

Guidance in Reading Strategies: A First Step Towards Autonomous Learning in a Semi-Distance Education Program

Guía en estrategias de lectura: un primer paso hacia el aprendizaje autónomo en un programa de educación semi-presencial

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This article aims at sharing the results of a research project focused on guiding students in the use of different reading strategies: reading non- text information, skimming and scanning, using contextual reference, predicting, and using true/false cognates as a first step towards autonomous learning. The project was conducted at a Colombian university with two groups of business administration students who belonged to a semi-distance education program. Informal talks with students, questionnaires, interviews and a teacher's diary were used to collect the information in this action research study. Findings revealed that by knowing several reading strategies the students could reflect upon their learning; meta-cognition processes were enhanced and confidence for students to work by themselves was built up.

Key words: Autonomous learning, distance education programs, reading strategies

Este artículo discute los resultados de una investigación enfocada en guiar a los estudiantes en el uso de diferentes estrategias de lectura: información no textual, "skimming and scanning", utilización de referentes contextuales, predicción y cognados, como un primer paso para promover el aprendizaje autónomo. Este estudio se realizó en una universidad colombiana con dos grupos de estudiantes pertenecientes al programa de administración de empresas a distancia. Para recolectar la información en este estudio de investigación acción, se emplearon conversaciones informales con los estudiantes, cuestionarios, entrevistas y el diario de campo del profesor. Los resultados mostraron que la exposición a diferentes estrategias de lectura promueve reflexión respecto al propio aprendizaje; se incrementaron procesos de metacognición y se generó confianza para trabajar autónomamente.

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje autónomo, programas a distancia, estrategias de lectura

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Introduction

We, as English teachers, have always been concerned with the way English is taught at institutions that work with semi-distance learning methodology. It is very attractive to university students to be involved in a program in which they can attend class during the evenings and on weekends because they can devote their daytime to working or performing other activities. Once these students are registered, they need to deal with a semi-distance learning methodology, which is new for them because most of them are not trained to study using this methodology: they do not know the implications and difficulties they will face; hence, they need to work hard on their own because they partially attend some classes or tutorial sessions out of the total amount of hours devoted to a course.

English is among the subjects students have to take. Thus, English teachers have to lead students to become autonomous learners. In the institution in which this study was carried out, around thirty percent of the time is devoted to regular classes and the other seventy percent is assigned to independent work that the students have to complete outside of class. This is in contrast to the daily equivalent program in which students attend regular sessions more often. Furthermore, the English class, or any other class, was not called 'class' or 'lesson' but "session" because the main objective is to help students to cope with trouble understanding the exercises. In every session the teacher was supposed to dedicate time to help students and avoid teacher-centered classes. Considering the previous issues, this study was focused on helping students to initiate their autonomous English learning by guiding them in the use of some reading strategies in a semi-distance education program.

Statement of the Problem

The business administration students of the University in which this research was carried out were enrolled in a semi-distance learning program. They attended sessions that cover 30% of the total amount of hours that students had to devote to reach the objectives of a course. The other 70% of the time was dedicated to independent work. In the English course, the two main components were grammar and reading. Students did not know how to approach reading effectively in their independent work time.

Students were used to translating word by word in order to get a better understanding of the text that was given as homework. In order to tackle this situation, five workshops were designed to help students to initiate their autonomous English learning, guiding them in the use of some reading strategies. The research question that guided this project was as follows: What are the benefits for autonomy in an English semi-distance learning program from a reading strategy training?

Research Setting and Participants

The Context

This research was carried out at a private university in Colombia. This institution offers a semi-distance education program in business administration. Students are supposed to take only two English courses. English courses consist of nine 2.5 hour sessions distributed throughout the semester. Each session is attended every two weeks. Each course offered the students a total of 90 hours per semester. Theoretically, the students would devote 60 hours working on their own to fulfill the institution's requirements of semi-distance learning plus 30 hours in the sessions. The students attended classes every 15 days; in

that way, they had time to do their homework outside of class. The English program had two main components: grammar, which was the backbone of the program, and reading.

