

GAINS AND CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A CRITICAL READING UNIT AT A PUBLIC
UNIVERSITY IN MEDELIN, COLOMBIA

A thesis presented by:

JUAN DAVID CASTAÑO ROLDÁN

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A Thesis Presented

by

JUAN DAVID CASTAÑO ROLDÁN

Approved as to style and content by:



Doris Correa Ríos, Chair



Jorge Hugo Muñoz Marín, Committee Member



Harold Andrés Castañeda Peña, Committee Member



Paula Andrea Echeverri Sucerquia, Director
Escuela de Idiomas

DEDICATION

To my beloved family, especially to my parents who patiently supported me and understood my dedication to this work. I also want to dedicate this work to my spiritual mother who always kept me up and to all of those who believed in me even when I thought

I would not make it. To all of you, thank you.

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ABSTRACT

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Nowadays, students are abundantly exposed to different discourses through texts such as memes, magazine articles, and newspaper reports. Although these texts seem to be neutral, the language in them is used not only to transmit information but also to produce social undesired phenomena. This is why it is important to teach students to read these texts critically which means: identifying authors' position and how it influences readers, thinking about texts from multiple perspectives, unveiling hidden messages, and identifying silenced and marginalized voices. Students reading this way are less prone to authors' influence. On the contrary, students not reading this way, fall prey to authors' manipulation easily. In the case of Colombia, universities have offered English reading comprehension courses. Unfortunately, the most prominent Colombian EFL journals show these courses mostly focus on the study skills model in which students learn cognitive reading strategies, grammar, and vocabulary. Thus, students are deprived of reading critically as described above. Given the lack of examples on how to do critical reading of community texts with

undergraduate students in Colombia and the lack of knowledge on the gains and challenges this could bring, this study aimed to explore the gains and challenges experienced by a group of undergraduate students during the implementation of a critical reading unit within a reading comprehension course at a public university in Medellín, Colombia. The research question was: what are the gains and challenges experienced by undergraduate students during the implementation of a critical reading unit? To answer this, an intrinsic case study was done and data sources such as video-recordings of all lessons, samples of students' work, and students' reflections were collected and analysed in a deductive-inductive way. Results from this analysis suggest that students experienced particular gains and challenges during the critical reading unit. Finally, the study also has some implications for teaching and research. The former includes the need to provide students with proper scaffolding to carry out the activities among others. The later include discovering how this methodology would work in other settings and with other students who are exposed to other types of texts.

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Introduction

The amount of texts available in different languages, especially English, has increased considerably in the last few years as a result of the development of technology around the world (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Due to this, students are now more exposed than ever to a variety of discourses through everyday texts such as “community texts” (Luke, O’Brien & Comber, 1994; Janks, 2010). Examples of these are, newspaper reports, memes, and magazine articles.

To critical literacy scholars, even though these texts can increase and expand our knowledge of the world, they also have the power to deceive, delude, and misrepresent reality (Haromi, 2014; Luke et al, 1994; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Wallace, 2003). Moreover, they can contribute to the reproduction of a variety of undesired social phenomena such as: (a) unequal social structures, (b) unequal institutional power relations, (c) discriminatory race relations, (d) restrictive versions of gender identities, and (e) one-dimensional versions of cultures (Luke et al, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009; Janks, 2010; Wallace, 2003).

But how do texts do this? To critical literacy scholars they do it through authors’ different lexical (e.g., choice of certain words), grammatical (e.g., choice of active instead of passive voice), and textual choices (e.g., fronting some information and putting the other at the end). These choices are situated in the authors’ world and reflect their ideological biases (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2008; Janks, 2010, Wallace, 2003). For example, if an author privileges a certain way of seeing the world, s/he will represent it in a positive way by using positive adjectives, fronting it, supporting it with other views. On the other hand, if s/he despises this way of seeing the world, s/he will use negative adjectives, hide the

view by putting it at the end of the clause or omitting it, marginalize it by silencing those voices that represent it in a positive way and so on (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Janks, 2010; Luke, 2000).

That is why, it is important to teach students to read these texts critically. To these scholars, reading critically means being able to do the following: (a) identifying the author's position in texts and how it influences readers (Cervetti et al, 2001; Luke, 2000; Shor, 1999); (b) thinking about texts from multiple perspectives (Iyer, 2007; Lewison et al, 2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004); (c) unveiling hidden messages in texts (Begoray et al, 2013; Kellner & Share, 2007; Luke, 2000, Molden, 2007), and (d) identifying silenced and marginalized voices in texts (Luke, 2000; McDaniel, 2004; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004), among other things. In other words, reading critically means not only understanding authors' position, but also being able to resist it by questioning it, contesting it, or contrasting it with other perspectives. This resistance allows readers to realize unfair representations of the world that might be promoting unfair power relationships (Haromi, 2014; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

According to Luke (2000) students who are not taught how to do this type of critical reading can more easily fall prey to authors' manipulation and therefore, they may inadvertently end up perpetuating unequal power relationships related to social issues such as race, class and gender. They may also find themselves normalizing and reproducing stereotypes and ideologies embedded by authors in these texts (Luke, 2012; Luke et al, 1994).

On the contrary, readers who are taught to read critically are able to identify this bias and decide how to balance it with their own knowledge of the world (Janks, 2010; Luke, 2012; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2008). This means that they can consider different

perspectives to issues in texts in order to reflect about them and work toward a more just image of what these issues might be (Iyer, 2007; Lewison et al, 2002). Moreover, they are able to recognize the language that authors use in texts with the intension of reproducing stereotypes and unfair discourses and avoid passively reproducing them (Comber, 2001; Janks, 2010). Besides, they can use language to exercise their power as readers by questioning normalized, unfair representations of certain groups of people in texts by creating counter-texts that represent these groups of people in a more just way (Janks, 2010; Kress, 1993). Finally, they “pay attention and seek out the voices of those who have been silenced or marginalized” (p. 383) to have a broader understanding of what is happening in texts. This means they are willing to wonder why authors silence certain voices and also to look for what these voices have to say (Harste et al., 2000) as cited in Lewison et al, 2002).

Aware of the importance of having students develop reading comprehension of the texts they read in English, Colombian universities have for years been offering reading comprehension courses in English. Unfortunately, a review of pedagogical experiences published, during the last sixteen years, in the five main Colombian journals in the field of EFL (Colombian Journal of Applied Linguistics, HOW, Ikala, PROFILE, and Lenguaje) confirms that most reading instruction in Colombia is based on the study skills model (Lea & Street, 2006). In this model, students are taught cognitive reading strategies such as, skimming, scanning, predicting, inferring, and determining main ideas, together with grammar and vocabulary (Lea & Street, 1999). As a consequence of this, students are deprived of the opportunity to read in the ways described above. Examples of these experiences in Colombia are those reported by Aguirre & Ramos (2009); Bautista (2013);

Camargo & Orbeagozo (2010); Gómez & Ávila (2009); Lopera (2012); Lopez (2001); Perdomo (2001); Posada (2004); Rodriguez (2016); Ruiz & Arias (2009).

Aguirre & Ramos (2009, Lopez (2001), and Perdomo (2001) implemented reading strategies such as exploiting transparent words, reading non-text information, skimming/scanning, using linguistic clues, predicting and inferring as a way to promote autonomous learning among their students. Aguirre & Ramos (2009) found that strategies such as exploiting transparent words, reading non-text information, and skimming/scanning improved a group of business administration students' self-confidence which derived in having a better attitude to take risks and learn autonomously. Likewise, Lopez (2001) found that strategies such as reading non-text information, skimming/scanning, and predicting not only reduced the stress generated by reading in a foreign language but also helped a group of accounting students be more self-confident when learning autonomously about their professional fields from texts in English. Separately, Perdomo (2001) found that strategies such as skimming/scanning, inferring, and predicting helped undergraduate students from different programs become autonomous readers and increase their vocabulary.

Bautista (2013), Gómez & Ávila (2009), and Rodriguez (2016) implemented reading strategies such as brainstorming, graphic organizers, comparing/contrasting, making associations, and finally meaning deduction by context to improve their students' reading comprehension level. Bautista (2013) found that strategies such as comparing/contrasting, making associations, and meaning deduction by context helped a group of undergraduate students from different programs to increase both their motivation and the acquisition of specific vocabulary. Separately, Gómez & Ávila (2009) found that strategies such as brainstorming, graphic organizers and comparing/contrasting not only helped a group of undergraduate students from different programs improve their reading

comprehension level but also promoted their participation in class. Finally, Rodriguez (2016) found that strategies such as making associations, meaning-deduction by context, and graphic organizers supported students' understanding of several literary texts. These strategies also motivated students to approach different kinds of texts.

Lopera (2012), Camargo & Orbezo (2010), and Ruiz & Arias (2009) implemented reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, anticipating, and predicting to improve their students' reading comprehension level. Lopera (2012) found that these strategies supported a group of nursing students to increase their motivation and also reduced the use of the dictionary which derived in higher levels of self-confidence. Similarly, Camargo & Orbezo (2010) found these strategies not only increased the reading comprehension level of a group of undergraduate students from diverse programs but also their confidence in what they understand when they read texts in English. For their part, Ruiz and Arias (2009) found that these strategies helped the instructor, involved in the study, foster extensive reading practices in a group of undergraduate students from different programs. Besides, these strategies increased both students' motivating towards reading and also their vocabulary.

Indeed, the literature review only shows one example of an approach to teaching reading that is not based on reading strategies. This example is offered by Posada (2004). This study exposed students to canonical and non-canonical texts to explore students' beliefs about race and gender. After reading the texts and discussing them, students wrote a letter to book editors to ask them to include writers from different races and genders. She found that discussing these kinds of texts increased students' vocabulary. Nevertheless, these students did not have the chance to read these texts critically by identifying authors'

position and how it influences readers, unveiling the hidden messages, or identifying silenced or marginalized voices.

Given this lack of examples on how to do critical reading of community texts with undergraduate students in Colombian English classrooms and the lack of knowledge on what the gains and challenges that such an enterprise would have, this study aimed to explore the gains and challenges experienced by a group of 21 undergraduate students during the implementation of a critical reading unit. The unit was taught as part of a level II reading comprehension course offered at a public university in Medellín, Colombia, and followed the Strategy Instructional Framework proposed by McLaughlin & DeVoogd (2004). The specific research question asked as the unit developed was, *what are the gains and challenges experienced by undergraduate students during the implementation of a critical reading unit that uses this framework?*

The following sections describe how literacy and texts have been conceptualized in time. Also, they explain principles, benefits, and challenges of critical reading as well as critical reading models. Then, they describe the reading comprehension course where this study was conducted, both as it was proposed and as it was modified for the purpose of this study. After that, they provide a description of the research methodology, including the participants of the study, how data were gathered and analysed, and the ethical norms that were considered. Next, they describe the main findings of the study, specifying gains and challenges experienced by the participants throughout the unit. Finally, they discuss the importance of these findings in the light of national and international studies, their potential contributions to the field, and their implications for teaching and research.

Theoretical Framework

The study proposed here draws on Critical Literacy theories. More specifically, critical reading theories. The following paragraphs provide a description of how literacy and texts have been conceptualized through time. Then, they present some principles, benefits and challenges of critical reading. Finally, they present some models and techniques that have been used to teach critical reading.

Conceptualization of Literacy and Texts through Time

The concepts of literacy and texts have evolved through time and this evolution can be seen in the literacy scholars' adoption of three different models: (a) study skills, (b) academic socialization, and (d) academic literacies (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 1998, 1999, and 2006). In the study skills model, scholars regard literacy as technical and instrumental and pay little attention to context (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 1999). They define texts as mere vehicles of communication that draw on linguistic codes to convey meaning (Lea & Street, 1998; 1999) and assume that literacy is a set of individual skills that are effortlessly transferable from one context to another and students must learn these skills in order to achieve reading proficiency (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 2006).

To help students develop these skills, scholars use several strategies which include the teaching of surface grammar aspects such as: (a) types of sentences, (b) verb tenses, and (c) word formation and punctuation (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 1998). Through these kinds of strategies, students are encouraged to understand the contents of texts without paying significant attention to the different contexts where those texts are produced (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 1998).

Although the model is still in place in many classrooms, it has been challenged by literacy scholars who take a more social view of language and give particular importance to social context. Such scholars helped to establish a new model: The academic socialization model (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 2006). In this model, scholars describe texts as vehicles of communication that use the codes and conventions of a particular context (Lea & Street, 1998;1999) and assume that once students have learned the ground rules of genres and academic discourses, they are able to achieve reading competence unproblematically (Lea & Street, 1998; 2006). To familiarize students with these genres, scholars propose some strategies which include teaching students how texts are organized in different genres, and how language is deployed to display meaning in those genres (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 2006). Even though contextual factors are regarded as important, this model has been criticized for assuming that genres are relatively stable and for not paying much attention to issues of power relations, identities, and institutional practices (Lea & Street, 2004; 2006).

Critiques to this model gave rise to a new model of literacy: the academic literacies model. This model builds upon insights developed in the two previous models and proposes a broader analysis of the nature of literacy in institutional practices, power relations, and identities and how these affects readers (Lea, 2004; Lea & Street, 1999). As such, it is the model upheld by most critical literacy scholars.

In this model, scholars conceptualize texts as representations of the world which are inevitably permeated by their authors' bias (Fairclough, 1989; Janks, 2010; Kress, 1993, Wallace, 2003), and "community texts" are not the exception. These texts, as defined by Luke et al. (1994), are those that circulate in everyday life and are important in the wider cultural climate. Examples of these texts are: memes, TV news reports, and magazine articles which seem to be neutral but actually document and shape social life based on

ideological agendas (Luke et al, 199; Wallace, 2003). In these texts, as in many others, authors create certain representations of the social world, and make them seem natural, so readers identify themselves with those social representations (Luke et al, 1994; Wallace, 2003).

