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TEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF ENTREPRENEURS IN CAMUZP LICENSE COURSES[1]: BUILDING PATHS

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Abstract: The present work is the result of Scientific Initiation research, financed by ``*Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa de Alagoas*`` - FAPEAL, with the objective of analyzing and reflecting on the textual understanding of students entering undergraduate courses offered by `` *Universidade Estadual de Alagoas*``, in Campus V, in União dos Palmares, resulting in the title "The textual understanding of those entering CAMUZP degree courses: Building paths". As a theoretical framework we use ideas defended by Marcuschi (2008), Kleiman (2008), Santos (2006), Ferreira (2011), among others who follow this line of analysis. This investigation is quantitative-qualitative in nature and as a methodology a semi-structured questionnaire was applied, combined with the Cloze test elaborated from a narrative typology text applied to students in the first and second periods of Language courses: Portuguese, Languages: English, Pedagogy and Geography for the year 2022. The results of this study showed that the majority of higher education students in question present a good level of performance in terms of reading and understanding narrative text and the 'challenge' imposed through the test.

Keywords: textual comprehension, Cloze test, reading, higher education.

A CONVERSATION START ...

There is a consensus among contemporary societies that reading is considered a cultural heritage and, by obligation, accessible to all social strata, considering that language is closely linked to both natural and social human formation. We can prove its need as we are willing to analyze the literate society in which we currently live.

Therefore, it is correct to say that reading is of even more special interest to those who are inserted in an academic environment, in which formal reading/writing is valued, given the responsibility held by research agents.

We can also say that this practice is fundamental for university students who are experiencing this initial period of contact with research and, consequently, with documents of a scientific nature, with more refined writing, when compared to everyday texts with which these relate to in their common life, and, for this reason, the practice of reading is necessarily seen as an integral part of the academic training, as well as the professional future of these students. Textual understanding is intrinsically linked to academic performance, taking into consideration, that students need to understand the various texts, in their most varied and complex forms that may present themselves throughout the course; and, consequently, the difficulty in understanding texts ends up affecting the teaching and learning process, which is essential for building a qualified professional.

Assuming that reading is not a merely visual activity, we must understand it as an intellectual practice, the result of an interactive and complex process within the human brain, which involves the exercise of mental faculties in the organization of ideas and information expressed throughout the text, as Kleiman explains:

> The task of understanding can be complex because there is a network of syntactic, lexical, semantic, pragmatic relationships, at the level of sentence, period, paragraph, relationships that make the object too rich for quick, immediate and total perception. The task, however, becomes accessible through the analysis and segmentation of the parts of this object: the effort to understand the written text through analysis and segmentation is what underlies the text processing strategies. (KLEIMAN, 1989, p. 11)

It is, for this reason, valid to state that reading allows the individual to walk and build their own journey of learning and acquiring

knowledge if reading is also considered as a social and dialogical activity, corroborating the position of Marcuschi (2010), when states that this practice is one of the basic aspects in mastering language use.

To understand reading from this perspective and with this degree of importance, we must consider this practice as a complex, interactive and necessary activity, which requires the reader to use various strategies. It is an activity that goes beyond decoding messages, requiring the reader to have an integrated understanding, as stated by Silveira (2005):

> The automatic processing of reading, a cognitive task, governed by various principles and rules [...] are behaviors that develop with the practice of meaningful reading. It is worth saying, therefore, that the more you read, the more efficient the reader becomes in automatic processing activities. [...] the reader only makes good use of cognitive strategies when he is processing texts and passages that do not cause him difficulties, allowing him to read quickly and smoothly. However, the picture changes when the text does not meet the reader's expectations, when some of the principles are violated or when another problem occurs that disturbs understanding. There, the reader is forced to interrupt the flow and monitor understanding through conscious control, making use of so-called **metacognitive strategies** (SILVEIRA, 2005, p. 69). This excerpt was highlighted by us.

In order for reading, as a synonym for textual understanding, to broaden students' experiences and help them on their journey, it must happen proficiently and the student must be able to overcome the barrier of 'functionally literate' and become, in fact, a literate guy. Observing the level of students' reading competence enables a better understanding of the work with textual comprehension and allows teachers, based on this analysis, to reorganize and/or complement their work in the classroom. The better the students' level of textual understanding, the more efficient

the insertion of these subjects both in the academic environment and in the social and cultural life of their country, thus making them critical and reflective citizens, capable of mediating situations and conflicts.

