gradation*) se relaciona con la graduabilidad de las actitudes y del compromiso, ya que sus recursos

son inherentemente graduables. Las realizaciones incluyen intensificación, morfología superlativa o comparativa, repetición y varios rasgos grafológicos y fonológicos, junto

con el uso de intensificadores léxicos. La figura 1 presenta los tres sistemas de la teoría de la valoración:

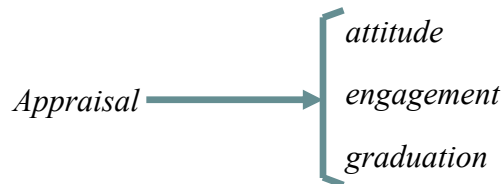*Appraisal* ⟶ *attitude*

*engagement*

*graduation*

Figura 1. Sistemas de la Teoría de la Valoración

Cabe aclarar que en el presente trabajo sólo tuvimos en cuenta el estudio del Sistema de Compromiso (=*Engagement*) (como término general para los recursos de posicionamiento intersubjetivo) propuesto por Martin & White (2005), que opera dentro de la metafunción interpersonal, y que tiene en cuenta la presencia subjetiva de los escritores/hablantes en los textos, en la medida que adoptan posiciones respecto del material que presentan y de las personas con quienes se comunican. A estos autores les preocupa cómo dichos hablantes/escritores aprueban o desaprueban, aplauden o critican, aborrecen o alientan; cómo posicionan al lector u oyente y cómo se identifican o no con él. Les preocupa también la construcción de textos de comunidades de sentimientos y valores compartidos, y los mecanismos lingüísticos para compartir emociones, gustos y evaluaciones normativas; como así también cómo los hablantes y los escritores construyen para sí identidades o imágenes, y cómo construyen una audiencia ideal o deseada.

De acuerdo con esta teoría, cada proposición expresa hasta cierto punto una actitud o un punto de vista. Cada proposición es inherentemente dialógica ya que cada emisión (=*utterance*), escrita u oral, muestra la influencia de, adopta la postura sobre o hace referencia a locuciones dichas previamente, anticipándose simultáneamente a la respuesta del interlocutor prospectivo. En otras palabras, la naturaleza dialógica de un texto se juzga de acuerdo a si el escritor ignora otras voces por medio de una proposición declarativa absoluta (=*bare assertion*), asumiendo que el lector comparte su punto de vista, o si reconoce potencialmente diferentes puntos de vista por parte del lector de modo que incorpora otras voces.

Un texto puede presentar emisiones monoglósicas o heteroglósicas. La figura 2 presenta las categorías principales del Sistema de Compromiso:
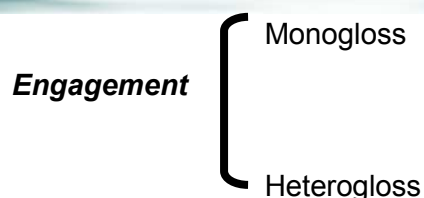
Monogloss

***Engagement***

Heterogloss

Figura 2. El Sistema de Compromiso

Las emisiones monoglósicas no aluden a otras voces o visiones alternativas en el texto, ignoran la diversidad de voces que se ponen en juego en todo acto comunicativo. Por ejemplo: *"Universities in Australia **are based** on Western intellectual tradition"* se considera como una declarativa absoluta (=*bare assertion*) que, según White, se asocia con conocimiento consensuado, o con versiones de eventos que son vistos como "hechos"; es una proposición que se da por sentada porque se supone que es información compartida entre el escritor y el lector en una interacción anterior. Así, bajo monoglosia, las posiciones alternativas se excluyen y el escritor asume que existe una convergencia entre su posición social e ideológica y la del lector basada en suposiciones compartidas. Desde una perspectiva interpersonal/dialógica, cada cláusula tiene significado interpersonal (White 2003:265); aún una declarativa absoluta dentro de la monoglosia está cargada interpersonalmente en cuanto invita al acuerdo con el lector.

Por otra parte, las emisiones heteroglósicas reconocen la existencia de otras voces y de otras posiciones divergentes. La voz textual está abierta a posiciones alternativas. Los recursos heteroglósicos se pueden dividir en dos amplias categorías: expansión dialógica (=*dialogic expansion*) y contracción dialógica (=*dialogic contraction*), de acuerdo con su función intersubjetiva. El compromiso heteroglósico puede actuar para expandir (=*open up*)**,** es decir para reconocer, considerar (=*entertain*) y/o estar abierto a voces alternativas o para contraer (=*close down*) dialógicamente, es decir para rechazar, para oponerse, para descartar, para afirmar o para proclamar voces alternativas.

Por un lado, los recursos léxico-gramaticales de expansión dialógica amplían las posibilidades de negociación y le permiten al lector tomar una posición alternativa. Por otro lado, los recursos léxico-gramaticales de contracción dialógica reconocen explícita o implícitamente posiciones alternativas posibles pero buscan limitar el rango o la posibilidad de interacción con factores de diversidad. De esta manera, si el autor elige las opciones de expansión se presenta en solidaridad con el lector, si en cambio opta por las opciones de contracción entonces estaría deliberadamente contrayendo dicha solidaridad con el lector. El siguiente esquema con ejemplos tomados de Martin &

White (2005:100) resume lo anterior:

| *Monoglosia* | *Heteroglosia* |
|---|---|
| **(***desconocimiento de alternativas dialógicas***)** | **(***reconocimiento de alternativas dialógicas***)** |
| The banks have been greedy. | **There is the argument though** that the banks have been greedy |
| | **In my view** the banks have been greedy. |
| | **Callers** to talkback radio **see** the banks as being greedy. |
| | **The chairman** of the consumers association **has stated** that the banks are being greedy. |
| | There can be **no denying** the banks have been greedy. |
| | **Everyone knows** the banks are greedy. |
| | The banks have**n't** been greedy. etc. |

La categoría de Expansión (=*expansion*) se divide en dos subcategorías: Consideración (=*Entertain*) y Atribución (=*Attribution*). La siguiente tabla muestra esta categoría con sus respectivas subdivisiones:

**Expansión Dialógica**

**Consideración**

**Atribución**
- Reconocimiento
- Distancia

Tabla 1: Subcategorías de Expansión

La siguiente tabla muestra un resumen de las subcategorías de contracción dialógica, según White (2003):

**Contracción Dialógica**

**Proclamación**
- Pronunciamiento
- Respaldo
- Coincidencia/Expectativa

**Rechazo**
- Negación
- Contra-expectativa

Tabla 2: Subcategorías de Contracción

La figura 3 presenta una perspectiva general del Sistema de Compromiso, para la categoría heteroglosia:
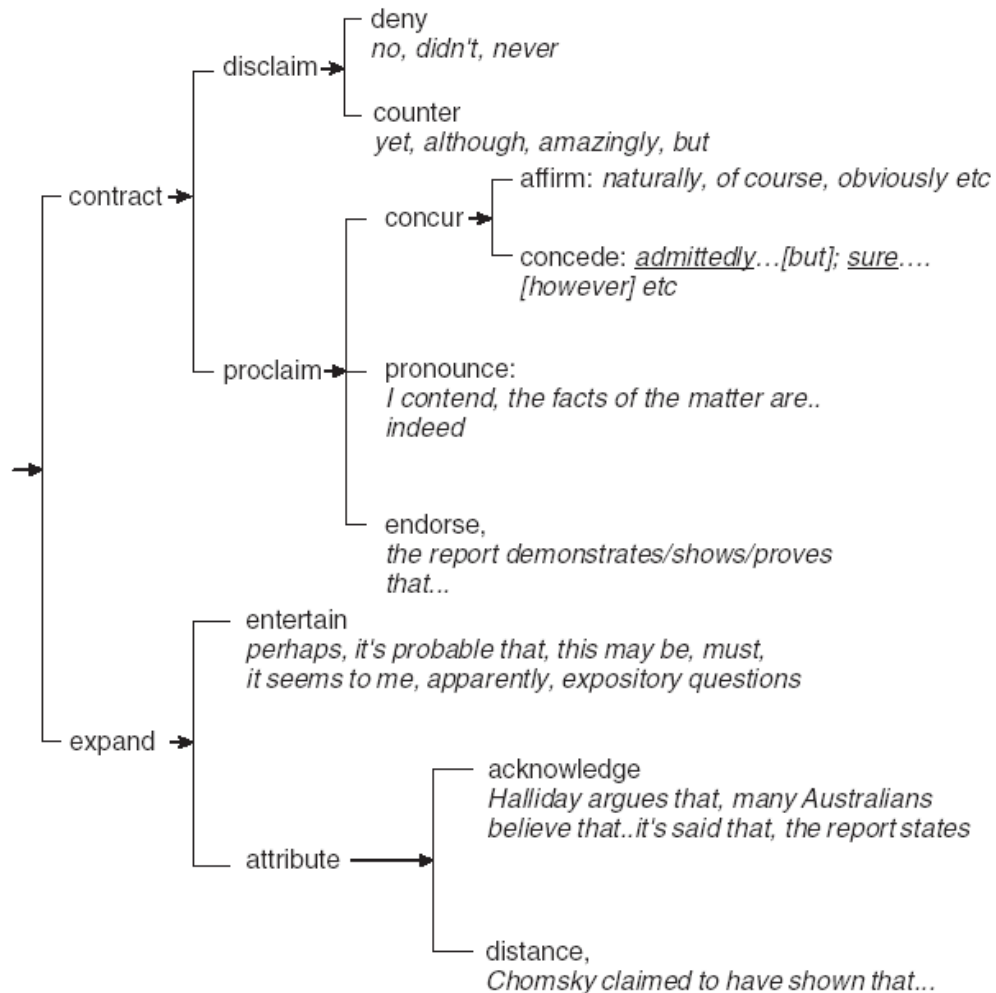


Figura 3. Perspectiva general del Sistema de Compromiso: Heteroglosia.
(Martin & White, 2005:117)


## III. Metodología

### 3.1 Descripción de la metodología

La metodología adoptada para este estudio fue un análisis retórico-lingüístico, tanto cualitativo como cuantitativo, de la parte textual Conclusión, de la muestra seleccionada. Realizamos un análisis cualitativo para intentar mostrar cómo se posiciona la voz textual a través de sus afirmaciones al describir resultados. Por otra parte, realizamos un análisis cuantitativo de los recursos léxico-gramaticales, en cada

Conclusión, cuyos resultados se exponen en tablas y gráficos de ocurrencias. Este análisis cuantitativo es de utilidad para demostrar cuál es la tendencia de los escritores de esta editorial, en esta sección del discurso: si la de reconocer o la de ignorar la diversidad de puntos de vista que se ponen en juego cuando presenta los resultados de su investigación.