Distance education, semi-distance education or low residency learning are names commonly used in the Colombian educational context to refer to distance learning. Each institution that offers distance learning in any way adopts one of the terms at random. Semi-distance education or low residency learning happen when students partially attend classes or tutorial sessions from the total hour course. In distance education in the Colombian educational context, students usually do not attend any classes or tutorials but receive the self-study guides and material for their learning. At a certain period of time, students are tested by a tutor to evidence learning and progress.

The Students

The participants of this research were 54 students. The students were attending English I and II courses in the distance business administration program. There were 28 students in English I and 26 in English II. The students who attended these courses ranged in age from 19 to 45 years old. The courses offered to these students were held in the evenings and on Saturdays. An average student would be in his or her late twenties and work during the day. In many cases, the students were housewives or husbands and had domestic responsibilities and, therefore, less time to devote to their academic careers than other students. Consequently, when the students attended classes, they were often tired from their different activities before arriving to class.

The majority of the students had very little or poor knowledge of the English language. Although these students may have studied English

while in high school, a typical student might not begin his or her career at the university level until they were in their mid-twenties or older.

The Teacher

During the development of this research, there was a teacher-researcher (the first author of this paper), who held a B.A. in Modern Languages. He was enrolled in a Master's program. He was not trained in distance learning teaching. Therefore, he did what he thought was best according to his own experience. He taught the topics that were required and brought new material to class.

Theoretical Framework

Since this study was focused on guiding students in the use of some learning strategies related to reading as a way to promote autonomous learning in a semi-distance program, the following concepts are considered below: Autonomous learning, distance education, and reading strategies.

Autonomous Learning in a Foreign Language

Despite the existence of multiple definitions regarding autonomy and autonomous learning, there is a consensus in terms of what students should achieve when being autonomous learners. Ariza (2004) mentions that autonomy refers to the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning as well as the right of students to determine the directions and means of their own learning.

Dickinson (1987, p. 11) states that autonomy has to do with all decisions that the learner makes in order to accomplish her/his goals as a learner: if one decides to study a foreign language, one follows her/his own set of rules to fulfill the

tasks. In other words, autonomy is related to the learner's total decision and implementation of learning. He defines autonomy as follows: "This term describes the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of these decisions. In full autonomy there is no involvement for teacher or an institution. And the learner is also independent of specially prepared materials".

The autonomous learner does not register in any institution at all. The learner observes himself for grading and selects the material; in other words, s/he establishes the syllabus by which to study. Things like time, material, tasks and levels are established by the learner her/himself. The same author also states that the learner does not become autonomous at once. The learner might go through a process, one step of which is semi-autonomy that "conveniently labels the stage at which the learners are preparing for autonomy".

This research study aimed at being the first step towards autonomous learning since it prepared learners to build up their autonomy. Different workshops, with associated self-access materials, were designed to cope with this objective. As Dickinson (1987, p. 11) suggests, self-access materials "are materials appropriate and available for self-instruction" and are key aspects in the development of students' autonomy. The same author further asserts that self-access material should be developed for a specific purpose and has some requirements to guide the learner through the task s/he should do.

The workshops designed in the pedagogical intervention aimed at fulfilling some of Dickinson's (1987) statements regarding a checklist to evaluate self-access material. According to the author, self-access materials need to have a statement of objectives, meaningful language input, practice

material, flexibility, instructions and advice for learning, feedback, tests, advice about progression, advice about record keeping, reference **materials**, indexing and motivational factors.

The population for this study was composed of business administration students. For this reason, the content of the readings selected for the workshops had to do with business, economics, administration and marketing. Thus, the contents of the readings were meaningful and motivational for the students. They connected those readings to the previous knowledge they already had about the subject matter.

The tasks in the workshops provided exercises for practice and had multiple accurate answers; thus, students were not looking for a fixed correct response in the practice exercises. In this way, flexibility was promoted. The exercises were classified by numbers as a guide for them to follow. Therefore, these workshops included some of Dickinson's requirements for self-access materials.

The Teachers' Role in Autonomous Learning

Núñez, Pineda & Téllez (2004), talk about the importance of having teachers ready to focus their teaching on telling students how they learn and use it for life-long learning. In the same way, Cárdenas (2006, p. 197) suggests that teachers should create new spaces and tasks to provide students with opportunities for the development of autonomy.

