EXPLORING DIGITAL LITERACIES IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION TO

DEVELOP CRITICAL READING

BY

CHRISTIAN ALEXIS GONZÁLEZ LOPERA

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Master's Thesis Committee
 Raúl Alberto Mora Vélez, Ph.D., Chair
 José Aldemar Álvarez Valencia, Ph.D.
 Tuba Angay-Crowder, M.Ed, Ph.D. Candidate

AFFIDAVIT

I, Christian Alexis González Lopera, hereby declare that this master's thesis has not been previously presented as a degree requirement, either in the same style or with variations, in this or any other university.

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Christian González

CHRISTIAN ALEXIS GONZÁLEZ LOPERA

Abstract

This thesis explored the use of mobile applications to foster critical reading with University students in a pre-service teaching English/Spanish program through the use of a set of multimodal workshops and online reading comprehension activities. This study focused on relevant issues to 21st century literacies such as: digital literacies, mobile learning, critical reading and online reading comprehension. Data for the study included blog entries on a Tumblr feed, where students would express through memes, drawings, comments, videos and word maps. Findings indicated that participants displayed a strong sense of creativity and artistic expressions combining the use of new digital literacies and old literacies. The use of online reading comprehension enhanced affinity group spaces, along with their online reading comprehension skills, and the discovery of metacognitive learning strategies encrypted in the development of these mobile learning activities. In addition, other important skills regarding online reading comprehension also contributed to the critical reading of the participants. These elements involved informational text comprehension processes such as: Prior Knowledge, inferential reasoning, self-regulation and affective variables. Future implications can be reflected on the creation of a mobile app that fosters critical reading in second language learning. And the adoption of new educational policies that allow students to make a good use of their smartphones for educational purposes.

Key words: critical reading, mobile learning, digital literacies and online reading comprehension.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Displays

Chapter One

Strengthen Connectivity and Empowerment of ICTs in the City of Medellín: A Double Edged sword

Technology has become an important part of our human history. It shows us how humans have become more practical by making their every day practices easier and by transforming the world in which they live. Societies have used technology to build and conquer cities around the world. It has taken us from one place to another shorten distances, cross the seas, and conquer the air and the space with the invention of means of transportation.

As Wankel and Blessinger (2012) claimed, we live in an age of technologies where learners are accustomed to living in a digital, globalized, and pluralistic world attached to an array of information technologies. Technological devices could bring the use of audiovisual materials that allow learning become more meaningful with the students. Internet became a necessity for schools and universities, as a tool for getting information and knowledge, permitting new ways of interaction and new ways of learning. Consequently, there have been important changes in the way we study, in the way we communicate and see the world. According to Kalantzis and Cope (2005), information and communication technologies have changed the way the human interact and learn causing a revolution in education.

These changes are occurring especially in the way we learn, we use our creativity to build, and how technologies facilitate learning as knowledge producers, and not just like recipients of knowledge. As Cope and Kalantzis (2007) argued, the essential change is not technology but its capacity to assist people to produce knowledge instead of consuming technology. Besides, schools have to change the way in which they develop curriculum

1

content (Kalantzis and Cope, 2005): they need to reconceptualize what learning is, because learning is not just about curriculum content. Schools need to think beyond about the meaning of literacy, knowledge, and our purposes for learning.

In Colombia there have been several programs and policies to promote the proper implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the city of Medellín. For example, Medellín Digital in 2007-2012 (Grupo de Trabajo de Medellín Digital, 2008) intended to expand the network in the educational institutions to park where people can connect wirelessly. One of the specific objectives of Medellín Digital was to "enhance the access conditions and coverage of ICTs in the city"[1]. By 2008, the program aimed to strengthen the connectivity and infrastructures in places like: educative institutions, government sites, etc. (Grupo de Trabajo de Medellín Digital, 2008). Furthermore, this program also intended to look for new ways of connectivity, ICT appropriation and network expansion in the educational communities.

Nowadays, this program is called "Medellín Inteligente" (Smart Medellín). The main objectives of this program include: (a) to transform the city of Medellín into a city to the service of quality of life of its citizens through the good use of the ICTs ; (b) to empower the citizens inside their own environment through the improvement and access of their environment in order to enhance their quality of life.

However, this empowerment through technologies and free access to internet mobility from public and private educational institutions may be harming the students' learning processes. New models of cell phones and electronic devices enable students to faster access to Internet from educational settings.

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[1] All quotes originally in Spanish, my translation.

Smartphones, if not used properly, may become double-edged swords. Students use them for chatting, getting access to social networks, listening to music and other non-educational purposes where they can connect for free, "Cell phones are typically seen as a problem and a challenge in the classroom" as Gilroy (2004, in Tessier, 2013, p. 20) cautioned. Therefore, free access to the networks inside institutions plus the use of cell phones and other devices can be a problem when students bring them into class. Nevertheless, what if one could implement learning strategies for meaningful use of smartphones for educational purposes? What if we looked at smartphones from a multimodal communication perspective? What if we considered the multimodal nature of smartphones as tools for knowledge making, where we can take real advantage of the new digital meanings and possible new ways of learning that are yet to be discovered? As Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996/2006) claimed "Multimodal communication is comprised of 'modes,' forms within various sign systems that carry the meanings that a social collective recognizes and understands. For example, photography, paint, watercolor and clay are modes within a sign system of art" (p.11).

With this in mind, and agreeing with Mora and colleagues (Mora, Martínez, Alzate-Pérez, Gómez-Yepes, and Zapata-Monsalve, 2012), teachers can focus on every day social, economic and political issues while keeping up with the current technologies that are available in our context that make learning processes more interacting and foster critical thinking among the students. In this sense, teachers can use the Internet to access global information to empower students to reflect on current topics that affect and shape their lives and transform their realities as Kellner & Share (2009) posited. These considerations are part of the following study on the use of free downloadable smartphones and tablet applications (from here on known as apps or mobile apps) that can be useful for second

language learning. Through these apps we can motivate and encourage students to study and reinforce knowledge in their free time, during school time and at home, since some students have a very personal interest and adherence to these kinds of devices. This MA thesis intends to foster reading strategies through mobile apps to develop critical reading in pre-service students. I also intend to propose a model to develop critical reading to help language teachers realize the advantages of using mobile apps. I proposed the following research question.

How can smartphone apps contribute to student engagement in second language critical reading?

Conceptual Framework

In order to understand and depict better the elements that converge into this research study, this framework relies on a series of concepts. In this section, I described the terms that I have used and I discussed how I used them for analytical purposes. The following display 1.0 illustrates the organization of the elements of this conceptual framework in order to foster critical reading.

Display 1. Fostering critical reading through digital literacies.
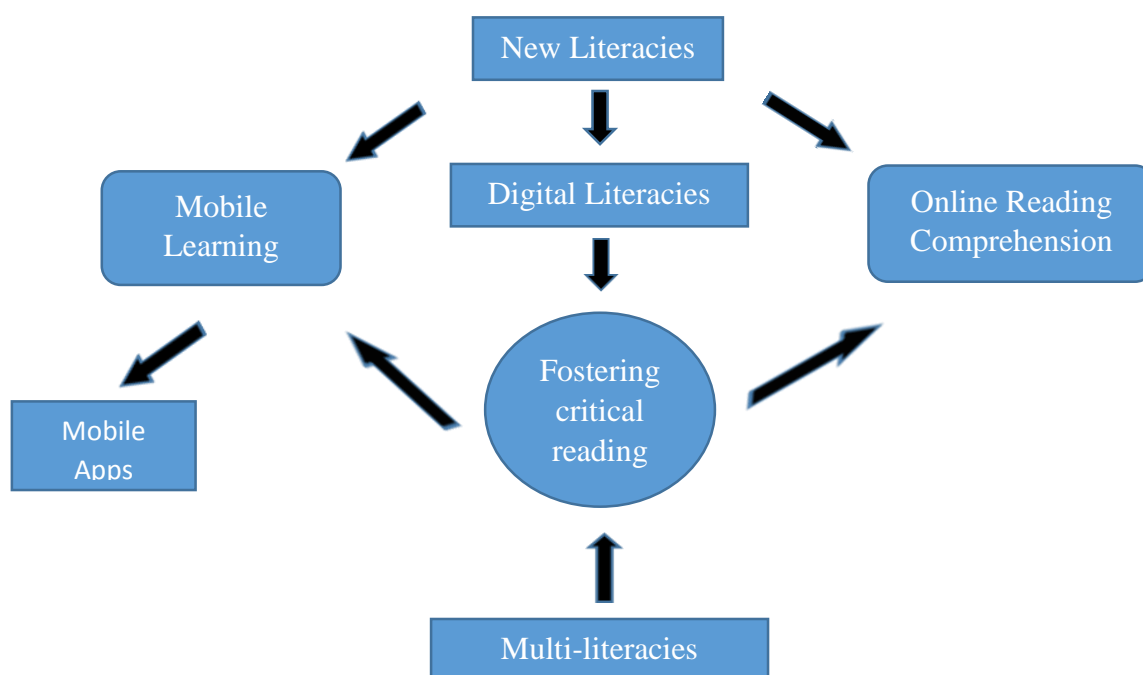
New Literacies

From Street's (2003) point of view, literacies are social practices that involve reading and writing inside a culture. In this sense, "Literacy practices, then, refer to the broader cultural conception of particular ways of thinking about and doing reading and writing in cultural contexts"(p.79). This implies that reading goes beyond printed text, and involves understanding those texts located in our social and cultural contexts, including, our streets, mass media, public transport, public advertisement, signs, icons, symbols, and even in every piece of art that people see every day. This view of literacy practices as those beyond traditional education is the basis of my study.

New literacies also involve the use of new skills and ways to learn to read in digital environments: As Karchmer (as cited in Abdallah, 2008) explained, "Students nowadays increasingly involved in electronic environments, they need new skills and strategies that they have not been familiar with; the ability to communicate through graphics, hypertexts, and other information resources necessitates the development of new literacy skills" (p.5).

These new social practices entail new forms of producing and exchanging meanings, and new ways of reading and writing a text including sounds, images, animations, texts and video unlike conventional print literacies mostly mediated by typographic forms of text. As Lankshear and Knobel (2011) claimed, these new social practices involve changing ways of producing, distributing, and exchanging texts in electronic and online environments.

The post-typographic new literacies can illustrate the advances of the new information era. However, one remarkable distinction about the use of the new literacies, it is the fact that they are more participatory (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011; Roccanti, 2014), and distributed rather than conventional literacies that were considered more like author centric and more individual. From the point of view of Lanshear and Knobel (2011), new literacies "are often more 'participatory', more collaborative, and more distributed: less 'published, less 'individuated', and less 'author-centric' than conventional literacies" (Lanshear & Knobel, 2011, p.29)

New literacies in formal education settings and learning processes, one can relate them to affinity spaces, these affinity spaces enable learning and foster collective affinities and common interests among a group of learners and communities. According to Lanshear and Knobel, (2011) "affinity spaces instantiate participation, collaboration, distribution and dispersion of expertise, and relatedness" (p.68). Gee (2002) also claimed that digital technologies foster affinity group connections that are embedded into common interests and shared norms without caring about race and class affiliations.

Digital Literacies

In the 21st century, Internet has caused the rise of new kinds of emerging literacies. Due to the impact of globalization, the Internet is the defining technology for literacy and learning in this century. In addition, as Leu and colleagues (Leu, McVerry, O'Byrne, Kiili, Zawilinski, Everett-Cacopardo, & Forzani, 2011) stated, the Internet has become the most efficient system in humankind history which requires new skills to read, to write, and to communicate efficiently. In the modern world, digital environments and technologies have strongly changed and impacted conventional literacies in schools "the Internet and other ICTs are increasingly an important source of information and require new literacies to

exploit their informational potential" (Leu, et al, 2011, p.5) such new literacies require

different skills in order to construct meanings in new ways, managing, interacting,

participating and collaborating with different genres and modes that are embedded into

these digital worlds. According to Grunshka and Donelly (2010), digital technologies:

> Have profoundly changed notions of literacy, knowledge and communicating
>
> altering the cultural construction of life in contemporary society and impacting on
>
> the classroom. Learning and communicating in the world of rapid will inevitably
>
> require the ability to produce meaning using combinations of digital technology,
>
> knowledge and skills. (p.84).

The use of electronic gadgets requires developing a set of abilities or skills for their

proper use. Most of these gadgets have very similar usage patterns such as: touching

screens, menus of applications and set of functional buttons among others. These new

electronic devices also feature Internet, and therefore, access to the world of information,

such access of the world of the information also requires new ways to read and new ways to

write. As Karchmer and colleagues (Karchmer, Mallette, Kara-Soteriou, & Leu 2005)

pointed out, the Internet is one the most important tools for obtaining and accessing

information. It has completely changed literacy, requiring new forms of writing, reading

and skills that not previously needed with printed books were the norm.

Online Reading Comprehension

Finding relevant information inside digital environments and especially on the

Internet requires abilities and skills that can help people to find and identify good

information from other information that might be useless. Hence, reading online requires

several reading practices such as reading online texts to find specific information and

evaluate it with critical lenses, synthetize information and transfer it to others. In this study

7

reading online was an important characteristic for the participants that got involved, constantly looking for specific information through the different online applications, participating, collaborating and also critically analyzing the information that they found online, sharing it and communicating it to the rest of the participants in order to foster critical reading and other kinds of learning that can be found with the use of apps with smartphones and other kinds of electronic devices. Online reading comprehension can be defined and consists of:

> A process of problem-based inquiry across many different online information sources, requiring several recursive reading practices: (a) reading online to identify important questions (b) reading online to locate information, (c) reading online to critically evaluate information, (d) reading online to synthesize information, (e) and reading online to communicate information (Leu, et al 2011, p.7).

In addition, there are some important considerations that one should keep in mind when reading online, as opposed to traditional print reading comprehension. First, online reading comprehension is self-directed (Leu et al, 2011) and offers different levels of hyper-textuality which means that information can be linked or intertwined with a huge quantity of nodes of information of the same kind that can be found by external or internal hyperlinks, unlike print books that just are limited and fixed in text, in addition to this they do not have access for searching linked information that is being read. However, in some print books authors might offer you this possibility. Another important characteristic of digital literacy is the term hyper-modality (Lemke, 2002) which refers to the organization and the interactions between images and words, units of sounds and units of texts which can be found on digital environments. According to Lemke (2002) "Hypermodality is one

way to name the new interactions of word-, image-, and sound-based meanings in hypermedia, i.e. in semiotic artifacts in which signifiers on different scales of syntagmatic organization are linked in complex networks or webs" (p.300)

Online reading is also interactive, as readers can have access to external links, interactive diagrams, and real-time videos where the reader decides where to go next or what to read next. (Coiro and Dobler, 2007). Reading online allows readers to construct meaning and knowledge at the same time thanks to the versatility and genres for communication and social interaction that virtual environments offer such as: photos, audios, videos and memes. And what is more important about online reading it is its sense of ubiquitous learning bringing new affordances that everyone can learn at anytime, anyplace, anywhere.

Online reading comprehension involves the following practices as they were mentioned above, but a deeper explanation is necessary in order to better understand the concept:

Reading online to identify important questions. When people read online it is because they are looking for answers to a question or to a problem framed at the beginning of their online quest. "We read on the Internet to solve problems and answers questions. How a problem is framed or how a question is understood is a central aspect of online reading comprehension" (Leu, et al., 2011, p.7).

Reading online to locate information. When reading online people are constantly looking for answers to a question or a problem. What really matters, however, are the necessary skills to locate and find the information that can fulfill one's needs, locating that information requires reading skills and certain strategies like writing the correct keyword in the searching engine pages like Google, Yahoo, Bing, among others in order to find reliable

information on the Net. According to Bean and Dagen (2012), "A critical component of successful Internet reading is the ability to read and locate information that meets one's needs" (p.301).

Reading online to critically evaluate information. According to Leu and Colleagues (2011), reading online requires the ability of analyzing information with a critical scope the large quantity of information that is available on the Internet. This critical evaluation of the information is more about identifying the level of reliability of the source of the information, so reader can question himself: Does this information come from a reliable source? Can I trust in this source of information? Is this the right information that I need? However, the most common problem that the reader can find is that knowledge is sometimes subjective, theories vary and change. Therefore, the reader can find himself with this dilemma finding the right information and the universal truth.

Reading online to synthesize online information. Internet is a source of unlimited information. Therefore, another important ability when reading online is the ability to classify and synthesize the exaggerated amounts of information that can be found on the Internet. (Leu, et al., 2011)

Reading online to communicate online information. As Leu and Colleagues (2011) stated, another important characteristic of reading online is that people can communicate to share information with others; hence, people can communicate and use the different means and media that internet provides and this requires not only just reading but also dialogue, and discussion about the information that has been found online.

Reading online also requires a skillful inter-textual ability to read critically and sort information within the different genres and modes (sounds, images, animations, video, etc.) embedded when reading online. According to Myers, Hammett, and McKillop,

10

Analytic reading of print online will remain important in order for people to thoughtfully examine, critique, and filter extensive amounts of information. However, critical analysis than the page in that it requires skillful inter-textual reading, not only across texts but also across genres and modes (Myers, et al., 1998, as cited in Leander & Lewis, 2008, p.61).

There are other characteristics that differentiate online from offline reading comprehension; the first one is that online reading comprehension is a self-directed text construction process. That means that readers can construct meaning reading the web pages that they want and gathering the information they want in order to solve a problem or a question. Another characteristic is that readers can choose their sequence of readings, they can follow a path of different links, and not all readers can follow the same sequence or path of readings they choose among the vast information that is available on the Internet. Finally, the last characteristic is that online reading comprehension is a collaborative social practice because readers can construct meaning and knowledge; they can share this knowledge and construct meanings from each learner's perspective.

Critical Reading

When people read a text, they are in contact with the meaning and the constructs and social context of a text. According to Blanton (1994) and Kress (2003), "Readers view a text through a socially located and individual perspective, and in order to comprehend a text, readers must decipher it through the lens of their surrounding social relations and interactions" (Blanton, 1998; Kress, 2003 as cited in Toth, 2011, p.42).

Critical reading is then a process of analysis and construction of mental representations of meanings that involve the understanding of a social context from different perspectives; from its conceptions, ideologies, social imaginaries and social

relations of power that are embedded into a social community. According to Arce (2013), critical reading is conceived as a conscious process in the construction of a meaning representation, from a socio-cognitive matrix that gathers conceptions, opinions and imaginaries of a community. In other words, the interpretation of the reading is always weighed up by cultural optic and historically determined and that reproduces social relations of power and axiological structures of a community.

In this study, the use of internet was fundamental in order to undertake the processes of reading through online text and to discover what other kinds of learning besides of critical reading can be fostered through the use of electronic applications and smart-devices. Hence, reading online texts, from news applications, such as: CNN News, Fox News, among others can be used so as to discover if they can really foster critical reading and re-thinking about new ways of learning.

