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UNDERGRADUATE WORK

A PROPOSAL TO BOOST STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN READING AND  
CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH II, GROUP 2, THROUGH THE USE OF THE BOTTOM-  
UP AND TOP-DOWN PROCESSING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Creating real world scenarios when teaching Reading and Conversation in English II is crucial for improving students' engagement, especially at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, where students of this subject are not so engaged in classes as it may be expected. Students are not engaged in classes and barely participate in the activities brought to the classroom; this was observed and measured through a diagnosis carried out by the research team that identified and described such problematic situation. One of the variables that is influencing this problem is the lack of a specific approach to teach the subject since, as it was observed, the teacher spent too much time in warm-up activities and did not have time for the rest of the content that was supposed to be taught. Therefore, the main goal of this research project is to recommend an effective approach, the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach, to boost Reading and Conversation in English II students' engagement as well as to provide several lesson plans and activities based on the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach. To test how the use of the approach may help improve Reading and Conversation in English II students' engagement, a check list was administered to the teacher in charge of the population under study in order to gather data about the suggested lesson plans structure and activities to be developed to improve engagement in class. For doing these, the teacher was sent a document containing the tool, and after she answered the check list, the document was sent back for the researchers to analyze and process the results. It is important to mention the target population was not randomly chosen, for the amount of people under investigation did not surpass 100 people. Consequently, the whole group of students was taken into consideration for the investigation. Besides, the analysis of the check list showed that using the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach to teach Reading and Conversation in English II is a great idea to boost engagement in class. It is important to mention that the type of paradigm is the qualitative one to gather information and process it. On this basis, the research team concluded that Reading and Conversation in English II students' engagement is affected by the lack of an effective approach to teach the subject. However, through the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach, students' engagement in class will actually be improved.

## INTRODUCTION

This study has been done to offer an organized proposal to help Reading and Conversation II teachers improve their students' engagement through the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach. It also intends to show teachers new ways to develop different reading activities that call students' attention and are designed to take students to a new level of engagement by developing activities that are enjoyable and fun. It is divided as follows: Chapter I "Description of the Problem" describes the main purpose of this study through the objectives and the research questions. The research team made a diagnostic study to know the problematic situation of students thoroughly.

Chapter II "Theoretical Framework" offers a summary of the main theories built by experts of the use of the Bottom-up Top-down processing approach and how it helps boost students' engagement by offering a variety of activities that involves also the different learning styles students have.

Chapter III "Methodological Design" describes the different steps the research team followed in order to carry out this investigation since the moment the problem was identified until the conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter IV "Analysis and Interpretation of Data" presents all the data obtained through the instruments, as well as its analysis and interpretation based on the point of view of the teacher in charge of the subject, the research team and the experts mentioned in the theoretical framework.

Chapter V "Conclusions and Recommendations" offers a variety of conclusions made by the research team based on the theory stated by experts and the analysis of the data gathered by the research team. It also offers some recommendations to future researches, teachers and students.

Finally, a complete and well-organized proposal on the use of the Bottom-up Top-down processing approach to boost students' engagement in Reading and Conversation classes is attached. This proposal might be used not only by the teachers in charge of the Reading and Conversation II class but also by any other teacher who needs help to boost students' engagement in different reading activities.

## **CHAPTER I: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

### **1.1 Description of the problem**

Nowadays, many English teachers are becoming conscious about the importance of using new techniques or approaches to optimize students' knowledge and nurture their engagement in the classroom; nevertheless, when a teacher does not manage specific techniques or approaches, which can help students grasp contents more effectively, or he combines two different approaches erroneously, it is possible that students get confused while working, or students could just feel disengaged with the activity that the teacher is trying to develop in class. To avoid this problem, the teachers should know what their students need if they want their students to learn. For this reason, from the researchers' point of view, each teacher should have a good command of the main approaches that can be used depending on the subject that is being taught.

The research team used observation guides and checklists during three weeks for observing classes of the subject Reading and Conversation in English II group 2, at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during semester I, 2020. During the first week, the research team identified the problem; then during the next two weeks they described the problematic situation affecting the target population. Through the observation process, the researchers made use of their tools such as checklists, observation guides about students' engagement and questionnaires to identify the factors that lead the students not to feel totally engaged during class. In this specific case, "engagement" should be understood in this study as "the commitment students have towards the subject." The researchers could observe that time management on the part of the teacher is the factor that affects students the most. The teacher starts the class with different warm-up activities or energizers, but these activities consume too much class time. This makes students get distracted from the main task, or they feel so relaxed that at the end they do not want to start working, so they start using their cellphones, talking to their classmates, or even solving homework assignments from another subject. This situation is, for the researchers, what the teacher ought to fix first. The teacher has to follow her lesson plans in order to cover all the material that was planned. Before starting the class, the teacher already has stipulated the amount of time she can spend in each activity; however, it is normal that some tasks take more time or less time than the stipulated, but



following a lesson plan could be the first step to correct this situation. Besides, the class control is another factor that contributes to the disengagement towards the subject. Meanwhile the teacher develops a topic, or she explains an idea, most of the students do not pay attention to her, and they start doing other things. The researchers could observe many students using the time of the class to check their social networks, to study for another subject, and to talk about things that were not related to the class; however, the teacher ever approached them to try to make them join the class. Actually, the teacher hardly ever paid attention to these students, so maybe some students felt free to take that time of the class just as a break.

Also, the Reading and Conversation in English II group 2 teacher has to balance the reading time with the discussing time, but the researchers discovered that the students did not read. The time the teacher spends on reading is really limited, so the students do not have the opportunity to enrich their knowledge, or know what they have to talk about. The students have to be part of discussions, and they count only with the information they themselves already know (this leads to poor arguments and vague ideas). The students never get informed first to brainstorm, and to provide complete ideas to have meaningful discussions. To continue, the researchers discovered that the studied topics were not relevant for the students. The students did not show interest in topics that they probably already had discussed in other subjects. Talking about basic topics seemed not to be a challenge for the students, and this caused the same students to participate during the class. According to the researchers, the teacher had to work on her students' attention and interest to have a more interactive class. Also, the research team noticed that the students sometimes do not have a skimming or scanning process. This means that sometimes the students have to discuss topics without reading about them, and this, as it is already stated, leads to providing poor ideas or vague arguments during the class, and others simply do not know what to say. For the researchers, it would be better if the students first read about a topic to posteriorly provide ideas. In this way, the students can be able to provide better and stronger arguments.

Another factor that was really catchy during this observation process was the lack of feedback. The teacher never provided feedback to students, so the students never knew in which aspects they could improve their ideas and arguments to make them either more reliable or more persuasive. During the class, the teacher goes from student to student to get their opinions, but

she never took the time to help students to polish their ideas. In fact, the students get corrected among them in some cases. Besides, the teacher did not provide students with unknown vocabulary. In addition to the scarce reading time and the lack of skimming or scanning process, the students had to deal with new vocabulary. This has pros and cons because on the one hand the population was able to assimilate vocabulary through the context, but on the other hand the students who hardly ever read had hard times trying to understand some pieces of reading. For this, the research team considers that providing students with the unknown vocabulary could improve this situation.

In addition, the researchers could perceive a mixture of approaches that frequently ended up confusing students, and this decreased the number of participants during the class. As a result, the same students provide their own opinions during the class. To conclude, from the research team's point of view, these were the main factors that limit the students to get engaged with the subject, and this concluded the three weeks of observation.

## **1.2 Scope of the work**

This research project will be executed with the population of students of “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza” at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, specifically with group number two of the subject “Reading and Conversation in English II” during semester I, 2020. When students are taking the subject Reading and Conversation in English II, they need to have an engaging environment in the classroom so that students are focused on learning a specific content and working on the activities that are brought to the classroom. However, there were a series of observations carried out by the research team in which it was observed that engagement level is low in the classroom. This not only affects students but also the teacher who gets issues when engagement is not present in the classroom. Therefore, this study focuses on improving the level of engagement in the classroom.

Through this study, the researchers attempt to propose a more effective way to level up engagement during classes in the aforementioned subject. To accomplish this, the research team will propose the implementation of the “Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach” to boost students’ engagement in the classroom. Bottom-up is a method which refers to processing

sensory information as it comes to our brains, like perceiving a picture of something in our minds. On the other hand, the Top-down refers to the perception formulated by our brains after applying what it knows. The target purpose of this study is to provide teachers of Reading and Conversation in English II with a methodological framework to teach, and it is focused on the importance of engagement in the classroom through the application of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach.

Besides, the researchers are aware of the importance of all macro skills such as speaking, reading, listening, and writing; however, the researchers are going to direct all their efforts towards engagement since this is the element the researchers are looking forward to improving. In this case, engagement is that commitment that students show towards a determined thing, in this case, towards the subject.

Finally, this proposal will be done through a variety of tasks planned through the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach. What researchers are looking for is to suggest an alternative way of teaching Reading and Conversation in English II through the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach to boost students' engagement.

### **1.3 Research Question:**

1. How may the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach nurture students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador?

### **1.4 Justification**

The researchers carried out a three-week observation in which they gathered data through observations and checklists to verify if there was a problem affecting students of Reading and Conversation in English II group 2 semester I, 2020. Through the mentioned observations, researchers found out that these students have problems at the moment of focusing and paying attention to class in the aforementioned subject. Therefore, the present study suggests a proposal to help teachers make students get engaged in reading activities. Because of this, the researchers proposed the use of Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach in

reading; it is not only a matter of engagement in reading but also a matter of helping students analyze what they are reading.

In this sense, the main purpose of this study is to provide a model in which the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach is applied to guarantee students' engagement in reading.

Students' engagement should be considered as an important aspect in Reading and Conversation in English II. Teachers are concerned with making students participate instead of helping them to feel attracted to what they are reading. On the other hand, this subject should provide a time and space in which students can converse about what has been read so that this knowledge is not later forgotten but meaningful to the student. In this sense, the importance of this research is higher because it seeks not only students' engagement but also the reading habit; showing students that understanding a reading can be easier than they can imagine. Through the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach, students will have the opportunity to discover which of these two processes is more suitable for their learning since this approach has two ways to develop a reading.

Moreover, the relevance of this research becomes evident when thinking about the culture that students have at the moment of reading; when students are asked to read a complete book, they look for the easiest way to know the relevant information about the book reading just a summary. For that reason, this research suggests that giving students an approach to use at the moment of reading will help them feel attracted to reading because with it they will have a guide to develop any type of reading.

To provoke students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II, the Researchers created a guideline applying the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach. Furthermore, researchers provided a variety of activities to implement the mentioned approach, and also, they suggested ways to evaluate students' learning.

This proposal seeks to be a guide that will be useful for both teachers and students to achieve a greater engagement in reading and learning.

## **1.5 Objectives**

### **1.5.1 General objective**

- To propose a methodological framework to boost students' engagement during class in the subject Reading and Conversation in English II of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza through the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador

### **1.5.2 Specific objectives**

- To build a proposal containing lesson plans using the Bottom-up and Top-Down processing approach as part of the methodology to boost students' cognitive, behavioral and emotional engagement at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador Semester 1- 2020
- To propose a series of activities to be developed in Reading and Conversation in English II class to boost students' engagement at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador Semester 1- 2020

## **CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In words of Sampson Quain (2018), effective teaching methods may be constrained by school curriculum, but educators can still devise instructional approaches based on the needs of their students (needs such as interest, attention, engagement, etc.). Some courses are taught better through lecture, but in the case of Reading and Conversation in English II the research team identified a need for a different methodology which includes a combination of lecture and conversation so that class participation and direct interaction among the students take place. For instance, two common teaching methods are known as top-down and bottom-up, which take opposite approaches to provide students with an appropriate learning environment, and combined become a complete approach that facilitates the learning process in this subject. According to Sampson Quain (2018), there are some approaches which fit more than others to the students' needs to improve things such as engagement. Based on this argument, the research team will take into consideration the Top-down and Bottom-up Processing Approach to improve Reading and Conversation in English II students' engagement.

### **2.1 Top-down and Bottom-up**

Continuing with Sampson Quain's 2018 idea, there are different ways of implementing the Top-down Bottom-up approach during a class to nurture students' engagement. It is important to highlight that the application of this approach would vary according to each teacher's methodology, but the results can be the same. Here, Sampson provides some examples of how to develop this approach to obtain the expected results: A top-down style focuses on providing students a large view of a subject, immersing them in the big picture without explaining the components that make up the subject. For example, in an English as a Second Language class, a Top-down Approach would begin by immersing students in all aspects of learning English immediately, including writing, reading and pronunciation. Students would not be taught the intricacies of vowels, nouns and pronouns first, instead they would be plunged into the totality of learning English and then gradually learn the building blocks that make up the English language.

Unlike a top-down teaching approach, which takes a macro view of a subject first, a bottom-up teaching approach begins with the component parts of a subject, and gradually builds up to the whole. For example, in an ESL class, a bottom-up approach would begin with things such as phonics, letters, vowels and syllables, which are the building blocks of language. It's only after students have mastered these specific rules and systems that they move on to speaking and reading.

Top-down and bottom-up teaching methods have the same learning objectives but different ways of achieving them. Top-down teaching is concerned with motivating students to learn through direct interaction and immersion, and allowing them to find meaning in a subject by applying their own experiences. Bottom-up teaching is more instructor-driven and focuses on the minutiae of a subject as a way of decoding and simplifying each component through repetition and memorization, so putting into practice these activities or combining them with the activities in her lesson plans, the Reading and Conversation in English II teacher would have many different ways to work her student's engagement, and nurture it.

### **Top-down:**

A top-down style focuses on providing students a large view of a subject, immersing them in the big picture without explaining the components that make up the subject. For example, in an English as a Second Language class, a top-down approach would begin by immersing students in all aspects of learning English immediately, including writing, reading and pronunciation. Students would not be taught the intricacies of vowels, nouns and pronouns first, instead they would be plunged into the totality of learning English and then gradually learn the building blocks that make up the English language. (Sampson Quain, 2018).

### **Bottom-up:**

Unlike a top-down approach, which takes a macro view of a subject first, a bottom-up approach begins with the component parts of a subject, and gradually builds up to the whole. For example, in an ESL class, a bottom-up approach would begin with things such as phonics, letters, vowels and syllables, which are the building blocks of language. It's only after students have mastered these specific rules and systems that they move on to speaking and reading.

Top-down and bottom-up teaching methods have the same learning objectives but different ways of achieving them. Top-down teaching is concerned with motivating students to learn through direct interaction and immersion, and allowing them to find meaning in a subject by applying their own experiences. Bottom-up teaching is more instructor-driven and focuses on the minutiae of a subject as a way of decoding and simplifying each component through repetition and memorization. (Sampson Quain, 2018).

### **2.1.1 Process**

The Cambridge dictionary defines “process” as a series of actions that a person takes in order to achieve a result, and the Merriam Webster dictionary defines “process” as a series of actions or operations conducted to an end.

### **2.1.2 Approach**

According to the British Council website (nd), “an approach is a way of looking at teaching and learning. Underlying any language teaching approach is a theoretical view of what language is, and of how it can be learnt. An approach gives rise to methods, the way of teaching something, which use classroom activities or techniques to help learners learn.”

## **2.2 Top-Down Bottom-Up Processing Approach**

In the words of Sampson Quain (2018, para. 3), the Top-Down Bottom-Up Processing Approach is an approach that allows the teacher to develop the class in different ways, and all these ways lead to the same result: nurturing students' engagement. For example: On the one hand, this approach can be applied in deconstruction, which means having the students learning a topic from the basic elements to the complex ones, to facilitate the learning process. On the other hand, the teacher can work in the opposite way, which means teaching a topic in a general way without diving the main idea in small elements. By using this approach in this way, the students learn understanding the topic as a unit. Therefore, the Top-down Bottom-up processing Approach offers this ease to the teacher for him to apply it according to his students' needs.



### **2.2.1 Advantages of the Top-Down & Bottom-Up processing approach**

The Top-down & Bottom-up processing approach, as it was previously explained, eases the teaching process through the versatility of two different options. On the one hand, going from the complex stuff to the smallest pieces of information (Top-down), and on the other hand, going from the bases of a topic to have a progressive evolution of the target content (Bottom-up).

- Teachers can use this approach as a unit or as two different approaches to nurture their engagement. This will depend on the students' needs.
- When teachers implement the Bottom-up processing approach, prior knowledge is not required.
- Teachers have the freedom of deciding if they develop their content either from the bases or from the complex ideas.
- While being educated through the Top-down & Bottom-up processing approach, students can develop their capability of decoding information through context and isolated ideas. (This depends on the teacher's methodology).
- The Top-down & Bottom-up processing approach can be used according to the students' learning preference.

This approach can be implemented in formal and informal education.

### **2.2.2 Steps of the Top-down & Bottom-up processing approach**

The Top-down & Bottom-up processing approach is an approach that completes itself due to its versatility; On the one hand, teachers have the Top-down option, which takes a topic and all its components as a unit to posteriorly delimitate it. This is more efficient with students who already have prior knowledge about the topic under study.

On the other hand, teachers have the Bottom-up processing approach, which is based on establishing the bases of a specific topic first, and then implementing a complex progression.

The Top-down & Bottom-up processing approach is a very versatile approach that, if well implemented, fits most types of learners.

