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# *El tratamiento de la lectura en las clases de español como lengua extranjera*

## *Attention to the reading skill in the lessons of Spanish as a second language*

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**Resumen:** La enseñanza de lenguas es un sistema constituido por un conjunto de conceptos propios de la comunicación, de la lengua y de los subsistemas que la componen. La clase de lengua debe ser pensada y analizada con elementos que entretengan y diviertan al alumno al tiempo que lo obliguen a pensar, analizar, sacar conclusiones y emitir valoraciones propias acerca de lo aprendido de manera tanto oral como escrita. Atendiendo a ello, con este trabajo se pretende ofrecer vías que resulten útiles en el tratamiento metodológico orientado hacia el aprendizaje de la lectura del estudiante de español como lengua extranjera.

**Palabras clave:** Enseñanza de lenguas; Lectura; Comunicación; Aprendizaje de la lectura

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**Abstract:** The teaching of language is a system constituted by a group of concepts of communication, language and the subsystems that make it. Language lessons should be thought and analyzed with elements that entertain the student, and at the same time to make them think, analyze, reach conclusions and express their opinions about what they learned in oral and written ways. Taking it into account in this paper we recommend ways that result useful in the methodological use oriented to learning how to read in students of Spanish as a foreign language.

**Keywords:** Language teaching; Reading; Communication; Learning how to read

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### **Introduction**

Every teacher of a second language knows the difficulties and limitations that the acquisition of a foreign language presupposes, because this process is based in a succession of stages for which the student will have to travel to know, internalize and consciously use the objective and subjective norms that turn out to be a complex and unique whole that constitutes a language as an instrument of communication. This process guarantees the acquisition by the student of that second language, of the necessary tools and skills in the

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grammatical, lexical, functional and cultural order that will allow him to acquire and increase his linguistic and communicative competence.

Reading, in this process plays a vital role, we must remember that in itself it constitutes one of the great communication skills and its mastery is essential in the acquisition and transmission of information, feelings and thoughts; hence it is necessary to ensure that the student is able to locate the information, specify if it is of interest or not and convey their ideas and opinions about what is understood from the reading.

This work aims to offer ways that are useful in the methodological treatment aimed at learning to read the student of Spanish as a foreign language, if you consider what was raised by Antich de León (1986), "The more a student reads, he retains the linguistic material, which makes it easier to understand him when he listens to him, and improves his oral and written expression "(page 347).

### **Development**

Taking into account what was raised by Antich de León on reading as a process in which physiological mechanisms are related to the intellectual aspect of the understanding of what is read, since it deals with the recognition of the word in the form of a graphic sign; it requires the performance of mental operations such as analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction and comparison, to understand and interpret written information.

The teaching of languages is a system consisting of a set of concepts of communication, language and subsystems that comprise it, including knowledge and linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic skills, which as is known, make up the communicative competence of man in society, in addition to topics, communicative functions, communicative situations and linguistic forms -elements of pronunciation, grammatical and lexical-semantic, as well as the relationship function - form - context and learning strategies- .

It can be said that the phonetic, grammatical or lexical element, object of teaching, will always be functionally linked to linguistic and communicative skills, so it must always be

necessary to teach the content of languages within the framework of a given communicative situation expressed in the oral or written text.

Those who read silently do so by completing the words mentally, anticipating the rest for themselves. The apprehension of the graphic signs and their combination is given from the selection and identification of these with the stereotypes or reference patterns that exist in the memory of the individual.

On the other hand, Gagné (1991), conceives four reading processes, they are: (p 45)

- 1.-Decoding, with its pairing and recoding processes.
- 2.- Literal comprehension, with its access, lexical and analysis processes.
- 3.- Inferential comprehension, with integration techniques, elaboration of summaries and elaboration.
- 4.- The control of understanding, with its processes to establish the goal, select the strategy, check the goal and correct.

These processes are called metacognition and refer to the degree to which the person is aware of their own processes. He also points out that unfortunately, good readers are substantially better than bad readers in almost every process involved in reading.

According to Acosta and Hernández (2011), "Linguistic understanding constitutes internal active mechanisms that are specified through reading and listening comprehension that lead to the formation of the intrinsic thinking of each person, which puts them in a position to open a range of possibilities in what to reading comprehension refers, in addition to the possibilities they offer to travel more deeply through the avenues of the text ". (p 18)

This mechanism provides information to the subject who in turn decodes it based on knowledge and experience that previously possesses. The reader constructs his knowledge from the text read according to:

- His command of the language.
- familiarity with the subject.

