

Importance of reading comprehension to enhance critical digital literacy

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Abstract

Along the twenty-first century, English has become an essential language that allows globalization through different means of communication. Enhance Critical Digital Literacy requires the acquisition of reading comprehension. Thousands of texts are around us showing important aspects of our world. Within this research, it was used a digital reading platform as a digital tool which was support for participants to interact with digital books while demonstrating their habits to comprehend a text, their level of reading comprehension, and thus, how they work to develop or not their critical digital literacy by analyzing, questioning, and making proposals in their interaction with digital books. Interviews, mind maps, and focus groups were established as data collection instruments that helped to evidence that students from eight grade of a private school were struggling with factors such as lack of vocabulary, coherence, usage of proper grammar structures, and written and oral production. This is how from our results we noticed the necessity of meeting these previous steps in order to get knowledge of the language and to acquire reading comprehension and then critical digital literacy.

Keywords: Critical Digital Literacy, Comprehension, Reading, Digital platforms

Resumen

A lo largo del siglo XXI, el inglés se ha convertido en un idioma imprescindible que permite la globalización a través de diferentes medios de comunicación. Favorecer la literacidad crítica digital requiere de la adquisición de una apropiada comprensión lectora. Hay miles de textos a nuestro alrededor que muestran aspectos importantes de nuestro mundo. Dentro de esta investigación, se utilizó una plataforma de lectura digital como herramienta que sirvió de apoyo para que los participantes interactuaran con libros digitales mientras demostraban sus hábitos para comprender un texto, su nivel de comprensión lectora, y así, cómo trabajan para desarrollar o no su literacidad crítica digital por medio del análisis, cuestionamiento y realización de propuestas en su interacción con los libros digitales. Se establecieron entrevistas, mapas mentales y grupos focales como instrumentos de recopilación de datos que ayudaron a evidenciar aquellos factores que se convierten en obstáculo para los estudiantes a la hora de comprender un texto digital en inglés y generar prácticas de literacidad crítica digital en este idioma.

Palabras Clave: Literacidad crítica digital, Comprensión, Lectura, Plataformas digital

Degree Requirement

This case study research project is submitted as a requirement to graduate from the Bachelor of Education in English Teaching Program (Licenciatura en Inglés) at Facultad de Educación, Universidad Católica Luis Amigó, in Medellín, Colombia.

Tabla de contenido

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Degree Requirement | 4 |
| Tabla de contenido | 5 |
| 1. Introduction | 7 |
| 1.1 Description of the context | 7 |
| 1.2 Statement of the problem | 8 |
| 1.3 Literature review | 12 |
| 1.3.1 From Literacy to Critical Digital Literacy | 12 |
| 1.3.2 Reading Comprehension | 13 |
| 1.3.3 Digital reading platforms | 14 |
| 1.3.4 MyON as a digital reading environment | 15 |
| 1.3.5 Relation between reading comprehension and critical digital literacy | 15 |
| 1.4 Research Question | 16 |
| 1.5 Objectives: | 16 |
| 1.5.1 General | 16 |
| 1.5.2 Specific | 17 |
| 2. Method | 17 |
| 2.1 Research methodology | 17 |
| 2.2 Population | 18 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 2.3 Data Collection | 18 |
| 2.3.1 Interview----- | 18 |
| 2.3.2 Mind map----- | 19 |
| 2.3.3 Focus group----- | 19 |
| 2.4 Data analysis | 20 |
| 2.4.1 Interview Analysis----- | 20 |
| 2.4.2 Mind map Analysis----- | 20 |
| 2.4.3 Focus group Analysis----- | 21 |
| 3. Results----- | 22 |
| 3.1 Relation between Reading comprehension habits and reading comprehension levels..... | 22 |
| 3.2 Relation between reading comprehension and Stances to critical digital literacy..... | 23 |
| 3.3 Relation between Stances to critical digital literacy and reading comprehension habits..... | 23 |
| 4. Discussion ----- | 23 |
| References ----- | 25 |

1. Introduction

1.1 Description of the context

Many countries worldwide such as Colombia have chosen to teach English as a second language in schools, having as a base that English is the global language in the creation and development of diverse processes. According to guide n° 22 of the National Ministry of Education Basic Foreign Language Proficiency Standards: English, it is important to be aware that today's world is characterized by intercultural communication, by the increasing rate of scientific and technological progress, and by the processes of internationalization. These circumstances raise the need for a common language that allows international society to access this new globalized world.