### **2.3 Top-down activities in reading**

Teachers often face the challenge of helping students improve their reading and comprehension and their capacity to make meaning from the different texts they encounter. Top-down approach is a useful tool teachers can use in their classes so that students improve their reading skill. With the top-down approach students take prior knowledge before they encounter new knowledge so that a student's active schema related to a particular topic or theme helps them incorporate what they learn from their reading. For instance researchers present some useful activities that can be implemented in class.

#### **2.3.1. Previewing titles, headings and subheadings:**

Students are taught the importance of the titles in a reading because the title is the first thing people read in a text and if the title is not attractive, people will not feel willing to read the text. So, teachers can use titles and headings to introduce a text because they are good means to trigger students' predictive potentials in regard to the context of a text; however, teachers should remember that headings must be attractive to students. For doing so, the teacher presents only the heading or title of the reading and students make predictions about what the text will be about. In this activity students have the freedom of expressing their ideas without them being wrong.

#### **2.3.2. Use of pictures and other visual support**

As it is known, there are different learning styles; therefore, teachers should use a variety of activities so that each learning style is taken into account. The use of visual aids is a useful tool to get visual learners on board. For this activity the teacher can show pictures, drawings, images and other visual aids accompanying the text under study to kindle the students' interest and foster their predictive potential. This activity can also be followed by a group discussion so that students have the opportunity to express their predictions based on visual aids.

### **2.3.3 Text fragments**

It is important to remember that students should be challenged so that the learning process does not get stuck. So, for this activity the teacher takes fragments, sentences, or words from the different paragraphs, and students explore them and discuss what the text is about. Also, the teacher can expose the text bit by bit and anticipate what they will read about in the following paragraphs. These activities keep students thinking and exploring the text little by little. Also, the activities are focused on the theme of the text and not on things like grammar, tenses, structure etc.

## **2.4 Bottom-up activities in reading**

### **2.4.1 Get key vocabulary out of the way**

As it usually happens in classes, vocabulary is one of the problems students face when reading a text. It is difficult to interpret some words or idiomatic expressions that students have not seen before, and that is the reason why it is good for students to get the key vocabulary about the reading before starting to read the text. This will ease the comprehension of the text later. In the words of FluentU (2020), “decoding phrases can be an area where students struggle the most, especially when it comes to idiomatic phrases. It even takes native speakers some time to recognize whether a phrase is idiomatic or literal, as we are blinded by our own familiarity.” Therefore, the teacher should think about important and difficult vocabulary in the text so that students can see and learn that vocabulary before starting to read. The teacher can ask students to scan for new vocabulary, present the vocabulary in a chart, or write it on the board. In this way, students are going to learn the meaning and correct pronunciation of vocabulary which is something important for students to put it into practice later.

### **2.4.2 Stimulate discussion**

What usually happens when teachers are about to introduce a piece of Reading is that they start up by reading the whole text without giving a short introduction to the text in any way. According to FluentU (2020), “prior to reading a comprehension text, you will want to engage the students and activate their current vocabulary, getting them talking in broad terms about the

topic that they will be reading about.” In other words, it is good for students to talk about the general topic that involves the whole piece of reading; if the reading talks about tourism, the teacher can start by asking questions about tourism in the country like “what are some of the best destinations in our country?”, “what are the advantages of making tourism in the country?”, “what are some of the problems for tourism here?”, and so on. Besides, the teacher can present the questions written on a chart, he can ask the questions aloud, or he can write the questions on the board. There are several ways of presenting the questions; also the teacher can use phrases instead of questions. This is just a way of stimulating students and getting them engaged with what is coming rather than focusing students on the meaning of the coming text.

### **2.4.3 Read the questions first!**

Sometimes, when students are about to read a text, they have no idea about what they are going to find there, and that can make the reading a little stressful for students. Creating questions about the reading and asking them to read them before they start to read the text is good for students to get some details about what is coming. As mentioned in FluentU (2020), “to read the questions first allows the reader to activate their knowledge of related vocabulary, and to glean the key words and phrases they should seek to understand the reading.” Also students are going to have the opportunity to have interaction with activities that are going to take place later in the class; this way, students are going to get to know what information is more relevant and important in the text.

### **2.4.4 Find a Detail**

Bottom-up (nd.) says that this is a good activity for helping your students learn to look for specific details. It usually happens that a teacher asks for specific details about a text during the reading time or after the reading time, but this can also be done before the reading takes place. Besides, this activity can be developed using a picture related to one part of the text. That picture needs to have some level of complexity. The teacher pastes the picture on the board, and then he or she asks students to look for a specific detail in that picture such as a little spot on the right corner (just to give an example). After the students have identified some details, the teacher can show students a part of the text, for example, a paragraph. In that paragraph the teacher can

then ask students to look for a language related detail like vocabulary, important dates mentioned in the text, ages, and so on.

## **2.5 Students' engagement**

When we refer to the teaching and learning process, engagement plays an important role so that students get interested, motivated and eager to attend, participate and work in in class activities.

Engagement is “The extent to which students identify with and value schooling outcomes, and participate in academic and non-academic school activities.” (Williams, 2003) This also refers to the attitude of students toward learning. However, people often tend to confuse engagement learning with students raising their hands in class.

In classrooms around the world, engagement refers to the investment of resources (i.e., time and effort) that either students or instructors make to optimize the experience of learning and enhance learning outcomes (Kuh, 2003, 2009; Trowler, 2010).

The Glossary of Education Reform (2016) states that “**student engagement** refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.” This means that student engagement involves many factors that must be taken into account by teachers in their methodology. The Glossary of Education Reform (2016) also defines some ways in which engagement can be addressed in school; these ways are intellectual engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, physical engagement, social engagement, cognitive engagement, and cultural engagement which will be defined below:

### **2.5.1 Intellectual engagement**

To boost intellectual student engagement, The Glossary of Education Reform (2016) suggests that teacher should create tasks that can be interesting to students; for example, teachers can let students decide the topic they are asked to write about; also, this activity can be modified

by asking students to present what they have learned in different ways like a short video, a short paper, or an audio.

### **2.5.2 Behavioral engagement**

The behavioral engagement domain concerns questions regarding, student conduct in class, student participation in school-related activities, and student interest in their academic task (Cooper, 2014; Fredricks et al., 2004; Shernoff, 2013; Yazzie-Mintz & McCormick, 2012).

Teachers may also establish consistent routines that help students stay on task or remain engaged during a class (The Glossary, 2016). However, in this type of engagement teachers should introduce variation into the class routines to have students engaged in the tasks they are performing. For example, a common routine in the classroom would be the teacher making groups; what usually happens is that the teacher creates the groups and student work with whom the teacher says. Therefore, a variation of this routine would be letting students choose who they want to work with; in this way, students know that they need to look for partners, and engagement takes place since the moment they stand up and do something different.

### **2.5.3 Physical engagement**

Teachers may establish physical activities to stimulate learning. As The Glossary of Education Reform (2016) states “Teachers may also introduce short periods of physical activity or quick exercises, particularly during the elementary years, to reduce antsy, fidgety, or distracted behaviors.” This can help enormously student’s attention; in addition, it suggests the use of “kinesthetic learning” which is the use of physical motions and activities so that the learning can be significant for students.

### **2.5.4 Social engagement**

“Teachers may use a variety of strategies to stimulate engagement through social interactions. For example, students may be paired or grouped to work collaboratively on projects, or teachers may create academic contests that students compete in.” (The Glossary of Education 2016). Furthermore, healthy competition in a classroom can help students get

engaged in the activities since it motivates them to put their best effort in what they are doing; also, Velasco (2012) states “this type of competition requires teamwork and positive participation. Participants are encouraged to improve themselves and learn a new technique. Winning is just an added bonus.”

### **2.5.5 Cultural engagement**

“Schools may take active steps to make students from diverse cultural backgrounds—particularly recently arrived immigrant or refugee students and their families—feel welcomed, accepted, safe, and valued. For example, administrators, teachers, and school staff may provide special orientation sessions for their new -American populations or offer translation services and informational materials translated into multiple languages.” as The Glossary of Education Reform (2016) states.

All these types of engagement need to be taken into consideration in the classroom since they help students feel better in their learning process. Moreover, there is another source that explains some types of engagement somehow different; this information is going to be shown below.

According to Fredricks (2004), engagement is characterized by three dimensions: behavioral (e.g., compliance with attendance and involvement), cognitive (e.g., investment in one’s activities and appreciation of challenges), and emotional (e.g., positive affective reactions, including enjoyment and sense of belonging). Those three dimensions are highly important, for they comprise important aspects to take into account when teachers want their students to be really engaged in the class.

### **2.5.6 Cognitive engagement**

PMC library (2011) states that “cognitive engagement can be characterized as a psychological state in which students put in a lot of effort to truly understand a topic in which students persist studying over a long period of time.”; to stimulate this type of engagement, an option could be the teachers bringing to the classroom real-life problems that adapt to students’

necessities because most of the time what is brought is just filler content, and students do not feel interested in it.

### **2.5.7 Emotional Engagement**

The emotional engagement domain concerns questions regarding students' feelings of belonging or value to their teacher, their classroom or their school (e.g., interest, boredom, happiness, sadness, anxiety) (Fredricks et al., 2004; Renninger & Bachrach, 2015; Shernoff, 2013; Stipek, 2002; Walker & Greene, 2009; Yazzie-Mintz & McCormick, 2012).

Emotional engagement is also an overall positive affective reaction that students have regarding the class, including enjoyment and one more time sense of belonging.

## **2.6 Class attention**

According to Ratey (2001) (as cited in Thorne and Thomas (nd.)), "attention is more than just noticing incoming stimuli. It involves a number of processes including filtering out perceptions, balancing multiple perceptions and attaching emotional significance to these perceptions." In other words, attention is a complex process in which a series of senses are employed to get to know what is happening around and to focus on specific things. Besides, in the words of Thorne and Thomas (nd.), attention is the first step in the learning process. Therefore, attention plays an important role in the classroom because if a student does not pay attention to something, he will not be able to understand or learn what is being taught. According to Thorne and Thomas (nd.), there are two major forms of attention: passive and active. Passive attention can be described as an involuntary process which is stimulated by external events happening around us. On the other hand, active attention is voluntary, and it is directed to a specific aspect of interest which involves concentrations.

## **2.7 Student's willingness to participate**

Based on the different types of engagement and classroom behaviors, to enable students to be active learners and engage in the different activities developed in class. Students must play an active role when seeking information, giving opinions and clarifying doubts. According to



Davis (2009), student's enthusiasm and willingness to participate in a classroom through these verbal engagements will create a conducive classroom environment.

Some studies show that several factors influence student's participation in the process of learners. According to Pajares and Schunk (Pajares, 1996 & Schunk, 1995) the first factor is the student's personality. They stated that students with high self-efficacy showed better academic achievement and more participation in the classroom. This reminds teachers the importance of getting to know students.

The second factor that affects student's participation is the traits, skills, and the teacher's teaching method. Traits that have been shown by the instructor, such as supportive, understanding, approachable, friendliness through positive nonverbal behaviour, giving smiles and nodded for admitting the answers that are given by students (Siti Maziha, Nik Suryani & Melor, 2010), affirmative and open-mindedness (Dallimore, Hertenstein & Platt, 2004; Fassinger, 1995; 2000) also contributed to the students' active participation in the classroom.

## **2.8 Attitude and Motivation**

Belmerchi and Hummel define motivation as “a potent force that corresponds to the expended effort and learner's goals”. (Belmerchi and Hummel, 1998). This force results from constant conviction, feeling, desire, attitude and decision towards a goal. Usually, the decision of learning comes from the student's desire of academic growth; however, teachers cannot ignore the fact that some students are moved to work by an extrinsic motivation. Having said that, it is important that students do not lose their intrinsic motivation so that they are eager to give an extra mile when it comes to the learning process. Noe and Pelletier (2000) said that Students feel more comfort and perseverance if the reasons for language learning are internalized.

Gronlneck and Ryan (1987) found that autonomous motivation for doing school work, in general, leads to more significant concept learning and fosters better memory compared to those who possess less autonomous motivation.

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines attitude as “a feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behavior”. Let's remember that a person can have a good or a bad attitude. For

instance, a bad attitude can affect a student's learning. An investigation carried out by the Ministry of Education of Guyana showed that students' attitudes on learning determine their ability and willingness to learn.

Rivers (1983) agreed that attitude and motivation are closely related when it comes to learning. It provides a brief explanation why some people have a much easier time of learning languages than others in the same classroom setting; some students may progress rapidly, while others just struggle along and never achieve command of a second language.

## **2.9 Student's autonomy**

One important factor in the learning process is autonomy. In the words of British council (nd), "an autonomous learner will take more responsibility for learning and is likely to be more effective than a learner who is reliant on the teacher". In other words, a student who takes control over his or her own learning will be more efficient when learning new things in the classroom so that the teacher becomes a collaborator and not a protagonist in the learning process. Besides, according to British Council (nd), "an autonomous learner will set their own goals, reflect on their progress, and seek opportunities to practice outside the classroom." Therefore, the student will show more self-conscious work and better attitude towards the activities presented by the teacher.

## 2. 10. Variables and Indicators

| General Objective   | Specific objectives   | Units of observation | Definition of the variables  | Indicators   | Instruments         |
|---|---|----------------------|--|--|---------------------|
| To propose a methodological framework to boost students' engagement during class in the subject Reading and Conversation in English II of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza through the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador | To build a proposal containing lesson plans using the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach as part of the methodology to boost students' cognitive, behavioral and emotional engagement at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador Semester 1- 2020 | Lesson plan          | Independent variable:<br>Presenting Bottom-up Top-down Processing Approach for future implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of “Previewing titles, headings and subheadings”</li> <li>• The use of “Use of pictures and other visual support”</li> <li>• The use of “Text fragments”</li> <li>• The use of “Get key vocabulary out of the way”</li> <li>• The use of “Stimulate discussion”</li> <li>• The use of “Read the questions first”</li> <li>• The use of “Find a Detail”</li> </ul> | • Observation guide |
|   | To propose a series of activities to be developed in Reading and Conversation in English II class to boost students engagement at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador Semester 1- 2020  | Lesson plan          | Dependent variable:<br>Improvement of student's engagement   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class attention</li> <li>• Student's willingness to participate</li> <li>• Student's attitude and motivation</li> <li>• Student's autonomy</li> </ul>   | • Checklist         |

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN**

In this chapter, the researchers give an account of all the steps needed to carry out this research study. The execution of all these steps aims to achieve the objectives of this research study.

### **3.1 Research Design**

To plan and execute the present study entitled “A PROPOSAL TO BOOST STUDENTS’ ENGAGEMENT IN READING AND CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH II, GROUP 2, THROUGH THE USE OF THE BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN PROCESSING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, SEMESTER I, 2020”, the research team has used the qualitative paradigm to plan and execute this research study. The type of study to be used to carry out this research is the projective design; the researchers selected it due to the efficacy of both to achieve the objectives of this proposal.

To execute the previously mentioned research study, the researchers have used a type of study known as Projective Research, which is used as a vision to a solution of a problem though its results may or may not be proven at the end of the investigation, in this case, the Reading and Conversation in English II students’ poor level of engagement in reading activities during Semester I-2020.

### **3.2 Preliminary phase**

In order to start this investigation, the researchers interviewed the teacher in charge of Reading and Conversation in English II group 2 to know what problems students might be facing. Then the researchers designed an observation guide to observe some indicators while students develop English reading activities. The data gathered through both the interview and the observation guide showed a low level of students’ engagement towards this subject.

### **3.2.1 Approaching to the field of study**

The diagnosis began at the moment the researchers sent a letter to the Head of the Foreign Languages Department to have access to all Reading and Conversation in English II schedules (teachers and classrooms) to develop the research. Then, the researchers approached the teachers to ask for permission for arriving one day at the classroom and administer the teacher an interview. The teacher was approached to understand how she could describe the problem that was affecting students, and after obtaining the required information, the research team analyzed it to posteriorly prepare the guidelines for the weeks of observation.

### **3.2.2 Diagnostic Test**

The researchers designed a specific instrument to diagnose if the problematic situation under study really existed so that the investigation “Boosting Reading and Conversation in English II, group 2 students’ engagement through the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, semester, I 2020” could be undertaken.

The current researchers used the instrument to identify if the problem identified in the year 2020 still existed, and according to the obtained results, the problem was still affecting the population.

To determine if there is or not engagement in reading activities in the group chosen to be studied, the researchers made an interview (APPENDIX A) to the tutor of Reading and Conversation in English II group 2 during semester I 2020. The research team designed the interview through open questions which could let us know about the teacher's methodology and her willingness to implement different techniques or approaches if necessary. Also, the interview was focused on knowing the type of learners the teacher had to look for the methodology and approaches that fulfilled her students' needs the most.

### **3.2.3 Definition of the Problem**

The main objective of this research study is to provide a proposal as methodological framework (Top-down & Bottom-up Processing approach) to boost students' engagement in the subject Reading and Conversation in English II to help teachers at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, semester I 2020. As stated in the first chapter of this research, the research team prepared guidelines to identify what was the Reading and Conversation in English II group 2 students' problem, and the identified problem was their poor level of engagement during reading activities. Students' engagement towards the class was not enough to succeed, so besides identifying the problem, the research team discovered the main causes that were causing this situation.

