USING AN SFL GENRE-BASED APPROACH TO RAISE UNDERGRADUATE

STUDENTS' CRITICAL AWARENESS OF CONTEXT AND REGISTER

FEATURES OF NURSING TEXTS

A thesis presented by

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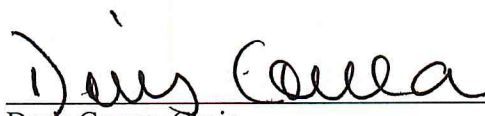Master's in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

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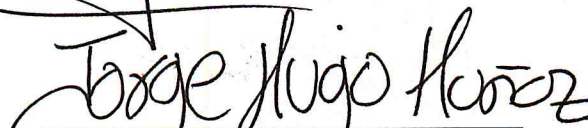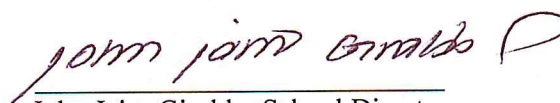IVÁN DARÍO FLÓREZ GARCÍA

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DEDICATION

To my beloved wife and son who were my invaluable emotional support in each step of this

professionally enriching and intellectually challenging odyssey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

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OF NURSING TEXTS

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Reading instruction in Colombia has mainly focused on the teaching of general reading skills and grammar. Although few attempts have been made to go beyond this model, familiarizing university students with the context and register features of the texts privileged in their disciplines and engaging them in the critical reading of these texts has been widely overlooked. Responding to this gap, this study aimed to find out to what extent SFL genre-based approaches could help a group of nursing students from a public university in Medellin, Colombia, gain critical awareness of context and register features of nursing texts in English. Data collected included video recordings of lessons, audio-recordings of teacher-students interactions in the classroom, audio-recorded interviews with students, and students' artifacts. Results from this study suggest that an SFL genre-based approach can indeed help students gain familiarity with context and register features of

disciplinary texts, and become more critical of these texts. However, implementing this approach requires instructors' commitment to and preparation for analyzing and teaching the relevant context and register features of the disciplinary texts most valued in students' specific area of study.

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Introduction

In Colombia, some higher education institutions demand that undergraduate and graduate applicants demonstrate, at least, reading proficiency in a foreign language (FL) as a prerequisite for both graduation from the undergraduate and admission to the graduate programs. This de facto policy has led to a growing demand for and copious offerings of reading comprehension courses in English at universities in the country. Recently, other Colombian universities have been changing their FL reading comprehension policy into a more comprehensive skill-based communicative one, requiring their students a B1 or B2 communicative proficiency for graduation. However, most of the current instructional practices for reading comprehension in Colombian universities conform to what Lea and Street (2006) call a *study skills* model. In this model, reading and writing are viewed as individual and cognitive skills; decontextualized language forms are emphasized; and literacy knowledge is assumed to be effortlessly transferable from one context to another (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368-369).

As a consequence of these views, approaches to reading instruction frequently focus on developing reading skills and strategies such as predicting, inferring, visualizing, note-taking, summarizing, determining main ideas, and distinguishing facts from opinions; or they merely focus on superficially teaching sentence structure and grammar. Furthermore, they only tangentially address students' specific disciplines, particularly the specialized language and genres within them, and they de-emphasize critical reading, preventing students from learning how to resist, contest, and critique the texts they are requested to read.

A review of articles published in the four main Colombian journals in the field of EFL (Colombian Journal of Applied Linguistics, How, PROFILE, and Íkala) in the last ten years confirms these claims. Aguirre and Ramos (2009) and Lopez (2001), for example, focus on teaching undergraduate students reading strategies and skills such as predicting content, exploiting transparent words, using linguistic clues, skimming and scanning, getting main ideas from the images in a text, and making inferences in order to both promote learning autonomy and improve reading comprehension.

Likewise, Perdomo (2001), interested in making students autonomous readers, calls for the parallel development of thinking skills such as classifying, comparing, deducing, inducing, and synthesizing; and reading strategies such as prediction, global understanding of a text, inferences, and deduction of meaning through vocabulary to prepare students to cope with scientific, artistic and critical written discourses in school environments (p. 57). Moreover, Rojas (2001), in discussing how to teach reading to large classes in tertiary and secondary education, recommends devising tasks that help students be aware of the purpose of reading, the role of the reader, the layout of a text, techniques and strategies, and study skills (p.73). Finally, of the ten Colombian authors reporting cases with reading comprehension courses at a university level, only López (2001) claims to have implemented texts about financial and accounting topics with a group of accounting students to expressly work technical vocabulary (p. 43). Nevertheless, in her study, no attention seems to have been paid to relevant features of disciplinary genres other than technical words.

In spite of all the success these courses may have had in developing cognitive strategies and thinking skills and in enhancing reading comprehension, they do not seem to have explored opportunities to acculturate university students into the concepts, language

and texts of their specific disciplines, or provided them with the occasion to get familiar with the genres that they are likely to encounter in their field. Besides, they do not seem to have explored the creation of a space in which students could learn how to become more critical of the texts they read.

Indeed, the review of literature only shows one example of an approach to teaching reading whose focus diametrically differs from the *study skills* model illustrated above. This example is offered by Posada (2004). The study took a multicultural education perspective to engage undergraduate students in reading canonical and non-canonical literary texts and discussing issues of gender and ethnicity. After reading, students were asked to transfer learning to real situations by sending an email to book editors asking them to include writers from different ethnicities and gender in their selections. However, they were not apprenticed into specific disciplinary knowledge, language, and genres since the literary texts used were overtly not embodied in or related to students' specific disciplines. Moreover, students did not seem to have been provided with pedagogical spaces in which they could build up disciplinary knowledge and get familiar with the context and register features of the genres most widely used in their academic disciplines, as supporters of the academic literacies model propose (Lea & Street, 2006). Finally, they did not seem to have been familiarized with powerful genres such as research articles which are the principal means for the dissemination of scientific knowledge in Science (Koutsantoni, 2007, p. 44).

The reading competence courses offered at the university where this study was conducted also seemed to follow this trend. An analysis of the syllabus for the reading comprehension level 1 course revealed that in these courses, just as in the courses described in the literature (Aguirre & Ramos, 2009; Lopez, 2001; Perdomo, 2001; Rojas, 2001), instructors follow the *study skills* model described by Lea and Street (2006), in which

reading skills and grammar are the two aspects most emphasized and the texts used rarely encompass valued genres in the students' area of study, such as research articles. Furthermore, a critical reading of disciplinary texts is far from being promoted, i.e., students are seldom encouraged to decode author's authoritative, objective, and impersonal position, and unveil author's positive or negative attitude towards the content of the text.

As a consequence, students are deprived of the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the context and register features of the texts most widely used in their specific disciplines (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 144). It is unlikely that students who are barely encouraged to develop reading skills and learn grammar as a set of rules, will manage to control the specialized language resources used in their academic disciplines, including the relevant grammar through which systematic, technical and discipline-based knowledge is encoded in academic texts (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000, p. 80-81). In addition, students' misunderstanding of the specialized language of their area of study is more likely to prevent them from reading disciplined-based texts critically (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 145).

An approach that helps students familiarize with all of these features of texts is SFL genre-based approach (Hyland, 2004, p. 33; Yasuda, 2011, p. 127). The approach is based on Halliday (1978) theories on language and suggests that to interpret texts effectively, it is necessary that students gain familiarity with the contexts of culture and situation, i.e., the genre, field, tenor and mode, in which disciplinary texts occur; as well as the particular register features that help realize these contexts (Butt et al., 2000, p. 80-81; Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 18). Moreover, to critically engage students with disciplinary texts, they need to be able to unpack the ways in which the specialized language of these texts embed ideologies and position readers as the same time as they convey meanings (Schleppegrell, 2004, p.

44). SFL genre-based approaches offer context and text analytical tools to achieve these goals, and thus comply with the Academic Literacies model (Coffin & Donahue, 2012, p. 65).

Accordingly, the research study presented here aimed to find out to what extent SFL genre-based approaches could help a group of nursing students from a public university in Medellin, Colombia, gain critical awareness of the context and register features of nursing texts in English. To meet this purpose, an SFL genre-based instructional unit was designed and taught to a group of nursing students at the level 1 of a reading competence course. The unit focused on the exploration and critical analysis of context and register features of nursing texts, particularly the macrogenre of research article.

In the following sections, I first present a discussion of classroom implementations of SFL and Genre theories for the development of critical academic literacies that provided a conceptual framework for this study. Then, I describe the setting where I conducted this study, the reading course as it is normally taught and the modifications that I made for the study, and the participants engaged. In addition, I explain the methodology regarding the texts I brought to class and the activities I implemented. Next, I provide a description of the data collection and analysis process. Afterward, I present the main findings of the study and their interpretation. In the final section, I discuss findings and draw conclusions as regards the importance of the study, its contribution to the field, its limitations, and implications for further research and teaching.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws mainly on Systemic Functional Linguistics genre-based theories. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language proposed by Halliday (1978) which SFL and genre theorists have been using to develop a critical understanding of how language works in academic contexts (Butt et al., 2000; Derewianka, 2004; Fang, Z., 2004; Luke, 2000; Macken-Horarik, 2002; Schleppegrell, 2004). Since it emphasizes "the ways that language is systematically linked to context" (Hyland, 2004, p. 24), it constitutes a great tool to raise students' awareness of how specific discourse communities organize their texts and about the lexicogrammatical choices that characterize their specialized writing. Besides, it also serves as a powerful device for the unveiling of ideological representations, social relations and textual formations through the analysis of the lexical and grammatical operations deployed in a text (Luke, 2000, p. 453). Finally, it constitutes a powerful tool to systematically investigate the relationship between text and context, allowing to explore the link between the structure of a text and its social purpose, and to describe how context variables determine language choices in a text (Butt et al., 2000, p.16).

SFL genre theorists focus on distinguishing the different social purposes of genres (e.g., to tell what happened, to argue a case, to tell how to do something), describing the schematic structures or stages used to achieve their social purposes, and identifying the lexical, grammatical and textual choices that are linked to each one of them and how these vary according to purpose, situation and audience (Hyland, 2002, p. 115). They draw on Martin's (1984) definition of genres as "staged, goal-oriented social processes" (as cited in

Macken-Horarik, 2002, p. 20) in which members of a particular culture engage to achieve different purposes through language.

They also make a difference between everyday and school genres. The first are those used in more informal, conversational interactions, whereas the second are those needed to meet the goals of schooling and specialized language demands of disciplines (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 147). Some common school genres are recount, narrative, procedure, report, explanation, and exposition (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 85). Each of these genres unfolds differently by means of a series of stages. A procedure for example is usually developed in three stages called goal, materials, and sequence of steps (Butt et al., 2000, p. 11). An exposition, on the other hand, includes a statement of position, arguments, and a reinforcement of position (Butt et al., 2000, p. 13). Each generic stage may contain several phases consisting of one or more messages. For example, a descriptive report can classify an animal species and describe it in terms of four different characteristics, i.e., its appearance, behavior, feeding and breeding habits. Each of these characteristics constitutes a phase in the description stage of the report (Marin & Rose, 2009, pp. 142-143).

School genres not only contain different stages but also different lexical grammatical and textual features such as types of participants and processes, verb tense, personal pronouns, passive and active voice, linking words, mood, and modal verbs (Butt et al., 2000; Derewianka, 2004; Schleppegrell, 2004). Some salient language features of explanations are, for example, generalized non-human participants, time and causal relationships through linking words, action verbs, passive voice, and timeless present tense (Derewianka, 2004, p. 62).

SFL genre scholars also argue that large, complex texts incorporate and combine different genres, for which they constitute macro-genres (Eggins, 2004, p. 47). A high

school geography textbook, for example, is a macrogenre that might include the genres of report, explanation, procedure, procedural recount, and exposition. Each of these genres has a different function within the whole text (e.g., to describe and explain social and natural phenomena, to tell the reader how to do geographic observations, and to argue for scientifically informed methods) (Martin & Rose, 2009, p. 218-225).

To teach these school genres and macro-genres, SFL genre theorists have developed a powerful methodology, known as the curriculum cycle (Derewianka, 2004, p. 6), that enables teachers to help students address both context and language elements of texts. This teaching-learning cycle, in which the teacher plays the role of expert and the student that of apprentice, consists of four linked stages: (1) context exploration, where students and the teacher collaboratively build up knowledge of the context features of texts; (2) explicit instruction, where students are introduced to model texts and their attention is drawn to the language features of those texts; (3) guided practice, where the teacher guides students in the reading, exploration and discussion of texts; (4) and independent application, where students apply what they have learned to independently explore texts, and consult the teacher only when needed (Butt et al., 2000, p.263-264; Derewianka, 2004, p. 6-10; Hyland, 2004, p. 129-139).

Authors such as Butt et al. (2000), Derewianka (2004), Fang and Schleppegrell (2010), Luke (2000), Macken-Horarik (2002), and Schleppegrell, Achugar, and Oteíza (2004) show us how SFL and genre-based theories can be combined to teach students the genres of specialized disciplines, and to enhance their critical comprehension of texts. All of them encourage students to explore the *context of culture* and the *context of situation* in which texts occur. The former deals with the knowledge of the purposes and schematic structures of texts, whereas the latter deals with the social activity and subject matter

(field), the reader-writer relationships (tenor), and the means of communicating and how it is used (mode) (Butt et al., 2000, p.264).

Exploring the context of culture involves investigating the purposes writers achieve with different texts, and how they structure their texts into different stages to accomplish those purposes. As to the context of situation, its exploration implies investigating the dimensions of *field, tenor* and *mode* that influence language choices in texts. To investigate *field* students ask themselves questions about the subject matter in which a text emerges and the topics it deals with. This questioning leads to the analysis of language resources that construe experiential meanings, i.e., Participants, Processes, and Circumstances (Butt et al., 2000, p. 186-187). These three elements encode the human experience of the world and commonly occur together in clauses as follows: Processes, the expressions of the events happening in the world, are realized in verbal groups; participants, the concrete and abstract things revolving around the process, are realized in nominal groups and prepositional phrases; and circumstances, the wherefores, whens, whys, and hows about the occurring of the process, are realized in prepositional phrases, adverbial groups, and nominal groups (Butt et al., 2000, p. 46-47).