Furthermore, mentors need to prepare students methodologically, training them in the use of techniques and strategies and providing them with as much guidance as required (Cárdenas, 2006; Little, 1991; Benson & Voller, 1997). In this sense, the teachers' role is seen as one of a guide and facilitator, in charge of giving students certain tools and strategies to enable them to become autonomous.

Distance Education

The terms “distance education” or “distance learning” relate to the separation of teacher and learner in space and/or time (Perraton, 1988), the volitional control of learning by the student rather than by the distant instructor (Jonassen, 1992), and noncontiguous communication between student and teacher, mediated by print or some form of technology (Keegan, 1986; Garrison & Shale, 1987).

Willis (1993) argues that distance education programs are usually focused on adult learners due to various reasons: constraints of time, distance, finances, the opportunity to take courses or hear outside speakers who would otherwise be unavailable, and the ability to come in contact with other students from different social, cultural, economic, and experiential backgrounds.

Reading As a Cognitive Process

Carrell (1998, p. 2) explains that reading as a cognitive process must be related to other processes such as “thinking, reasoning, studying, or motivational strategies”. According to this author, reading is a process that involves many actions that the reader performs to have a better comprehension of the text. Good readers use different types of strategies to access a text. Not only should readers know how reading strategies work but, also, they should understand how to synchronize the strategies in order to use them more effectively and efficiently.

Carrell (Ibid, p. 3) concludes that to “contextualize and operationalize” are the key actions to be able to read successfully. For this author, reading is a connection of different aspects that the reader might control to get the meaning of any reading. She says that a reading strategy is a tool selected flexibly by the reader. Because the reader has the ability to select the correct strategy, he is improving his attention, memory,

communication and learning, which are key elements for meta-cognition and motivation.

Reading Strategies

Below, the reading strategies used in this research are defined.

- Exploiting transparent words: Transparent words are the words that have similar spelling or pronunciation in two languages. The transparent words could be divided into two categories: true cognates and false cognates. A true cognate is a transparent word which has the same meaning in both languages. For example, the English word “international” is similar to the Spanish word “internacional”. A false cognate keeps the same characteristics as transparent but its meaning is not the same in both languages. Conductor is a false cognate, for instance. The English word conductor means person who directs an orchestra or “drives” a locomotive and the Spanish word conductor means a person who drives a car.
- Reading non-text information: This strategy refers to getting the main ideas of the content of a text from the images that go with it. These images could be graphs, pictures, cartoons, etc. This reading strategy is accomplished by readers when reading in their native language. This strategy relates to what Oxford (1990) has called transferring. She argues that transferring “means directly applying previous knowledge to facilitate new knowledge in the target language” (Oxford, 1990, p. 85).
- Skimming & scanning: These reading strategies help the learner to comprehend what is being read. Scanning has to do with looking for specific words or chunks of information. Skimming deals with getting main ideas of the text without reading every single word. Both reading strategies have in common the

fact that the reader uses these two strategies to get acquainted with the text in a first reading.

- Using linguistic clues: “This strategy relates to previously gained knowledge of the target language, the learners’ own language, or some other language [that] can provide linguistic clues to the meaning of what is heard or read” (Oxford, 1990, p. 90). In this action research, the linguistic clues were contextual references, which are words that replace, indicate or emphasize some other information in the text being read. They are usually used to refer to a previous idea in the text. Some examples of those words are it, they, them, I, he, she, which, who, whose, that, such, one, and demonstrative adjectives such as this, that, these and those.
- Guessing: “It helps learners let go of the belief that they have to recognize and understand every single word before they can comprehend the overall meaning” (Oxford, 1990, p. 90). By guessing, the learners can predict what the text is about.

Research Methodology

The Type of Research

This research can be classified as an Action Research study because it comprises the three main characteristics of this type of project, according to Cohen & Manion (1994, p. 186): A diagnosis of a problem, the implementation of a proposal and the evaluation of the proposal.