- knowledge of the world.
- relationship with the writer
- The type of text and its organization.
- The interest of the reader.
- understanding of the context.
- Visual analyzers and their memory.
- The conditions of reading (time, length and quality of the text).
- Linguistic characteristics of the text.
- Linguistic difficulties (phonetic, grammatical and lexical) of the text.
- interpretation of the circumstances of the expression and what precedes it.
- His reading of the paralinguistic elements (speed of reading, tone, volume, facial expressions, gestures, body movements).

From this it follows that during the decoding process the student perceives the linguistic sign, identifies it with a reference pattern, decodes it, establishes relations between grammatical patterns, associates the listened with the context and establishes self-control of what he hears or reads.

In the teaching of foreign languages an interactive and global didactic is essential, without grammatical or lexical fragmentations, it must be communicative, interactive, formative, developmental and holistic, with a deep cognitive and affective base.

The teaching of reading does not escape this concept, so to achieve its objectives, should take into account the performance of actions that ensure their effectiveness, such as:

- Automatically recognize the written word.
- Infer by the text the meaning of new words.
- Understand the communicative value (function) of expressions.
- Forecast and predict (anticipate).

- Find the general idea of the text through a quick glance.
- Paraphrase; reproduce the text with the words of the reader.
- Summarize; shorten the text including only the main ideas.
- Infer by the use of evidence.
- Follow the clues of the text.
- Arrive at conclusions.
- Identify the nature of the text to be able to predict the form and content.
  - Internally dialogue with the text.
  - Search for specific information through quick reading.
  - Specify the intention; know well why it is read.
  - Recognize the issues; discover what the text is about.
  - Classify ideas into main, secondary and accessory.
  - Locate in the text the topic sentence and the generalizing prayer.
  - Identify the main idea of a sentence, paragraph or text, know what an author expresses about a topic.
- Identify relationships between the elements of the text; identify patterns of relationship, relationships between ideas; that is, the general structure of the text.
- Identify and use words that establish relationship patterns; be able to see the connections between ideas through the use of words such as: first, finally, later, among others.
- Understand non-explicit information in the text.
- Recognize and use pronouns, referents and lexical equivalents as keys for the achievement of cohesion.
- Visualize what is read through drawings and diagrams.
- Read critically.

- Read quickly.
- Adjust the reading rhythm according to the material, the context and the objective.

These actions must respond to three stages:

Pre-reading: students are prepared to understand the text by activating the knowledge they already possess from various activities such as question and answer techniques, brainstorming, observation and analysis of slides, discussion of ideas, etc. The student should be led to anticipate and anticipate the subject and the contents of the text, to later verify how close they were to infer the theme or content of the text.

Reading: this stage constitutes a challenge for the student, since he will face the text, put into practice and develop his strategies to understand it. It will establish associations between the knowledge schemes it has and the new information, to create new knowledge schemes.

It is at this stage that skills are developed and consolidated for the location of the central idea, understanding of detailed information, inference of meanings, recognition of structural and organizational patterns, among others. The student will have the opportunity to develop strategies to achieve understanding, including:

- Organize the information about the language and the subject based on the written text.
- Understand the text without understanding the meaning of each word.
- Use general and linguistic knowledge in favor of understanding.
- Analyze the parameters of the context in favor of a better understanding of what is read.
- Understand different styles of written expression.
- Analyze the elements of the linguistic system in the text.
- Identify functions and forms in text interactions.

Post-reading: once the text has been worked as many times as necessary, you can assess it from various points of view, express your opinions, reach conclusions. This assessment results from combining what is read, what has been learned, and the experience of the

procedures applied to understand and enjoy the activity. In this stage various techniques can be applied, including:

- Students can make a list with the negative aspects of the class and another with the positive ones.
- You may be asked to state how much you liked the activity, or to suggest other work procedures.
- Students can assess the social, personal and cultural impact of the text.

These described elements are very useful in the teaching of reading for students of Spanish as a second language, but it is also necessary that the teacher knows the difficulties that the written language can present to their students and that can be summarized as follows:

1. The non-correspondence between the oral language and the written language.
2. The existence of simple, complex graphemes, others that do not represent any sound in the system (h).
3. The use of punctuation, underlines, quotation marks, spaces that have a meaning in the message that is intended to be transmitted through the written text.
4. The difference of contexts.

At the same time, the teacher must establish the subjects, communicative functions, linguistic and communicative skills, grammatical structures, vocabulary and aspects of pronunciation to study, so you should always start from a diagnosis that meets these objectives and that It does not necessarily have to be an oral or written exam, since various ways of pedagogical research could be used, such as interviews, observations, surveys, among others.

It is worth asking what criteria to observe in the texts that are to be used for the introduction, study and analysis of the different grammatical structures and communicative functions?

- That they are authentic.