Before starting the investigation, the research team prepared guidelines for three weeks of observation. During the first week, the researchers identified the problem, during the second week, they confirmed that the problem existed, and they identified its main causes, and during the third one, the researchers had to find out if there were other external factors related to the main problem, and they had to analyze what type of methodological framework fulfilled students' needs the most.

The identified problem was low level of engagement; it could be observed that these students were not engaged in class, and, consequently, their participation or their attention in the class was limited. The main factors that the research team discovered as the cause are listed now:

The first factor was class time management; the teacher used too much time for developing activities that were not too fruitful when it comes to the main tasks (activities like warm-ups, energizers and icebreakers).

Another important factor that the research team identified was class control; during the whole observation process, the researchers could observe that many students used to talk about different things, or used their cellphones during activities, but the teacher never approached these students asking them to join the class, and thus have the class under control.

The last factor the research team identified was the disequilibrium between reading and discussing. During the observation process, the research team could observe that most of the reading activities were focused on discussing, and only a few activities were focused on reading.

### **3.3 Planning Phase**

After diagnosing the problem, the research team started building a well- structured theoretical framework. This helped the researchers define variables and indicators in which the proposal will be built on. Later the research team created and validated with experts in the field all the instruments to be used to gather data for their investigation.

#### **3.3.1 Literature Review**

The creation of this proposal required revising different literature from experts on teaching English as a foreign language and more specifically on teaching reading and conversation. The methodological proposal also involves modifying an existing model of lesson plan including a variety of activities using the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach to be used in the Reading and Conversation in English II subject. All this literature incorporated by the researchers support the final outcome of this investigation.

#### **3.3.2 Data Collection Instruments**

The researchers created three instruments in order to build up this proposal. The first instrument was a semi-structured interview (Appendix A) addressed to the teacher in charge of the subject. This was a key instrument in order to find out the methods and approaches that are used when teaching this subject. At the same time, the researchers could gather information regarding some problems the teacher might have identified during the class.

The second instrument was an observation guide (Appendix B) used by the researchers at the moment of observing the Reading and Conversation in English II class. This instrument was created to identify if the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach was used during the class and to identify if other approaches were used as well.

The third instrument was a checklist (Appendix C) to measure the level of engagement students had at the time of participating and working on the different activities developed by the teacher in Reading and Conversation in English II class. The researchers could observe if students were eager to participate or if they just waited for the teachers to ask them directly. At the same time, the research team observed whether the students completed the tasks or just started chatting or doing something else. The use of this instrument was key since this investigation seeks to boost students' engagement.

### **3.3.3. Validity of Data Collection Instruments**

The research team asked an expert in the area of English teaching at the English language Department of the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador to check and validate each of the instruments designed by the researchers to obtain data. This person was in charge of providing all types of suggestions to better these instruments if necessary. For this, the research team provided the expert with a validation sheet which contained all the aspects to take into account to assess the data collection instruments so that they are reliable and suitable for collecting data. After making all the necessary improvements in each of the instruments, the researchers administered them to a small sample of the population to make sure that these tools are effective and understandable.

### **3.3.4 Validity and reliability**

To assure validity, the investigators designed the instruments based on two validity criteria. Firstly, they guaranteed “face validity”. This means that each indicator included in the operationalization of the variables measures what the researchers want to measure at the moment of administering instruments to gather data. Furthermore, the investigators made sure that they included every indicator needed to measure the variables of the hypothesis. Secondly, they guaranteed “content validity” in which they checked the degree to which the items of the instruments covered the content to be assessed. To be specific, the investigators made sure if they had included the correct number of items per variable or indicator, the correct order of them, and the correct grammar in each of the aspects included in the instrument. Also, the researchers made sure to include the correct aesthetics, and they assured that the tool avoided ambiguities and confusing terms.



Regarding reliability, the researchers ensured the degree to which the instruments produced the same scores when applied in the same conditions. Besides, the observers assured that all of the instruments agreed on the measurements for the results. To assure reliability, the researchers took into account internal consistency, which means that there exists consistency of items and questions in the tools applied in the process. Also, they used Test-Retest reliability, which looks for maintaining consistency over time, and this means that the instruments were applied several times to get the most accurate data. In the same way, the observers are assured to integrate reliability to get homogeneity in the results. For this, the scientists used the same tools at every moment without changing anything, just in case a prior consensus existed on that.

### **3.3.5 Ethical aspects**

Ethical principles are a very important part when doing research; the investigators paid careful attention when providing any kind of data collection instrument to the population. As a matter of fact, the researchers had to be polite and respectful when administering the instruments to the students and the teacher of Reading and Conversation in English II class. For instance, they respected the participation of students during the classes observed, which means that they reacted professionally and appropriately to the students' performance. In other words, the investigators were careful so that students felt comfortable at any time during the diagnostic phase and the observation stage at the beginning of the research study. Similarly, all data gotten through the instruments were anonymous. They maintained the confidentiality of the participants since no personal information was revealed but kept anonymous. Furthermore, legality was covered since investigators were always aware of laws and regulations to govern the research project. Also, the researchers maintained respect for intellectual property as they never plagiarized or copied other's work and tried to pass it off as their own. All in all, the research team supports social and moral values with the aim of covering a key part of the whole study.

### **3.4 Execution Phase**

To go a step further with this investigation, the execution phase deals with the data collection procedures, the data processing, and data analysis and interpretation. Moreover, this study will be carried out through the use of the qualitative paradigm.

### **3.4.1 Data processing and analysis**

The information gathered from the class observations was helpful to search for the suitable methodologies, techniques and activities to create this proposal.

The researcher team checked the syllabus and lesson plans of Reading and Conversation II to identify all the aspects that needed to be changed and all the aspects that should be added in the proposal to achieve the main objective of this project. In addition, the researchers analyzed all the information gathered from the observations and from experts' theories that were the major insight to the result of this proposal.

### **3.4.2. Building of the Proposal to Boost Students' Engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II**

To build the proposal to boost students' engagement in the subject Reading and Conversation in English II, the research team will consider the results of the diagnosis of the problem, the research question that they formulated at the beginning of this study, the research objectives of the study as well as all the theory that experts have stated about the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach used to boost students' engagement in English reading activities at university level. The proposal will include the elements that are described as follows.

#### **3.4.2.1 Introduction**

This is the overview of the proposal. It provides a summary of the creation and what is expected from the proposal.

#### **3.4.2.2. Description of the program**

It describes what the complete proposal is about by giving all the important aspects that are included in the whole document.

#### **3.4.2.3. Approach to the need**

This will help people know what the proposal will be focused on and to identify who will benefit from it. Also, these sections will explain where all the activities contained in the

proposal will be carried out. The situation that led this investigation to be held in the first place is also stated. At the same time, it refers to previous investigations that have been carried out in the same field.

#### **3.4.2.4. Description of the beneficiaries and staff**

This section will describe and define the profile of all the people who are involved in the execution of this proposal as well as those who will receive its benefits at the moment of executing it.

#### **3.4.2.5. Objectives**

Objectives are the achievements that want to be reached in a long term by the proposal at the moment of carrying out reading activities in the already mentioned subject.

#### **3.4.2.6. Contents**

The contents are the areas the proposal wants to reach such as boosting students' engagement through well-structured lesson plans using the Top-down and Bottom-up Processing Approach.

#### **3.4.2.7. Activities**

In this section, a series of activities will be included and described. Those activities will be planned using methodologies, techniques or approaches that boost students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II.

#### **3.4.2.8. Resources**

Here all the teaching materials, resources and technical elements that will be necessary to execute the proposal will be listed and described.

#### **3.4.2.9 Budget**

This is the financial plan that will help all the previous elements to be fulfilled.

### 3.5 Timeline

| Activity                       | Responsible   | Timeline 2020 |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          | Timeline 2021 |    |       |     |      |      |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------------|----|-------|-----|------|------|
|                                |               | February      | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | Febr          | Ma | April | May | June | July |
| Research Team Formation        | Research Team | X             |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          |               |    |       |     |      |      |
| Choosing the topic             | Research Team | X             |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          |               |    |       |     |      |      |
| Preliminary Phase              |               |               |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          |               |    |       |     |      |      |
| Approaching the field of study | Research Team | X             |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          |               |    |       |     |      |      |
| Diagnostic Study               | Research Team | X             |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          |               |    |       |     |      |      |
| Definition of the problem      | Research Team | X             |       |       |     |      |      |        |           |         |          |          |               |    |       |     |      |      |

|  |               |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|---------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Planning Phase                                       |               |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Literature Review                                    | Research Team |   |   |   | X |  |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Elaboration of the Research topic Proposal           | Research Team |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Revision of the Research Topic Proposal              | Advisor       |   | X | X |   |  | X | X | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Incorporation of the Suggestions made by the Advisor | Research Team |   | X |   |   |  | X | X | X |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Elaboration of Data Collection Instruments           | Research Team | X |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Execution Phase                                      |               |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |               |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |   |
|--|---------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Data Collection Procedure/ Observation | Research Team | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Data Processing                        | Research Team |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Data Interpretation and Analysis       | Research Team |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |   |  |  |   |
| Writing the Final Report               | Research Team |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  | X |  |  |   |
| Oral Presentation                      | Research Team |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |   |  |  | X |

**3.6 Budget**

| <b>Service</b>                      | <b>Cost</b>    | <b>Total</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Internet</b>                     | \$40 per month | <b>\$600</b>  |
| <b>Other expenses (electricity)</b> | \$30 per month | <b>\$450</b>  |
|                                     | <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$1050</b> |

## **CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This chapter contains the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the research study entitled “A Proposal to Boost Students’ Engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II, group 2, through the use of The Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, Semester I, 2020”. Researchers analyzed and interpreted all the data to provide evidence of how the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach influence students’ engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II classes. Besides, a discussion of the findings contrasted with all the theory presented in chapter II is included.



#### 4.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this section, the data gathered through the tools administered during the research study is presented, analyzed, and interpreted in a systematic way. The data collection and analysis of the data helped the researchers to identify relations and differences in accordance with the theory included in the research study.

Through the checklist administered to the teacher in charge of Reading and Conversation in English II group 2, researchers got the results shown in Table No. 1.

*Table No. 1 Students' Engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II*

| INDICATOR       | TEACHER'S ANSWERS |    | RESEARCHERS' INTERPRETATION  |
|-----------------|-------------------|----|--|
|                 | Yes               | No |  |
| Class attention | X                 |    | According to Thorne and Thomas (nd.), there are two major forms of attention: passive that is involuntary and active that is voluntary.  |
|                 |                   |    | The results showed that the activities designed under the approach may activate students' passive and active attention. Some students may feel attracted to reading and some others to discussion, and that may help students keep their attention in class. |
|                 | Yes               | No | COMMENTS   |

|   |             |  |  |
|---|-------------|--|--|
| <b>Students' willingness to participate</b> | X           | In general, the activities that the lesson plan contained promote students' participation. Also "the activities are good for students to practice in a good manner the reading skill".                               | According to Pajares and Schunk (Pajares, 1996 & Schunk, 1995) students' personality and teacher's methodology to teach can affect students' participation. The findings revealed that the approach provides activities that may help students participate in different moments in the classroom because it gives students the opportunity to work in various types of activities such as group tasks or individual tasks so that they are able to practice their skills with confidence among the rest of students or in front of the class when they are exposed to it. Also, these activities may help the teacher create an environment in which students feel part of their learning process and are willing to participate instead of being pushed to do so. |
| <b>Student's attitude and motivation</b>    | Yes No<br>X | COMMENTS<br>The lesson plan of the subject provides activities that can awake students' interest and motivate students to develop them. Besides, "these activities can accomplish the objectives set in the lesson". | Rivers (1983) agreed that attitude and motivation are closely related when it comes to learning. The gathered data showed that the activities that the lesson plan contained may make students discover things that they like. The activities can drive students to give a good performance without being pushed to do it. Besides, these activities are created in such a way that students can   |

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improve and practice their skills in creative and funny ways.

| <b>Students'</b> | Yes | No | COMMENTS  |   |
|------------------|-----|----|---|---|
| <b>autonomy</b>  | X   |    | Overall, the lesson plans included activities that make students be autonomous. Furthermore, "the tasks can make students analyze the situation included in the texts presented in the lesson". | In the words of the British Council (nd), "an autonomous learner will set their own goals, reflect on their progress, and seek opportunities to practice outside the classroom." The results showed that the activities included in the lesson plans may affect positively students' autonomy since they give students the opportunity to work by themselves in different moments of the class. Students are constantly exposed to work on activities that demand analysis, creativity, and self-conscious work that is going to be really useful for further activities in the classes. In this way, students can be the protagonists of their learning process. |

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Source: checklist addressed to the teacher of the subject Reading and Conversation in English II Group 2, administered on September, 2020

## **4.2. Data Discussion**

### **4.2.1 The use of previewing titles, headings and subheadings**

According to Springer (2020), “a text must have a title that grabs attention, accurately describe the contents of your manuscript, and make people want to read further.” That implies that students should be exposed to titles and headings texts before they are asked to read the complete text so that they are willing to read more because the heading may appear attractive to them. Also, as it is found in chapter II, activities such as introducing the title before the whole text may help the teacher keep students focused on analyzing what the text will be about.

### **4.2.2 Use of pictures and other visual support**

In the words of Clark Quinn (2015) activities should be adapted to the learning style of students to have a better outcome. For instance, it should be taken into account that a large number of students are visual learners that means that they need pictures, colors, images or videos to boost their learning process and have a better outcome. When talking about Reading and Conversation in English II, this is not the exception. Sometimes reading a text can become boring for students who are visual learners, but the process gets better when pictures or images related to the text are included. This makes researchers state that the use of pictures or other visual support becomes necessary to boost students’ engagement in a Reading and Conversation in English II class.

### **4.2.3 The use of text fragments**

Jim Scrivener and Adrian Underhill (2012) point out that “Demand-High does not mean “making things more difficult”. It is a demand that comes precisely at the point where the learner is capable of taking the next steps forward.” Based on what they said, students need to be challenged regularly so that the learning process does not get stuck. So, when students are given just fragments of a text instead of being given the whole text, they are challenged to analyze each fragment until they come to the conclusion of what the whole text will be about without

even reading it completely. Besides, this process challenges students to go beyond a simple activity such as reading a text and talking about it.

#### **4.2.4 Get key vocabulary out of the way**

In the words of FluentU (2020), “decoding phrases can be an area where students struggle the most, especially when it comes to idiomatic phrases. It even takes native speakers some time to recognize whether a phrase is idiomatic or literal, as we are blinded by our own familiarity.” Therefore, researchers came to the conclusion that vocabulary should be given and taught before the text is even read since the students may become frustrated or lose interest in it and may not continue reading the text if this contains new vocabulary for them. Besides, there is a variety of interesting activities that can be developed to teach vocabulary and get students’ attention. All of this will have them interested in knowing how they will find a specific word in a text.

#### **4.2.5 The use of “stimulate discussion”**

According to FluentU (2020), prior to reading a comprehension text, the teacher ought to make students feel interested (through a variety of activities) in the task to be developed. Through the use of this technique, students can express their ideas in English more effectively because they have been exposed to the topic, and this is possible because of the engagement level that the teacher promotes in the introduction phase. In other words, before presenting the story/text to the students, the teacher can introduce the main topic through a “third party” activity, in a creative way if possible, to boost the students’ engagement level. In this way, the teacher will have set proper expectations, and students will know what they would work on in advance. The research team agreed with the “stimulate discussion” development because it helps the researchers reach the objectives of the research study. After having analyzed the use of “stimulate discussion”, the research team agreed that this has a very high potential to boost students’ engagement because students do not usually carry out this type of activities while reading in their ordinary Reading and Conversation in English II classes. They are just given a piece of reading, and that is it. There are not any pre-reading activities aiming at letting students get familiar with the text, neither is there a contextualizing process; just basic skimming and

scanning are done, and it is notorious that the target population of students needs more than that if the teacher wants them to be engaged.

#### **4.2.6 The use of “Read the question first”**

Sometimes, when students are about to read a story/text, they struggle trying to understand everything during the first time of reading it; however, this can turn into frustration for the students because not all of them have the same performance while reading. For this reason, the research team suggests the use of “read the question first”. The students will be shown questions about the reading prior to reading the article, and they will have to answer those questions for themselves. After having answered the questions (even though they are correct or not), the students will have an idea about what they might find in that reading. For the research team, the “read the question first” process is one of the best introductory reading activities that the students can apply. Some students from this group showed some deficiencies at the moment of understanding a reading. It is known that it takes more than one time of reading to understand a text thoroughly, but some of these students sometimes needed many repetitions to get the main points of a reading.

#### **4.2.7 The use of “Find a detail”**

Bottom up (nd.) says that this is a good activity for helping your students learn to look for specific details in a text. A nice characteristic of this activity is that it can be done before, after or during the reading process as the previous activity. The research team took into account the implementation of this activity due to previous experiences that have provided and enriched the research project with outstanding results. This is a process that was applied by the teacher while having reading activities; students are taught about skimming and scanning, but the research team considers that this also needs a bit of improvement if what the teacher wants is boosting her students’ engagement.

