

UNIMORE LM, LACOM a.a. 2016-2017.

Lettorato , September 2016.

Welcome LACOM 1 students!

Students who are already matriculated should sign up for *lettorato* via the DSLC Dolly portal. Students who have **NOT** yet matriculated can sign up for *lettorato* **only when they have done so**. In the meantime, please work independently on your language skills so that you are ready to join class. Below are some strategies to improve your language. Do these activities 3 or 4 times a week.

READING

Do a web search for articles on topics connected with your study area. e.g. in *The Economist*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The New York Times*, etc. You could also look at company websites for in-house journals.

1. Once you have found an article that interests you, read it first for **meaning**.
 - What is the purpose of this article?
 - Who is the intended audience?
 - What is the main idea?
 - What examples or sources does the writer use to support their ideas?
 - What new information have you learned from this text?
2. Next, process it for **language**, by asking yourself the following questions:

Understanding structure

- How does the writer link up the ideas in the text? Underline the connecting features and think about their function: do they
 - *Sequence* information?
 - Provide *additional* information?
 - Give *contrasting* information?
 - *Highlight* information,
 - *summarize* information,
 - *concede* a point, etc.

Use it or lose it!

Take notes and contextualize useful chunks in sentences of your own.

Expanding your vocabulary

Look for **subject-specific vocabulary** e.g. *Global economic crisis*

- **collocation**, e.g. 'the company has *adopted* a firm *policy on* absenteeism'. 'This is a *management decision*'
- **compound nouns** to package information and concepts effectively, e.g., *Higher education system, rising oil prices, gun crime, university access*
- **how opinion is expressed**,. Is this explicit e.g., *I believe that*, or implicit, *it seems clear that* ?
- **vocabulary or adverbials** used to comment on the topic, e.g., '*Inevitably* this compromises the quality of the product'
- **AUDIENCE REACTION: If there is a comments section below the article, visit it and gauge the reaction of the readers. Look for how the readers express their point of view! Be aware of the register used here...**

Use it or lose it!

Record these examples and use them in your own writing or speaking

LISTENING

Watching TV programs and films develops your listening fluency but it does not necessarily give you exposure to spoken discourse on specific subjects with a range of educated speakers. **Radio**, instead, focuses your skills on content-rich discourse without the aid of visual cues. Listening to short radio clips regularly will provide meaningful input and a wide range of voices and interpersonal language which you can use for language improvement. A bigger challenge, but an advanced listening skill!

Use a search engine to find **BBC Radio 4**. Browse the contents to find topics relative to your field. Try out a couple of clips until you find something interesting. Listen to a clip twice, first for meaning, and then for language improvement. Follow the steps outlined for reading, but focus particularly on interpersonal language, e.g. how participants in the programme express opinions, agree or disagree politely, interrupt, change topic, emphasize or qualify a point, and so on.

Again, note this down and try to use them in your own speaking and writing.

By doing these activities with authentic reading and listening texts, over time you should improve your language and vocabulary, and acquire discourse knowledge too. We suggest Radio 4 programs **Today and Business Daily**, but there are many more

We look forward to working with you on developing your language skills during the academic year!

Siân Morgan and Liz Long, CLA.