To help students examine the ways in which ideology and power are expressed, produced and reproduced through language, scholars teach them how to question normalized representations in these texts (Fairclough, 1989; Luke, 2000; Morgan, 2012). Likewise, they encourage them to draw on different perspectives to construct understandings in order to avoid passively reproducing unfair, discriminatory representations of certain groups of people in texts. This does not mean to say that everyone accepts messages passively, only that those who do, are prompted to be more critical (Freebody & Luke, 1990; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). Similarly, they instruct them to focus not on what is openly announced, but on omissions and distortions, by asking who is left out of the conversation and the reasons the author had to represent the world that way (Gee, 1990; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993).

Critical Reading: Principles, Benefits and Challenges

To critical literacy scholars, critical readers are able to perform five main tasks. First, they are able to identify the author's position in texts and how it influences readers. This involves being able to recognize how the linguistic and textual choices made by authors are helping them both establish their position and influence the readers' position (Cervetti et al., 2001; Luke, 2000; Shor, 1999). Second, they are able to think about texts from multiple perspectives. This means being able to recognize that other representation of the world, apart from those of the author, are possible and valid (Iyer, 2007; Lewison et al.,

2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). Third, they are able to uncover hidden messages in texts. This implies being able to identify other messages in texts, beyond the obvious, and the ideologies behind these messages (Begoray et al., 2013; Kellner & Share, 2007a; Luke, 2000, Molden, 2007). Finally, they are able to identify silenced and marginalized voices in texts. This has to do with being able to identify whose voices are being left out of the conversation by authors and the intentions that authors have behind this (Luke, 2000; McDaniel, 2004; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

Doing this type of critical reading has both benefits and challenges for students. As for benefits, there seem to be many. First, it prompts students to consider different perspectives to the issues dealt with in texts to develop a more just image of what these issues might be (Iyer, 2007; Lewison et al, 2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2008). Second, it allows students to recognize the language that authors use in texts, with or without the intension of reproducing stereotypes, and teaches them to avoid the passive reproduction of these (Comber, 2001; Janks, 2010). Third, it encourages readers to use the power they have as readers by questioning normalized, unfair representations of certain groups of people in texts (Janks, 2010; Kress, 1993). Fourth, it “helps students recognize dominant forms of language without devaluing their own language and culture” (Janks, 2000 as cited in Lewison et al, 2002, p. 383). Fifth, it urges students to challenge, redefine, and expand their own representations of the social world and incites them to cross their own borders with the intension of understanding others (Lewison et al, 2002; Gee, 1990). Sixth, it supports students in their efforts to “critique, problem solve, and produce a broad range of texts from a range of cultures and institutions” (Luke, 2000, p. 454). Finally, it motivates students to “pay attention and seek out the voices of those who have been silenced or marginalized” to

have a more inclusive understanding of what is happening in the world (Harste et al, 2000 as cited in Lewison et al, 2002, p. 38).

As for challenges to do this type of critical reading, there seem to be at least four. The first one deals with the time and desire needed to adopt a critical position towards certain normalized cultural representations in texts (Janks, 2010, Wallace, 2003). For example, students might not want to adopt a critical position towards texts that contain representations of the world with which they feel comfortable as readers. The second one has to do with school curricula, as they are not usually designed to promote a critical position towards texts, making critical reading activities difficult to implement in terms of time and contents (Janks, 2010; Lewison et al., 2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Wallace, 2003). The third one touches on the issue of potential parental opposition to the issues being addressed when teaching critical reading to teenagers or children. For instance, some parents or institutions might not find it appropriate that their children or teenagers start adopting critical positions towards traditional representations of race, gender, and family in texts (Janks, 2010; Lewison et al., 2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Wallace, 2003). The fourth one discusses the language level needed to draw on certain critical reading strategies. Although this does not have to be too high, students with a poor language level might feel at a loss when trying to, for example, understand the contents of texts and identify the linguistic elements that authors use to position texts, readers, and themselves (Janks, 2010; Lewison et al., 2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Wallace, 2003).

Critical Reading Models

To teach their students how to do critical reading, authors, such as, Asghar & Al-Bargi (2014); Dar, Rahimi & Shams (2010); Haromi (2014) have used different models and techniques. Asghar & Al-Bari (2014) used the three-dimensional framework proposed by Wallace (2003) as cited in Asghar & Al-Bari (2014). This framework asks students to explore linguistic, conceptual, and cultural insights in texts to analyze them critically. Separately, Dar, Rahimi & Shams (2010) taught their EFL students critical discourse analysis techniques (CDA) as a critical reading strategy to raise their critical language awareness. Finally, Haromi (2014) proposed to familiarize students with appraisal resources such as attitude, engagement, and graduation to teach critical reading to Iranian EFL learners. However, because of time constraints, Haromi' s (2014) study only focused on teaching students engagement resources such as expanding and contracting. To do this, the instructor chose several sentences from an editorial article in which engagement resources were used and wrote these on the whiteboard. Then, the functions that these resources had in the text were explained. Finally, students were given time to analyze the engagement resources used in another text and the functions that they had.

But probably the most well-known model for critical reading is that proposed by McLaughlin & DeVoogd (2004). The authors called it “the Strategy Instructional Framework” to teach critical reading strategies. This model involves explaining, demonstrating, guiding, practicing, and reflecting. In the first stage, explaining, the instructor “explains what the critical literacy strategy is and how it works” (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004, p. 38). Examples of these strategies are, Appraisal, Switching, and Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits (Butt, et al., 2000; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004).

In the appraisal strategy, students analyze the adjectives, nouns, and verbs that authors connect to situations or characters in the texts that they read, as well as the people that authors quote to support their arguments. In this strategy, students examine how the story would make a different impression after altering those elements. This strategy helps readers realize that representations of characters and situations are socially constructed (Butt et al., 2000).

In the switching strategy, after students read a text, they respond to selected questions such as “what gender is represented in the text?” or “what race is represented in the text” Then, they imagine how the message would change after switching the race or gender of characters in certain texts. This strategy helps readers realize racial and gender stereotypes embedded by authors in texts (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

In the mind and alternative mind portraits strategy, students examine a text from two points of view which may be both present in the text or one represented and the other one not. For this, they sketch the silhouettes of two heads and start writing words or sentences related to each point of view to contrast both sides of the story in the text. This strategy helps readers understand and see the different interests at play in texts (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

In the second stage, demonstrating, the instructor “demonstrates the strategy by using a think-aloud, a read-aloud, and an overhead projector or chalkboard” (p. 38). In the third stage, guiding, the instructor “guides students to work in small groups or with partners to create responses” (p. 38). In the fourth stage, practicing, the instructor has students “practice by having students work with partners or independently to apply the critical literacy strategy” (p. 38). Finally, in the last stage, reflecting, the instructor encourages students to “reflect on how the strategy helps read critically” (p. 38).

Setting

The setting for this study was a critical reading pedagogical unit taught as part of an English Reading Comprehension Level II course offered to undergraduate students in a public university in Medellin, Colombia. Both the course and the unit are described below.

The Reading Comprehension Course

The Reading Comprehension I and II courses are offered by the school of languages and constitute a requisite for graduation from the undergraduate programs. These courses seek to develop students' reading comprehension skills in English by familiarizing students with morpho-syntactic structures, vocabulary, general terminology as well as reading strategies (Programa de Competencia Lectora Inglés I & II). At the end of the courses, students are expected to be able to accurately extract explicit information from a variety of texts at a medium pace (Programa de Competencia Lectora Inglés I & II).

To help students achieve these goals, the reading comprehension Level I program proposes to teach basic grammar aspects to consider when reading, dictionary use, reading strategies and identification of main ideas in texts at a basic level. For level II, the program proposes five units: (a) exploration of text organization methods; (b) meaning of expressions and words by context; (c) information extraction and organization; (d) reading and interpretation of graphics; (e) interpretation and evaluation of texts. In this last unit of the course, students are expected to do the following: (a) distinguish between facts and opinions; (b) recognize generalizations; and (c) identify author's tone, purpose and prejudices (Programa de Competencia Lectora Inglés II).

The Pedagogical Unit

The pedagogical unit (see Appendix A) was carried out in the final four weeks of the first semester 2018. The sixteen classes took place from April 18th to May 23rd, 2018 and were taught at a rate of three two-hour class sessions a week. The unit drew mainly on “community texts” (Luke et al., 1994) because these texts circulate in everyday life and are influential in the wider cultural climate which makes them relevant for all kinds of students (Wallace, 2003).

These community texts were the following: (a) two news reports called “Drug Boss Pablo Escobar still divides Colombia” and “Press hails Uribe’s victory” retrieved from BBC Newspaper; (b) two magazine articles called “Can alcohol help you live longer?” and “How a vegetarian diet could help save the planet” retrieved from Time Magazine; (c) several memes related to race and gender issues retrieved from the internet; (d) two news report videos from “Father challenged Marco Rubio on guns” retrieved from BBC News Channel and “Colombia and FARC sign historic ceasefire deal” retrieved from Al Jazeera English News Channel.

These texts supported students’ understanding of several principles of critical literacy. These principles claim that a critical reader is able to: (a) identify the author’s position in texts and how it influences readers, (b) think about texts from multiple perspectives, (c) uncover hidden messages in texts, and (d) identify silenced and marginalized voices in texts. The instructor taught students several pre-reading strategies such as, anticipation guides, structured overviews, and case scenarios (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008). These helped students cope with possible issues related to low reading proficiency levels.

To organize the unit, the Strategy Instructional Framework (explain, demonstrate, guide, practice, reflect) proposed by McLaughlin & DeVogd (2004) was used in a cyclic manner (one cycle per principle) until all four principles were covered. For example, to familiarize students with the first principle, during the first class, students were explained how identifying authors' position in texts could help them read critically (Explain). Then, a news report "Press Hails Uribe's Victory" retrieved from BBC newspaper was used as a model to demonstrate the critical reading strategies to identify authors' position in texts. These strategies consisted in looking at the adjectives and nouns used to represent the characters and situations in this text as well as the people quoted by the author to support their argument (Butt, et al, 2000). This helped students see how authors construct a version of the information through these elements (Butt, et al, 2000, Janks, 2010) (Demonstrate).

Next, during the second class, students were guided, in pairs, to analyze another news report "Drug Boss Pablo Escobar Still Divides Colombia" retrieved from BBC newspaper. They wrote down the analysis they made with the strategies and presented it to the rest of the class orally and received feedback both from their classmates and instructor (Guide). Then, in the same pairs and as homework for the third class, students had to find a similar text to practice the modeled strategies and to show their understanding of the critical reading principle that was being discussed. Once in class, they shared the analysis they did with the whole class and received feedback from both the instructor and their classmates (Practice).

Finally, during the fourth class, students answered and discussed some questions to reflect on the gains and challenges they experienced while working with this principle (reflect). For a list of the questions they were asked to respond in the reflecting stage of each principle, see Appendix B. Once the cycle with one of the principles was done, a new

cycle with a new principle would begin. Each cycle lasted about four classes. One for the explaining and demonstrating stages, one for the guiding stage, one for the practicing stage, and one for the reflecting stage. For a total of about four weeks for the unit to be covered.

Research Methodology

The present study was carried out by means of a single intrinsic case study methodology. Single intrinsic case studies allow the researcher “to examine a current phenomenon in its natural context” through different data sources (Yin, 2011, p. 13). Additionally, their primary interest is to learn about the particularities of the case itself through a single experiment rather than to generalize or rebuild theory (Yin, 2011).

Similarly, this study allowed me to explore a phenomenon: the gains and challenges experienced by undergraduate students during the implementation of a critical reading unit. Furthermore, this study explored the phenomenon in its natural context: an undergraduate Level II reading comprehension course in a public university in Medellín, Colombia. Moreover, it aimed to provide a description of the particularities of this case: the particular gains and challenges that this group of undergraduate students had while taking a critical reading unit. Besides, it drew on different data sources (e.g., video-recordings, students’ work samples, reflection tasks) as one of the main analytical processes.

Participants

Participants in this research study were a group of twenty-one undergraduate students who took the reading comprehension level II course in order to fulfil their requirement for their graduation. The students held a high school degree and came from different educational and social backgrounds which meant their reading proficiency in English varied from basic to intermediate. They were pursuing different professional programs such as, dentistry, healthcare administration, nursing, psychology, social work, and Spanish language teaching. Their ages ranged between 19 and 26.

In terms of their reading comprehension level in English, reading exercises conducted at the beginning of the semester showed that they were able to identify the main idea in a paragraph and use reading strategies such as skimming and scanning to identify the topic of a text and answer global and specific questions. They were also able to identify paragraphs with different functions such as generalizing, explaining, and exemplifying. In terms of reading critically, the exercises showed that most of them were unaware of how to do this. That is, they had problems to: (a) identify authors' position in texts and how it influences readers, (b) think about texts from multiple perspectives, (c) unveil hidden messages in texts, (d) identify silenced and marginalized voices in texts. This was not a surprise since this type of reading is not usually promoted in schools (Garcia, Sagre & Lacharme, 2014; Luke, 2012; Luke & Woods, 2009). Besides, most of the contents in the previous course dealt mainly with grammar aspects, how to use dictionaries, and how to identify main ideas (Programa de Competencia Lectora Inglés I).

Instructor

I hold a Bachelor's degree in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning from Universidad de Antioquia. I have also previously taught reading comprehension courses in private universities in Medellin. I became interested in critical reading after observing that many of my students firmly believed in online versions of magazine articles and news reports that they read in class just because, to them, these were trustable sources of information without questioning the representations or the intentions behind these texts. Additionally, this topic attracted my attention after observing how students easily reproduced stereotypes present in online texts such as memes and advertising without considering how these can be socially discriminatory.

Data Collection

To explore the gains and challenges experienced by students during the implementation of the critical reading unit, this study drew on several data sources. These included samples of students' work, students' written reflections, and video-recordings. Table 1 summarizes all the data collected.

Table 1
Data Collected

Data Collected		
Instrument	Purpose	Amount
Video recordings	To facilitate a more detailed exploration of the gains and challenges experienced by students during the activities.	16
Work samples	To confirm or disconfirm what was seen both in the reflection tasks and the video recordings.	64
Reflection tasks	To confirm or disconfirm what was seen both in the work samples and the video recordings.	81

Samples of students' work.