However, contrary to what can be considered ideal for this reality, Silva (1986), when doing a historical retrospective on reading among reading citizens in Brazil, revealed that access to reading in our country has never occurred in a democratic way.

From the colonial period to the present day, the lack of reading, as well as illiteracy, have been closely linked to societies since ancient times, permeating to the present day. These factors can be explained by the scarcity of libraries, the high cost of books, as well as the old ideology that reading was an 'elite thing' and, therefore, inaccessible to the less favored classes.

It is also interesting to mention that, according to research carried out by INAF (National Institute of Literacy), 13% of students who complete high school in Brazil are still functionally illiterate, which can be considered worrying for the future of a Brazil that is desired, with individuals who are readers in quantity and quality and, therefore, more critical and knowledgeable about the various rights that have already been guaranteed, in addition to those that still have to be achieved.

Therefore, taking into consideration, all the issues mentioned, we decided to carry out research that dealt with textual understanding in the university context. This way, the present study aims to investigate the level of textual understanding of students in higher education at Campus V, in União dos Palmares (CAMUZP) and arises from the concern with the formation of critical and reflective students, capable of understanding a text in between the lines and, as a consequence, write texts suited to the standard norms of the formal Portuguese language, required

in academia, which would result in greater intimacy with the discursive genres, with which they maintain intimate and constant contact and which they will continue to have in their future professionals.

TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

We know that it is through reading various texts that the subject is able to come into contact with different contexts, interacting, even at a distance, with writers and thus establishing a dialogue. It is through this interaction that reading allows the individual to walk and build their journey of learning and acquiring knowledge. We know, however, that one of the problems related to the completion of this journey is the fact that schools consider reading to be an act of decoding only, as Ferreira (2011) states:

> One point to be discussed is what is considered **reading at school**, as there is a big difference between being a decoder and being a reader. The school context produces many **decoders**, that is, people capable of translating the written code into speech, but who are still unaware of the message of what is written. There are many who, faced with a textual genre, are able to locate information in the text, but are unable to synthesize the message of that text and, even though they know all the parts, they do not understand it. (FERREIRA, 2011, p. 43) This excerpt was highlighted by us.

According to Saveli (2007), reading practices within basic education schools are, for the most part, structuralist: there is a lot of space for decoding and little for understanding. Some factors that may influence this situation include poor teacher training, the great importance given to textbooks and manuals, the lack of a political-pedagogical project that presents reading as an essential practice for all subjects in the school curriculum., between others.

In this regard, it is also recommended that we remember Kleiman (1989) who, sharing the same line of thought, adds:

> The school context does not favor the delineation of specific objectives in relation to this activity. In it, the **reading activity is diffuse and confusing**, often constituting just a pretext for copies, summaries, syntactic analysis, and other language teaching tasks (KLEIMAN, 1989, p.30). This excerpt was highlighted by us.

This way, we understand that, for reading to happen satisfactorily, learning to read must be parallel to learning to decipher. There is no point in understanding linguistic codes if you do not understand what is being decoded.

In fact, deficient training in Basic Education, especially regarding textual understanding, can be easily seen in the various research carried out. For example, the indices demonstrated by PISA (International Student Assessment Program), in the last 10 years, reflect the still incipient work with reading in Brazil. The last test applied, in 2018, shows that 50% of students under 15 do not have a minimum level of proficiency in reading.

According to data from INAF in 2018, approximately one third of people (34%) reach higher education with a proficient level[2].

And as a consequence of this, the aforementioned problem ends up affecting higher education, since not all students demonstrate that they are prepared for academia, given that reading in academia is the way to access scientific knowledge, because "when students If they have a good command of reading, they are more likely to also develop more positive attitudes towards this activity, have better study conditions and better academic achievement" (SILVA and WITTER, 2008, p.396).