Taking into consideration these demands, language policies and the General Law of Education in Colombia (Law 115) establish in the article n° 21 as one of its main goals that students can have “The acquisition of conversational and reading elements in at least one foreign language” (p.6). In the same way, it is also established the importance of “the understanding and the ability to express oneself in a foreign language” (p.7). Moreover, Colombia has implemented the “Plan Nacional de Bilingüismo” (PNB). In this national plan, the main objective is to lead citizens capable of using English to communicate, so that Colombia will be immersed in a constant process of globalization thanks to a universal language.

Considering the previous information, this research work was held at Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Berrío, a private and catholic school located in Medellín Antioquia which began a process of becoming a bilingual school since 2020. For this, some actions have been carried out in order to promote bilingualism at school based on language policies in Colombia. Students in a course fulfil a set of characteristics that locate them in a different group (English I or English II in the school) and levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1) set by the European Common Framework. The classification for each level in each grade is held by means of a placement test carried out by the Richmond publishing house every

year; This test assesses the level of speaking, listening, writing, and reading of each student before finishing the scholar year. Besides, teachers who have guided the students' process along the whole year and based on the academic follow up, are also considered by the English department meetings that are held periodically. English classes are divided into advanced and basic levels from fourth grade to eleventh. With this division, the English department pretends to foster students' communicative competence development from the four skills and their levels established in the Common European Framework (CEF).

In this research work, we adopted a digital reading platform called MyON which has been used at Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Berrío for more than four years, as other action applied not only to improve English level, but also to enrich reading comprehension in students. The English department has been implementing the use of this platform in terms of promoting reading habits not only inside the classroom, but also in those spots where students do not have teachers by their side. It is important to point out that in our investigation, this platform provided us with the book needed to make our analysis. We made different activities related to the book suggested in class in order to obtain the data that showed up an answer to our research question.

1.2 Statement of the problem

During the twenty-first century, English has been recognized as “a global language” (Sonntag, 2003), that is why it is related to the phenomenon of globalization. As Sonntag 2003 argues, the English language holds cultural and political components related to globalization and according to Rao (2019), English language occupies a big place in the development of the world, that is why it has been necessary to promote a common language for communication as English that is spread around the world in different fields such as scientific research, internet, education among others (p.66).

With its spread, English language has become a global language being recognized as the “lingua franca” or being implemented as a bridge for communication in global societies. Native and non-native speakers of English are demanded to use it and learn a

communicative competence different from their native tongue. As Crystal (2003) says “a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (p.3). Globalization has impacted pedagogical dynamics from primary to higher education. The acquisition of a second language has gone from being an option to become a necessity that maintains competitiveness at the local and international levels. As Correa and Usma (2013) established, to be part of the market world, Colombia has adopted different language policies and for more than thirty years, these policies have been designed to strengthen the English language (p.228).

According to the Common European Framework (2001), for students to acquire fluency in their communicative competence and use it in the social and professional environment in the 21st century, it is necessary to develop the reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. (p. 90-91). Reading comprehension is one of the most relevant because everything around people is presented in written language as it is mentioned by Pang et al. (2003) who expressed that one important goal for people is to learn how to read, thus, the ability to read opens up new global opportunities for human beings without excluding ages (p. 6). It enables people to gain new knowledge, enjoy literature and do everyday activities that are part of globalized life.