Tenor, in turn, is investigated through questions on the roles of readers and authors in specific disciplines, and the relationships they enact (Butt et al., 2000, p. 188-189). Thus, resources for interpersonal meanings such as mood, modality and appraisals, are analyzed. Mood allows writers to make statements (declarative mood), ask questions (interrogative mood) or give commands (imperative mood), and each of these choices helps them build a different relationship with their readers. Declarative mood is typically used by writers in academic texts to present themselves as knowledgeable providers of information (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 58-59). Modality enables writers to express probability, certainty,

necessity, obligation, and inclination, and to present propositions non-categorically (Butt et al., 2000, p.113; Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 60). Resources of appraisal allow writers to explicitly or implicitly convey positive or negative attitudes and construe stance, judgment and evaluation (Butt et al., 2000, p.120-121; Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 61).

To investigate mode, students look for patterns in the text structure, identifying Theme, Rheme, and cohesive devices that realize textual meanings (Butt et al., 2000, p. 189-190). The first element of a clause is called Theme and the remaining part of it, where the theme is developed, is called Rheme. Writers use this first position in a clause as a signpost to show their readers what the message is about and how the text is developed (Butt et al., 2000, p. 134-135). Information previously presented in the rheme of one clause is then condensed and displayed as the theme in the next clause to develop the text, which in academic texts contributes to informational density and more complex text organization (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 71). Text cohesion is also attained by use of lexical and grammatical devices such as repetition, semantic relation, reference, substitution and ellipsis (Butt et al., 2000, p. 147).

Examples of how ESL scholars who have used SFL to explore the context of culture and the context of situation of academic texts can be found in several places in the literature. In Canada, for example, Slater and Mohan (2010) work with ESL teachers and content-area teachers to help ninth grade students tackle the challenging meanings in the register of science. To do this, the ESL teacher uses texts and tasks similar to those of the Science class, to explicitly teach relevant lexicogrammatical features such as the processes of being, doing and thinking as they are employed to build taxonomy, cause-effect reasoning, and problem-solving. In doing so, her ESL students gain awareness of the science register and are better positioned to both understand the texts presented by the

science teacher and do the scientific tasks related to these texts (e.g., do lab activities and write science reports).

Another example is provided by Walker (2010) who describes how a bilingual teacher in a school in Hong Kong brings science texts to class and asks her students to pinpoint the text's purpose and genre, and underline lexico-grammatical resources used in these texts. These resources include those which realize experiential meanings (e.g., technical noun groups, nominalization, and relational processes); those that express interpersonal meanings (e.g., mood, deixis, and modality); and those that encode textual meanings such as themes. This descriptive analysis helps students learn language resources that allow them to deconstruct academic texts, realize how language can be used to construe content-area meanings, and eventually construct their own texts.

Also, in the United States, Gebhard et al. (2007) describes how an ESL teacher uses SFL tools to help her fifth grade ESL students understand the genre or argumentation. She first identifies its stages, i.e., stating a thesis, providing arguments and counter-arguments, and restating the main thesis. Then, she analyzes with them which lexico-grammatical resources help authors acknowledge various points of view, take a position, link words, and show causal and contrastive relationships. Next, through a series of mini-lesson, she and her students analyze the structure and language of a sample letter, and then write similar letters as they discuss how the linguistic choices they make in the draft are based on their audience (e.g., a restaurant owner) and purpose (e.g., persuading him/her to ban smoking in the restaurant). Through this instruction, ESL students are able to deconstruct and write argumentative texts using relevant meaning-making resources that are distinctive of school genres, thus gaining access to academic discourses.

Even though these interventions took place in ESL school settings, as can be gathered by the above examples, the role of the SFL genre instructor is different from that the one reading comprehension instructors have adopted for years, particularly in Colombia. Instead of teaching students individual reading strategies such as predicting content, using linguistic clues, making inferences, skimming and scanning, these SFL genre instructors teach students how to scrutinize the cultural and situational contexts in which texts are embedded, and how to use this knowledge to work with texts effectively (Butt et al., 2000, p. 16). In doing so, students gain familiarity with the salient features of academic genres and the English meaning-making resources typical of disciplinary texts, which would allow them to analyze and discuss how texts work to achieve specific purposes. They also gain awareness of how variation in context explains variation in linguistic choices used in the texts they read in their specific discipline, and, as Schleppegrell (2004) points out, they become more likely to participate "in the context of learning they help create" (p. 44).

The next section provides a brief description of the context in which this approach was tried out, including the setting, the specific course, and the students that participated in the study.

This research study was conducted at a public university located in Medellín, Colombia. As a requirement for graduation in this university, undergraduate students must certify their proficiency in a foreign language by obtaining a passing grade in the two reading comprehension courses that the institutions offers, with a total of 80 hours per level, or by approving a reading proficiency test.

The Reading Comprehension Level 1 Course

The overall aim of this course is to develop in students the reading skills that will help them understand scientific and cultural texts written in English. The course lasts a total of eighty hours which can be taught intensively or distrusted throughout the semester in 4 to 6 hours a week. The syllabus is normally organized around four main aspects related to language and reading: vocabulary knowledge, grammar knowledge, discourse knowledge, and reading skills. Instructors commonly emphasize on one of these aspects depending on their students' needs. They also bring a variety of texts ranging from short stories to science news that may interest students, and work on comprehension questions as well as grammar and vocabulary building worksheets. The course evaluation is divided into 50% follow-up activities, a 25% mid-term exam, and a 25% final test. Recommended follow up activities include reading worksheets and quizzes in which students read a text and answer several questions about the information provided in the text. They also include grammar

worksheets in which students get drilled on sentence structures or verb tenses. For the mid-term and final test, instructors are advised to design and apply multiple choice tests in which students have to read several passages and identify aspects such as main idea, author's tone, and word meanings.

The SFL Genre-based Unit

For the design and implementation of this instructional unit, I first secured consent from the coordination to modify the syllabus and then followed SFL genre-based approaches as proposed by Butt et al. (2000), Derewianka (2004), Fang and Schleppegrell (2010), Luke (2000), Macken-Horarik (2002), and Schleppegrell (2004). In the following paragraphs, I provide more details about the methodology, the texts employed and the activities carried out.

Methodology. Following the cycle of teaching and learning proposed by Butt et al. (2000), Derewianka (2004), Luke (2000), Macken-Horarik (2002), and Schleppegrell (2004), I first introduced students to three different nursing texts and discussed with them the context and register features of these texts. Then, students engaged in the analysis of disciplinary texts, exploring their context of culture and context of situation, and discovering the lexicogrammatical resources that realize experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings. As they did this, students unveiled embedded meanings that went beyond the obvious information in these texts. Finally, we had whole-class discussions on the findings they got from their analyses of texts.

Texts used. To carry out the unit, I selected three different types of nursing texts. These texts, a nursing manual, a featured article and three research articles can be considered macrogenres as they merge context and register features of different genres. The text I chose for the macrogenre of instructional manual was the *Nurse's Manual of Laboratory and Diagnostic Tests* (Cavanaugh, 2003), of which I decided to focus on chapter 16 about endoscopic studies. The overall purpose of this manual is to provide nursing students and practitioners with the necessary information for the care of patients undergoing laboratory and diagnostic procedures. Every chapter in this manual basically follows the same schematic structure, i.e., a list of the medical procedures covered in the chapter, a brief introduction, a definition of each procedure and a description of the nursing care before the procedure, how to carry out the procedure, and the nursing care after it. These chapters also include indications and contraindications for each procedure as well as nursing alerts, figures, and tables.

This nursing manual combines the elemental genres of information reports and instructions in each of its chapters. Thus, it shows distinctive language features of these two genres such as a technical vocabulary, generalized participants, relational and material processes, timeless present tense, time relationships, circumstantial information of how, when and where, factual description of participants, declarative and imperative mood, and formal and objective style (Derewianka, 2004, pp. 53,62).

The text selected for the macrogenre of featured article was *Surviving posttraumatic stress disorder* (Lavin, 2011), published in the online journal Nursing2011. The overall purpose of this article is to present factual information about the posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), persuade about the usefulness of treatments, and instruct about how to care for patients. In its particular schematic structures, this article starts with a brief recount

of a patient's case followed by a definition of PTSD and its incidence, causes, diagnosis and treatments, to end up with a guide for the care and education of patients. Other features of this article are indirect citations of other authors and governmental web page found throughout the article, a list of references included at the end, and a picture of a soldier above the patient's case.

This nursing featured article combined the genres of factual recounts, information reports, expositions, and instructions. Hence, it had some distinctive language features of these genres such as a, generalized as well as specific participants, factual description of participants, variety of processes, timeless present and simple past tense, information of how, when and where, logical connectives of reasoning, technical terms, declarative mood, some imperative sentences, use of third person pronouns, modal verbs, and formal and objective style (Derewianka, 2004, pp. 17, 27, 29, 53, 77, 78).

The texts I selected for the macrogenre of research articles were *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home* (Berry, Zhang, Lipsitz, Mittleman, Solomon, & Kiel, 2011), *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture* (Hubbard, Farrington, Smith, Smeeth, & Tattersfield, 2003), and *The Impact of Resistance Exercise Training on the Mental Health of Older Puerto Rican Adults With Type 2 Diabetes* (Lincoln, Shepherd, Peggy & Castaneda-Sceppa, 2011). The first of these articles served two functions in the unit: to explore and compare similarities and differences among different genres, and as a sample text for the guided analysis of research articles. The second one was used as a target text for students' independent analysis of this genre. The third was used for the final test.

Research articles' overall purpose is to persuade an academic community into accepting new knowledge claims (Koutsantoni, 2007, p. 45). They follow the structure of

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Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion (IMRD). They also contain an abstract, citations of other authors, tables, figures, and a list of references. As a macrogenre, research articles combine persuasive elemental genres such as expositions and factual recounts. Therefore, they show register features such as nominal groups to name the arguments, generic and abstract participants, modality to present claims as possibilities, nouns, verbs, prepositions to present reasoning, markers of contrast, classification, and logical sequence (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 85); details to help reader reconstruct the activity, details of time, place and manner, descriptive details to present accurate information, passive voice, explanations and justifications (Derewianka, 2004, p. 17).

Activities. To facilitate students' analysis of these disciplinary texts, I designed five worksheets. Before the implementation of these worksheets, I explicitly instructed students on the dynamic relation between context and text, and on some context and register features of nursing genres. Class discussions on students' previous knowledge of the sample texts were also held before worksheets. Then, students read and did the worksheets in small groups. After working in small groups they participated in whole class discussion and oral presentations about their findings of context and register features of texts. I also designed and implemented a final reading test to assess their ability to identify textual, experiential and interpersonal meanings in a research article. The reading of the sample texts and the implementation of worksheets unfolded as follows.

Worksheet 1. After explaining that context and texts have a dynamic relationship in which context influence the language choices made in texts, and reversibly linguistic patterns reveals context (Butt et al., 2000, p. 182), students carried out a first worksheet in which they explored the context of three different types of nursing texts. In this worksheet, students had to read scan and compare a nursing manual, a featured article and a research

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article. Specifically, they were asked to identify the type of publication, who gets published in these publications, authors, intended audience, purpose, and topic and its importance in the field. After completing this task, I asked each group to share its answers with the whole class for discussion. The purpose of this worksheet was to activate students' background knowledge of these genres and help them gain familiarity with some contextual variables of nursing texts. This first worksheet is shown in Appendix A: Worksheet 1.

Worksheet 2. After discussing the context features of the three nursing texts, explored in worksheet 1, students did a second worksheet in which they skim read these texts to identify register features. First, students were asked to recall in their worksheet the purpose of each text they had already explored in the previous one, and identify its particular text organization. Then, students identified some register features such as mood, verbs, modal verbs, tense, voice, and pronouns in each sample text. After the completion of this task, students were asked to present to the whole class the similarities and differences they found between the three sample texts in terms of their context and register features. The purpose of this worksheet was to help students realize how differences in context account for differences in register, and gain familiarity with some register features of nursing. This second worksheet is shown in Appendix B: Worksheet 2.

After exploring and comparing some context and register features of a featured article, a manual and a research article in the first two worksheets, I explained to students that texts construe textual, experiential and interpersonal meanings simultaneously (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 119). To help them track these meanings in the language choices made in the texts, I designed and implemented other three worksheets I will describe below. Providing that the macrogenre of research articles is the most valued genre within scientific disciplines (Koutsantoni, 2007, p. 44), these worksheets focused on the analysis of research

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articles (RA). Particularly, I used the article *Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home* as a sample text to show students examples of textual, experiential and interpersonal meanings in this genre, and the article *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture* as the target text for students' independent analysis.

Worksheet 3. For the third worksheet, I introduced students into the textual resources of theme and rheme, and showed them how authors organized texts through theme development. Specifically, I explained to students how writers deploy signposts to guide readers through a text, i.e., they use the first position in a clause to indicate what the message is about (Butt et al., 2000, p. 135). I also explained the notion of rheme as the remainder of a clause after the theme, and showed how writers place elements taken from the rheme of a clause into the theme of the next to develop the text (Butt et al., 2000, p. 142). Examples of textual meanings were provided using the sample RA *Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home*. I also emphasized that this analysis might help readers see the focus, the structure and the purpose of texts.

Then, students read the target RA *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture* and complete a worksheet in which were asked to identify theme and rheme in the sentences of the first paragraphs in each section of the research article, and answer questions about the purpose, genre, focus, and content of each section based on their findings of theme/rheme analysis. The purpose of this worksheet was to help students gain familiarity with textual features of RA. This third worksheet is shown in Appendix C: Worksheet 3.

Worksheet 4. After analyzing textual meanings in the RA, students did a fourth worksheet in which they explored some lexicogrammatical resources used to construe

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experiential meanings. Before doing this, I provided an explanation of participants, processes, and circumstances. Specifically, I explained processes as the events happening in the world, realized in verbal groups; participants as the concrete and abstract things revolving around the Process, realized in nominal groups and prepositional phrases; and circumstances as the wherefores, whens, whys, and hows about the occurring of the process, realized in prepositional phrases, adverbial groups, and nominal groups (Butt et al., 2000, p.46-47). Examples of experiential meanings were provided using the sample RA.