In Solè's (1998) understanding, proficient readers do not encounter difficulties in the task of comprehension, because even when

2. The INAF scale divides comprehension levels into illiterate, rudimentary, elementary, intermediate and proficient.

they cannot understand a text, they know how to try to correct the difficulty encountered through inferences, thus constructing the meaning of the text.

Like Witter (1996), we believe that good student performance is closely linked to reading competence, since within the academic environment, whatever the activity to be performed, whether by teachers or students, underlying it will be the need for reading practice, regardless of which support is used.

Encouraged by these reasons, we propose to analyze the level of understanding of these students in their basic aspects, after all, the university must enable students to increase their knowledge about the world of representation and communication that houses the diverse and varied texts.

GET TO WORK: COLLECTING DATA

Based on the hypothesis - based on data from INAF - that 30% (i.e.: three in every ten) of students entering undergraduate courses at `` *Universidade Estadual de Alagoas*`` (UNEAL), on Campus V, are distributed among Language courses (Portuguese and English), Pedagogy and Geography do not have a satisfactory level of textual understanding, considering the environment in which they are inserted (academic context), we ask: what is the level of textual understanding presented by students of simple texts, such as narratives?

To answer this question, we carried out two main actions: initially, the application of a questionnaire (in an online form format) with semi-structured questions (socio-economic and literary), in order to better understand the social reality of our employees, as well as the relationship they have with reading and books; then, the application of a Cloze test which, in simple terms of explanation, consists of the technique of filling in specific gaps in a given text, in order to evaluate certain linguistic

knowledge (TAYLOR, 1953). We will discuss the data pertinent to both the questionnaire and the test results in the next topic.

According to Santos (2002), the Cloze test has proven to be effective, both in terms of ease of preparation, application and correction, and in the objectivity and precision of its results. Assured by this and other favorable statements, we decided to use the Cloze test as a methodological procedure for our investigation.

For this research, we sought to evaluate the reading comprehension of students/collaborators through verbal knowledge, fundamental for the construction of sequential meaning of the actions that occur within the narrative, a typology which we deem appropriate for analysis, as it is considered simple.

Among the various classifications of Cloze tests, the type we use is called grammatical Cloze (omission of relational items, such as verbs and conjunctions, for example). We also wanted to mix it with another type of Cloze: restricted Cloze, which consists of the arrangement of omitted words in a table, which serves as a support for the reader to choose just one for each space, the word that best suits the context. in question.

As a basis for the test, we chose the text "The metamorphosis", by Luis Fernando Veríssimo, omitting 78 verbs from different tenses from the chronicle. It is a chronicle, which tells the story of a cockroach that transforms into a human being, but ends up dying as a cockroach; This story is easily adapted to the children's universe and, we emphasize, is easy to understand.

However, as could be expected, we were not interested in making the challenge so easy for employees. And, based on this conclusion, we had an idea: add a measure of difficulty to the test.

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With that in mind, we did a kind of 'prank': we duplicated five words (in addition to what was needed) in the support table, we started the table with the word 'finish', which does not fit in the text with a capital letter, and we removed four terms from it: one necessary for the progress of the narrated story; another, which already existed in the text, however, when we omitted it, it was missing; We added the last two by hand to serve as a clue so they could be alerted to something that might be 'wrong'. As shown in the figure below (Figure 1), we can see, in bold, the words that were removed; in italics and underlined, the term 'finish'; and, underlined, the added words.

To finish - fled - fit - followed - issue - had - gave - had - saw - woke up - Started - woke up - transformed - Did - needed - followed - was - Left - cover - Looked - found - discovered - are - Made up - Adopted - belonged - had - enough - needed - Got - gave - Was - discovered - arrived - date - be - needed - mate - fight - resolve - Will - hesitate - Get - give - changed - got it right - had - have - Bought - have - does - Employed - Fought - Know - entered - dress - Changed - married - do - Climbed - Passed - eat - Hired - puts - Died - went - woke up - was - saw - was - transformed - yielding - there is - Was - would use - thought - ran - went down - went - were – found – the person had – it was

Figure 1: Bank of words used to support filling out the test

By making this change in the test, we tried to analyze what ways collaborators would use to solve the enigma of completing the text, constructing an acceptable meaning. The final result of the test, created for application, is expressed in Figure 2, below:

The metamorphosis

A cockroach _____ one day and saw that _____ turned into a human being. _____ moving his paws and _____ that only _____ four, that _____ big and heavy and difficult to articulate. No _____ more antennas. I wanted to _____ a sound of surprise and accidentally ____ a grunt. The other cockroaches _____ terrified behind the furniture. She wanted to _____ them, but not _____ behind the furniture. Her second thought ____ her: "How horrible… I need to _____ with these cockroaches…"
Thinking, for the ex-cockroach, ____ is new. In the past, she _____ her instinct. Now _____ reason. ____ a kind of cloak with the living room curtain to _____ her nakedness. _____ around the house and _____ a closet in a room, and in it, underwear and a dress. _____ yourself in the mirror and _____ yourself beautiful. For a former cockroach. _____ yourself. All cockroaches ____ the same, but women _____ enhance their personality. _____ a name: Vandirene. Later _____ that just a name doesn't _____. What class _____? … _____ education…. References?... _____ a job as a cleaner at great cost. Her cockroach experience gave her _____ access to poorly suspected dirt. _____ a good cleaning lady.
It was difficult for _____ people… _____ to buy food and the money didn't _____. Cockroaches _____ in a brush of antennae, but humans don't. _____ up, _____, _____, _____ make up, _____ get married, _____. _____ what will the money give? _____ house, furniture, appliances, bed linen, table and bath. Vandirene _____ herself, _____ children. _____ a lot, poor thing. Queues at the National Social Security Institute. Little milk. The unemployed husband… finally _____ the lottery. Almost four million! Between cockroaches _____ or not _____ four million there is no _____ difference. But Vandirene _____. _____ the money. _____ of neighborhood. _____ House. _____ to dress well, to _____ well, to take care of where _____ the pronoun. _____ of class. _____ nannies and _____ at `` *Pontifícia Universidade Católica* ``.
Vandirene _____ one day and _____ who had _____ into cockroach. His penultimate human thought _____: "My God! … The house _____ was pest controlled ___ two days!". Her last human thought _____ for her money _____ in the finance company and that her bastard husband, her legal heir, the _____. Then _____ the foot of the bed and _____ behind a piece of furniture. Don't _____ anything anymore. _____ pure instinct. _____ five minutes later, but _____ the happiest five minutes of your life.

Figure 2: Cloze test used in the research

There is a total of 34 collaborators (when adding the first action, which took the form of a questionnaire, with the next and main action, which was the collection of results for the research, Cloze), we carried out tailor-

made tests that we had an opportunity to meet the incoming classes, due to the different schedules between the three courses offered in the Campus V space.

BUILDING PATHS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

In order to be able to draw any conclusions about the results obtained, we felt the need to present an assessment of the reality of the research contributors. Therefore, we know better the profile of our employees, their social aspects, as well as their relationship with reading.

The majority of respondents (both for the questionnaire and the test) were new to the Pedagogy Course, while the smallest proportion of responses came from those new to Languages. The majority of them are female (more than half of taxpayers), residents of the local city (União dos Palmares) and surrounding cities (Santana do Mundaú, São José da Laje, Ibateguara, Branquinha, Joaquim Gomes and Murici). The majority come from public schools and completed basic education in 2019, 2020 and 2021, but there are still those who completed it longer ago (from 2006); We can therefore see large differences in age range between the three Courses.

In terms of reading, most of them said they considered themselves good readers. Just over half (52.3%) dedicate 1 to 4 hours a week to reading, with 66.7% having read 1 to 2 books, while 34.3% have already read 3 books or more during this year 2023 (let us also consider that the questionnaire was answered during the month of March of this year). Based on the answers to the other questions asked about fruitive reading and experiences with books, the majority interacted favorably. We prove this with the data that 81% of respondents have read for pleasure, while 19% read only out of obligation. Despite the good result, it is necessary to note that reading done out of obligation, as it is not pleasurable, can be a barrier to understanding and hinder the objective of analyzing and reflecting on each text read out of obligation, even if only in a small portion.

After we could know, therefore, some pertinent aspects of our collaborators that are interesting to contribute to the analysis of the responses in the second stage, let us move on to the next part of our investigation: the performance of the collaborators regarding the Cloze test.