Considering the linguistic abilities of English and what can be carried from them out, there is an aspect as part of linguistic comprehension that is important to underline the reading comprehension. At this point, it is important to mention that as Snow (2011) indicates, reading comprehension helps to construct meaning from the extraction of information in each text and apply it within a context for readers. According to Van Dijk & Kintsch (1983) reading comprehension is established as the mental representation of a text through different levels such as: word-level as a lexical process, sentence-level as the syntax process, and text level which is the meaning of the text itself. Besides, it is important to keep in mind that as Kintsch (1999), this system of comprehension is a process in which the majority elements that are involved achieve a stable state relating meaningful among them and suppressing those elements that do not fit in the prior process.

In this sense, it can be understood that for human beings the acquisition of reading comprehension is essential. Especially in this century whereas a result of great technological advances there is a wide access to virtual information that needs to be analyzed. That is why it is important as stated Merchant (2007) to consider within the educational system “critical digital literacy as an important component of literacy education; which will allow students to critique and challenge the dominant discourses circulating within the different digital media”(p.125), and to achieve this, the schools must provide learners with tools for the development of a critical awareness that lead them to evaluate from the classrooms the quality of technology’s information that has become so accessible in our current context. In fact, as a concept, critical digital literacy continues being interpreted in different ways, but Darvin (2017) states that “the CDL examines digital contexts in a more cultural sense and requires that teachers be equipped with philosophical and ethical frameworks for understanding digital cultures" (p.5), as key to construct knowledge that contributes to unprecedented social change.

It is possible to affirm that reading comprehension has become one of the most important abilities that schools must use to promote critical digital literacy. First of all, according to Franco (2015) "for the large amount of information that frequently circulates on the internet; secondly, due to the diversity of different sources or websites from which content is downloaded and thirdly, due to the low reliability of many of them "(p.141) that are even characterized by their ideological biases when inciting and influencing children and teenagers of this century with their controversial contents.

Moreover, to promote practices of critical digital literacy, it is necessary to strengthen the reading comprehension of digital texts since it allows the reader to carry out a deeper analysis of the text, to evaluate the content and to make criticisms related to it. Here, we took as a basis Park (2012) who says that reading comprehension “can generate a deeper and different understanding of texts; question social and economic realities; and reimagining the status quo” (p. 630). In schools, students as teachers are in charge of creating spots where they carry out activities and apply different strategies in order to favor

the development of the reading comprehension skill in digital texts in English to empower the educational community in content analysis that later on will lead them to develop practices of critical digital literacy. That is why we decided to make this research work at Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Berrio, since this institution has been going through a change regarding becoming a bilingual school by applying different strategies such as myON as a digital reading platform among other tools to improve students' English level.

During the last three years at the institution, the English teachers have been working on the methodology and the approach given to the different classes. The implementation of new textbooks and a digital reading platform called myON are part of the tools that are supposed to help students in the school to develop the four skills in their communicative competence. Due to this, English II classes are based on making students to grow up in their production of written and oral discourses, since according to the academic reports presented at the end of each term as on the institutional platform as on myON, the results obtained from placement tests, and students' performance inside the classrooms, has been evidenced more fluency and understanding of the language in this level. Nevertheless, the same assessment strategy has been carried out in English I level but with quite different results. Students seem to be struggling not only with writing and speaking in English but also with reading comprehension of the audiobooks they read on the digital reading platform.

That is why English I classes are addressed to the improvement of the four communicative skills but emphasizing on the reading skill, since students of the basic levels of each course, specifically eighth graders who according to teachers and the reading platform reports have been presenting difficulty when interpreting, analyzing and making meaning on digital texts presented in English class. Taking into consideration this necessity, we have questioned ourselves about how reading comprehension enhances critical digital literacy in a group of students from eight grade in Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Barrio? We pretended to describe how reading comprehension benefits critical digital in these students. For this, we identified what were those reading comprehension habits

carried out by students when interacting with digital texts in English. Besides, we observed what were the reading comprehension levels the students had according to the stipulated by the National Ministry of education in Colombia and finally, we analyzed what stances students assumed from in critical digital literacy.