Data Collection Procedures

The instruments that were used in order to gather information were as follows: Informal talks with students, two questionnaires, an interview and the teacher’s diary. These informal talks

with students were held after each workshop. Those talks were focused on listening to students’ perceptions regarding the tasks they had to engage in at home after being trained in terms of how to use reading strategies effectively. The questionnaires and the interview were also aimed at accessing students’ voices regarding the development of the five workshops and the homework assignments. The interview took place at the end of the data collection because it was necessary for the researcher to validate what he had observed. The teachers’ diary was kept during the time the data was collected. The teacher kept notes related to what was actually happening in the classroom while guiding students in the use of reading strategies.

The Pedagogical Proposal

The pedagogical proposal that was implemented was divided into three steps: a first part in which the diagnosis of a problem was made; a second one in which an action was taken, and a third one related to the evaluation of the action.

Stage I. After having analyzed a questionnaire and the information obtained from informal talks with the students involved in this research, we established the following findings for the diagnostic stage:

- Students had not been trained to do independent work.
- Students were not proficient in English.
- Students considered that having an English textbook designed specifically for a semi-distance program, a module (self access material) was an important factor.
- Classes every fifteen days were not beneficial for the students.

- Neither the teachers nor the students were trained to work with semi-distance learning methodology.
- Teachers did not teach the students how to become autonomous.
- Students did not know how to use reading strategies.

After the development of this stage, it was found that students needed more instruction on how to become autonomous learners and how to face the challenge of learning English as part of a semi-distance program.

Stage II. In response to the above concerns, a proposal was drawn up and implemented to improve the students' reading skills while they were working independently.

Five workshops were designed to help students with a semi-distance learning methodology trying to develop reading skills. Each workshop had three main sections: The first part was the presentation of a reading strategy which included the description of the reading strategy and instructions to use it. The second part was an article in which the students practiced the reading strategy and the third part contained some exercises to be completed based on the reading (See Appendix 1).

The purpose of the workshops was to guide students on how to improve their reading skills to help them deal with the independent work they needed to do. The classes were to guide the students and clarify their questions. The readings adapted for these workshops were taken from magazines, articles on the internet, and one reading in the workshop was taken from an EFL book.

The design of these workshops was thought to meet the five steps proposed by Winograd & Hare (1988, cited in Carrell, 1998). They claim that learners should be taught five essential steps

to learn how to monitor themselves. These five steps were included in the teacher's presentation of each reading strategy. These five steps were the following:

- What a strategy is
- Why a strategy should be learned
- How to use the strategy
- When and where the strategy should be used
- How to evaluate use of the strategy.

In each of the workshops the teacher started the instructional part of the class by setting a specific objective; for example, identifying transparent words before reading. After that, the teacher selected different transparent words as examples. Then, the students were asked to provide more examples of transparent words that they knew.

Afterward, the students read about the definition of the transparent words. Next, they classified the examples of transparent words provided in the workshop and classified them into true and false cognates. Subsequently, students read the text and answered the questions about it. Usually, there was an extra exercise to be developed depending on the reading.

As homework, they had to select a reading from a magazine related to their field of study: business administration, marketing, etc. and identify the transparent words from there. Then, in the following session, students had the opportunity to comment if the transparent word selection helped them to understand the reading and if they did not have to use the dictionary as frequently as they used to. All the workshops followed the same pattern of instruction, practicing exercises and homework.

Stage III. In the third stage of this study the workshops were evaluated.

Data from this stage were gathered and analyzed using the following instruments and techniques: Questionnaires for the students after each workshop, which were given to the students in their native language, Spanish, in order to get more accurate information (See Appendix 2). Also, informal talks with the students were included in the data.

Findings

The data were collected during an academic semester. Categories emerged after reading, analyzing, and reading the data again. The grounded approach as well as the process of dissembling and reassembling data mentioned by Freeman (1998) was used during the whole process. Overall, two main categories were found. The first one relates to meta-cognitive awareness and the second one to confidence building.

Towards Meta-cognitive Awareness

After implementing and collecting data throughout this research study, we found that both the teacher and students reported increased meta-cognitive awareness. In the teacher's diary, he mentioned that, while implementing the workshops, students seemed to focus more on comprehending the text and understanding it using different reading strategies.