- That they are of interest: updated, understandable, with a level of complexity appropriate to the type of reader, useful, with linguistic richness.
- That they are instructive: applicable information, that combine new concepts with others already known, with new information.
- That they are educational: useful, with formative values for the development of the student's personality, capable of sensitizing the reader.
- That they comply with rules of form and style: coherent, varied, with linguistic richness, with elegance and beauty.

Proposed reading exercise for students of advanced level of Spanish as a foreign language:

1. Have you ever heard Spanish Nino Bravo?

What do you know about this Hispanic singer?

Nino Bravo -Luis Manuel Ferri Llopis- was born on August 3, 1944, in a small Valencian town, Ayelo de Malferit, but he moved to Valencia a few years later. When she was 16 years old, she started working in the Valencian jewelry store Casa Amat, where she became a graver.

During these years he combined the work with his love of singing, founding at the end of 1962 the group Los Hispánicos, with his friends Félix Sánchez and Salvador Aranda. The musical trio became very popular in the neighborhood of Sagunto, where they performed in numerous presentations, dances and festivals of the time, and became finalists in the national radio contest Fiesta en España. However, his bandmates decided that the world of music was not their thing and they dissolved the group.

Luis Manuel lost his job and given his friendship with Vicente López, bassist of Los Superson, and taking advantage of the fact that they were looking for a substitute due to the loss of their singer Carlos Lardies in a traffic accident, he joined the group, which he already owned.

His first single was recorded with songs by Manuel Alejandro: *Como todos* and *Es el viento*. He attended the song festival in Barcelona with the song *I should not think of you*, where he was eliminated.

But in the summer of 1969, Augusto Algueró gave him *I love you, I love you*, a song that for different reasons, even having it recorded by the singer Raphael, the singer Lola Flores and the actress Carmen Sevilla did not go on the market. Nino got with it an overwhelming success, being chosen song of the summer. *I love you, I love you* was followed by *Noelia*, *Forgiveness*, *My great love*, *Esa será mi casa*, *Mi amada madre*, *I am looking for*, *Un beso y una flor*, *Libre*, among others.

He participated in the selection for the Eurovision Festival twice. The first in 1970 with the theme *Esa será mi casa*, which failed to reach the final, which Julio Iglesias won with *Gwendolyne*.

On April 20, 1971, he secretly married María Amparo Martínez Gil. On January 24, 1972, his first daughter, Amparo, was born. Shortly after he released his third album, entitled *Un beso y una flor*, with which he achieved great success in Spain and Latin America.

In November of 1972 he participated in the Festival of the Song of Rio de Janeiro as a Spanish representative, where he managed to tie in the first place with the American David Clayton-Thomas. The victory was snatched away by the jury president, Joseph Lee Zhito, who, being an American, could not have voted for his own country. Weeks later his fourth album was released, entitled *Mi tierra*, which includes one of his main hits: *Libre*.

#### Death and subsequent years

On April 16, 1973, Nino Bravo, in a fatal accident, perishes. The causes of his death have never been officially revealed, everything points to possible pneumothorax and various polytraumatism suffered in the abdominal area, since although the car had front seat belts (the standard that forced its use is from 1974) it is quite likely that the singer will not wear it.

- Today we will have the opportunity to hear a beautiful song in the voice of Nino Bravo, entitled *America*.

### **Listening to the song**

1. Did you like it?
2. What is it about?
3. What do you think about the song and its content?
4. We will read the following text by Cuban Félix Varela and that was extracted from his composition *Elogio de Fernando VIII*.

Felix Varela (Havana, November 20, 1788 - San Agustín, Florida, United States, February 25, 1853) also known as Father Varela, was a Cuban priest, teacher, writer, philosopher and politician who had an important performance in the intellectual, political and religious life in Cuba during the first half of the 19th century. Father Varela is considered one of the forgers of the Cuban nation.

At 23 he was ordained a priest in the Cathedral of Havana, Bishop Espada and on December 21, 1811. He celebrated his first Mass in the convent of Santa Teresa in Havana.

At age 24 he is appointed professor of Philosophy, Physics and Ethics in the Havana seminary. There he prepares the first Physics and Chemistry laboratory in the country. Father Varela gives a major importance to learning methods and uses innovative systems for his time, wanting his students to learn with their heads and interest and not repeating from memory what they were taught, in this regard he said:

"Learning by heart is the greatest of absurdities, because if memory fails, everything that has been studied fails, and for this reason the constancy in the study consolidates knowledge".

One of his disciples José de la Luz y Caballero once said of his teacher:

"As long as you think about Cuba, you will think with respect and veneration in the one who taught us to think."