Para llevar a cabo dicho análisis procedimos de la siguiente manera: en primer lugar, numeramos las oraciones en cada Conclusión, luego realizamos un análisis detallado oración por oración con el propósito de: a) identificar los recursos evaluativos del sistema de compromiso en cada Conclusión, b) clasificar dichos recursos tomando las categorías de análisis descriptas anteriormente y c) cuantificar dichos recursos para determinar los porcentajes de ocurrencias de los mismos tanto de la categoría monoglosia como de la categoría heteroglosia.

## 3.2 Muestra de textos

La muestra seleccionada para este trabajo está constituida por 10 Conclusiones extraídas de artículos de revistas científicas sobre Educación, publicados en *SAGE Journals Online*, ediciones 2004-2005 de las revistas: *AERA* (*American Education Research Association*), *Active Learning in Higher Education*, *ANNALS* (*The Annals of the American Academy*), *Culture and Psychology*, *Improving Schools*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* y *Adult Education Quarterly*.

Estas revistas fueron seleccionadas en base al prestigio de esta editorial y los artículos fueron seleccionados porque creímos que cada uno de ellos podía contener una temática interesante para los alumnos, en este caso, del Profesorado y de la Licenciatura de Ciencias de la Educación que cursan 4° año de ambas carreras, sabiendo que si estos artículos habían sido publicados en *SAGE* nos asegurábamos poder abordar los textos en tanto tipos textuales socialmente ratificados en una comunidad científica.

Elegimos diversos temas relacionados con problemáticas concretas que atañen a una institución o instituciones en particular, como por ejemplo, el diseño curricular, y con problemáticas más amplias y de mayor complejidad, como la eficiencia del sistema educativo, que refiere a la educación en su conjunto y podría tener una incidencia más global.

## IV. Análisis y Resultados

### 4.1 Resultados globales del análisis de la muestra

A continuación, presentamos la tabla 3, que da cuenta de los casos y porcentajes de ocurrencias totales para las categorías monoglosia y heteroglosia, en cada una de las Conclusiones de la muestra:

| PORCENTAJES TOTALES DE CASOS POR CONCLUSIÓN | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CONCLUSIONES | TOTAL DE PALABRAS | TOTAL DE ORACIONES | MONOGLOSIA | | HETEROGLOSIA | | | TOTAL DE CASOS |
| | | | | | Expansión Dialógica | | Contracción Dialógica | |
| | | | casos | % | casos | % | casos | % | |
| 1 | 614 | 21 | 1 | 2% | 15 | 29% | 35 | 69% | 51 |
| 2 | 834 | 33 | 2 | 3% | 16 | 26% | 43 | 71% | 61 |
| 3 | 319 | 13 | 1 | 4% | 5 | 21% | 18 | 75% | 24 |
| 4 | 512 | 20 | 3 | 9% | 13 | 37% | 19 | 54% | 35 |
| 5 | 462 | 15 | 2 | 6% | 7 | 23% | 22 | 71% | 31 |
| 6 | 294 | 12 | 3 | 13% | 15 | 62% | 6 | 25% | 24 |
| 7 | 137 | 4 | 0 | 0% | 6 | 86% | 1 | 14% | 7 |
| 8 | 129 | 4 | 1 | 14% | 2 | 29% | 4 | 57% | 7 |
| 9 | 263 | 11 | 0 | 0% | 7 | 44% | 9 | 56% | 16 |
| 10 | 555 | 21 | 0 | 0% | 23 | 50% | 23 | 50% | 46 |
| TOTALES | 4.119 | 154 | 13 | 4% | 109 | 36% | 180 | 60% | 302 |

Fue interesante observar que en las Conclusiones de la muestra, predominaron las ocurrencias de contracción dialógica, con (60%) (ver Tabla 3), lo cual evidencia una presencia marcada del autor.

A pesar de que en la mayoría de los textos analizados predominan los recursos léxico-gramaticales de contracción dialógica, vale la pena mencionar que notamos un equilibrio en cuanto al número total de casos analizados, entre las realizaciones léxico-gramaticales de la categoría de contracción dialógica correspondientes a la opción semántica de Proclamación/pronunciamiento (58 casos) y las realizaciones léxico-gramaticales de la categoría de expansión dialógica correspondientes a la opción semántica de Consideración/operadores modales de probabilidad de valor medio y de

valor bajo (56 casos). Asimismo, también observamos ese equilibrio de número de casos entre las realizaciones léxico-gramaticales de la categoría de contracción dialógica de Proclamación/respaldo (12 casos) y las realizaciones léxico-gramaticales de la categoría de expansión dialógica correspondientes a la opción semántica de Atribución/distancia (14 casos). Todo lo mencionado indicaría que a pesar de este predominio, a saber, el de contracción dialógica, los autores hacen un juego continuo entre los recursos léxico-gramaticales de la categoría contracción y de la categoría expansión para atenuar afirmaciones fuertes en sus declaraciones o enunciados.

## V. Conclusiones finales

Concluido el análisis de todos los textos, quedó claro que las selecciones estratégicas realizadas por los escritores fueron guiando al lector y, por ende, configurando la lectura que él hace. La voz textual de las Conclusiones en los artículos de investigación publicados por *SAGE*, que conformaron nuestra muestra, lejos de construirse unilateralmente, previó -como es lógico quizás esperar- un lector con competencia propia, a quien hay que motivar, ya sea para que realice una simple lectura, en tanto recorrido del texto hasta su final, o bien, para que realice una tarea específica, provocada por la manipulación exitosa de los recursos interpersonales al intentar persuadirlo.

En síntesis, el análisis de los recursos evaluativos del Sistema de Compromiso que las voces textuales emplean en las Conclusiones incluidas en este trabajo, demostró que la escritura no es más que negociación, interacción y relaciones dialógicas con el lector. Los resultados mostraron que la voz textual aquí casi no utiliza monoglosia, lo cual indica que el autor no se muestra categórico sino que hace un juego permanente, mediante el uso de una gran variedad de realizaciones léxico-gramaticales de expansión y de contracción dialógica, en su intento de mostrar rigor científico y lograr credibilidad, a la vez que solidaridad.

Como reflexión final, la posibilidad de interpretar el posicionamiento del autor respecto de un tema específico y la relación que las elecciones léxico-gramaticales del texto guardan con el contexto son dos aspectos importantes a tener en cuenta durante el proceso de lectura crítica. Los resultados de este trabajo muestran que la Teoría de la Valoración, y dentro de ésta, el Sistema de Compromiso pertinente a esta investigación, contribuye en la consecución de estos dos aspectos del proceso de lectura crítica. Esta teoría es, por lo tanto, un aporte pedagógico dado que los estudiantes de los cursos de lecto-comprensión en lengua extranjera (en este caso,

inglés), pueden aplicar algunos aspectos de la misma, para lograr  una mejor comprensión lectora.

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# RETHINKING THE SENSE OF DISTANCE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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## Abstract

As White (2003) states, understanding the genuine sense of language learning in distance education implies focusing on the actual learners and exploring their responsiveness towards the demands and opportunities it presents. Thus, educators' task is grounded on the search for teaching/learning practices that pursue learners' autonomy, critical thinking and collaborative attitudes in order to build meaningful learning experiences. It is then deemed relevant to present a heuristic view able to challenge the utilitarian and deterministic approach towards the role that education and technology perform in society. To this end, this paper suggests a reflective exercise in certain issues, such as distance language learning contexts and those who are most involved - the learners; the social construction of technology as well as the conception of education and technology as transforming agents.

## Introduction

As educators who believe in education as the essence of the individual's integral development, intellectually and morally, we aim to articulate it to a sense of technology that transcends its suitability for practical needs. From a socio-constructivist stance, efficacy as the driving force of technological innovation, should not be interpreted as a purely technical or scientific factor that is determinate, unquestionable, or independent of social considerations. Not only do human beings have technology at their disposal, but they are innately technological. In this view, technology and education are socially constructed processes and are hence developed in complex interrelations, which in turn, shape society. The individuals' potentialities for developing understanding and sensibility towards human actions and meaning construction in a given sociocultural context are implied in technology and education. For this reason, the prospects of growth and change should be directed mainly towards those involved in education through relevant pedagogical planning and not just towards the means that help achieve them.

This view is neither meant to disregard the power relations existing in and through educational institutions or technological innovations, nor does it pursue to instill a utopian idea of education as a technosocial network that focuses only on the benefits

of technology. Rather, it seeks to highlight the genuine sense of technology and education as transforming agents in the global society we construct and live in.

In light of this, it is possible to value the intrinsically constructive power of technology and education, if both are grounded on critical awareness, autonomy and authenticity, which foster our responsiveness and openness towards new interpretations of our experiences and actions. Being technological in nature, distance education could be regarded as a viable alternative to significant teaching/learning experiences that respond to the uncertainties, complexities and rapid changes of our times. This entails educators and learners should construct knowledge as well as their ways of being and living by means of distance education. It is therefore crucial that all members of educational institutions understand and reflect about the essence of distance education, its potential for growth along with the responsibilities it places on all participants.

As Wilhelm (2004) states, a deep digital literacy, which implies accessing, administering, integrating, evaluating and creating information, is fundamental to a significant construction of knowledge through technology. Technological inequality does not stem only from socioeconomic or cultural conditions impeding access to innovations or information but also from the lack of commitment towards a digital literacy programme pursuing a reflective use of technological tools and based on a *politics of knowledge* that contemplates the interrelations of education, science, technology and society (Pérez Lindo, 2010). Such an approach emerges from the need to develop methodological competencies, rendered fundamental to reinforce the learning process. This entails a movement of information and communication technologies (ICTs) towards learning and knowledge technologies (LKTs).

**The social nature of Technology**

Profound and genuine transformations in education are possible if we understand technology as integral to educational processes and not just as a practice that focuses on the use of technological devices. It is a fact that devices, artifacts and inventions are physical constructions which involve human collaborative work, the use of techniques, viewpoints as well as shared knowledge, theories and concepts, either from a past or present time. In this sense, technology is more than the artifact or product itself; it is a way of representing the world, thereby, being dependent on both social and physical context as well as being historically, culturally and institutionally situated (Wertsch, 1991).