Bearing in mind that the objective of this work is to evaluate the reading comprehension of the text as a whole, we will not delay in carrying out a detailed analysis of each phenomenon due to the fact that they are loaded with grammatical information that is, in fact, curious to the analysis (which could It could very well be done another time and with more words and notes, but this is not the time). Therefore, we paid attention to analyzing how the students performed when exposed to the test, which could have been quite easy and which, due to curiosity and the appeals of our research, was not exactly accurate.

As it was shown in Figure 3, we grouped the performance of students/employees in the Cloze test into classification levels according to the proposal of Bormuth (1968), cited by Santos et al (2006): For less than 44% of correct answers, the respondent is in level of frustration; between 44% and 56% correct, the respondent is at the instructional level; and after 56% of correct answers, the respondent is considered independent.
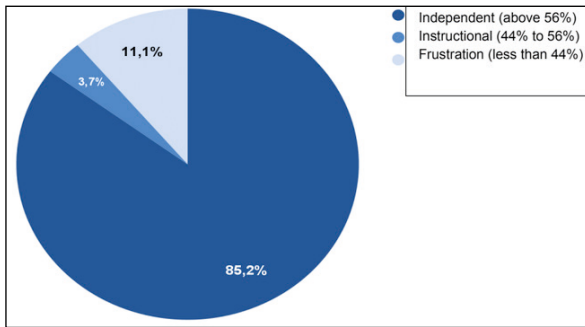
Figure 3: Graph with general result of students' responses to the Cloze test

Source: the own authors.

As we can see, the overall result is, in fact, a good index, showing that the vast majority of respondents did well, understanding most of the text. However, if we can also consider, of this percentage of 85.2% (independent level) only 3 people managed to solve the text completely.

It is worth noting that the number of errors or blank spaces came from non-present or modified words, which means that the dependence on the helping factors (which were put to the test here) 'served' as a barrier to prevent understanding from occurring. total text.

As for the words that were added, we can highlight that these also contributed to the non-resolution of the complete text. Some respondents, perhaps perceiving something wrong, tried to give meaning and coherence to the text because they did not trust the word bank that we made available (which was, in fact, our objective).

In part, they managed to construct a coherent meaning, even with words that were not in the word bank; in part (and the majority), no: they added words that did not even come from the verbal class; and, if they were verbs, there was no agreement or no coherence between them and the context.

The other errors occurred due to the exchange of words belonging to the text, in the search to find a coherent meaning,

sometimes achieved and sometimes not achieved. In general, the greatest difficulty presented in all the tests answered is linked to the difficulty not of understanding, but of verbal agreement, which indicates the possible lack of training in Basic Education regarding grammatical aspects and their relationships established with the textual whole, confirming what has already been discussed: the way the school deals with reading, a fundamental act for the keen perception of these small details, but constituents of this textual whole, which interact with each other and require the reader to understand their positions and reasons for organization, this is: your goal. We conclude, therefore, that there are some points to be remedied regarding verbal agreement and coherence in some cases and regarding understanding in some respondents, in other cases (in a smaller number); but, in any case, the final result can be considered quite satisfactory.

LAST WORDS: IT'S NOT THE END YET

Even at a level of scientific initiation, the search for theoretical references on the part of recent students represents a considerable advance for their learning journeys, since it allows the insertion of the undergraduate student in the exercise of critical-scientific reflection, which contributes to good and necessary academic training. And, in fact, there is an even greater need to understand such formal and academic genres

The results demonstrate a good level of understanding on the part of undergraduates regarding the Cloze test, which means that they are familiar with the narrative typology; However, another question remains to be considered: if they were exposed to Cloze tests with another textual typology, would they perform as well as they did in this narrative typology test? (FERREIRA, 2011).

Furthermore, we emphasize the need for research of this nature to be carried out on a regular basis to identify the reality of these students and, thus, more accurately propose some alternatives for overcoming weaknesses of this type, in an attempt to change the current scenario in different parts of Brazil that is considered worrying and has been shown on a large scale in the various research carried out on the subject. In our case, the results were favorable, but we cannot be certain about everyone who enters colleges in the country.

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