#### **4.2.8 Class attention**

According to Ratey (2001) (as cited in Thorne and Thomas (nd.)), “attention is more than just noticing incoming stimuli. It involves a number of processes including filtering out

perceptions, balancing multiple perceptions and attaching emotional significance to these perceptions.” As stipulated before, attention involves many aspects that should be taken into account at the moment of teaching a class. After addressing the questionnaire, the research team found out that the majority of Reading and Conversation in English II Group 2 students were not paying attention to the activities developed in class. The lack of attention was evident because students were doing different things like using their cellphones, talking about other topics that were not related with the class, and doing homework from other subjects during the Reading and Conversation in English II class. However, the research team considers that the lack of attention is a problem that affects students, but it can be solved by developing engaging activities that increase students’ attention.

#### **4.2.9 Students’ willingness to participate**

According to Davis (2009), “student’s enthusiasm and willingness to participate in a classroom through these verbal engagements will create a conducive classroom environment.” In fact, teachers cannot leave aside the fact that students have different likes, different ways of learning that means teachers should bring to the classroom many and different activities like those mentioned in this research study. However, the research team observed that students had an indifferent attitude towards the activities developed in class since they were not willing to give their ideas, opinions or points of view about the reading they were supposed to be analyzing.

#### **4.2.10 Students’ attitude and motivation**

Motivation in the classroom plays an important role, and Belmerchi and Hummel (1998) define it as “a potent force that corresponds to the expended effort and learner’s goals”; this force results from constant conviction, feeling, desire, attitude and decision towards a goal. Therefore, it is important that students have an extrinsic motivation that leads them to have intrinsic motivation so that they take the control of their own learning putting themselves their own goals. The research team observed that extrinsic motivation was present in the class when the teacher developed warm-up activities, but the majority of the time this kind of activities were too long, causing students to want to play all the class. For that reason, every activity should be planned seeking students’ motivation and learning.

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines attitude as “a feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behavior”. This means that teachers should develop activities in which students feel comfortable and do not feel confused in order to have a positive attitude towards the activities. Thus, the research team observed that Reading and Conversation in English II students got easily distracted or focused their attention on activities that were not part of the class due to the amount of time spent when developing one activity.

#### **4.2.11 Students' autonomy**

In the words of the British Council (nd), “an autonomous learner will take more responsibility for learning and is likely to be more effective than a learner who is reliant on the teacher”. It is evident that students' autonomy is an important factor in students' learning. In this specific case, the research team observed that students participated only if they were asked to do it; that means students were not taking the control over their learning which leads to a low performance at the moment of putting into practice what they have learned. Therefore, promoting students' autonomy should be a priority in the classroom so that students can set their own goals, and in that way, they will seek some opportunities to practice English reading outside the classroom.

### **4.3 Research Question**

To make a deep discussion of the data, the researchers answered the stated research question: How may the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach nurture students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during semester I, 2020? To do so, the researchers analyzed the different sources of information and data gather from tools in the investigation.

The Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach may influence positively students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II, group 2. According to the investigation, the approach offers teachers a variety of activities that go from the simple things in text such as vocabulary, phrases, simple questions and so on to the complex ones (analysis of ideas and interpretation of texts). All of this makes that this approach brings many benefits for students.



First of all, the approach creates more participatory environments; this means that students have more opportunities to put into practice their knowledge and to have a sense of belonging in the learning process. Besides, the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach promotes students' autonomy by offering different individual tasks to make students work by themselves without relying too much on the teacher. The individual tasks are prepared in such a way that students can easily develop them without the teacher's help. In addition, this methodology provides activities that catch students' attention; this occurs due to the creative activities and real world scenarios that are involved in the activities in which students have the opportunity to learn by having fun and by associating daily occurrences with the activities developed during classes that can also influence students' motivation to a great extent. Thus, students will not be so reluctant when developing activities that demand a good effort to be finished. Moreover, with the correct assignment of time and the appropriate feedback, the activities implemented under the approach will become more stimulating for students not to lose the interest in developing them. In this way, students become more engaged in the class.

Finally, the checklist addressed to the teacher showed that creating lesson plans with activities under the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach may improve students' engagement since it was shown that the lesson plans presented included the majority of aspects previously mentioned such as participatory activities, and tasks that involve students' autonomy, as well as other activities that catch students' attention. Therefore, the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach may nurture students' engagement in many different ways.

## **CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

### **5.1 CONCLUSIONS**

Through this study, the research team collected data about the phenomenon since they could observe that Reading and Conversation in English II students have little engagement in class activities of this subject. Therefore, based on the findings of this investigation, the research team has drawn a set of conclusions about this phenomenon:

#### **5.1.1. The Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach can be used to boost reading skill and speaking skill.**

The Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach has advantages over some other approaches because it includes activities that may foster students' reading and speaking skills. At the same time, the use of this approach allows teachers to work with the different learning styles (visual, kinesthetic, auditory, social, and so on), which guarantees more opportunities for learners to improve their reading and speaking skills. Consequently, the activities developed under this approach may stimulate students' senses and help them interact among them by giving them the opportunity to develop physical, verbal, visual, cooperating, and individual activities; all of these activities are designed in such a way that students may practice their reading and speaking skills in different ways. Also, the approach has proven to foster students' reading and speaking skills because it can turn simple readings and monotonous ways of reading texts into something different, something more attractive and dynamic for students. For instance, the students can read using their emotions, read in groups at a time to do cooperative work, play a game to get to see who is the one who is going to be reading a paragraph, analyze and subtract the most relevant ideas from texts to discuss and create their own points of view, and so on. Therefore, when students start reading texts in class, they will feel more connected and more interested in reading texts than if they were just put to read aloud without any other thing to do. Additionally, since the approach provides group and individual discussing activities, students can develop their speaking skill since they have more time for discussing and reading along the class. In this way, the teacher moves aside, and the students become the center of the class.

#### **5.1.2. Real World Scenario Activities Promote Students Engagement and Participation during the Whole Class.**

Another important finding in the present study shows that the type of in-class activities that a teacher develops play an important role when talking about students' engagement. If teachers seek to have students engaged in class, they must include activities that catch students' attention. Therefore, the activities developed under this approach promote students' willingness to participate because they are designed according to students' needs, creating real world scenarios and environments of creativity for students. For example, students can work on activities in which they are asked to change parts or complete readings into different genres like news, magazines, books, and so on. In addition, they can perform analysis of readings in different ways like presentations, debates, TV shows, and so on. By doing this, the discussion and reading activities turn into a work of interaction, presenting points of views, and producing new knowledge. Therefore, students' participation and students' engagement are boosted during the whole class.

Moreover, students' attitude towards the activities changes positively because they can be focused on developing the tasks without being pushed to do so because as Rivers (1983) says, attitude and motivation are closely related when it comes to learning. Consequently, with appropriate use of the approach, the teachers can make students be motivated and not reluctant to developing tasks because the students feel interested in developing something that brings real life situations experience to them. Besides, if the teacher wants his/her students to be more engaged and participating most of the time, he/she needs to incorporate individual and group tasks as it was seen in the findings of the investigation so that students can have the opportunity to interact with others and support each other in group tasks and to be autonomous in individual tasks. Thus, the approach makes students become the center of the class, giving extra participation to them and making them feel more engaged in everything.

### **5.1.3. Developing activities under the Bottom-up and Top-Down Processing Approach Can Improve Students' Engagement.**

The activities included in the lesson plan using the aforementioned approach should be scaffolded in such a way that students can start by understanding the minimal parts of a reading like vocabulary in individual phrases and then going beyond with the analysis of the text. All of this depends on students' learning which means that some students learn in a process that goes from the easiest tasks to the most complex ones. Besides, it is necessary to take into account that the learning process of some students is the opposite of what was previously mentioned;

this means that some students need to be challenged with the most complex tasks and later be taken to the easiest ones to maintain a level of interest and engagement.

Moreover, according to the findings of this investigation, there is a need of creating real world scenarios during classes because the students look for things that they can associate with real life situations. In this way, the approach can actually offer solutions for many things that affect students, since it provides activities that make students be involved in real life situations, accumulating experience that is going to be useful in their personal life. Furthermore, each activity developed under the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach is student centered, so the students feel part of their learning process and are not just spectators in the class.

Besides, based on the data gathered, individual and group activities play an important role in class because they boost students' autonomy. On the other hand, group discussion is allowed to create an environment in which students are given the opportunity to create their own learning by expressing different points of view about the things they do. In addition, if the teachers really know the approach, they will offer students well-structured activities to work on them without the teacher's help, which means that students will work more easily and will show their potential when working in the different tasks developed in the classroom. To end up, with the final analysis of the data, the investigators conclude that using the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach can help teachers improve students' engagement in class.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

After carrying out this project investigation, the researchers have formulated some recommendations for teachers and further researchers.

### **5.2.1 Recommendation for teachers**

Based on the data gathered after analyzing how efficient the Bottom-up Top-down processing approach is when teaching students the subject Reading and Conversation, the research team suggests that teachers should create lesson plans or include activities under the approach previously mentioned. Besides, the research team recommends making activities that are different and attractive to students so that the class does not become monotonous. Furthermore, teachers should not create lesson plans based on only one learning style since each

student has a different learning style and sometimes the lesson plans are created just for auditory or visual learners.

### **5.2.2 Recommendations for further research**

The researchers should take into consideration more activities to be applied under the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach. Due to the flexibility that this approach has, the researchers can present more activities so that teachers can modify them under this approach to bring more benefits to the students. Besides, this may help further researchers to take it into consideration in their research studies.

The researchers should try some lesson plans with the target population in order to know what activities should be taken into consideration for the research study. The researchers may ask the teacher they are working with to develop some classes with lesson plans provided by the research team so that they know exactly what activities work and what do not. By doing this, researchers can make sure that what they are including in their project can actually improve the learning process of the target population.

The researchers should try to focus this investigation on the improvement of a specific skill such as speaking, reading, writing, or listening skill. The approach offers many opportunities for teachers to implement and modify wonderful activities according to specific skills and for students to give their best performance in all the tasks developed in the classroom. Therefore, the investigators should work on selecting and modifying activities for less complex purposes, since working on specific skills makes the work easier, obtaining better results with more efficiency. In conclusion, that would make easier for the investigators to exploit all the potential that this approach offers to teachers.

### **5.3 LIMITATIONS**

Along the preparation and development of this investigation, the research team experienced certain limitations which required modifications as well as adjustments in the planning and the development of the research. The investigators agreed with dividing them into academic and global limitations. The research team considers academic limitations the

following: some teachers did not allow any research team in their groups; this situation made some research teams work within the same subject having the same population. Also, the schedule differences of the members of the research team required an immediate solution, and, lastly, the time was considered as a limitation because not all the research team's members could meet the same amount of time in each meeting.

On the other hand, the research team experienced a global limitation: the covid-19 pandemic and quarantine. Because all the academic activities were temporarily cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the preparation and development of this investigation was modified many times. The presence-based modality meetings were also affected by the current situation. In addition, the researchers faced health problems, Internet connection problems and sometimes electricity problems.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
THESIS WORK



INTERVIEW ADDRESSED TO THE TEACHER IN CHARGE OF READING AND  
CONVERSATION II, GROUP 2

Objective: To identify problems affecting Reading and Conversation II, group 2 students

1- What type of learners have you identified in your class?

2- Which methods, approaches or techniques that fit with your students' needs have you put into practice?

3. Which methods or approaches do you use the most in your class?

4- Have you identified a moment during the class in which students seem not to be paying attention or not being eager to work? If so, what do you do?

5- Are you willing to add different strategies in your class?

## Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
THESIS WORK



**QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO THE RESEARCHERS OF THE PHENOMENON “A PROPOSAL TO BOOST STUDENTS’ ENGAGEMENT IN READING AND CONVERSATION II, GROUP 2, THROUGH THE USE OF THE BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN PROCESSING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, SEMESTER I, 2020”**

**Objective: To identify problems affecting Reading and Conversation II, group 2 students**

1. Does the teacher develop a variety of activities? YES NO
2. Do students pay attention to all the activities developed by the teacher? YES NO
3. Is there a balance between students talking time and teachers talking time? YES NO
4. Does the teacher take too long while developing reading activities? YES NO
5. Is there a balance between reading time and conversation? YES NO
6. Do students freely participate in the activities developed by the teacher? YES NO
7. Does the teacher use a specific approach or methodology to develop the class? YES NO
8. Do students go beyond what they are asked to do in class? YES NO

## Appendix C

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
THESIS WORK**



**CHECKLIST ADDRESSED TO THE READING AND CONVERSATION II GROUP II  
TEACHER ABOUT THE PHENOMENON “A PROPOSAL TO BOOST STUDENTS’  
ENGAGEMENT IN READING AND CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH II, GROUP 2,  
THROUGH THE USE OF THE BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN PROCESSING  
APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF EL SALVADOR, SEMESTER I, 2020”**

**Objective:** to collect data about students’ engagement

| <b>Criteria</b>   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Comments</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1. The lesson plan contains activities that promote students’ attention class.  | X          |           |                 |
| 2. Activities that involve students’ participation at any time are included in the lesson plan.                               | X          |           |                 |
| 3. The individual activities contained in the lesson plan are appropriate for students to be autonomous.                      | X          |           |                 |
| 4. The activities from the lesson plan take the appropriate time so that students do not lose the interest in developing them | X          |           |                 |

## Appendix D

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
READING AND CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH II  
OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**



| <b>CRITERIA</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Students' attention during the in class activities           |          |          |          |          |          |
| 2. Students' performance in reading activities                  |          |          |          |          |          |
| 3. Student's willingness to participate voluntarily             |          |          |          |          |          |
| 4. Students' autonomy when developing individual tasks          |          |          |          |          |          |
| 5. Students' performance in discussion activities               |          |          |          |          |          |
| 6. Student's attitude towards the activities developed in class |          |          |          |          |          |
| 7. Students' capability to communicate ideas about the topics   |          |          |          |          |          |
| 8. Student's capacity of analyzing texts                        |          |          |          |          |          |

**Objective:** diagnose students' engagement during class

Comments:

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## Appendix E

### UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

#### WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT THESIS WORK

Validation sheet addressed to the experts on the research field

**Name of the validator:** Tatiana Poleth Beltrán

**Degree:** Licenciada en Idioma Ingles opción Enseñanza

To the evaluator: check the appropriate box for your ratings.

Scale: 5 - Excellent 4 - Very Good 3 - Good 2 - Fair 1 - Poor



| Criteria  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1. Clarity and Directions of Items</b><br>The vocabulary level, language, structure, and conceptual level of participants. The test directions and the items are written in a clear and understandable manner. |   |   |   |   | √ |
| <b>2. Presentation and Organization of Items</b><br>The items are presented and organized in a logical manner.  |   |   |   |   | √ |
| <b>3. Suitability of Items</b><br>The item appropriately presented the substance of the research. The questions are designed to determine the skills that are supposed to be measured.                            |   |   |   |   | √ |
| <b>4. Adequateness of the Content</b><br>The number of questions per area is representative enough of all the questions needed for the research.  |   |   |   |   | √ |
| <b>5. Attainment of Purpose</b><br>The instrument as a whole fulfills the objectives needed for the research.   |   |   |   |   | √ |
| <b>6. Objective</b><br>Each item or questions requires only one specific answer or measures only one behavior and no aspect of the questionnaires suggests in the past of the researcher.                         |   |   |   |   | √ |
| <b>7. Scale and Evaluation Rating</b><br>The scale adapted is appropriate for the item.   |   |   |   |   | √ |

Comments: The tools are very well designed and they are very reliable.

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Validator's signature

**Appendix F**

**A PROPOSAL TO BOOST STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN  
READING AND CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH II, GROUP 2,  
THROUGH THE USE OF THE BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN  
PROCESSING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
EL SALVADOR, SEMESTER I, 2020**

**UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR**  
**FACULTAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA DE OCCIDENTE**  
**FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**A PROPOSAL TO BOOST STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN READING AND  
CONVERSATION II THROUGH THE USE OF THE BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN  
PROCESSING APPROACH AT THE WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**

**PROPOSAL PRESENTED BY**

**GERSON JAVIER LOBOS SALAZAR**  
**GLORIA SUSANA MARTÍNEZ FUENTES**  
**ESTEFANIA ABIGAIL NOVOA VALLE**  
**JOSÉ LUIS VÁSQUEZ PEÑATE**

**THESIS ADVISOR**

**MASTER GUADALUPE DELURDY LINARES DE SERMEÑO**

**FEBRUARY, 2021**

**SANTA ANA, EL SALVADOR, CENTROAMÉRICA**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The present proposal has been created towards improving students' engagement in the subject of Reading and Conversation in English II at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, using the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach because, as found in the data gathered through different research tools administered to the population under investigation, the research team concluded that engagement was poor in the subject. So, the researchers considered appropriate to implement a different methodology to improve this factor that hinders students' development of their skills.

The proposal includes the following: introduction, description of the proposal, justification of the proposal, general and specific objectives, content of the proposal, activities, timeline, place of project, and budget for the development of the proposal.

The body of the project consists of a series of lesson plans that cover a total of four weeks, teaching five hour per week. For this, the researchers created eight lesson plans of 100 minutes and four of 50 minutes; two 100-minute lesson plans and one 50-minute lesson plan are going to be taught a week. Additionally, the activities included in the lesson plans have been properly selected and developed under the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach, following all the patterns that the approach demands. In the last part of the proposal, there is an observation checklist to assess engagement before and after the proposal is carried out in order to see the changes that the project brings to the population.



## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL**

The incoming proposal for the use of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach in the subject Reading and Conversation in English II, group 2 at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador is based on the findings of the research study entitled “A Proposal to Boost Students’ Engagement in Reading and Conversation II, Group 2, through the Use of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, Semester I, 2020”. This proposal is made up by twelve lesson plans that cover four weeks of classes. As stated in the theoretical framework, the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach helps students develop different skills emphasizing two macro skills such as speaking and reading.

Besides that, this method helps students improve their reading and speaking skills through different activities. Furthermore, according to different authors, activities developed under the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach help students to be more engaged in their learning and to be the protagonists of their learning process. As a result, the development of activities under this approach helps students be more engaged in classes as they are based on reading and speaking, looking for a balance between these two macro skills.

This proposal is composed by different elements such as an observation checklist, a series of twelve lesson plans, and a final evaluation to see the improvement in students’ engagement. In the observation checklist, the aim is to see how engagement takes place in the classroom. Besides, students’ performance in reading and speaking which are the two macro skills involved in the investigation are going to be observed. Moreover, the lesson plans are designed in such a way that the Bottom-up and Top-down processing approach takes place in different moments of the class so that students are exposed to a variety of activities such as different ways of reading texts and different ways of analyzing texts. To boost students’ engagement, the lesson plans offer students the opportunity to interact among them and with the teacher. In addition, a final evaluation is added to measure how efficient the approach is.

It is expected that students learn how to comprehend a text in an easier way using the different techniques that this approach has such as learning a topic from the simple to the complex and vice versa. That is why, in line with information gathered in the thesis work “A Proposal to Boost Students’ Engagement in Reading and Conversation II, Group 2, through the Use of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, Semester I, 2020”, the lesson plans are developed in a way to enhance students’ engagement and to facilitate students’ learning. Furthermore, the lesson plans include the contents developed with different activities to teach students Reading and Conversation.

## **JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROPOSAL**

This proposal is the result of a research study carried out with the population of students of Reading and Conversation in English II group 2, which the problematic situation studied was that students were not engaged in classes due to the lack of a specific method to carry out the activities. Moreover, the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach has not been applied to develop activities in Reading and Conversation in English II classes. Thus, the purpose of this proposal is helping students be more engaged in the Reading and Conversation in English II Group 2 classes. Students will not only be learning from the simple contents to the complex ones and from the complex contents to the simple ones as the approach describes, but also, they will be exposed to different engaging activities in an environment that allows them to practice their reading and speaking skills in a more interesting and entertaining way.

As a result, the purpose of this project is to test the effectiveness of the application of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach to boost students' engagement. Moreover, the goal of this project is to boost students' engagement through the use of the approach previously mentioned so that students learn how to analyze texts in an easier way and later discuss them through engaging activities to make the learning process more interesting for students.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSAL**

### **General objective**

To present the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach as a tool to boost students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II

### **Specific objective**

To provide lesson plans using the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach to teach Reading and Conversation in English II

To recommend the use of engaging techniques using the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach that the teachers of the subject Reading and Conversation in English II may use to boost students' engagement

To boost students' engagement in Reading and Conversation in English II with interactive dynamic educational activities develop under the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach

## **CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL**

This proposal consists of thirteen lesson plans that offer a guide to the Reading and Conversation in English II teachers of how to enhance students' engagement through the incorporation of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach. For that purpose, the elements that compose this proposal are based on the principles and steps of the Bottom-up and Top-down Processing Approach as a way of showing how useful this tool can be to teach students Reading and Conversation in English II. Besides, the lesson plans were created based on different activities that include physical movements, actions, and roles in which students are the protagonists of their own learning process.

## **ACTIVITIES**

For the teachers to be able to use this proposal with students of Reading and Conversation in English II, they should be aware of the flexibility of this approach and of all the variations that the activities developed under this approach may suffer in class. The teacher should consider the amount of time that the activities take and the different types of learning that the students have. Second, the teacher in charge of the subject should read extensively about the principles and characteristics of this approach so that he/she may use it effectively in class. He should also prepare material that would be used in the activities so that he can provide it to students at the moment of developing the class. Moreover, the teacher should check the meaning of vocabulary, phrases and analysis of texts included in the lesson plans.



## **PLACE OF THE PROJECT**

This proposal has been planned to be executed at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador with Reading and Conversation in English II students. In this university, many students come from different areas of the western zone of El Salvador, sometimes from a background of poverty where some of the students work during some hours of the day and then attend classes. Moreover, the majority of the classrooms are too small for the amount of students in class, which, in most of the cases, interferes with students' learning. Besides, in this specific subject, there is not any structured lesson plan to carry out the classes, which complicates the development of activities and the learning process.

## **BUDGET**

To develop the present proposal, the research team did not spend money in any resource; however, the teacher in charge of the subject will have to print all the necessary sources such as lesson plans and worksheets to carry out this project. Besides, the teacher will need supporting material such as posters, flashcards, and other supporting materials for the development of activities so that he/she can implement everything in the best way.

# LESSON PLANS

## LESSON PLAN No. 1

*UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
READING AND CONVERSATION II, SEMESTER I 2020*



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

- Provide the definition of words without using dictionaries
- Talk about a text by just scan it
- Create and present mind maps about a text

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Time 15 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1 (Adopt a word)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To start with the class, have students form groups depending on their birthday months or city where they live: however, tell them that each group can't have more than 4 students, so one group is full, they will have to form another one.</li><li>• Give each group a series of words found on the text they will read later. Then, ask each student of each group to choose one of the words you have given them.</li><li>• Now that every student has adopted a word from the text, ask each student to look for the definition of the word (no the translation) a synonym and an antonym of the word they chose. Also ask them to write one sentence that contains the original word, a sentence with the synonym and one with the antonym.</li><li>• After they have finished their task, play Simon says (for example, Simon says to show me a black marker.) and the last person to show you what you have asked will be the one who shares his or her task with the rest of the class.</li><li>• You can do this only 5 or 6 times so that students don't bored.</li></ul> |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 (Quick revision)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Now that students have worked on vocabulary, give them 2 minutes to skim and scan the text about Nelson Mandela. It is important that you don't give them more time than that.</li><li>• After the 2 minutes have passed, give a category (colors, animals, adjectives, verbs, etc) and ask random students to give you a word related to that category.</li></ul>   |



|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
|                               | <p>If a student takes more than 3 seconds to give you a word, he or she has to share 5 things he or she read about Nelson Mandela.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can do this activity 3 or 4 times because the text is not that long.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Time 10 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 3 (Reading time)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To read the text about Nelson Mandela, ask one student to start reading and to stop where the first paragraph ends. Now the student has to call out the name of another student and call out an emotion too (sad, happy, angry, crying), so the person whose name was called out has to read the next paragraph but performing the emotion that was called out so that the task of reading the text does not get boring.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NELSON MANDELA</b></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Nelson Mandela is considered by many to be the father of South Africa. Mandela was an anti-Apartheid activist, which means that fought for those who were disadvantaged by the system of racial segregation. Mandela became a civil rights leader, leading many against the Apartheid government. Apartheid was a system of racial inequality which kept all races separate from one another. In 1994, Mandela was of key importance in negotiating the freedom and equality of all South Africans. He then became South Africa’s first democratically elected president.</p> <p>Early Life Mandela was born on 18 July 1918 in a small village, Mvezu, in the Eastern Cape. Growing up he learnt about African history and the unfair discrimination faced by non-whites living in South Africa. He wanted to help end this discrimination so that everyone could live freely and equally. Mandela later went on to study law at the University of the Witswatersrand where he met fellow activists who fought against Apartheid. Fighting for peace Readings and Conversations II – T. Raquel Sosa – Semester I - 2020 Apartheid was introduced in 1948 by the NP (National Party) which was an all-white government. It was a harsh system that gave little opportunities to non-white people and took away their basic human rights such as education, freedom of movement and rights to self-determination. Mandela joined the ANC (African National Congress) in 1944 and was elected President of the ANCYL (African National Congress Youth League) in 1951. He first encouraged non-violent protests as he wanted to follow Mahatma Ghandi’s example but this did not work and later on they used more violent tactics. The apartheid government then labeled Mandela and the other civil rights activists as terrorists. Mandela was arrested by the apartheid government and during the Rivonia Trail (1963 -1964) and was sentenced to jail. He spent 27 years in jail, and most of that time was spent on Robben Island. During this time he had become an international symbol for the anti-Apartheid movement. Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement gained international support as there were worldwide protests and sanctions against the apartheid government The fight against the apartheid government was a success due to both local and international pressure which forced</p> |

the regime to end. On the 11 February 1990, F.W. de Klerk, who was South Africa's president at that time, released Nelson Mandela from jail. Together they worked to end apartheid by abolishing apartheid laws, freeing civil rights protestors and unbanning political parties. The 27 April 1994 was a historical day, when South Africa's first democratic elections were held and everyone was given the right to vote regardless of their race. The ANC won the elections and Mandela, as its leader, became the first democratically elected president. South Africa is now a fully democratic country. Mandela helped prevent a civil war and he ensured that no one would be discriminated because of the color of their skin. Since then all South Africa's citizens' rights are protected by the new South African constitution based on human rights. However, even though Apartheid no longer exists, the legacy of Apartheid can still be seen in South Africa today, especially in structural issues such as education and the distribution of labor. Mandela stepped down as president in 1999 but continued to promote peace around the world. He also became involved



with many charities for children and education.

Taken and adapted from: <https://experiencelife.com/article/no-fear-bethany-hamilton-on-finding-your-courage/>  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/14/opinion/stephen-hawking-death-.html>  
<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/nelson-mandela-father-nation>

**20 min  
utes**

**Activity 4 (Gallery walk)**

1. After students have read the text, assign a part of the text to the groups that were previously formed.
2. Give each group markers and paper to make a drawing that represents their paragraph or a mind map that contains information about their paragraph.
3. Ask each group to paste the drawing or mind map on the wall.

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
|                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Now the gallery walk starts. Each group will present the drawing or mind map expressing what they did, telling a summary about their paragraph and what they think about the paragraph so that everybody in the group participates.</li></ol>   |
| <b>10 minutes</b> | <p><b>Activity 5 (Assessment)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Ask each student to write an autobiography about what they have lived so far following Nelson Mandela's biography.</li><li>6. Have some students share what they wrote and other students give his or her thoughts about the biography that the students shared.</li><li>7. Provide feedback.</li></ol> |

## LESSON PLAN No. 2

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READING AND CONVERSATION II, SEMESTER I 2020**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

1. Provide synonyms, antonyms and usage of different words found in a text
2. read efficiently a text according to pronunciation, intonation, fluency and punctuation
3. Analyze the text and discuss about Stephen Hawking

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Time 5 minutes</b>  | <b>Activity 1 (Hot seat)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First, split your class into different teams (two is best, but if you have a large class, any number could be used).</li><li>• Sit the students facing the board.</li><li>• Then take an empty chair - one for each team - and put it at the front of the class, facing the team members. These chairs are the 'hot seats'</li><li>• Then, get one member from each team to come up and sit in that chair, so they are facing their team-mates and have their back to the board.</li><li>• Prepare a list of vocabulary items that you want the students to use in this game.</li><li>• Take the first word from that list and write it clearly on the board.</li><li>• The aim of the game is for the students in the teams to describe that word, using synonyms, antonyms, definitions etc. to their team-mate who is in the hot seat - that person can't see the word!</li><li>• The student in the hot seat listens to their team-mates and tries to guess the word.</li><li>• The first hot seat student to say the word wins a point for their team.</li><li>• Then change the students over, with a new member of each team taking their place in their team's hot seat.</li><li>• Then write the next word...</li></ul> |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 (Adopt a Word)</b>  |

- Form groups and give each group a word from the reading and a template with headings they will have to fill.

| Word | Meaning | Part of speech | Example of usage |
|------|---------|----------------|------------------|
|      |         |                |                  |

- The students will do some research on the word they got, using the template above.
- Each group then gives a short presentation on his or her adopted word until all the class has had a chance.
- Provide feedback

**Time 10 minutes**

**Activity 3**

- Give students characteristics of Stephen Hawking without mentioning his name. Give difficult characteristics such as his birthday, the year of one of his discoveries, etc. until students guess who the reading is about.
- Have students give you different information they know about him.
- Provide feedback

**15 minutes**

**Activity 4 (The crazy professor reading game)**

- It is time to read the whole text. For this, the teacher will read one paragraph of the text to exemplify the activity. The teacher will read orally with hysterical enthusiasm. Then another student will be chosen to read with the same enthusiasm or assign a feeling such as anger, sadness, etc, and the student has to read the paragraph expressing that feeling.

**2. Stephen Hawking**

I always thought that Stephen Hawking would outlive me. I broke into tears when I heard on Wednesday that he had not. He died at his home in Cambridge, England, at 76, after more than half a century of living with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. When a man is given three years to live at 21, and he dies 55 years later, it shouldn't come as a shock. But though I'm 15 years younger than Stephen was, and he had been gravely ill for years, if you knew him you couldn't help thinking that he would always be around, that his life force was inexhaustible, that he would always have another miracle to pull off.

The scientific community rightly makes much of one of his miracles, a discovery he made in 1974 of something now known as Hawking radiation: the phenomenon in

which black holes — so named because nothing can escape them — actually allow radiation to get out.

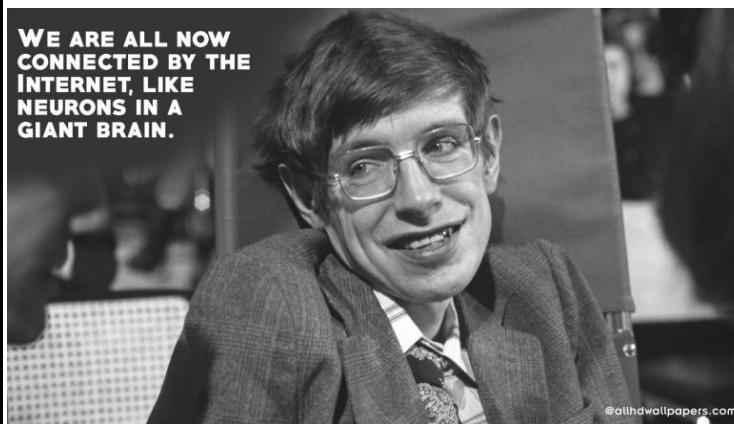
In popular culture Stephen was another kind of miracle: a floating brain, a disembodied intellect that fit snugly into the stereotype of the genius scientist.

But to me Stephen was also the everyday miracle of an ordinary embodied human — albeit one who had to battle in heroic ways within the confines of his particular shell.

What you don't often hear about Stephen is that he loved a good curry, but not if it was spicy. That he considered himself allergic to gluten, but that he wouldn't notice when his caregivers occasionally let some slip through. That he ate bananas mashed with kiwi every day. That he had to eat all his food mashed or chopped, and had to be spoon-fed. And that he never let this embarrass him, even when he ate in the finest restaurants.

I began collaborating with Stephen in the early 2000s, not long after I had published my first book. He contacted me to ask if I'd consider working with him on a book — the first of two we would write together. Though I was also a physicist, and had had the good fortune to work alongside other geniuses of the field like Richard Feynman, I was no less awe-struck by the chance to get to know Stephen.

Soon we were collaborating, literally elbow-to-elbow, many hours each day, for days on end. We would talk and debate about physics, and about how best to write about it. But I was also helping to dab his face dry, adjust his glasses, carry him to the couch. And then we'd get back to arguing. With time, our intellectual connection was deepened by that physical intimacy, and we grew close.



Since Stephen couldn't speak, he communicated through his computer. Composing a sentence was like playing a video game — the cursor would move on the screen, and he would have to capture the letter or word he wanted by pressing on a mouse with his thumb, or, in his

later years, moving his cheek to activate a motion sensor in his glasses. When he was done, he would click an icon and his famous computer voice would read what he had typed out.