Critical reading is a process of recognizing not only what a text says, but also how the reader exposes and interprets the subject matter. It is also an analysis of a text, describing it, understanding the author's arguments and what the author intends to say or wants to portray. Critical reading also means self-interpretation, as the reader must create his/her own perspective about what he/she is reading, involving and retaking previous knowledge, so in this way the reader can understand better or interpret in different ways according to the reader's context.

In addition, critical reading is about the use of some strategies in order to understand better a text and to develop critical reading ability. In this research study, the use of the following strategies might provide a good context where participants can be engaged into critical reading. This is important to understand all these processes in order to make an appropriate use of them and to plan the activities that are going to be used in the

data collection process. The following seven critical reading strategies can help learners to develop critical reading abilities. According to Salisbury University (n.d.) some critical reading strategies are:

Previewing. Previewing refers to learning about a specific issue before reading it and knowing about it. Therefore, readers have previous knowledge knowing in advance what the text is about, and how the text can be organized. Readers can also identify the topic before reading it by reading the headings of a text. It involves learning about something before reading it.

Learners can used this strategy to choose specific readings on trending and current topics. Therefore, participants can learn about these topics before reading them, using introductory materials that can engage them and give them a previous overview before reading online.

Contextualizing. Contextualizing involves positioning a text into a historical, biographical and cultural context. This strategy can be useful to recognize a text in its historical and biographical settings. Some possible questions for analysis include: when was the text written? What possible cultural, social, political, and economic causes have influenced the author's position? What could be the possible social, political, economic implications of a reading?

Questioning to understand to remember. This strategy consists on asking the readers to elicit questions related to the main ideas of a text; this helped the readers to have a deeper understanding and a better analysis of the purpose of a reading and its main ideas. This strategy is quite important because through questions, learners can scan and look for the right answers of a text. This strategy can also help learners to socialize and share the main ideas using questions.

Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values. This strategy is useful to make readers challenge their positions, beliefs and attitudes towards the topics that are being reading. It is about reflecting on the main ideas of an article, and how this article can affect or benefit readers' lives.

Outlining and summarizing. Understanding better the entire structure and the main ideas of a text is important. Readers can accomplish outlining and summarizing the main ideas of a reading using their own words. Outlining and summarizing can be a good strategy to have better insights about the structure of a text.

Evaluating an argument. It refers to accepting or refusing an author's; assumption, belief, or point of view; readers can either refuse or accept them.

Comparing and contrasting related readings. This strategy refers to reading different authors about the same topic; this can help readers to identify different perspectives and points of view.

Mobile Learning

In the beginning, mobile learning was related to the concept of electronic learning, both as an extension of it, and as an approach that contained the same contents and characteristics of electronic learning. In spite of this misconception mobile learning became an approach that had its unique features, differences and limitations. According to Parsons and Ryu (2006),

> Mobile learning (M-learning) is an approach to electronic learning (E-learning) that
> utilizes mobile devices. Although in some cases M-learning is seen as simply an
> extension of E-learning, just another channel for delivering the same content, in fact

quality M-learning can only be delivered with an awareness of the special

limitations and benefits of mobile devices. (p.1)

Mobile learning is distinguished by its many benefits such as: allowing students to gain more access to the Internet and to the huge amount of information that can be transformed into knowledge, mobile learning is also characteristic by its ubiquitous learning, in that sense people can learn anytime, anywhere, anyplace, but this learning is only possible if the mobile device is always connected to a wifi Internet connection. This characteristic is mainly related with concept of ubiquity in learning. As Parsons and Ryu (2006) claimed, that ubiquity means that the content of learning can be located anyplace despite the place where the learners are.

Another two important characteristics of mobile learning are personalized learning and learner's autonomy. Personalize learning refers to the process of learning that includes features of individuality, difference, diversity and learning styles. According to Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler (2007),

By personalized learning, we mean learning that recognizes diversity, difference

and individuality in the ways that learning is developed, delivered and supported.

Personalized learning defined in this way includes learning that recognizes different

learning styles and approaches (though perhaps this should not be related too

literally to the established literature of 'learning styles', see Coffield et al. 2004),

and recognizes social, cognitive and physical difference and diversity. (p.184)

Since the learners can have access to their mobile devices and hence learners can plan and set their learning goals, mobile learning in addition can foster learners' autonomy. "Some of the benefits of m-learning are increased access, convenience, anytime learning,

anywhere learning, as needed learning, quick reference and troubleshooting, personalized

learning, autonomous learning, and social media integration" (Stable, 2013, p.22).

Furthermore, mobile learning can be implemented in formal or informal settings, in

formal setting means that learners are under an instructional approach in a determine

educational environment unlike informal learning is a matter of learning independently, it is

when you want to look for something by yourself, and it can be considered an spontaneous

act where the learner is interested in something they like, and enjoy learning. From the

point of view of Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler (2007),

> Informal learning may be deemed to occur spontaneously and independently of
>
> formal education – but in mobile learning the term is frequently used to describe
>
> forms of learning where the technology supports a specific activity that has been
>
> designed in advance with a particular user group in mind. (p.186)

Finally, situated learning and authentic learning are other two features of mobile

learning, situated learning concerns to the place where learning is actually happening

especially in meaningful environment embedded to the learning practices. For example a

group of doctors learning in a hospital, meanwhile, authentic learning refers to engaging

learners into real-authentic world problems and tasks that help students to explore topics

they like and discussing them with others,

> By authentic learning, we mean learning that involves real-world problems and
>
> projects that are relevant and interesting to the learner. It means that learning should
>
> be based around authentic tasks, that students should be engaged in exploration and
>
> enquiry, that students should have opportunities for social discourse, and that ample
>
> resources should be available to them as they pursue meaningful problems.
>
> (Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler 2007, p. 185)

Mobile Apps

Mobile apps are pieces of software available in mobile phones, smartphones, tablets and other technological devices with access to internet connection. In addition, they can be downloaded from different Application stores, such as Google Play, AppBrain, AppsFire, AndroidPit, GetJar, etc. Mobile apps can help to improve and facilitate the everyday digital tasks. According to Salz and Moranz (2013), a mobile app is

A piece of software specifically designed to run on a mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet. The app is usually downloaded and installed by the device owner, and once installed, a mobile app typically operates in tandem with the device's native, or installed, operating system (OS). Very often, this allows the app to take advantage of some of the mobile device`s features. (p.14)

Participants used mobile apps through this research study, since they played an important role for locating the online texts, posting entries in a virtual blog, and creating memes.

Chapter Two

Concerning Digital Literacies

In this chapter I have gathered literature from previous studies related to digital literacies in the field of Education. Inside this field I have found different studies that can be divided into four line categories that were specially related to my research study and the conceptual framework items. I described how in these studies mobile computing devices and smartphones, among other technologies, are re-conceptualizing the idea of ubiquitous learning, depicting a pedagogical and critical perspective and their affordances in educational settings.

I also described how some authors have taken advantage and highlighted the importance of using digital text and the new skills that can entail the processes of online reading comprehension. Finally, I took a quick glance to the future research lines that these authors suggest and what other studies need to be covered specially in the context of digital literacies in Colombia.

The search for literature. During my search for previous studies done before related to my research project I have classified four lines of literature that are intertwined with the digital literacies topic, these research lines of studies are: Mobile learning, new literacies and internet technologies, online reading comprehension and mobile apps in language learning. In this extensive search for previous studies related with my research project, I conducted a careful online search through some databases and websites such as EBSCO and SCIENCE DIRECT, JSTOR, Academía.edu, and Initiativefor21research.org. I also reviewed some of the major journals in ELT in Colombia, such as Ikala, Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, PROFILE and HOW. I used different keywords to find literature related to my research study, keywords like: mobile apps in second language

learning, developing critical reading through mobile apps, and the use of smartphones in second language acquisition, etc. I excluded some literature due to its irrelevance and few contributions on methodological and conceptual ideas.

After this search, I found 53 articles that fit my search profiles. I read and summarized all these articles. This chapter will highlight my summaries and analyses.

Mobile Learning

From the point of view of Macconatha, Praul and Lynch (2008). mobile learning, or M-Learning "is a relative new tool in the pedagogical arsenal to assist students and teachers as they navigate the options available in the expanding distance world" (p.1). In the literature, there are several studies that discuss the use of mobile devices in educational settings such as students' perceptions about using mobile devices, mobile apps for second language learning, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) studies, and pedagogical benefits in language learning.

Students' perceptions in educational settings. I found some studies that examine the students' perceptions about the use of mobile devices in higher education. Sawaya (2013) explored the students' perceptions about learning with mobile computing devices. This exploratory study was done with 28 undergraduate students of an introductory educational psychology course. The main aim of the study was to obtain a deep understanding of the affordances that mobile computing devices can provide, and analyze what students perceive or interpret as learning when using smartphones. Another similar study by Gikas and Grant (2013) showed us the students' perceptions with mobile computing devices and social media. This research was done with the students of three universities across the US, where the students have been exposed to activities integrating mobile computing devices and cellphones for about two semesters. Group interviews were

19

applied to collect data. Data analysis was inductive and the findings revealed two specific

themes that were positive and negative perceptions of the students about the use of mobile

computing devices and cellphone for learning and teaching.

Just like the previous studies, Al-Fahad (2009) explored the students' attitudes and

perceptions towards the effectiveness of mobile learning in a University context in Saudi

Arabia. This quantitative study indicated that mobile technologies are more flexible,

allowing students to have more freedom to learn at any place, at any time. Mobile devices,

the author argued, can also improve communication between students and teachers. I also

learned that mobile learning can support micro-learning, or how people can learn more

effectively if information is broken into smaller units making easier the learning process.

Another study by Rossing and colleagues (Rossing, Miller, Cecil, & Stamper, 2012) also

examined the implications of using iPads on a College campus, and the opportunities as

well as limitations that University perceive when using mobile technologies in learning

environments. This research made a deep analysis of many features of mobile learning such

as: access and availability of information, sharing and collaboration, novelty, learning

styles, and convenience and usability, all these aspect were analyzed regarding to

opportunities and limitations of using iPads inside classrooms. A similar study in Australia

(Kinash, Brand, & Mathew 2012) proved that students' perceptions of mobile learning were

neutral when they were asked if using mobile technologies can enhance learning

performance, and that they felt in some degree motivated when using them.

Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) experiences. Bestwick and Campell (2010)

questioned the best way to teach the technologically savvy children of today. They claimed

that one way to learn best is through interacting with others so as to construct knowledge.

With this study, I learned that mobile technologies can permit that teachers and students

collaborate each other building knowledge through the Internet via social networks allowing virtual and physical interactivity. A case study in a primary school by Song (2014) investigated how students advance and understand content knowledge support by mobile technologies for seamless science inquiry learning environment with six graders in a school in Hong Kong. This study contributes to the literature of mobile learning because it uses a BYOD program in combination with an inquiry-based pedagogical practice, this combination can have great results on students learning content.

Nelson (2012) reflected on the benefits and the pedagogical advantages of incorporating BYOD models in suburban school systems. He examined issues such as the easy access students have to information, collaborative learning, empowerment through technology and issues like equity, teacher training and high cost and risks supporting BYOD models. A similar article by Stable (2013) also discussed the benefits and pedagogical affordances of adopting BYOD policies in educational settings considering that autonomy is the most important benefit. However, this article emphasizes in the design and organization for a successful a BYOD model bearing in mind design considerations such as file type, organization, length of learning content, culture and language, connectivity, motivation, and assessment.

Pedagogical benefits in language learning. Tuttle (2013) discussed how mobile devices can transform their modern language classes and how students' learning can become more active, more personalized, more contextual and more culturally authentic. He also claims that mobile devices can foster language communication unlike discrete traditional language class. One very positive aspect that I learned from this article is how a traditional language class can be reconfigured by using mobile activities that promote real communication through meaningful real world contexts, like for example students asking

21

and answering questions in the target language using textbook contents, by texting each other using their mobile devices, describing a daily routine taking pictures of the activities that they during the day, searching on the Internet for two real houses in sale that they would like to live, describing the positive and negative features of them instead of using outdate static pictures of a textbook. I agree with the pedagogical affordances that smartphones can offer to 21st century educational settings. Mobile devices can intertwine out-of-school worlds and in-school contexts, making connections with the students' daily lives, their own realities, and their affective and personal interests. Being aware of these real life, virtual life, and school life spheres can really mark the difference in order to trigger meaningful learning processes in second language acquisition.

Bromley (2012) pointed out that using smartphones can help students to acquire new vocabulary, develop digital skills, and writing skills. Besides, I learned that with the use of smartphones students can get motivated and scaffold comprehension with the reading of informal text. I-Jung, Chi-Cheng, and Jung-Chuan (2012) focused on the effects of presentation mode on mobile language learning, this study explores the effects of adding texts in PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) as learning tools for improving English Listening comprehension skills.

Ally, Tin, and Woodburn (2011) researched on the use of iPhones to access grammar and vocabulary lessons with elementary French University students. Results from the pre and post-training tests suggest that the interactivity of the format in which the lessons of French were designed was fundamental to show positive results of their basic knowledge of French. During this search I also found a study that approaches mobile learning from the affordances of mobile social networks in order to provide learning environments for the second language or foreign language acquisition. Al-Shehri (2011)

indicated the affordances and potential of social networking in order to create an effective L2 English learning environment. Here I learned that using mobile social networking played a transformational role encouraging learners to a more collaborative and enjoyable learning process, and to a more student-.centered instruction.

Online Reading Comprehension

It is important to explore the literature related to online reading comprehension due to this study relies on activities that fosters online reading comprehension using mobile technologies. It is necessary to make a distinction to the work of Leu and colleagues (Leu, McVerry, O'Byrne, Kiili, Zawilinski, Everett-Cacopardo, & Forzani, 2011) which approaches online reading comprehension as a problem-based inquiry process across different online information sources that require several reading practices such as: reading online to identify important questions, to locate information, to critically evaluate information, to synthetize information and reading online to communicate information. In this group of studies it is also important to highlight the work by Coiro (2012), who discussed the future directions of the new literacies of online reading comprehension. She addressed the challenges of integrating digital texts and tasks into the literacy curriculum and explains that instructional models, such as Internet reciprocal teaching (IRT) can help to the development of online reading comprehension skills.

Rowsell and Burke (2009) show us two case studies of digital reading practices, two participants with different characteristics and from different settings were involved in this research, they analyzed two web sites with the multimodal framework discourse by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) which is focused on four steps to develop multimodal texts, those steps are discourse, design, production and distribution. One thing I learned from this study is that reading skills are more intrinsically related to the comprehension of design and

personal interests that students may show for the websites. I also found that teachers need to understand that reading print texts is very different from reading digital texts and that reading digital texts depends more on how digital texts are designed, and it requires a set of skills and a semiotic understanding from the multiple genres that digital literacies bring to the table.

Dwyer (2010) explored the basic skills and strategies of struggling readers in disadvantage schools in Ireland when they carried out an online Internet inquiry process, to scaffold participants to develop effective online reading comprehension and information seeking skills, and to explore the affective, cognitive and social dimensions when working on groups to develop online reading skills. I learned that children's role changed inside the learning ecology (classroom curriculum, teaching pedagogies, relationships between teachers-students and students and students) from being recipients of knowledge to be more active and meta-constructors of knowledge as they develop online reading comprehension skills becoming more collaborative and responsible. Future research suggests providing insights for the development of more formal assessments tools of the new literacies within the online information seeking cycle. As well as the development of critical literacy strategies and whether explicit instruction embed strategies in which children read online.

Developing strategies for online reading comprehension. Kingsley (2010) conducted a quantitative study to examine the impacts of intervention lessons designed to improve online reading skills with 443 fifth grade students from a Midwestern, suburban school. An experimental group was taught new literacy skills such as identifying question, locating, evaluating, synthetizing, and communication information within an online learning environment. The statistical results of the study suggested that the experiment

group of students showed an important enhancement over the control group on two online reading skills such as locating and synthetizing.

Ostenson (2010) also reported the same strategies but he approached them by focusing on the topic of critical evaluation skills when reading online, he pointed out the importance of making judgments about credibility of the sources everybody can find on the Internet. The main purpose of this study was to examine the effects of targeted instruction on students' ability to read critically and evaluatively the sources of information that they found on the Internet, one using a checklist with some important criteria for the evaluation and the another one basically background knowledge of the topic being studied, as well as relying on the use of strategies of sourcing and corroborating, comparing information using other tools to corroborate trustworthiness of the information. Future research suggested can be done on students who are less likely to have access to Internet. O'Byrne and McVerry (2009) also investigated an instrument designed to gauge the dispositions and capabilities necessary for online reading comprehension, these ones were included: persistence, flexibility, collaboration, reflection, and critical stance.

Assessing online reading comprehension skills. Coiro and Kennedy (2011) considered that reading online in educational settings demand new challenges for researchers and educators to develop new ways of assessing online reading comprehension that can be practical, valid and reliable for the needs and demands of the 21st century education. The purpose of this article was to present the particulars of a research project called ORCA (Online Reading Comprehension Assessment) funded by the U.S department of education which its main objective was to develop and to test three formats of online reading comprehension assessments with seven grade students grounded in a web-based problem-solving inquiry, where the same skills and strategies were applied by the

25

participants such as: locating, evaluating, synthetizing and communicating information. One thing that I learned from this study is that there are new ways of assessment online reading comprehension skills that are not being applied by traditional reading tests and that these elements of classroom instruction can allow the evaluation of the students' ability to read online.

A similar study by Coiro and Dobler (2007) also proved that for a successful online reading comprehension, students require a set of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and processes when reading informational text on the Internet, such processes are: prior knowledge, inferential reasoning, self –regulation, and affective variables related to efficacy and motivation. Future research invites to investigate about how reading interacts with writing and synthesis across multiple texts in global Internet contexts. They also suggested to explore online reading comprehension from other contemporary perspectives such as: notions of identity, gender, stance, positionality and socio-semiotic lenses.

Steffens (2012) in a case study of four second graders readers examined how young children adjust the comprehension strategies they use depending on the reading context, whether is printed text, or hyperlinked websites or Internet searching. This study also revises the similarities and differences of using reading comprehension strategies when reading print informational texts, and online informational texts. Future research is suggested on readers with variety abilities since all the participants in this case study were skilled readers, the author also suggested providing instructional interventions may enhance children's abilities to read. Studies by Hilden (2008) and Norman (2010) also reported strategies in printed text as well as in online reading comprehension when adults and young children read online.

Digital Literacies Studies

In this line of studies I wanted to explore the different and salient contributions that have been done in the field of digital literacies globally and locally where there are some elements of research design and findings that are very appealing for my research study. Recent studies in the field of digital literacy are varied; there are studies of the implementation of blogs, podcasts, WebQuests, fan fiction communities and other digital resources and modes of meaning making. In the field of digital literacies we can find great contributions from authors such as Lankshear and Knobel (2011) and their discussion of the evolution from traditional print literacies to new literacies and social practices of digital remixing.