Thus, the social nature of technological developments is undeniable and such developments are viewed as contingent processes, involving a multiplicity of factors that promote or restrain them. Accordingly, Dusek (2006) argues that technological developments are analysed by reference to the controversies, disagreements and difficulties they arise among the different actors or social groups with shared conceptual construals, ethical stances and interests. The analysis of the impacts of technological development as well as their influence on society underpin the intertwinement of the social shaping and social impacts of technology, as stated by Bijker (2009).

In this line of thought, technology is to be regarded as a meaningful human activity capable of expanding the potentialities of human experiences and of challenging our conceptions of what it means to be human. As part of humans' lives, technology coexists with other means of construing individuals' social, ethical and cultural dimensions, such as art, science and music. In other words, it is "a situated human activity, reliant on and reflective of social, cultural, political and environmental location" (Compton & Jones, 2004:5).

For this reason, it renders vital to consider technology as integrated to education and to thoroughly understand the essence of technology along with other notions specific to it, namely, technological practice and knowledge. Jones & Moreland (2003) have found that such an understanding fosters the development of critical digital literacy and judgment, which lead learners to conceive technology as transforming individuals' view of the world they build and inhabit as well as to be aware of the advantages and drawbacks of technologies.

It is then viable to refer to the present rapid technological changes and digital proliferation as shaping and being shaped by the varying social, economic, and cultural contexts, to which educational institutions belong to. As Pérez Lindo (2010) argues, globalization leads to the internationalization of educational processes and allows for individuals' preparation for a planetary responsibility. Castells (2001) defines the Internet "as the heart of a new sociotechnical paradigm that … constitutes the material basis of our lives and our ways of relationships, of work and of communication" [our translation]. In this sense, the Internet processes virtual reality and transforms it into our reality, thereby constituting the net society, that is, the society we live in.

This means online distance education, being technological in nature, has become a worldwide purposeful agent in knowledge construction and meaning negotiation. As such, we believe online education gains full significance when envisaged as a committed learning choice, as a way of approaching the world and of social interaction,

and not as a mere necessity of institutions in the face of intense competition or as a convenient means of learning.

## Understanding distance education

Different terms have been used for distance learning, such as e-learning, virtual learning, web-based learning and online learning, among others. All of them imply that learners and teachers are separated in time and space, that learners' interaction with their tutor and peers alongside their access to the learning content occur through some form of technology and that learners receive some support service. Hence a system able to develop distance learning entails creating spaces that cater for the learning, administrative and support needs of learners (White, 2003:223). This paper will employ the term distance education throughout to emphasise that learning does no longer occur in a classroom setting but in new contexts, such as the home or workplace, and that is developed according to each learner's pace and schedule. Distance is thus related to the place and time dimensions.

Distance learning is often delivered in a Virtual Learning Environment, which is a web-based platform in which course content (documents, audio and video lectures) alongside an array of activities, like questionnaires as well as automatically graded quizzes and tests, are delivered and stored. Communication tools, like discussion forums, or text and audio chat are available in this virtual classroom. More advanced virtual learning environments have incorporated blogs and wikis. A main advantage of this form of course delivery is that learners are able not only to interact with the learning material,  tutor and peers, but also to receive their tutor's feedback about their written work or assignments and their contributions to forums. The combination of automatically graded activities and tutor's evaluation, which are recorded in the platform, enable learners to consult their grades and be aware of their progress at any point, thereby enriching the assessment process.

Alongside these structural features, a deeper understanding of distance learning is attainable through what van Lier (1999) defines as *an educational theory of practice*, grounded on the dynamic interrelation of theory, practice and research. This is crucial in order to emphasise that distance learning is bound to possibilities of transformative experiences, and not to a strictly utilitarian view of an efficient information source. The potential flexibility in distance education challenges the premise that reproducing the classroom context represents best practice in virtual learning spaces.

In his article "Toward a Theory of Online Learning", Anderson (2004) mentions the three functions of a solid educational theory: first, a theory helps to optimise the

potentialities the Internet provides: improved communication, information retrieval and management skills. Second, theories of distance learning also study ways to make a proper use of time and resources in order to enhance the development of online courses and of online teaching/learning experiences. Third, a good theory is constructed on the basis of existing knowledge and allows for interpretation and planning for the novel. It also requires us to anticipate to contingencies and potential outcomes in order to assure a sound and ever expanding language learning process and online learning practice. Hence, an educational theory of practice entails web-based distance learning environments based on knowledge construction through meaning negotiation and collaboration as opposed to information acquisition.

The construction of a model which defines the variables intervening in distance education and their relationships is necessary to comprehend the learning process in a virtual environment. Anderson (2004) describes a model with two modes of distance learning in which learners and teachers are the major human actors interacting with each other and with content presented in different formats, particularly on the Web. In the first mode, learners belong to a community and engage in collaborative learning, using internet-mediated synchronous and asynchronous activities in various delivery options- audio, video, computer conferencing or virtual world interaction. Community learning can help learners in the development of their social skills and in knowledge construction but they should also adjust to the learning pace of the group and participate in arranged sessions. The other model is based on independent learning, developed through the use of computer-supported activities and structured tools, such as tutorials, simulations and drills, virtual labs, as well as search and retrieval tools. In both modes of distance learning, students' handling of the content and learning materials is mediated by the teacher or tutor to a greater or lesser extent, depending on learners' needs.

Although learners engaged in distance learning can benefit from the attributes of technology offering real-life models and simulations, it is the content and design principles underlying these models that the real value lies in. Appropriate diagnostic and assessment tools should also be integrated into the learning process. That is, the course material and tasks should be relevant, authentic and accessible to learners in order to promote learning.

**Tenets of Distance Language Learning**

The relevance of distance learning lies in its capacity to enhance the interactivity beyond educational institutions. In this sense White (2003) argues that the benefit

students attribute to distance language learning courses depends on the context of delivery – comprising learner support systems, the teacher's responsiveness and the quality of interaction in the course. The challenge resides, then, in constructing the appropriate learning context and in comprehending students' construals of the learning process. This entails learners' rationalities of language learning, needs, concerns and peculiarities are attended to. To this purpose, theorists suggest the idea of a *learner-context interface,* which explores the dynamic between the learner and the learning context. This theory of distance language learning encompasses three dimensions: the learner, the learning context and the interface between them. Thus, "how learners define the context, how they define themselves as learners, how they act on that knowledge... is critical for the development of the interface" (2003:89).

The interface also focuses on the effects of teacher's and learners' interactions. As van Lier (2004) states, each individual's language learning process is mediated by others in social interaction, by self through private speech and by artifacts (tasks and technology). Distance education results in new contexts for learning, new ways of learning, new roles and new responsibilities for participants. We therefore argue that through reflexivity the horizons of mediation can be expanded in distance education due to the elements by which it is brought into being: reciprocal interaction, learners' self-awareness and an insightful view of the artifacts. These characteristics are coherent with a purposeful, flexible an open-ended teaching and learning practice. In order to build significant experiences from distance learning, learners and teachers should be aware of its benefits and functioning. Moreover, any teaching/learning experience that is intended to be educationally consistent and sustainable should be grounded on a theory of learning and on a conception of language.

*Distance learners' roles and responsibilities*

Since the focus is on the learners and the learning process, learner autonomy is at the core of distance education in general, and of distance language learning in particular. These concepts are linked to the nature of a sound learning environment and of quality learning experiences along with learners' roles and responsibilities. With respect to autonomy, we find van Lier's definition illuminating since it does not imply independence or individualism. Rather it means:

> having the authorship of one's actions, having the voice that speaks one's words, and being emotionally connected to one's actions and speech (Damasio, 2003), within one's community of practice (Wenger, 1998). This type of autonomy is dialogical in Bakhtin's sense (1981): socially produced, but appropriated and made one's own (van Lier, 2004:8)

Thus, autonomy is related not only to the freedom of choice, exploration and individual preferences, but also to the learners' responsibilities for their own and their partners' learning adventures. Following van Lier's framework of interaction in the language curriculum, we believe the other two attributes of the syllabus -awareness and authenticity- can also be applied to distance learning in order to create a constructive distance learning experience. Awareness implies learners know, or at least reflect on, the objectives they pursue and the possible ways to achieve them. Authenticity refers to the commitment and interest as well as to relevant, real-life experiences (1996:20).

It is then advisable that learners are encouraged to become involved in their learning and participate actively in the process by participating in forums, analysing their experiences with the content and tasks delivered alongside their sense of progress in the course. They should be guided particularly in accessing learning opportunities that are meaningful to them and available within their context. As White (2003) states, learners should develop an effective interface with their learning context– one which enables them to make choices and decisions throughout the development of the course. With flexibility and a two-way communication, students are provided with learning spaces to negotiate suitable approaches to the materials and to evaluate learning sources in the virtual environment, which can help them manage their own learning. Critical reflection is then essential as a means of promoting learner autonomy.

*Teacher roles and responsibilities*

Distance education assigns language teachers the role of facilitator and of collaborators in the learner's learning process. Teachers, also called tutors or instructors, should be aware of the affordances of distance education and of the new language learning context in order to guide students in the construction of knowledge and of meaningful learning experiences. Not only should teachers handle different technological tools chosen to convey instruction, but, above all, they should be able to resort to pedagogical strategies that encourage choice and expand learning options at the delivery stage. For this purpose, teachers are required to adjust the learning material to the learners' needs, interests and knowledge. This engages teachers in a continuous and thoughtful revision of course development and design.

Communicative strategies also play a central part in teacher's duties since they are meant to foster dialgue with their learners. Computer-mediated environment also requires tutors to develop specific competencies, such as helping learners to adapt to the distance language settings; identifying and responding sensibly to learners'

requests and concerns in order to maintain or increase their motivation and self-confidence; supporting students in assuming responsibility for their learning and in understanding the dynamic of the distance language learning process; working within a context of continuous change and innovation.

Although these responsibilities are within the scope of teachers in face-to-face classes, distance teachers need to adapt to physical, temporal and psychological distance with their learners. This may imply tutors should devote a large amount of time giving feedback to and assisting learners. Due to this, teachers need to establish parameters that define when, how often, how and why feedback and assistance will be provided.

## Conclusions

Distance language education has become omnipresent in society and it becomes urgent to critically examine its merits and drawbacks and above all, as White (2003) argues, its genuine sense, which implies focusing on the actual learners as well as exploring their responsiveness towards the demands and opportunities it presents.