Stephen could compose his sentences at a rate of only about six words a minute. At first I would sit impatiently, daydreaming on and off as I waited for him to finish his composition. But then one day I was looking over his shoulder at his computer

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|                              | <p>screen, where the sentence he was constructing was visible, and I started thinking about his evolving reply. By the time he had completed it, I had had several minutes to ponder the ideas he was expressing.</p> <p>This was a great help. It allowed me to more profoundly consider his remarks, and it enabled my own ideas, and my reactions to his, to percolate as they never could have in an ordinary conversation.</p> <p>When I argued a point of physics with Stephen, I always lost. I would scribble equations on a pad or a whiteboard, trying to sway him, but when I was done, I would find that the answer was the one he had already worked out in his head.</p> <p>He was no less certain in his ideas about how to write our books, though when we disagreed on those matters, there was no right or wrong answer, only preference. And so we might argue at length — on one occasion we did so for two hours — over a single sentence.</p> <p>There was an important difference between us here. Making my arguments took little effort. To oppose my ideas, Stephen had to struggle to type every letter of every word. Yet it was I, not he, who ceded points out of exhaustion. Once, during a particularly heated discussion, I waited several minutes for him to respond, and then, when his response finally came, it was a joke. Even when contemplating the cosmic, he had a keen sense of the cosmic.</p> <p>Stephen’s expertise was gravitation, the weakest of the four fundamental forces of the universe. Yet Stephen himself was a strong force. When, as a student, he started his work on black holes, most scientists thought it was a dead-end field. His doctors made a similar assessment regarding his prospects in life.</p> <p>Proving people wrong turned out to be his strength — and his gift to all of us.</p> |
| <p><b>10<br/>minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 5 (Assessment)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to work in pairs and discuss the reasons why they think Stephen Hawking did not give up despite his disease, and what they think they would do if they go through a disease like his.</li> <li>• Have some pairs share what they discussed.</li> </ul>   |

## LESSON PLAN No. 3

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 2020**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

- infer what a text is about by readings only some phrases found on the text
- read efficiently a text according to pronunciation, intonation, fluency and punctuation
- express opinions about a text efficiently

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

**Time 5  
minutes**

**Activity 1**

1. Give students a piece of paper with a specific country from the world, and ask them to stand up and look for the other students who have the same country to form each group. (The groups do not have to be too big.)
2. Give each group a worksheet containing a word search with words found on the text.
3. Ask students to look for the synonym of the words on the word search. Tell them that they have only 2 minutes.
4. Ask students for their answers randomly.
5. Provide feedback and the correct answers.

| <b>Word</b>  | <b>Synonym</b> |
|--------------|----------------|
| Unthinkable  | Unbelievable   |
| Dangling     | Hanging        |
| Nightmare    | Dream          |
| Woe          | Misery         |
| Charitable   | Humanitarian   |
| Pursue       | Seek           |
| Far-flung    | Distant        |
| Ward off     | Restrict       |
| Exhilarating | Exciting       |
| Scary        | Horrorifying   |



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| <p><b>Time 10 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the same groups, ask students to read the following phrases and have them discuss them.</li> <li>2. After that, select one person from each group to summarize in 45 seconds what they discussed.</li> <li>3. Ask random students what they think the text will be about based on the phrases they just read and discussed.</li> </ol> <p><b>Phrases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“[If I had] I’m not sure I’d be able to live with the nightmares or ever go back in the water.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“So to fight that fear I would just get in the water and focus on catching the waves.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“One of the most beautiful things that came from the accident is how it has allowed me to see that I can overcome difficult things.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“There aren’t that many great role models for young girls.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“No two days on the water are ever the same.”</i></li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Time 10 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 3</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using the same groups you formed with the countries, have one group at a time to read a paragraph of the text (divide the text into smaller parts). In this activity the whole group has to read the text at the same time, focusing on intonation, pronunciation, fluency, and punctuation. Remember students that reading is not just about pronouncing words.</li> <li>2. If the group makes a mistake or does not read at the same time, the group has to start over.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BETHANY HAMILTON</b></p> <p>Bethany Hamilton first tried to surf at age 5. She could catch a wave and stand up on the board without help by age 7, and entered — and won — her first competition the following year. Before long, the Hawaii native had snagged her own sponsor (Rip outfitter) and was being home-schooled to accommodate her training schedule. She was barely a teenager, yet her dream of becoming a pro surfer seemed not just possible but almost inevitable. Then, on Halloween morning 2003, the unthinkable happened. The day started like any other. At 5 a.m., the 13-year-old rolled out of bed to hit the beach. The wave report for that morning was pretty uninspiring — no good surf spotted around the island. But Hamilton wanted to go anyway, so her mom dropped her off at one of her usual spots. She joined a group of fellow surfers and they all paddled out to wait for a few good waves. As Hamilton rested on her board, a tiger shark came out of nowhere and bit off her left arm, which had been dangling in the water. “I never saw the shark closing in on me,” says Hamilton. “[If I had] I’m not</p> |

sure I'd be able to live with the nightmares or ever go back in the water." She also believes that not seeing the shark coming helped her remain calm immediately after the bite — a reaction that probably saved her life. As it was, she lost over 60 percent of her blood volume during the attack. Had she thrashed and panicked, she would likely have lost even more blood and died. The next several days were a blur of surgeries, but as time passed and she began to heal, her anxiety shot up. "I began to worry about the future: Will I have to forget about surfing forever? What am I going to do?" says Hamilton, now 23. She also fretted about being defined by the attack for the rest of her life. She didn't want people to pity her or think of her as a person whose life had been ruined. So within a week she made two promises to herself. She would never wallow or walk around moaning "Woe is me," and she would get back on her surfboard. She kept that second promise just 26 days after the accident. "When I first returned to surfing, I was very afraid of sharks," says Hamilton. "The attack that happened to me was such a rare occurrence, but I still thought about it. So to fight that fear I would just get in the water and focus on catching the waves. I refused to dwell on 'what-ifs.'" The physical reality of surfing with only one arm was also an adjustment. "I had really frustrating days," says Hamilton. "Some days I would go into the water and come out of the water crying, but I just kept at it." Her determination paid off. By the following year, she was competing in national competitions, and within five years she was a staple on the professional surfing circuit. Today she is ranked 48th among female surfers worldwide with the Association of Surfing Professionals. While the accident wasn't something she would have wished for, she has embraced it as part of her life — and discovered many unexpected silver linings. "One of the most beautiful things that came from the accident is how it has allowed me to see that I can overcome difficult things," says Hamilton. "It taught me that I have the ability to overcome my fear in scary situations." She also finds joy in being an example for other young amputees — and for girls in general. "There aren't that many great role models for young girls," says the creator of the charitable organization Friends of Bethany, a nonprofit that donates money to child amputees around the world. "It's really special to be a role model for girls who are going through so much — hormones, body changes, adjusting to how they look in the mirror — no matter what has happened to them." Hamilton continues to surf daily and she pursues other far-flung adventures. In March, she competed in the Gazelle Rally, a women-only car race (without GPS, phones or other modern tech) across Morocco to raise awareness for women living with a hereditary risk of cancer. She has also started public speaking, a task known to induce anxiety. Does anything scare her? "Yes," she laughs. "I'm terrified of spiders." She also worries about losing the capacity to surf. "To lose that ability would be devastating," says Hamilton. To ward off that anxiety, she focuses on the present moment — a task that, coincidentally, surfing helps facilitate. You have to be in the here and now to stay up on a surfboard, Hamilton explains. And if you zone out, you miss one of the sport's most exhilarating side effects — variety. "No two days on the water are ever the same," Hamilton says. "That is part of what makes it so addictive."



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| <p><b>15<br/>minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 4</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Individually, ask students to write a 5 or more line paragraph answering the following question:<br/><b>What do you think about Bethany Hamilton’s attitude toward her accident and how that changed her life?</b></li><li>2. Have 1 student start giving his or her answer but without reading what he or she wrote. Then ask another student what he or she thinks about that answer and share his or her own.</li><li>3. Provide feedback.</li></ol> |
| <p><b>10<br/>minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 5 (Assessment)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Assess if students have read and analyzed the text. Choose some students randomly to give a one-minute speech answering the following question:<br/><b>What would you have done if you had faced this situation?</b></li><li>2. Provide feedback.</li></ol>  |

## LESSON PLAN No. 4

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 2020**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

- Talk about how music can influence people's feelings.
- Know how the brain works while listening to music.

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

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|------------------------|---|
| <b>Time 15 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1 Warm-up: (The goals ball)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask each student to write 2 or 3 goals in a sheet of paper.</li><li>• After all students have written their goals, make a ball using all the sheets of paper.</li><li>• Clap while the students are passing the paper ball, and when you stop clapping, the person who has the ball has to take a sheet of paper and read out loud the goals written in it.</li><li>• After reading the goals, this student has to motivate that person to keep following his/her dreams.</li></ul> |
| <b>Time 15 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 (The musical preference)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have students work in pairs, and have them discuss about music. In this case, students have to talk about the song they like the most, and explain what that song makes them feel.</li><li>• Each student has to be open hearted, and explain why that song is special, what does it make them feel, and if it provokes a specific mood or feeling when they listen to it.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 3 (The scan)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide students with a copy of the article, and give them only 10 minutes to scan it, and try to understand the message the article conveys</li></ul>   |

**Time 20  
minutes**

**Activity 4 (The reading Chorus)**

- The teacher can divide the class into 2 groups to develop this task.
- Each group of students will read a paragraph out loud one after another one till the reading is complete. After this each group has to read it as a chorus.

The article "The science behind music" was retrieved from reading and conversation II Raquel Sosa articles list.

**The Science behind Music:**

Weird brain reactions explained as it happens, music isn't "magic" after all. Indeed, whether it's a compulsion to dance or a song cementing itself in your brain, humanity's love of music can be explained with some basic science.

1. Why do you get the chills from a certain part of a song?

There's a name for the sudden burst of cold that you may experience during a given song — frisson — and it stems from the nerve fibers that connect the brain's auditory cortex (the part of the brain that processes sound) to the anterior insular cortex (the part of the brain that processes emotion). If you experience frisson, as around half to two-thirds of the population does, it means that the connection between those two cortexes is strong. So just what is it that triggers the chills?

It all has to do with a change in stimuli. When we listen to music, our brains continually process melodies and predict the reoccurrence of a repetitive musical phrase. When something unexpected (but pleasing) happens in a given song, these cortexes react. For some, this response may lead to a physical-emotional sensation: chills.

2. Why can't you get that song out of your head?

Repetition is a cornerstone of pop music, and its presence is only growing: Indeed, data show that music has only become more repetitive over the last 55 years. Of course, music producers wouldn't resort to repetition unless there was a strong demand for it. Which begs the question: Why do our brains love repetition so much?

According to the literature on the matter, it all has to do with something called the "exposure effect." This premise holds that your brain experiences positive psychological effects when it encounters something it already knows, such as a repeated melody, beat, or chorus.

The effect is so powerful that, in terms of activating our brains' reward centers, repetition even trumps our personal musical preferences. And sometimes, for that reason, a repetitive song — and one that you don't even like— will stick around in your brain for longer than you'd want.

Enter the earworm, which is the name given to a repetitive snippet of music that gets stuck in your head. And as pop music becomes more and more repetitive, there will be more and more earworms out in the world.

### 3. Why songs lose their "magic"

As it turns out, there is familiarity, which the brain likes, and then there's over-familiarity, which the brain does not like. Indeed, recent research shows that our brains have a threshold when it comes to responding positively to familiarity. After that point has been reached, the song's familiar aspects will no longer trigger the brain's reward centers, and the song becomes "dull." The complexity of the music also comes into play in terms of mapping out the limits of the threshold. Generally speaking, it's easier for the brain to become tired of a simple song than it is for the brain to become tired of a song that offers a little more to chew on.

### 4. How we develop certain tastes in music

One recent experiment aimed to find out. It worked like this: Researchers used test subjects with no formal music training and asked them to rate piano performances. The subjects were told which pieces were played by world-famous pianists (high

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|-------------------------------|--|
|                               | <p>value), and which were played by conservatory students (low value). The researchers constantly switched the labels throughout the experiment, telling listeners that they were hearing the performance of a world-famous pianist when they were actually listening to a student, and vice versa.</p> <p>The results showed that the subjects did not intrinsically recognize or favor the performances of professionals; rather, they favored only the music that they thought was being played by professionals. In other words, individual opinions on music are shaped at least as much by individual perceptions of its value as they are by our actual experience of the music itself.</p> <p>5. Why does music give us an urge to dance Recent neurological testing has demonstrated that our brains interpret danceable rhythms in specific ways?</p> <p>In the study, researchers led by Michael Thaut at the Center for Biomedical Research in Music at Colorado State University found that pattern, meter, and tempo processing tasks are managed by the “right, or bilateral, areas of frontal, cingulate, parietal, prefrontal, temporal and cerebellar cortices,” while interpreting tempo alone “engaged mechanisms subserving somatosensory and premotor information.”</p> <p>1. In plain English, this means that a tune with an obvious “groove” actually pulls the trigger on our motor system. At the same time, our cerebellum is contributing to the coordination, precision, and timing required to dance. Blood is even directed toward our legs, which gets our toes tapping. Coordinated movements please our brain’s reward centers, so coupling that with a heavy beat is like a double whammy on the brain.</p> <p>— And thus creates a desire to dance that’s pretty hard to deny.side effects — variety.</p> |
| <p><b>Time 20 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 5 ( A weird discussion)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the students work in pairs one last time, but this time students have to work with the person whom they have spoken less during the entire semester. After students are in pairs, have them read one last time each</li> </ul>  |

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|                        | <p>point, and then they have to share any experience they have experienced similar to the ideas stated in the article. Each experience counts, and after both students have shared their opinions, they can switch and work with somebody else.</p>   |
| <b>Time 20 minutes</b> | <p><b>Activity 6 (Assessment)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to go to their seats, and give 2 minutes to quickly read the article. After 2 minutes, ask students open questions about the chemical reactions caused by music. There will not be wrong answers</li></ul> |



## LESSON PLAN No. 5

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 20**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

Infer the main idea of the text from reading specific ideas of it.

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

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| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1 (Guessing the main idea)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide students a series of key ideas from the text.</li><li>• Make couples and let them discuss for 3 minutes what they think the reading is going to be about.</li><li>• Ask them to share their ideas with the whole class.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Time 15 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 (Gap-fill Transcript Dictation Reading )</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to work in groups and talk about the things they are grateful for and the problems they are dealing with. (Don't ask them to talk about personal problems, ask them to talk about the university and all the things they have to do)</li><li>• Ask some students to share what they talked about and check if they complain more and talk about the things they are grateful for less.</li><li>• Now ask, Why do you think is easier to talk about the problems than the things we are grateful for?</li><li>• Listen to some students and provide feedback.</li></ul> |
| <b>Time 20 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 3 (Reading time)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to continue working in groups and take turns to read the text out loud. Have them take out the new vocabulary and to provide a meaning of the word based on the context.</li></ul> <p><b>Shut up and Be Grateful</b><br/>The fact that you're reading this sentence means that you are richer and more educated than 99.5% of people in human history. It means you have almost immediate access to over half of all of the information and data ever created by</p>   |

the human race. It means you have the ability to educate yourself on subjects people previously spent their entire lifetimes to learn.

Hegel said that history is the process of freedom realizing itself. Assuming you're in the western world, then you currently live in the most free and tolerant society that has ever existed. There is less racism and sexism than at any other time in history. The world has more economic mobility than ever and traveling across borders is easier now than ever.

You may be unhappy with your love life, but just a few generations ago, casual dating was an impossibility, contraception was a rarity, and you could be disowned by your family for fooling around with the wrong person. A few generations before that, you likely never went to school with someone of the opposite gender and your parents chose who you married. In some countries and regions, you could have been killed for sleeping with or even flirting with the wrong person.

Your family may frustrate you, but over 1/3 of the world's population has only one parent and 143 million children are growing up with no parents at all. If you're in college or you went to college, you are part of the lucky 7% worldwide elite. You're unlikely to ever live at a subsistence level like almost 60% of the population and you surely won't ever be starving like almost 25% of the world population.

But you've heard stuff like this before. And it doesn't actually help, right? Yeah, you're lucky, but you still struggle with your confidence, you still feel socially anxious, you still suffer from feelings of inadequacy, you still stress about money/work/debt/family/friends. Your love life is still a mess. Sure, you're eating well and you have a nice TV and car and you can do long division and code in PHP, but your life isn't exactly peachy either.

For decades, research has tied gratefulness and appreciation to happiness. People who are happier tend to be more grateful and appreciative for what they have.

But what they've also found is that it also works the other way around: consciously practicing gratitude makes one happier. It makes one appreciate what one has and helps one to remain in the present moment. Practicing gratitude increases accountability which directly leads to higher self-esteem and happiness. Not to mention it makes one more pleasant to be around and creates a more magnetic personality.

Your parents may be smothering and obnoxious, but they do it because they care about you and it's the only way they know how to show it. Be grateful you have people who love you, even if they don't show it in the way you wish they did. Use it as an opportunity to help them, communicate with them, develop a better relationship with them.

You may be overweight, but at least you've enjoyed plenty of good food and have the knowledge and capability to get thin and look great. Use it as an opportunity to set goals and improve yourself.

You may be single and lonely, but at least you live in a society which accepts open communication between men and women, is liberal about dating practices, and at least you have the means to get out there and improve your situation.

You may not be the person you want, but at least you have the self-awareness and drive to notice what you're unhappy with and the desire to do something about it. You are part of the first generation in human history that has truly discovered we are always capable of improving our lives — socially, emotionally, professionally and financially. In the past, people assumed if they were born into it, they were screwed.

You've been blessed. Even if you rarely realize it. All of us here have.

And you'll keep forgetting this unless you remind yourself. Remind yourself regularly. Choose to be grateful.

Remember how it could be worse, it could always be worse.

The human mind naturally overemphasizes the negative. Psychologists have found that the loss of something is two to four times more painful than the joy of gaining the same thing. It's an unfortunate mechanism that has kept our species alive and thriving but also keeps many of us in a constant state of irritation and stress.

It's why negative news gets reported and spread so much more readily. It's why we can't turn away from a car accident or two people fighting. It's why it's so much more tempting to relate to others through complaining and gossip rather than through gratitude. It's easier.