1.3 Literature review

1.3.1 From Literacy to Critical Digital Literacy

The term literacy is conceived by Cassany (2005) as a global concept that covers knowledge, abilities, values, beliefs, and attitudes expressed in a social, collective, historical or individual context by means of a written discourse. Therefore, Casillas et., al (2020) establishes that literacy is a set of abilities and attitudes that have to do with the quality of interaction with information either by generating, analyzing, or collecting new content. Moreover, Street (1993) in his book, establishes on repeated occasions literacy as a social practice where plurality enables us to observe the world from different perspectives. The same author affirms that these practices have to be with feeling, emotion, perceptions, and social relationships created in a context. These social practices can be evidenced in the interaction that students have when they read a book which calls on different emotions or when students write according to their interests. As Cassany (2003) affirms, these practices are adjusted to the social scenario (p. 60). Actually, technological advances give new possibilities of literate formats and spaces since electronic writing apart from impacting practices creates new horizons in the teaching-learning processes. In this way, when a student recognizes the characteristics, uses, and advantages of literacy practices, he can expand his knowledge to other types of literacies such as digital literacy.

Digital literacy has crossed through distinctive definitions given by different authors. The main basis to define this concept has been the usage that this digital generation provides digital tools. For example, in a study, Knobel and Lankshear (2006) set at the beginning that digital literacy was thought of as a “thing” used for consuming and producing information (p.1). Later, the same authors assumed that “digital literacy involves

interacting with information and interacting with information is about assessing its truth (or validity), credibility, reliability and so on”, in this sense, digital literacy is understood as a “skill” that involves interaction with information while questioning it. Finally, they concluded that digital literacy is neither a skill nor a “thing”, digital literacies are practices that involve both of them while making meaning from different texts. Diverse arguments in that study create controversy among themselves trying to generate an exact definition of what digital literacy means. Lastly, they provided their definition in which it considers the different definitions given by other authors in other studies. After all, other authors agreed that digital literacy was both a skill as a thing that allows students to be able to be critical of the contents found in digital environments taking in it in all their contexts.

In this order of ideas, as mentioned by Castrillón (2020) critical digital literacy (CDL) is the ability to discern information that is found or disseminated in a digital environment. CDL is to question the truthfulness of the facts that come to us daily from different sources of information. Having a CDL is, for example, being able to validate the accuracy of the information we receive on different social networks before sharing it. An idea that is linked to the postulated by Labbo et al. (1998) who consider that CDL "requires the ability to be a critical consumer and producer of various forms of information" (p.280). Also, the authors argued that critical digital literacy is “the ability to recognize, interpret, and evaluate underlying ideologies in various types of hyper textuality linked information as it is presented in various data sources" (p. 282). Similarly, Darvin (2017) claimed that CDL “facilitates ways of thinking, relating, and interacting with others” (p.5) and this process is carried out through reading.

1.3.2 Reading Comprehension

According to Kirby (2007), reading comprehension is understood as "the application of a skill that evolved for other purposes (listening or oral comprehension) to a new form of input (text)" (p. 1). Sometimes, reading comprehension is seen simply as the decoding of words; however, it can be found as the creation of meaning through the comprehension of words, phrases and a text in general considering its levels of difficulty

and the processes of metacognition of the human being who develops it. In this sense, the interaction that human beings hold with digital texts requires a deep reading comprehension that allows them to analyze, interpret and question said texts in order to apply them in their lives. Thus, according to the guide N°22 of the MEN (2006) "a student can make use of publications written in a foreign language to be more aware of the national and global reality and this allows him to make decisions that affect his reality" (p. 9).