We completely agree with Pérez Lindo (2010) when he states that a good teacher should transmit their wish to learn to learners and, on these grounds, they achieve better results than with mere repetition or accumulation of information. What makes education different from other forms of communicating knowledge and information is that its purpose is to form individuals in their cognitive, ethical, social, practical and intellectual dimensions. In so doing, they construct humanity, being thereby grounded on an ethical perspective (Litwin, 2005).

The use of technology can promote learning but they do not define the curriculum and do not exclude effort in learning. Owing to this, the integration of technologies into education transcends their use to acquire information, to gain technological expertise or educational effectiveness –as pursued by the ICTs approach- and opens the paths towards a conception of technologies as reinforcing learning and knowledge (LKTs). A good teacher and a solid distance learning pedagogy should make students acquire competencies that enable them to integrate into a given society and to achieve full autonomy, that is *learning to be*, which in turn will mean learning to manage their own freedom. This is exactly what distance education in general and of online language learning in particular foster.

The other principle that is practised through distance education in general, and through distance language learning in particular, and that helps individuals become better is the one that confirms that knowledge is meant to be shared, and further, that

such sharing does not diminish its value to its creator. Thomas Jefferson eloquently expressed these ideas in 1813 when he wrote:

> "He who receives an idea from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lights his taper at mine, receives light without darkening me. That ideas should freely spread from one to another over the globe, for the moral and mutual instruction of man, and improvement of his condition, seems to have been peculiarly and benevolently designed by nature, when she made them, like fire, expansible over all space, without lessening their density in any point, and like the air in which we breathe, move, and have our physical being, incapable of confinement or exclusive appropriation." (1854, 180–181)

We believe that education is one of the few sustainable means to equip humans around the globe with the skills and resources to confront the challenges of ignorance, poverty, war, and environmental degradation. Distance education is perhaps the most powerful means of extending this resource and making it accessible to all. Thus, we contribute to the elimination of human suffering by making as freely available as we can the knowledge that we have gained from developing distance education alternatives.

Last but not least, research should be conducted on many areas, ranging from the design of didactic materials to the application of specific pedagogic strategies, or to the analysis of students' level of satisfaction and assessment, among other issues (Cabero, 2004). Assuming distance education is a social process and that technology is socially constructed, we can definitely say that technical determinants of the system will not mark its quality, but the attention we pay to working educational and pedagogic variables will. Today the problems are not technological but they derive from not knowing what to do, how to do it, or why we want to do it. This entails building a politics of knowledge that supports a sustainable, congruent dynamic of research, theory and practice in distance language learning.

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# UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF GRAMMATICAL METAPHOR: EXAMPLES FROM NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ON ARGENTINA

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**Abstract**

This paper presents some of the work being done as part of the project called "The representation of Argentina and its people in the discourse of English-speaking media." Our main focus is on providing a definition and explanation of the concept of Grammatical Metaphor (GM), as put forward by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004), and on illustrating this theoretical construal through examples drawn from the project's corpus. With a focus on the systemic-functional metafunctions, a link is drawn between the concept of arguability, which is central to the interpersonal metafunction, and the concept of encapsulation, central to textual and ideational meanings (Thompson, 2004). Some pedagogical implications are also presented.

> *"The language system is a network of grammatical and lexical choices which can be seen as a 'tool-box' or resource for making meaning."*
> (Droga and Humphrey, 2003:1).

## Introduction

As stated by Louise Droga and Sally Humphrey (2003), we can think of the language system as a *'tool-box'* for making meaning. With that in mind, we could say that as language users, we have all the necessary tools to express what we want or need, the way we want to or need to, right at our fingertips.

An understanding of such tools or choices can be of great use when it comes to exploring the meaning/s of different kinds of texts. According to Mall Stålhammar (2006), there has recently been a growing interest in resources used in non-literary texts, as such texts constitute the overwhelming majority of all printed matter. The current interest in this type of texts, in the author's view, may be inspired by different

needs; for example, the increasing global need for English for specific purposes, or perhaps the growing awareness of the social impact of textual strategies.

One important characteristic of non-literary texts is the use of a very useful though oftentimes disregarded tool: Grammatical Metaphor. When we say 'disregarded' we refer to the fact that many language teachers at primary and secondary school are not usually aware of the prevalence and the impact of Grammatical Metaphor. This lack of awareness may have significant consequences in the students' learning process, especially when it comes to reading comprehension skills.

The aim of this paper is to provide a short definition and explanation of the concept of Grammatical Metaphor as described by Systemic Functional Linguistics, focusing mainly on nominalization as an instance of GM. We will analyze some examples of this meaning making resource taken from excerpts of different newspaper articles on Argentina, which are part of the corpus of a research project called "The representation of Argentina and its people in the discourse of English-speaking media" currently being conducted at the School of Philosophy, Humanities and the Arts of the National University of San Juan. Some pedagogical implications will also be presented in an attempt to show the strong link between linguistic principles and classroom practices.

**Theoretical Framework**

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language centered around the notion of language function and meaning making. It was developed by M. A. K. Halliday who, influenced by the school of Prague[3], explored texts as social constructs. He focused his studies on language in use and wrote a Functional Grammar for the English Language based on the use of language in social contexts, semantic categories and the centrality of meaning (Bollati, 2010). He thought of language as "*a network of systems, or interrelated sets of options for making meaning*" (Halliday, 1994:15). In this sense, language is a functional-semiotic system, since interlocutors use language to attain a certain purpose by choosing from an array of possible options. In Eggins' words, "*The distinctive feature of semiotic systems is that each choice in the system acquires its meanings against the background of the other*

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[3] **Prague school:** A school of linguistic thought and analysis established in Prague in the 1920s by Vilém Mathesius. It included among its most prominent members the Russian linguist Nikolay Trubetskoy and the Russian-born American linguist Roman Jakobson. This school was characterized, among other things, by its socially-based view of language. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prague_school)

*choices that could have been made"* (Eggins, 2003:3). In this respect, context plays a major role since all linguistic choices are context-bound.

In SFL, context is not regarded as an external factor that simply adds some elements to the linguistic components, but as an integral part of language. Context is seen as being inseparable from more formal aspects of language, and as having utmost importance in the creation and interpretation of meaning. Within SFL theory, a good way of illustrating the relationship between the formal and contextual aspects of language is through the concept of stratification, which implies "*looking at language along a spectrum of abstraction, moving from linguistic to extra linguistic strata"* (Bollati, 2010:19)*.* This stratified view of language covers the most tangible aspects of language, such as written or spoken realizations, to more abstract features such as genre and ideology. Figure 1 below presents a graphic representation of the stratification dimension through concentric circles, typically presented in SFL publications:
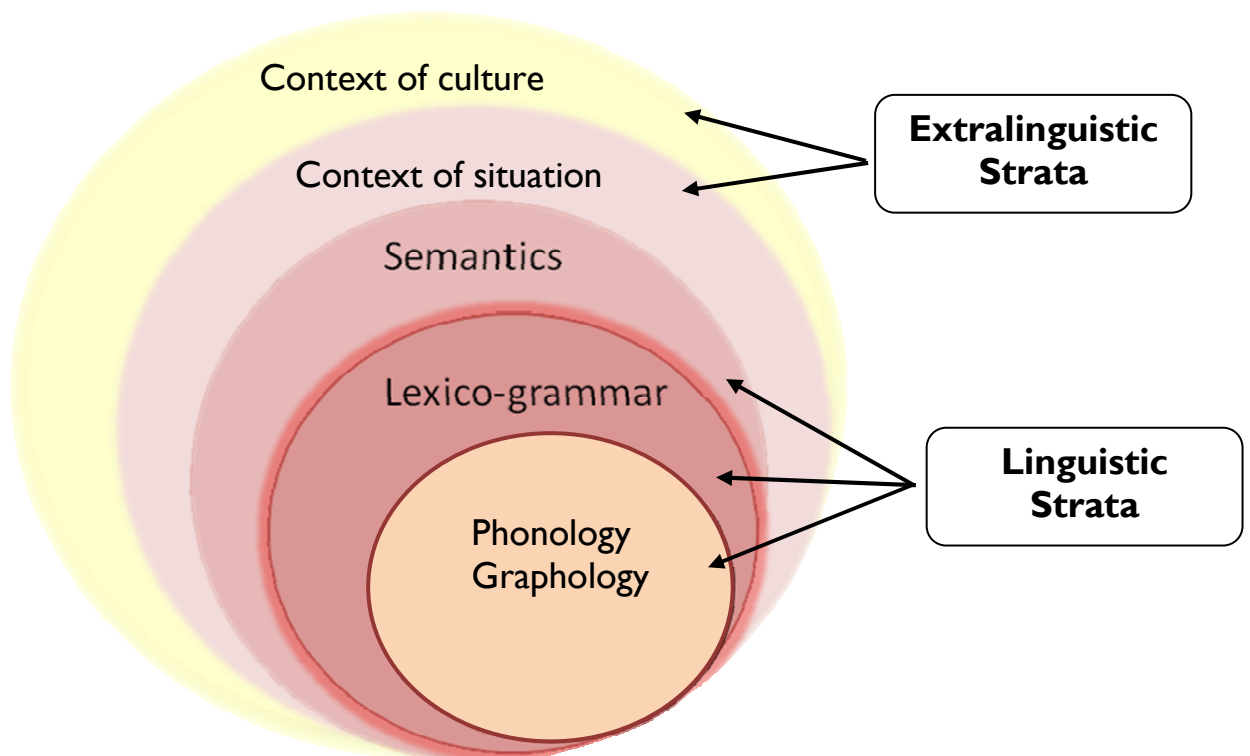


Figure 1: Stratification-Linguistic and extralinguistic strata (adapted from Halliday and Matthiessen 2004).

This graph allows us to see the concepts presented in a vertical way, showing how SFL conceives of language as being embedded in social contexts emphasizing the idea that it is the 'view from above' which prevails when it comes to interpreting a text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004:31).

Another feature of language as seen by SFL is that it has an 'enabling function': we use it to achieve different goals or social purposes, or in the words of Droga and Humphrey "*we use it to get things done*" (2003:1). According to Halliday, language has developed in response to three kinds of social-functional 'needs': **ideational** (experiential and logical), **interpersonal** and **textual**. Halliday called these the 'metafunctions' of language.