These included the analyses of texts that students made using the critical reading strategies taught in class. They were collected at two different moments: (a) in the guide stage; (b) in the practice stage of each principle. Since there were four principles, in total, eight samples from each pair of students were collected. These text analyses showed both gains and challenges experienced by students during the implementation of the critical reading unit.

Written reflections.

These were done in Spanish and took place at the reflection stage of each principle. These reflections gave account of the gains and challenges students experienced while doing the critical reading activities connected to each principle. Among the questions that were asked in the written reflections, we have the following: what did you learn about

author's position and how it influences readers? What did you learn about texts and different perspectives and positions, what did you learn about hidden messages? And what did you learn about silenced and marginalized voices in texts? As there were four principles, a total of four individual written reflections were collected per student.

Video-recordings.

These took place throughout the whole implementation of the unit and were sixteen video-recordings in total, as there were fourteen class sessions. Their purpose was to have a record of the gains and challenges experienced by students which was not limited to samples of their work but that also covered the gains and challenges they experienced during conversations held in class, presentations of the analysis of the texts they made with the critical reading strategies both during the guide stage and the practice stage, and also during the feedback they received both from their instructor and classmates.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using a deductive-inductive approach (Richards, 2003). That is, there were four categories (the four critical reading principles) and two subcategories (gains and challenges) that were pre-established (deductive approach). However, new categories (e.g., lack of cultural background, understanding the role of language in positionality, lack of grammatical knowledge) were allowed to emerge from the data (inductive approach).

To conduct the analysis, excerpts of video-recordings that showed gains and challenges experienced by students, reflection tasks, and work samples were uploaded into NVivo 10. Then, categories with the four principles were created along with two general subcategories per principle: one for gains and one for challenges. Once these categories and subcategories had been created, data collected for each principle was read and coded using

only the two general subcategories gains and challenges. Then, it was read again, allowing for new specific subcategories to emerge under each general subcategory. For example, for the first principle, under gains, subcategories such as *Understanding the Role of Knowledge in Positionality and Understanding the Role of Language in Positionality* started to emerge from the three sources of data. Similarly, for the same principle, under challenges, subcategories such as *Lack of Grammatical Knowledge and Having Problems to See Positionality When Readers Identify with Authors' Position or When Texts Appear to Be Factual* began to emerge (see Appendix C). Next, data in each specific subcategory were analysed to check which students presented evidence for each specific gain or challenge in the three data sources. Pseudonyms, instead of students' real names, were used to code all data.

This way of working with the data not only allowed me to be more systematic and thorough but also to achieve trustworthiness, which according to Creswell (1998) implies validating the accuracy and credibility of the findings through strategies such as member-checking, external audit, or triangulation to avoid overgeneralization or bias. To Guion, Diehl & McDonald (2002) there are five types of triangulation: data, investigator, theory, methodological, and environmental. Data triangulation involves gathering data from different sources such as the students in a course in order to increase the validity of the findings. Methodological triangulation involves drawing on different data collection methods such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews. If similar results are found in the different data collection methods, then, the findings can be considered as valid. In the case of this study, both data and methodological triangulation were performed as data from different information sources (e.g., all reflection tasks from different students) and from

different data collection methods (reflection tasks, students' work samples, and video-recordings) were compared to produce the findings (see Appendix D).

Ethical Considerations

In qualitative research several measures are suggested to ensure the ethical procedures are followed. One of these is to inform all participants of the nature of the study. Also, consent must be obtained, and their real names must remain private since disclosing behaviour or conversations that took place in the study might be harmful to them (Drew, Hardman and Hops, 2008). As such, to conduct this study, permission was sought from the program coordinator and their team. To get it, a meeting was organized with them. In it, they were presented a cover letter to the study that they had time to read carefully (see Appendix E). Then, their questions about all the details of the study were answered (e.g., its nature, the activities involved, and the possible ways in which the results of the study might be used in the future). Then, they were asked to sign a consent form. Once permission was granted, the study was presented to the students taking the course. As the program coordinator and their team, these were provided all the details of the study and asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix F) before the beginning of the unit. The data collected was stored safely and only the researcher and the thesis advisor had access to them. Students' real names were protected by means of pseudonyms.

Findings

As described in the previous section, this study aimed to explore the gains and challenges that a group of undergraduate students from a public university experienced during the implementation of a critical reading unit in a level II reading comprehension course. The unit had as its main aim to develop students' critical reading as proposed by CL scholars. That is, it intended to help students (a) identify the authors' position in texts and how it influences readers (Cervetti et al., 2001; Luke, 2000; Shor, 1999); (b); think about texts from multiple perspectives (Iyer, 2007; Lewison et al., 2002; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004); (c) uncover hidden messages in texts (Begoray et al., 2013; Kellner & Share, 2007a; Luke, 2000, Molden, 2007); and (d) identify silenced and marginalized voices in texts (Luke, 2000; McDaniel, 2004; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004)

Data analysis suggests that the critical reading unit not only helped students understand the four critical reading principles but also go beyond and understand the role of language in positionality and the role of memes in promoting stereotypes among others. This analysis also suggests that there are some stumbling blocks to consider such as the lack of grammar knowledge and cultural background. The following paragraphs present evidence of these gains and challenges in relation to each of these principles.

Principle 1: A Critical Reader Is Able to Identify Authors' Position and How It Influences Readers

In regard to this first principle, students had both gains and challenges during the development of the critical reading unit. These will be explained below, and evidence will be provided.

Gains.

Besides being able to identify authors' position and how it influences readers, students presented two main gains which had to do with understanding the role of knowledge in positionality and understanding the role of language in positionality.

Understanding the role of knowledge in positionality.

This gain refers to students' realization that readers are more easily influenced by authors when they are not knowledgeable about the topic, character or situation being presented. At least nine students experienced this gain. An example of these students is Valeria. After learning how to identify authors' position and intention and during the practice stage for the first principle, she brought up the issue of when a reader could be more easily influenced when approaching a text with a new topic and said,

20:58: Valeria: Profe, yo quiero decir que cuando estaba buscando el texto para hacer la tarea, algo se me hizo difícil. Yo busqué textos en inglés y encontré temas que no conocía. Y pues, como yo no sabía del tema, para mí era difícil hasta cierto punto encontrar la posición del autor porque yo no tenía un punto de referencia como para saber si podía creer en lo que leía o no. Entonces, suponía que era verdad de cierto modo (Valeria, excerpt from class 3rd, 24/04/2018)

20:58: Valeria: Teacher, I want to say that when I was looking for the text to do my homework, something was hard for me. I looked for texts in English and I found topics that I did not know. And well, since I did not know about the topic, it was hard for me, to a certain extent, to identify author's position because I did not have a reference point to know if I could believe what I was reading or not. So, I assumed it was true in a way (Valeria, excerpt from class 3rd, 24/04/2018)

As can be seen, Valeria realized that it is hard to identify authors' position in a text about a topic that she does not know very well: “*since I did not know about the topic, it was hard for me, to a certain extent, to identify author's position*”. Since she did not know much about the topic, the texts she found positioned her in a way: “*I did not have a reference point to know if I could believe what I was reading or not. So, I assumed it was*

true in a way". This also shows that she could have had avoided that positioning if she had had reference points or at least if she had considered different perspectives to the issue in the text.

During the reflect stage for the first principle, she brought up again the issue about the importance of being knowledgeable about a topic in order to identify author's position, but also not to be positioned. In this class, she said,

40:28: Valeria: Profe, antes de que aprendiera este principio, - yo leía solamente porque estaba interesada en el tema y ahora intento tomar una posición. Es decir, ya intento identificar la posición del autor para ver si estoy de acuerdo porque ya sé que los autores siempre están intentando influenciar a los lectores y principalmente si es sobre temas sobre que no saben nada. Por ejemplo, a las personas las posicionan fácilmente cuando les hablan de temas sociales que no conocen. Cuando las personas no saben mucho de x o y problema, son más propensas a ser influenciadas (Valeria, excerpt from class 4th, 25/04/2018)

40:28: Valeria: Teacher, before I learned this principle, I used to read just because I was interested in the topic. Now, I try to take a position. That is to say, I try to identify the author's position and see if I agree with it because I already know that authors are always trying to influence readers and mainly if these readers do not know anything about the topic. For example, people are easily positioned regarding social topics that they do not know anything about. When people do not know much about x or y problem, they are more prone to be influenced (Valeria, excerpt from class 4th, 25/04/2018)

As can be seen, Valeria not only realized that texts are always trying to influence readers. She realized that it is easier to identify authors' position in texts when you have previous knowledge about what you are reading because that way you can compare and contrast the new information in those texts to avoid being positioned. "When people do not know much about x or y problem, they are more prone to be influenced" this also suggests that she realized that people might tend to accept what they read in texts more easily when they do not know much about the topic. Valeria's realization was confirmed in the

reflection task for the first principle where, in response to the question 1. *What did you learn about authors' position and how it influences readers?* she wrote,

Los autores usan ciertos elementos lingüísticos para darles a los lectores pistas sobre su posición sobre el tema del texto. Sin embargo, si el lector no sabe mucho del tema, el autor puede hacerlo cambiar de opinión o interés en el tema de manera negativa o positiva. (Valeria, Reflection Task 1, 25/04/2018)

Authors use certain linguistic elements to give readers clues about their position on the topic of the text. However, if the reader does not know much about the topic, the author can make them change their opinion or interest in the topic in a negative or positive way. (Valeria, Reflection Task 1, 25/04/2018)

As can be seen, in this reflection, Valeria basically repeated what she stated in class that “*if the reader does not know much about the topic*” authors “*can make them change their opinion or interest in the topic*” easily. Such statement demonstrates that she remained in the same position that she had taken before.

Understanding the role of language in positionality.

This gain refers to students' realization that language plays a crucial role in reader's positioning. At least sixteen students experienced this gain. An example of these students is Tomas. Indeed, for the guiding stage regarding this principle, the instructor provided students with a newspaper article about Escobar from BBC News (see Appendix G). In this newspaper article, the author takes a negative position against Escobar by describing him as “infamous drug lord”, “drug boss”, and “crime boss”. He also takes a negative position against the fact that some people still affectionately refer to Pablo as “Pablito”. Through this newspaper article, the instructor showed students how authors influence readers positively or negatively about the situation or characters being presented through the verbs, adjectives, and adverbs that they choose to represent them. Additionally, students were provided with the following questions:

1. How is the author positioning Escobar?
2. What linguistic elements is he using to do that?
3. What image of Escobar is he trying to imprint on readers?

Table 2 shows how Tomás was able to not only understand how the author is positioning Escobar but also to identify elements such as, adverbs, adjectives, and nouns through which the author positioned Escobar in order to “*persuade readers to believe that Pablo was a bad person*”.

Table 2
Tomás’ Analysis of Escobar’s Newspaper article

Newspaper Article: Drug Boss Pablo Escobar still divides Colombia – 1st Principle		
1. How is the author positioning Escobar?	2. What linguistic elements is he using to do that?	3. What image of Escobar is he trying to imprint on readers?
<p><i>El autor posiciona a Escobar como alguien por quien siente desprecio. También lo posiciona como un criminal cruel y despiadado.</i></p> <p><i>The author positions Escobar as someone for whom he feels disdain. He also positions him as a cruel and ruthless criminal (My own translation).</i></p>	<p><u>Adverbs/Adverbios:</u> Sadly, Shockingly</p> <p><u>Adjectives/Adjetivos:</u> Infamous, criminal</p> <p><u>Nouns/Sustantivos:</u> Greatest outlaw – Richest – Ruthlessness – Crime Boss</p> <p><u>Verbs/Verbos:</u> Terrorised, bribed, attacked, killed</p>	<p><i>El autor intenta persuadir a los lectores para que crean que Pablo fue una mala persona que no merece ser admirada en la cultura colombiana. Puedo decir eso por la manera como describe todo lo relacionado con Pablo.</i></p> <p><i>The author tries to persuade readers to believe that Pablo was a bad person who does not deserve to be admired in the Colombian culture. I can say that because of the way that he describes everything related to Pablo (My own translation).</i></p>

The reflection task for the first principle shows Tomás' understanding of the role that language plays in positionality. In this, in response to the question *1. What did you learn about authors' position and how it influences readers?* Tomás brought up the issue of language and how it is used by authors to influence readers. He answered,

Yo era consciente de que los autores usan sus textos para más que informar. También los usan para imponer sus opiniones en los lectores. Sin embargo, No había alcanzado el nivel de análisis para darme cuenta de cómo los autores toman decisiones sobre el lenguaje que usan para influenciar a los lectores. Ser consciente de esto me permite leer entre líneas (Tomás, Reflection Task 1, 25/04/2018)

I was aware of the fact that authors use their texts for more than just informing. They also use them to impose their opinions on readers. However, I had not reached the level of analysis to realize how authors make decisions about the language they use in order to influence readers. Being aware of this allows me to read between lines (Tomás, Reflection Task 1, 25/04/2018)

As can be seen, he not only admitted that understanding the role of language in positioning readers is a new knowledge that he acquired through the activities in class: *“I had not reached the level of analysis to realize how authors make decisions about the language they use in order to influence readers”* but also suggested he feels empowered by this knowledge: *“being aware of this allows me to read between lines”*.

During the reflection stage for the first principle, he brought up some important aspects that confirm his understanding of the role of language in positioning readers. In this class, he said,

20:30: Profe, cuando yo hacía los ejercicios y veía el ejemplo que usted nos dio sobre Pablo y el que yo hice, yo me di cuenta de que el lenguaje que el autor usa sean adjetivos o lo que sea hace que uno crea porque le causa emociones que hacen que uno esté de acuerdo o en desacuerdo y más cuando uno lee de afán que es como uno lee las noticias (Tomás, excerpt from class 4th, 25/04/2018)

20:30: Teacher, when I was doing the exercises and was looking at the example that you gave us about Pablo and the one that I did, I realized that the language that the author uses either adjectives or whatever makes you believe because it causes

emotions in you that make you agree or disagree and mainly when you read in a hurry which is like you read the news (Tomás, excerpt from class 4th, 25/04/2018)

As can be seen, he admitted that authors use the language to position readers through the emotions that this language causes: *“the language that the author uses... makes you believe because it causes emotions in you that make you agree or disagree and mainly when you read in a hurry which is like you read the news”*

Challenges.