The author Perez (2003), exposes three different level of reading comprehension in the guidelines of the MEN and ICFES in Colombia: the literal reading level, inferential reading level and critical-intertextual reading level and their different most important characteristics; The first level is defined as the explicit type of reading in which the reader can infer the meaning of the words, sentences and even the images exposed in a literal way, a second level allows the reader to make inferences from the text demonstrating his previous knowledge about the topic, besides showing a purpose in front of the reading, and finally, the last level allows the reader to take a critical stance in front of the text being analyzed and take different ideas from others texts he already read.

1.3.3 Digital reading platforms

As is stated in Liu (2012), reading practices have been shifting from intensive to extensive due to the assistance offered by technology. At the beginning of the 21st century, the intensive reading of print texts carried out in libraries was impacted by the digital age and reading practices became more accessible for students because of the incorporation of new devices and digital platforms that allow people to have a constant interaction with all kinds of information provided by digital texts (Margolin, et. Al, 2013) and over time different digital platforms have been designed for reading. Firstly, according to Koh and Fichman (2014), digital platforms are those digital environments that allow interaction between different groups of individuals understood as consumers and producers.

At this point, it is necessary to clarify as Cardoso et, al. (2012) mentions that the incorporation of digital technologies is not only generating a new way to access to new contents but also the way we interact and make usage of it, while we share information and

change our understanding of what reading means. This explains that new devices and digital environments have been created for reading texts, interacting with cultural information, books of all kinds of literary genres, and general information. Then, digital reading platforms permit interaction with digital texts through reading to become students as users as producers. As Barzillai et. al, 2018 set this digital reading involves mastering navigating skills such as selection of sources, integration and connections of sources and information and evaluation of the quality of such information (p.92).

1.3.4 MyON as a digital reading environment

In our research work, we used a digital reading environment named myON which according to Kuykendall (2015), "is an electronic library that allows students to choose their own reading based on their reading level and interest". That way, reading is not only carried out at school but also at home. Additionally, as Sanford-Moore (2013) sets, the purpose of this reading environment is not only to read and acquire a set of words but also make students increase their comprehension and make sense of what they are reading while still being interested and maintain their learning (p.4).

1.3.5 Relation between reading comprehension and critical digital literacy

Based on the above, human beings are always trying to comprehend the information offer by the different digital contexts they are involve in, understanding comprehension as a social practice by itself as is set by (Luke & Freebody, 1997), that each individual carries out in his life and which allows an analysis and evaluation of the different aspects that are part of his life to make the necessary changes. The interaction that human beings hold with digital texts requires a deep reading comprehension that allows them to analyze, interpret and question said texts in order to apply them in their lives. In the words of Hinrichsen and Coombs (2014), critical digital literacy practices require five resources that allow the reader to have a better understanding and interaction with digital texts, consisting of "Decoding" symbols and grammar, "meaning-making" of the semantic contents, "using resource" which is the usage of the message in their academic context or any other dimension,

“analyzing” the message obtained from the text by means of discerning its value, the judgment of its impact and the questioning of its effects, and finally "Persona" where the ethical values of the reader lead him to take a role in which he is not only a consumer of digital texts but also acquires the responsibility and ability to produce thoughts and proposals.

Parallel to the above, Hurry and Parker (2007) set three levels to reach reading comprehension: the first of them is the literal level in which the reader obtains a surface understanding of the text, the second is the interpretive level that takes the individual to make an image and a contextualized application of what is read, and the third level that encourages the reader to evaluate and produce a personal response to the text itself. In this way, it is evidenced how reading comprehension and critical digital literacy are connected. Also, how in terms of favoring the practices of critical digital literacy it is necessary to strengthen the reading comprehension of digital texts since it allows the reader to carry out a deeper analysis of the text, evaluate the content and make criticisms related to it. In schools, students as teachers are in charge of creating spots where they carry out activities and apply different strategies in order to favor the development of the reading comprehension skill in digital texts in English with the purpose of empowering the educational community in content analysis that later on will lead them to benefit critical digital literacy.

1.4 Research Question

How does reading comprehension enhance critical digital literacy in a group of students from eighth grade in Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Barrio?