The author explains that the **experiential** metafunction refers to the way we use language to construe experience in terms of what is going on around us and inside us: what is happening, who is involved and under which circumstances. In addition, language is also used to establish links and relationships between the 'what', the 'who' and the 'how', so it serves a **logical** metafunction as well. The **interpersonal** metafunction makes reference to the way we use language to interact with the social world by negotiating roles and attitudes, i.e. we enact social roles and express attitudes towards the ideational components. Finally, the **textual** metafunction is concerned with the way we use language to create well organised and cohesive texts, both spoken and written, by means of linguistic resources (Droga & Humphrey, 2003).

Every time language is used, these three different functions are served simultaneously, and it is the interaction of these three metafunctions that helps the text achieve its purpose.


**Grammatical Metaphor - GM**

Grammatical Metaphor can be defined as "*the possibility of re-setting the relationships between meanings and wordings*" (Thompson, 2004:220)*.* In simple words, in GM one grammatical category is made to do the job of another grammatical category. It should be noted that GM can occur within the systems that create ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings; however, this paper focuses exclusively on one form of ideational GM, namely Nominalization.

Nominalization basically involves the use of a nominal form to express a process or a quality/attribute (Thompson, 2004:225/226). The use of nominalization can serve various purposes in discourse. It can help the text producer to hide or omit the doer, avoid argumentation, give prominence to a process and maintain the flow of discourse.

A practice often carried out in GM analysis is that of 'unpacking' the metaphor, which involves the identification and retrieval of the process or quality and participant/s implied in the nominal form. Halliday refers to the 'unpacked' version as being 'congruent' with the grammar, in the sense that a process is realized by a verb and a quality by an adjective, for instance (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004).

Listed below are some instances of GM from our research corpus, together with an unpacked version of the expression.

**1.** Source: **THE GUARDIAN** (www.guardian.co.uk)

*The sins of the Argentine church* (January 4th, 2011)

a.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| *"Yet even **the execution** of other men of the cloth did nothing to shake the support of senior clerics, including representatives of the Holy See, for the criminality of their leader General Jorge Rafael Videla and his minions."* | *Yet even [when **somebody executed**] other men of the cloth, [that] did nothing to shake the support of senior clerics, including representatives of the Holy See, for the criminality of their leader General Jorge Rafael Videla and his minions.* |

In this example, through the use of GM it becomes possible to omit any reference to the doer of the action. The execution, therefore, becomes a self-contained, encapsulated concept.

b.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| *"What one did not hear from any senior member of the Argentine hierarchy was any expression of regret for the church's **collaboration** in these crimes."* | *What one did not hear from any senior member of the Argentine hierarchy was any expression of regret for the [fact that] the church [**had collaborated**] in the crimes.* |

c.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| "He recounts how the Argentine navy with the **connivance** of Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, now the Jesuit archbishop of Buenos Aires, hid from a visiting delegation of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission the dictatorship's political prisoners." | He recounts how the Argentine navy [with which] the Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, now the Jesuit archbishop of Buenos Aires, [**had connived**], hid from a visiting delegation of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission the dictatorship's political prisoners. |

d.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| "The extent of the church's **complicity** in the dark deeds was excellently set out by Horacio Verbitsky, one of Argentina's most notable journalists, in his book El Silencio (Silence)." | The extent [to which] the church [**was complicitous**] in the dark deeds was excellently set out by Horacio Verbitsky, one of Argentina's most notable journalists, in his book El Silencio (Silence). |

The use of GM in these cases makes it possible to produce a non-arguable expression, presenting the participation of the church in Argentina's military process as a given fact. In examples b. and c. this is achieved by 'packing' processes (collaborate - connive) and in example d. by encapsulating the attribution of a quality (being complicitous).

e.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| "As it happens, in the week before Christmas in the city of Córdoba Videla and some of his military and police cohorts were convicted by their country's courts of the **murder** of 31 people between April and October 1976, a small fraction of the **killings** they were responsible for. The **convictions** brought life sentences for some of the military." | As it happens, in the week before Christmas in the city of Córdoba Videla and some of his military and police cohorts were convicted by their country's courts of the murder of [i.e. **military and police cohorts had murdered**] 31 people between April and October 1976, a small fraction of the killings [**people the military and police killed**] they were responsible for. [The fact that country's courts **convicted** some of the military] brought life sentences for some of the military. |

Example e. presents various cases of GM. The first two examples are related to the fact that the police and military forces killed many people during the dictatorship. The third is a nominalized rephrasing of the verb 'convicted' used in the preceding sentence. Although it is true that in these examples there is encapsulation of information, the use GM serves clearly cohesive purposes. The word 'killings', in itself a GM, is used as a reformulation of 'the murder of 31 people' (used before) and the word 'conviction' maintains the flow of information.

**2.** Source: **THE EPOCH TIMES** (www.theepochtimes.com)

*I Cry for You, Argentina* (November 2nd, 2010)

f.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| *"When asked about it, Mr. Vargas Llosa said that Mrs. Kirchner was leading a government riddled by* **corruption.***"* | *When asked about it, Mr. Vargas Llosa said that Mrs. Kirchner was leading a government riddled by [actions of]* **corrupt people.** |

In this example, the use of the nominalized form 'corruption' allows the speaker to omit any direct reference to human involvement. It is clear that corruption refers to actions performed by people, and it is implied in this example that the actions are related to Mrs. Kirchner's presidency. However, the use of GM makes it possible not to make a direct attribution of responsibility and to somehow distance the president from the actions condemned. Thus, some aspects of the critique, though directed to the government, are somehow depersonalized.

g.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| *"This doesn't faze the president, who continues to insist that Argentina has a phenomenal economic growth rate. The astronomical* **raise** *in subsidies for poor families, however, belies her* **assertions***."* | *This doesn't faze the president, who continues to insist that Argentina has a phenomenal economic growth rate. The astronomical raise in subsidies for poor families [**somebody has raised subsidies**], however, belies* **what she asserted.** |

The nominalizations highlighted in example g. seem to serve different purposes. The use of 'raise' objectifies the government's decision to increase subsidies, and presents

it as a self-engendered process. The word 'assertions' contributes to the flow of discourse by referring back to the expression 'who continues to insist that... '.

**3.** Source: **THE WASHINGTON POST** (www.washingtonpost.com)

*Argentine coup leader, ex-Adm. Emilio Massera dies* (November 8th, 2010)

h.

| Actual version | Unpacked version |
|---|---|
| *"Images of Massera showing him to be aging and infirm in recent years were sharply at odds with the coldly calculating "Admiral Zero" who led the **extermination campaign** during the dictatorship's early years. His **atrocities** were brought to light through the testimony of hundreds of survivors during the historic trial of junta leaders in 1985, when he was sentenced to life for **murder**, illegal **imprisonment**, **tortures** and **robbery**."* | *Images of Massera showing him to be aging and infirm in recent years were sharply at odds with the coldly calculating "Admiral Zero" who led the extermination campaign [**he led others who systematically exterminated people**] during the dictatorship's early years. His atrocities [**he was atrocious**] were brought to light through the testimony of hundreds of survivors during the historic trial of junta leaders in 1985, when he was sentenced to life [because **he had murdered, imprisoned, tortured and robbed people**]* |

This fragment contains a number of GMs. In the cases highlighted, we find a nominalized form used as a qualifier (extermination campaign). This is one of the possibilities enabled by nominalization. Once a process is packed into a noun (exterminate-extermination), it can be modified or used to modify other nouns, becoming part of a chain in which a great deal of information is contained. Also present in example h. is a case of a nominalized attribute (atrocious) and various instances of nominalized processes (murder, imprison, torture and rob), serving the same encapsulating and depersonalizing effect described in previous examples

In general terms, the 'hidden' meanings in the nominalizations above are often related to the elimination of responsibility on the part of the actors responsible for the actions involved. When a process becomes a participant, it becomes somehow timeless, static, unarguable and encapsulated. As we unpack the meanings, and are faced with a more 'congruent version' we become more aware of what is actually being represented.  While it is true that GM as such can contribute greatly to maintaining the flow of discourse and keeping a text highly cohesive, on many occasions it serves

ideological purposes by not making explicit who is responsible for what is happening or by downplaying the role of the doer of the action.

The examples presented here have helped us, as novice text analysts, to explore and discover some of these 'hidden' meanings. The unpacking exercise constitutes a first attempt at analyzing some of the meaning making tools we often take for granted as language users.

**Pedagogical implications**

For those of us interested in language use, an exploration of GM and the various purposes it can serve seems to be a relevant, though quite challenging type of activity. As we worked on the examples presented, focused on nominalization, we often found ourselves swimming in a deep sea of possible rewordings as we sought to unpack the texts and find congruent readings that adequately reflected the meanings the writer intended to encode in the metaphorical wording. Despite its difficulties, this 'rewording' exercise showed us that an awareness of nominalization and its meaning making power can be extremely valuable for teachers, especially when it comes to selecting material for reading comprehension exercises.

Students' frequent failure at such exercises can be attributed to the text having too many instances of nominalization. As such, nominalization is a resource often used in academic, formal or scientific texts -among others- and it is not easily accessible to learners of all ages. It involves a level of abstraction and processing that is quite complex even in our native language. Thus, nominalization can be a serious obstacle for EFL students who are still not prepared to deal with such abstract ('incongruent') language, either because of the cognitive stage they are in or because of the level of language competence they have reached.

If EFL teachers are aware of the use of nominalization in a text, they can be better prepared to make decisions as to whether to use such text in a class or not, and if a highly nominalized text is actually used, informed teachers will have the resources to help their students by 'translating' the text's academic language into everyday language, "unpacking" the abstraction for students, or even guiding the students to unpack an expression themselves. In addition, awareness of the impact of nominalization can help teachers guide their students in the use of nominalized forms as cohesive devices in writing classes for instance. Students in intermediate and advanced classes can be taught the use of such forms to avoid repetition and wordiness in their written work.

If we as teachers are aware of the meaning making power of nominalization, we can make more effective choices of texts for our students. An understanding of GM can not only assist us in choosing and adapting texts to suit our students' language level and cognitive development, but it can also provide us with more tools to engage our students in critical reading activities, involving the exploration and unveiling of hidden meanings.