This isn't to say one must ignore what's wrong or broken with the world. I'm the last one to pretend everything is unicorns and rainbows. It's just to say that when things seem shitty, don't forget what's good, true and beautiful.

Remember to shut up and be grateful.

Gratitude is the skill of happiness. It's the cure for an emotional vampire. And it is indeed a skill. It requires practice and effort and habit. But it's a skill anyone can learn and anyone can do. And you can start it today, right now.

Do it every morning when you wake up, while you brush your teeth, look in the mirror and think of five things you're grateful for. Pick someone and tell them this week that you're grateful for them or for something they did.

Chances are it will make you feel better than them. Chances are you'll feel far more comfortable around them and your relationships will begin to improve.

Source:

Taken and adapted from:

<https://jamesclear.com/grit>

<https://markmanson.net/shut-up-and-be-grateful>

<https://markmanson.net/how-to-grow-from-your-pain>

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| <b>Time 25 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 4 (Movie time)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Make groups of 5 and ask them to create a 5 minute movie based on what they read on the text. They can also take the movie “In pursuit of happiness” with Will Smith.</li><li>- Then have some groups perform their short movies and explain why they chose to make it in that way or what they wanted to express.</li><li>- Provide feedback</li></ul>  |
| <b>Time 25 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 5 (Assessment)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ask students to create a short presentation about what you are grateful for now that you were not grateful for before. Give them paper and markers to present their work using drawings or mind maps.</li><li>- Play Simon says and ask students to show you different things to select the ones who will participate. (The last person to show you what you asked is your volunteer.</li><li>- Provide feedback</li></ul> |

## LESSON PLAN No. 7

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 2020**



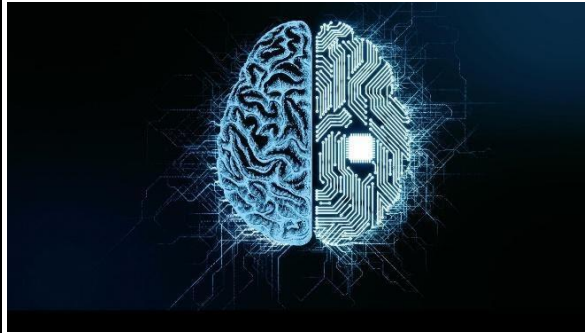
**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

Infer the main idea of the text from reading specific ideas of it.

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

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| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1 (Guessing the main idea)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide students a series of key ideas from the text.</li><li>• Make couples and let them discuss for 3 minutes what they think the reading is going to be about.</li><li>• Ask them to share their ideas with the whole class.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Time 15 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 (Gap-fill Transcript Dictation Reading )</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide students with a copy of the text, with gaps. Take out verbs, adjectives or nouns.</li><li>• Once each student has his copy, start reading the text. They should pay careful attention to hear the missing words in the text and write them down.</li><li>• Once finished, get learners to check if they have spelled the words correctly by discussing (not showing!) with their neighbors.</li><li>• Finally, provide missing words and let them give their own meaning of the words.</li><li>• Provide feedback if necessary.</li></ul> |
| <b>Time 20 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 3 (Reading time) (three steps reading)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First step: Give students 5 minutes to read this text individually</li><li>• Second step: give students 2 minutes to skim and scan the text to find new vocabulary</li><li>• Ask them for the new vocabulary and let them give you an idea of what they think each word means, and after each word provides the correct meaning, give synonyms or antonyms if necessary.</li><li>• Third step: now that they know the meaning of all the words, ask them to read them the last time.</li><li>•</li></ul>  |

## Digital Heaven



If you had the opportunity to live forever, would you take it? The obstacles to keeping your body alive indefinitely still seem insurmountable, but some scientists think there is another possibility opened up by digital technology: creating a digital copy of yourself and keeping that "alive" online long after your physical

body has ceased to function.

In effect, the proposal is to clone a person electronically. Unlike the familiar physical clones - offspring that have identical features as their parents, but that are completely separate organisms with a separate conscious life - your electronic clone would believe itself to be you.

How might this be possible? The first step would be to map the brain.

How? One plan relies on the development of nanotechnology. Ray Kurzweil

- One of the prophets of artificial intelligence - predicts that within two or three decades we will have nanotransmitters that can be injected into the bloodstream. In the capillaries of the brain, they would line up alongside the neurons and detect the details of the cerebral electronic activity. They would be able to transmit that information to a receiver inside a special helmet or cap, so there would be no need for any wires protruding from the scalp.

As a further step, Ray Kurzweil also envisages the nanotransmitters being able to connect you to a world of virtual reality on the internet, similar to what was depicted in the film 'Matrix'. With the nanotransmitters in place, by thought alone, you could log on to the internet and instead of the pictures coming up on your screen they would play inside your mind. Rather than send your friends e-mails you would agree to meet up on some virtual tropical beach.

For Ray this would be, quite literally, heaven. Once you upload the brain onto the internet and log onto that virtual world the body can be left to rot while your virtual self carries on playing Counter Strike forever. (One snag: to exist on the net you will have to have your neural network parked on the computer of a web hosting company. These companies want real money in real bank accounts every year or they will wipe your bit of the hard disc and sell the space to someone else. With your body six feet underground how will you pay? Here the analogy with heaven really breaks down. God keeps heaven going for free, but the web is something you have to pay for.

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|                               | <p>Source:<br/> Fullspate (nd.) Digital heaven, retrieved on November 15<sup>th</sup> 2,020 from:<br/> <a href="https://www.fullspate.digitalcounterrevolution.co.uk/english-articles-advanced/digital-heaven.html">https://www.fullspate.digitalcounterrevolution.co.uk/english-articles-advanced/digital-heaven.html</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Time 25 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 4 (discussion time)</b></p> <p>Ask students to discuss in couple the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you had the opportunity to live forever, would you take it? Why?</li> <li>• Do you think that the idea of Ray Kurzweil could be possible? How?</li> <li>• Would you pay for this service? How much?</li> <li>• How would your perfect scenario be? Describe it.</li> </ul> <p>Then, ask them to change a couple and share their ideas again.</p>  |
| <p><b>Time 25 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 5 (Assessment)</b></p> <p>Ask students to create a mini story using at least 3 of the new words that they have learned from the reading.</p> <p>Give them 5 minutes to think (not write) the story, if the time is not enough ask them to tell an impromptu story.</p> <p>Select the participants randomly. Choose people that have not participated or have not been involved in the previous activities. After each participation, ask the rest of the students if the words of the story were well used in context.</p> <p>Provide your own feedback after each student´s participation.</p> |

## LESSON PLAN No. 8

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**SUBJECT: READING AND CONVERSATION II**



### Objectives:

- By engaging in different communicative tasks, swbat:
- Identify main ideas and important information in a text efficiently.
- Summarize readings creatively.

### Materials: worksheets, markers, eraser, dice

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| <b>Time 20 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1 (Battle it out in Vocabulary)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Write the vocabulary in pieces of papers and put it in a bag or box.</li><li>2. Ask students to form groups of 5, and ask them to select a representative.</li><li>3. Give each group the worksheet with the vocabulary (the square above) to work on the activity (give the groups a minute for them to check the vocabulary).</li><li>4. Select one representative and ask him/her to take one piece of paper. Then ask him/her to give it to you. Say the word aloud, and tell students that as soon as you read the word, they will start filling the line of the word that has been read.</li><li>5. Give students 1 minute for them to fill the spaces for the word. If one group finishes before the time, they have to say “done”, and they have to start reading their answers. If all the answers are correct, they will win the points of the word. If something is wrong, another group will have the opportunity to win the point.</li><li>6. At the end, the group that accumulates more points will win the game.</li></ol> |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 (Stimuli discussion)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Divide the class in two groups; however, students will have to work alone in this activity.</li><li>2. Tell one of the groups to write in a piece of paper four ideas about why technology is good for people, and tell the other group to write another four ideas about why technology is bad for people.</li><li>3. Give students 5 minutes to do so, and then ask them to make the piece of paper into a ball.</li><li>4. Later, ask students to stand up and be face to face with the other group, and then ask them to throw the ball up.</li></ol>   |



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|                               | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. After, ask students to take a ball from the floor and select one of the students to read the ideas the others have written on that piece of paper, and ask him/her if he agrees or disagrees with the ideas written on the paper.</li> <li>6. Then give other students the opportunity to participate.</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>Time 10 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 3 (Underline Understanding)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell students to scan the text and underline all the unfamiliar words they find in the text.</li> <li>2. Put students into six groups to work together.</li> <li>3. Each student in the group should make a list of his or her own unfamiliar words, and any other words that are unfamiliar to the group members.</li> <li>4. Then ask students to compare the words that each of them underlined and work together to come up with possible meanings of the unfamiliar words according to the context in which the words are.</li> <li>5. Ask students not to use their cell phones or dictionaries to write the meanings of the words.</li> <li>6. Give students from 5 to 7 minutes to do so</li> <li>7. Later, ask students to share the vocabulary they found, group by group.</li> <li>8. Provide feedback.</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>Time 15 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 4 (Dice paragraphs)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask students to form six groups in the class and then number them from 1 to 6 (see the quantity of students in the classroom to have equal groups).</li> <li>2. When all the groups are formed, throw the dice the first time for the group to read the first paragraph.</li> <li>3. Ask the whole group to read at the same time, and if the students are not synchronized in their reading or if they make mistakes, they have to start over.</li> <li>4. When the group finishes, throw the dice once again to see what group continues.</li> <li>5. Continue until the whole text is read.</li> <li>6. Provide feedback.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Smartphones Are the New Cigarettes</b></p> <p>I go to this boot camp-style class sometimes at a gym near my apartment. It's one of those classes where a coach stands there and yells at you to do more pushups and squats until you think you're going to puke. Then you go home and struggle to sit on a toilet for the next three days. I just love it.</p> |

Today, as happens many mornings, a couple of people, in between exercises, ran over to the wall to pick up their phones and check... well, I don't know what they could have been checking. Email? Instagram? Snapchatting their sweat beads so everyone could see? I don't know. And the coach **got pissed, yelled at** them to put their phones away, and we all stood around **awkwardly**. This proceeded to happen two or three times in the class, as it does in pretty much every class, and for whatever reason, today I decided to speak my mind to the woman glued to her phone while the rest of us were working out: "Is there really nothing in your life that can't wait 30 minutes? Or are you curing cancer or something?"

Note to readers: this is a bad way to make friends.

I was pissed. I felt like I was in the right that I was saying what pretty much everyone else in the room was silently thinking.

Later that day, once we'd all gone home, while painfully sitting on a toilet seat, I was going over the incident in my head. And I asked myself, "Why does that bother me so much? Why do phones, in general, seem to bug me so much? Why does it bother me when my wife pulls out her phone when we're walking down the street together? Why do I fervently hate people who hold up their phones and record half a concert? What's the deal?" Am I the **screwed up** one here? I know I'm not though. We all have this weird love/hate relationship with our phones these days. Every year, we become more **glued** to them than ever before. Yet, every year, we seem to resent that we're glued to them. Why is that? If you think about it, our attention is the only thing we truly own in our lives. Our possessions can go away. Our bodies can be compromised. Our relationships can fall apart. Even our memories and intellectual capacity **fade away**. But the simple ability to choose what to focus on — that will always be ours.

Unfortunately, with today's technology, our attention is being pulled in more directions than ever before, which makes this optioning of our own attention more difficult — and more important — than ever before. To be happy and healthy, we need to feel as though we are in control of ourselves and we are utilizing our abilities and talents effectively. To do that, we must be in control of our attention. And I think this is why the cell phone thing at the gym pissed me off. Those workouts are hard. They require me to focus and exert not only physical discipline but mental discipline as well. And to stop every 10 minutes because somebody needs to email their boss or text their boyfriend **yanks me out** of that. And worse, it yanks me out against my will. And with the explosion in smart devices and internet available pretty much everywhere, attention pollution is infiltrating our daily lives more and more without us realizing it. It's why we get annoyed at dinner when someone starts texting in front of us. It's why we get pissed off when someone pulls their phone out in a movie theater. It's why we become irritated when someone is checking their email instead of watching the ballgame. Their inability to focus interferes with our (already-fragile) ability to focus.

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|                               | <p>The same way second-hand smoke harms the lungs of people around the smoker, smartphones harm the attention and focus of people around the smartphone user. It <b>hijacks</b> our senses. It forces us to pause our conversations and redouble our thoughts unnecessarily. It causes us to lose our train of thought and forget that important point we were constructing in our head. It erodes at our ability to connect and simply be present with one another, destroying intimacy in the process. But the smoking comparison doesn't end there. There's evidence that suggests that we are doing long-term harm to our memories and attention spans. The same way smoking cigarettes damages our long-term health in the name of a series of short-term <b>bursts</b> of highs, the dopamine kicks we get from our phones are harming our brain's ability to function over the long-term, all in the name of getting a bunch of likes on that really cool new photo of our food we just took.</p> <p>Now, it may sound like I'm overreacting here. Like I had a bad gym session and am taking it out on hundreds of thousands of readers on the internet. I've noticed friends who can no longer sit through entire movies (or even episodes of a TV show) without <b>pulling out</b> their phones multiple times in the middle of it. People who can't make it through a meal without putting the phone next to their plate. It's happening everywhere, and it's therefore becoming the social norm. The eroded attention is becoming the normal, socially acceptable attention, and we are all paying for it.</p> <p>Source:</p> <p>Manson, M. (nd) Smartphones Are the New Cigarettes. Retrieved on December 2nd, 2020 from <a href="https://getpocket.com/explore/item/smartphones-are-the-new-cigarettes">https://getpocket.com/explore/item/smartphones-are-the-new-cigarettes</a></p> |
| <p><b>Time 20 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 5 (Summarize and retell)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask students to remain in the same groups and ask them to select a representative.</li> <li>2. Ask them to summarize the story they read in a 10 to 15 line paragraph and to write it as TV news.</li> <li>3. Tell students that they are going to present their news as if they were in a news TV show, so ask them to assign a name to their show.</li> <li>4. Give students 15 minutes to write the short story and ask them to be creative, and to use the vocabulary they learned during the class.</li> <li>5. Later, ask all the representatives to stand up and go to the front of the class to present their news as if they were in a news TV show.</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>Time 25 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 6 (Assessment)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask students to remain in the same groups and ask them to skim and scan for specific information in the text quickly.</li> </ol>  |

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|  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Later, let students work for 10 to 15 minutes to write 10 tricky questions in a separate sheet of paper about the text in silence for the other groups not to listen to them. Tell students to leave space for answering the questions.</li><li>3. Then, ask students to keep all the things they have on their desks and to take a pen or a pencil.</li><li>4. Ask students to pass the questionnaire to other groups. Ask students not to turn the page until all the groups have a questionnaire.</li><li>5. When all the groups have a questionnaire, tell them to turn it and start answering.</li><li>6. Let students work for 5 to 10 minutes to answer the questions, and ask them to write the name of one member of the group in the questionnaire.</li><li>7. Later, ask students to give back the questionnaire to the corresponding group, and ask them to check it. Give students a couple of minutes to do so.</li><li>8. Finally, ask students to give the results to you. The group that obtains the higher grade wins the game.</li></ol> |
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## LESSON PLAN No. 9

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 2021**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

\*Understand how some of the most important supermarkets food wastage and plastic pollution are affecting the environment.

\*Provide possible alternatives to reverse food wastage and plastic pollution for supermarkets.

- Technique applied: Inferring

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets, sheets of paper, whiteboard, etc.