1.5 Objectives:

1.5.1 General

To describe how reading comprehension enhances critical digital literacy in a group of students from eighth grade in Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Barrio

1.5.2 Specific

- To identify what are the reading comprehension habits of students.
- To observe what reading comprehension level the students have
- To analyze what stances students assume in critical digital literacy.

2. Method

2.1 Research methodology

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), qualitative research works over the use and collection of data related to life experiences, familiar and personal narrations, material studies, observational texts, interviews, and other events such as groups where there are interactions between the participants and their context. (p.2). Additionally, the characteristics established in the Spanish study developed by Batthyány et al. (2011) supports this research was qualitative due to it pretended to collect the field data in the spot where the students carried out their daily academic activities experimenting the identified problem and the investigators were a clue instrument since one of the researchers was the teacher who was in constant contact and interaction with students (p. 10), noticing a fundamental characteristic related to the significance of the participants and the collections of the required information thanks to the application of three different instruments (pp. 78-79). In this case study research, we took as a basis the way in which students interact with a digital reading platform and its texts in their academic environment which according to Yin (2009) allows a holistic view of behaviors, managerial processes, and individual and collective school performance. We decided to get immersed in the students' academic environment and get involved in their follow up. For this, we applied different data collection strategies that helped us to obtain the information needed for this research.

2.2 Population

Our research work was carried out with the participation of 7 students, 2 women and 5 men, who belong to Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Berrio, a private and Catholic educational institution located in the southwestern area of Medellín, specifically commune 16, Belén las Mercedes. To select our participants, we took into consideration different aspects such as: they had to range between 13 to 14 years of age and be coursing eighth grade. Another aspect considered was the situation the world has been living in due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the institution was offering a semi- scholar model of education divided between week A and B. We choose the students belonging to one of the two subgroups for the ease of having them all together every two weeks in person for the application of the data collection instruments. However, due to the increase of cases of the virus, these instruments had to be applied from virtuality by government regulations.

2.3 Data Collection

2.3.1 Interview

The structured interview is a type of interview that allows the researcher, according to Torrecilla, J. M. (2006) to question the participant through a script with previously thought and planned questions about a specific objective taking as a biases attitudes, life experiences, values or opinions (p. 6). That is why, this interview allowed us to give a response about what are those habits carried out by students in order to comprehend the texts they read in English on the digital platform. The questions were designed according to the eight reading comprehension strategies established by the National Reading Panel (2000). To mention some of them, we have “comprehension monitoring”, “cooperative learning”, making graphic and semantic organizers to schematize and organize ideas, summarization, among others.

2.3.2 Mind map

In this research the use of mind mapping was a tool that allowed us to observe what were the reading comprehension levels that each student had. This strategy can be conceived as a graphic thinking tool useful to represent ideas in a hierarchical order using images, and statements to connect principal and secondary ideas through short sentences, meaningful words and expressions and a specific vocabulary that accomplishes a function (Farrand et al. 2002) which helped to identify aspects that noticed different characteristics related reading comprehension levels. In order to observe and analyze the mind map we based on the three reading comprehension levels established by Perez (2003) for the Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación (ICFES), the entity in charge of carrying out standardized tests and Colombia Aprende along with The National Ministry of Education. Among this we have literal comprehension where readers can identify and translate the meaning of words and sentences, inferential comprehension has to be with those readers who can identify main and secondary ideas while understanding a macro structure of the text and establishing correlation between the different components of the text, and intertextual comprehension where the reader can get into a depth of understanding of texts , that is, to reconstruct and identify the communicative context, to establish a connection with other texts, to recognize the intentionality, and to generate questions about the text in order to propose and apply in their context (p. 42- 43).