There is also salient literature that examines and analyses the distinguishing features of the new media and digital technologies and their affordances and relationships they bring to educational systems. Cope and Kalantzis (2007) highlighted the importance of a new learning, the shifting paradigm where learners are knowledge producers, reflecting, participating, and having their own voice and agency all thanks to the incorporation of new media.

The use of blogs. Blackstone, Spiri, and Naganuma (2007) examined the implementation of blogging activities in English courses for academic composition in an English medium University in Japan. I learned that combining some features of blogging activities like a) accessibility beyond limits of traditional classrooms, b) personalized, student-centered nature of the interactions, and c) the capacity of motivating students to work autonomously can be an effective way to enhance and refine students' language skills. Future lines of research of this study suggest to inquire on how student writing is impacted in quantity and quality for the use of blogging in relation to grammar, content organization

and research on what are the students' perceptions about using blogging. Amir, Ismail, and Hussin (2010) corroborated that blogs offer students a high level of autonomy and facilitate collaborative writing processes in a more interactive authentic environment. Besides, I learned that using blogs provides a learning environment that generates in the students a strong sense of community where they can participate actively and learn at the same time, no further research is suggested.

A case study by Fu and Pow (2011) explored the use of a set web-based collaborative inquiry learning activities (WCIL) to provide support to 42 secondary students aged 14 to 15 in a local secondary school in Hong Kong for a course named "Inquiry learning." The purpose of this study was to prepare secondary students towards university admission and the development of digital literacy activities. The WCIL activities were mostly performed by the students on a weblog where they shared information, asked each other questions about the activities, and wrote and published what they have learned. From this study I have learned that Weblogs "can encourage personal reflection, critical thinking, and rigorous writing composition and are easy to use" (Jun & Pow, 2011, p. 59). This study has gave me some ideas of how to carry out activities that foster learning inquiry and critical thinking. Further research is suggested to clarify the effect of WCIL students digital literacy in a broader context due to this research represents only a single case.

Another study that by Abas (2012) highlighted the importance of using blogs to study how children make use of multimodality posting entries in an English journal. Abas pointed out the use of two theoretical frameworks to make the study analysis based on Pierce's (1955) model and Barthes's (1977) relationship between text and image. Abbas recognizes that representational demands of traditional literacies are not enough to help learners grasp language meaningfully. Therefore, the author suggests future research on the

development of some guidelines and indicators to gauge learners' level of multimodal progression. I agree that traditional print literacies are not enough to cope with the demands of a globalized and modern world where every day activities, and social practices are performed through digital environments. This study has given me some ideas to organize the critical reading sessions through multimodal activities.

Podcasting. Another group of studies refer to the use of Podcast in educational settings and how Podcasting in fact can enhance linguistic practices in second language learning environments. For instance, Smythe and Neufeld (2010) studied English Language Learners from sixth and seventh grades through a multimodal project that consisted in tell the students to write a story, turn it into an illustrated book and then record it to a digital form, and finally upload it to the Internet for others participants to listen to it. The project aimed to know how ELL's in grades six and seven acquire digital and multimodal literacies? And how did podcast project build on and expand the resources available to students for school-based reading and writing? I learned that podcasting can make students feel more free to learn and to share their knowledge, their linguistic resources all in a more collaborative and social space for learning. I consider that this study sheds light on how student can incorporate multiple resources and modes in second language settings especially for reading and writing learning processes in digital ecologies. Authors suggested more experiences with varied texts in the classroom as well as critical reading, personal writing, and peer narratives.

Other studies regarding podcasting in language learning focus more on a specific language skill. For example, Rahimi and Katal (2012) studied EFL learners' metacognitive listening strategies awareness and podcast-use readiness to learn English as a foreign language, they used a metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire with 145 students to

29

perceive their use of listening strategies in five different aspects such as planning-evaluation, directed attention, person knowledge, mental translation, and problem solving. Participants also took a questionnaire to assess readiness to use podcasting in aspects of familiarity, attitude, and experience. I refined my understanding of metacognitive strategies, as they refer to planning and consciously doing appropriated actions to obtain a goal (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001). Furthermore, I also learned the concept of metacognitive knowledge, it is the knowledge that helps learners to take control of their process of learning. In addition, it helps learners to choose from different resources or mediums of learning, as well as using strategies to obtain learning goals (Bannert, Hildebrand, & Mengelkamp, 2009).

Another similar study by Weinberg and colleagues (Weinberg, Knoerr, & Vandergrift, 2011) also investigated metacognitive strategies, where the authors designed several English language podcast grounded in metacognitive theory, the French Immersion students that participated were provided with strategies in order to improve listening and note taking skills for academic purposes in French.

WebQuests in EFL settings. Luzon-Marco (2010); Sen and Neufeld (2006) discovered that using web-based oriented methodology can engage students on readings, foster learners' autonomy and involve students in meaning-making activities in digital environments. A study by Kocoglu (2010) examined a designed University reading and writing course where WebQuest tasks were integrated into EFL reading and writing instruction. With this study I found and I learned that Webquests are structured by six components of inquiry oriented activities, such components are: introduction or background information for the Webquest, a task, resources, the process or step by step instructions to complete a task, the evaluation how their tasks will be assessed, and a conclusion or

reflection that students make about what they learned. Results proved that using WebQuest tasks students improved their reading skills. A similar study by Alshumaimeri and Almasri (2012) also proved the same by exploring the effects of using WebQuest on Saudi EFL students reading comprehension performance. Shan (2011) also demonstrated that using WeQuest is an effective tool to facilitate and to improve task-based instruction with graduate students' English reading class. With this study I learned that WebQuest provides learners with authentic material, in which different modes are accommodated, visual, aural, and kinesthetic. Besides, WebQuest can also support other constructs of learning like: critical thinking, social skills, knowledge application, and scaffolded learning. Future research is suggested on different learning settings like oral communication classes, listening practices, and writing classes.

In the case of Colombia, I found several studies by Mora and colleagues. (Mora, Martínez, Alzate-Pérez, Gómez-Yepes, & Zapata-Monsalve, 2012; Mora, Martínez, Espinal, & Múnera, 2012; Mora, Martínez, Peinado-Navarro, Acevedo-Pedrozo, Ríos & Patiño Pérez, 2012; Mora, Martínez, Zapata-Monsalve, Alzate-Pérez, & Gómez-Yepes, 2012) which redefines the concept of using WebQuests in a pre-service English education program in Colombia, using WebQuest allowed authors to perceive and to expand the current concept of WebQuest in ELT by integrating different critical thinking, socio-cultural theories, competences, and communicative tasks. Here I learned that paradigms can be shifted, that not only teachers can manage or control what the students learn. However, students can start to control what they learn, monitoring their strengths and weaknesses, all these processes have to be combined with different strategies like cognitive, and metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies that at the end of the day will foster student's autonomy. Same research is suggested in a Spanish curriculum.

Fan fiction communities and language learning. Black (2009) examined and explored how online fan fiction practices in an English language teaching context relate to 21st century skills inside and outside of school literacies. In addition, how such practices can inform pedagogical advantages in the field of second language acquisition. This study helped me to understand that online and technology mediated contexts such as fan fiction communities not only provide spaces just to acquire technological skills and new digital literacies, but also are effective environments to develop collaborative work, communication skills, work ethic, critical thinking, and leadership. I also learned that online communities are affinity spaces where students can take leadership roles, participate and engage in self-directed forms of learning.

Thomas (2006) provided an overview of the nature of fan fiction communities and how fans get involved, engage and negotiate the different literacy practices of a fan community with 400 participants called (Middle Earth Insanity) and also understand how participants engage in a self-reflective critical reading inside those contexts, and the roles they played and the identities they personalized. With this study I learned that fan fiction communities are collaborative texts immersed into a hybrid context of textualities and new genres, in which fans are described as active manipulators and designers of original texts, creating, reading and specially valuing written texts.

Mobile applications and language learning. In this line of studies, few endeavors have been informed about the use of mobile apps to foster online reading comprehension and critical reading, or studies that can inform the use of smartphone' applications for educational purposes. However, I have found some studies related with language learning, three studies refer to vocabulary learning with the use of mobile apps. Butgereit and Botha (2009) informed about a pilot study part of a big project called Hadeda where primary and

secondary school pupils are encouraged to practice spelling words with the help of a mobile application. This pilot study was done in a private English primary school in North West province in South Africa with four graders that were allowed to bring their cell phones. Teachers provided and chose the spelling words, and the researchers added the spelling words to the server of the application through the web interface, therefore, children practiced the spelling of such words. This study help me understand that mobile phones are not themselves instructors, instead they are instructional tools and their success depends mostly on the educators endeavors to provide their activities.

Den and Shao (2011) explored how graduate and undergraduate students in China enlarged their vocabulary repertoire through a mobile application called Remword. Results suggested that students were self-directed with the help of the application in their everyday life. In this sense I realized that a self-directed learning can benefit students to a more long life process of learning, in addition, mobile technologies are more portable and easier to carry out unlike dictionaries and books which generate a state of motivation and students can feel more motivated to learn. Chu (2011) examined the effect of features of smartphone vocabulary applications on Korean college students' satisfaction and use for studying English. Thirty two college students were enrolled in this study, perceptions of usage patterns of hardware and application features showed also a feeling of satisfaction regarding to m-learning and willingness to use apps for the English learning process.

Amer (2010) investigated a mobile application designed to help four groups of English learners at the American Language Institute (ALI) at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in order to learn idiomatic expressions and collocations. The application was used during a week, quiz questions were taken by the participants, resulting in positive outcomes regarding to learning idiomatic expressions and collocations. Future research is

33

advised on how texting can be implemented within the same application to allow learners to communicate each other while sharing idiomatic expressions and collocations.

Grishaj and McNair (2013) discussed the impact the impact of using digital literacies (picture book apps) as a substitute to printed books on children's reading skills. From this article I learned that it is important that children should be exposed to both printed books and picture apps, the author points out the importance of printed book pictures and their irreplaceable features and characteristics like the front and the back covers, dedication pages, and the end-pages. However, multimodal picture book apps are key elements for children to acquire new literacies of 21st –century.

In the local context I could not find studies relate with mobile learning, and smartphone applications in the field of second language learning, studies in those fields should be an incentive for scholars and teachers researchers to start exploring and seeing the affordances and the impacts they might have in our social context. Previous studies seen above in this chapter did not address the use digital literacies and mobile devices to engage students into critical reading in second language acquisition. This actually highlights the relevance of my study as a contribution to the literature of second language acquisition through the use of smartphone applications to develop critical reading in L2. The conceptual elements seen in this literature review such as: BYOD, multimodality activities, use of blogs, ubiquitous learning, and online reading comprehension have helped me to build on the organization and inspiration of this study.

How This Previous Studies Informed my Research

These previous studies can inform me deep insights and understandings about the affordances of how to approach digital literacies regarding to educational purposes. And they also have given me some ideas about methodological designs and considerations to

include and to bear in my in research study. The first group of studies refers to mobile

learning, these studies are pretty much related to my research studies because they talk

about the students perceptions when using mobile computing devices in educational

contexts, one thing I learned is that using mobile technologies can go beyond the fact of

assessing mere information on the Internet, there must be many possibilities for embracing

learning in different perspectives, and how can we transform a traditional language class

into a mobile learning class and foster collaborative work, participation, language real

communication, a more active and personalized learning, providing also a more contextual

and more culturally authentic environment.

I also learned that one the big advantages of using mobile computing devices is that

learning can take place any moment, at any time, and any place whether it is in a formal or

in an informal context, situated learning can happen in both contexts, situated learning

means that learning takes place in the context where is applied "situated learning methods

can induce every cognition by anchoring knowledge and skill in realistic contexts"

(Hannafin, 1995, as cited in Gikas & Grant, 2013,p.57) therefore, this idea of situated

learning can shed light on how to use realistic contexts and authentic materials like

Newspaper articles while reading online on mobile computing devices, and recall students

previous knowledge to interact, and to critically reflect on the topics that were presented

during the data collection process.

The second group of studies about online reading comprehension have shed light on

how multimodal digital text are composed, and how can I use the framework by Kress and

Van Leeuwen (2001) to analyze how the features of multimodal text influence on the

processes of learning when reading online digital texts. From these groups of studies I

learned that multimodal digital environments can embed four distinct features (discourse,

35

design, production, and distribution. Discourse refers to ideas, thoughts, and values in order to convey a given message, design refers to the selection of modes and how discourses materialize in the designs production is about choosing modes or the choices made during the design process that means establishing a message using different discourses and modes that will be conveyed later to the readers. Finally, "the distribution represents the manner in which modalities embody meanings in the design and content of texts" (Roswell & Burke, 2009, p.116).

In the third group of studies I learned several concepts that are associated with the knowledge represented and embedded on images, and the relationships of images and texts. For example Pierce's model between icons, indexes and symbols from which explains that images can represent knowledge of various degrees since they can be classified into different visual representations. On the other hand, Barthes' relationship between images and texts can be separated into anchorage and relay. The anchorage refers that both image and text can elaborate meaning no matter the order. While reading, people can elaborate images of what they are reading as when people see an image they can construct a text of what is happening. Unlike, relay images and text can complement more each other and they become fragments of a more general syntagm or structural sequence. Hence, I will bear in mind these kinds of relationships that texts and images can have when reading online and these contributions can help me to understand better the processes of meaning making and new kinds of learnings that could flourish when using mobile technologies.

I also learned that students in order to create meaning they can select resources from their cultural, social settings and materially available at the moment, this is something that Smythe and Neufeld (2010) defined as the concept of students' semiotic resources they

refer to "the actions and artifacts we use to communicate, whether they are produce physiologically or by means of technologies" (p.491).

Finally the fourth group of studies related to mobile apps made me realize and confirm that mobile apps can be a very effective tool concerning to language teaching education, with the correct instruction students can benefit from expanding vocabulary, learning idioms expressions, collocations and even to enhancing reading comprehension skills using mobile apps inside and outside schools contexts.

Regarding methodological considerations. Reading throughout all these previous studies (e.g. Jun & Pow, 2011; Song, 2014; Steffens, 2012) helped me to confirm the methodological approach relying on some elements of case study I used in my research. Some of these studies have provided me good ideas and inspiration for the data collection process, like using post interviews after each session of mobile learning, using online surveys (Blackstone, Spiri, & Naganuma, 2007), designing artifacts to collect data that can measure what kinds of cognitive, and meta-cognitive (Coiro & Dobler, 2007) learning strategies participants used. They also helped me think about the knowledge making they produced, the kinds of learning goals to set for each mobile learning session, and the kinds of contents I should provide for each session. Besides, I can take some elements from the methodology of case study and collective case studies to compare similarities and differences (Steffens, 2012). This gave me a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Therefore, to understand a single case it is important to link other cases as the whole perspective of what kinds of learnings can flourish when students read online with their mobile applications.

Chapter Three

Methodological Considerations

This chapter informs the methodological considerations that were taken into account to develop this master thesis, and explains why this study relies on some features of case study methodology. This chapter also provides information concerning to the kinds of data collections tools that were used, the data analysis procedures that were applied and relevant information about the categories that emerged and guided me throughout the whole data analysis process.

Questions and Paradigm

The purpose of this study is to investigate and explore the use mobile applications in order to foster critical reading with University students of the pre-service teaching English/Spanish program at a private University. Therefore, the following question was addressed: How can smartphone apps contribute to student engagement in second language critical reading?

The nature of this research belongs to the kind of a qualitative research or qualitative inquiry with some elements of a case study. In order to explain the data collection process, I need to explain first in detail what a case study is. Case study is a methodology that has been used in different multidisciplinary academic fields such as medicine, law, business, public policy, sociology, anthropology, psychology, science, political science, nursing, social work, community planning, and education. Case study is a methodological approach that focuses its attention on the researcher's question, and this focus of attention is specially related with what can be learned from a single case, for example life cycles, and individual or group behaviors. From the point of view of Stake (2005) "The name "case study" is emphasized by some of us because it draws its attention to the question of what specially can be learned

about: the single case" (p.433). Hence, I relied on what possible kinds of learning can emerge when using smartphone applications to foster critical reading under an instructional design, and as a process of inquiry there should be a learning product. Besides, this study is centered in a particular intrinsic interest of my own. According to Stake (2005), a case study can be itself of interest and other researcher's curiosities around the stories of a living case.

Case study is a research method that focuses on a contemporary phenomenon inside a bounded system, using several data collection tools or data resources as lenses to see different perspectives so as to understand the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This study is an attempt to address the issues of new literacies and the use of ICTs in second language acquisition. Therefore, this study was developed on a contemporary phenomenon that takes place in the use of ICTs in the 21st century.

Two different kinds of questions can arise when doing a case study, a case might be exploratory or descriptive depending on the kind of question that will be addressed. The opinion of Yin (2006) is that a "case study method is pertinent when your research address a descriptive question (what happened?) Or an exploratory question (how or why did something happen?)" (p.112) in this sense, this research relied on an exploratory question of how university students can be engaged into critical reading through the use of different mobile apps?

Furthermore, case study as Yin (2009) posited can help investigators to extend the knowledge and keep in mind some aspects of real life events like small group behaviors and individual life cycles. Regarding to this issue, this study embraced the characteristics and behaviors of a small group of university students that participated and took part as units of analysis. In addition, case studies can be qualitative or quantitative studies, some studies can focus on qualitative perceptions, interpretations and behaviors, unlike quantitative that rely

more on statistics, and numerical answers rather than focusing on something can be interpreted rather in something that can be counted. Some theorists, such as Yin (2009) claimed that "case studies can be limited to quantitative evidence" (p.19), case studies rely more on qualitative data rather than quantitative evidence. However, some case studies can also use a mix of evidences, quantitative and qualitative evidences. According to Yin (2009) some case studies can also be quantitative and qualitative, and use a mix of both data evidence.

Case study in the context of my study. I believe that case study is a methodology that helps the researcher to describe in detail how things worked in a determine study, therefore, case study can be highly descriptive which also helps to the readers to get a better picture of the study. Using case study methodology afforded me the opportunity to tell a story of contemporary phenomenon of my particular interest. It also allowed me the opportunities to tell the stories of a particular case allowing me to construct the arguments of my research study. Therefore, I chose making narratives of the events that occurred during the critical reading sessions, using vignettes of personal comments participants made throughout the whole activities, and participants' answers taken from the personal interviews. Case study gives the opportunity also to evidence from the virtual artifacts using screenshots of the virtual activities participants made as well.