In this worksheet, students were asked to scan the target RA in small groups and identify examples of participants, processes, and circumstances of each section of the text. Then, they participated in a classroom discussion in which each group shared their findings of the experiential analysis. The purpose of this worksheet was to help students gain familiarity with lexicogrammatical resources that realize experiential meanings in RA in the area of Health Sciences. This fourth worksheet is shown in Appendix D: Worksheet 4.

Worksheet 5. After the analysis of experiential meanings, students explored lexicogrammatical resources that realize interpersonal meanings. I explained to them some lexicogrammatical resources such as mood, modals, voice, pronouns, person selection, and appraisals. Specifically, I showed students how writers use these resources to realize the situational variable of tenor. Examples of interpersonal meanings were provided using the sample RA. Then, students were asked to identify linguistic features such as mood, tense, voice, person selection, modal verbs, and appraisals in each section of the target RA. After the worksheet, they participated in a classroom discussion about their findings. The purpose of this worksheet was to help students gain familiarity with interpersonal meanings construed in nursing texts. This fifth worksheet is shown in Appendix E: Worksheet 5.

Final test. Besides the worksheets, at the end of the unit, students were asked to take a final test. This test was intended to assess students' awareness of register features of a RA in the area of Health Sciences. For this activity I used the RA *The Impact of Resistance Exercise Training on the Mental Health of Older Puerto Rican Adults with Type 2 Diabetes*. Here students were asked to identify four excerpts as pertaining to a particular section in a RA; the content of one of these excerpts; processes, participants and circumstances in an excerpt; author's positive or negative position in the text; and author's authoritative, interpersonal, and objective stance in the text. This test is shown in Appendix F: Unit Final Test.

For a summary of all the lessons and the exercises done in each lesson, see Appendix G: Unit Plan. As the unit unfolded, I collected and analyzed data. In the next section I briefly describe the research theories I drew on and the data collection and analysis procedures I follow.

Participants

The reading comprehension level 1 course is offered to nursing students from the first semester but they can take the course any time before graduation. The number of students in the classroom usually varies from ten to thirty-five, and the age of the students ranges from nineteen to twenty-six approximately. The following chart shows the number, ages, and gender of the students who took the modified course that I taught.

Number and Features of Participants

	Age		Gender		Semester	
	19-26	Over 26	Male	Female	4th	other
Number of students	33	2	5	30	31	4

As we can see, of the thirty-five students, thirty-three were between nineteen and twenty–six years of age, and only two were over twenty-six. Most of the students were female, thirty of them, and only five were male. Also, most of them were in forth semester, and only 4 were in higher semesters. Furthermore, the majority felt that their English level proficiency was low, and stated that they had only received English instruction at school before having taken the reading comprehension course at the university.

In the following section I provide a description of the study in which these students accepted to participate. Specifically, I present the research method to which the study subscribes, the data collection instruments I used, and the data analysis procedures I followed.

Research Methods

This research study falls into the category of qualitative single case study. According to Yin (2003) case studies examine a "case" in depth within its "real life context" (p.11). Instead of proving relationships or testing hypothesis, their overall purpose is to provide a detailed description of a particular unit or set of units such as institutions, programs and events (Richards, 2003, p. 20). To achieve these purposes, they rely on triangulation of data, and use earlier theoretical propositions (Yin, 2003, p. 14). Accordingly, this research examined a case in depth (how SFL genre-based theories could help a group of nursing students gain critical awareness of the context and register features of nursing texts in English). It also examined it in its real life context (a reading comprehension 1 course they needed to take as a requirement for graduation). Moreover, it aimed to provide a detailed description of the unit implemented and the extent to which it helped students in the course gain critical awareness of context and register features of nursing texts. Besides, it used triangulation across sources of data (e.g., video recordings of lessons, audio-recordings of teacher-students interactions, individual and small group interviews with students, and samples of students' work), as one of the main analytical processes. Finally, it was guided by theoretical propositions from previous SFL and genre studies.

Data Collection

As in most qualitative studies the four data collection procedures employed to gather evidence of the target phenomenon and explore the research question were video recordings of all the classes I taught as part of the instructional unit, samples of students' work, audio-recordings of teacher-students interactions in the classroom, and individual and small group interviews with students (Richards, 2003). A chart summarizing all of the data collected is shown in Appendix H: Data Collection.

In collecting these data, ethical procedures were followed, i.e., I first sent a letter to the School of Languages, the entity in charge of offering the English courses and my direct employers, explaining the project and requesting written permission to carry out the project in the course I was hired to offer at the Nursing Faculty. Once their approval was secured, I sent a similar letter to the Research Coordinator at the Nursing Faculty requesting their permission (Yin, 2011, p. 113). A copy of that letter is shown in Appendix I: Consent Letter Sent to the Nursing Faculty Chief. Finally, I informed the students of the reading comprehension course about my interest in carrying out this study, and provided them with all the necessary details. Once they were informed of these, I asked them to sign a consent form for their voluntary participation. In this, I explained their identities would be kept anonymous and that there would not be any consequences for them were they to withdraw from the study, among other aspects of the project (Yin, 2011, p. 46). A copy of that consent form is shown in Appendix J: Consent Form for Student Participants. A brief description of each of the sources of evidence is provided below.

Video recordings of classes. Video and audio-recordings were made following Richards (2003). I video-recorded the whole instructional unit. A total of five lessons of four hours each were video-recorded from February to March. The purpose of these video-recordings was to be able to observe those students who were showing progress or having difficulties with the activities, and those who were or were not interested in and engaged with the texts, the readings activities, and the discussions. With this, I wanted to analyze to what extent students were gaining a critical understanding of the context and register features of nursing texts.

Audio-recordings of teacher-students interactions. Teacher-students interactions in the third, fourth and fifth lessons of the instructional unit were audio-recorded. These interactions occurred while students were working in small groups on worksheets 3, 4 and 5, and I was monitoring and providing them with support. I started audio-recording them from the third lesson onward since it was after reflecting on the two previous lessons that I realized these interactions were a potentially meaningful data source, and were not being captured by the video recorder placed in a classroom corner. The purpose of these audio-recordings was to collect the doubts, questions, and difficulties that students had during these activities, which because of the position of the video-recorder, were difficult to capture otherwise. I also wanted to observe which students were showing progress or having difficulties with the texts and worksheets, and analyze to what extent they were gaining critical understanding of context and register features of texts. I recorded a total of ten audio files; each of which contains one or more interactions with students who were receiving support and ranges from three to forty minutes, summing approximately two hundred minutes of recording.

Interviews with students. Based on Hancock and Algozzine (2006)'s guidelines for successful interviews, I designed and conducted interviews with seven students who were showing difficulties with identifying context and register features of texts, and/or developing a critical understanding of these features during the lessons. I chose these students because these were the most easily available out of the eleven students who had shown some difficulties. I also interviewed five students who were showing progress with identifying context and register features of texts, and developing a critical understanding of these features during the lessons. These were chosen because they were the most accessible of the fifteen students showing progress. Six of the eleven interviews were conducted individually and five were done in groups. Group interviews were programmed when students expressed they would feel more confident in their classmates' company, or when time constraints did not allow for the organization of separate interviews.

All the interviews were audio-recorded and took place as follows: three individual interviews were made after lesson four, one group interview (with two students) and one individual interview were carried out after lesson five, and two individual interviews and one group interview (with three students) took place after the final test. The purpose with these interviews was to learn more details about their difficulties and their progress and to find out their opinions on and attitudes toward the reading activities and the exercises. Interviews were semi-structured in nature. The structured questions were the following: what do you think about the activities done? Have you done this kind of reading activities before? Did you find the activity difficult or easy? Why? What do you think you have learnt from doing the activity? Did you find it useful or not? Why? A sample of interview protocol is shown in Appendix K: Sample of Individual Interview Protocol.

Samples of students' work. These consisted of the five reading worksheets students did in small groups during lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and a final test for the unit they took individually the last day of class. As explained in the previous section, Setting, each worksheet guided students' analysis of context and register features of the nursing texts I brought to class as follows: In worksheet 1, completed during the first lesson, students identified context features such as type of text, who gets published and why, authors, audience, purpose, and topic in three texts. In worksheet 2, carried out in the second lesson, they identified and compared register features such as mood, verbs, modal verbs, tense, voice, and pronouns in each text. In Worksheet 3, completed in the third lesson, students read a research article and identified the textual choices of theme and rheme, and answered questions about the purpose, genre, focus, and content of each section. In worksheet 4, carried out in the fourth lesson, they identified the experiential choices of participants, processes, and circumstances in the RA. In worksheet 5, filled out in the fifth lesson, they identified interpersonal choices such as mood, tense, voice, person selection, modal verbs, and appraisals.

Finally, at the completion of the unit, students did a test in which they analyzed four excerpts from a RA to pinpoint the section they pertained to by examining the textual resource of theme selection; to understand each section's content by skimming over the experiential choices of processes, participants and circumstances; and to decode author's positive or negative position in the text, and author's authoritative, interpersonal, and objective stance, by identifying interpersonal choices such as mood, modals, person selection, and appraisals. All five worksheets and the final test were collected for analysis as soon as students completed them. The worksheets and test implemented are shown in Appendixes A through F. The purpose with them was to see to what extent students were

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able to identify context and register features of nursing texts, and to move past identification into critical understanding of these features.

Data Analysis

Adhering to Richards (2003, p. 272)'s aspects of analysis, collected data were analyzed during the development of the instructional unit as follows. I watched the video-recordings of lessons several times to look for parts in which students showed gains and/or difficulties in recognizing context and register features of texts, and taking a critical stance towards texts. To do this, I used the transcription software Express Scribe 5.13, which allowed me to easily handle the digital video files as I transcribed the selected excerpts. Next, I uploaded these excerpts into the software NVivo 9 to make them more manageable (Yin, 2003, p. 110). Likewise, I repeatedly listened to the audio-recordings of teacher-students interactions and transcribed the parts showing students' gains and/or difficulties with identifying textual, experiential, and interpersonal resources as well as with moving past this stage. Then, I uploaded selected excerpts into NVivo 9. A sample of the transcripts made for audio-recordings of teacher-students interactions is shown in Appendix L: Sample of Audio-recordings Transcription. Besides, I transcribed audio-recordings of interviews with students completely, also using Express Scribe, and uploaded the file into Nvivo.

As for students' artifacts, reading worksheets and final tests, they all were coded manually. I recurrently reviewed them to find instances that showed their gaining critical awareness of context and register features of nursing texts or the contrary. To examine the data from these artifacts, I designed tables that summarized students' answers and showed

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which exact students were either having difficulties or doing well in the activities, and which questions and prompts were posing most difficulties to them. To summarize worksheet 5 results, for example, I designed a table containing all the students' names and the different parts of the research article (introduction=I, methods=M, results=R, and discussion=D) and the number of questions posed for each part. Then, I put a check mark on correct answers and crossed out incorrect answers. This allowed me to see how all students did in each of the questions and to draw conclusions as to their difficulties and assets. A copy of this table is shown in Appendix N: Sample Summary Table for Worksheets.

As I uploaded transcripts from video and audio recordings into NVivo 9, and tabulated the results from students' works, I started coding and categorizing data. To do this, I worked both deductively and inductively (Altrichter et al., 1993, p.121; Yin, 2011, p. 94). That is, I had some pre-established categories which accounted for the aspects I was interested in seeing, such as *identifying context features, identifying lexicogrammatical features, identifying textual features, and building a critical response* (See Appendix M: Initial Categories created in Nvivo 9). These initial categories helped me organize the data and start coding. However, as I moved forward in the analysis, I refined them into two main themes: *gaining critical awareness of context features* and *gaining critical awareness of register features*. Later, I divided the second main theme into three subcategories: *students' critical awareness of experiential meanings, critical awareness of textual meanings,* and *critical awareness of interpersonal meanings*. Then, as I read the data again, I allowed two categories to emerge from the category of critical awareness of interpersonal meanings, i.e., *decoding author's authoritative, objective, and impersonal position,* and *unveiling positive or negative attitude towards the content of the text*.

Findings from the four sources of data were compared to see to what extent students had indeed gained familiarity with context and register features of disciplinary texts, especially the macro-genre of research report, and to what extent they had built a critical response towards texts. In the following section, I report the main findings of this analysis.

Findings

This study aimed to find out to what extent SFL genre-based approaches could help a group of nursing students gain critical awareness of the context and register features of nursing texts in English. As discussed in the theoretical framework, part of becoming critically aware of texts is becoming familiar with their context features (i.e., the overall social purpose and text structure) and their register features (i.e., the participants, processes and circumstances constructing *field*; the mood, modality, voice, person constructing *tenor*; and the theme and rheme patterns and cohesions devices constructing *mode*), and understanding how these construct the texts that are privileged in the students' area of study (Derewianka, 2004, p.7; Schleppegrell, 2004, p.83).

The other part is being able to engage critically with texts, i.e., being able to go beyond decodification of the message and identification of texts features, into, for example, the way authors use the lexico-grammatical resources found across the text to display objectivity, impersonality, and authoritativeness (Butt et al, 2000; Luke, 2000), or how the author is showing positive or negative attitudes towards the content of the text (Butt et al, 2000; Schleppegrell, 2004).

Analysis of the data in this study suggests that an SFL genre-based approach is indeed useful in helping students develop not only greater familiarity with the context and register features of academic texts in their area of study, but also a critical response to them. Data also indicate that identification of these features is much easier than the critical understanding of them, and that, of all the register features, experiential and textual ones are harder for students to identify due to the challenging complexity of disciplinary texts

and students' insufficient knowledge of English grammar. Finally, data indicate that to be able to effectively help students with these tasks, instructors require both a lot of practice with this SFL genre-based methodology and sufficient class time with students so that s/he can guide them through the process step by step, fill the knowledge gaps, and apprentice them into new ways of looking at texts. In the following paragraphs, I present evidence of this.

Students' Critical Awareness of Context Features of Nursing Texts

Data indicate that students did not have much trouble with tasks intended to raise critical awareness of context features of nursing texts such as identifying the different types of texts there are in the nursing field, pinpointing the overall purpose, and structure of these texts, or uncovering their main topic or intended audience. Lack of difficulty with these particular context features of nursing texts can be explained by the fact that most students were in fourth semester and they had been in contact with the same type of texts in previous courses. Although these texts were mostly in Spanish and instructors' questions had mainly focused on one of these features, main topic, permanent exposure to these texts made it easy for them to get a sense of their type, audience, purpose and structure. For example, an interviewed student said that they were already familiar with the types of texts and topics of the nursing texts used in the worksheets.