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# TALLERES

# CAN WE MAKE LEXICO-GRAMMAR MEMORABLE?

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## Abstract

This paper promotes the teaching of vocabulary and grammar in an integrated fashion rather than as separate language items. A number of issues and ideas are discussed, including: a) the still highly prevalent grammar/vocabulary dichotomy; b) the theoretical construct known as the lexico-grammatical cline (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004), increasingly reflected in modern dictionaries and grammar books; c) the concept of 'word grammar' (Lewis, 1993, 2000, 2005), involving a practically endless network of lexicogrammatical patterns; d) some findings from corpus-based studies (McCarthy and Carter, 1997) of high relevance to the EFL teaching situation; e) an illustration of some grammar teaching techniques as suggested by an EFL expert (Stranks, 2010). It is expected that the ideas presented can assist teachers in their exploration of the nature of language and can expand their inventory of teaching resources.

## Introduction

Any teaching situation puts the teacher in a position to decide what to teach and how to go about it. In this process, many factors need to be taken into account: the socio-cultural context of the teaching-learning situation (regular schooling -primary, secondary or higher levels; special language classes), students' ages and previous language exposure and experiences, expected outcomes, to name but a few. More often than not, many of the language classroom decisions are pre-determined by the institution or somehow dictated by the coursebook, which is not always the teacher's choice. Regardless of what coursebook is selected or whose the choice of material may be, all language courses will contain -with varying degrees of emphasis- some grammar and some vocabulary content, and these two components will often be dealt with separately.

In this paper we endorse a more integrated view of grammar and vocabulary, and present some reflections and ideas that promote such integration. We will discuss:

- the traditional conception of grammar and vocabulary as a dichotomy, which has had a strong influence on EFL/ESL teaching;

- the concept of lexico-grammar as a cline (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004), which challenges the polarized view of vocabulary and grammar;

- the concept of 'word grammar' (Lewis, 2005), which involves the practically endless networks of lexicogrammatical patterns;

- some findings from corpus-based studies ( McCarthy and Carter, 1997) which support an integrated approach to grammar and vocabulary, and are thus relevant to the EFL teaching situation;

- the use of some grammar teaching techniques as suggested by an EFL expert (Stranks, 2010), which seem to endorse an integrated view to the teaching of grammar and vocabulary.

We hope that we can illustrate the validity of a non-polarized view of vocabulary and grammar as a beneficial approach in any foreign language instruction setting. We believe that students can develop a more realistic view of the language they are learning if a more integrated view is endorsed in the classroom.


**The grammar - vocabulary dichotomy**

It is generally the case that teachers and students associate grammar with fixed rules and structures which can be learnt as formulas, and vocabulary with lists of words, isolated from other words, and recorded with equivalent terms in their mother tongue. According to Michael Lewis, this 'binary kind of oppositional thought' is one of the greatest misconceptions in ELT (1993:8). Lewis explains:

> *Grammar is normally equated with structures, sentence patterns, different verb forms ('the tenses'), prepositions and those other supposedly generative bits of the language which are practised in grammar exercises. Roughly speaking, grammar is seen as a set of sentence frames with slots, into which appropriate 'vocabulary', or words can be fitted.* (1993:8)

Unfortunately, this polarized view of language has been prevalent in EFL for many years, and it has prevented teachers and students alike from developing an understanding of lexis, which is, in Lewis' opinion, a highly complex and revealing aspects of language analysis (1997).

The word 'lexis' is now often used instead of vocabulary in most teacher training settings. In this respect, Selivan (2011) explains that lexis is a more comprehensive term including multi-word items and reflects:

> *Why use a technical term borrowed from the realm of linguistics instead of the word 'vocabulary'? Quite simply because vocabulary is typically seen as*
>
> *individual words (often presented in lists) whereas lexis is a somewhat wider concept and consists of collocations, chunks and formulaic*

*expressions. It also includes certain patterns that were traditionally associated with the grammar of a language, e.g. If I were you…, I haven't seen you for ages, etc.*

However, internalization of these concepts takes time, and grammar continues being presented as opposed to vocabulary. A consequence of this binary conception can be seen in most ELT syllabuses, which are often organized on the basis of some central grammatical categories, such as the tense system, reported speech, passive voice, or some similarly complex system. The vocabulary used to illustrate these forms seems to play a secondary role, as long as students can master the right structures.

Behind these choices lies the implicit idea that knowledge of grammar can be of greater help to communicate than lexis. However, research studies have shown that some students can 'recite long lists of irregular verbs, but can't ask for a cup of coffee.' (Swan, 2006). In line with the communicative power of lexis, Wilkins said, as early as 1972, 'Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed' (1972:111). Confirming this statement, Krashen then claimed "when students travel, they don't carry grammar books, they carry dictionaries" (cited in Lewis,1993:iii).

Another misconception that supports a binary view of vocabulary and grammar is the idea that grammar structures are finite in number, and thus more manageable, whereas vocabulary is perceived as being practically infinite, or so vast that mastery is out of the question in any language course of reasonable length. However, reducing the learning of a language to the mastery of a limited number of structures would do nothing but create a distorted view of language and of language learning. Advanced mastery of language is an extremely complex process which cannot be reduced to a list of structures.

Why has the grammar/vocabulary dichotomy been so dominant in ELT? As Lewis points out (1993), dichotomies have the great pedagogical value of simplification. But, as Lewis explains, this process of simplification is often conducted at the cost of suppressing or distorting information about real language use. The author suggests that the relationship between grammar and vocabulary should be seen as a gradable concept, and should be represented as "points on a scale, cline or spectrum" (1993:37). This is very much in line with Halliday's definition of lexicogrammar, discussed below.

**The lexico-grammar cline**

In his extremely thorough description of the English language, Michael Halliday (1985, 1994, Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004) stresses the unity of lexis and grammar and explains that the lexical and grammatical choices we make every time we use language can be seen as choices made simultaneously from both a syntagmatic and a paradigmatic axis. Syntagmatic choices are made in relation to co-occurring language (i.e. the use of a certain adjective with a certain noun), whereas paradigmatic choices are made in relation to alternative items that could have been selected but were not (i.e. the use of a certain adjective instead of another qualifying expression) (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). Halliday regards grammar patterns and vocabulary items as the two extremes of a continuum, or as "the two poles of a single cline" (2004, 43). In this continuum, the grammar end of the cline is associated with what is normally known as closed systems, generality in meaning, and structure, whereas the lexis end of the cline would correspond to open sets, specificity in meaning and collocations.

**Lexico-grammar (stratum of wording)**



| **Grammar** | | **Lexis** |
|---|---|---|
| (closed systems, general in meaning, structure) | | (open systems, specific in meaning, collocation) |
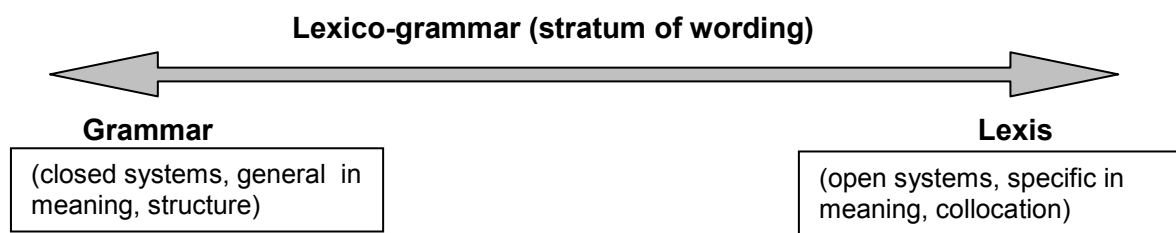
Fig. 1. The lexico-grammar cline (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:43)

The question then emerges, as Halliday and Matthiessen pose it: "If grammar and lexis are interpreted as the endpoints of a continuum, what lies in between them, around the middle?" (2004:45). They suggest that on different points along this cline we would place patterns that have properties of both, closed and open systems. They illustrate this point with the following examples:

- *take + pride / pleasure / delight + in……. ing*

- *make + things/matters + (even) worse / more……*

- *waste/ squander / spend + time / energy / money + on/in ….. ing*

The underlying idea is that the grammar end of the cline is associated with generalizability, whereas the lexis end of the spectrum is associated with specificity or 'delicacy' in Halliday's terms. Halliday even defines lexis as "*grammar extended to the point of maximum delicacy*" (2004:46). In turn, Lewis refers to this concept through the idea of a 'spectrum of generative power' (1993:37), and goes on to explain that while it

is true that structures have the potential of generating a very large number of utterances, it is also true that words have generative power, as the above examples illustrate. Lewis goes on to explain:

> *Language patterns are arranged on a spectrum from those which are absolutely fixed and non-generative, to those which provide a high degree of generalization, though usually with some restrictions."* (2000:149)

If grammar and vocabulary can be seen along this cline, how can the elements on the cline be described? Halliday explains that grammar books evolved to describe the left end of the cline, and thesaurus and dictionaries evolved to describe the right end of the cline. However, as McCarthy *et. al*. explain (2010), thanks to the use of corpora, most modern dictionaries now include a great deal of information about the most common patterns of words, as well as other types of grammatical information. Something similar is happening to grammar books with respect to lexis. According to McCarthy et al.

> *Modern corpus-based grammars provide a lot of information about word meaning and collocation as well as grammar* (2010:44)

What is happening with the contents of grammar books and dictionaries clearly illustrates that "the traditional split between vocabulary and grammar is breaking down" McCarthy *et.al*. (2004:44). We believe that the concept of a lexico-grammatical cline, in lieu of such split, can be a valuable theoretical construct to inform teaching practices.