Participants and Settings

I conducted this study at a private Catholic university, on its Medellín campus. This private University is a higher education institution that offers undergraduate, specializations, masters and PhD degrees and is well recognized by its high academic education. Regarding to the units of study, the participants were five local under-graduate students from the city of Medellín (aged 18 to 21), four female and one male, all enrolled in the pre-service

English/Spanish teaching program. At the time of the study, the participants were enrolled in a course intended to help students develop their communicative competence in the target language. It is quite important to clarify that this study was not part of this course. Students participated in this research as an extracurricular activity and all activities took place on campus. All students were willing to participate signing a consent form as an out-of-class activity. Five participants fulfilled two criteria for participation:

- All participants were at the intermediate level of A2 or B1 (based on the Common European Framework of Reference). Their competence level was determined through an online placement test. This requirement was very important in order to develop the critical reading sessions.

- All participants had to possess electronic devices like smartphones or tablets with internet access. The devices should also permit downloading the applications needed for this study.

A distinctive characteristic of this study is that the findings are presented in a highly descriptive way using different data sources to understand and see the phenomena from different points of view and perspectives. This idea, also known as polyangulation (Mora, 2014) involves multiple perspectives and points of view of the data collected in order to generate validation and to differentiate multiple meanings, and social realities among participants and contexts involved in a research study. According to Mora (2014) "polyangulated analysis would need to keep in mind the different social realities that the data sources portray. It must keep in mind the social realities of the participants, the different milieus where the research takes place" (p.1)

In addition, I used descriptive narratives and quotes, from the participants' interviews, and from other sources of information like the virtual blog entries, videos and audios that

were recorded in order to recreate the stories and procedures that took part in the data collection process. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2006),

> Case study is richly descriptive, because it is grounded in deep and varied sources of information. It employs quotes of key participants, anecdotes, prose composed from interviews, and other literary techniques to create mental images that bring to life the complexity of the many variables inherent in the phenomenon being studied"(p.16)

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Data collection tools were quite important to undertake this investigation in order to give this feeling to the readers of a rich description of the phenomena and to show very descriptively how things worked. Therefore, data were collected from different data sources. As Stake (2010) pointed out that some researchers use case studies to determine meanings, personal performances and vicarious experiences of the activities being studied.

Field notes. Field notes were used to make observations within reading sessions planned throughout data collection, observations are important to determine what kinds of aspects the researcher should focus on, in order to find answers that can help to respond the main research question. As Bloommaert and Dong (2010) stated,

> You observe all the time. Whenever your eyes and ears are open and you are in a clear state of mind, you register things that strike you. In everyday life we don't have a word for this (we just do it); in fieldwork we call this 'observation'. And the rule is: you start by observing everything and gradually start focusing on specific targets. The main instruments for that are your eyes, your ears, your mouth and your notebook, and you can use visual and other recording devices in support of that. (p.29)

Personal interviews. Semi-structured interviews[2] were essential in order to gather personal insights from the participants. According to Neelankavil (2015), "Personal interviews can be used to obtain insightful information based on respondents' reactions to questions" (p.218). I designed a semi-structured interview protocol with relevant questions that strengthened the information and the different perspectives of the contemporary phenomenon, and understand the lived experiences of the participants and the meanings that they made throughout the whole experience of critical reading sessions using mobile applications. Semi-structured interviews "rely on a certain set of questions and try to guide the conversation to remain more loosely" (Hesse-Biber & Levy, 2010, p.102).

Personal interviews are ways of understanding people's stories, and knowing details from those experiences that people tell, reflect as conscious process of meaning making. As Seidman (2006) explained, "telling stories is essentially a meaning making process. When people tell stories, they select details of their experience from their stream of consciousness" (p.7).

Surveys. The implementations of surveys[3] are quite important to depict another dimension of the phenomenon being studied. The surveys were useful to collect important data related to the research question and participants' reading skills, behaviors, and knowledge about their critical analysis abilities. According to Fink (2003), "Survey is a system for collecting information from or about people to describe, compare or explain their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior" (p.1). In addition, surveys "can also be an efficient way to collect needed factual information, as well as attitudinal and affective data, from a group" (Willis, 2008, p.175)

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[2] See Appendix A for some samples of the interview protocols.
[3] See Appendix B for some samples of the surveys.

Participants filled the surveys, which contained multiple choice questions about language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990) and online reading comprehension skills and abilities (Leu, McVerry, O'Byrne, Kiili, Zawilinski, Everett-Cacopardo, & Forzani, 2011), at the end of the critical reading sessions. One important characteristic of virtual surveys were the easy access to them, surveys were created in the Google drive platform, and they were sent by WhatsApp app, this process of filling up the surveys by the participants did not take more than five minutes. Before filling up the surveys I personally explained to the participants what really were these language learning strategies and online reading comprehension skills and abilities proposed by the authors in this study. This explanation was on purpose due to participants had to have this previous knowledge before filling up the surveys.

Video recordings. I implemented the use of video recordings participants made in the virtual activities. These video recordings correspond to personal and peer opinions they had to make and upload to Tumblr blog in order to develop the virtual activities listed below like previewing and reflecting on challenges to your beliefs.

Audio recordings. I first used audio recordings through the virtual activities of previewing and reflecting on challenges to your beliefs as audio entries in the blog Tumblr listed below. I also relied on audio recordings for the personal and semi-structured interviews participants conducted at the end of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Researchers should always consider ethical issues when using video recordings and audio recordings. Participants should be aware that the data collected through video recordings and audio recordings can be used as part of support for building the findings of a certain study. According to Yin (2007),

A golden rule is to understand that, regardless of the situation, all researchers should make sure that they have secure permission from some relevant person to make any specific recording. Without gaining such permission, trouble is bound to arise later. (p.172).

The participants themselves recorded some of the audio and video materials used as data as part of the virtual activities. In the case of personal interviews, I recorded, transcribed, and analyzed in order to build the arguments of this study.

Virtual artifacts. As Hatch (2002) explained, virtual artifacts can be a good source of data. Artifacts in education research can vary from lesson plans, documents, participants' work, or just materials that have been used and can help the researcher to collect important data without altering or influencing the context. Understanding by virtual artifacts as the data that can be taken from the Tumblr blog where participants posted their entries developed in the virtual activities listed below. Therefore, virtual artifacts can be screengrabs, photos, and written entries taken directly from the blog.

Virtual activities. Virtual activities gave the study a different view of the settings being studied. As part of this study, I designed a set of virtual activities for the critical reading sessions. Such virtual activities had the purpose to be developed by the participants through Tumblr app accessing it from their smartphones. I designed the following activities that were developed in the same order presented here (See appendix C), as part of the data collection exercise.

Contextualizing. The purpose of this activity was for participants to set up the socio-historical context of an article chosen in the BBC app making a description of the article like name of the article, date, location, social context, and political and economic implications of the article.

Pre-viewing. For this activity, participants described previous knowledge before reading the article, what participants knew about the article before reading it, they had to upload an audio or a video to Tumblr platform with an avatar that could represent them instead of filming themselves.

Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs. For this activity, participants were supposed to upload a video or an audio describing how the article can benefit or affect the lives of the participants being involved.

Evaluating an article. In this activity, participants would either upload or create (using Meme Generator, http://www.memegenerator.es/) a meme, the main idea was to relate how participants felt about the article making a short description in the platform Tumblr about if they refused or accepted the author's point of view.

Iconographic representation. Participants drew and depicted ideologies and social relations of power embedded in the article, and how students can represent their point of view drawing an icon, a sign, or a symbol whatever they could come up at the moment. This activity consisted on drawing, then taking a picture to it, and upload it to the platform with a short description about their painting and drawings.

Outlining and summarizing. For this activity, participants constructed a word map, taking into account the main ideas of the article, when participants finished their word map they took a picture of it and finally they uploaded it to Tumblr, one important consideration is that all these virtual activities were performed and developed with the Tumblr app, BBC News, and Meme generator.

The virtual activities helped students to develop positive and negative aspects of the readings, new vocabulary, and how participants applied the main ideas of the online readings

in their everyday life. These virtual activities were key elements in the data collection process and for the development of the critical reading sessions.

Data Analysis

The first step for the data analysis[4] process is to collect data through different data collection tools; digital artifacts helped me as a main source, personal interviews, field notes, and surveys about the critical reading sessions. I reduced this data according to the research question and the categories defined during the research process in a categorical chart; data was reduced through extensive reading and re-reading. Then, I used a code system in which I assigned a color to each category of my research proposal in order to do my data analysis.

Categories. Regarding the categories, I decided to base them on my research question and the items developed through the conceptual framework. These items have provided me with good ideas to develop the following categories:

Developing critical reading strategies. This category is defined and based on the main research question of this study: How can smartphone apps contribute to student engagement in second language critical reading? Therefore, it was quite important to work and develop critical reading strategies such as: previewing, contextualizing, questioning to understand to remember, reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values, outlining and summarizing, and evaluating an argument (Salisbury University, n.d.). In order to gauge these strategies and to see if participants were really learning to use them, participants had access to a blog in the app called Tumblr from which students could develop the six activities that were specially designed to work these critical reading strategies mentioned above.

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[4] See Appendix E for a more detailed explanation of the data analysis procedures.

Fostering affinity group connections through mobile apps. This category focuses on the common interests, and class affiliations that participants showed during the critical reading sessions, this category in fact depicted me if reading digital texts through mobile apps could also provide affinity (Black, 2009) spaces to share common interests of learners.

Fostering the artistic discourse and creativity in second languages. This category involved the artistic way in which participants expressed reacting to the readings and posting entries in the blog. It also reflects the creativity and the imagination participants used communicating in the target language drawing, painting and interpreting the readings in an artistic way.

Developing online reading comprehension skills and abilities. This category provided with the information about what kind online reading comprehension skills and abilities participants developed through the critical reading sessions. With the use of digital surveys as data collection tools, I gathered information of which of the following recursive reading practices according to Leu and colleagues (Leu, McVerry, O'Byrne, Kiili, Zawilinski, Everett-Cacopardo, & Forzani, 2011) participants developed and used more during the data collection process: (a) reading online to identify important questions, (b) reading online to locate information, (c) reading online to critically evaluate information, (d) reading online to synthesize information, (e) and reading online to communicate information.

Beyond mobile learning. This category helped me to understand the learning affordances of mobile applications. Going beyond critical reading and online reading comprehension, or language communication skills. Instead this category helped me to perceive and understand what kinds of language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990), learning styles, participants used through the reading sessions. And to perceive what kinds of

cognitive and metacognitive strategies and processes are embedded when reading digital texts through mobile applications. Such processes according to Coiro and Dobler (2007) can involve prior knowledge, inferential reasoning, self –regulation, and affective variables related to efficacy and motivation.

Role of the researcher

My role as a second language researcher began two years ago in the Graduate Specialization in ELT program at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. At the beginning I did not know what to do then I started looking for something that I could feel good and proud about it. Since, I have been storing karaoke Rock songs in my Pc desktop. And I was using them for teaching English at the language center where I was working at that time. All started this way that then I felt I could do something more with those songs. One year later I started my Master's program in Learning and Teaching Processes in Second Languages at the same university, where I started developing this research project in which I could rely on a topic that will indeed have a remarkable impact in our local context.

My role as a researcher was to focus on issues concerning with the use of mobile applications in order to foster critical reading, and furthermore, to see what other kinds of learning can flourish from the mobility with the utilization of mobile technologies under an instructional approach that was focused mainly on the development of critical thinking, cognitive, or even social strategies. My role as a researcher is embraced on the paradigm of constructivism perspective in which individuals construct their knowledge by interacting and sharing their knowledge with others. Besides, I took a role as a participant observer, at some point I was there guiding students to develop their virtual activities and interacting with them all the time. Being close to the participants I could perceived relevant information of how participants felt like doing the virtual activities at that moment.

According to Hatch (2002) "the researcher may learn sensitive information from being in the setting that informants may be reluctant to discuss in interviews" (p.72).

The topic that I chose was about mobile learning more specifically with the use of mobile applications that can be useful for participants so as to critically read and reflect about the trending topics of their daily lives. However, this topic is embedded to the field of digital literacies and online reading comprehension; from both of these topics I felt special attraction and interest, that perhaps in a near future I would like to research more about them, because there is little work in these fields of research in our local context. Why did I choose this topic? I chose this topic because in the local context there is few research work related to the field of digital literacies. Hence, this research work can have a socio-historical impact in the local context, it might help other researchers as a reference to use mobile technologies for language learning and it might have some influence in future educational policies regarding the inclusion of BYOD programs or mobile learning policies. I would love to do this research project because I love technology, and I love smartphones, I would like to see how things come up because I consider that from the perspective of mobility smartphone devices can offer a lot of possibilities for educational purposes, the possibilities are out there and are yet to be discovered.

Chapter Four

Going Beyond Mobile Learning: Fostering Affinity Spaces, Meta-cognition, Artistic

Discourse and Online Reading Comprehension

This chapter uses participants' voices to validate the findings presented in this master theses, the construction of them relied mostly in the deep analysis of the data collected throughout field work such as narratives and descriptions taken from the participants' interviews, screenshots from the virtual activities, and observations during the critical reading sessions.

Fostering Features of Affinity Group Connections Through Mobile Apps

One big characteristic of digital literacies and digital learning are the different features of affinity connections that can be promoted. As Leander and Lewis (2008) claimed, new technologies can initiate group connections through several common interests learners might share and be motivated to participate and discuss about something or a topic they have in common. During the critical reading sessions, I found that students shared this positive characteristic of affinity group connections that helped them to get involved into the topics of discussion. It is important to clarify that affinity appeared in the way participants reacted to the readings, to some kind of shared interest participants had in common and not in the way an affinity community would converge organically. Instead, students' participations reacting to the readings generated responses and features of a similar way to see the world. The following are some examples taken from the digital blog in Tumblr and some comments participants did and I could write in my field notes at the very moment when participants were interacting each other and talking about the activities.

One big characteristic of digital literacies are the different affinity connections that can be promoted. At the first session participants did not feel and seemed interested with the activities and with the topic that was developed during that day which was a topic related with Ebola disease, during session number two things changed a little bit, the reading was about the a local news related to Cartagena de Indias and a polemic topic that participants felt a little bit compelled with the topic.

During session 3 participants showed a lot interest and affinity with the article developing their ideas, and their thoughts in a smooth and collaborative way, this time the topic was about the abusive use of the power by police officers during Brazil's 2014 world cup, the following session participants felt motivated with a topic that was related with their professional area in Education, the reading was an article called "Teachers not footballers' needed by Brazil", this topic initiated a great discussion among participants due to the controversial beliefs and ideologies that Brazilian culture has about the soccer, believing that people prefer to become a soccer player instead of studying a professional career to become successful in life. The following example is a conversation between participant five, four and two.

Box 1

Participant Five: "I think soccer is more important than anything else in the lives of many Brazilian citizens"

Participant Four: "I agree with that, I believe the only way for Brazilian citizens to become successful and to get out of poverty is to become professional players"

Participant Two: "I think that Brazilian government should invest more in education, we have a similar situation here in Colombia"

During session five, the topic was very entertaining for the participants who laughed a lot with their entries in the blog, especially with the ones where they had to look

for a meme or create a meme, participants had a lot of affinity with the topic of using cannabis for medical purpose, this is because Colombian social context is affected a lot by problems of drug abuse and trafficking. The city of Medellín has always had problems related to the use of drugs. This, in turn, is reflected in the culture of its citizens and how people can relate the use of cannabis as something common in the city of Medellín.

Figure 1 below shows an example of the entries and meme created by one participant who greatly enjoyed creating them. In one activity, participants had to create a meme with the application meme generator, therefore, participants had to look for an image and relate it with the article named "Bob Marley family launches first world cannabis," which is a topic closely related to the Colombian culture. After doing this, participants had to add text to the image and upload it to Tumblr blog using their smartphones.

Fig. 1. Meme about the use of cannabis

Another example of affinity group connection I could perceived was during session six, this reading was about how an US University gets Gabriel Garcia Marquez archive. This topic had such a huge positive impact over the participants who felt quite motivated by this news Participants One and Two described the reading with the following words.

> Box 2.
>
> "I believe that these topics are the ones that makes us awake the interest by our cultural heritage and our love and sense of admiration for the people of our country who put our national flat high above and make us feel really proud" (Participant One, blog entry, November 26, 2014)

During the last session of critical reading affinity group connections can be seen more clearly in the virtual artifacts (Tumblr blog) or entries of the activities done by the participants. In this session I could also perceive in the blog that for this article participants also felt affinity for a famous character and comedy series icon Roberto Gómez Bolaños, in activity three, they made the following reflections.

> Box 3.
>
> "It's sad that we had to say goodbye to this icon that gave us a lot of fun, we will miss Roberto Gómez Bolaños" (Participant One, blog entry, November 28, 2014)
>
> Participant two also states the following comments in a video "Roberto Gómez series were a great a part of my life, because with every character allowed, and he was a big influence, for this reason it is sad to say goodbye to an icon like Roberto, he will always be in my greater memories" (Participant Two, blog entry, November 28, 2014)

This affinity, love, and devotion were also evident in the memes they created through the app Meme generator. We can foster not only critical reading but also affinity

spaces that rely on students common interests. According to Knobel, (2005), "One useful way of conceptualizing the ways in which memes are shared and transmitted within and across groups of people and activities is to appropriate Gee`s concept of affinity spaces" (p.1). Gee's (2002) conceptualization of affinity spaces talks about offline and online interactive spaces where people can be strongly or weakly attached to each other by shared common interests, goals and beliefs. Figures 2 to 4 below introduce some more examples of memes created by Participants One and Two, where they show a common interest and love for this TV comedy icon.

Fig. 2. Participant One shows a lot of affection and love for this TV comedy Icon.
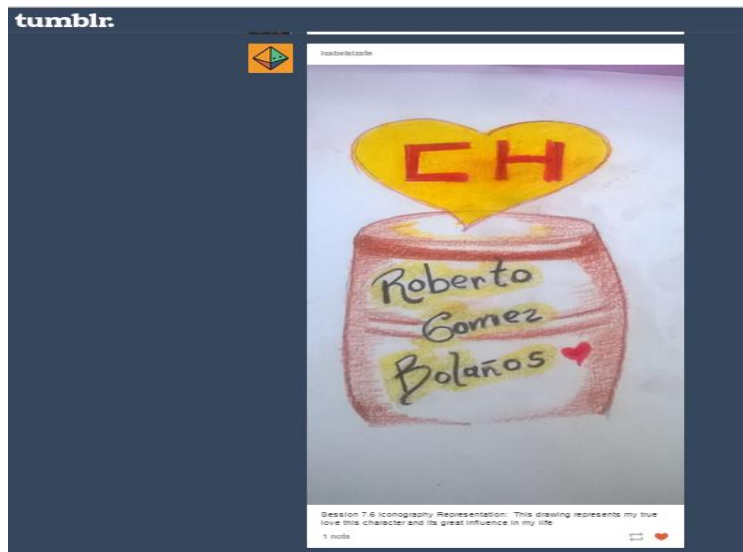
Fig. 3. Meme done by Participant Two.