> Berenice: (...) bueno, primero eran temas que conocíamos ya o que al menos tenían que ver con nosotros. Eh…y porque nos ayudaron mucho como a identificar los tipos de texto, al menos en inglés. En español para nosotros es mucho más fácil (...). Entonces identificar ese tipo de textos en inglés es mucho más fácil (Interview, Berenice, 03/08/12).

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[Berenice: (...) well, first of all, they were topics that we already knew or that, at least, they had to do with us. Eh…and because they (the worksheets) helped us much to identify the types of texts, at least in English. In Spanish it is much easier for us (...). So identifying that type of texts in English is much easier.]

Familiarity with these features allowed them to easily compare the three different texts I brought to class, which were samples of different macro-genres in their area, and signal similarities and differences with respect to these context features. However, when it came to discussing who gets published or not in their field, students had a harder time and it was through the activities I brought that they were able to start noticing this.

An example of this noticing on the part of students comes from worksheet 1 in which, after briefly conferencing on who gets published in a research journal, eighteen out of twenty-seven students started to pay attention to authors' qualifications, positions and institutions. Although the other nine students answered this question with the names of the authors, their titles and workplace, demonstrating that they were confusing the name of author with the qualifications needed to get published, these eighteen students were able to determine, for example, that the authors of the three nursing texts read for worksheets 1 and 2 were highly qualified, experienced medical doctors, researchers, nurses and health educators.

Notwithstanding their gains in reflecting about who gets published, only two students were able to reflect on why these people are the ones who get published in journals. These two students wrote in worksheet 1 that health professionals and epidemiologists get published in medical research journals because they belong to important institutional health departments and may do research that contribute to their area.

This was a significant gain for the two students since they were not used to query about authors and their qualifications when reading.

In the following section, I provide a description of how the approach taken helped students gain familiarity with register features that help realize textual, experiential and interpersonal meanings in nursing texts, especially in scientific research articles.

Students' Critical Awareness of Register Features of Nursing Texts

Analysis of the data indicate that even though students were able to see authors' objective and personal positions, and their attitudes toward text content through the analysis of interpersonal resources (e.g., mood, person selection, voice, and appraisal), they had difficulties moving past the identification of experiential (e.g., participants, processes, and circumstances) and textual meanings (e.g., theme, rheme, and thematic progression). In the following paragraphs, I illustrate these findings.

Critical awareness of experiential meanings (field). As I did the activities I had planned for the experiential meanings, I noticed that neither students nor I were ready to get past the identification of experiential choices and go into critical discussions of them. Data indicate that students had difficulties with identifying participants, processes, and circumstances in the clauses they analyzed. These difficulties, along with lack of time and experience on my part, hindered students' opportunities to move into a critical understanding of these resources.

An example of students' difficulty distinguishing circumstances from participants comes from a group of six students wrote that in the clause "*Each year in the United*

Kingdom more than 10 percent of people over the age of 60 years receive a prescription for an antidepressant drug", found in the Introduction section of the RA *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture*, the circumstance was 'prescription for an antidepressant drug' when in fact it is a second Participant in the Process 'receive' (Worksheet 4, Ana, Berenice, Camila, Deisy, Miriam and Raquel).

Another group of four students stated that in the sentence "*We identified all patients within the GPRD with a recorded diagnosis of hip fracture or fractured neck of femur up to November 1999*" in the Method section of the RA, the prepositional phrases *with a recorded diagnosis of hip fracture or fractured neck of femur* and *up to November 1999* were circumstantial information about the process 'registrados' (Worksheet 4, Aleida, Amada, Liliana, and Lucía). However, the prepositional phrases these students considered a circumstance are actually part of a postmodification of the second participant in the clause, i.e., *all patients*.

Difficulties identifying circumstances were also evident during interviews. One of the interviewed students, for example, reported that sometimes she could not clearly distinguish the second participant from the circumstance in a sentence.

> Clara: … Pero eso me enredó.
> Instructor: ¿por qué?
> Clara: porque hay veces no, no, no sabíamos, pues, diferenciar bien. Eh...que después del proceso si el segundo sí era participante o era circunstancia (Interview, Valentina and Clara, 03/12/12).

> [Clara:…But that confused me.
> Instructor: Why?
> Clara: because sometimes we did not know how to distinguish them well. Eh...whether the second element after the process was a participant or a circumstance]

Students' difficulties with identifying processes, for example, were seen in worksheet 2 where they were asked to pinpoint verbs in three nursing texts. Nine out of 20 students who did this worksheet, for example, identified verbal groups such as performed, used, and examined without the preceding form of the auxiliary verb to be. Five of these nine students also identified the word 'fall' in sentences such as "Among nursing home residents, falls may result in fractures, disability, and even death", from the RA *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home*, as a verb when it actually appears as a noun.

In the same RA, another student, Berenice, took the preposition 'before' in the sentence "Given our hypothesis, we chose hazard periods from 2 to 7 cumulative days preceding the fall with corresponding control periods selected 8–14 days before the fall" for a verb. The following excerpt shows how difficult this activity was for her.

> Instructor: ¿tuviste alguna dificultad con esta actividad?
> Berenice: los verbos, para mí es demasiado difícil encontrar los verbos y eso me ayudó mucho.
> Instructor: ¿difícil encontrar los verbos?
> Berenice: en serio.
> Instructor: ¿por qué?
> Berenice: no sé, no sé, de pronto es por el vocabulario. No sé porqué, o sea, para mí es muy fácil escucharlo, entenderlo, leerlo; pero identificar, no, para mí es muy difícil (Interview, Berenice, 03/08/12).

> [Instructor: Did you have any difficulty with this activity?
> Berenice: The verbs, it is too difficult for me to identify verbs and that helped me much.
> Instructor: Is it difficult to identify verbs?
> Berenice: certainly.
> Instructor: Why?
> Berenice: I don't know, maybe it is due to the vocabulary. I don't know why, I mean, it is very easy for me to listen to, understand, and read it, but identifying is not. It is difficult for me.]

Likewise, other seven students stated that in the sentence "Combat veterans and victims of sexual assault have an increased risk of PTSD, ranging from 10% to 30%", from the article *Surviving posttraumatic stress disorder,* the word 'increased' was a verb when in fact it is functioning as an adjective. When asked about the difficulties with this activity, Valentina said:

> Como nunca lo habíamos hecho, nunca habíamos realizado esa actividad, entonces es bastante complicado como identificar eso porque para uno todo es circunstancia, todo es proceso. Solamente los verbos, donde el verbo 'to be', que yo no sé qué, o que terminan en -ed siempre para uno es un verbo (Interview, Valentina and Clara, 03/12/12).

> [As we had never done it, we had never carried out that activity before, so it is too complex to identify that because one thinks everything is a circumstance or everything is a process. Only with the verbs, when the verb is 'to be', I don't know what, or that they end in –ed, one always thinks it is a verb.]

Insufficient knowledge of English grammar made students think that every word ending in –ed was a verb in past tense. This overgeneralization partly explains the foresaid difficulties, since it led them to mistakes in identifying –ed ending adjectives for verbs; and thereby classifying them as processes. As they did this, they had difficulties distinguishing most nominal groups or prepositional phrases containing an –ed ending adjectives from verbal groups, overlooking determiners that usually head a nominal group. Although I explained to students that not every –ed ending word was a past tense form of a verb, and provided some examples found in the texts we read in class, limited class time did not allow practicing sufficiently on this issue so as to help them overcome this difficulty. Further considerations of why students had difficulties with experiential resources, and how lack of class time and experience on my part hindered their opportunity to move past the identification stage, are made in the Discussion section.

Critical awareness of textual meanings (mode). Through the doing of the activity planned for the textual meanings, I noticed that neither students nor I were ready to move past the identification of textual choices and go into more critical discussions of them. Data suggest that students had difficulties identifying theme and rheme in the sentences they analyzed. As they worked in small groups on worksheet 3, I soon realized that this was not going to be an easy task since they were not able to divide large, complex sentences into clauses. To help them do this, I first asked them to underline the processes in the sentences they were to analyze, and highlight the part of each sentence that came up to the first process they had identified. Then, they had to label the highlighted part as the theme. This worked well with my support, but the summary of the results of worksheet 3 showed that students still had difficulties with these resources. Thereupon, I asked them to pinpoint the participants in the Themes they had identified, and explained to them that this would help them see how authors foregrounded some issues, and how these vary from one section to another in the research article.

These difficulties identifying theme and rheme occurred mainly when students were not able to identify verbal groups in the sentences. For example, Miriam, Camila, Raquel and Yolima stated that the first verbal group in the sentence "*The validity of a wide range of drug exposures, including antidepressants, and of diagnoses has been tested within the GPRD and consistently found to be high*" , found in the Method section of the RA, was 'including'; thereby they pinpointed 'The validity of a wide range of drug exposures' as the theme. Here students misidentified the word 'including' as a verb when it actually works as a preposition within the theme.

When asked to identify the theme in the third sentence of the Introduction section of the RA, Lucía, for example, correctly pinpointed the theme but overlooked one part of the verbal group.

> Instructor: entonces la tercera oración... ¿la tercera oración dónde está haciendo énfasis?… el énfasis... ¿qué es lo primero que pone?
> Lucía: la tercera oración aquí…eh... 'las dos clases de antidepresivos' umm... aquí sería 'to have', sería el verbo ¿cierto?
> Instructor: el verbo sería 'appear to have' (Audio-recordings, Lucía and Aleida, 03/05/12).

> [Instructor: so the third sentence…what is this third sentence making emphasis on?… its focus... what is being foregrounded?
> Lucía: the third sentence here…eh... 'the two classes of antidepressants' uhmm... here it would be 'to have', it would be the verb, right?
> Instructor: the verb would be 'appear to have'.]

Leaving the sensory verb "appear" in theme slot led to a misunderstanding of the theme in the sentence "*The two classes of antidepressants appear to have similar efficacy for the treatment of depression (4)…*".

Also, Elena, one of the interviewed students, commented that she had some difficulty identifying main verbs in a sentence and whether there was more than one clause in a sentence containing two verbs. This difficulty seems to have made theme/rheme analysis difficult.

> Pues a ver, yo personalmente me estaba confundiendo mucho con la identificación de los verbos, pero era porque, por ejemplo, yo trabajaba con Valentina, entonces yo le decía: 'este verbo'… 'no, pero éste no es el verbo principal'. Y yo: 'ay, no, yo cómo hago para identificar cuál es el verbo principal en una oración'. Ella me estaba diciendo que si era, pues, que si estaba acompañado del sujeto, entonces ella sabía que ese era el principal, y sino entonces si ya encontró dos verbos, entonces que ya serían dos oraciones (Interview, Elena, 03/12/12).

> [Well, look, personally I was getting very confused with the identification of the verbs, but this was because, for example, I worked together with Valentina, so I told her 'this is the verb'… 'no, but it is not the main verb' she would say. And then I would say: 'oh, no, what can I do to identify which is the main verb in a sentence?' She would tell me that whether it was, you know, whether it was accompanied by a

subject, then she knew that that was the main verb; and if it was not, then if she found two verbs, then there were two sentences.]

Correspondingly, in the following excerpt, Valentina and Elena had difficulty deciding whether the word 'set' was a verb in the rheme or a noun forming the nominal group 'Our data set' in the theme of the first sentence in the Results section.

Valentina: es que estamos perdidas en esta frase.
Elena: es que no la entendemos
Instructor: ah, pero identificaron el verbo. Están bien.
Elena: pero entonces tenemos...
Valentina: tenemos este 'set', encontramos que también es un verbo.
Elena ¿este también es un verbo?
Valentina: ahí no sería el mismo verbo.
Elena: ¿o el verbo es data set?
Instructor: 'data set' es conjunto de datos.
Elena: aaah, o sea que es con 'data set' (Audio-recordings, Valentina, Clara, and Elena 03/05/12).

[Valentina: the thing is that we are lost in this clause.
Elena: the thing is that we don't understand it.
Instructor: uh, buy you identified the verb. You are OK.
Elena: but then we have...
Valentina: we have this 'set', and we found out it is also a verb.
Elena: Is this also a verb?
Valentina: it wouldn't be the same verb there.
Elena: or is 'data set' the verb?
Instructor: 'data set' is 'conjunto de datos' in Spanish.
Elena: aaah, it means that it is with 'data set'.]

One explanation for these difficulties was students' lack of practice with pinpointing the verbal groups in a clause, which is crucial to identify its theme. Another explanation was that complex sentences, mainly those with embedded clauses, were too difficult for students to break down to point out the verbal group in the independent clause and thus identify its theme. Again, even though I explained to students how to identify verbal groups in a sentence, and provided some examples, limited class time did not allow further

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practicing on neither the verbal group structure (i.e., the Event and their auxiliaries expressing Tense, Aspect, Modality, and Voice) nor patterns of clause combination (e.g. embedded and interrupting clauses), which could have helped them do better with the identification of Themes and Rhemes. Further considerations on how limited class time and inexperience on my part are made in the discussion section.

Despite these difficulties, data indicate that this activity helped students identify the purpose, genre, focus, and content of each section of the RA after carrying out the theme and rheme analysis. For example, nineteen students of twenty-seven who did worksheet 3 marked that the purpose of the Introduction section of the target RA was to argue, and that it belonged to the genre of argumentation. Seventeen of these nineteen students answered that the Introduction section focused on a problem rather than on a thing, a process, or a sequence.

Regarding content, for instance, most of the students reported that this section of the target RA was about the relation between the use of antidepressants and risks of hip fractures in nursing homes. Valentina, Clara and Elena, for example, answered in worksheet 3 that the Introduction focused on a problem and what the problem was.

> "describe y da una explicación general sobre el problema tratando de buscar una relación entre los antidepresivos tricíclicos y el riesgo de fractura de cadera"
>
> [It describes and provides a general explanation of the problem, trying to seek a relation between tricyclic antidepressants and the risk of hip fracture].

One reason why this activity in worksheet 3 was easier than identifying theme and rheme was students' familiarity with research articles.

> …estos (los textos usados en clase) tienen conceptos muy difíciles que hasta en el diccionario ni se encuentran porque son muy técnicos. Pero igual me parecieron

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bien. Además nosotros trabajamos mucho con artículos de revista de investigación entonces nos hemos familiarizado con eso (Interview, Paula, 03/15/12).