Regarding the first principle, students had two main challenges. The first one was related to the understanding of the principle. The second one was related to the strategies taught in class. The challenge related to the understanding of the principle was: having problems to see positionality when readers identify with author’s position or when the text appears to be factual. The challenge related to the strategies taught was lack of grammatical knowledge. All of these challenges will be explained below, and evidence will be provided.

Having problems to see positionality when readers identify with authors’ position or when texts appear to be factual.

This challenge refers to the fact that students had problems to see positionality in two instances. First, students felt so identified with author’s position that they were not able to see what the author said as a position. Instead of that, they thought it was the truth. At least three students experienced this. Second. Students expressed that authors could not take a position in texts that appear to be factual such as scientific texts because to them, these are supposed to be objective. At least six students experienced this.

An example of students feeling identified with author’s position is Ana. In the activity that had students analyze Escobar’s newspaper article, Ana, for example, showed

that she was able to identify the linguistic elements that the author used to position Escobar. However, she had problems to see this description as a position and insisted that it was not a position but the truth. When she was asked *What image of Escobar is he trying to imprint on readers?* she wrote,

Una imagen comercial como uno de los más grandes narcotraficantes, asesinos y terroristas. Él todavía es una fuente de dinero para las personas de la ciudad incluso si ya está muerto. Inclusive si es una mala persona, su fama hace que algunas personas lo quieran y comercialicen todo lo que esté relacionado con él y los lugares donde él vivía son turísticos.

Sin embargo, yo ya sabía esto y por lo tanto este texto no me influencia tanto porque lo que dice no es una opinión sino la verdad. Ya que está escrito en inglés, es posible que sea para extranjeros que podrían ser influenciados.

A commercial image as one of the biggest drug-traffickers, murderers, and terrorists. He is still a source of money for the people in the city even if he is already dead. Even if he is a bad person, his fame makes some people love him and make everything related to him commercial and the places where he lived are touristic.

However, I already knew this and therefore, this text doesn't influence me that much because what it says is not an opinion but the truth. Since it is written in English, it is possibly for foreign people that could be influenced (My own translation)

As can be seen, she was able to see that the author was representing him as a “*drug-trafficker*”, “*murderer*”, “*terrorist*”, and “*bad person*”. However, to her the fact that she coincided with the author in his representations of Pablo meant two things: a) that they were the truth and b) that she could not be positioned by the author. In sum, she had problems to recognize that to some people these might not be truths and that the fact that she aligned with the author does not mean that he was not trying to position her.

As time progressed, Ana remained in the same position that she expressed before. The reflection task for the first principle confirms this. Indeed, when she was asked, *1. What did you learn about author's position and how it influences readers?* Ana insisted on

her idea that authors only position readers when they state opinions, not facts or truths, and that they cannot influence readers who already know about the topic. She answered,

Yo creo que los autores no siempre influncian no importa si usan un lenguaje elogiante o agresivo. Hay cosas que son como son y los autores no pueden expresar sus opiniones ahí. Por ejemplo, en el caso de artículos científicos y el texto de Pablo. No me sentí posicionada porque sé que todo lo que dicen ahí es verdad (Ana, Reflection Task 1, 25/04/2018)

I believe that authors do not always influence readers it does not matter if they use praising or aggressive language. Things are as they are and authors cannot express their opinions there. For example, in the case of scientific articles and Pablo's text. I did not feel I was being positioned because I know that all they say there is true. (Ana, Reflection Task 1, 25/04/2018)

As can be seen, Ana's alignment with author's position prevented her from seeing that authors always try to influence readers and position them, regardless of whether readers accept this positioning or not. To her "things are as they are" which means she thinks there is just one truth in certain cases and this is supposed to make authors be objective no matter if they use "praising or aggressive language". This also means that she had problems to perceive author's descriptions of situations and characters in texts as personal and, instead of that, she thought they were universal due to her alignment with author's position.

An example of students having problems to see positionality when texts appear to be factual came from the fourth class in which students were sharing some of the answers for their reflection task for the first principle. During this, Andrea expressed their thoughts about the possibility of authors taking a position in scientific texts and said,

37:45: Andrea: Profe, para ser honesta, desde mi experiencia, yo no era consciente de que los autores podían permitirles a los lectores identificar su posición a través de la forma como describieron las situaciones o personas. Ni a través de los adverbios. No era consciente de que cuando alguien está escribiendo, esa persona piensa que tiene la verdad. También, con los animadores, yo leía, pero no sabía que esta era una estrategia para hacer creer al lector lo que el autor está diciendo. Profe,

pero en ciertos textos, creo que es difícil hacer este tipo de análisis. Por ejemplo, yo no cuestionaría los textos científicos, yo no creo que los autores puedan tomar posición en esos (Excerpt from Class 4th, 25/04/2018).

37:45: Andrea: Teacher, to be honest, from my experience, I was not aware of the fact that authors could let readers identify their position through the way they described situations or people. Not even through adverbs. I was not aware of the fact that when someone is writing, they think that they have the truth. Also, with the animators, I read but I did not know that this was a strategy to make the reader believe what the author is saying. Teacher, but in certain texts, I think it is hard to do this kind of analysis. For example, I would not question scientific texts, I do not think authors can take a position in them (Excerpt from Class 4th, 25/04/2018).

As can be seen, she admitted that language plays an important role in identifying author's position when she mentioned that *"I was not aware of the fact that authors could let readers identify their position through the way they described situations or people. Not even through adverbs"* However, she also stated that she *"would not question scientific texts"* because to her *"authors cannot take a position in them"*.

As time progressed, Andrea stayed in the same position and the reflection task for the first principle confirms this. Indeed, when she was asked, *"3. Have your views of author's and reader's positionality changed after analyzing them with these strategies, how"*, she answered,

En ciertos textos como los textos científicos, yo no creo que se pueda identificar la posición del autor porque los autores están describiendo algo objetivamente y no hay forma de describirlo subjetivamente (Andrea, reflection task 1, 25/04/2018).

In certain texts such as scientific texts, I do not think that author's position can be identified because authors are describing something objectively and there is no room for describing it subjectively (Andrea, reflection task 1, 25/04/2018).

Her statement that you cannot really see authors' position in scientific texts because *"authors are describing something objectively"* and that *"there is no room for describing it subjectively"* demonstrates that she remained in the same position that she had taken when

she was sharing her answers for the first reflection task in the fourth class. To her, authors write scientific texts objectively and that is why they cannot take a position in them. This also shows that she thinks that scientific texts are never biased.

Lack of grammatical knowledge.

This challenge refers to students' problems in applying the strategy that was being taught due to their lack of explicit knowledge of English grammar. At least six students experienced this problem. One example of students struggling with this is Camilo. Indeed, in the activity that had students analyze Escobar's newspaper article, to answer question, 2. What linguistic elements is he using to do that? students had to identify linguistic elements that showed how the author took a position to influence readers. Then, they had to categorize these linguistic elements into adjectives, adverbs, and verbs.

Although Camilo was able to identify some of these elements, it was clear that he struggled with differentiating the grammar categories to which they belonged, which slowed down the process for him and made it more tedious than it had to be. Table 3 shows the questions he was asked and the answers he provided.

As can be seen, Camilo misclassified some of the words that he had to find in order to identify the author's position in this particular text. For example, in the category of adjectives, Camilo put the words "Drug Lord" and "Ruthlessness" which are compound nouns. Then, in the category of nouns, he included the words "infamous" and "the richest" which are adjectives. This shows how this process was slowed down because of this and also because of proper knowledge about the collocation of adjectives.

Table 3
Camilo's Analysis of Escobar's Newspaper Article

Newspaper Article: Drug Boss Pablo Escobar still divides Colombia – 1 st Principle		
1. How is the author positioning Escobar?	2. What linguistic elements is he using to do that?	3. What image of Escobar is he trying to imprint on readers?
The boss crime, Famous Drug Trafficker, Terrorist, A cruel person	Adjectives: The most popular, <u>drug lord</u> , the greatest outlaw, <u>ruthlessness</u> Adverbs: Sadly, shockingly, affectionately, fortunately Nouns: <u>infamous</u> , the greatest outlaw of the 20th century, <u>the richest</u> Verbs: Trafficked, terrorized, bribing, kidnapping, killing	The author doesn't agree with people remembering someone who hurt Colombia so much and that is why he makes him look like someone who promoted bad things in society.

Camilo's struggles with the strategy were captured in the reflection task for the first principle, where in response to the question "2. *To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you apply this principle?*", he acknowledged his difficulty with categorizing the linguistic elements of the Escobar's text and suggested that the reason for the difficulty might be the language. In this reflection task, he wrote,

Siento que el análisis con estas estrategias podría ser más rápido si uno pudiera diferenciar las palabras que el profesor nos enseñó para identificar la posición del autor porque puede ser más difícil diferenciarlas en inglés (Camilo, Reflection Task 11/04/2018).

I feel that the analysis with these strategies could be faster if I could differentiate better the words that the teacher taught us to identify the author's position because it can be harder to differentiate them in English. (Camilo, Reflection Task 11/04/2018).

As can be seen, Camilo recognized that the strategy allowed him “*to identify the author’s position*” but feels his lack of meta-linguistic knowledge of the categories slowed down the process for him.

Principle 2: A Critical Reader Is Able to Think about Texts from Multiple Perspectives

In regard to this second principle, students also had both gains and challenges during the development of the critical reading unit. These will be explained below, and evidence will be provided.

Gains.

Regarding the second principle, apart from being able to think about texts from multiple perspectives, students experienced two main gains during the critical reading unit. These had to do with understanding the role of multiple perspectives in seeing authors’ positionality and identifying particular interests behind the adoption of a position.

Understanding the role of multiple perspectives in seeing authors’ positionality.

This gain refers to students’ realization that authors’ influence in the text is more evident when readers consider the position of different perspectives. At least nine students experienced this gain. One example of these students is Anibal. In one of the activities carried out to help students understand this principle, the instructor provided students with a magazine article about vegetarianism from TIME Magazine (see Appendix H). In this magazine article, the author took a position in favor of vegetarianism by portraying it as the possible solution to environmental and health problems. Students were asked to take one of author’s statements related to the topic of the article and then think about it from the position of several perspectives. This implied analysing what the author stated in the article

in the light of the opinion of people from different contexts. Some of these perspectives were: scientists, housewives, and activists. The objective of this activity was to have students realize that people generally construct arguments to defend their particular interest related to a given topic and that authors' representation of the topic is just one among many possible ones. This exercise also helped students understand authors' influence in the text better by considering the position of other perspectives. By the end of the exercise, Anibal was able to think about the topic of the text from the position of several perspectives that were both in favor and against the author's position. Table 4 shows the perspectives that he provided and how he classified them.

As can be seen, Anibal was able to think about the author's statement from the position of different perspectives that were against and in favor. Some of these perspectives included: (a) a butcher; (b) a nutritionist; (c) a mother. These perspectives helped him understand, in a deeper way, how the author was trying to position him. For this, he thought about the arguments that this author provided from the position of other perspectives. For example, he thought about the author's statement from the perspective of a nutritionist who is in favor of the author's position and argued, "*reducing meat consumption helps avoid a lot of heart problems*" and also from the position of a butcher who is against author's position and argued that "*if we stop eating it, it will affect many people's economy*". This shows that he was able to think about the arguments that different perspectives would provide against or in favor of this statement and therefore, about the particular interests that these arguments would support. This also shows that he was able to see that everyone is always going to support his/her point through different ways.

Table 4
Anibal's Perspectives for the Vegetarianism Magazine Article

Magazine Article: How a vegetarian diet could help save the planet – 2nd principle	
Alternative Perspective	
Author's statement	Reducing meat consumption improves human health Reducir el consume de carne mejora la salud humana
What would other perspectives say about this statement?	<p>A favor/In favor: <u>Nutricionista/Nutritionist:</u> Reducir el consumo de carne evita muchos problemas cardiacos. Yo puedo ayudarte a diseñar una dieta para reducir el consumo de carne. Reducing meat consumption helps avoid a lot of heart problems. I can help you design a diet plan to reduce meat consumption.</p> <p>Científico/Scientist: This is scientifically proven. With more studies, we can tell you more information about it.</p> <p>En contra/Against: Mother: Meat cannot be reduced. It has a good amount of protein and it is easy to prepare.</p> <p>Carnicero/Butcher: Los humanos siempre han comido carne. Si dejamos de comerla, esto podría afectar la economía de muchas personas. <u>Humans have always eaten meat and if we stop eating it, it will affect many people's economy.</u></p>

Anibal's understandings of the role of multiple perspectives in seeing the author's position were captured during the reflection stage for the second principle during which he brought up some important points. In this class, he said,

28:10: Anibal: Profe, uno generalmente piensa que la información que uno tiene es la verdad porque sí y ya y no una opinión como la de los demás. Cuando uno empieza a considerar lo que diferentes perspectivas pueden opinar sobre cierto tema en un texto, uno hasta se da cuenta de cómo cree el autor que deberían ser las cosas respecto al tema del texto. Por ejemplo, con comer carne, yo pienso que es bueno o malo dependiendo de las creencias y los intereses de cada quién y eso lo pude ver en el ejercicio que hice (Anibal, excerpt from class 8th, 03/05/2018)

28:10: Anibal: Teacher, you generally think that the information that you have is the truth just because and not an opinion like everyone else's. When you start considering what different perspectives can think about a certain topic in a text, you can even

realize the way that the author believes the things should be concerning the topic in the text. For example, concerning eating meat, I think it is good or bad depending on the beliefs and interests that people may have and I could see that in the exercise that I did (Anibal, excerpt from class 8th, 03/05/2018)

As can be seen, he realized that authors include their opinions in the texts they write:

“you can even realize the way the author believes the things should be concerning the topic in the text”. He admitted he could do that after “considering what different perspectives can think about a certain topic in a text”. He also realized that opinions, either good or bad, depend on the beliefs and interests that people may have in the topic of the text. This shows that it was easier for him to identify the author’s position when he considered what other perspectives thought about the topic of the text.