## Word grammar

If grammar and vocabulary have traditionally been thought of and taught as different categories, it may sound strange to say that there is such a thing as a 'word grammar'. However, if grammar is understood, as Lewis suggests, as "the search for powerful patterns" (1993:137), and if we recognize that most words are likely to enter a number of specific patterns -as has been demonstrated by corpus-based studies, then it is only natural to speak of 'word grammar'. Making a difference between the type of patterning which characterizes words of a higher or lower meaning content, Lewis says (1993:142):

> *Every word has its own grammar -the set of patterns in which it occurs. Words with a comparatively high meaning content enter into a comparatively small number of typical patterns. [...] In general, it is lexically vacuous words which enter the widest range of patterns.*

He uses a similar rationale to invite teachers to rethink their conception of grammar to make room for the grammar of each word:

*"Individual words, whether lexically powerful (submarine) or lexically weak (take) have their own grammar. Recognition of these factors suggests a much wider concept of grammar than that traditionally adopted in the teaching of English." (Lewis, 1993: 137).*

The patterns entered into by different words have often been described under the umbrella term *collocation*, defined by as "the readily observable phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur in natural text with greater than random frequency" (Lewis, 1997:8). Collocations have also been defined as "the company words keep" (J. R. Firth in Lewis, 2000:48), and additionally as "the way words combine in predictable ways" (Lewis, 2000:48). Although the description of lexical patterns has been extended to include polywords, fixed expressions, semi-fixed expressions, among other categories (Lewis, 1993, 1997), for our purposes in this paper we will limit the description of combinational patters to *collocations* and *colligation*, the former involving the co-occurrence of a word with certain other specific words, and the latter implying the co-occurrence of a word with particular grammar patterns.

| | |
|---|---|
| Collocation: | *settle a dispute* |
| | *make amends* |
| Colligation: | aware + of + noun phrase/ |
| | *aware of a problem* |
| | aware + that + clause |
| | *aware that something must be done* |

In view of the existence of these patterns, it can be said that teaching 'vocabulary' implies much more than dealing with isolated words. It implies teaching the most typical or frequent patterns of each word. This forces teachers to take a fresh look at their practices and to expand the concept of grammar to include other lexically-based patterns.

One objection sometimes raised against this approach is that the teaching load is multiplied, as the idea of teaching 'one' grammar gets replaced by the teaching of an endless number of word grammars, which are not necessarily 'rule-based' but rather 'use-based'. A simple reminder that it is our task as teachers to teach *language in use* can help dismiss the objections, even if our task becomes more complex, taking us away from the comfort zone that 'knowing all the rules' can create.

**Some corpus-based studies**

This more integrated view of grammar and lexis has been made possible to a large extent by the introduction of corpora as a tool for recording, describing and analyzing

language in use. McCarthy *et. al*. (2010) consider that the use of corpora has been greatly responsible for the change in this process.

A corpus is basically a large collection of actual texts, intended to provide information about the way language is used. In the case of the English language, pioneering work was carried out by Sinclair, who -working with a team of researchers- led the Cobuild corpus project (McCarthy *et. al*., 2010). Quite early in the development of corpus studies, it became evident that corpus building was a highly complex process and that corpora needed to be constructed with specific purposes in mind, if they were to provide reliable information (Lewis, 2000:191-192). Thus, a wide variety of corpora has emerged, with sophisticated technology now made available in simple form to non-expert users, who can easily build their own corpus for their specific purposes.

How is the use of corpus-based information relevant to EFL teaching? For one thing, most teachers and students have access to these technological resources and can easily consult corpus information and even build their own course-specific corpora. Additionally, most modern EFL dictionaries -essential reference material in any language course- are based on corpus information and provide examples of actual language use. Modern course books, in turn, contain whole sections devoted to the teaching and practice of collocations selected from corpus data.

Corpus-based information has been relevant to EFL teaching in other ways, as well. Corpora have revealed the relative frequency of words and their text coverage potential. As Nation and Waring (1997:8) point out, the potential of this information for language learning is enormous: the higher a word's frequency rate is, the more warranted any learning effort will be.

The table below (Francis and Kucera, 1982, cited in Nation and Waring (1997:9) shows "what proportion of a text is covered by certain numbers of high frequency words":

| Vocabulary Size | Text Coverage |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1,000 | 72.0% |
| 2,000 | 79.7% |
| 3,000 | 84.0% |
| 4,000 | 86.7% |
| 5,000 | 88.7% |
| 6,000 | 89.9% |
| 15,851 | 97.8% |

Table 1- Vocabulary size and text coverage

The authors point out the relevance of this data for the language teacher and learner (1997:9):

> *The good news for second language learners and second language teachers is that a small number of the words of English occur very frequently and if a learner knows these words, that learner will know a very large proportion of the running words in a written or spoken text.*

Together with word frequency information, the corpus provides word collocation and colligation information. Once the most frequent words and patterns have been identified, together with their most frequent collocates, they can become the focus of meaningful teaching practices.

**Suggestions from an expert voice**

While research in corpus data and the connection between language learning and word usage give us tremendous insight into what words and phrases we should focus on in the classroom, it is important, of course, to consider how we present and teach these items. Namely, a teacher might use corpora data to create worksheets for her/his students, but it is often the case that students will quickly forget the word usages and phrases very soon after performing the exercises. As Jeff Stranks points out in the Cambridge University Press video **"Making grammar exercises more memorable,"** "if you ask learners the next day, they often can't remember a single sentence from a grammar exercise that they spent 15 minutes doing." It is undeniable that memorization, teamed with comprehension, plays a necessary role in language learning, especially when we want the student to master the correct uses of words and phrases.

In **"Making grammar exercises more memorable"** Stranks provides guidance as to how to make grammar learning meaningful by providing an exercise that helps students retain the words, phrases and grammar patterns they have learned in class. The video lays out a simple, fun, and easy-to-use exercise called "gradual deletion" that only requires a whiteboard, marker, and a few sentences which are pertinent to whatever grammatical or lexical concept a class is covering.

Stranks suggests that the instructor begin by taking a few sentences from a worksheet or exercise the class has recently completed and corrected. In the video, Stranks only uses five or six sentences at a time. After selecting the sentences, the instructor then writes them on the board, making sure to number each sentence and to write them clearly. The sentences selected in the video are all instances of the use  of

the present perfect. As an alternative, we have provided examples where the focus is on some commonly used phrases (Sample activity 1-a) .

| |
|---|
| 1. Danny always found it helpful to bounce ideas off of his wife.<br>2. Sheryl was careful to get her money's worth, so she always looked for sales.<br>3. Since they shared a small apartment, the roommates had to be careful not to tread on each other's toes.<br>4. You've been training very hard, you must be working toward winning the race.<br>5. When she was two years old, she threw a lot of temper tantrums. |

<div align="right">Sample activity 1 -a</div>

The instructor then invites a student to read a randomly selected sentence aloud. For example, the instructor might say, "Mr. Smith, please read sentence number 2 for the class," but the instructor could just as easily have asked Mr. Smith to read sentences 1, 3, 4 or 5. Throughout the exercise, it is important that the instructor picks sentences at random, with no particular order in mind. Once Mr. Smith has read said sentence, the instructor then rubs out one or two words (again, completely at random) from that sentence (Sample activity 1-b).

| |
|---|
| 1. Danny always found it helpful to bounce ideas off of his wife.<br>2. Sheryl was careful to get _____ worth, so she always looked for sales.<br>3. Since they shared a small apartment, the roommates had to be careful not to tread on each other's toes.<br>4. You've been training very hard, you must be working toward winning the race.<br>5. When she was two years old, she threw a lot of temper tantrums. |

<div align="right">Sample activity 1-b</div>

As Stranks states, "You don't have to plan which words to choose, just rub out a bit of the sentence." Next, the instructor asks another student to read another sentence, perhaps sentence number 5 (again, it can be any sentence) (Sample activity 1-c). The student reads the sentence, then the instructor rubs part of it out. This process is repeated with different students, with the remaining sentences, until all sentences have a bit rubbed out of them (Sample activity 1-d).

| |
|---|
| 1. Danny always found it helpful to bounce ideas off of his wife.<br>2. Sheryl was careful to get _____ worth, so she always looked for sales.<br>3. Since they shared a small apartment, the roommates had to be careful not to tread on each other's toes.<br>4. You've been training very hard, you must be working toward winning the race.<br>5. When she was two years old, she _____ a lot of temper tantrums. |

<div align="right">Sample activity 1-c</div>

| |
|---|
| 1. Danny always found it _____ bounce ideas off of his wife.<br>2. Sheryl _____ to get _____ worth, so she always looked for sales.<br>3. Since they shared a small apartment, _____ had to be careful not to tread on each other's toes.<br>4. You've been training _____ , you must be working toward winning the race.<br>5. When she _____ years old, she _____ a lot of temper tantrums. |

<div align="right">Sample activity 1-d</div>

Now, the sentences will all be partially incomplete. The instructor continues, asking a student to read one of the sentences, but they have to say the complete sentence, filling the missing bit from memory. Once the student has said the complete sentence (let's say they were asked to read sentence number 4), the instructor rubs out a bit more from number 4. Then, another student is called on to read another randomly chosen sentence, and the instructor rubs out another word or two after the student reads it. The instructor continues to repeat this process of asking a student to read a sentence aloud, then rubbing out a bit of the sentence once it has been read correctly. Slowly, the students will have to remember more and more, until all the sentences have been completely rubbed out, and only the numbers remain (Sample activity 1-e-f-g).

1. Danny _____ it _____ bounce _____.
2. Sheryl _____ to get _____ worth, so _____ looked _____.
3. _____ shared _____, _____ had to be careful not to tread on _____.
4. _____ training _____, you _____ toward winning the race.
5. When she _____ _____, _____ _____ temper _____

<div align="right">Sample activity 1-e</div>

1. _____.
2. _____ worth, so _____looked_____.
3. _____, _____.
4. _____ training _____, you _____race.
5. _____, _____

<div align="right">Sample activity 1-f</div>

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____, _____.
4. _____, _____.
5. _____, _____

<div align="right">Sample activity 1-g</div>

If, during the process, a student cannot remember a sentence, the instructor should let other student's help. However, before letting other students help, the first student called upon should have a chance to try to work out the sentence on their own. This means the class must wait to help until given permission from the instructor. This will prevent stronger students from taking the exercise over from weaker ones, and thus give every student a chance to benefit. Again, while working through the exercise, it is important for the instructor to keep sentence order random, otherwise it will become predictable, which will reduce effectiveness, and will result in students losing interest.

At the end of the video, Strank stresses the importance of the instructor keeping alert and in control during the entire exercise. He advises that the instructor be careful not to rub out too much of any one sentence at once, and again, that the instructor not let the exercise become predictable. He also explains that while this exercise can be seen as a type of memorization drill, it is particularly effective because it increasingly challenges and engages students as it progresses. Strank states that after doing this exercise: "Your learners, between them at least, will remember the [five] sentences. And you may well find that the next day, they can remember one or two of the sentences still. And, between everyone in the class, they'll probably remember them all." Above all, Strank emphasizes that before using the exercise, the students must understand the grammatical concepts and the context of the phrases in the sentences. This is an exercise to reinforce concepts that students are already moderately familiar with.