[these (the texts used in class) have very difficult terms that are not even found in the school dictionary because they are very technical. But I think they were good, anyway. Besides, we usually work a lot on research articles, so we have become familiar with them.]

Another reason was that this activity encouraged students to draw their attention to themes which are the part of the clause that signals what a text is concerned with (Butt et al, 2000, p. 153). When asked in an interview about having carried out the kind of text analysis of theme and rheme before taken this course, Elena stated that the activity helped her focus on what was being foregrounded in the text.

Entonces de acuerdo al lenguaje que se utilice, de acuerdo a lo que le está dando más prioridad o lo que se está recalcando, entonces eso me ayuda para sacar la idea principal. Pero no había tenido en cuenta, pues, entonces mirar qué tipo de verbos, lo qué hay antes o después de éste, no, no lo había tenido antes en cuenta (Interview, Elena, 03/12/12).

[Then, taking into account the language that is used, taking into account what is being prioritized or what is being enhanced, that helps me get the main idea. But I had not considered the types of verbs, what it is before or after them. No, I had not taken that into account before.]

In the following section I present evidence of students' becoming familiar with interpersonal resources and how this familiarity helped them become more critical of the academic texts they read.

Critical awareness of interpersonal meanings (tenor). Data suggest that, notwithstanding some difficulties regarding mood, person selection, and voice, students were able to go beyond identification of interpersonal resources such as mood, person, voice, and appraisal devices to understand how these resources functioned to convey author's authoritative, objective and impersonal positions. They were also able to unveil

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author's positive and negative attitudes towards the content of the texts. Evidence of both gains and difficulties is provided below.

Decoding author's authoritative, objective, and impersonal position. Through the analysis of lexicogrammatical choices such as mood, modality, person selection, and voice in nursing texts, and in spite of some difficulties, students were able to identify author's authoritative, objective, impersonal positions.

In regard to identifying mood, the majority of the students were able to identify declarative sentences as predominant in the three nursing texts, and imperative sentences as being present in the FA and the nurse's manual while absent in the RA. Additionally, students were able to state that declarative mood was used to make descriptions or provide explanation of things and processes, whereas imperative mood was employed to give instructions to the reader.

Four students, however, had some difficulty with mood. Two of them only identified declarative sentences in the FA and nurse's manual although the imperative mood also appears in both texts. A third student did the same for the FA. Another student showed problems with the mood in the RA as she stated that the text should include a hypothesis in the form of a question since it was a research study.

> Berenice: En el texto B, hablamos de la parte de análisis de estadística dijimos que era...ah, bueno, dijimos que el texto también tenía oraciones interrogativas porque era un estudio, obviamente parte de una pregunta y... (Video 3, 02/27/12).

> [Berenice: In text B, we mentioned the statistical analysis section, and we said that it was...uh, well, we said that the text also had interrogative sentences because it was a study, obviously it is based on a question and…]

In spite of students' difficulties with mood, the following excerpt shows an emerging significant interpretation of the use of an interpersonal resource such as declarative mood to establish authoritativeness.

> Instructor: ¿en cuánto al mood, qué tipo de oraciones son las que prevalecen en todo el texto?
> Various students: declarativas
> Instructor: ¿por qué?
> Yolima: porque están contando algo, no están preguntando...
> Instructor: ¿están contando algo?
> Elena: están afirmando
> Instructor: el 'mood' es el mismo en todo el texto ¿no aparece ningún otro 'mood'?
> Yolima: No.
> Instructor: ¿entonces cómo se está mostrando el autor? ¿como alguien que sabe, que no sabe, como alguien experto? ¿Como alguien que domina el tema, que no lo domina?
> Elena: como un experto (Video 5, 03/12/12).

> [Instructor: in regard to the mood, what kind of sentences prevails throughout the text?
> Various students: declarative
> Instructor: why?
> Yolima: because they are telling something, they are not asking questions...
> Instructor: are they telling something?
> Elena: they are stating.
> Instructor: the mood is the same throughout the text, is there not any other mood?
> Yolima: No.
> Instructor: then, how is the author portraying himself/herself? As someone who knows, who does not know, as an expert? As someone who masters the topic?
> Elena: As an expert.]

As for person selection, data suggest that students showed difficulty when identifying author's person selection, i.e., whether the author chose first, second or third person pronouns, in the article according to the results of worksheet 5. These students said that the person selected by the authors in the Discussion section was the first person although this section is predominantly written in third person. Similarly, three of these students stated the first person was predominant in the Results section. Although the first

person pronominals *we* and *our* appear in these two sections of the RA they are not certainly predominant.

This difficulty was explained by the fact that students identified first person in expressions such as 'Our data set included…' and 'Our results show…' found at the beginning of the Results and Discussion section respectively, which led students think of the first person being predominant in both sections. The personal pronoun 'we' indicating the use of first person, in fact, appears only once in the Results and it is not used in the Discussion, which signals the predominant use of third person in these two section of the RA.

Another explanation for this was students' lack of familiarity with this kind of grammatical analysis before the lessons of this study. One interviewed student, for example, said that she had done different grammar exercises in previous English courses.

> Valentina: no necesariamente, pero sí le preguntaban a uno, pues...o sea, para...para ver si, por ejemplo, tiene tercera persona...eh...que tiene la -s en el presente simple. Que tiene la -s, que tiene la -es, entonces hay que saber si es tercera persona que es 'do' y 'does'; entonces identificar tercera persona y lo mismo en el pasado también, para ver si va con 'was' o 'were', algo así. Así ponían, identifique eso y cuál... o sea, dejaban el espaciecito a ver cuál va ahí como para identificarla. Pero no así como, ay, vamos a ver cómo está escrito el texto en esa persona, no (Interview, Valentina and Clara, 03/12/12).

> [Valentina: not necessarily, but one would be asked, I mean, to...to see whether, for example, it is conjugated in third person...eh...that it takes -s in present simple tense. If it has -s, if it has -es, then one should know whether it is third person which is 'do' and 'does'; so identifying the third person. And the same thing with the past tense, to see whether it takes 'was' or 'were', something like that. They would ask to identify this or that... I mean, they left the blank to see what came there in order to identify it. But not like, hey, let's see how the text is written in the person, no.]

Data also show that most of the students were able to identify pronouns recurrently used in the texts and point out to what they referred. For instance, they found that the

pronoun 'we' was used in the RA to refer to the authors and researchers of the study, whereas there was no pronominal reference to the authors in the other two texts. Similarly, the pronouns 'it' and 'they' were identified in the three texts as referring to things or patients.

Nevertheless, students overlooked object pronouns such as 'him', 'them', and 'me', and the subject pronouns 'I' and 'you 'in the FA. Besides, they did not consider pronominals such as 'my', 'his', 'our' and 'their' appearing in the FA and RA. This difficulty was explained by the fact that students were not explicitly asked to find possessive adjectives, and that they were likely to be more familiar with subject pronouns than object pronouns.

In terms of impersonality, not only were students able to identify some instances, but also to link this to authoritativeness. When asked to find expressions of authoritativeness in some excerpts of the RA, students pointed out that the author was impersonal because he/she uses third person or passive voice.

Specific expressions that students identified as conveying impersonality were, for example, "There were no significant relationships between…"in the Results section, and "Data suggest …" in the Discussion section. Students also provided sentences such as "All interviews were conducted in Spanish" and "Data used in theses analyses were collected in…", in the Methods section, as an example of author's impersonal stance achieved through the use of passive voice and third person. Likewise, students identified the absence of the author in the texts as another resource to convey objectivity.

Although most of the students could successfully distinguish active and passive voice in the texts, some of them had problems. In their attempt to state which voice was predominant in each of the three nursing texts read in worksheet 2, two students affirmed

that the featured article (FA) and the RA used mainly active voice disregarding the significant occurrence of passive voice in these texts. One of these two students also showed difficulties with voice when striving to explain the purpose of using passive or active voice in the FA[*].

> Sandra: cuando como el texto, pues, en general como la enfermedad habla en voz pasiva porque no se refieren a alguien. Cuando habla de sintomatología y pues del paciente...eh...estas personas son...Cuando habla pues en general de qué es la...describiendo, pues, como el... la enfermedad es como en voz pasiva, y cuando habla de las personas xxx (indecipherable), y cuando habla de lo que unos pacientes sienten, hacen, las conductas y eso, entonces sí es activa (Video 5, 02/27/12).

> [Sandra: when the text kind of, you know, in general about the disease, it uses passive voice because it doesn't refer to any person. When it talks about symptomatology and, you know, about the patient...eh...these people...when it talks in general about what it is the...describing, you know, what the... the disease is like, is kind of written in passive voice. And when it talks about people xxx (indecipherable), and when it talks about what some patients feel, do, their behaviors and stuff like that, then it is active voice.]

To sum up, students had some difficulties identifying mood, person selection and voice. However, they were able to move past the identification of interpersonal resources such as mood, modality, person selection, and voice, into a critical understanding of these resources in nursing texts. Thus, they were able to reveal authors' objective, impersonal, and authoritative positions in the texts they read. Further reflections on these difficulties and gains are made in the Discussion section.

Unveiling positive or negative attitude towards the content of the text.

Notwithstanding the difficulties with identifying appraisal resources, students in this course were able to recognize some expressions in the RA that convey the authors' positive or negative attitude towards the meanings in the text. For example, the students in the

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[*] The letters 'xxx' stand for a short indecipherable fragment of the videorecording.

following excerpt considered as positive the expression "The major advantage of..." in the sentence "The major advantage of the case-series approach for this study is that the influence of confounding by factors that vary between individuals, such as frailty, bone mineral density, and presence and severity of depression, is removed" in the Methods section in the RA *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture* .

> Valentina: Aquí dice que la mayor ventaja de... ¿sí?...está diciendo que hay una mayor ventaja de eso.
> Instructor: ¿y qué es 'eso'?
> Valentina: los pasos de...
> Instructor: el enfoque metodológico
> Valentina: ¿entonces, sí es 'appraisal'?
> Instructor: o sea, ese método que nosotros utilizamos...
> Elena: tiene más ventaja con respecto a otros (Audio-recording, Interpersonal Level 1, 03/15/12).
>
> [Valentina: here it reads that the major advantage of... yes?...it means that there is a major advantage in that.
> Instructor: and what is 'that'?
> Valentina: the steps of...
> Instructor: the approach
> Valentina: then, it is an appraisal?
> Instructor: that is, that method that we used...
> Elena: …has more advantage compared to others.]

Other students identified author's attitudinal stance as being implicitly in large chunks rather than single lexical items such as adjectives or adverbs. For instance, one student commented that she and her group identified author's negative attitude implicitly in the Introduction section of the RA.

> Camila: Profe, nosotras no la encontramos como tan preciso. Nosotras dijimos que era negativo porque el uso de antidepresivos tricíclicos está asociado con la hipotensión lo que causa las caídas y por ende las fracturas de cadera (Video 5, 03/12/12).

[Camila: Teacher, we did not find it as so clear. We said that it was negatively appraised because the use of tricyclic antidepressants is associated with hypotension which causes the falls and, thus, the hip fractures.]

Difficulties students had with appraisal were related to the fact that, although on some occasions they could identify expressions carrying attitudinal meanings, they omitted to say whether these were positive or negative. Another problem was that students pinpointed experiential and textual resources such as adverbs, deictics, and pronouns as interpersonal resources conveying positive appraisals. This happened mainly because students mistook the demonstrative adjectives and adverbs that they identified in text for appraisals.

Some students, for example, identified adverbs such as 'previously', 'independently' and 'originally', which were more likely to be conveying experiential rather than interpersonal meanings, as being signals of the authors' stance. For instance, in the sentence "The accuracy of hip fracture diagnoses within the GPRD has been investigated previously and been found to be high (13)" in the Discussion section of the RA, some students pinpointed the adverb 'previously' as an appraisal when in fact it realizes a Circumstance.

Other words such as 'this' and 'that', whose meanings in the text were correspondingly experiential and textual, and not interpersonal, were considered by students as appraisals with a positive meaning. As can be seen in the sentence "Therefore, although the case population for this analysis is identical to that in the case-control study …" the word 'this' is a deictic while the word 'that' is a device of reference. This example shows how students had some difficulties identifying resources for appraisal in the RA.

Other students pinpointed nouns such as 'frailty' and 'severity' as portraying a negative position. Although nouns within a Participant or a Circumstance can be used to express point of view (Butt et al., 2000, p. 129), in the sentence "The major advantage of the case-series approach for this study is that the influence of confounding by factors that vary between individuals, such as frailty, bone mineral density, and presence and severity of depression, is removed", these two nouns seemed to be used when referring positively to one aspect of the research method chosen by the researchers. In this case, students had problems with distinguishing positive and negative appraisals because they considered nouns in isolation and did not take into count the whole sentence.

Students' difficulty with unveiling authors' positive or negative stance in a text was also evident in an interview I had with Valentina. To her, the difficulty lied in the fact that authors often hide their stances.

> Valentina: de pronto, a veces, identificar los adjetivos, como ver la posición (del autor), por ejemplo, si lo está haciendo con...muchas veces, o sea, como que la hace muy oculta y uno no sabe si en realidad lo está haciendo como...si él dice que es algo negativo o simplemente lo mencionó porque sabe que es negativo, yo no sé, o sea, que no ponga la posición. Entonces, como que no se ve bien si la posición es negativa o positiva (Interview, Valentina and Clara, 03/12/12).

> [Valentina: Maybe, sometimes, identifying the adjectives, like seeing the position (the author's), for example, whether s/he is doing it with… I mean, very often, s/he kind of does it in very hidden way, and one doesn't really know what s/he is doing it as...if s/he says that it is something negative or simply mentioned it because s/he knows it is negative, I don't know, I mean, that s/he doesn't state his/her position. So, it can't be clearly seen whether his/her position is negative or positive.]

In sum, students were able to pinpoint some appraisal resources deployed throughout the text in the form of specific words or larger chunks of texts, which allowed them to unveil author's positive and negative attitudes. This, however, did not happen

without difficulties since authors are usually very cautious with the use of appraisals in academic texts.

In the following section I summarize the main findings of this study, discuss the importance for university students of gaining critical awareness about the disciplinary texts they read, the drawback of not getting this instruction, and the implications for teaching and research.