Anibal’s understandings of the role of multiple perspectives in seeing author’s position were confirmed in the reflection task for the second principle where in response to the question *1. What did you learn about texts and multiple perspectives?* he wrote,

Aprendí a mirar los textos con un pensamiento distinto al mío. Aprendí a no quedarme solo con lo que dice el autor y mi propio entendimiento del tema. También, cuando me puse en los zapatos de las otras personas y pensé en que argumento dirían sin importar si estaban o no de acuerdo con el argumento del texto, fui capaz de ver la posición del autor de manera más clara y ver con que argumento quería posicionarme porque al contrastar lo que dice el autor con lo que dicen otras perspectivas, uno podía ver que había intereses distintos y que el tema se trataba con otras palabras y actitudes. (Anibal, Reflection Task 2, 03/05/2018)

I learned to look at texts with a different mind. I learned to go beyond what the author says and my own understanding of the topic. Also, when I put myself in the shoes of other people and thought about the argument they would give no matter if they agreed or disagreed with the argument of the text, I was able to see the author’s position in a clearer way and notice the argument that the author used to try to position me because when contrasting what the author says with what other perspectives say, one could see that they had different interests and that the topic was dealt with different words and attitudes. (Anibal, Reflection Task 2, 03/05/2018)

As can be gathered from the quote above, to Anibal, the author's position was easier to see when he contrasted what this author said with the position of other perspectives. All of these perspectives encouraged Anibal to consider different arguments that people might use in order to agree or disagree with the author's statement. This consideration helped Anibal realize how the author was trying to position him.

Identifying particular interests behind the adoption of a position.

This gain refers to students' realization that there are always particular interests when adopting a position that is either in favor or against something. At least ten students experienced this gain. One particular student who was able to do this is Johan. During the guide stage the instructor asked students to take a statement from the TIME Magazine article about vegetarianism that showed the position of the author and then think about it from different perspectives. While discussing the results of the activity, he said,

90:20: Johan: Al principio para mí, fue un poquito complejo pensar desde los zapatos de alguien que dice o promueve cosas con las que yo no estoy de acuerdo y más con el vegetarianismo porque yo pienso que comer carne es sano y normal. Pero yo me imagino que alguien que tenga una tienda vegetariana va a decir los argumentos que ya sabemos... que no es saludable y todo eso, pero es porque su interés, fuera de ser bueno o malo, es que se consuman más vegetales y cosas naturales que carne para que le vaya bien económicamente, pero un carnicero diría lo contrario. Ahí, uno empieza a ver que la posición que las personas adoptan hacia un tema generalmente defiende un interés. Por ejemplo, el interés de las tiendas sería económico. (Excerpt from class 6th, 01/05/2018)

90:20: Johan: In the beginning, it was a little complex to think like someone who says or promotes things that I do not agree with and mainly concerning vegetarianism because I think that eating meat is healthy and normal. But, I guess that someone owning a vegetarian store is going to present the same arguments that we all know... that it is not healthy and all of that, but it is because their interest is to promote the consumption of more vegetables and natural things over meat so they can sell, but a butcher would say the opposite. In that sense, one starts to realize that the position that people take towards a topic usually defends an interest. For example, the interest of the stores would be economical. (Excerpt from class 6th, 01/05/2018)

Even though Johan stated that it was hard for him to think about vegetarianism from different perspectives at first because of his beliefs, he suggested that people might defend or criticize a position towards a topic depending on their personal interests. To him, “the position that people take towards a topic usually defends an interest”. Table 5 shows the perspectives that he provided and the way that he classified them.

Table 5
Johan’s Perspectives for the Vegetarianism Magazine Article

Magazine Article: How a vegetarian diet could help save the planet – 2nd principle	
Alternative Perspective	
Author’s statement	A vegan or vegetarian diet could cut those emissions by 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions (author’s position)
What would other perspectives say?	<p>In favor: Ambientalista/Environmentalist: La producción masiva de carne afecta el ambiente debido al efecto invernadero. <i>The massive production of meat affects the environment due the greenhouse effect.</i></p> <p>Nutritionist: Reducing meat consumption can be beneficial for people’s heart besides it’s good for the environment.</p> <p>Against: Doctor: The human being needs to eat meat to have enough proteins. Human health is more important than the environment. Carnicero/Butcher: La reducción de carne podría afectar mi economía. <i>The reduction of meat consumption could affect my economy.</i></p> <p>Rancher: The greenhouse effect doesn’t exist and the meat can be produced sufficiently.</p>

As can be seen, Johan was able to think about the author’s statement from multiple perspectives which had varied arguments against and in favor of it and therefore, different interests in the topic. One of the perspectives from which he thought about the author’s statement is an environmentalist whose interest is to protect the environment and argued that “the massive production of meat affects the environment due to the greenhouse effect”. He also thought about the author’s statement from the perspective of a butcher whose

interest is to sell meat and, therefore, this butcher argued that “*reduction of meat consumption could affect my economy*”. This confirms he realized that people adopt a position depending on the interest that they have in the topic. This realization was possible when he considered what both perspectives against and in favor would say concerning the author’s statement.

His comments on the reflection task for the second principle confirm this realization. Indeed, in response to the question *1. What did you learn about texts and different perspectives?* he wrote,

Aprendí que todos los textos pueden ser interpretados desde diferentes perspectivas y que esas perspectivas pueden llegar a tener posiciones muy distintas dependiendo de los intereses que tengan en el tema del texto. Hay posiciones muy validas, pero que siempre irán en contra de otras que también lo son. Todo depende del interés. Además, yo pienso que es inevitable que los intereses particulares siempre entren en conflicto (Johan, 03/05/2018).

I learned that all texts can be interpreted from different perspectives and that these perspectives can have very different positions depending on the interests that they have in the topic of the text. There are very valid positions but they are always against others that are valid too. Everything depends on the interest. Besides, I think that it is unavoidable that particular interests are always in conflict. (Johan, reflection task 2 03/05/2018)

As can be seen, he became aware of the fact that perspectives always adopt positions “*depending on the interest that they have in the topic of the text*”. He also acknowledged that the fact that a position is valid to someone does not mean that another valid position that may be against it does not exist: “*there are very valid positions but they are always against others that are valid too*”. To him, the conflict in which these positions may enter “*depends on the interest*” in the topic.

Challenges.

The main challenge that students had regarding this second principle during the critical reading unit was having problems to think about impartial positions. That is, the students only thought about the texts from perspectives that saw only either pros or cons related to the author's position but not from perspectives that saw both pros and cons. At least six students experienced this challenge.

An example of this came from the activity that had students analyze the magazine article from TIME about vegetarianism. During the activity the instructor asked students to take a statement from this magazine article and then think about it from the position of several perspectives. Pedro was able to think about this statement from perspectives that had different positions. However, these positions were only extreme which means these only completely agreed or disagreed. Table 6 shows the perspectives that he provided and how he classified them.

As can be seen, Pedro could think about the author's statement from several perspectives. However, these perspectives have extreme positions which completely agree or disagree. He did not provide any perspectives that partly agreed or disagreed. This shows that he had problems to think about impartial positions. Then, during the same activity, he expressed,

75:13: Pedro: Yo creo que hay temas en los que no hay puntos medios. Por ejemplo, en el vegetarianismo siempre están los que le dicen a uno que siempre hay que comer carne por las proteínas. O están los que le dicen a uno que no coma carne por el sufrimiento animal o la salud (Excerpt from class 6th, 01/05/2018)

75:13: Pedro: I believe there are topics without middle points. For example, in vegetarianism, there are always those saying that you must always eat meat because of the proteins. Or, there are those saying that you must not eat meat because animals suffer or because it is bad for your health (Excerpt from class 6th, 01/05/2018)

Table 6
Pedro's Perspectives for the Vegetarianism Magazine Article

Magazine Article: How a vegetarian diet could help save the planet – 2nd principle	
Alternative Perspective	
Author's Statement	Reducing meat consumption improves human health Reducir el consumo de carne mejora la salud humana
What would other perspectives say?	<p>In favor: Vegetariano/Vegetarian person: Desde que dejé de comer carne, me siento más saludable y energético. <u>Since I have stopped eating meat, I feel healthier and energetic.</u></p> <p>Hinduist: Meat is disgusting and is not natural to eat it. Why would we eat it?</p> <p>Against: Carnívoro/Carnivorous person: La carne es deliciosa y la vida es para disfrutarla. Al final vamos a terminar muriéndonos. <u>Meat is delicious and life is to be enjoyed. We will end up dying anyway.</u></p> <p>Butcher: Human beings have always eaten meat. People can do many other things that are also healthy. They do not have to quit eating meat.</p>

Such statements show that he had problems to think about perspectives that partly agreed or disagreed. That is to say, perspectives that considered arguments both in favor and against the author's position. To him, "*there are topics in which there are not middle points*". As time progressed, Pedro remained in the same position. The reflection task for the second principle confirms this. In response to the question, 2. *To what extent did the strategy help you understand the topic of the text from different perspectives?* he answered,

Esta estrategia me ha ayudado a ponerme en los zapatos de los demás. Sin embargo, hay temas que solo se ven desde una o dos posiciones y no desde tantas. Por ejemplo, el texto sobre vegetarianismo que analizamos, yo no podía pensar en perspectivas diferentes a las que están de acuerdo o en desacuerdo (Pedro, Reflection Task 2, 03/05/2018).

This strategy has helped me put myself in the shoes of others. However, there are topics that can only be seen from one or two positions and not from so many. For example, the text about vegetarianism that we analyzed, I could not think about perspectives that were different to those that agreed or disagreed (My own translation, Pedro, reflection task 2, 03/05/2018).

His statement that certain topics “*can only be seen from one or two positions and not from so many*” demonstrates that he remained in the same position that he had taken when he was analyzing the magazine article about vegetarianism. In that analysis, he had problems to think about perspectives that said something both against and in favor of the author’s position.

Principle 3: A Critical Reader Is Able to Unveil Hidden Messages in Texts

In regard to this third principle, students also had both gains and challenges during the development of the critical reading unit. These will be explained below, and evidence will be provided.

Gains.

Apart from being able to unveil hidden messages in texts, students presented several gains regarding the third critical reading principle which had to do with understanding the role of memes in promoting stereotypes and understanding the role of multiple perspectives in unveiling hidden messages.

Understanding the role of memes in promoting stereotypes.

This gain refers to students’ realization that memes portray certain groups of people in a discriminatory, unfair way and therefore, they promote stereotypes. At least thirteen students experienced this gain. One example of these students is Carolina. During the guide stage for this principle, the instructor provided students with a group of memes numbered from one to eight to be analyzed with the strategies (see figures one and two).



<https://www.okchicas.com/creatividad/me-podrias-haber-pedido-logica-masculina-trareas-hogar/>

Figure 1
Meme about men and women



Figure 2
Meme about black and white people

As can be seen, the first meme plays with the stereotype of men taking it for granted that women must do all household chores by portraying women having things to do and men only chilling out. The second meme plays with the stereotype of white people being

aggressive towards black people and vice versa as well as the stereotype of women being in charge of doing the cooking. Students applied the race and gender switching strategies to these memes. This implied, in the first meme, making the woman fit into the man's stereotype and vice versa and, in the second meme, making the black people fit into the white people stereotype and vice versa in order to find out the author's beliefs about these groups of people. Then, they had to answer the following questions to complete their analysis:

1. What is the meme's explicit message?
2. What is the meme's implicit message?
3. What is the stereotype behind them?
4. Do you have any arguments concerning these hidden messages?

Carolina was able to identify not only the hidden message but also how they were discriminating against certain groups of people. Also, she presented some arguments against these hidden messages. Table 7 shows her responses.

As can be seen, in meme one, Carolina was able to identify the stereotype the meme was promoting which consisted in portraying women as being responsible for doing household chores. To realize this, she drew on the "*gender switch*" strategy. Additionally, she noticed that this meme also portrays men assuming that "*household chores are only women's responsibility*" and argued that the fact that many men in her culture do not help with household chores, does not mean that "*all men are like that everywhere*". This demonstrates that she was also able to identify the stereotype about men in this meme. Then, while discussing the results for the analysis of the memes, Carolina said,

80:07: Carolina: Ya veo porque a uno le da risa los memes y es porque generalizan el rol que las personas deben tener en ciertas situaciones y a lo mejor uno está de acuerdo, pero cuando uno se pone a pensar en esas generalizaciones no siempre se cumplen o son casos aislados (Excerpt from class 10th, 09/05/2018)

80:07: Carolina: Now I see the reason why memes make me laugh and it is because they generalize the role that people must have in certain situations and I might agree with these roles in a way, but when you analyze those generalizations, they are not always true or are isolated cases (Excerpt from class 10th, 09/05/2018)

Table 7

Carolina’s analysis of memes in the practice stage.

Analysis of memes 1 & 2 provided by the instructor (posted above) – 3rd Principle		
2. What is the implicit message?	3. What is the stereotype?	4. Do you have any arguments against these hidden messages?
<p><u>1. Los hombres siempre creen que las tareas domésticas son sólo responsabilidad de las mujeres.</u></p> <p><u>Men always think that household chores are only women’s responsibility.</u></p> <p>2. Los negros no aceptan otras razas.</p>	<p><u>1. Las tareas domésticas son responsabilidad de las mujeres “Gender Switch”</u></p> <p><u>Household chores are women’s responsibilities “Gender Switch”</u></p> <p>2. Los negros son racistas “Race Switch”</p>	<p><u>1. Muchos hombres en nuestra cultura no ayudan nada para las cosas de limpieza del hogar. Pero no quiere decir que todos los hombres en todas partes son así.</u></p> <p><u>Many men in our culture do not help with anything related to household chores, but it does not mean that all men are like that everywhere</u></p> <p>2. La discriminación se da entre todas las razas. Los blancos también son racistas.</p>

These statements show that Carolina became aware of the fact that memes indeed generalize: “Now I see the reason why memes make me laugh and it is because they generalize the role that people must have in certain situations and I might agree with these roles in a way”. However, she also stated that when she analyzed those generalizations, she

found that “*they are not always true or are isolated cases*”. This demonstrates that she was able to understand that memes promote discriminatory stereotypes.