Figure 4. Drawing made by Participant Two which also depicts the big affinity among participants about this

character.

Participant Two wrote the following comment regarding the same activity:

> Box 4.
>
> **"**This drawing represents a very important icon: "El Chapulín
> Colorado" who is recognized around the world, and his symbols that
> can be identified easily by people who known about him."
>
> (Participant Two, blog entry, November 28, 2014)

Summary. We have seen evidence about how reading online articles through mobile devices can be an effective way for students to share common interests, and motivate students to talk and discuss about topics students feel attach in a affective, cultural, social and personal way. Furthermore, the topics were appealing to participants, the topics promoted interaction and engagement and thus language production.

Fostering the artistic discourse and creativity in second languages

Artistic discourse can be referred as Silva (2006) claimed as the language depicted in the form of art, language used to communicate art, and disguised in the form of art. Both elements, art and language are constructed by the same processes and discourses from which people interact, think and reflect to use language in order to reproduce their social groups and culture. Or as Foucault (2000) explained, discourse shapes text producers lives and explains that the most important is how discourse is said, allowing text producers to promote or demote ideologies and social relations of power.

During the workshops, participants displayed a strong sense of creativity and artistic expressions posting their entries in the virtual blog using their smartphones. We can also see characteristics of a participatory culture, using Alvermann's (2008) taxonomy as illustration,

1. Low barriers of artistic expression and civic engagement. 2. Support for creating and sharing one's creations with others. 3. Forms of informal mentorship, passing down information. 4. Members believe that their contributions matter. 5. Members feel social connection with one another. (p.14)

The data also provided quite a few examples of artistic discourse, many of which were colorful drawings of icons, signs, symbols and paintings done by the research participants. In the interviews, participants showed and reflected how they have had a great time drawing and painting. They also agreed that one of the advantages of using this model of critical reading online was developing the activity called iconography representation which consisted on evaluating an article, depicting, drawing and interpreting the ideologies and social relations of power embedded on the readings online combining old school literacies like drawing and digital literacies such as taking a picture of the drawing, upload the picture with Tumblr app, and post it with a comment that explains what the drawing means and how this drawing was related to the reading. The following are some examples of the artistic discourse that participants showed throughout the critical reading sessions. The first sample was from the Tumblr blog Critical Reading Sessions, where participant number one interpreted the article called "Teachers not footballers' needed by Brazil", which the purpose of this reading was to make participants reflect about the importance of education, precisely due to the beliefs that Brazilian people have about soccer as a possible solution to get out of the poverty. Therefore, participant number one drew the following interpretation and reflection about this article.
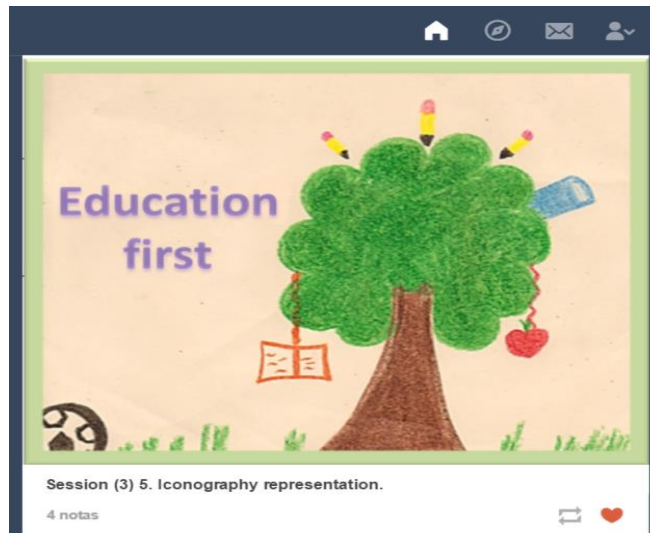
Figure 5. Drawing done by participant one.

As we managed to see in Figure 5, here are some elements such as the pencils, the book hanging from the tree, and the soccer ball combined all together trying to send an encoded message and a meaning to the person who is watching it. However, the message here is quite evident and explicit because there is a text included in the drawing making it easier to the reader to interpret the message and the artistic discourse behind this drawing.

The following vignette is an extract from activity one that was about contextualizing the article with political and economic implications and activity three that was a personal reflection that participant one made about the same article "Teachers not footballers' needed by Brazil".

Box 5

Participant One on social, political and economic implications: "The lack of quality in education is a big obstacle in the progress of a society"

Participant One`s personal reflection activity three : it's very important to know that the education is the root of the society , always depends the success or the failure of the youth of the present and future, in this education is a process that needs to improve everyday"

(Participant One, blog entries, November 7, 2015)

Critical reading involves, as Wallace (2003) described, taking a stance about a text and as activating a level of consciousness and understanding ideological conceptions encrypted in a text. Box 5 shows how Participant One had a deeper understanding about the text in its ideological roots, making a deep reflection and creating a visual representation about the importance of education as one of the mains roots of society.

The next sample show us the artistic discourse and an interpretation done by Participant Two from the article Brazil Police 'Kill Six A Day taken from the BBC NEWS app, the purpose of this reading was to make participants reflect about the abusive use of the force by police officers and the social injustices that marginalized people were suffering due to the recent world cup held in Brazil in 2014. In the following sample (Fig. 6 below) there is no text included. However, the participant is interpreting what she read with an icon of a hammer and a balance that represents justice and law worldwide.
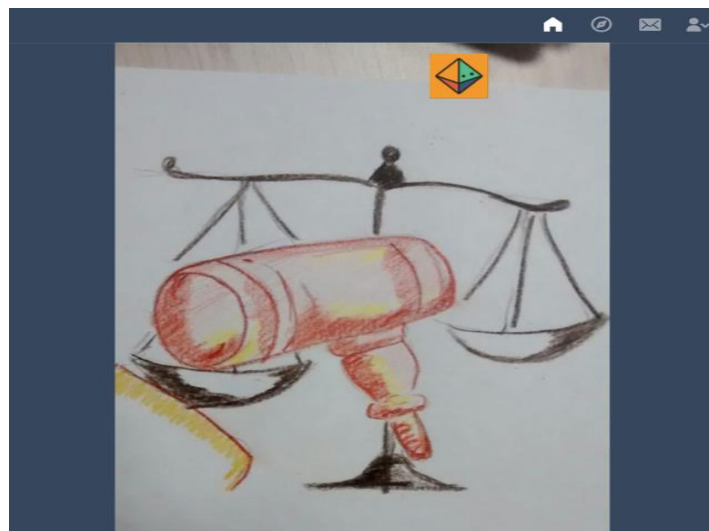

Fig. 6. Drawing that represents justice and the way the participant interprets the reading.

Participant Two posted alongside the drawing some social, economic and political implications about the article "Brazil Police 'Kill Six A Day" where she reflected on the social injustice that took place in Brazil due to the abusive use of force by police officers.

> Box 6.
>
> Participants Two and Four on social, political, and economic issues: "Human rights organizations are raising awareness on the issue and tourism in Brazil might be negatively affected"
>
> Participant Two`s personal reflection : "I think every government has its right to defend their citizen from crime, and violent organizations, but sometimes they do it in a way that is out of proportion or it can affect people who are not directly involved"
>
> (Participants Two and Four, blog entries, November 12, 2014)

Some issues of social injustice were treated in Box 6. One of the main objectives of critical pedagogy as Christensen & Aldridge (2012) described is to transform society regarding social injustice and equity. Or as Hargreaves (1994) posited, the pursuit of truth is entailed by ethical principles like justice, fairness, and equity.

From Harris's (2003) point of view, images and works of art can be interpreted differently, because every single person has a different point of view and perception of them, interpreting and seeing the information depend on cognition and a complex system of interpretation. This means that art can be interpreted differently, and it depends also in the subjectivity of how a piece can be seen, for a student a drawing can represent just a mere hammer with no common, but for participant two the hammer represents an icon of justice and balance.

According to Silva (2006), "words never describe objectively what a work of art shows; instead they describe the interpretation of a subject upon seeing a work of art" (p.14). This can be an obstacle when interpreting drawings and paintings that promote the artistic discourse among language learners. However, the point is not that the discourse itself has a meaning but meaning is assigned by language users (Van Dijk, 1997b), which is reflected on the sense and the meaning that language users imply to decode the artistic

discourse. The examples from Figure 7 below illustrate how meaning can vary according to the users' language. These two drawings were done by Participants Four and Two, who interpreted the article called "Bob Marley family launches first world cannabis brand" about the use of cannabis for medical and recreational purposes. Both participants represented in different aesthetic interpretations the content of the article: On the left there is a drawing that represents the tower of Seattle smoking cannabis. I inferred that the participant explains that Seattle is a state where people can buy cannabis for recreational and medical purposes and the drawing of the right represents a leaf of cannabis:
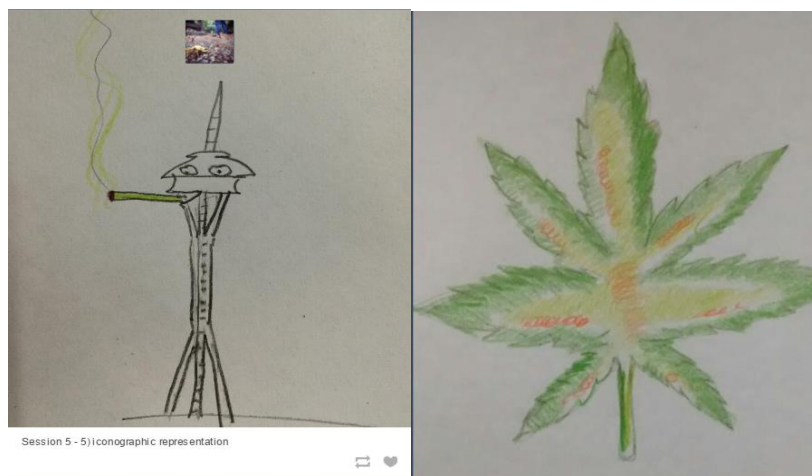

Fig. 7. Seattle's tower and cannabis leaf.

There are some examples of artistic discourse that can develop critical thinking expressing feelings, emotions, reactions, about cultural, politic, economic, and social topics and situations that affect our everyday lives. Important manuscripts, letters and some political work of the famous writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and how this event was considered a cultural loss of Colombia patrimonial heritage.
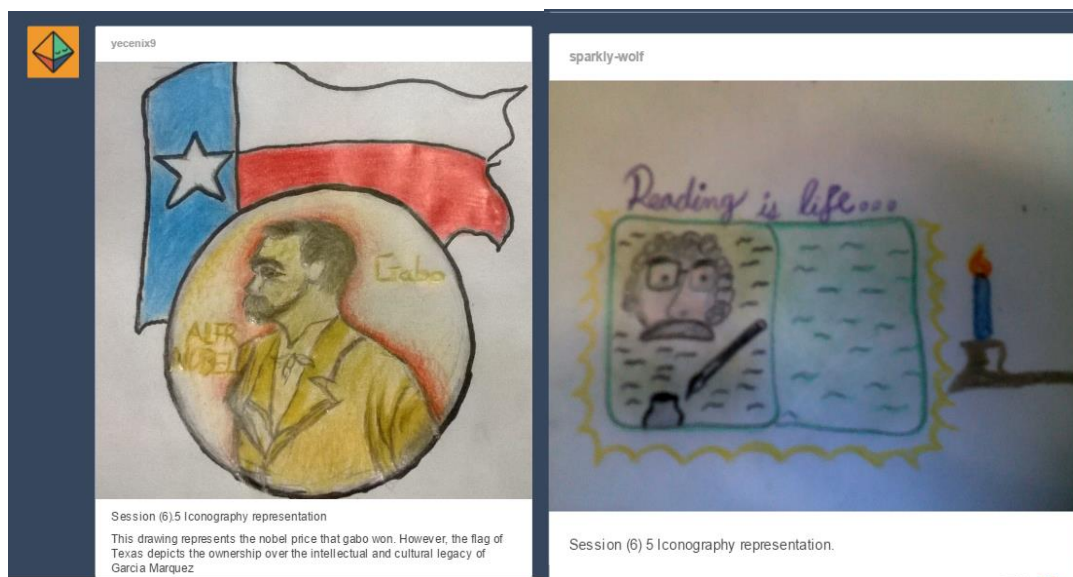
Fig. 8. Drawings representing Gabriel Garcia Marquez

On the left of Figure 8 above, we can see that Participant Three drew the flat of the

Texas state and the icon that the represents the Nobel Prize with the name of Gabo. The

right-hand side drawing represented Participant One's message about the importance of

reading.

To support all these findings about fostering the artistic discourse, the following

translated extracts describe in more detail the students' opinions about the importance of

the inclusion of activities that promote the artistic discourse in second language acquisition.

The third interview question addressed the following topic: Do you consider these activities

can foster the art and creativity of the people who want to learn a second language?

Box 7.

(Interview 1): "The strategies used were adequate and right for us to develop the abilities for critical reading in a second language, the artistic, innovative, and creative content. Besides, this is a great opportunity and a proper space, not just to acquire knowledge but a place where we can express ourselves freely, the art and the creativity are elements that strengthen the motivation, making the learning of a second language more gratifying and easier, because it orientates the personal likes of every person." (Participant One, personal interview, December 20, 2014)

(Interview 2): "these activities give the opportunity to the person to express freely before a reality that affects himself/herself directly or indirectly, since it contains an array of means in order to manifest his/her thoughts, how to paint, to write, to speak with a partner or make a recording, besides you are learning a second language" (Participant Two, personal interview, December 29, 2014)

(Interview 4): "From my point of view these activities are very useful for the ones that possess an artistic spirit, since it makes you work on those abilities, or inclusive it might contribute to discover them" (Participant Four, personal interview, December 19, 2014)
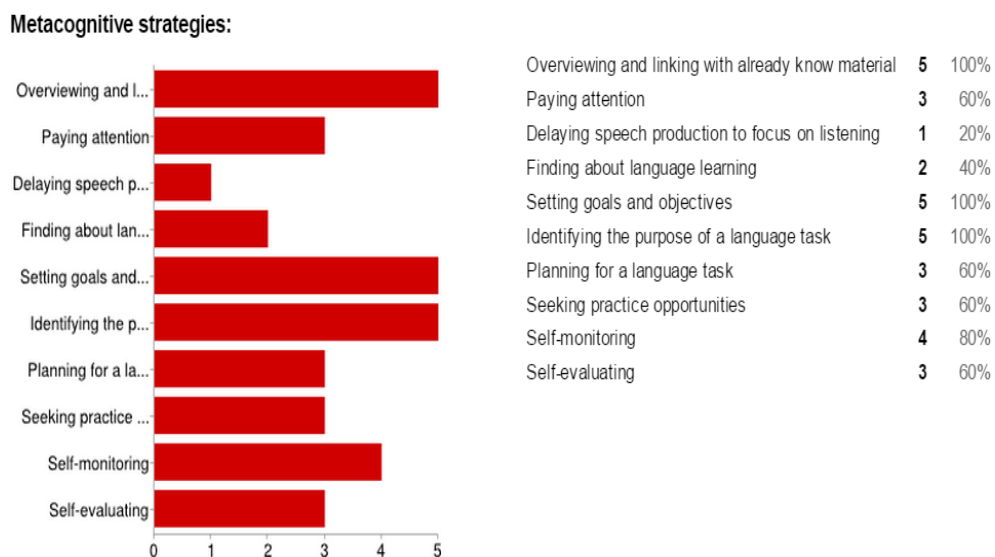
Beyond Mobile Learning

This section makes sense of the learning affordances of mobile applications. Going beyond critical reading and online reading comprehension, or language communication skills. It addresses what kinds of language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990), learning styles, participants used through the reading sessions. This section also addresses what kinds of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and processes are embedded when reading digital texts through mobile applications. Surveys were quite important in the data collection as well in the data analysis of this study, in order to determine language learning commonalities I used virtual surveys that participants could have access through their mobile phones or electronic devices with access to Internet. Going beyond learning a second language is more than a linguistic, social and cognitive process. Learning a second language can go even deeper and go beyond learning, since that also involves other reasoning processes. According to Oxford (1990), metacognitive learning strategies are the

ones that students use to regulate their process of learning, planning, controlling, self-evaluating and self-monitoring their learning tasks.

The participant filled these surveys at the end of the critical reading sessions, as explained in the methodology chapter. One important characteristic of this virtual surveys were the easy access to them. I created them in the Google Drive platform sent them via the WhatsApp app. The participants completed the surveys on an average of five minutes. Before filling up the surveys, I explained to the participants what these language learning strategies were about, as well as the online reading comprehension skills and abilities that the authors in this study proposed. This explanation was on purpose because participants required this previous knowledge before filling up the surveys. The results show that some metacognitive strategies were used during the critical reading sessions:

Table 1 Metacognitive strategies used by the participants.

Metacognitive strategies:

Strategy	Count	Percentage
Overviewing and linking with already know material	5	100%
Paying attention	3	60%
Delaying speech production to focus on listening	1	20%
Finding about language learning	2	40%
Setting goals and objectives	5	100%
Identifying the purpose of a language task	5	100%
Planning for a language task	3	60%
Seeking practice opportunities	3	60%
Self-monitoring	4	80%
Self-evaluating	3	60%

As we can see on Table 1, there are three metacognitive language learning strategies that all five participants selected during the exercise of the virtual survey and one strategy

that was selected by four participants. The most used metacognitive learning strategies were: Overviewing and linking with already known material, setting goals and objectives, identifying the purpose of a language task, and self-monitoring. Self-monitoring is when a learner is constantly checking his/her learning, a learner checks and self regulates and controls what he or she is learning or even if he or she is doing right.

To further corroborate these findings, I observe in the first session how the students planned what they were going to say in the second activity. The second activity in all the critical sessions consisted on recording an audio about previous knowledge of the article read at first on their mobile devices and post it on the Tumblr platform using their smartphones. Participants had to tell through an audio what they know about the article before reading it. The first article they had to read was about Ebola disease, the following vignette is a conversation between participants one and two about Ebola disease.

BOX 8.
 Participant One: "well, what are we going to say about Ebola? Do you know what it is?
Participant Two: "I know that is a mortal disease that is causing a lot deaths in Africa recently, and we can say that its symptoms and we can say how people can be infected?
Participant One: "Ok, and who is going to make the audio! You or me!
(Participant One and Two, audio entries, October 30, 2014)

Box 8 shows how participants planned their language task and set their goals. During the upcoming activities, participants planned what were they going to say on the

activities that they had to produce a speech and make a recording. I noticed that participants prearranged their audios and videos by first writing what they were going to say and asking for feedback before posting their entries on the blog. Therefore, prearranging and planning a task were a constant during all the sessions, I also realized that participants discussed and planned what they were going to draw in activities that required drawing an icon, symbol, or signs to represent ideologies and social relations of power that were embedded on the articles. Besides, participants liked to know what their partners thought about their artistic representations, they also evaluated their drawings and asked for peer feedback.