2.3.3 Focus group

In order to obtain the needed information to analyze what stances students assume in critical digital literacy, a focus group was implemented as a data collection strategy. Having in mind that this type of research strategy allows the researcher to identify important information in the process, the focus group was a useful tool to gather the information through a semi-structured interview that was guided by the researcher step by step. According to Powell et. al (1996) the focus group strategy allows interaction between participants in a group with the purpose of bringing out attitudes, feelings, beliefs,

experiences, and reactions from them; as well as collect relevant information about a specific topic in the research project (p. 52).

2.4 Data analysis

2.4.1 Interview Analysis

After sharing the instructions to students, they were given 30 minutes to complete an interview with six open questions in order to identify behaviors before taking the reading section in class and prove during the reading their habits to comprehend texts in English. During the treatment of the information obtained in the interview, we could identify some students' habits that were correlated to some strategies proposed by the National Reading Panel (2000). For instance, their habits were more focused on translating, brainstorming, predicting content by the titles, highlighting, re-reading, looking for keywords and images for understanding the big picture of the reading by accomplishing two of the strategies displayed before “summarization in which the reader attempts to identify and write the main or most important ideas that integrate or unite the other ideas or meanings of the text into a coherent whole”(p. 4-6). A minority of students take the reading seriously and they go beyond the reading by applying another strategy by looking for more information in different sources and sharing information with someone else. Another strategy is “Cooperative learning in which readers work together to learn strategies in the context of reading” (p. 4-6). Noticing that, the rest of strategies are not present in the habits they develop in their reading due to the lack of vocabulary and grammar, making comprehension an arduous ability to achieve.

2.4.2 Mind map Analysis

After reading the book “Human Environmental Impact” individually and socializing it during class, students got to create a mind map where we could observe and recognize the level of reading comprehension they performed based on the established by Perez (2003) as we mentioned before in data collection.

This activity was applied to seven participants who provided us the data where we realized that students manifested interest and motivation to do the mind map after the given instruction. Nevertheless, five out of seven students show to perform the first level regarding literal comprehension. Since, they took textual lines from the text causing fraud in order to give a general notion of what each chapter was about, in other words, they did not go deeper through the reading to take ideas from the inner text. Secondly, they showed there was no written production in English considering they wrote some ideas in Spanish.

On the other hand, there were two students showing knowledge about the book and organizing main and secondary ideas in a hierarchical way on the mind map without falling into literal level and also managed to extract important textual information that demonstrated understanding of the meaning of English words and sentences.

Regarding intertextual comprehension, we appreciated that students are not at this level yet as they did not manage to establish a connection with other texts, recognize intentionality and generate questions about the text to propose and apply in context as Perez (2003) coins to be this level about.

2.4.3 Focus group Analysis

In the development of the focus group, we were able to identify some attitudes of the students that helped us to think about the stances that each one of them assumes based on the reading comprehension obtained from the book read in class. The indications were given at the beginning of the session; students were asked to answer three questions aiming their analytic, questioning, and propositive stances. Students had a few minutes to think about these questions; However, it was also evident they prepared what would be their participation in the focus group. This evidenced the absence of a capacity for authentic construction on the part of the participants. That previous preparation of the answers showed a lack of empowerment of the language and the topic proposed to develop in the focus group. In the same path, we also could identify that the participants were not able to answer the counter questions the moderator did. The participation was very active and

students were willing to express their ideas, but it was in Spanish also because of this reason mentioned previously about the language production.

Regarding analytic stance, we could identify participants did not go beyond the literal level, that is to say, they just shared their opinions based on their previous knowledge and daily life experiences. Even, having a book as a base to develop the focus group, they did not use any kind of reference about it. Connected with the previous stance, students do not question themselves about the practices in their daily life regarding the environment. They just used basic comments based on some information they have heard, but they did not make use of that information to create questions about social responsibility. Finally, participants expressed proposals, but the same ones displayed in the book, which demonstrated they were understanding, however they did not know what to do with the information nor how to apply it in their context. Despite these results, students always were motivated, open to participate and they took risks.