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| <b>Time 5 minutes</b>  | <p><b>Activity 1 (Guess What)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the students pictures related to the article they are to read, and have them make predictions of what the reading and its main points will be about.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <p><b>Activity 2 (The not blinking eye)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• -Have students work in pairs, and provide them with the article "Sustainable Supermarkets". Each student has to take a quick look at the article, and gather as many main ideas as possible in 2 minutes; however, during those 2 minutes, none of the students can blink. If one of the students blinks during those 2 minutes, he cannot continue scanning main ideas (each student has 2 attempts).</li> <li>• After the 2 minutes are gone, each student has to explain how the facts stated in the article are affecting the environment.</li> </ul> <p>The article "Sustainable supermarkets" was retrieved from British Council 2019 on November 2020.</p>   |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <p><b>Activity 4 ("Sustainable Supermarkets")</b></p> <p>Working in the same pairs, have students read the following article and write down the problematics from the article that affect our planet:</p> <p>Many of the major supermarket chains have come under fire with accusations of various unethical acts over the past decade. They've wasted tonnes of food, they've underpaid their suppliers and they've contributed to excessive plastic waste in their packaging, which has had its impact on our environment.</p> <p>But supermarkets and grocers are starting to sit up and take notice. In response to growing consumer backlash against the huge amounts of plastic waste generated by plastic packaging, some of the largest UK supermarkets have signed up to a pact promising to transform packaging and cut plastic wastage. In a pledge to reuse, recycle or compost all plastic wastage by 2025, supermarkets are now beginning to</p> |

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|                               | <p>take some responsibility for the part they play in contributing to the damage to our environment, with one major supermarket announcing their plan to eliminate all plastic packaging in their own-brand products by 2023.</p> <p>In response to criticisms over food waste, some supermarkets are donating some of their food surplus. However, charities estimate that they are only accessing two per cent of supermarkets' total food surplus, so this hardly seems to be solving the problem. Some say that supermarkets are simply not doing enough. Most supermarkets operate under a veil of secrecy when asked for exact figures of food wastage, and without more transparency it is hard to come up with a systematic approach to avoiding waste and to redistributing surplus food.</p> <p>Some smaller companies are now taking matters into their own hands and offering consumers a greener, more environmentally friendly option. Shops like Berlin's Original Unverpakt and London's Bulk Market are plastic-free shops that have opened in recent years, encouraging customers to use their own containers or compostable bags. Online grocery Farmdrop eliminates the need for large warehouses and the risk of huge food surplus by delivering fresh produce from local farmers to its customers on a daily basis via electric cars, offering farmers the lion's share of the retail price.</p> <p>There is no doubt that we still have a long way to go in reducing food waste and plastic waste. But perhaps the major supermarkets might take inspiration from these smaller grocers and gradually move towards a more sustainable future for us all.</p> |
| <p><b>Time 15 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 5 (The story telling art gallery + Show &amp; tell)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Working in the same pairs, students have to elaborate a short list of drawings. These drawings have to narrate a short story exemplifying how supermarkets can reverse food wastage and plastic pollution. After each pair has finished, they have to exchange their stories with other pairs. None of the pairs can keep their own story. (The art gallery has to be 6 drawings maximum).</li> <li>-After all the pairs have exchanged their art galleries, the teacher can choose one pair randomly to explain what they understand about the art gallery they got. Each pair has to go to the front and will have only 2 minutes to explain the art gallery they got through the exchange. This compound activity can be splitted into two parts of 10 minutes for drawing and 10 minutes for showing &amp; telling.</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 6 (The Debate)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-After all participants have presented their "show and tell", have students work in groups of five (two students have to be in favor, two against and one moderator).</li> <li>- Once in groups, have students have short debates about the facts they read in the article and discuss providing arguments based on the information gathered from the reading.</li> <li>- Each pair (the pair in favor and the pair against) will have only five minutes to present and defend their arguments.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Time 10 minutes</b></p> |   |

## LESSON PLAN No. 10



**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
SUBJECT: READING AND CONVERSATION II**

### Objectives:

By engaging in different communicative tasks, swbat:

- Analyse a text by using the summarizing technique
- Transform a text by using the most important information into a different genre

**Materials: worksheets, markers, eraser**

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|------------------------|--|
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1: Warm-up</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ask students to think about their favorite movie, book, or any story they like.</li><li>2. Tell students to think of the main characters, the main conflict (problems or obstacles presented), and the resolution (how all the events conclude) and ask them to write in their notebooks some basic and simple ideas about it.</li><li>3. Ask some students to tell what they got, summarizing their book, movie, or story they thought about.</li></ol>   |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ask students what they know about summarizing</b></li><li>• <b>Later, explain students the technique</b></li></ul> <p><b>Reading technique: Summarizing</b></p> <p>The process of summarization requires the reader to determine what is important when reading and to condense the information in the readers own words (Adler, 2001). During the summarizing process, the students will be able to distinguish the main ideas from the supporting ideas. Distinguishing the related knowledge from the unrelated ones is another point in the summarizing process which will help the students' capacity to improve text comprehension. Summarizing is a strategy which helps the students to organize the ideas even in the long reading passages which are usually perceived as threat for the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write the questions on the board and have students take a look at them before going to the next activities.</li><li>• Tell students that they will need them for the following activities.</li></ul> |

**How to use summarizing**

These questions can help you make a good summary:

1. What are the main ideas?
2. What are the crucial details necessary for supporting the ideas?
3. What information is irrelevant or unnecessary?

**Time 15 minutes**

**Activity 2: Matching (5 minutes)**

- Ask students to form groups of 5 and give them a sheet of paper with the activity they will work on.
- Tell students that they will work on a matching activity and that they will have 2 minutes for solving it, so tell them that they have to do it as fast as they can.
- Tell students that they will look for the corresponding synonyms of the words.
- After the two minutes have passed, ask for volunteers or select some people randomly to listen to their answers.
- Provide feedback.

**MATCHING**

**Direction:** Match each word with the corresponding meaning

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Journal      | Illustration |
| Speculate    | Postulate    |
| Harsh        | Amazing      |
| Astonishing  | Discovery    |
| Startling    | Recharge     |
| Replenishing | Surprising   |
| Milestone    | Disagreeable |
| Sample       | Magazine     |

**Vocabulary**

**Journal:** a newspaper or *magazine* that deals with a particular subject or professional activity



**Speculate:** form a theory or conjecture about a subject without firm evidence; *postulate*

**Harsh:** unpleasantly rough or jarring to the senses; *disagreeable*

**Astonishing:** extremely surprising or impressive; *amazing*

**Startling:** very *surprising*, astonishing, or remarkable

**Replenishing:** fill (something) up again; *recharge*

**Milestones:** A **milestone** is a significant event in your life. Often a **milestone** marks the start of a new chapter (*discovery*).

**Samples:** a small part or quantity intended to show what the whole is like; *illustration*

### Activity 3: Reading Time (10 minutes)

1. Provide students with a photocopy of the text (the vocabulary and the corresponding meaning should be included after the text so that students can now look for it every time they need it.)
2. Read the first paragraph of the text.
3. Ask students to read in chorus (aloud) the second paragraph of the reading
4. Later, ask all the boys to read aloud the third paragraph while the others read silently, and then girls will go over the fourth one.
5. Then repeat the process until all the reading is completely read.
6. Provide feedback

### Life on Mars

A new study published in the **journal** *Science* shows definitive evidence of organic matter on the surface of Mars. The data was collected by NASA's nuclear-powered rover Curiosity. It confirms earlier findings that the Red Planet once contained carbon-based compounds. These compounds – also called organic molecules – are essential ingredients for life as scientists understand it.

The organic molecules were found in Mars's Gale Crater, a large area that may have been a watery lake over three billion years ago. The rover encountered traces of the molecule in rocks extracted from the area. The rocks also contain sulfur, which scientists **speculate** helped preserve the organics even when the rocks were exposed to the **harsh** radiation on the surface of the planet.

Scientists are quick to state that the presence of these organic molecules is not sufficient evidence for ancient life on Mars, as the molecules could have been formed by non-living processes. But it's still one of the most **astonishing** discoveries, which could lead to future revelations. Especially when one considers the other **startling** find that Curiosity uncovered around five years ago.

The rover analyses the air around it periodically, and in 2014 it found the air contained another of the most basic organic molecules and a key ingredient of natural gas: methane. One of the characteristics of methane is that it only survives a few hundred years. This means that something, somewhere on Mars, is **replenishing** the supply. According to NASA, Mars emits thousands of tons of methane at a time. The level of methane rises and falls at seasonal intervals in the year, almost as if the planet is breathing it.

NASA suspects the methane comes from deep under the surface of the planet. The variations in temperature on the surface of Mars cause the molecule to flow upwards at higher or lower levels. For example, in the Martian winter the gas could get trapped in underground icy crystals. These crystals, called clathrates, melt in the summer and release the gas. However, the source of the methane is still a complete mystery.

The world of astrobiology considers both of these studies as historical **milestones**. According to this information, Mars is not a dead planet. On the contrary, it is quite active and may be changing and becoming more habitable.

Of course, this means further research is necessary. Scientists say they need to send new equipment to Mars, equipment that can measure the air and soil with more precision. There are already missions underway. The European Space Agency's ExoMars ship lands in 2020 and will be able to drill into the ground on Mars to analyze what it finds. Additionally, NASA is sending another Mars Rover in the same year to collect **samples** of Martian soil and return them to Earth.

The possibility of life on Mars has fascinated humans for generations. It has been the subject of endless science-fiction novels and films. Are we alone in the universe or have there been other life forms within our Solar System? If the current missions to the Red Planet continue, it looks as if we may discover the answer very soon.

Source:  
 British Council (nd). Life on Mars. Retrieved on December 3rd, 2020 from <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/advanced-c1/life-on-mars>

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| <p><b>Time 15 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 4: Text Transformation (Assessment)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to continue working in the same groups</li> <li>• Ask students to transform the text into a different genre, taking into consideration the questions written on the board.</li> <li>• Tell students that they can transform the text to any of the following genres:</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Newspaper article</li> <li>2) Flyer or advertisement</li> <li>3) Letter from a specific viewpoint</li> <li>4) Diary entry</li> </ol> |
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**5) Comic strip**

**6) News for a TV show**

- Tell students that they don't need to transform the whole text; they will take the main ideas of the text and create a new genre.
- Give students 10 minutes to do so, and later select a group to go to the front and present the summary.
- Provide feedback

## LESSON PLAN No.11

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 2020**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

- Infer the content of the text by creating the definitions of some words found on the text
- Answer some questions based on what they read
- Give their own point of view about the text

**Materials:** markers, eraser

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| <b>Time 15 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give students a series of words found in the letter they will read next</li><li>• Then form groups and have each group write a definition per each word. However, ask them not to use any dictionary or help but their own words.</li><li>• After that, have each group provide the definition they created and compare them with the other group definitions to choose which definition suits better.</li><li>• After that, ask students to tell you different scenarios or reading in which those words might be used. Provide an example. –The word awful can be used to describe a situation, and object, or a place</li><li>• Based on the different answers you get from students, tell the class they will be reading a letter. Ask them what they think the reading will be about based on the words they worked on.</li></ul> |
| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 2 Reading time (Echo Reading)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In this activity, students echo back what the teacher reads, mimic his inflections and expressions.</li></ul> <p>From: Jo Backhouse<br/>To: Karl Anderson<br/>Date: 17 October<br/>Subject: Support for Judy</p> <p>Dear Karl,</p>   |

I received a call from Judy a couple of days ago to discuss some of the issues that she was having and I thought I'd give you a heads-up on what was said, seeing that you are Judy's project team leader.

Judy really enjoys working with you and the team and finds the project very interesting, but I think she's feeling a bit lost and struggling to see the big picture. It seems that she's been given a fair amount of autonomy to carry out the tasks that you've given her, and of course this level of delegation is not uncommon in your branch. But I believe in her Tokyo office, she is used to a bit more managerial direction and guidance and so is finding this international project quite daunting.

When I asked her about meeting her deadlines, she mentioned that due to the recent changes to the project timeline, her goalposts have been moved, and she doesn't seem to really understand why this has happened. Bearing in mind that she's also facing simultaneous deadlines from her department in Tokyo, we can presume that she might be feeling a bit stretched.

Looking ahead, I was wondering if we could make it easier for Judy by offering her more direction when setting her tasks, at least until she learns the ropes and gets used to working unsupervised. I think she'd also appreciate you giving her a clearer idea on how her role in the team fits into the overview of things. Do you think you could maybe outline the group and individual targets at your next team meeting and that way, everyone not only gets a reminder of the end goal, but each team member, including Judy, might have a more holistic view of the whole project?

I was also thinking it might help to touch base with her every so often to make sure that she's up to date with any changes to the overall plan of attack. In the meantime, I'll write to her manager in the Tokyo office and see how aware they are of the deadlines you've given her, and if they could in some way review her responsibilities and co-ordinate her tasks so that she doesn't constantly feel pulled in both directions.

Judy is an extremely conscientious worker and is eager to contribute positively to the team. Personally, I think she is someone with high potential and will be an asset to our international projects if properly mentored. I'm keen to know your thoughts on the matter and am open to any suggestions on how we could better support Judy so that she has a more smooth-sailing experience on the team.

Best regards,  
Jo Backhouse  
Head of Department  
International Projects

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| <b>Time 10 minutes</b> | <b>Activity 3</b> |
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|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to put their readings in the notebook or another place where they cannot look at it. And ask the following questions for them to answer according to what they read.</li> <li>• <b>Why is Jo writing to Karl?</b></li> <li>• <b>What is Judy not used to?</b></li> <li>• <b>Why is Judy confused by the changing targets?</b></li> <li>• <b>Who might benefit from having a better overview of the project and a better understanding of how the individual tasks fit together to achieve the group target?</b></li> <li>• <b>What does Jo think of Judy?</b></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Time 15 Minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 4 (Assessment)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the same groups students worked at the beginning, had them answer the following question which has to be answered by each member of the group.</li> </ul> <p><b>How do you deal with problems at the University? Do you think Jo made the right decision by writing the e-mail? Yes/no why?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let each group discuss the questions during 6 minutes and select a person who will summarize what the whole group discussed.</li> <li>• Give feedback.</li> </ul>                               |

## LESSON PLAN No. 12

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR**  
**WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**  
**READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS II, SEMESTER I 2020**



**Objectives:** At the end of the class SWBAT:

- Comprehend a text by applying the predicting technique

**Materials:** lesson plan, markers, worksheets

**Time 10 minutes**

At the beginning of the class, write or explain the predicting technique so that students know what they are going to be learning or doing during the class. Give them a brief definition.

### **Predicting.**

This strategy involves the ability of readers to get meaning from a text by making informed predictions. Good readers use predicting as a way to connect their existing knowledge to new information from a text to get meaning from what they read.

### **Activity 1 (preparation)**

Instructions:

1. Match the words with the definitions.
2. Write the words on the board so that students can read them easily.
3. Start reading the definitions and let them guess what the corresponding word of the board is.
4. Let the person who guesses give his explanation about the word and the definition, if he gets it wrong let another person respond.
5. At the end provide feedback and ask some questions like, what the reading is going to be about? What is the title of the reading?

Words:

**To jump out of your skin – a cliché – desperation- uninhabited – resourceful – creepy – handy – suspense**

Definitions:

- producing a sense of fear or making you feel uncomfortable
- an idea that has been used so often that people think it is bad, unoriginal or boring

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|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• useful or convenient</li> <li>• a feeling of pleasurable excitement while waiting to find out what is going to happen</li> <li>• not lived in by people</li> <li>• able to solve problems and act imaginatively in difficult times</li> <li>• the feeling of needing or wanting something so much you will do anything to get it</li> <li>• or be so frightened or surprised by something that you physically move</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Time 20 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 2 (Reading time)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First of all, ask students to clear their desks, they don't have to see the reading yet.</li> <li>• Show students the first paragraph of the text, it can be in a piece of paper or it can be written on the board, ask for a volunteer to read it. Then ask them to predict what kind of cliché they think is going to appear in the reading.</li> <li>• Then, read the first sentence of the first cliché and let students give ideas and predict the cliché that the reading is going to present.</li> <li>• Do the same with the four clichés left.</li> <li>• At the end, let them time to read the complete text in silence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Five horror film clichés</b></p> <p>Since almost the beginning of cinema, we have had scary films. Of all the genres that exist, horror is perhaps one of the most conventional. Many horror films rely on specific plot devices, also called tropes, to make their audience frightened. When a trope is used too much, it can become a cliché. But when used well, it can really make us jump out of our skin. Here are some of the most used, and perhaps abused, clichés in horror films.</p> <p>1</p> <p>No matter what kind of house it is, the basement is a scary place in horror films. That's usually where something is hiding or where the evil psychopath has hidden their tools. Basements are always dark and often damp. You can only reach them by a narrow staircase. And basements are always creepy, even when there isn't anything down there.</p> <p>2</p> <p>In older horror films, when protagonists were in desperation, it was difficult or impossible for them to call for help or call the police. Mobile phones have made that situation a bit less believable now. What's the solution to maintain suspense? No phone coverage! If you're a hero in a horror film, it's almost certain that at a key moment, just when you absolutely need to call for help, you will not have any coverage at all. Or your phone battery will die just as you are making the call. Or both.</p> <p>3</p> |



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|                               | <p>Horror films love uninhabited places. This could be an abandoned hospital, a scary empty house or a ghost town. There's something about lonely, empty places. What was it like when people lived there? Why did they leave? Maybe it's also that they are so quiet, which can be very scary too. Of course, abandoned places are also handy for horror film directors in that it's more believable that you will have no phone coverage there either (see above).</p> <p>4</p> <p>The hero has been driving for hours. It's night-time and it's beginning to rain. Suddenly he sees a person on the side of the road. Maybe the company will keep him awake? In horror films, giving anybody a ride is asking for trouble. The hero always does it, and it always ends badly.</p> <p>5</p> <p>This horror film cliché was especially popular with horror films of the late 20th century. It starts with a group of teenagers all enjoying themselves, and it ends with everyone dead except one girl. At the beginning the girl is usually innocent, shy and not particularly strong. By the end, she has become the toughest and most resourceful person in the world. The last girl almost always wins in the end.</p> <p>Source:</p> <p>Learn English, British Council (nd.) retrieved on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2,020 from: <a href="https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/advanced-c1/horror-film-clich-s">https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/advanced-c1/horror-film-clich-s</a></p> |
| <p><b>Time 15 minutes</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 3 (analyzing the text)</b></p> <p>Write or paste the subheadings on the board so everybody can watch them, then ask them which subheading corresponds to which paragraph according to what they have read. Ask them why?</p> <p>Match the subheading with the paragraph (1–5). There is one extra subheading you do not need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't make me go down there!</li> <li>• Is he really dead?</li> <li>• Nobody lives here</li> <li>• I can't get through</li> <li>• Lone survivor</li> <li>• Deadly hitchhiker</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Time 5 minutes</b></p>  | <p><b>Activity 4 (Assessment)</b></p> <p><b>Do you like horror films? Can you think of any more horror film clichés?</b></p>   |