Carolina’s understanding about the role that memes play in promoting stereotypes was captured in the reflection task for the third principle where in response to the question 3. *Have your views of memes changed after analyzing them with these strategies, how?* she wrote,

Sí, en la mayoría de los memes analizados, mi opinión cambió porque al principio se ven simplemente como un chiste, pero al analizarlos se descubre que lo que verdaderamente hacen es promover un estereotipo o prejuicio. Además, hay algunos que están cargados de estereotipos muy fuertes que atacan inclusive al que los está leyendo. Yo no era consciente de eso antes de hacer este ejercicio (Carolina, Reflection Task 3, 15/05/2018)

Yes, in most of the memes analyzed, my opinion changed because, at the beginning, they simply look like a joke, but when you analyze them, you realize that they are promoting stereotypes or prejudices. Besides, there are some of them that are filled with very strong stereotypes that attack even the one reading. I was not aware of that before doing this exercise (Carolina, Reflection Task 3, 15/05/2018)

As can be seen, Carolina was able to realize that memes are big promoters of stereotypes. To her, memes can “*simply look like a joke*” at the beginning, but when you analyze them, you realize that the joke always discriminates in favor or against a certain group of people. That is to say, they promote stereotypes and these might “*even attack the one reading*”. She states that she was not aware of that discrimination until she did the exercise. This demonstrates that she did not consider she could be part of the groups of people against which memes discriminate.

Understanding the role of multiple perspectives in unveiling hidden messages.

This gain refers to students’ realization that adopting a different perspective is useful to unveil the hidden messages in memes. At least six students presented this gain.

One example of these students is Catalina. To practice what they had learned about unveiling hidden messages in memes, students were asked to bring random memes to be analysed in class using the strategies taught: race and gender switching race, gender. From the all the memes that students brought, they selected some and numbered them from one to five to do the exercise (see figure three and four).

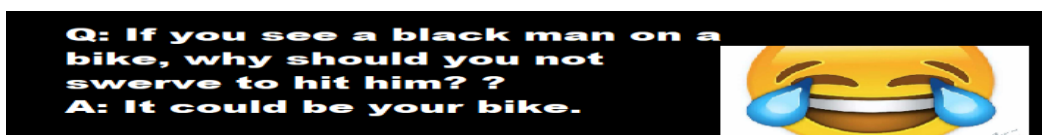


Figure 3
Meme about black men

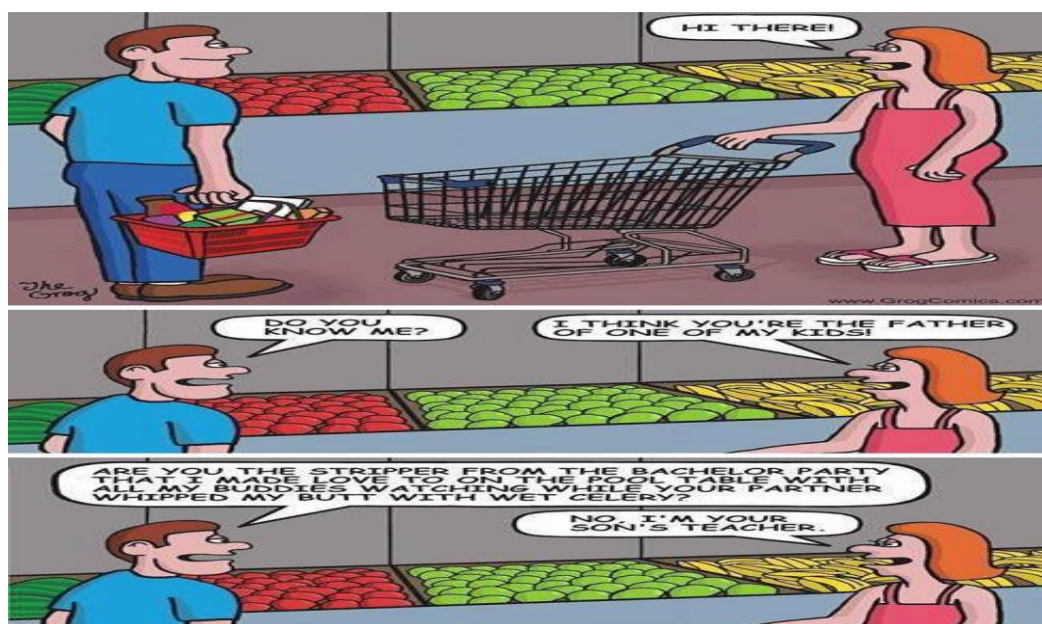


Figure 4
Meme about men and women

As can be seen in figure four, this meme contains a hidden message that men are irresponsible. It was created from the perspective of a moralist person. As can be seen in figure three, the second meme contains a hidden message that black people are bike-thieves. This meme was created from the perspective of a racist person. To analyse their memes, they were asked to answer the same questions used during the guide stage:

1. What is the meme's explicit message?
2. What is the meme's implicit message?
3. What is the stereotype behind them?
4. Do you have any arguments concerning these hidden messages?

Catalina's responses to these questions show her understanding of the role of multiple perspectives in unveiling hidden messages. Table 8 shows her responses.

Table 8
Catalina's analysis of memes in the practice stage.

Analysis of memes 1 & 2 brought by students (posted above) – 3rd Principle	
What is the implicit message?	What is the stereotype?
<u>1. El mensaje implícito es que los hombres son irresponsables.</u> <u>The implicit message is that men are irresponsible.</u>	<u>9. Los hombres son infieles e irresponsables. Para saber esto usamos, "Gender Switch"</u> <u>Men are unfaithful and irresponsible. To know this, we used "Gender Switch"</u>
<u>2. El mensaje implícito es que los negros son ladrones.</u> <u>The implicit message is that black people are thieves.</u>	<u>11. Los negros son ladrones. Para saber esto, usamos "Race Switch"</u> <u>Black people are thieves. To know this, we used "Race Switch"</u>

As can be seen, in meme one, she could unveil both the implicit message and the stereotype against men. To do this, she used "Gender Switch" which means she changed genders to male. This demonstrates that she realized that adopting a different perspective was important and useful in unveiling hidden messages in memes. During the same class and while discussing the results of the analysis of the memes, Catalina said,

63:08: Catalina: Es que, si uno hace el cambio de raza en el meme que generaliza a los negros como ladrones, uno sabe que ellos no van a decir eso sobre sí mismos. Uno se da cuenta de que son creencias que otras personas tienen sobre los negros

y que, si uno mira el meme fuera de esas perspectivas, el meme deja de tener sentido o ser chistoso porque no hay argumentos para mantener el estereotipo y más de esa manera tan discriminatoria (Excerpt from class 10th, 09/05/2018)

63:08: Catalina: If you make the race switch in the meme generalizing black people as thieves, one knows that they are not going to say that about themselves. One realizes that these are beliefs that other people have about black people and if you consider different perspectives, the meme stops making sense or being fun because there are no arguments to keep the stereotype and mainly in such a discriminatory way. (Excerpt from class 10th, 09/05/2018)

As can be seen, Catalina suggested that memes reflect discriminatory beliefs that certain people have about specific groups of people such as the black: “*One realizes that these are beliefs that other people have about black people*”. Besides, she stated that when you consider different perspectives: “*the meme stops making sense or being fun because there are no arguments to keep the stereotype*”. This shows that she was able to understand how different perspectives could help her unveil hidden messages in memes.

The reflection task for the third principle confirms this realization where in response to the question 3. *Have your views of memes changed after analyzing them with these strategies, how?* she wrote,

Ahora soy más consciente de que muchos memes reproducen estereotipos y cuando nos reímos de ellos, no somos conscientes de eso y eso puede deberse a que estamos acostumbrados a mirar todo desde una sola perspectiva. Para descubrir los mensajes, se me hizo necesario pensar como otras personas, pensar en otras perspectivas que tuvieran creencias diferentes sobre los hombres y negros (Catalina, Reflection Task 3, 15/05/2018)

Now, I am more aware of the fact that many memes reproduce stereotypes and when we laugh because of them, we are not aware of that and this can be due to the fact that we are used to looking at everything from a single perspective. To unveil the hidden messages, it was necessary to think like other people and other perspectives that had different beliefs concerning men and black people (Catalina, Reflection Task 3, 15/05/2018)

As can be seen, she admitted that she was “*used to looking at everything from a single perspective*” and that she understood that “*it was necessary to think like other*

people and [take] other perspectives” to unveil hidden messages.

Challenges.

The main challenge that students had regarding this third principle was related to the lack of cultural background to understand the hidden message in certain foreign memes. Eight students presented this challenge. An example of students struggling with this is Adriana in the activity where students brought random memes and then selected five to be analysed in class. Two of the memes came from a different cultural background to those of the students (e.g., Arab and Jewish) (see figures five and six).

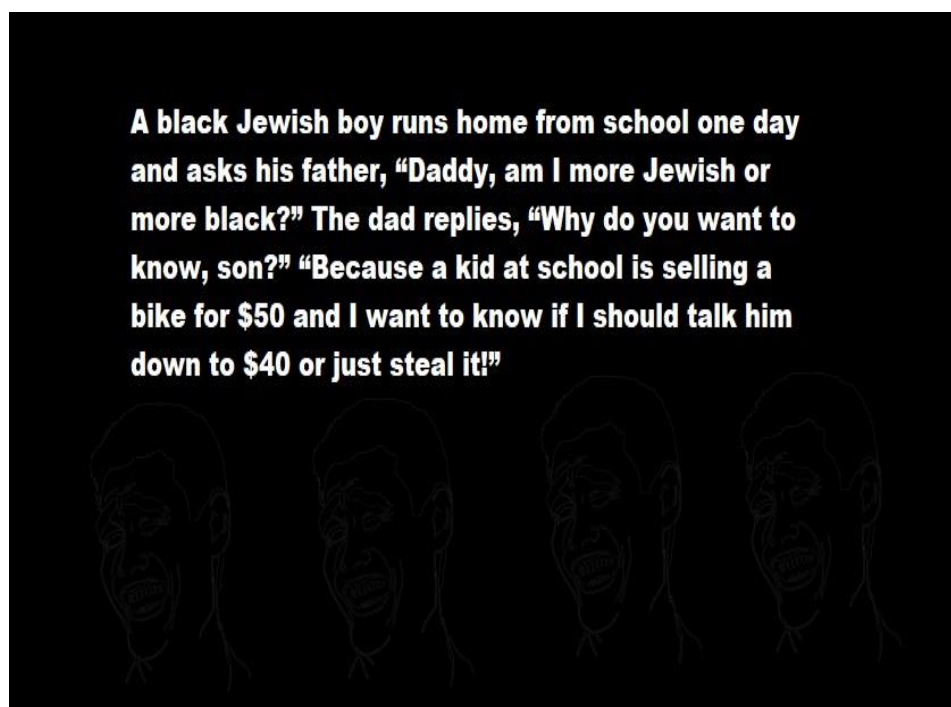


Figure 5
Meme about Jewish and black people

As can be seen in figure five, the first meme plays with the stereotype of Jewish people always bargaining over all they buy. In figure two, the second meme plays with the stereotype of Arab people being zoophilous.

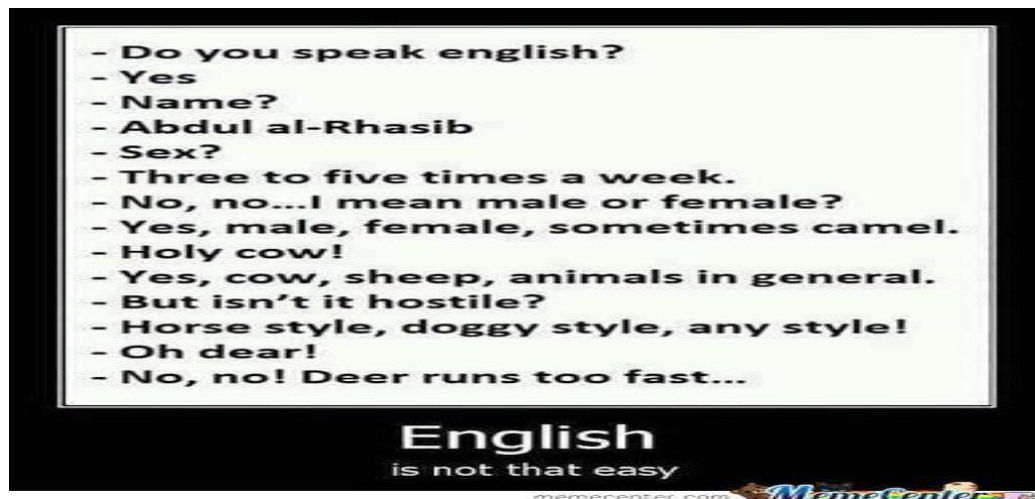


Figure 6
Meme about Arab people

Although Adriana could see stereotypes that were common for her (e.g., women doing the household chores, black people regarded as dangerous), she struggled to see the stereotype in the previous memes, which simultaneously stopped her from classifying them and from unveiling their specific hidden messages. Table 9 shows her responses.

As can be seen, Adriana had problems to unveil the hidden messages in memes three and four since she did not make any specific connections between Jewish people and bargainers. Similarly, she saw no connection between Arabs with zoophilous people. That is why she had problems to provide a classification for these memes. Adriana’s struggles with the task were captured in the reflection task for the third principle, where in response to the question “3. *Have your views of memes changed after analyzing them with these strategies, how?*”, she wrote,

Mi opinión sobre los memes cambió porque nunca había pensado sobre el estereotipo que una imagen irónica podía reproducir y principalmente si esta imagen viene de una cultura diferente en la cual los estereotipos y hábitos son diferentes y uno podría no conocerlos. Eso hace que el mensaje oculto sea más difícil de ver (Adriana, Reflection Task 3, 15/05/2018).