Students focused on reading and comprehension more than paying attention to unknown vocabulary or grammar structures. Thus, the students concentrated on continually reading to get main and general ideas from the reading passages without interrupting their reading process. They were using different reading strategies that were already practiced in class. In this session, the strategy used was reading graphs. A student, who was working with a partner mentioned that she did not know that the graphs contained basically all the infor-

mation. She also said that what was written in the text was not more than somebody else's interpretation of the graphs (Teachers' diary # 1).

By knowing several reading strategies the students could switch or combine the different strategies to comprehend the passages by themselves. This process of switching from one reading strategy to another incorporated meta-cognition awareness skills. When I asked them to read the non text information included in the reading "Colombian Macroeconomics", they immediately recognized the transparent words from the title. Then, they started guessing and predicting the information in the text by just interpreting the graphs (Teachers' diary # 2).

The Contextual References workshop helped the students to link ideas together as they read the passages. They noticed that knowing the meaning of some words in a reading passage, e.g. they, his, itself was not enough to obtain concise information from the readings. They realized that they needed to link the contextual references and the ideas expressed in the passages. This exercise made them reflect at the same time as they were reading. By doing this, they were exercising a meta-cognitive reading skill (Teachers' diary # 4).

In an interview, when asked about the workshops carried out and their usefulness outside the classroom, one of the students mentioned:

The Skimming and Scanning workshop helped me to get general ideas about the passage before reading it. I was not concentrated on understanding and checking the meaning of new words, but on getting the main and general ideas of the passage. I think it was the most important strategy. I learned because after knowing how it works, I do not need to translate every single word and it is much easier to do the reading tasks at home (Interview 1- Juan).

This showed that students relied on using the Transparent Words strategy to guess the meaning of new vocabulary. In the same way, combining the Transparent Words with Skimming and

Scanning reading strategies showed that students were selecting a reading strategy and using prior knowledge to understand the reading passages. In this sense, combining two or more reading strategies was evidence that the students were becoming autonomous because they not only used the reading strategy suggested by the teacher, but also incorporated one reading strategy they had learned before.

In the interview, when asked their opinions about the usefulness of working with reading strategies, most students mentioned that the predicting workshop was not very positive. They said it was difficult and ambiguous. They also mentioned that the other reading strategies were more useful. These opinions illustrated that students contrasted what they had learned about reading strategies in the previous workshops. So, they contrasted this previous knowledge about which reading strategy was more effective. This is a characteristic of an autonomous learner.

In autonomous learning, meta-cognition is a very important factor that affects learning. It is defined by Carrell (1998, p. 4) as “cognition of cognition... thinking about thinking... and learning about learning”. The student in an autonomous learning context should be aware of the way s/he is learning. This capacity of meta-cognition should be developed to help students to deal with autonomy. If learners do not have meta-cognitive strategies, it would be harder for them to monitor themselves in the process of learning.

Building Confidence to Work by Myself

In addition to increasing their meta-cognitive awareness while they were reading passages in English, the students indicated an increasing level of confidence in working independently. The analysis of the questionnaires, interviews, informal talks with both teachers and students

indicated that, as a result of the reading strategies, students were more adept and efficient learners. The analysis of questionnaires presented clear documentation of the students becoming less dependent after [///] the first two workshops.

The following information was taken from the teacher's diary while he was implementing the five workshops:

The five designed workshops -Transparent Words, Reading Non-contextual Information, Skimming and Scanning, Contextual References, and Predicting- helped the students to improve their reading level because they could read easier after they learned how to use each reading strategy. Whenever I sent a task to be carried out at home, they were able to accomplish it (Teachers' diary # 3).

The Transparent Words workshop helped the students to become less dictionary dependent because they tried to guess the meaning of new vocabulary. They did not interrupt the reading to stop and check for unknown words. Thus, the students read more fluently and tried to grasp the main idea from the passages. Consequently, the students started to show evidence of applying a learning skill as they did not use the dictionary as often as they did before. They felt confident guessing the meaning of new words while they read (Teachers' diary #5).

When asked about the effectiveness of the workshops they had carried out, students provided the following answers:

“The most significant issue about doing the exercises in the workshops was knowing how to read by myself. I felt great the first time I could do the reading task without having the teacher by my side” (Interview 1- Angela).