The following vignette is part of a conversation between participant four and Participant One during session number six.

> BOX 9.
>
> Participant Four: "Hey do you like my drawing? It is Gabo, do you like it?
>
> Participant One: "ha, ha, ha it is funny! And what about that flat?
>
> Participant Four: "ha, ha that flat is the flat of Texas, so it represents that the University of Texas is taking away Gabo's heritage"
>
> (Participants One and Four, personal comments, November 26, 2014)

The article participants read during session six was about Gabriel García Márquez and the work that has been bought by the University of Texas. Figure 9 represents that Gabriel Garcia Marquez personal manuscripts and letter has been sold and now belong to the University of Texas, in the drawing there is a portrait of Gabriel Garcia Marquez face and the flag of the state of Texas.
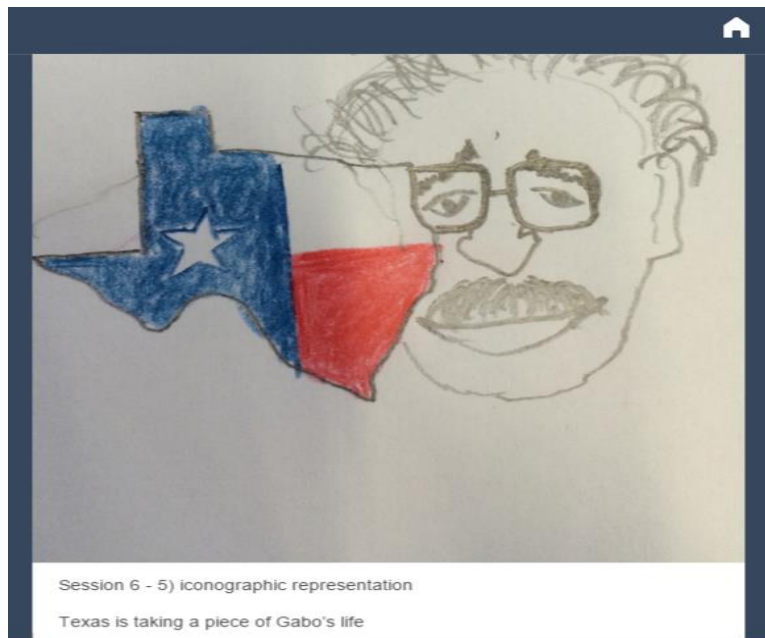
Fig. 9. Drawing that represents the article about Gabriel García Márquez.

Planning for a language task, self-monitoring and self-evaluating are three metacognitive learning strategies that can be intertwined each other in the making of word maps. Since they require that participants need to plan what they are going to write, and at the same time they are monitoring and evaluating what they learned in the articles. Word maps played an important role in order to achieve critical reading because participants had to create a word map at the end of each session to sum up the main ideas of each article. This activity represented one of the main critical reading strategies explained on chapter one called outlining and summarizing.

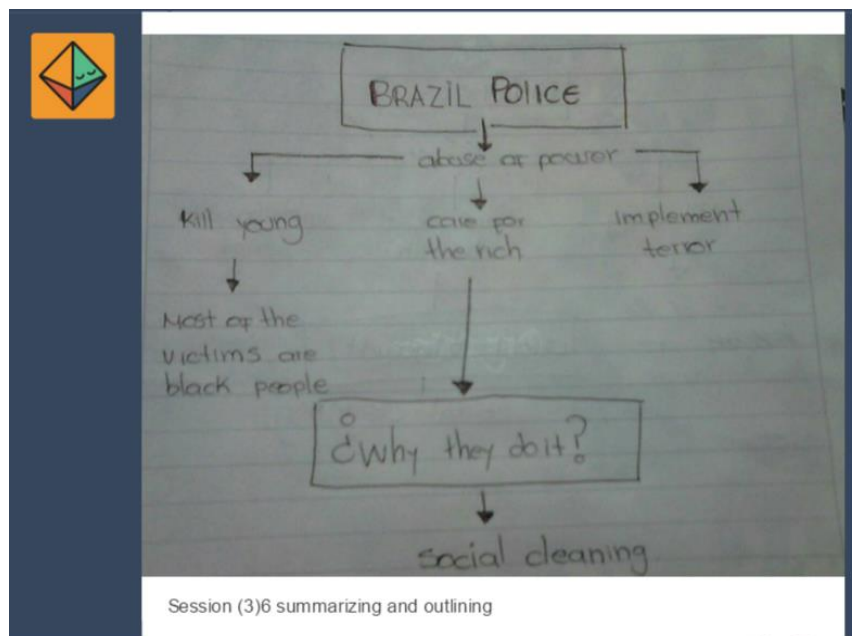The following screengrabs show us some of the best word maps done by the participants.
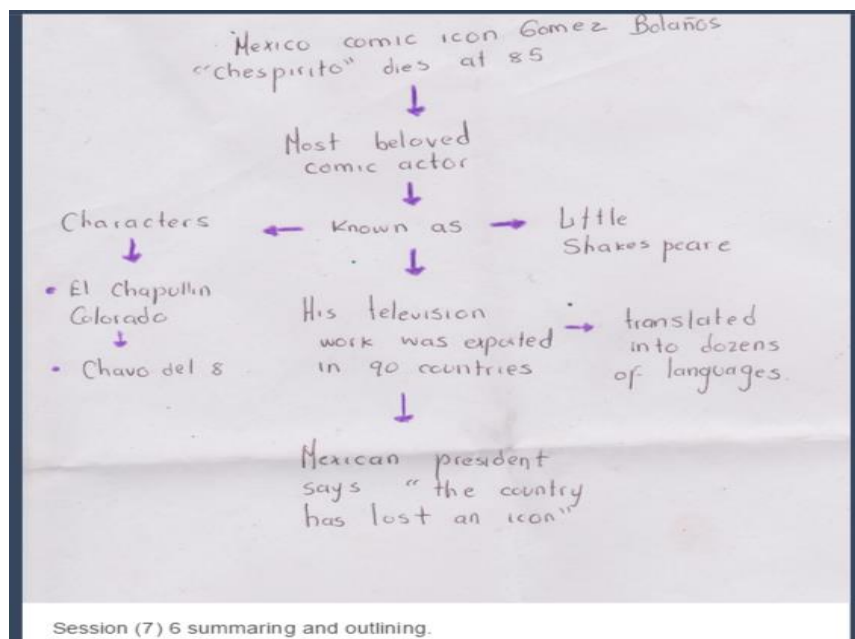
Fig. 10. Word map from session number three.

.

Fig. 11. Word map explaining the main ideas about the article of Roberto Gómez Bolaños.

Metacognitive learning strategies can be also associated with the development of learners' autonomy. As Macaro (2008) described, the effectiveness of language learning depends on the knowledge, the awareness, and the strategies used in a language task. Or as Hamilton (2013) pointed out, the autonomy of language learning competence is not only linked with linguistic competency but also related with some adaptations individuals make in their learning environments and some strategies individuals used in order to increase their learning opportunities controlling consciously how, when and what they learn.

Prior Knowledge, Inferential Reasoning, Self-regulation and Affective Variables Behind Comprehension of Online Texts

There are other important aspects regarding the comprehension of online texts and the comprehension of informational texts such as news and articles. These processes can lead us beyond the linguistic competences and beyond mobile learning itself. Results and data collected can show us some elements that participants developed during this study. These elements involve informational text comprehension processes (Coiro & Dobler, 2007) such as: Prior Knowledge, inferential reasoning, self-regulation and affective variables.

Prior knowledge refers to the construction of a meaning, but it implies the previous knowledge individuals possess about a specific topic. Inferential reasoning concerns about the process of making connections that are not explicit on a text, but connections individuals make about their prior knowledge of the world and the things that surround them (Barlett, 1995; Beck, 1989). Self-regulation refers to metacognition when reading or the same as a process of conscious self-evaluation and self-regulation (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). And finally affective variables (Horner & Shewry, 2002), described as learners' beliefs, personal goals, and attitudes towards the reading combine with the use of

cognitive strategies, that can interfere and improve the achievement of reading. The following samples were taken from the virtual blog on Tumblr platform. On the first session, three of these elements mentioned above can be observed, previous knowledge, inferential reasoning, and affective variables. Participant Five was having fun and showing a great attitude towards the activities. Figures 12 and 13 show a meme and a word map, respectively, that she uploaded. Both images show how she related the topic of Ebola by making connections that were not explicit on the text, her previous knowledge of the world, and her sarcastic representation of people infected with Ebola as zombies. Participant Five also made the following description on below her meme, "hopefully Ebola won't affect us"
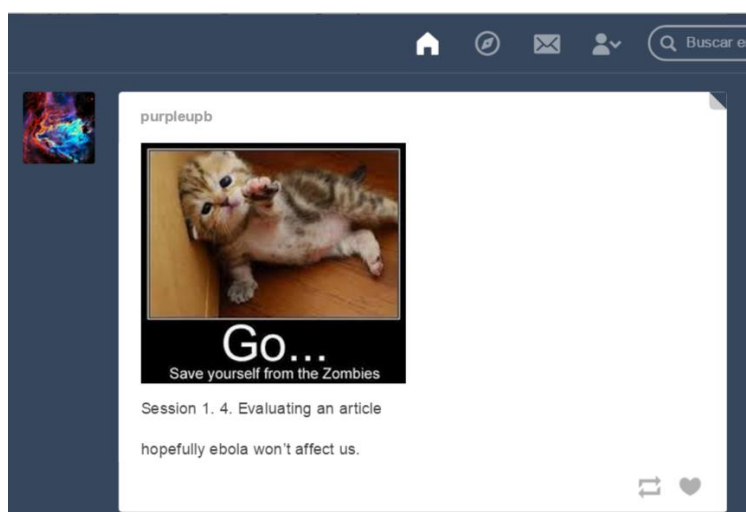

Fig. 12. Screengrab taken from session number one.

Participant Five was so happy about the word map that she made that she even shared on her Facebook time line after finishing the workshop.
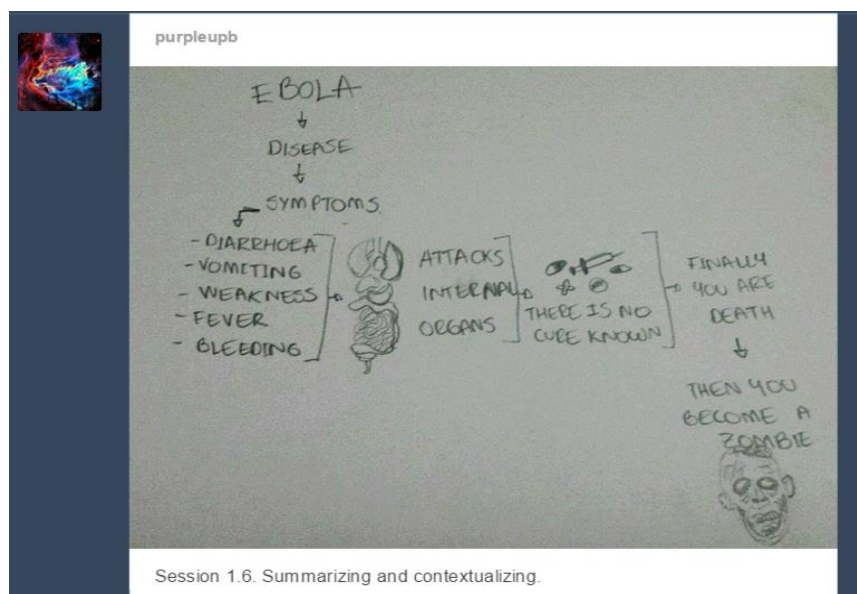
Fig. 13. Word map created by Participant Five.

Another case of inferential reasoning can be seen on the first activity (contextualizing) during session two. Participants had to write social, political and economic implications about the article, "Plaque unveiled by Prince Charles in Colombia is removed." In the screengrab below (Fig. 14), Participant Two developed the whole contextualization of the article as a critical reading strategy, which consisted of: name of the article, URL, date of publishing, location where the events took place, and social, political or economic implications. In this activity, Participant Two used the process of inferential reasoning making connections with the tourists and visitors of Cartagena that might not be probably happy about that plaque that symbolizes the British colonizers that invaded the city of Cartagena in 1741. The information about tourist and visitor of the city of Cartagena was not explicit on the article. Therefore, inferential reasoning is here exposed.
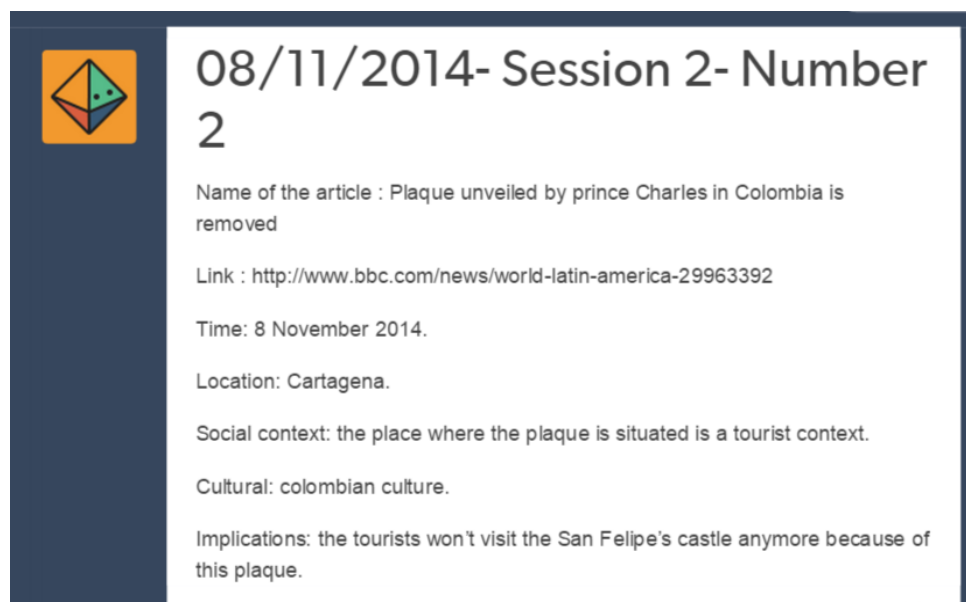
Fig. 14. Screengrab from session two, and activity number two Contextualizing.

Cases of affective variables were also seen throughout the development of the data collection process, feelings, states of mood towards the topics of the articles that affected the achievement of the goals proposed on the activities and the comprehension of the reading exercise.

Motivation increased when readers felt connected and found a sense of humor on the topics they read. On session number five, for activity four (evaluating an article), participants had to create a meme, upload it to the platform Tumblr, relate it with the article, and finally discuss about it if they accept or refuse the point of view made by the author. Activity four seemed to be a funny activity. Participants enjoyed a lot, since they could look for memes or create their own memes through a mobile application called Meme generator. The screengrabs below show how participants two and four expressed their sense of humor with these images and how they agree or refuse with the position of the author:

Figure 15. Screengrab taken from the blog critical reading sessions, session 5.

In Figure 15, the participant two evaluated the article agreeing with the author's opinion about the use of cannabis just for medical purposes (Box 10), but she posted a meme that represents a contradiction about the legalization of cannabis in Colombia, at the same time she was using some cognitive language strategies such as the use of resources for sending messages that means the use the smartphone and the virtual platform, or formally practicing with writing systems.

Hence, we can conclude that participant five implied these cognitive strategies combined with some affective variables such as, the grade of motivation, her sense of humor and her personal beliefs about the use of drugs that in some way could have improved the achievement of reading successfully.

Box 10.

Participant Two " I agree with the author that weed can be sold by medical purposes but here in Colombia contradicts himself calling for legalization and at the same time refuses to legalize Maryjane"

(Participant Two, written entry, November 20, 2014)

Affective variables can also be reflected on the grade of motivation that participants showed in the memes they created on session six. The following memes were created using the app meme generator which can be downloaded from android, windows phone, and IOS systems. These memes were created with a flourishing sense of humor, where participants displayed and exploded their creativity and imagination.

First, they downloaded an image, and according to that image they added a text depending on the message and feeling they wanted to express to rest of the participants or people who are interested in reading their posts. The memes were based on the article "Us university gets Marquez archive"
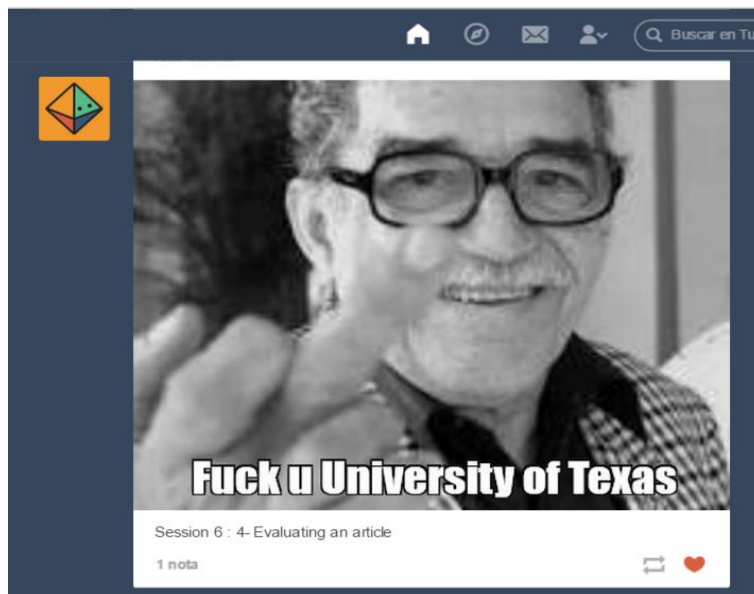
Fig. 16. Taken from session number six.

Fig/ 17. Screengrab taken from session six and meme created by Participant Four.

Fig. 18. Meme created by Participant One.

Discussion. Creating memes with a sarcastic humor about a topic is certainly

something participants enjoyed a lot in this study. As a conclusion of this finding, I can say

if language teachers upgrade their reading activities, in the sense that students can make fun

of the topics would allow that students have a better opportunity to succeed in their reading goals.

Developing Online Reading Comprehension Skills and Abilities

This research study was intrinsically related with the development of online reading comprehension skills and abilities. According to Leu and colleagues (2011), reading online is a problem-based inquiry process that requires several reading practices such as reading online texts to find specific information and evaluate it with critical lenses, synthetize information and transfer it or communicate it to others.