3. Results

3.1 Relation between Reading comprehension habits and reading comprehension levels.

Taking into consideration the previous analysis made from the interview and the mind map, we could evidence that those reading comprehension habits manifested by students were not applied while reading the text and making the mind map. With the construction of the mind map, students needed to organize and hierarchize the information understood from the text, but the participants showed they did not go deeper into the subject matter and there was no interaction with the text. In the development of this activity was evident the use of some key words, the translation, and plagiarism of textual lines of the book, limiting own production and demonstrating clearly low understanding and their position to the text.

3.2 Relation between reading comprehension and Stances to critical digital literacy.

The level of reading comprehension that could be evidenced in the relation of these two categories was strictly in a literal level, that is, it was not possible to evidence neither a written production in the mind map nor a fluent discourse from the participants in the focus group. Additionally, it could be seen that there was a lack of a more in-depth inquiry from them about the topic. It was clear, there was no own production in English and fluency in their discourses, no connection with the text worked, corroborating the literal level of reading comprehension mentioned before. Thus, they did not demonstrate to have an analytical, questioning or propositive stance on their part.

3.3 Relation between Stances to critical digital literacy and reading comprehension habits.

The lack of reading comprehension habits generated a lack of vocabulary and strong reading comprehension of the book read; which limited the students' participation in the focus group. The lack of understanding of the words used in the discussion created confusion, thus, requiring the use of their mother tongue (Spanish). This generated that there was no understanding and that they could not reach their own position on the topic, besides not generating authentic production in an autonomous and spontaneous way. Although the proposed activity had some points that created a need for analysis on the part of the participants, due to the aforementioned aspects, this was not evident.

4. Discussion

Once the data collection process and its respective analysis have been completed, we could observe that the eighth-grade students of the Instituto Salesiano Pedro Justo Berrío mostly have a literal comprehension level. Also, we evidenced that the non-implementation of study habits and lack of interest in reading have a significant influence on maintaining their low level, since it was identified that the lack of vocabulary, knowledge and usage of grammatical structures, fluency when speaking, and own written

production in most of the participants hinders content analysis and deep questioning of texts, which makes the comprehension a difficult skill to achieve.

Now, articulating the categories that were previously analyzed, it is possible to identify the importance that exists in the relationship emerged between them, since the acquisition of critical thinking or reading comprehension as a skill is directly shaped by a set of previous steps and knowledges in terms of achieving the development of a position in critical Digital literacy which was initially supposed to be fostered from reading comprehension of digital texts in English; However, the data collected indicated the opposite, since to enhance CDL it is necessary for students to acquire a critical-intertextual reading comprehension level that our participants have not developed yet and which according to Pérez (2003), it is the only level that will allow the reader take a critical, questioning, and propositive stance in front of the book read, and take different ideas from other texts which they have interacted with to apply them in their daily context.

In this sense, we consider it is important to continue conducting research on the subject; considering the results of this work, it could be interesting to contrast these findings with students from other grades to see how regular this trend is or whether there are other variables depending on the factors mentioned above. Additionally, we suggest to future researchers to consider the possibility of exploring new activities and strategies to promote a successful reading comprehension process of digital texts in English that will allow students to develop their critical digital literacy. Finally, after finishing this research, more questions emerged regarding what are those factors that prevent students from being motivated toward reading on this digital reading platform? This is why we recommend to the school to implement new strategies to strengthen the knowledge of the language and other activities that favor reading comprehension. Besides, reevaluate the methods carried out by teachers in terms of helping students to interact with the digital books read in class and to take a look at the methodology assigned to the usage of this digital reading platform in English classes.

It has been very gratifying to learn not only from the content of this work, but also from the experiences and contributions of every single student who has made a transcendental part of this research possible, since in spite of being in a constant process of improvement of all the language skills, they were always interested and motivated to participate and make the classes active and fruitful. In short, this degree project has been incredibly positive and as future teachers we believe that it is key to strengthen reading comprehension processes by being completely interrelated with critical digital literacy, because it is considered a fundamental and especially important skill in twenty-first century education.

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