If I had known how reading could be addressed, I would have done every single task that was assigned by my English teachers. Fortunately, now I know and I can do the homework (Informal talk 3- Chris).

In relation to this point, Dawn (2003) mentions that when students know how they learn and the strategies that best work for them, their attitude and motivation increase.

Conclusions

It is clear that prior to the workshops, the students that participated in the study were accustomed to a traditional classroom experience and were not prepared for the autonomous learning responsibilities associated with taking a semi-distance learning course. However, after conducting the five workshops, it was evident that the use of reading strategies did contribute to learning English in this semi-distance learning program. The students' attitude and motivation changed towards English. Through the guidance in terms of how to use reading strategies, students were able to develop meta-cognitive skills and, as a result, they were able to build confidence to work by themselves on the assigned tasks.

The outcomes of this research also indicate that English courses in Semi-Distance Learning Programs can incorporate different reading strategies practices in their lessons as a way to provide the opportunity for students to select or combine them when reading a passage. Then, when students know how to use a reading strategy, they build confidence among themselves. Thus, building confidence among students is a big step towards autonomy.

Knowing different reading strategies does not give learners an automatic ticket to autonomy, but it initiates them into a broad path of learning since they are equipped with strategies for reading. They can choose the reading strategy they think is appropriate to use; therefore, selecting a reading strategy and evaluating its use while reading give the students the basic structure for

meta-cognitive awareness. Finally, some further practical implications which emerged from our study are as follows:

- It is better to explain to students in L1 how the reading strategy should be used. Then, students will better assimilate the hints written in English to use each reading strategy successfully.
- English modules designed for students involved in semi-distance learning programs should include language contents and learning how to learn lessons, to develop meta-cognitive awareness in the students. In this way, students would know how to make efforts to study a foreign language autonomously.
- Regardless of the course offered as a part of semi-distance learning programs, orientation sessions or workshops should be conducted for the students to increase the level of confidence in working independently. Instructions should be given to the students on how to become autonomous learners or a mandatory course in Learning and Study Skills should be taken by students at the beginning of their programs.
- English teachers should be trained in how to teach courses based on a distance learning methodology and how to design instructional material for reading, to help students develop meta-cognitive awareness and become autonomous learners.

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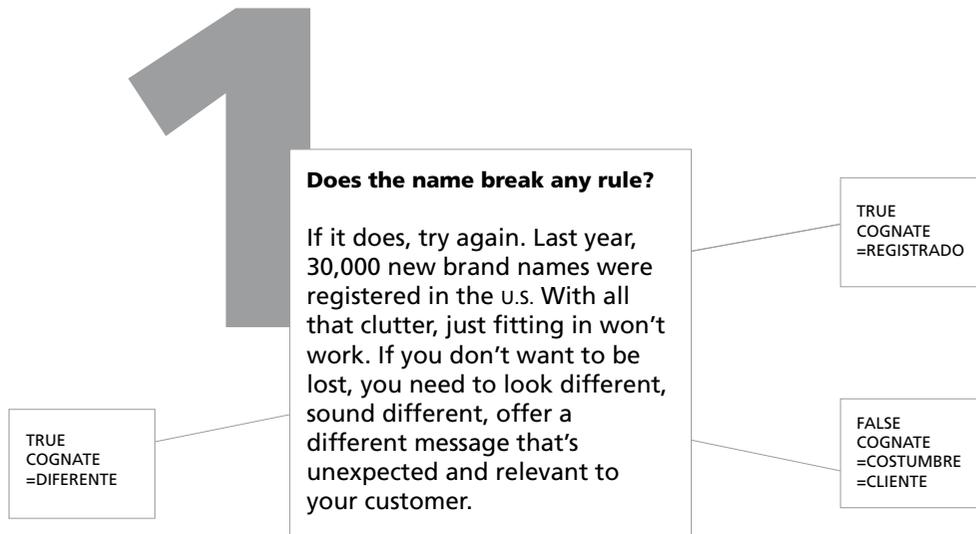
Appendix 1: Workshop Sample

INGLÉS II Workshop 1

TRANSPARENT WORDS

Transparent words are the words that have similar spelling or pronunciation in two languages. The word *intelligent* is a transparent word because its spelling and pronunciation is similar to the Spanish word *inteligente*.