Virtual surveys played an important role since they can tell us what kinds of online reading comprehension skills and abilities participants developed during the critical reading sessions using their smartphones as primary resources for reading the online articles. Table

1) Check which of these online reading comprehension skills did you use in these sessions. You can mark several times

• Reading online to identify important questions	5	100%
Reading online to critically evaluate information	3	60%
Reading online to locate information	4	80%
Reading online to synthesize information	5	100%
Reading online to communicate information	4	80%

2.0 show us the results from a multiple choice question; which of these online reading comprehension skills did you use in these sessions?

Table 2. Online reading comprehension skills developed by the participants.

As we can see on Table 2, the two online reading comprehension skills most used by the participants were reading online to identify important questions, and reading online

to synthetize information. However, the least used was reading online to critically evaluate information, but this ability does not have to do with assuming a critical position and reflecting about a specific topic, it has to do more with evaluating the reliable information that one can find on the internet and it is about then to critically evaluate reliable sources of online information.

        Developing critical reading strategies. The main purpose of this study was to respond to one main research question, which is how can smartphone apps contribute to student engagement in second language critical reading? After making the analysis of the data collected, I could find that there were many examples that indeed can serve as evidence that participants were really engaging with critical reading using smartphones and apps like BBC News, Tumblr, and Meme Generator. The statements, the artistic discourses, memes, personal interpretations, personal opinions, collective and individual construction of meanings, and reflections that participants presented on this study provide us with a bigger picture about how online texts can be approach from a critical perspective using apps on smartphone devices. The following vignettes are students' opinions taken from the personal interviews that make evident how participants incorporated and learned some of these critical reading strategies. Participants were asked the following question pertained to the semi-structure interviews, which of these critical reading strategies have you learned through the making of these sessions (previewing, contextualizing, reflecting on challenges, evaluating an article, iconographic representation , outlining and summarizing), and which one do you consider the most effective?

Box 11.

"With this activities I could learned and developed all the strategies mentioned before, I consider that each strategy is effective and important, I would like to highlight all of them because they complement each other" (Participant one, personal interview, December 20, 2014).

"I have learned all of them, and I consider the most effective strategy evaluating an article, because I consider that in this step, it is where I have already had a comprehension of an article entailing a critical reflection" (Participant two, personal interview, December 29, 2014).

"I think all of them are important, because it makes remember what I read about a reading and its main ideas, they make reflect about the purpose of the reading. Reflecting on challenges is the most important since it makes you think about how this information can benefit me" (Participant three, personal interview, December 20, 2014)

"Reflecting on challenges is the strategy that allows you to express your position about a reading in a freely way and natural way" (Participant four, personal interview, December 19, 2014).

"I did not know about these strategies of critical reading, I think they are a good way to critically reflect and remember the stronger points of a reading, I really like all of them" (Participant five, personal interview, December 22, 2014).

Discussion. All participants agreed that the use of critical reading strategies were quite important in order to understand better the readings, and the main ideas of them. The importance of these examples are not just how students produced linguistic features of language or developed and improved language skills like reading and speaking. Instead, they show how participants were able to link some linguistic features of language reflecting on ideological, political, cultural, economic and social relations of power that were hidden within the texts that were provided throughout this study. Furthermore, it is indispensable to know why students read what they read, as well as their purposes for reading. Having a critical view about our social, cultural, economic and political spheres can help us understand better who we are, transforming the world and transforming ourselves questioning why we do the things that we do. In their essence, critical literacy and critical

pedagogy seek to transform lives, society, and our realities. These kinds of activities can help students to awaken their critical consciousness and, more importantly, empower them with the use of a second language and the use of new technologies. Therefore, we as teachers we should continue fostering critical reading in second languages, and at the same time take advantage of the affordances that new literacies and new technologies as smartphones can offer to language education.

Evidence in this study suggest that participants showed a strong set of technical skills and abilities known as digital competence, understanding by digital competence as Ilomäki, Kantosalo, and Lakkala (2011) claimed consist of:

1) Technical skills to use digital technologies, 2) abilities to use digital technologies in a meaningful way for working, studying and for everyday life in general in various activities, and 3) abilities to critically evaluate the digital technologies, and 4) motivation to participate in the digital culture (p.8).

Chapter Five

Integrating Mobile Learning in Educational Contexts

This chapter addresses the political, pedagogical, and socio-cultural implications that this master thesis could have in a near future at local and global spheres regarding to the integration of mobile learning components in educational settings for second language acquisition and learning processes at university levels. On top of that, this chapter also features the limitations found in this study when implying a mobile learning approach at university level, these kinds limitations address issues of synchronization of activities, pre-selection of apps, timing activities, Internet speed, and speed of typing in smartphones. In addition, at the end of this chapter there are some future research suggestions that are mainly concerned with digital literacies in second language acquisition.

Expanding the ideas about online reading comprehension, mobile learning, and critical reading. The idea of combining old school literacies and digital literacies using a mobile learning component, cannot solely foster critical reading strategies, but to promote, online reading comprehension skills, students' creativity, and to promote art education in second language acquisition. This idea is similar to Angay-Crowder's (2015) statement who claimed that "strategies of incorporating art into a multi-modally-oriented curriculum as a way of transformative education"(p.92). This author basically proposes "to help teachers incorporate art into a curriculum with multimodal pedagogies for the purpose of interrogating language and power dynamics, promoting social justice, and advocating social change" (p.94). The current literature has provided us with the development of each of these singular topics, such as online reading comprehension, mobile learning studies, and the use of digital literacies for language acquisition and so on. However, there is no existent literature that can extend and deeply analyze the mix of all these learning components,

which focuses on the use of mobile apps for the developing of critical reading strategies, and at the same time using an array of virtual activities that help the learner not to only achieve a critical reading component, in fact it can contribute to development of learners' online reading comprehension skills, the artistic discourse, students' creativity, cognitive and meta-cognitive language learning skills.

Some of these findings actually may challenge the existing literature, this is to the fact that this study has shown a good proof that Art in second language education should be promoted and it can be incorporated into a multi-modally-oriented curriculum to (Angay-Crowder, 2015). Art in second language acquisition can develop students' agency, establishing a relationship between the artistic discourse and students' personality, developing a critical sense for their surrounding world and their creativity in an artistic way.

This study can expand the existence literature about mobile learning and online reading comprehension rising some questions about the combination of old school literacies and the new digital literacies that emerge every day thanks to the evolution of the ICTs technologies. Should teachers combined old school literacies and new digital literacies to promote language education? Or should art be promoted from an early age in children? What are the affordances of promoting the artistic discourse and art from the perspective of second language acquisition and mobile learning?

Political implications in our educational context. In a near future this study can entail some possible political implications and repercussions in the use of smartphones in educational contexts like public and private Universities in our country. According to González Moncada (2007), policy makers, teachers, and researchers need to start cooperating each other for the creation of new local discourses in ELT education, and the

creation of new policies that can benefit the educational spheres. Since, in some private and public institutions the use of smartphones for academic purposes and for learning processes is not seen as something appropriated. Mostly, due to the distracting element that students face every day. Social networks, and other apps like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Messenger among others are time consuming practices that can easily interfere with their learning processes.

Mobile learning should be an element that will require the attention of policy makers in higher education. Mobile learning requires the implementation of new policies that allow the use of smartphones for academic purposes inside classrooms. Especially policies that help teacher educators to embrace the whole concept of mobile learning from its conceptual underpinnings, and should be focused on to the appropriation of new literacies, skills and abilities that permit a better management and understanding of hardware and software that can enrich the processes of learning and teaching in higher education.

Other policies that can be promoted are the use of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programs to foster second language acquisition inside our universities, which raises questions about students' equity and digital literacy. Questions like; can all the students count with the appropriate technological tools that allow them to be part of language course integrating the mobile learning component? Are language teacher educators prepared to integrate the mobile learning component? And the same question goes to the students regarding to digital literacy skills, are today`s students technological savvy to cope with the technological challenges of using smartphones?

Some other question can be raised about the integration of a mobile learning component even public education, schools, and secondary institutions so as to reach the

goal from the national plan of bilingualism which main objective is that Medellin becomes

a bilingual city by the year 2019. Questions like; should the government and the Ministry

of Education provide with the technological tools to the thousands of students in public

institutions to adopt a mobile learning component that can benefit the national plan of

bilingualism? Can public and private institutions provide free connectivity to integrate the

element of mobile learning? And what are the pros and cons about providing free

connectivity in all academic institutions at all levels of education? Even though, if the

ministry of education were able to provide with technological devices and access to free

connectivity to schools and students , there are some other external boundaries that would

affect the adoption of a mobile component. The point is that mobile learning is an

integrated component of education that can be used inside educational contexts and outside

educational context where the free connectivity does not depend any more from educational

institutions. It depends more on the social context and social strata where the students live.

One of the biggest obstacles is that in Colombia not all the students can count with Internet

access in the comfort of their homes. Bearing in mind this limitation, we can then raise one

more important question: Should mobile learning component in second language

acquisition be developed only as inside classroom literacies or should be planned to be also

as out of classroom literacies?

Pedagogical Implications of Integrating a Mobile Learning Component in Second

Language Acquisition

The usage of mobile devices for educational purposes cannot not just constrain to

language acquisition practices focusing only on critical reading, mobile learning could be

focused as well on other linguistic skills like practicing speaking, practicing grammar, and

writing (Beach & O'Brien, 2013). BYOD programs can be designed to integrate all

language skills. One positive aspect about using this model of teaching, is to combine old school literacies like drawing, painting, writing, and reading with today's new digital literacies such as: recording an audio, taking a picture, uploading a file in a Blog, creating a meme, creating an avatar, recording a video, posting a comment, posting an entry, creating a digital drawing, creating a blog, combining and remixing offline and online modes trying to explode students' creativity at their maximum level. So, this issue can raise questions about to what extent can digital texts replace printed books? To what extent can digital literacies replace old school and traditional ways of learning?

Mobile learning programs can be also designed to embrace other interdisciplinary perspectives (Beach & O'Brien, 2014), not just to be constrained for language acquisition, which means that other areas of knowledge can be incorporated, for example, in school contexts there could be mobile learning programs that enrich other areas of learning like mathematics, science, and social sciences.

In addition, a future and pedagogical implication of this study could be reflected in the creation of a mobile application that fosters critical reading in second language acquisition as a practical tool for secondary institutions and universities. This mobile app would embrace a multimodal platform where students can upload videos, audios, photos, texts, memes, drawings, and external links. This mobile application would be different from virtual blogs like Tumblr or WordPress, the difference would consist on the updated news and articles from around the world. This variety of topics would allow the users to select an article from different categories like technology, culture, education, economic, entertainment, and health among others. The idea is that this mobile application embraces all the social, political, economic and cultural spheres of our societies. After selecting a topic students would follow some steps and tasks like contextualizing the article,

previewing the article, giving a personal or a collective reflection whether in audio or video recording, uploading a meme, drawing something, creating an avatar and even allowing students to create a word map.

The university context. From a local perspective, both the language center from this private University and the pre-service English/Spanish program should consider incorporating the mobile learning component in their curriculum design. This component will certainly enrich the second language acquisition programs in higher education. The design of mobile learning component focusing on critical reading will require a deep conceptualization and understanding of the online reading comprehension abilities and skills (Leu, McVerry, O'Byrne, Kiili, Zawilinski, Everett-Cacopardo, & Forzani, 2011) and as well as the critical reading strategies (Salisbury University, n.d.) that I implied and mentioned in this study.

Teachers, therefore, should have then some kind of knowledge about these conceptual components because the online reading comprehension skills can help as rubrics assessment in these kinds of courses. As Coiro and Kenedy (2011) posited, the new online reading comprehension skills demand a valid, reliable, and practical way to assess online reading comprehension skills that help students to become better online readers. Such assessment elements can be rooted in the way students use strategies to locate information on the Internet, critically evaluate it, synthetize it and finally that they have the capacity to communicate this information to others (Coiro & Kenedy, 2011). Mobile learning fostering critical reading courses should be designed without forgetting that the activities to be implied, should be focused on creative activities based on the critical reading strategies like contextualizing, previewing, reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values, evaluating an article, questioning to understand to remember and summarizing and outlining. These

activities will allow that critical reading classes have a better dynamic and a better pace, allowing variety in activities and generating motivation among students.

The critical component mixed with the artistic component should be something to be fostered and intertwined in language education. As some of the participants of this study in their respective interviews agreed that these kind of activities have let them expressed themselves totally free in front of realities and topics that affected them directly or indirectly, since this model of learning provides them with an array of means and modes to express their thoughts, and express themselves in an artistic way and at the same allowing them to discover their artistic capacities and sense of appreciation for the aesthetics and Art.

One possible implication of this study is the incorporation of a mobile learning component in the Spanish for Foreigners programs that exist in the private university where this study took place. Foreigners who want to learn Spanish could benefit from a BYOD program that fosters critical reading orientation. The importance of doing this should rely on the integration of language and culture. This issue raises questions about the importance of addressing cross culture boundaries and how to integrate culture with a critical reading orientation in second language acquisition. In what degree should culture be incorporated to critical reading courses?

Teacher training and contents. Some questions regarding teacher training and content should be raised in order to consider the adoption of a mobile learning or a BYOD program in order to foster critical reading in second language acquisition. As I discussed earlier, I really believe that a deep conceptualization should be done about online reading comprehension skills and abilities (Leu, et al., 2011) and some rubrics for online reading comprehension assessment (Coiro & Kenedy, 2011) should be taken into account. We also

need to develop a deeper understanding of the critical reading strategies (Salisbury University, n.d.) to develop activities and workshops specially designed for the online reading comprehension for the use of smartphones apps and virtual blogs. However, some questions that we would need to address include: What kind of contents should be addressed in critical reading courses? What kind of articles should students read? And for what purposes? These are issues that should be solved before designing a critical reading course integrating a mobile learning component. In addition, as Hundley and Holbrook (2013) posited, preservice English who well trained in traditional ways of print-based writing can even face challenges when asked to elaborate multimodal formats through digital environments despite the affinity teachers they have outside school with technology. Therefore, teachers and students should be co-learners sharing and learning together through these digital environments, tools, skills as digital composers (Hundley & Holbrook, 2013).

One of the main underpinnings of literacy is critical literacy, which questions the kinds of texts that students read and why they do it, seeing texts from pedagogical and ideological spheres of our societies (Gómez & Zuluaga, 2014). Critical pedagogy can give us a clue about the kinds of texts that we should provide to our students in order to foster critical reading in second language acquisition. Reading texts from ideological perspectives invite students to question what kind of ideologies are hidden as encrypted messages.

Decoding these messages help students to develop a critical consciousness and awareness about their context surroundings and realities. Decoding ideologies and social relations of power help students to take stance, a personal position of resistance against dominant social practices and discourses of powerful groups. According to Giroux (1983), members of a society can be empowered to resist dominant social practices. Hence, we

should provide texts that face students' every day realities and today's social, cultural, political problems, news and articles that enrich not only their linguistic abilities, but also to enrich their critical thinking, and awake their critical awareness that make them think differently and see the world from different perspectives.

Critical reading courses should aim to go beyond texts and provide tools for students that can able to discuss not just only the events on an article, but to be able to see , to question, to challenge and to understand the implications of those events from different perspectives. But we cannot just focus critical reading on local issues, we should go further and transcend cross cultural boundaries and look also for texts that let students discuss about the cultural differences, beliefs, customs, ideologies, social practices and similarities about the target language culture. According to Wallace (2003), cultural implications of a critical reading orientation should rely on promoting insights into cultural assumptions, similarities and differences across cultural boundaries. Culture and language are not isolated entities, they are both social constructs, in this sense teaching culture should then be an important element inside the contents of mobile learning course. Cultural awareness should then be promoted as a key element in order to promote individual`s autonomy and to enrich one's self with the knowledge and a better understanding of the world.

Another important aspect about teacher training, it is that teachers need to be conscious about the intermodal relationships that are embedded into a composition. According to (Shanahan, 2013),

> It is critical for teachers to develop conceptual understandings of the intermodal relations that result from students' semiotic choices. While there is a growing body of work around multimodality, it needs to be more explicit when re-conceptualizing writing, the writing process, and composition. (p. 222)

Therefore, it is not enough to cope with and recognize the different modes that exist within a digital composition.

Social and cultural implications in a local context. Medellín is well known by all its technological and social advances in the fields of Education and social growing. It is also well known by its motto as the most innovating city in Colombia and even in all Latin America. Some policies and programs of the city bet for a social change and are for the wellbeing of the citizens, pointing to a social and economic growing of the city. Programs like "Medellín Inteligente" and "Medellín la más educada" are leading these social and cultural changes.

Some possible social and cultural implications of this study are the creation of some policies and programs oriented to foster a culture of critical thinking, which aims to educate an ideal citizen who is able to reflect and transform his/her social surroundings. The local government and the Secretary of Education might also be leading the creation of cultural and educational campaigns and programs such as critical reading in second language acquisition. And also the creation of a mobile app that fosters critical thinking in and out school contexts where the citizens of Medellín can constantly interact, participate and have their own voice in today`s social, economic and political spheres of our society.

Model of teaching: offline and online version. This study has study has helped me to understand the whole picture about the differences between online digital texts and printed books. These differences are associated with the levels of interaction, participation, hyper-textuality, and as well as with the digital abilities and capacities that one`s require to manage a digital text. Some questions should be raised regarding to a changing in the way teacher educators develop learning processes and traditional ways of learning like printed books, and the need of a model of education teacher centered.

The synergies implied in teaching in a globalized world lead us to change our ways of thinking, and our ways to live in a post-modern globalized society. Technologies make easier our ways of living. Smartphones have become indispensable elements for communicating and sharing every day`s personal information of our academic, labor, and personal lives. The model of teaching I proposed in this study combines the use of smartphones' apps to foster critical reading in second language. It can be used as model for teachers to rely on activities that can be done through smartphones to develop critical reading in second language. From a pedagogical perspective, the model of teaching I used in the workshops is a learning-centered method because it provided learners opportunities to interact in opened-ended meaningful discussions. As Kumaravadivelu (2009) claimed, learning-centered methods are the ones that provide opportunities for participations in open-ended meaningful interactions that are perform through solving-problem tasks.

The main idea is to try keep a model of teaching that combines the use of critical reading strategies and activities that promote learners' imagination, creativity, art skills, from a multimodal perspective that intertwines and remixes modes. And at the same time a model of learning a second language acquisition that promotes learners' autonomy with the practicality, simplicity and portability that mobile apps can offer to educational contexts. Therefore, the affordances of using such technologies relies on the portability, multimodal perspective and ubiquitous learning processes that can be entailed in second language acquisition, and the development of new digital literacy practices that these ones implicated; allowing students to engage in the development of different activities online that can be done anywhere, anytime and anyplace, inside or outside educational contexts.