Discussion and Conclusions

The main purpose of this study was to find out to what extent SFL genre-based approaches could help a group of nursing students from a public university in Medellin, Colombia, gain critical awareness of the context and register features of nursing texts in English. Findings suggest that, on the whole, students gained awareness of some context and register features of disciplinary texts, particularly scientific research articles, and started to build a critical response towards these texts.

In terms of context features, it was a significant gain for students to be able to reflect on who gets published in medical research journals and other types of publication, and why. For example, students, who were not used to query about authors and their qualifications when reading, were able to pinpoint that health professionals and epidemiologists get published in research journals because they belong to important institutional health departments and may do research that contribute to their area. It was also an important gain for students to be able to see how different kinds of texts (e.g. nursing manuals and research articles), highly valued in the nursing area, accomplish particular purposes through different text structures.

From an SFL genre-based approach, it is important that students become aware of the context in which the academic texts they read are produced. Boosting students' interest in context helps them focus on how texts function as a social practice in their specific discipline rather than on the features of a text in isolation (Hyland, 2004, p.77). If students fail to identify the context features of these texts, they might overlook how members of the discourse community to which students belong employ different genres to achieve different communicative purposes in their discipline (Hyland, 2004, p. 45, 56, 64, 84).   Also,

since context features of texts influence the language choices deployed throughout them (Butt et al., 2000, p.2), students should be familiar with the context before engaging with the text. However, this familiarity is not enough, critical analysis of these features is also important. Students should be able to reflect further on why these authors were the ones to get published, which genres are more valued than others in their discipline and why, which genres are marginalized and why, and who has access to those valued genres and who does not, how the audience influences language choices, and what shared knowledge is assumed.

Furthermore, regarding register features of nursing texts, students were able to identify interpersonal resources (e.g. mood, person selection, modal verbs, voice, and appraisal devices) which helped them decode writer's authoritative, objective, and impersonal position, and unveil writer's attitudes toward the content of the text. This was also a significant gain for students since it helped them be able to unveil the interpersonal meanings that writers display explicitly and implicitly throughout their texts. Mood choice, for example, helps authors construct distinct interpersonal meanings such as conveying an authoritative stance, which contributes to the accomplishment of their texts' specific purposes (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 58). As such, Mood is key to construing different writer-reader relationships of which students should be aware.

As important as mood is person. According to Schleppegrell (2004), person, which is often signaled through nouns, is used by authors to achieve different effects such as showing personal involvement (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 60) or appearing impartial and objective (Derewianka, 2000, p. 79; Schleppegrell, 2004, p.117). Third person in academic texts, for example, helps create the effect of an authoritative voice (, p. 87), by presenting meanings in the text as impersonal (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 98). The use of third person in analytical texts also contributes to the positioning of the author as the 'objective expert'

(Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 61) and the reader as someone who to be informed (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 98).

Modality is another important resource authors widely use to position themselves expressing degrees of certainty, probability, necessity, and obligation. From an SFL standpoint, it is important to have students understand that authors often use modal verbs to display their position in regard to the topic they are developing. When students fail to identify modals, they are most likely to fail to understand the ways authors express opinions, make recommendations and fine-tune their stance towards the meanings in the text through the use of these linguistic devices (Butt et al., 2000, p. 113-114, 118, 127). Also, as this specialized language is thoroughly used in research articles, which are among the most valued genres within scientific disciplines (Koutsantoni, 2007, p. 44), control of it would enable students to participate effectively in the disciplinary practices they are apprenticed into through reading (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 144).

As for voice, a clear understanding of voice in texts is likely to lead students to identify meanings inexplicitly construed in the text. By the use of passive voice, authors can hide the Actors of a Process, thereby drawing their readers' attention to the Event itself or the Goal (Derewianka, 2004, p. 80). In such cases, it is worth inquiring about the author's possible motivation to remove the agent of the action (Butt et al., 2000, p. 53).

Moreover, SFL scholars argue that readers should be able to realize the way in which they themselves are being positioned by the writer's use of appraisal devices so that they can decide whether to accept or reject such positionings (Butt et al, 2000, p. 120-121, 130). If reader students are unaware of the use of appraisal resources in the texts they read, they might probably overlook the fact that they are being drawn to a seemingly natural way of interpreting the content of the text. Therefore, it is relevant for reader students to gain

awareness of "how different positions are constructed in language so that those positions might be challenged or queried" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 19).

Notwithstanding the gains in analyzing context features and unveiling interpersonal meanings, and their importance for students' reading practices, there were some difficulties in the process related to the identification of the register features of experiential (i.e., participants, processes, circumstances) and textual resources (i.e., thematic choices, and theme/rheme patterns); and to moving past this stage into a more critical understanding of these resources. Students, for example, struggled to distinguish circumstances from participants in the clauses they analyzed, and to identify processes as they mistook adjectives and nouns for verbs. They also had problems with dividing sentences into clauses, and pinpointing the verbal groups in each clause, thereby struggling to identify themes and rhemes. These difficulties in the identification stage hindered students' chance of getting into a more critical understanding of these register features.

Reasons for these difficulties lied mainly on my lack of time to provide students with more practice and my lack of experience implementing SFL genre theory. Although I knew SFL genre theories could be potentially powerful tools to help students raise critical awareness of experiential resources in disciplinary texts, I was new to these theories and this was the first time I put them into practice. As a consequence, I focused on helping them identify these resources without helping them see how in disciplinary texts, such as the ones they were reading, participants are usually general categories, concepts and processes in lieu of specific things or individuals; relational processes usually define, classify, compare, evaluate, and explain; and circumstances usually enhance precision and identifying conditions or constraints of processes (Butt et al., 2000, p. 80-81; Derewianka, 2004, p. 43-44; Fang, 2004, p. 341). Neither did I encourage conversations about why this

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is so and how by being what they are participants, processes, and circumstances not only help encode the generalized, systematic, and technical knowledge of their specific discipline, but they also help achieve the purpose and structure of these texts. By not doing this, students missed out on realizing the meaning potentials of the distinctive experiential resources of scientific disciplines.

From an SFL genre-based perspective, it is also important for reader students to be able to identify how information is organized in a text because if students fail to identify theme/rheme patterns in a text, they might not notice the way in which theme choice interplays with text structure, and thus, how authors usually shift themes to signal a move from one stage of the text to another (Butt et al., 2000, p. 154). In addition, by analyzing thematic choices and theme/rheme patterns, reader students can discover the extent to which messages intertwine with the overall purpose of texts, and deal successfully with the meanings of texts, thereby with their concern. Hence, being unable to follow theme development might result in students' overlooking the particular purpose of the text, and grasping its gist (Butt et al., 2000, p.153).

Unfortunately, I had neither the time nor the experience required to help students get past the stage of identification into discussions about how themes in research articles varied from one section to another, and how this thematic variation helped achieve different purposes, foci and structures; how selection of themes showed the writer's perspective; and how information in the rhemes was repackaged in the succeeding themes, and what for. Had I had both, students would have gained critical awareness of how writers exploited textual resources to organize their texts in different ways and display their main concerns along the text.

Other reasons for students' difficulties seemed to have been their insufficient knowledge of English grammar; their lack of familiarity with the dense, abstract and technical disciplinary texts in English; and their lack of previous instruction, scaffolding and practice in using SFL tools to explore context and register features of academic texts.

All of this suggests the need for universities to take some measures in terms of teaching, professional development and research. These measures will be explained in the following paragraphs.

Implications for Teaching

According to Luke (2000, p.454), readers should develop four necessary reading practices: coding, text-meaning, pragmatic, and critical, which can be addressed simultaneously in the classroom. EFL reading instruction in Colombian universities, however, has mainly focused on teaching only two of them, namely, coding and text-meaning practices. To do it, instructors have used different kinds of texts ranging from literary to disciplinary texts and they have focused on teaching general reading skills and grammar.

This study has shown that all four reading practices can be coped with in EFL reading courses at university level, and that other text types which are more discipline specific can be used to allow students to build up their knowledge of the specialized genres and registers most commonly used in their discipline. Therefore, EFL reading instructors can go beyond the regular skimming and scanning activities, the development of general

reading skills, and grammar drills, and move into the examination of relevant context and register features of the disciplinary texts they bring to class.

Luke (2000) asserts that critical literacy embraces not only the teaching of how texts work in particular contexts to achieve social purposes, but it also aims at "moving students toward active position-takings with texts to critique and reconstruct the social fields in which they live and work" (p. 453). If such aim is needed and desired, further activities need to be designed to allow students to develop this critical response to texts. As we saw in this study, critical awareness of language features in academic registers does not come naturally to students (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 153); it has to be repeatedly promoted through carefully planned activities which are based on students' previous experience and background knowledge.

Implications for Professional Development

In order for instructors to successfully teach English reading courses following an SFL genre-based approach as the one proposed in this study, universities need to prepare them in the use of SFL tools to carry out effective text analyses that help them identify and select model texts which epitomize valued academic genres in their students' specific disciplines. Equally important is to provide instructors with sufficient practice in using SFL analytical devices to deconstruct texts and be able to specify what register features their students need to control to tackle disciplinary texts more effectively and critically. This requires that universities bring SFL experts to teach workshops on SFL and its applications

to genre and register analysis to equip EFL reading instructors with the necessary tools to investigate texts and judiciously decide what to teach to their students.

Workshops on SFL genre-based pedagogies need to also prepare reading instructors on how to scaffold their students' critical understandings of academic genres and engage them in critical discussions around texts features. They also need to include instructors' preparation for designing teaching materials and implementing classroom activities to help their students gain familiarity with and critical awareness of genres and registers in their specific disciplines. EFL reading instructors, trained on SFL, should consequently be in charge of designing the SFL genre-based reading syllabus.

In designing the reading syllabus, EFL reading instructors would require the cooperation of content-area teachers in each faculty. The latter should also be trained on SFL tools for text analysis. The universities should then offer workshops to not only EFL reading instructors but also to content-area instructors, regardless of their level of English, to teach them SFL tools to examine the context and register features of disciplinary texts in their area, and allow them to be able to cooperate with the reading instructors in the construction of the reading syllabus. These workshops should be taught by the EFL reading instructors previously trained on SFL, and should result in the development of reading syllabi that respond to the disciplines' specific needs in each faculty.

In preparing these syllabi, several disciplinary text types should be covered and sufficient time and effort should be allowed for the scaffolding of each text type and their particular context and register features. Besides, the disciplinary texts analyzed in the English reading lessons should also be used by content-area teachers to work with their students in their lessons. Thus, the content-area teacher would help students develop content and disciplinary knowledge whereas the EFL reading instructor would focus on

providing students with the scaffolding on the textual, experiential and interpersonal resources (e.g., participants, processes, circumstances, modality, appraisals, and thematic progression) that they need to examine texts. This would certainly make reading texts in English more meaningful.

Nonetheless, these actions would only be possible if universities were committed to having a team of full-time English reading instructors, who were willing to be trained on SFL, go to the different faculties to work collaboratively with content-area teachers, design the reading syllabi, and teach and improve these courses. Otherwise, any university investment in training reading instructors and content-area teachers on SFL would be a waste of time, money and effort. In turn, each faculty would have to encourage their content-area teachers to participate in the workshops and cooperate with the English reading instructors in the development of the reading syllabus. These actions should also be informed by further research studies on SFL genre approaches to reading instruction in the Colombian context.

Implications for Research

One of the questions that stems from the difficulties found in this study is how much more I would have been able to help students read disciplinary texts more effectively and critically, had I had the chance to participate in a well developed professional development program on SFL tools and their classroom applications. This question suggests the need for research that explores what kind of professional development program needs to be offered to reading instructors so that they can become text analysts and be able to apprentice their

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students into critical reading practices from an SFL genre-based approach. To answer this, a pilot study could be carried out to see what difficulties might arise (e.g., English teachers who do not want to cope with disciplinary texts, those who may be reluctant to work with content-area teachers, and those who might find SFL metalanguage too complex) when offering SFL training workshops with experts to the reading instructors who will teach SFL genre-based reading courses, and develop the reading curriculum in collaboration with content-area teachers.

Another question derived from this study is how helpful it would have been to work together with nursing teachers on the selection of texts and the analysis of their features before having designed and taught the SFL genre-based instructional unit. A second pilot study, then, could be done to explore what would be the best way of preparing content-area teachers on SFL tools and engaging them with English reading instructors in the development of the reading syllabus for each faculty. This would allow to see what difficulties might occur (e.g., teachers' lack of time and motivation, reluctance to use English texts in their class, low level of English proficiency, and problems to use SFL tools) in involving content-area teachers in a professional development program to become text analysts of English texts in their disciplines.

Besides, as mentioned in the Findings section, in this study, there were some texts features, mainly at the experiential and textual level, that proved to be more problematic for students, which suggests the need for further research on teaching strategies that help students identify these features and gain a critical understanding of them. Next, if collaboration between EFL and content-based instructors were to be possible, research would be needed to see to what extent the teaching of SFL genre-based syllabi, collaboratively developed by English reading instructors and content-area teachers, could

help university students move beyond the identification of the most relevant experiential and textual resources in disciplinary texts into a more critical understanding of them, and to find out what difficulties, problems, and doubts English reading instructors may encounter when implementing these syllabi.

Finally, although students showed gains in terms of being able to decode writer's positions and unveil their attitudes toward the text content, more information would be needed as to the long-term effects of this SFL genre-based approach in the students' EFL reading practices of disciplinary texts. This suggests the need for both classroom interventions that are sustained, and for cases studies that follow this in time to decide the actual effects of SFL genre-based instruction on students' abilities to read disciplinary texts from a more critical stance.

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APPENDIX A: WORKSHEET 1

Exploring Context of Scientific Texts

Activity 1: exploration of context feature of scientific texts.

Objective: to explore context features of texts such as purpose, type of publication, who gets published and why, intended audience, and topics.

Instructions: Scan the three texts and answer the following questions for each text.

• What type of publication is each of the texts?
Text A
Text B
Text C

• Who gets published in these types of publication? why?
Text A
Text B
Text C

• Who is the author(s)?
Text A
Text B
Text C

• Who is the intended audience?
Text A
Text B
Text C

• What is the purpose of each text?
Text A
Text B
Text C

• What is the topic in each text?
Text A
Text B
Text C

Students' names:

_____

Exploring Language Features of Scientific Texts

Acitivity 2: Finding differences and similarities about texts (purpose, structure, and language).