That is why Cubans refer to Varela as "the one who taught them to think", since he always put forward reflection and practice, to the repetitive memory and the immobility of the teaching centers of the time, of fundamentally canonical order and strongly marked by religion and ostracism. Varela joined science and conscience and that is why it has always been said that "Reflection was his trench".

Father Varela trained the most outstanding men of his time such as José Antonio Saco, Domingo del Monte, José de la Luz and Caballero, however, his extensive work was not limited to teaching, he also founded the first Philharmonic Society of La Havana, he was part of and worked for the Economic Society of Friends of the Country, and wrote plays and philosophy.

His political work was no less meritorious; he was elected deputy to the Spanish Cortes, representing Cuba, and left for Spain at the age of 34, not knowing that he would never see his beloved Cuba again. In the metropolis begins an arduous parliamentary work organizing a group with the other representatives of the Spanish overseas provinces, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, in order to improve the defense of common rights.

He is also part of several delegations with the aim of presenting to the King initiatives to improve public instruction in the overseas provinces, drafting a bill to abolish slavery, which he strongly opposed and considered totally opposed to Christian values. It proposes the recognition of the independence of some American nations already liberated and launches a new bill for an autonomous government in the provinces overseas, on it he wrote:

During more than 30 years of life in exile he founds schools, builds churches, evangelizes the poorest, defends the Catholic faith in the face of the advance of Protestantism, according to Catholics called this religious movement, and the last years of his life were marked for poverty, diseases, and loneliness. On February 25, 1853, he died in the city of San Agustín in Florida. His remains rest today in the Aula Magna of the University of Havana.

Since 1981, the government of the Republic of Cuba has created the Félix Varela Order, the highest distinction granted to Cubans and foreigners, as well as cultural groups in recognition of extraordinary contributions made in favor of the imperishable values of the national and universal culture.

Oral reading of the text by the teacher and audition by the students

"Nature placed at the entrance of a peaceful gulf that bathes the opulent countries of the New World, a fortunate island where he printed his charism. He did not want to send her the poisonous viper, nor the cruel locust; he separated the devouring beasts as strangers from the mansion of peace, forbade the furious hurricane, the heavy hail and the destructive frost to come near; at the same ray he put just limits; he repressed the scorching volcano, so that he would not vomit his deadly lavas on the country of his affection; It gave rise to numerous rivers that meander through the smiling meadows communicate fertility and stop in a thousand ways, because they seem to leave with regret a privileged soil. The sun promised to accompany her always, more without making her feel the rigors of the African toast. Everywhere a hungry land invites man to give him copious seeds, offering to pay with usury. A benign sea bathes its coasts and blesses them in different parts, forms ports in which it respects the ships, as if to invite them to return. In this delicious island lives a generous town ".

### **Global comprehension of the text**

- a) What did you think of the text?
- b) What is it about?
- c) What words are difficult to understand?

The student must reach the understanding of these words, with the help of the teacher, from the context. At this time of the activity, the teacher will use pictures, drawings, body language, among others, which will serve as support to reach conclusions about the meaning of words that offer difficulties for their understanding.

- d) Mark with an X the phrases that you consider correct as expressed in the text:

\_\_\_ The author praises the beauty of a continent.

\_\_\_ The author describes the beauty of an island.

\_\_\_ The place described is in the American continent.

\_\_\_ The nature of the place described is not favorable for life.

\_\_\_ The inhabitants of this place are kind and charitable.

Detailed understanding of the text

- a. Where is the place to which the author refers? Lean on the term "New World"
- b. What characteristics, according to the text, does this place have?
- c. Do you know that island? Could you name it?
- d. Have you already had contact with the inhabitants of this island? Does it agree with the author when he expresses that they are generous? Argue from your personal experience.
- e. In your opinion, do you find a relationship between the content of the text and the ideas expressed in the song "America"? Support your opinion with elements of both texts.

The oral reading of the text will be carried out

- By logical groups individually, in duos and collectively.
- Readings of more extensive fragments until reaching the total reading.

### **Independent work**

Locate other text, of any type (written, video, iconic, and others) that in some way relates to the ideas exposed in the song heard and in the text read in the class.

### **Conclusions**

This paper offers a sample in the theoretical and practical orders that illustrate the proper treatment of reading in Spanish as a foreign language class. It is not intended to offer a recipe, only routes are suggested. In the end the teacher of a language as a second language must adopt the procedures required by their students, according to their characteristics and stage in which they are in the course.

If we take into account that the teacher must try to make their classes interactive, with activities that lead to the student's prominence both in the construction of knowledge and in practice and deepening them, then the language class must be thought and analyzed with elements that entertain and entertain the student while requiring him to think, analyze, draw conclusions and make own assessments about what has been learned both orally and in writing.

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