My opinion about memes changed because I had never thought about the stereotype that an ironic image could reproduce and mainly if this image comes from a different culture in which stereotypes and habits are different and you might not know them. This makes the hidden message in them harder to unveil (Adriana, Reflection Task 3 15/05/2018)

Table 9
Adriana's analysis of memes in the practice stage

Analysis of memes 3 & 4 brought by students (posted above) – 3rd Principle			
What is the explicit message?	What is the implicit message?	What is the stereotype?	How can we classify it?
<p><u>3. El mensaje explícito es que el niño quiere su bicicleta a cualquier costo.</u> <u>The explicit message is that the boy wants his bicycle at any cost.</u></p> <p><u>4. El mensaje explícito es que aprender inglés es complicado.</u> <u>The explicit message is that learning English is complicated</u></p>	<p><u>3. El mensaje implícito es que los niños son muy inteligentes.</u> <u>The implicit message is that boys are very intelligent.</u></p> <p><u>4. El mensaje implícito es que el inglés es difícil para los árabes.</u> <u>The implicit message is that English is hard for Arabs.</u></p>	<p>3. Los niños hacen lo que sea por conseguir lo que quieren.</p> <p>4. Los árabes no comprenden inglés</p>	<p>3. -----</p> <p>4. -----</p>

As can be seen, she realizes that unveiling hidden messages in memes that come from a different cultural background can be hard because “*stereotypes and habits are different and you might not know them*”. This suggests that a lack of knowledge of a culture can interfere with the identification of stereotypes in their texts. In this case: memes.

Principle 4: A Critical Reader Is Able to Identify Silenced or Marginalized Voices in Texts

In regard to this fourth principle, students also had both gains and challenges during the development of the critical reading unit. These will be explained below, and evidence will be provided.

Gains.

Apart from being able to identify silenced and marginalized voices in texts. This gain refers to students' realization that authors give voice to certain characters and silence others based on their intentions. At least fourteen students presented this gain. One particular student that was able to do this was Juliana. During the guide stage for this principle, the instructor provided students with a TV news report about the peace agreement in Colombia from Aljazeera English New Channel (see Appendix I). In this news report, the author takes a position in favour of the peace agreement and tries to position readers by giving voice to those who agree and marginalizing those who disagree. To analyse this text, students used the strategy "*mind and alternative mind portraits*" and answered the following questions:

1. Who are the main participants?
2. Who is included and excluded?
3. What would these marginalized voices say?
4. Why did the author decide to omit these voices.

Juliana was able to see author's intentions behind this marginalization. Table 10 shows the analysis she provided for the news report.

As can be seen, she was able to identify marginalized voices in the news report such as, *ex-president Uribe's followers and the victims of the conflict*. With respect to this marginalization, she stated that the author “omitted them not to change the objective of the text” and with the aim to “*keep his argument valid*” since his intention was to position the peace agreement “*as something positive*”. This shows that she was able to understand that this marginalization was due to author's intentions.

During the same class, she brought up some important aspects about the issue being discussed and said,

75:02: Juliana: Profe, yo soy consciente de que el acuerdo tiene cosas buenas y cosas malas, pero si el autor quiere convencerme de que el acuerdo es solamente bueno, no puede dejar hablar a personas que intenten convencerme de lo contrario porque entonces me armo una imagen diferente de la situación en el texto y no la que el autor quiere que yo crea (Excerpt from class 17th, 17/05/2018)

75:02: Juliana, Teacher, I am aware of the fact that the agreement has good and bad things, but if the author wants to convince me that the agreement is only good, he cannot let people with different positions talk otherwise I might get a different picture of the situation in the text and not the one the author wants me to believe” (Excerpt from class 17th, 17/05/2018)

As can be seen, she realized that if authors “*let people with different positions talk*”, this might lead readers to “*get a different picture of the situation in the text and not the one the author wants [people] to believe*”. This shows that she was able to understand that authors marginalize voices in order to create a representation of the situation from a couple of perspectives that are in agreement with the intension of leading readers to believe that it is the only possible one. That is why authors marginalize voices and it is because those voices may offer not only a different perspective of the situation but also a different representation that may lead readers to see a more just representation of the issue being portrayed in this text.

Table 10
Juliana's Analysis of the peace agreement news report

News Report: Colombia and FARC sign historic ceasefire deal – 4th principle		
2. Who is included and excluded?	3. What would these marginalized voices say?	4. Why did the author decide to exclude these voices.
<p>Incluidos: colombianos que están de acuerdo con el acuerdo de paz. Included: Colombians who agree with the peace agreement. Excluidos: Víctimas del conflicto, Rebeldes de las FARC, personas que están en desacuerdo con el acuerdo. <u><i>Excluded: Victims of the conflict, FARC rebels, people who disagree with the peace agreement</i></u></p>	<p>Seguidores del expresidente Uribe: No es posible que estas personas puedan llegar al congreso después de haber hecho tanto daño a esta sociedad. <u><i>Ex-president Uribe's followers:</i></u> It is not possible that these people can reach the congress after harming this society so much. Víctimas del conflicto: No hay garantías. Que nos digan donde están nuestros seres queridos para darles cristiana sepultura. Muy injusto que los premien sabiendo que han hecho tanto daño a la sociedad colombiana. <u><i>Victims of the conflict:</i></u> There are no guarantees. They must tell us where our beloved ones are to bury them. It is not fair that they are being rewarded after all they did</p>	<p>Los omitió para no cambiarle el objetivo al texto. El autor vio la firma del tratado de paz como algo positivo y omitió las voces de los que no estaban de acuerdo para no perder la validez de su punto de vista. He omitted them not to change the objective of the text. The author saw the sign of the peace agreement as something positive and omitted those disagreeing voices in order to keep his argument valid</p>

Juliana's realization that authors give voice to certain characters and silence others based on their intentions was captured in the reflection task for the fourth principle where in response to the question *1. What did you learn about marginalized voices in texts?* she wrote,

Apredí que de acuerdo con la intención del autor y lo que se quiera transmitir, se marginalizan las voces debido a que se quiere lograr dar una determinada imagen sobre el tema y ciertas voces no favorecerían esa imagen. Apredí también que el autor incluye o excluye voces según sus intenciones (Juliana, Reflection Task 4, 23/05/2018)

I learned that according to the author's intentions and what you want to transmit, voices are marginalized because the author wants to transmit a specific image of the topic and some voices would not favor this image. I also learned that the author includes or excludes voices based on his intentions (Juliana, Reflection Task 4, 23/05/2018)

As can be seen, to her, “*the author includes or excludes voices based on his intentions*” in order to “*transmit a specific image of the topic*”. Therefore, including some opposing voices “*would not favor this image*” and would give the text a different intent. This confirms that she was able to see the intentions that the author had behind the marginalization of certain voices.

Challenges.

The main challenge that students had concerning this fourth principle was having problems to see marginalized voices due to their alignment with authors' position. At least six students presented this challenge. One example of these students was Tatiana. During the activity in which students had to analyse a news report about the peace agreement in Colombia from Aljazeera English New Channel, Tatiana was able to identify marginalized voices in the news report. However, she did not recognize them as such due to her alignment with the author's position. Table 11 shows the analysis she provided for the news report.

As can be seen, Tatiana was able to identify marginalized voices such as, *Uribe and his followers*. However, she stated that “*the author did not marginalize them*” because “*he already knew what those voices would think*”. She also stated that Uribe and his followers

“would say or do anything to stop the peace agreement because all they want is war” This shows that she was in favor of the peace agreement just like the author and this prevented her from recognizing Uribe and his followers as marginalized voices. During this class, she also said,

70:10: Tatiana: Profe, pero es que el autor para que va a poner a hablar a los seguidores de Uribe o al mismo Uribe. Uno sabe que esas personas no son muy honestas y que jamás cambiarían de posición. Inclusive si el autor incluyera lo que ellos piensan, yo no les creería (Excerpt from class 15th, 22/05/2018)

70:10: Tatiana: Teacher, there is no sense in letting Uribe or his followers speak. One knows that those people are not very honest and that they would never change their position. Even if the author included them, I would not believe them (Excerpt from class 15th, 22/05/2018)

These statements show that she had problems to see Uribe and his followers as marginalized voices not only because she aligned with the author’s position in the sense that she was in favor of the peace agreement but also because of her own beliefs about them: “One knows that those people are not very honest and that they would never change their position. Even if the author included them, I would not believe them”. This demonstrates that she might only consider voices to be marginalized if their position coincided with hers.

As time progressed, Tatiana remained in the same position and even stated that some of these marginalized voices “are unnecessary” and this is confirmed in the reflection task for the fourth principle where in response to 3. *Have your views of voices in texts changed after performing this analysis, how?* she wrote,

De alguna manera cambió porque yo sé que, en algunos temas controversiales, los autores pueden marginalizar y silenciar voces porque estas voces dirían una verdad que están intentando esconder. Pero en otros casos, los autores no incluyen la voz de alguien porque esas voces no tiene nada que sea verdadero para contribuir al tema que el autor está intentando desarrollar. Es decir, ciertas voces son innecesarias. Como en el caso del reporte de noticias sobre el acuerdo de paz, los seguidores de

Uribe dirían mentiras para intentar convencer a las personas (Tatiana, Reflection Task, 23/05/2018)

In a way, it did, because I know that in some controversial topics, authors can marginalize and silence voices because these voices would tell a truth that they are trying to hide. But in some other cases, authors do not include someone’s voice because they have nothing that is true to contribute to the topic that authors are trying to develop. I mean, certain voices are unnecessary. As in the case of the news report about the pace agreement, Uribe’s followers would tell lies to try to convince people. (Tatiana, reflection task, 23/05/2018)

Table 11
Tatiana’s Analysis of the peace agreement news report

News Report: Colombia and FARC sign historic ceasefire deal – 4th principle		
Who is included and excluded?	What would these marginalized voices say?	Why did the author decide to exclude these voices?
<p><u>Incluidos/Included:</u> <u>colombianos que están de acuerdo con el proceso de paz.</u> <u>Colombians who agree with the peace process.</u></p> <p><u>Excuidos/Excluded:</u> <u>Seguidores de Uribe y Álvaro Uribe.</u> <u>Followers of Uribe and Álvaro Uribe</u></p>	<p>Álvaro Uribe: Hay muchas concesiones para estos asesinos. Ellos deben pagar y debemos declararles la guerra There are too many concessions for these murderers. They must pay and we must declare war on them.</p> <p>Uribe’s followers: Uribe tiene la razón. Los rebeldes de las FARC no merecen ser perdonados. Son terroristas. Uribe is right. FARC rebels do not deserve to be forgiven. They are terrorists</p>	<p>El autor no los marginalizó, él ya sabía lo que esas voces pensaban y sabía que Uribe y sus seguidores dirían o harían cualquier cosa para detener el acuerdo de paz porque todo lo que quieren es guerra. <i>The author</i> did not marginalize them, he already knew what those voices thought, and he knew that Uribe and his followers <u>would say or do anything to stop the peace agreement because all they want is war</u></p>

As can be seen, she believes that in some cases authors exclude voices because they are “unnecessary”. To her, these voices are unnecessary because “*they have nothing that is true to contribute to the topic that authors are trying to develop*”. Her alignment with the author’s position shows that she thinks that the development of a topic or piece of

news is only possible through voices that defend not only the author's position towards that topic but also her own position which she thinks to be the valid one because according to her, those opposing voices would tell lies: "*Uribe's followers would tell lies to try to convince people*".

Discussions and Conclusions

This study explored the gains and challenges that a group of undergraduate students in a reading comprehension level two course from a public university experienced during the development of a reading unit in which they approached community texts such as newspaper reports, magazine articles, memes, and news reports in a critical way. Specifically, the study explored the gains and challenges that students experienced while trying to (a) identify the author's position and how it influences readers; (b) think about texts from multiple perspectives; (c) uncover hidden messages in texts; and (d) identify silenced and marginalized voices in texts.

Findings suggest that the unit not only helped students realize the four critical reading principles but also go beyond them by (a) understanding the role of knowledge and language in positionality, (b) understanding the role of multiple perspectives in seeing authors' positionality and unveiling hidden messages, (c) identifying particular interests behind the adoption of a position, (c) understanding the role of memes in promoting stereotypes, and (d) understanding the role of marginalization in authors' positionality. However, this study also suggests that there are challenges of which we need to be aware. These had to do with: (a) lack of grammatical knowledge, (b) lack of cultural background (c) having problems to see positionality when readers identify with authors' position or when texts appear to be factual, (d) having problems to think about impartial positions, and (e) having problems to see marginalized voices when readers identify with authors' position.

These findings are important for several reasons: First, they demonstrate that it is possible to do critical reading with undergraduate EFL students who are not very proficient in the language if instructors provide students with proper instruction and scaffolding

before they approach texts (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004, Wallace, 2003). In a country where many reading comprehension instructors only teach students grammar rules and reading strategies (Aguirre & Ramos, 2009; Bautista, 2013; Gómez & Ávila, 2009; Lopera, 2012) to understand author's position but not the effects of this position, it is important that students realize that they can learn to read in a different way in order to be active users of the information in texts and not passive reproducers of the ideas in them (Luke, 2000; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

Second, the findings are important because they show that students can even go further in their analyses than expected. In this day and age, where media is everywhere, where memes are sent to us in dozens per day (Grabe & Stoller, 2002), and where most of these media are promoting stereotypes (Luke, 2000), it is important for readers, such as undergraduate students, to be able to understand how power relationships are established through language (Fairclough, 1989; Janks, 2010) in order to resist author's positionings and develop an independent position (Luke, 2000; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Wallace, 2003).

