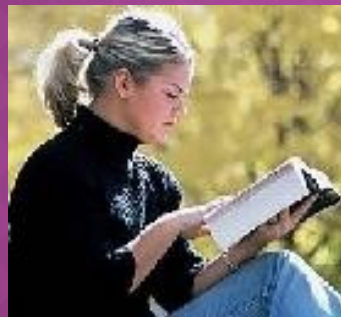


UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA EXPERIMENTAL LIBERTADOR  
INSTITUTO PEDAGÓGICO DE CARACAS  
PROGRAMA DE INGLÉS  
CURSO: SEMINARIO DE INGLÉS PARA PROPÓSITOS ESPECÍFICOS

COURSE DESIGN BASED ON THE SKILL-CENTERED APPROACH  
WITH EMPHASIS ON READING SKILLS



AUTHORS: WILLIAM BENJAMIN & MAURY RODRIGUEZ

# WHAT IS READING?

According to Dechant (1991) cited by Macceca (2007, p.4), reading is a visual process that begins with one's ability to use one's vision to interpret graphic symbols.

# WHAT IS READING COMPREHENSION?

According to Dechant (1991) cited by Macceca (2007, p.4), It refers to understand what is read, so readers must be able to cognitively process the words by drawing meaning from their own experience and knowledge to understand the author's message.



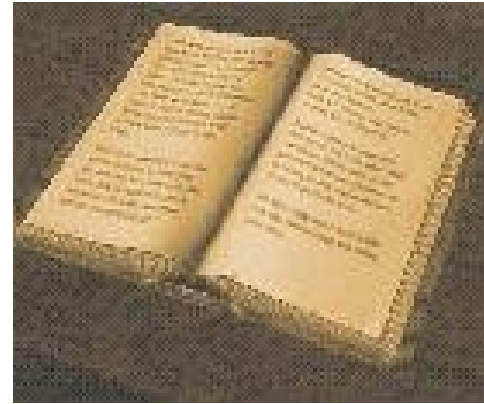
**There are two approaches which describe the nature of the reading learning process:**

*Bottom-up processing*, readers must recognize a variety of *linguistic signals* (letters, morphemes, syllables, etc.), and impose some sort of order them, so as to make them cohere.

*Top-down processing*, it focuses on the background knowledge a reader uses to comprehend a written text.

# SCHEMA THEORY AND READING

According to Nunan (1999, 201), "schema theory is based on the notion that past experiences lead to the creation of mental frameworks that help us make sense of new experiences."



Anderson (1994) presents research showing that recall of information in a text is affected by the reader's schemata and explains that "a reader comprehends a message when he is able to bring to mind a schema that gives account of the objects and events described in the message" (469). Comprehension is "activating or constructing a schema that provides a coherent explanation of objects and events mentioned in a discourse" (473).

# MICROSKILLS FOR READING COMPREHENSION

What do English students do in order to become efficient readers?

- Discriminate among the distinctive graphemes and orthographic patterns of English.
- Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory.
- Process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.
- Recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance.

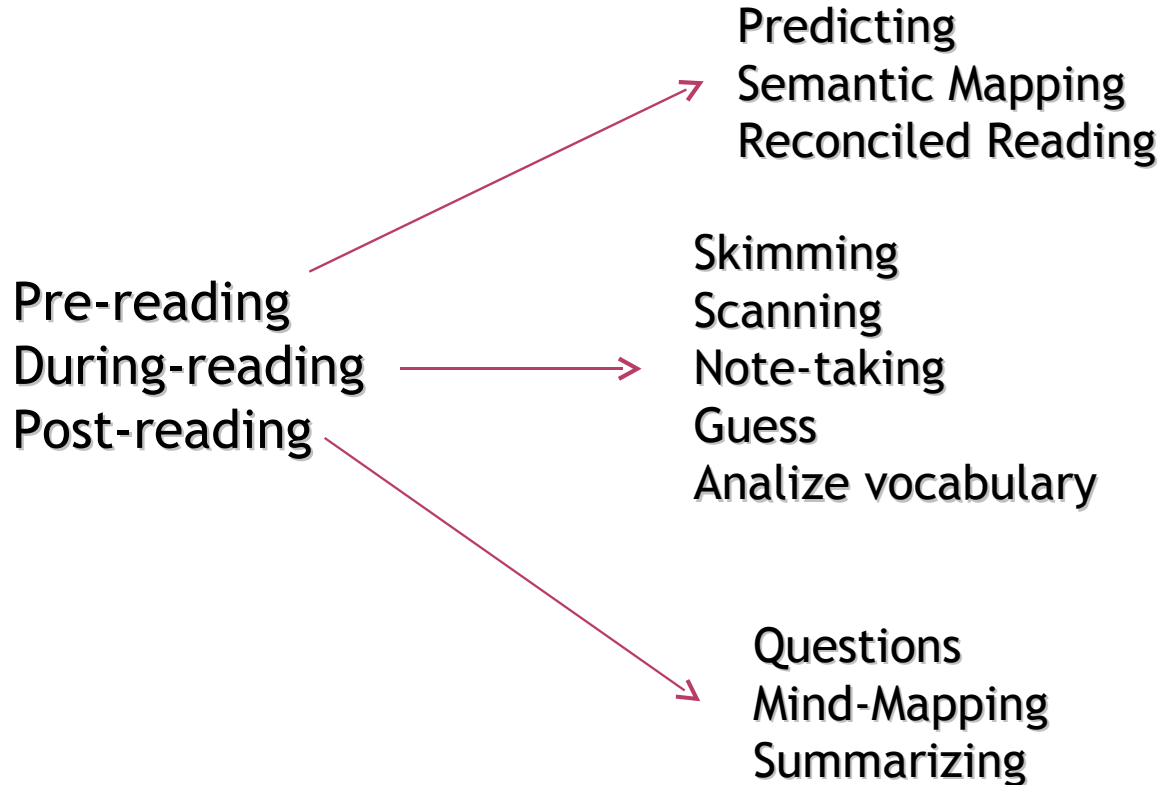
- Recognize grammatical word classes, patterns, rules and elliptical forms.
- Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms.
- Recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses.
- Recognize the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose.
- Infer context that is not explicit by using background knowledge.

- Infer links and connections between events, ideas, etc., deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.
- Distinguish between literal and implied meaning.
- Detect culturally specific references and interpret them in a context of the appropriate cultural schemata.
- Develop and use a battery of reading strategies such as scanning and skimming, detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from context, and activating schemata for the interpretation of texts.



# ACTIVATING AND BUILDING THE SCHEMATA

After selecting a text, the following three stages of activities are typically used to activate and build students' schemata:





# PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGNING INTERACTIVE READING TECHNIQUES

- Do not underestimate the importance of specific instruction in reading skills.
- Use techniques that are intrinsically motivating.
- Balance authenticity and readability in chosen texts.
- Encourage the development of reading strategies.
- Include both bottom-up and top-down techniques.
- Build in some evaluative aspects to your techniques.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, H. Douglas. ( 1994). Teaching by Principles: An Approach to Language Pedagogy. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall.

Macceca, S. (2007). Reading Strategies for Science. Huntington Beach, USA: Shell Education.