Objective: To explore and expand students' ability to identify differences and similarities among scientific genres in terms of purpose, text's organization, and language.

Instructions: Scan each of the three texts to find the text's features in the box below.

Text Features		TEXT A	TEXT B	TEXT C
PURPOSE				
ORGANIZATION	(Stages)			
LANGUAGE	**Mood**			
	Verbs			
	Modal verbs			
	Tense			
	Voice			
	Pronouns			

APPENDIX C: WORKSHEET 3

WORKSHEET 3

Text 2: *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture.*

Student: _____   Date: _____

Read the first paragraph of each section and highlight or underline with different colors the Theme and Rheme in each clause. Complete the chart to show how the topic of the text is developed.

INTRODUCTION	THEME	RHEME

According to the thematic choices and theme/theme progression,

- What is the purpose of this section?   To argue   To explain   To give instructions   To describe   Other?
- What type of text is it?   Procedure   Discussion   Argument   Explanation   Other?
- What does this section focus on?   Thing   Process   Sequence   A problem   Other?
- What is it about?

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METHOD

According to the thematic choices and theme/rheme progression,

- What is the purpose of this section?   To argue   To explain   To give instructions   To describe   Other?

- What type of text is it?   Procedure   Discussion   Argument   Explanation   Other?

- What does this section focus on?   Thing   Process   Sequence   A problem   Other?

- What is it about?

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According to the thematic choices and theme/theme progression,

- What is the purpose of this section?

| | To argue | To explain | To give instructions | To describe | Other? |

- What type of text is it?

| | Procedure | Discussion | Argument | Explanation | Other? |

- What does this section focuś on?

| | Thing | Process | Sequence | A problem | Other? |

- What is it about?

RESULTS

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According to the thematic choices and theme/theme progression,

- What is the purpose of this section?

  | To argue | To explain | To give instructions | To describe | Other? |

- What type of text is it?

  | Procedure | Discussion | Argument | Explanation | Other? |

- What does this section focus on?

  | Thing | Process | Sequence | A problem | Other? |

- What is it about?

DISCUSSION								

WORKSHEET 4

Text: *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture.*

Students' names:

Instruction: scan the Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections in the text and find participants, processes and circumstances used in each of them.

INTRODUCTION		
Participants	**Processes**	**Circumstances**

METHODS		
Participants	**Processes**	**Circumstances**

RESULTS		
Participants	**Processes**	**Circumstances**

DISCUSSION		
Participants	**Processes**	**Circumstances**

APPENDIX E: WORKSHEET 5

WORKSHEET 5

Text 2: *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture.*

Student: _____   Date: _____

1. Scan the text and identify the mood, tense, voice, person, modal verbs and appraisals mostly used in each stage. Complete the chart.

STAGE	MOOD	TENSE	VOICE	PERSON	MODAL VERBS	APPRAISAL (+/-)
INTRODUCTION						
METHODS						
RESULTS						
DISCUSSION						

APPENDIX F: UNIT FINAL TEST

FINAL READING COMPREHENSION TEST

Student: _____   Date: _____

1. Skim read the following excerpts from the text *"Transition in care in persons with antidepressant prescription in naturalistic conditions"*, and decide which section of the research report they belong to. Provide evidence for your answer.

SECTION:	EVIDENCE
Excerpt 1 The study sample was 64% female with a mean age of 67.1 ± 7.8 years. The largest proportion of the sample was married (43%) with 21% widowed. Forty-eight percent had a history of smoking. There was a high prevalence of insulin treatment (33%) and use of oral glycemic medications (60%). In addition, participants were taking medications prescribed for mood problems (17%) or other medications known to affect mood (91%). There were no significant relationships between these types of medication measures and GDS and MCS outcomes. Table 1 describes the participant characteristics by randomized group. The PRT and control groups differed at baseline only on the prevalence of insulin and hypoglycemic therapy.	
Excerpt 2 APPROXIMATELY 23.6 million (8%) of the U.S. population have diabetes (National Diabetes Information Clearing House, 2007). Diabetic patients are twice as likely to have depression compared with matched controls without diabetes (Lin et al., 2004). Furthermore, depressive symptoms are more common in individuals with diabetes than in those without (Golden et al., 2008). The impact of exercise on diabetes (Morrato, Hill, Wyatt, Ghushchyan,& Sullivan, 2007), depression (Penninx et al., 2002), and resistance Exercise training with depression (Singh, Clements, & Fiatarone, 1997) has been documented.	
Excerpt 3 The data suggest that older Puerto Rican adults with diabetes experience depressive symptoms and overall poor mental health. At baseline, 51.7% of the sample reported levels of depressive symptoms that are likely to indicate clinically significant distress. Although this intervention was originally designed to improve glycemic control, we have demonstrated that participation in the PRT had the added benefit of significantly improving mental health.	
Excerpt 4 *Study Population* Fifty-eight community-dwelling Puerto Rican men and women older than 60 years of age with type 2 diabetes participated in this study and enrolled as previously described (Castaneda et al., 2002). Participants reported living in the United States an average of 23 (±13) years, and 94% of the participants' language used for speaking and reading in the United States among friends and family was Spanish. Eligible participants were given written informed consent approved by the Institutional Review Board at Tufts Medical Center. Upon enrollment, participants were randomly assigned to PRT or to the control group. Data used in these analyses were collected in interviews conducted at baseline and after 16 weeks postrandomization at the conclusion of the study period. All interviews were conducted in Spanish.	

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2. What is Excerpt 2 about?

3. Find *Participants, Processes, and Circumstances* that help construct he topic in **Excerpt 2.**

Participants	
Processes	
Circumstances	

4. Find expressions in **Excerpt 3** that show authors' appreciation of content. Are they positive or negative?

5. Find expressions in the four excerpts that show how the authors represent themselves as objective, impersonal, or authoritative. Explain your answer.

	Expressions	Why?
Excerpt 1		
Excerpt 2		
Excerpt 3		
Excerpt 4		

APPENDIX G: UNIT PLAN

This appendix shows the objectives, activities and texts for the different lessons that were

implemented carried out in this study.

UNIT PLAN	
Course/level	Reading Competence level 1 – Nursing students
General objectives: Students will… • gain familiarity with cultural and situational variables of nursing texts. • gain familiarity with the register features of nursing texts. • be able to build a critical response to nursing texts. **Specific objectives**: Students will be able to… • be able to identify the overall purpose and structure of nursing texts . • be able to identify the topic, type of publication, who gets published, authors and intended audience of nursing texts. • be able to identify experiential resources of main participants, processes, and circumstances in nursing texts. • be able to identify interpersonal resources of mood, modal finites, voice, person and appraisals in nursing texts. • be able to identify textual resources of thematic progression in nursing texts. • be able to decode how the author positions themselves and their audience in nursing texts. • be able to unveil author's positive and negative attitude towards content in nursing texts.	
LESSON 1	**Exploring the context of nursing texts**
Date	Feb. 13
Length	4 hours
Specific objectives	1. To explore and identify context features of nursing text such as type of publication, authors, who gets published, purpose, intended audience and topic and its importance. 2. To find out similarities and difference between three nursing macrogenres, i.e., a manual, a featured article, and a research article.
Texts	Text A- *Surviving posttraumatic stress disorder* by Lavin, J. (2011) (taken from http://www.nursingcenter.com/pdf.asp?AID=1208811) Text B- *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home*. Berry et al (2011) in Journal of Gerontology: MEDICAL doi:10.1093/gerona/glr113 Text C - *Laryngoscopy from Nurse's manual in laboratory and diagnostic tests* by Morrow, B. (2003, p.363-367)

Students' Artifacts	Worksheet 1: students reported their findings of context features of the three nursing texts such as purpose, the type of text, overall structure, who gets published, the intended audience, and topic.
Procedure	1. Instruction: I explained that texts always occur in context. Then, I introduced some context features such as purpose, audience, subject-matter, and authors that may influence the language used in a text and account for register variation or similarity. 2. Exploring context features of texts: In small groups, students scanned the three texts and found out the type of publication, purpose, authors and intended audience, and who gets published and why. Students also pinpointed the topics and shared their previous knowledge of the topics and the importance these topics had in their field. Students recorded their findings in Worksheet 1. 3. Sharing and discussion: discussing about context features of nursing texts as students reported their findings of similarities and differences in the sample texts. This discussion was guided by the following questions: • What is the purpose of each text? Do they have different a purpose? How do you know? • What is the topic? What do you know about it? How important is it in the nursing area? • What is the intended audience of each text? Are they similar or different? How do you know? • Who are the authors? What are their qualifications and positions? • What type of publication are these texts? Who gets published in this type of publication?
LESSON 2	**Analyzing register features of nursing texts**
Date	Feb. 20
Length	4 hours
Specific objectives	1. To explore and identify some register features of nursing text such as mood, verbs, tense, modals, voice and pronouns. 2. To find out similarities and difference between the three nursing macrogenres in terms of register features. 3. To discuss how register features relate to the context of texts.
Texts	Text A- *Surviving posttraumatic stress disorder* by Lavin, J. (2011) (taken from http://www.nursingcenter.com/pdf.asp?AID=1208811) Text B- *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home*. Berry et al (2011) in Journal of Gerontology: MEDICAL doi:10.1093/gerona/glr113 Text C - *Laryngoscopy from Nurse's manual in laboratory and diagnostic tests* by Morrow, B. (2003, p.363-367)
Students'	Worksheet 2: students reported their findings of some register features such as

Artifacts	mood, verbs, modal verbs, tense, voice, and pronouns in the three nursing texts.
Procedure	1. Instruction: I explained that the register of texts is determined by their context features. Then, I provided examples of how language choices in different texts vary to accomplish its purpose and respond to their particular context. I also explained some register features such as mood, modals, types of verbs, tense, voice and pronouns. 2. Finding similarities and differences among texts: In small groups, students scanned the three texts and looked for the similar and different features they had in terms of text's purpose and organization, and language. Specific things they looked for are mood, verbs, modal verbs, tense, voice, and personal pronouns. Students completed Worksheet 2 to record their findings. 3. Sharing and discussion: discussing about register features of nursing texts as students presented in poster a summary of their findings of similarities and differences in the sample texts in terms of register features. The discussion was guided by the following questions: • What mood do you find in each text? Which one is predominant? • What modal verbs are used? What do they mean? • What types of verbs are used? What tense is predominant? • What voice is mostly used? Is passive voice predominant? Why actors are omitted or displaced in passive clauses? • What pronouns are used? What do they refer to? Do they make texts personal or impersonal? • How these resources respond to context? How do these register features relate to text purpose and structures?
LESSON 3	**Identifying the textual meanings of a nursing research article**
Date	Feb. 27
Length	4 hours
Specific objectives	1. To identify theme and rheme in each section of a RA. 2. To identify theme development in each section of a RA. 3. To identify the genre, purpose, focus and topic of each section of the RA.
Texts	Text 1 (sample text). *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home*. Berry et al (2011) in Journal of Gerontology: MEDICAL doi:10.1093/gerona/glr113 Text 2 (target text). *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture*. Hubbard et al., 2003. American Journal of Epidemiology. Vol. 158, No.1. DOI: 10.1093/aje/kwg114
Students' Artifacts	Worksheet 3: students reported their analysis of textual resources such as theme and rheme in the sentences of the first paragraphs in each section of the target research article, and answered questions about the purpose, genre, focus, and content of each section.
Procedure	1. Exploring the genre of RA's (whole class): I explained the general purpose, schematic structure, and the purpose of each stage in Text 1,

through guidance and questioning such as what is the purpose of RA's? Why are they so valued in health sciences? How are they usually structured? What function does each section have? What is the tone of the language used? Besides, I drew students' attention to the multigeneric nature of scientific research articles.

2. Instruction: I explained that texts construe textual, experiential and interpersonal meanings simultaneously. Then, I started introducing the resources of theme and rheme, explaining that authors use the first position in a clause to signpost what they want to talk about, and drop their message in the rest of the clause. Then, I showed students how authors developed the topic in Text 1 using these resources.

3. Identifying textual meanings (Group work): In small groups students read the first paragraph of each section of Text 2 and identified theme and rheme in each sentence to complete Worksheet 3. Then, students answered questions about purpose, genre, focus, and topic of each section of the RA in this worksheet.

4. Sharing and discussion: discussing about thematic development of each section in Text 2 as students reported their findings of theme and rheme. The discussion was guided by the following questions:
   - Based on theme analysis, what is the focus of each section?
   - Are there any items reiterated in the themes? Which ones? Are there any items reiterated in the rhemes? Which ones?
   - What differences can you see between themes of the different sections in Text 2?