The type of exercise proposed by Stranks is very much in line with the integrated view of grammar and lexis that we have put forward in this paper. Although Stranks refers to his work as a way of making 'grammar' memorable, we believe that his proposal is actually an attempt to make 'lexico-grammar' memorable. In this respect, the selection of sentences for 'gradual deletion' practice is critical, and this is where corpus-information can be very valuable, as well as the teacher's experience in terms of what language will be more meaningful for the students' needs. For instance, if the Present Perfect has been a recent teaching point in the course, a good 'gradual deletion' session might include sentences which contain some very typical lexical items which are frequently used with this tense (for instance, *I've already checked all the details./ They have never been there before./ We have not ordered yet./ What's kept you so long?* /etc.). If the exercise has a more lexical focus (as is the case in our sample activity above), then the selection of sentences should ensure that the phrases are used in real, meaningful structures (In order to view Stranks' instructional video, please visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIghw-xQVRo).

**Closing remarks**

Through the ideas presented here we have sought to advocate the teaching of grammar with accompanying lexis, as well as the use of corpus-based information to inform our practices. We have also endorsed the idea of teaching word grammar along with sentence grammar as complementary pathways. We believe that such an approach can bring students closer to real language use and thus empower them to interact more confidently and more competently in real communication situations.

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# HOW TO DEAL WITH WEAK AND STRONG FORMS IN THE EFL CLASS

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## Abstract

The use of weak and strong forms play a very important role in English pronunciation. Consequently, students of English as a foreign language who wish to acquire a high level of oral performance must handle them appropriately when listening to and when responding to different language situations. Spanish speakers learning English face difficulties when they learn this feature, due to the different kinds of rhythm both languages have.

This workshop aims at helping teachers integrate this topic into an EFL class, through a series of activities built around a scene from a film. The use of this audiovisual aid with the support of new technologies provides the opportunity for analysing this phenomenon in a contextualized communicative situation.

## Introduction

Weak forms are an essential feature of English pronunciation, consequently anybody who wishes to acquire a high level of oral performance must handle them appropriately when listening to and when responding to different language situations.

There are a number of structure words (grammatical words) that may have a weak and a strong form. Their use depends on different factors: 1) phonetic environment, 2) position and 3) accent (Ortiz Lira: 2008).

1) The phonetic environment affects only some structure words. It helps to determine which weak form to use.

*Example*:
   Let's go to **the** office to get **the** tickets.
      /ðɪ/              / ðə /

97

2) Position affects only some structure words (prepositions and auxiliary verbs). This factor may co-occur with accent.

*Examples*:

    A: Who were you talking **to**?
                        /tu:/

     B: To Peter.
      /tə/

    A: Are you sure you can do it?
    B: Yes, I **am.**
        /æm/

3) Accent affects all structure words. Consequently, if accented they are always strong.

*Example*:

    It's "**her** I was talking to, not "**him**.
     /hɜ:/                /him/
    I was talking to **her** when he came in.
              /hə/

**Remember:**

Words that carry meaning (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) are known as content words. They usually receive greater prominence in an utterance and are therefore accented. On the other hand, words that express grammatical relationships (conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, auxiliary verbs and some adjectival words) are known as structure words. They are generally non-prominent and are hence not accented.

*Example*: Oh, "sorry. "False a"larm. He's "not a "burglar. He's "dating my "daughter.

The structure words that may be weakened are the following:

| Adjectival Words | Pronouns | Conjunctions | Preposition | Auxiliary verbs |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a, an, the, some, his, her | he, him, her, us, them, there (be) that | and, but, as, than, that | at, from, for, of, to | be (am/is/are /was/were) have, has, had, do, does, shall, will, can, must, would, should, could |

## HANDOUT OF ACTIVITIES

Watch and listen to the following excerpt from the film "Something gotta give", starring Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton.

### A- Listening for meaning

Answer the following questions:

- How many people are involved in the conversation? What's the relationship among them?
- Why does Erica call 911?
- Is the man actually a burglar? Why is he mistaken?
- Why is Erica surprised by the man's identity?
- How is the situation solved?

### B- Listening to sounds

Listen to the dialogue while reading the transcript, pay attention to the underlined words and be ready to do the exercises that follow.

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT: *Something gotta give*

ERICA: Oh God. What is this?

ERICA: Okay, you stay right where you are[1]. We have a knife.

HARRY: Do[2] you... live here?

ERICA: Okay, Mister, look, I'm going dial 911 and you[3] are not going to move. Zoe, hand me the phone.

HARRY: You don't understand. I'm a friend of your daughter's.

ERICA: Yeah? I don't think so. My daughter's in the city and you what, like wandered in here, like high on Ecstasy..?.

HARRY: Honestly, if you just...

ZOE: Stay there[4] . I was[5]  in the Israeli army. I can break you in half.

ERICA: Hello, yes. I have an intruder in my house. 29 Daniels Lane, Sagaponack.

HARRY: I'm dating your daughter Marin. She invited me here for the weekend. She's in her room right now, changing.

ERICA: You're[6] dating my daughter?

HARRY: Now who would've thought that would be worse news?

MARIN: Oh!!!!

ERICA: Oh, sorry. False alarm. No, he's not a burglar. He's dating my daughter.

MARIN: Mom, I had no idea you were coming out this weekend 'cause you said you

had to write.

ERICA: I do[7], honey but I thought I'd do it out here.

MARIN: I'm an idiot. I should[8] have told you I was bringing someone else.

ERICA: I'm sorry. I should have told you we were coming. Obviously, anyway here we are. Hello, I'm the mother.

HARRY: Harry Sanborn. How are you?

MARIN: Oh, God, sorry... Mom, this is my friend, Harry. Harry, my Mom, Erica... my Aunt, Zoe.

ZOE: Sorry about that[9] .

MARIN: We just totally spur-of-the-moment decided to get out of the city for a couple of days.

ERICA: Oh, good. That's good.

ERICA: Honey, does[10] Harry have a robe?

HARRY: You know what? I think I should just take off. Let you gals enjoy your weekend...

ERICA: No, no, I'm sorry, of course don't do that. That's silly. Zoe and[11] I will leave and you and Harry stay. Harry, I'm sorry. I apologise about the near arrest.

HARRY: You were very impressive. Very strong, very… "macho".

ERICA: I don't think I was exactly "macho"

HARRY: Trust me, if I ever catch a guy in his underwear in my refrigerator I hope I'm half the man you were, Mrs uh...

ERICA: Yeah. Okay. Whatever...

HARRY: All right then...I'm definitely gonna hit the road. Ladies...sensational meeting you. Doll, give me[12] a call.

ZOE: Hold on. Let's not get so dramatic here. What are[13] we? Four teenagers? We're sophisticated people. Why don't we all stay for the weekend? Your mother's got work to do,   I've got papers to grade. You'll do your thing, whatever that may be and if we want to hang together, we hang together. If we don't, we don't. There's[14] no reason why we should all give up this spectacular weekend.

MARIN: Seriously. I can handle it.

ZOE: I can totally handle it.

ERICA: I mean, well, I can "handle" it...

**1. Listen to the conversation again and pay attention to the underlined words. Identify the function and transcribe them as they are pronounced.**

| Word | Function | Transcription |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Are | | |
| 2. Do...? | | |
| 3. You | | |
| 4. There | | |
| 5. Was | | |
| 6. You're | | |
| 7. Do | | |
| 8. Should | | |
| 9. That | | |
| 10. Does? | | |
| 11. And | | |
| 12. Me | | |
| 13. Are | | |
| 14.There´s | | |

**Provide an explanation for the strong forms used in the conversation.** *(If necessary go back to the Introduction)*

**2. Listen and circle the best option to the underlined words.**

- We <u>have</u> a knife:
  a. /həv /          b. /hæv/
- I should <u>have</u> told you we were coming:
  a. /həv /          b. /hæv/        c. /əv /
- How <u>are</u> you?:
  a. /ɑː /          b. /ə /
- You <u>were</u> impressive:
  a. / wə /          b. /wɜː /
- I hope I'm half the man you <u>were</u>:
  a. / wə /          b. /wɜː /

**6.  For each word in italics write the word you hear in phonemic script.**

- Hand me *the* phone: /................../
- I was in *the* Israeli army: /................../
- I have *an* intruder in my house: /................../
- Does Harry have *a* robe? /................../

*Let's complete the rule:*

We use /   / and /   / before ……………..........................................................

We use /   / and /   / before ……………..........................................................

**4. Listen and notice how _that_ is pronounced in these examples. Choose the appropriate form for each case from the boxes.**

- Sorry about **that**: /................./
- **That´s** good: /................./
- I had no idea **that** you were coming out this weekend...

ðæt

ðət

➲ What is the function of _that_ in the following example? How would you pronounce it?

_Who would have thought **that that** would be worse news?_

..................................................................................................................

**5. Listen and say whether the underlined words are properly transcribed. If wrong correct them.**

- Do you live here? / juː /
- You are not gonna move: / juː /
- She invited me here: /ʃi / /miː/
- She's in her room right now: / ə /
- He's dating my daughter: / hiːz /
- I should have told you we were coming: / wi /
- If I ever catch a guy in his underwear in my refrigerator: / ɪz /

➲ Are the pronouns underlined in the examples prominent? If so in which case/s?

..................................................................................................................

**6. Underline the right form of the words in bold.**

- I'm a friend **of** your daughter's:
  /ɒv - əv /
- She invited me here **for** the weekend:
  /fə - fɔː /
- We just totally spur-**of**-the moment decided to get out of the city **for** a couple of days:
  /ɒv - əv /          /fə - fɔː /

Ⅽ What is the function of the words in bold?

..................................................................................................................................

Ⅽ Would you say that in this context they are weak or strong? Why?

..................................................................................................................................

**7. Work in pairs. Think of a context where the following pronunciations are possible:**

- I 'was in the Israeli army.
  /wɒz/
- How are 'you?
  /juː/
- I should have told you 'we were coming.
  /wɪː/
- She's in 'her room right now.
  /hɜː/

*C- Communicative practice*

In groups of 3 / 4 think of a situation in which a misunderstanding is involved. Bear in mind the following aspects:

- *the conversation should be 2 or 3 minutes long*
- *pay special attention to the use of weak and strong forms in the dialogue*
- *role-play it in front of the class*

*D- Follow-up*

If you are interested in learning more about weak and strong forms you may visit the following websites:

- http://minerva.ublog.cl/archivos/1885/weak_forms.pdf

- http://bdigital.uncu.edu.ar/objetos_digitales/2642/leanezwaasafexploringperception.pdf