The kinds of activities that I implied in this study to engage students with critical reading can be also done in an offline version where educational contexts like schools and

secondary institutions that do not count with the technological and economic resources to provide a mobile learning component in their learning processes. Some possible implications of this study is that the teaching model of engaging student into critical reading in second language can be switch from the online to the offline version of learning. The key is to switch from sophistication of smartphones apps to the simplicity of old school printed literacies such as: books, magazines, photocopies, sheets of papers and notebooks and a little bit of imagination.

For example, we can change the sources of the articles, instead of using an app like BBC News or the New York Times for reading the articles, we can provide students with newspapers and magazines. And apply the same critical reading strategies, like contextualizing, previewing, evaluating an article, reflection on challenges and outlining and summarizing. Instead of posting an entry on virtual blog like pictures, audios, memes and videos, students can create physical and intellectual products, like drawings and posters for interpreting the articles, and express themselves freely in an artistic way. Furthermore, they can also create physical word maps for outlining and summarizing texts. Instead of creating a video and upload it to a virtual blog for a personal reflection task, students may easily discuss and socialize their personal or group reflections in a round table discussion. The key is then try to keep the same model of teaching whether we use sophisticated apps in educational contexts like Universities that can count with enough technological resources and access to free connectivity. Or whether we use sheets of papers, newspapers and magazines in low social strata educational contexts, with no Internet connectivity and low educational resources. But more importantly, and as a main goal teacher educators should try to focus on fostering critical awareness, and the promotion of artistic discourses, learners` autonomy, group work, imagination and creativity leading the students to a

personal transformation that can help them to transform their own realities and the world that surrounds them.

Limitations

The limitations of this study are associated with issues like the synchronization of the activities, the pace and the timing of the activities, the Internet connectivity, the Internet speed, students' limitations in terms of technology resources, and finally, teachers' personal limitations regarding the management of technological resources and digital literacies.

Synchronizing activities and preselecting apps. During the first session of critical reading activities, there were some logistical issues that affected the development of all the activities planned for that day. Some possible limitations of using a mobile learning component in a second language acquisition class are related with the logistics and preparations of previous pre-activities that should be set and done before starting with the main mobile learning course component. For example, teachers need to set and plan very carefully what kinds of smartphones apps are going to be used with the main activities? For what purpose are going to be used each application? Each app should then have a role and task in the development of the main activities that will foster critical reading.

After pre-selecting the smartphone apps, teachers should pre-arrange a training class with their students in order to tell them and explain them how to download and install the pre-selected apps that are going to be used in the critical reading main activities. The advantages of doing this synchronization and preselection of the apps with students will avoid possible misunderstandings and complications with the way apps can be used, and specially will avoid wasting time trying to explain the students how to download and install the apps.

Timing activities. When it comes to planning and setting the activities, we have to discuss how long to spend on each activity. It is quite important to pace the activities and the time that we are going to assign to each of them. As well as the frequency of exposure and interaction with mobile learning activities. If teachers do not take into account these two pre-setting characteristics, teachers might have some possible complications like students' demotivation and failing to achieve learning goals. Some of my participants stated that the time spent on the activities should not be very grueling and that the frequency of each mobile learning class should be reconsidered if not classes can become tedious and monotonous. I consider that is quite important to set the time for each activity, this will contribute with the dynamics of the reading class, making it easier for the teacher so as to manage the activities and fulfill the learning goals of the class.

Internet access and free connectivity. Internet access and connectivity in this research was free. As they university allows students to connect for free, there were not any problems or issues with free connectivity through the development of this study. However, if this model of mobile learning is adopted in any public institution, there should some considerations regarding to these issues. One the main obstacles about mobile learning is Internet access and free connectivity, if educational contexts do not count with a WiFi service, adopting a mobile learning component would be impossible to achieve. If we analyze the possibility of adopting a mobile learning component in public schools and secondary institutions, we can perceive that the worst case scenario is that the majority of public schools in our local context do not count with Internet access for the students. This is because in public schools exist some restrictions, and school policies that do not allow students to use their mobile devices inside classrooms. However, if we think about adopting a mobile learning component on higher education, the case of Public and Private

Universities is quite different, this is due to the public policies like "Medellín Inteligente" and "Medellín la mas educada" both programs are leading a social and cultural change in the city of Medellín. However, if Universities have access to Internet connectivity, does it really mean that mobile learning activities can be at the speed that we have assigned each activity?

Internet speed. Through the development of the virtual activities throughout the critical reading sessions, there were some complications with the Internet speed. The connection was not fast enough, so participants sometimes had to wait until they connected to post an entry to the blog. Therefore, a possible limitation of adopting a mobile learning component in second language acquisition practices could be Internet speed connection. What if teachers correctly plan all and set all the pre-activities and all the activities to be done in mobile learning class, and do not count with speed connection factor, and then suddenly students cannot achieve any all the tasks proposed. This is something that really complicates the development of a mobile learning class, because it does not depend on teachers` willingness and motivation to achieve all learning tasks and learning goals, it depends from external factors like Internet service providers and other kinds of issues related with speed connections. Internet speed connection is an external factor that teacher educators and educational directives must have into account, prevent and anticipate beforehand. Internet speed connections should be tested and be analyzed with anticipation what kinds of technical issues can emerge before going straight on mobile learning classes.

Typing on smartphones can be too slow. We have already explored in this study some affordances that smartphone devices can offer to second language acquisition and educational contexts such as: ubiquitous learning, practicality, portability, fast access to information, promotion of metacognition, affinity spaces, multimodal learning, online

reading comprehension skills, creativity, learners' autonomy and critical thinking. However, what happens if activities are not accomplished on time because students cannot type fast enough with the mobile devices?

In fact, this situation was reported by some of the interviewed participants that explained me that it was very difficult for them to type fast enough to cope with the pace of the tasks that they had to complete. We have to think that typing on mobile devices is not the same as typing on PC keyboards. Typing on mobile devices requires fine motor abilities with both hands, according to Henze, Rukzio, and Boll (2012), modern smartphones count with touch screens and virtual keyboards where output design is smaller than the input resolution of humans' fingers making it difficult for the selection of small targets. Typing speeds per minute (wpm) can vary from few words per minute to 100 wpm.

Therefore, we have to consider that typing slow on smartphones is possible limitation and that some students may type slow and other may type faster when it comes to posting comments, reflections, headings in the realization of the activities.

Students' limitations with technological resources and logistical problems. Adopting a mobile learning component or a BYOD program in an educational context could bring other kinds of limitations regarding students' technological resources. For example, if a University decides to integrate a BYOD program to enhance a second language acquisition course, does not guarantee that all students have a smartphone, Tablet, iPad, Notebook, or other devices can suit with the apps and the activities.

Besides, there are other technological and logistic issues that teacher educators must take into account before starting a mobile learning class. Issues like compatibility of mobile applications, mobile apps do not run in every mobile system, for example some apps like Retrica cannot be installed on Windows Phone operative systems without paying

for them. However, Android users are able to install the same app for free. Another good example of this is the BBC News app, which participants used in this research study. The problem I found on the first session it was that this app have different versions, the one that I was using was different from the participants' in the sense it did not have the same interface design, and you can find different versions on the application store. So, not all smartphones devices have the same operative system, which can be a technical and logistical problem at the time when students download the applications they need in order to run smooth the class.

Teachers' limitations. Some questions rise when concerning to teachers' limitations in the field of mobile learning in a local and global perspective. For example; are elderly teachers really prepared for managing smartphones` technologies? Do old teachers need some special training to manage smartphones` technologies? These questions make us reflect about the kinds of consequences for adopting a mobile learning component or a BYOD program in second language acquisition. In this research the teacher of communicative competence did not participate in this study, therefore, I cannot speculate about if teachers in this university are limited with the use of smartphone technologies for educational purposes.

Smartphones elements of distraction on mobile learning classes. Finally, I could not finish these discussions about limitations of a mobile learning component in second language acquisition without mention the distraction elements that smartphones can cause inside educational contexts. Participants in this research did not get distracted by other elements that can be considered as elements of distraction when using smartphones. However, there were some moments when a couple of students received a call and answered getting distracted by some minutes talking on their smartphones. Hence, when

97

adopting a mobile learning component teachers should be aware that, students may get easily distracted by elements such as: chat apps, entertaining media, social networks, calls and videogames.

Chat apps. What if students in your mobile learning class start chatting with someone else out of the educational context like a friend, girlfriend or some relatives? What teachers would do in a case like this? Nowadays, chatting apps like WhatsApp are very popular among the students, therefore, teachers educators have to set the rules about chatting inside classes.

Entertaining media. When we talk about media we are referring to the use of Music and Video apps, such as ITunes or Spotify. Imagine that you are developing some of the activities and not all your students are focused on them; someone might be listening to music on ITunes application or just watching a video on YouTube.

Social networks. There is a wide range of activities that students can develop through social networks. They may involve doing all the activities mentioned above such as watching a video, listening to Music, or chatting with a friend. We have to have in consideration that there are an array of social network apps that students may have strong affiliations or even have some sort of addictive behavior. Social Networks vary from activities to do, from social networks for social critiquing like Facebook and Twitter, or social networks for posting pictures capturing moments in the time like Instagram. Or even social networks for posting work of arts like Pinterest.

Incoming calls. Another element of distraction about using smartphones in academic contexts is the incoming calls that participants might possible receive from friends, parents, boyfriends and girlfriends during a mobile learning class. Incoming calls are elements of discussion, because we also have to think about the possibility that

incoming calls can be classified as emergency calls. Teachers have then to be aware that incoming calls can be elements of distraction but, teachers and students have to discuss and negotiate rules about the proper use of calls.

Videogames. Videogames are everywhere in today`s technological ecologies like computers, iPads, notebooks, smart TVs, even in smartphones. The development of new technologies, the trading of transnational flows and the Phenom of globalization are increasing the features and technological advances of mobile devices, like mobility, accessibility, affordability, and flexibility. Today's smartphone devices are like personal computers where daily tasks can be done and perform in matters of seconds. Smartphone devices are also part and target of the industry of videogames, and media and entertainment industries. The accessibility to these games are quite easy, just in seconds one can past from posting a text in Tumblr app and then being playing other apps like videogames that can be obstacles and distracting elements for the development of the critical reading tasks.

All these distraction elements can be overcome if teachers, discuss, and negotiate with the students the rules for using the smartphones only as learning tools during mobile learning classes.

Future Research Suggestions

Thinking about the possibilities of mobile learning and mobile research suggestions there are some basic ideas that come into my mind. This study has relied on the use of three main mobile apps that were Tumblr as a virtual platform for posting entries like comments, thoughts, uploading videos, photos, and drawings as participants' meaningful and intellectual products. BBC News app for choosing current news and articles for students to make a critical analysis of them. And I finally used the application Meme Generator, which helped participants to create their own memes related with images and photos from the

topics they read. I would dare to encourage future research on the use of memes for critical analysis of texts in second language acquisition. I think this idea would shed a light on the affordances that memes can contribute in second language acquisition.

I would even dare to think that the application itself Meme generator is a great tool in which students can be engaged into critical thinking. Memes can be also used for the appropriation of text. Memes can help in the development of earlier text production stages in second language acquisition either with children and adult populations. Meme applications on smartphones can be also used for exploring issues in second language acquisition like Lankshear and Knobel (2011) claimed memes for social critiquing, political critiquing, cultural parody, absurdist humor and displaying of good citizenship. I would like to suggest too, the study and use of the application of Skype translator, whether in smartphones or desktop PC's, I think it would shed light on the affordances of using an instant translator with native speakers and nonnative speakers.

Finally I would like to suggest the study of videogames as tools for L2 written comprehension, the use of videogames with highly rich cultural environments means that people can interact, and develop a rich story full of common places inside those virtual worlds with the meeting of the target culture.

What Did This Study Mean to Me?

Writing this MA thesis represented a huge challenge to me, since I have improved my writing skills and academic writing skills as well. It implicated taking hard decisions like for example, choosing a topic from two of my personal interests. At the beginning of this research process, I started writing about the use of smartphones apps for engaging students into critical reading in second languages. Then, I started doubting and suddenly changed my research topic for one topic that I was more interested. I started writing about

videogames for the development of L2 writing comprehension through interaction with videogames and it consisted on researching on a videogame like Grand Theft Auto V in order for participants to interact with the stories and chunks of written text, engaging them into the process of reading comprehension and acculturation.

Regardless, the topic of videogame was a good idea for me, my research adviser suggested me that I should continue with the research about smartphones apps for the development of critical reading. Although, it was difficult to me choosing a topic of study, I considered that I have also improved my profile as an academic researcher throughout the whole process. This master thesis entailed a lot of sacrifices for me, not only in terms of economy sacrifices, but also time. I had to set aside other free time activities I love to do like drawing, painting, or even studying something else.

Writing my thesis also meant staying late many nights writing and reading articles, even on Friday and Saturday nights. It has taken me a lot time, planning, researching, and writing each chapter that now is an academic product from which I can be really proud of it. Finally, and the most important, is that I would like to say that this master's thesis means that I can achieve and chase any goal and any dream that I target in my life, no matter how hard it looks like, no matter how many obstacles there are, no matter how many times I might fail. Now I know I can do anything I propose, now I know that I can dream big, and chase any dream I want.

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Appendix A

PROTOCOLO ENTREVISTA LECTURA CRITICA A TRAVES DE

APLICATIVOS DE TELEFONOS INTELIGENTES

●	●	●	●
Critical thinking	**Artistic discourse**	**Learning Model**	**Fostering affinity**

1. ¿Cuál es su opinión sobre las actividades hechas de las sesiones de lectura online con aplicaciones de teléfonos inteligentes para el desarrollo de la lectura crítica en segundas lenguas?

2. ¿Considera usted que las estrategias de lectura utilizadas en la sesiones de lectura online con aplicaciones de teléfonos inteligentes son propicias para el desarrollo de la lectura crítica en segundas lenguas? Si, No y Por qué?

3. ¿Considera usted que estas actividades pueden fomentar el discurso artístico, la creatividad y el arte de las personas que quieren aprender una segunda lengua?

4. ¿Considera usted que estas actividades son propicias para el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua **como un modelo de enseñanza y aprendizaje** para fomentar la lectura crítica en un contexto académico Universitario, teniendo en cuenta las posibles dificultades que están puedan presentar, tales como , la conectividad, el acceso a los recursos tecnológicos y la velocidad de digitación en teléfonos inteligentes? Si, No y Por qué?

5. ¿Considera usted que estas actividades a través de aplicaciones móviles pueden promover espacios de afinidad e intereses comunes entre estudiantes en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua?

116

6. ¿Considera usted que leer textos digitales en aplicaciones móviles puede promover la comunicación real (diálogos, y conversaciones de la vida real) en el aprendizaje de segundas lenguas? Si, No y Por qué?

7. ¿Cuáles estrategias de lectura crítica ha aprendido usted: (previewing, contextualizing, reflecting on challenges, evaluating an article, iconographic representation, outlining and summarizing) a través de estas sesiones, y cuál es la que usted considera más efectiva y porque?

8. ¿Qué ventajas y desventajas le ve usted a este modelo de aprendizaje y lectura crítica en segundas lenguas en un contexto académico Universitario?

Language learning strategies and online reading comprehension survey

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION

DATE *
FULL NAME: *

Check which of these online reading comprehension skills did you use in these

sessions? You can mark several times

☐ Reading online to identify important questions

☐ Reading online to critically evaluate information

☐ Reading online to locate information

☐ Reading online to synthesize information

☐ Reading online to communicate information

2) Check with which of the following language learning strategies did you use

in these critical reading sessions?

Cognitive strategies:

☐ Repeating

☐ Formally practicing with sounds and writing systems

☐ Getting the idea quickly

☐ Using resources to for receiving and sending messages

☐ Reasoning deductively

- ☐ Analyzing expressions

- ☐ Analyzing contrastively across languages

- ☐ Translating

- ☐ Transferring

- ☐ Taking notes

- ☐ Summarizing

- ☐ Highlighting

Metacognitive strategies:

- ☐ Overviewing and linking with already know material

- ☐ Paying attention

- ☐ Delaying speech production to focus on listening

- ☐ Finding about language learning

- ☐ Setting goals and objectives

- ☐ Identifying the purpose of a language task

- ☐ Planning for a language task

- ☐ Seeking practice opportunities

- ☐ Self-monitoring

- ☐ Self-evaluating

Social strategies:

☐   Asking for clarification

☐   Asking for correction

☐   Cooperating with peers

☐   Cooperating with proficient users of the new language

☐   Developing cultural understanding

☐   Becoming aware of others thoughts and feelings

Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1whxmLw4lPdCQG-sI3HFHZZ4pgfdv4XV6OKznECUtMpg/viewform

Appendix C

Developing Critical Reading Strategies Through Multimodal Work

1) Previewing: Previous knowledge. Upload a short audio or video to the platform (work

in pairs)

2) Read the article online

3) Contextualizing: Socio historical context of the article.

- Name of the article:

- Date of the news

- Location

- Social context

- Political and economic implications

- URL

4) Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs: How can this article can benefit or affect

your life? Upload a short video or audio. **Individual work**

5) Evaluating an article: Upload a **Meme** and describe how do you feel about the article?

Individual work

6) Iconographic representation: Ideologies, conceptions and social relations of power:

Draw icons, symbols and things related with the article, take a photo and upload it to the

platform. Work in pairs

7) Summarizing and outlining: Create a word map about the article, take a photo and

upload it to the platform. Work in pairs.

Appendix D

Sessions and Articles

Session # 7 (November 28, 2014). Mexico comedy icon chespirito dies at 85

Link: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-30256054

Session # 6 (November 26, 2014). Us university gets Marquez archive,

link: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-30186451

Session #5 (November 20, 2014). Bob Marley family launches first world cannabis

brand: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-30110235

Session # 4 (November 12, 2014). Brazil Police 'Kill Six a Day',

link: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-30015465

Session # 3 (November 7, 2014). Teachers not footballers' needed by

Brazil: http://www.bbc.com/news/business-29331958

Session # 2 (November 5, 2014). Plaque unveiled by Prince Charles in Colombia is

removed, link: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-29963392

Session #1 (October 30, 2014). In 60 seconds what is Ebola? Link:

http://www.bbc.com/news/health-28105531

Appendix E

Sessions	How can smartphone apps contribute to student engagement in second language critical reading? ⚫	Developing Artistic Discourse 🟢	Fostering affinity group connections through mobile apps (Lanshear & Knobel, 2011) 🔴	Developing online reading comprehension skills and abilities (Leu et al, 2011) 🟣	Fostering real language communication through mobile applications (Tuttle, 2013) 🔵	Beyond Mobile learning(language learning strategies (Oxford, 1999) (Coiro and Dobler 2007) • Prior knowledge ⚪ • **Inferential reasoning** • **Self – regulation** • **Affective variables**
Session #1						
Session #2						
Session #3						
Session #4						
Session #5						
Session #6						
Session #7						