Transparent words could be divided into two categories: True cognates and False cognates. A *true cognate* is a transparent word which has the same meaning in both languages. For example, the English word *international* is similar to the Spanish word *internacional*. A *false cognate* has the characteristics of a transparent word but its meaning is not the same in both languages. *Conductor* is a false cognate, for instance. The English word *conductor* means person who directs an orchestra or someone who drives a train or a locomotive and the Spanish word *Conductor* means person who drives a car.



Five Questions to Ask Before you Approve*

Your Next Brand Name

1 Does the name break any rule?

If it does, try again. Last year, 30,000 new brand names were registered in the U.S. With all that clutter, just fitting in won't work. If you don't want to be lost, you need to look different, sound different, offer a different message that's unexpected and relevant to your customer.

2 Will it make your competitors Grimace?

Since the registered brand name is the one thing your competitors can't take away from you, it needs to make them wince every time they see it. If you think they will just shrug it off or create something better, take it off the list.

3 Does the name make a promise or tell a story?

If it doesn't, don't approve it. Great names are like small poems. Every letter, word unit and sound work together to deliver strategic messages. Too often, names are selected for what they mean at the moment, as opposed to messages that keep delivering. What would you rather have, *Antiglare Sunglasses* or a pair of *Ray Bans*? It's tempting to select the comfortable solution.

If you think about it, selecting the right brand name can be your toughest marketing challenge. But what could be mere important? The right brand name is the cornerstone of the product-customer relationship. It is your single most powerful marketing tool. And it's the one thing your competitors would love to steal.

4 Is the name descriptive or suggestive of features of benefit?

If so, make sure it is the single most compelling benefit that consumers will need over the next ten years. This could make or break the brand.

5 Are you comfortable with the name?

If you are, you might have a good name, but you don't have a great one. Oscar Wilde once said that an idea that isn't dangerous is hardly worth calling an idea at all. It's the same with a name. A great name provokes. It takes chances. This attitude attracts customers and the market to your brand. Let the other guys fit it in.

For More Information

On these or other questions, give us a call. We're the people who created the *Pentium* processor, *Embassy Suites* hotel, *Zima*, *Power Book* computer and *DeskJet* printer brands. Hewlett-Packard's Pavilion PC, Sony's Metreon center and Subaru's Outback station wagon also came from us. When you call you'll find a unique combination of personal creativity, structural linguistics and attribute-driven research waiting to help you.

* (Adapted from: <http://www.lexicon-branding.com>).

TRUE OR FALSE COGNATE?

Underline the transparent words in the reading: *Five questions to ask before you approve your next brand name*. Then, classify them into true cognates and false cognates.

Based on the reading, answer the following questions:

TRUE

True cognates	Meaning

False cognates	Meaning

FALSE

1. How many brand names were registered last year in the USA?
2. Why do you need to think of your competitor when selecting a brand name for your product?
3. Why do good brand names not tell a long story?
4. How long do you need to project the name of your product?
5. Mention a characteristic of a good brand name.

Optional exercise:

Create a brand new name for a coffee shop, a soda, a restaurant, a software company or a car.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write a brand name for one of the specified categories.

Appendix 2: Students' Questionnaire

(Adapted from: Boeckner & Brow, 1993, p. 1)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please answer the following questions.

1. What is the name of the reading strategy practiced today in class?

2. What does this reading strategy consist of?

3. Did you practice this reading strategy before?
Yes _____ No _____
4. Do you think that practicing this reading strategy will help you to better understand the reading passages in English?
Yes _____ No _____
5. The reading exercises to practice this reading strategy were
 - a. On a manageable level of difficulty
 - b. Not on a manageable level of difficulty
6. What other reading strategy do you remember?

7. How did you like this reading?
 - a. Interesting
 - b. Boring
 - c. Neither interesting nor boring
8. How did you like this reading?
 - a. Difficult
 - b. Easy
 - c. In accordance with your English level

Thank you

Note: This questionnaire was given to the students in their native language: Spanish.