LESSON 4	Identifying the experiential meanings of a nursing research article
Date	March 5
Length	4 hours
Specific objectives	1. To identify main participants in RA's. 2. To identify the type of processes in these texts. 3. To identify circumstances in RA's.
Texts	Text 1 (sample text). *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home.* Berry et al (2011) in Journal of Gerontology: MEDICAL doi:10.1093/gerona/glr113 Text 2 (target text). *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture.* Hubbard et al., 2003. American Journal of Epidemiology. Vol. 158, No.1. DOI: 10.1093/aje/kwg114
Students' Artifacts	Worksheet 4: students reported their analysis of experiential resources such as participants, processes, and circumstances of the each section of the target research article.
Procedure	1. Instruction: after analyzing textual meanings in RA's, I introduced the metalanguage of participants, processes and circumstances as resources that help construe experiential meanings in texts. I explained each of these resources and showed how to identify them in Text 1. I also pointed out that these resources help reader explore the topic and the worldview presented by authors. 2. Identifying experiential meanings: In small groups, students scanned

	Text 2 and identified main participants, processes and circumstances in each section to complete Worksheet 4. They also found similarities and differences between sections in terms of these resources. 3. Discussion: in a whole-class discussion, students shared their findings in Worksheet 4 and discussed about them based on the following questions: • What types of processes are used? Are they appropriate for the genre? • What types of participants are used? Are they appropriate for the genre? • What circumstances are used? What do circumstances say about the processes? • Did you find similarities or differences between the sections of the text?
LESSON 5	**Identifying the interpersonal meanings of a nursing research article**
Date	Mar. 12
Length	4 hours
Specific Objective	1. To analyze mood and modal finites in each section of a RA. 2. To identify person selection in each section of this type of text. 3. To identify active and passive voices used in each section. 4. To identify resources for appraisal in a RA. 5. To decode how the author positions themselves and readers in the text through the use of interpersonal resources. 6. To unveil authors' positive or negative attitudes through the use of appraisal resources.
Texts	Text 1 (sample text). *Antidepressant Prescriptions: An Acute Window for Falls in the Nursing Home*. Berry et al (2011) in Journal of Gerontology: MEDICAL doi:10.1093/gerona/glr113 Text 2 (target text). *Exposure to Tricyclic and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants and the Risk of Hip Fracture*. Hubbard et al., 2003. American Journal of Epidemiology. Vol. 158, No.1. DOI: 10.1093/aje/kwg114
Students' Artifacts	Worksheet 5: students reported their analysis of interpersonal resources such as mood, tense, voice, person selection, modal verbs, and appraisals in each section of the target RA
Procedure	1. Instruction: I explained that authors use lexicogrammatical resources such as mood, modal finites, person selection, voice, and appraisals to construe objectivity, authoritativeness, and impersonality as well as to convey their attitudes. I provided some examples of how these resources helped authors position themselves and readers, and convey attitudes in Text 1. 2. Identifying interpersonal meanings: Students scanned Text 2 and find samples of mood, modals, voice, person, and appraisals in each section. They also reflected on how these resources may have been helping the author positions themselves and readers and whether their

	attitudes toward content were positive or negative. 3. Sharing and discussion: discussing about interpersonal meanings of each section in Text 2 as students reported their findings of mood, modals, person, voice and appraisals. The discussion was guided by the following questions: • What mood is predominant in each section of the text? What does it tell us about the author's stance? • What modals are used? In which sections of the RA are they more likely to be used? Why? What do the authors use modals for? Are modals absent? In which section? Why do you think they are not used? • What pronouns are used? What do they refer to? Are pronouns different between sections? Why? • Is the text written in first or third person? How do you know? Where and why authors use first person in the text? • What is the authors' stance? Impersonal or personal? Subjective or objective? What resources are used to convey impersonality, objectivity and authoritativeness? • What appraisals are the authors using to convey attitudes? Are they positive or negative?
LESSON 6	**Final Test**
Date	Mar. 14
Length	2 hours
Objective	to assess students' awareness of contextual, textual, and lexicogrammatical features of a RA in the area of Health Sciences
Text	*The Impact of Resistance Exercise Training on the Mental Health of Older Puerto Rican Adults With Type 2 Diabetes(Lincoln, Shepherd, Peggy and Castaneda-Sceppa, 2011)*
Students' Artifacts	Final test: Students identified excerpts as pertaining to a particular section in a RA; the content of one of these excerpts; processes, participants and circumstances in an excerpt; author's positive or negative position in the text; and author's authoritative, interpersonal, and objective stance in the text

APPENDIX H: DATA COLLECTION

This appendix summarizes the data collection procedures carried out in this study.

Data collection			
Instrument	**Purpose**	**Lesson**	**Date**
1. Video recordings of classes	To see to what extent students were able to discuss about context and register features of nursing texts, and unveil author's positionings and attitudes; and also see what difficulties they have in achieving these objectives.	1	Feb. 13
		2	Feb. 20
		3	Feb. 27
		4	Mar. 5
			Mar. 12
		5	Mar. 12
Instrument	**Purpose**	**Artifact**	**Date**
2. Samples of students' work	To see if students have developed the reading strategies to identify context and register features of nursing texts, and read texts critically, and to see what difficulties they have faced.	Worksheet 1	Feb. 13
		Worksheet 2	Feb. 20
		Worksheet 3	Feb. 27
		Worksheet 4	Mar. 5
		Worksheet 5	Mar. 12
		Test	Mar. 15
Instrument	**Purpose**	**Lesson**	**Date**
3. Audio recordings of teacher-student interactions	To see what difficulties students had with the analysis of context and register features of nursing texts, and their ability to unveil author's positionings and attitudes, during the worksheets.	3	Feb. 27
		4	Mar. 5
		5	Mar. 12
Instrument	**Purpose**	**Participant**	**Date**
4. Interviews with students	To find out more details about their difficulties and their progress and to find out their opinions on and attitudes toward the reading activities and strategies.	Individual	Berenice	Mar. 8
		Individual	Lucía	Mar. 9
		Individual	Elena	Mar.12
		In group	Valentina and Clara	Mar. 13
		Individual	Sara	Mar. 13
		Individual	Liliana	Mar. 15
		Individual	Paula	Mar. 15
		In group	Raquel, Lorena and Alejandro	Mar. 16

APPENDIX I: CONSENT LETTER SENT TO THE NURSING FACULTY CHIEF

Medellín, agosto 29 de 2011.

Dr(a). _____
Jefe del Centro de Investigaciones.
Facultad de Enfermería.

Cordial saludo,

Yo, Iván Darío Flórez García con C.C. 78751112 de Montería, docente de inglés vinculado a la Escuela de Idiomas de _____ como catedrático, solicito su aprobación para llevar a cabo un estudio investigativo en mi curso de *Competencia Lectora en Inglés* nivel I, grupo 01 de la Facultad de Enfermería, con horario los lunes 8-12. Este estudio hace parte de los requisitos del programa de Maestría en la Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Universidad de Antioquia que actualmente curso y tiene como propósito promover la *lectura crítica de textos académicos mediante una pedagogía basada en la Lingüística Sistémica-Funcional y la Teoría de Género.*

La realización de este proyecto incluirá la preparación y el desarrollo de una unidad temática en torno a la lectura de textos académicos, la realización de talleres de lectura, la grabación en video de las clases que compongan esta unidad, y entrevistas cortas con algunos de los estudiantes del grupo. La información recolectada durante el proyecto sólo será leída por mí y por mi asesora, la Dra. Doris Correa, docente de la Escuela de Idiomas de la Universidad de Antioquia. Sin embargo, los resultados de dicho estudio podrán ser publicados en revistas nacionales o internacionales y en conferencias relacionadas con la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras.

La identidad y privacidad de los participantes y de la institución será protegida mediante el uso de seudónimos en todos los informes, conferencias o publicaciones que se hagan sobre la investigación. Además, al final de la realización del estudio de investigación dejaré una reporte de los resultados del estudio investigativo, como evidencia del trabajo realizado, el cual espero resulte de gran utilidad para el mejoramiento de los cursos de Competencia Lectora en inglés que ofrece la institución.

Agradezco su colaboración con este proyecto y, en caso de estar usted de acuerdo, le solicito muy comedidamente su autorización por escrito. En caso de tener alguna duda, puede contactarme al teléfono y la dirección electrónica que aparecen abajo.

Atentamente,

Iván Darío Flórez García
Estudiante - Investigador
Maestría en la Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad de Antioquia
florez.ivan@gmail.com
Celular: 301 427 21 42

APPENDIX J: CONSENT FORM FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Consentimiento Escrito de la Participación Voluntaria de los Estudiantes Participantes en

el Estudio

Yo, _____, identificado con cédula número _____, acepto voluntariamente participar en el proyecto de investigación *"Desarrollo de la lectura crítica de textos académicos mediante una pedagogía basada en la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional y la Teoría de Género",* entendiendo que:

1. El propósito de este estudio es explorar en qué medida una pedagogía crítica basada en la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional y la Teoría de Género puede ayudar a los estudiantes a leer textos académicos de forma efectiva y crítica.

2. Iván Darío Flórez García, profesor e investigador, me podrá entrevistar un máximo de tres veces durante este proyecto acerca de mi percepción de las actividades realizadas y la metodología empleada en el salón de clases. Las entrevistas se llevarán a cabo en el lugar y hora de mi conveniencia y no tendrán una duración de más de una hora.

3. Las entrevistas serán grabadas con el propósito de facilitar el análisis de los datos. La información suministrada en dichas entrevistas será leída sólo por el investigador y su asesora y será archivada bajo un seudónimo con el fin de proteger la identidad de los entrevistados.

4. Por lo menos cuatro clases serán grabadas en video con el fin de recoger evidencia de la metodología implementada y de la interacción de los participantes. Estas grabaciones de video sólo podrán ser vistas por el investigador y su asesora, y por ningún motivo serán publicadas y/o difundidas a través de medio audiovisual alguno.

5. El investigador podrá recolectar y archivar los talleres que yo realice durante el desarrollo de este curso. Sólo el investigador y su asesora podrán leer dichos talleres.

6. Parte de la información que suministre durante las entrevistas, las grabaciones de video y los talleres podrá ser incluida en una publicación nacional o internacional o en una conferencia dictada por el investigador de este proyecto. En ambos casos, mi identidad será protegida mediante el uso de un seudónimo a menos que yo autorice al investigador a usar mi nombre.

7. Mi participación en este proyecto es voluntaria y por lo tanto puedo retirarme de él cuando lo desee sin ninguna consecuencia para mi calificación en el curso.

8. Si tengo alguna pregunta, puedo contactar al investigador al siguiente correo electrónico y números telefónicos: florez.ivan@gmail.com, Teléfono: 263-8627, Celular: 301-427-2142.

Firma del estudiante: _____ Fecha: _____

APPENDIX K: SAMPLE OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

PROTOCOLO DE ENTREVISTA INDIVIDUAL

Proyecto "Desarrollo de la lectura crítica de textos académicos mediante una pedagogía basada en la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional y la Teoría de Género"

El propósito de esta entrevista es indagar en qué medida la instrucción y las actividades realizadas en la clase de Competencia Lectora en inglés han influido en tu capacidad para comprender textos. Cabe recordar que la información que suministres en esta entrevista será leída exclusivamente por mí y por mi asesora la profesora Doris Correa de la Escuela de Idiomas de la Universidad de Antioquia. La entrevista no tardará más de una hora.

Individual Interview # 1	Fecha: March 8th
Hora: 11:00 am	Lugar: Faculty of Nursing
Participante(s): Berenice	

Exploring experiential meanings

Dime cómo te pareció la actividad de lectura que hicimos con los tres textos en la que debías identificar el propósito, la audiencia, el autor, el tipo de texto, el tipo de publicación, y el tema.

¿Habías hecho esta actividad de lectura antes?

¿Tuviste alguna dificultad con la actividad? ¿Te pareció difícil? ¿Por qué?

¿Qué aprendiste de esta actividad?

¿Te pareció útil o poco útil? ¿Por qué?

Exploring interpersonal meanings

Hablemos ahora de la actividad en la que debías identificar el mood, tiempo verbal, los verbos modales (el tipo de oraciones, el tiempo verbal, los verbos modales, la voz, los pronombres). ¿Cómo te pareció?

¿Habías hecho esta actividad de lectura antes?

¿Tuviste alguna dificultad con la actividad? ¿Te pareció difícil? ¿Por qué?

¿Qué aprendiste de esta actividad?

¿Te pareció útil o poco útil? ¿Por qué?

Te gustaría agregar algo más o tienes alguna pregunta sobre el proyecto.

Gracias por la entrevista, por la información suministrada y por tu tiempo

APPENDIX L: SAMPLE OF AUDIORECORDINGS TRANSCRIPTION

CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS

Lesson 4: Identifying the experiential meanings of a nursing research article.

Date: March 12

Description of interactions: Short conversations about *Participants, processes, and circumstances* in a research article between the instructor and some students while they were doing worksheet 4.

Purpose: to see what difficulties or gains students were having identifying experiential features.

Selected transcript 1 - (00:14) to (01:01)

Me: primero, la circunstancia me dice algo más sobre el verbo ¿cuál es el verbo ahí?
Margot: y Rafael: identificar
Me: ¿quién identifica?
Margot: Nosotros, pues,
Me: ¿qué identifica?
Margot: los pacientes en la base de datos de...GPRD
Margot: o sea que el participante es uno solo
Me: este es uno, el verbo identificar implica dos: quién identifica y qué identifica.

Selected transcript 2 - (01:56) to (02:34)

Me: no porque lo que me está diciendo es sobre el paciente
Margot: Por eso paciente es participante y está diciendo algo de ellos.
Me: sí, pero la circunstancia no me está diciendo nada sobre el verbo identificar.
Margot: o sea sí es una circunstancia para el paciente, no para el verbo.
Me: Me describe al paciente, pero no me dice nada del verbo.
Margot: o sea que las circunstancias pueden hablar del proceso o del participante.
Me: me da información adicional del proceso.

Selected transcript 3- (03:04) to (04:02)

Sara: en la primera oración...
Me: ¿en el abstract?
Sara: ajá
Me: ¿y cuál es el verbo ahí?
Sara: 'está asociado'
Me: ¿y por qué no aparece acá? Proceso o verbo.
Sara: es que nosotras sabemos que, o sea, el proceso es el incremento que tuvieron en el riesgo. O sea, el proceso sería el incremento, es el riesgo de usar medicamentos antidepresivos. El proceso no es 'está asociado' sino realmente el proceso es el incremento en el riesgo para la fractura de cadera.
Me: Bien, estamos de acuerdo: el incremento es un proceso. Pero en la oración ¿qué es lo que hace las veces de proceso?...'estar asociado con'.
Sara: entonces, entonces,...pero es igualmente proceso con el uso de antidepresivos y en la circunstancia la fractura de cadera.

APPENDIX M: INITIAL CATEGORIES CREATED IN NVIVO 9

WORKSHEET 5 Identifiying lexicogrammatical features (interpersonal level)

STUDENT	I 1	2	3	4	5	6	M 1	2	3	4	5	6	R 1	2	3	4	5	6	D 1	2	3	4	5	6
Amanda	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD
Aleida	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sandra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	AD
Paola	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Angela	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Raquel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clara	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓
Liliana	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Agusto	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Alejandro	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Rafael	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Margot	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Jazmin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Berta	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓
Nina	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Valentina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓
Cindy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nancy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lorena	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Sara	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	AD
Lucia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD
Deisy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Camila	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ana	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓
Miriam	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Marta	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Noelia	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Elena	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓
Fanny	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	AD
Elsa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Berenice	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	AD	✓	X
Yolima	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Julia	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP

$Diff.$

3 sts with MOOD (1)

3 sts with TENSE (2)

No one with VOICE (3)

11 sts with PERSON (4)

No one / 0 sts with MODALS (5)

22 sts with APPRAISAL (6)