Third, findings are important in that they point at specific aspects of critical reading which might be easy or troublesome for students. Once alerted about these areas, instructors can prepare more effective units and activities. For example, to solve the problem of lack of grammar knowledge and cultural background, instructors may consider reviewing grammar categories before teaching students the strategies and providing students with more cultural background related to the foreign memes that they analyze in class since, as this study suggests, not having a solid knowledge of grammar categories may slow down class activities and using critical reading strategies on foreign memes without appropriate cultural background may be troublesome for students.

Also, to solve the problem of students having problems to see positionality when texts appear to be factual or when their position is the same as the author's, instructors may consider providing students with scaffolding on how they could identify author's position in different types of texts other than news reports as well as more examples of texts that have different positions towards the same topic in order to show students that even if they align with authors' position, it does not mean that these are not trying to influence them (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

Moreover, to solve the problem of students struggling to identify marginalized voices in texts whose author had the same position as them, instructors could provide them with texts that reflect different positions about the same topic to show students that voices are included or marginalized according to authors' intentions.

Finally, the findings are important in that they expand on the work done by international and national scholars. Internationally, it expands on the work carried out by Dar et al (2010) and Haromi (2014). For example, Dar et al (2010) found that through CDA techniques, students were able to identify author's position. Separately, Haromi (2014) found that teaching students appraisal devices such as attitude, graduation, and engagement helps them see positionality in editorial articles. However, none of these studies highlighted any challenging areas for students to see positionality, as this study did. In particular, it noticed how students have problems to see positionality when texts appear to be factual or when students align with authors' position.

Nationally speaking, it expands on the work carried out by authors such as Bautista (2013); Lopera (2012); Lopez (2001); and Ruiz & Arias (2009). For example, Bautista (2013) and Lopera (2012) found that the use of cognitive reading strategies such as skimming and scanning helped undergraduate students improve their reading

comprehension level. However, their studies did not focus on critical reading strategies such as looking at the adjectives and nouns that authors use to influence readers' perception of the world (Butt et al., 2000) or race/gender switch that helps students see stereotypes embedded in texts (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). As such, they do not account for how critical reading strategies can help them become critical readers.

Likewise, Lopez (2001) found that it was easier for students to use cognitive reading strategies when dealing with texts of their interest and that this also improved their confidence when approaching these texts. This study shows that it is easier for students to do a critical reading of community texts when taught critical reading strategies such as race and gender switch and mind and alternative mind portraits (McLaughlin and DeVogd, 2004).

In the same way, Ruiz & Arias (2009) showed that through reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and guessing, students come to understand reading as a new way to acquire vocabulary and improve cultural background. This study shows that through critical reading strategies such as gender/race switch and mind and alternative mind-portraits (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004) students come to understand reading as way to become aware of other possible representations of the world with the aim of constructing more just images of what these representations might be (Luke, 2000, McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

In spite of its success, this study had some limitations which have to do mainly with the fact that it was done with adult university students whose level of English was not advanced in the context of a reading comprehension course. Likewise, the texts that supported the pedagogical unit were "community texts" (Luke et al., 1994) such as newspaper reports, magazine articles, and memes, not disciplinary texts; and the memes

used dealt mainly with racial and gender issues, not other types of issues such as social class, politics, or justice. Besides, the news reports only presented one position about the topic being discussed; Pablo Escobar being a ruthless criminal and the Colombian peace process being a success. Because of these limitations, we still do not know how the unit would work with different kinds of students at a different age or with a different level of English proficiency. Neither do we know how it would work with other kinds of texts, such as disciplinary texts, or how it would work with memes that deal with other kinds of issues, or with news reports that present different positions concerning an issue, not just one.

These gaps open new possibilities for further research. First, they suggest exploring how this methodology would work with other types of students such as teenagers or even children with different levels of proficiency in English since both age and level of proficiency may have an impact on the success of the unit. Second, they advise investigating how the methodology would work with texts that are different from community texts, such as disciplinary ones since students tend to have the belief that these are completely objective. Third, they recommend exploring the effects of using this methodology with memes that deal with issues other than gender and race since students may need cultural scaffolding to be able to unveil certain stereotypes embedded in some foreign memes. Finally, the gaps propose investigating how the methodology would work with texts that show different positions concerning an issue since students might align with author's position and this might prevent them from seeing positionality and identifying marginalized voices.

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APPENDIX A: PEDAGOGICAL UNIT

Principle	Texts	Activity
<p><i>Reading critically is being able to identify author's position in texts and how it influences readers (Cervetti, Pardales, & Damico, 2001; Luke, 2000; Shor, 1999)</i></p> <p>Main objective: *To identify authors' position and how it influences readers.</p> <p>Specific objectives *To identify the language elements that authors use to position readers.</p> <p>*To explore the effects of changing this language elements in the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Press hails Uribe's victory – News Report (Adjectives, Nouns, Verbs, and Animators) Retrieved from: BBC Newspaper <u>Demonstrate Text</u> ✓ Drug boss Pablo Escobar still divides Colombia – News Report (Adjectives, Nouns, Verbs and Animators) Retrieved from: BBC Newspaper <u>Guide Text</u> ✓ Texts brought by students and previously analyzed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-reading strategies: Students will be familiarized with the contents of the text by means of strategies such as, map of the text, discussion of critical terms, and an anticipation guide. They will also be taught how to identify topic sentences to answer the question: what is the text about? 2. Explain: The teacher will explain the principle to students: "When someone writes about a topic, they always do it from their own position and this position can influence readers" 3. Demonstrate: With the aid of some snippets from different texts, the teacher will show students' some strategies on identifying how the author takes a position and influences readers. Among those strategies, we have: (1 class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analysis of Adjectives, Verbs, and adverbs, and animators (Butt et al., 2000). 4. Guide: With the aid of some questions and the previous strategies, students will analyze the text "Drug Boss Pablo Escobar still divides Colombia" to discover the author's position and interest. Students will write down their answers and then they will share them orally. (1 class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How is the author positioning Escobar? ✓ What linguistic elements is he/she using to accomplish this positioning? ✓ What image of Escobar is the author trying to imprint on readers? ✓ How can we modify author's language to depict Escobar in a different way?

		<p>5. Practice: As homework, in pairs, students will find a text in which they identify the author's position and how it influences readers. They will mark the elements the author is using to achieve this and give a copy of their analysis to the instructor. They will also share their analysis orally with the whole class (for follow up). (1 class)</p> <p>6. Reflect: Students will be given a set of questions to explore their reactions to this principle and the activities implemented. (1 class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What did you learn about authors' position and it influences readers? ✓ To what extent did the strategies in class help you identify authors' position and how it influences readers? ✓ Have your views of texts changed after analyzing them with these strategies? How?
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Principle	Texts	Activity
<p><i>Reading critically is being able to think about texts from multiple perspectives</i> (Iyer, 2007; Lewison et al., 2002; McLaughlin, 2001) Main Objective <i>To think about texts from multiple perspectives.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can alcohol help you live longer? – Magazine Article Retrieved from: Time Magazine <u>Demonstrate Text</u> ✓ How a vegetarian diet could help save the planet – Magazine Article Retrieved from: Time Magazine <u>Guide Text</u> ✓ Texts brought by students and previously analyzed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-reading strategies: Students will be familiarized with the contents of the text by means of strategies such as, map of the text, discussion of critical terms, and an anticipation guide. They will also be taught how to identify topic sentences to answer the question: what is the text about? 2. Explain: The teacher will explain the principle to students that information in texts is presented only from the author's perspective which is limited. When people analyze a text from multiple perspectives, it challenges students to

<p>Specific objective <i>To tell the difference between a perspective and a position</i></p>		<p>expand their thinking and discover diverse beliefs, positions, and understandings. How a text may be understood depends on readers' perspective.</p> <p>3. Demonstrate: With the aid of the magazine article "Can alcohol help you live longer?", the teacher will teach students one strategy to help them think about texts from multiple perspectives. They will also determine the author's perspective. (1 class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). ✓ What is the perspective the author wants us to take? ✓ What are other perspective on the issue? <p>4. Guide: With the aid of some questions and the previous strategy, students will analyze the article "How a vegetarian diet could help save the planet". They will use the previous strategy to think about it from different perspectives. They will share their analysis it orally (1 class).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What is the perspective the author wants us to take? ✓ What are other perspective on the issue? ✓ By using the mind and alternative mind portraits strategy, students will think how different people such as, a meat-eater, a physician, and a pacifist/vegan would write about this topic. <p>5. Practice: As homework, in pairs, students will choose a text. Later, they will use the previous strategy to examine it from different perspectives. They must give a copy of their analysis to the instructor. They will also share their analysis orally with the whole class (1 class).</p> <p>6. Reflect: Students will be given a set of questions to explore their reactions to</p>
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		<p>this principle and the activities implemented (1 class).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What did you learn about texts and different perspectives? ✓ To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you understand the topic of the text from different perspectives? ✓ Have your views of texts changed after analyzing them with these strategies? How?
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Principle	Texts	Activity
<p><i>Reading critically is being able to uncover hidden messages in texts. (Begoray et al., 2013; Kellner & Share, 2007; Luke, 2000, Molden, 2007)</i></p> <p>Main Objective <i>To unveil hidden messages.</i></p> <p>Specific Objectives <i>To tell the difference between a stereotype and a prejudice</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Several memes and advertisement from the internet ✓ Memes and advertisement brought by students and previously analyzed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain: The teacher will explain the principle to students: “Unveiling hidden messages in texts means being able to identify meanings that are not explicitly stated but can be inferred with the information provided. These hidden messages might promote certain stereotypes”. 2. Demonstrate: With the aid of some advertisement and memes about race and gender issues, the teacher will teach students the switching strategy to uncover hidden messages (1 class). <p>Strategies we can use to confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gender Switch (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). ✓ Race Switch (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). ✓ What is the meme’s implicit message? ✓ What is the stereotype behind them? ✓ How can we classify them? ✓ Are these hidden messages only applicable to these groups of people? ✓ What arguments do we have against these messages? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Guide: With the aid of the previous strategies and some questions, students will analyze 5 internet memes to unveil hidden messages in them. They will write down their answers and then some will share them orally (1 class).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategies we can use to confirm: ✓ Gender Switch (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004). ✓ Race Switch (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004). ✓ What is the meme’s implicit message? ✓ What is the stereotype behind them? ✓ How can we classify them? ✓ Are these hidden messages only applicable to these groups of people? ✓ What arguments do we have against these messages? <p>4. Practice: As homework, in pairs, students will find memes or advertisement where they can identify hidden messages. They must state: what is the hidden message? what is the stereotype behind the message? what strategy they can use to confirm? what is the message promoting? what arguments do you have against this message? They will give a copy of the text/meme to the instructor with what their analysis, and they will share their analysis orally with the whole class (1 class).</p> <p>5. Reflect: Students will be given a set of questions to explore their gains and challenges to this principle and the activities implemented (1 class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What did you learn about uncovering hidden messages? ✓ To what extent did these strategies help you uncover hidden messages? ✓ Have your views of memes changed after analyzing them with these strategies. How?
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Principle	Texts	Activity
<i>Reading critically is being able to identify silenced or marginalized voices texts (Luke, 2000;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Father challenges Marco Rubio on Guns – News Report Video Retrieved from: CNN News <u>Demonstrate Text</u> 	<p>1. Pre-reading strategies: Students will be familiarized with the contents of the text by means of strategies such as, map of the text, discussion of critical terms, and an anticipation guide. They will also be taught how to identify topic sentences</p>

<p>McDaniel, 2004; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004)</p> <p>Main Objective <i>To identify silenced and marginalized voices.</i></p> <p>Specific Objectives <i>To tell the difference between a silenced and a marginalized voice.</i></p> <p><i>To explore the arguments of marginalized and silenced voices.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Colombia and FARC sign historic ceasefire deal – News Report Video Retrieved from: Al Jazeera English News Channel <u>Guide text</u> ✓ Texts brought by students 	<p>to answer the question: what is the text about?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Explain: The teacher will explain the principle to students: “As readers, we recognize the power of the author to express their perspective. In the same way, we as readers, have the power to question their perspective and reflect about whose voice might be silent or marginalized and the reason why” 3. Demonstrate: With the aid of the news report “Father challenges Marco Rubio on guns”, the teacher will teach students one strategy to analyze silent/marginalized voices. This strategy consists in thinking about the opinions that the silent/marginalized perspectives would have to juxtapose them with those in the texts (Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits McLaughlin and DeVogd, 2004) <p style="text-align: center;">Model Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Who are the main participants in the text? ✓ What verbs are being connected to those participants? ✓ Who is included in the text? ✓ Who is not included in this text? ✓ Whose views are marginalized or silenced in the text? ✓ What would these marginalized people say? (Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits) ✓ Why did the author decide to represent some voices and others not? ✓ What questions about itself does the text not raise? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Guide: With the aid of some questions and the previous strategy, students will analyze the text “Colombia and FARC sign a historic ceasefire deal” They will have to discover missing or marginalized voices in it. They will write down their answers and then some will share them orally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Who are the main participants in the text?
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What verbs are being connected to those participants? ✓ Who is included in the text? ✓ Who is not included in this text? ✓ Whose views are marginalized or silenced in the text? ✓ What would these marginalized people say? (Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits) ✓ Why did the author decide to represent some voices and others not? ✓ What questions about itself does the text not raise? <p>5. Practice: As homework, in pairs, students will find texts where they can identify included voices and marginalized and silenced voices. They will need to point out Who are the main participants in the text? What verbs are being connected to those participants? Who is included and excluded? Whose views are marginalized or silenced in the text? What would these marginalized people say? (Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits) Why did the author decide to represent some voices and others not? What questions about itself does the text not raise? They will give a copy of the analysis to the instructor and share their analysis orally with the whole class.</p> <p>6. Reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What did you learn about marginalized people and voices in texts? ✓ To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you see how some people and voices are silenced/marginalized from texts? ✓ Have your views of voices in texts changed after performing the analysis? How
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APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS – REFLECTING STAGE

Principle	Questions - Reflecting Stage
Identifying author’s position in texts and how it influences readers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you learn about identifying author’s position in texts and how it influences readers? 2. To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you identify author’s position in texts and how it influences readers? 3. Have your views of texts changed after performing the analysis with the strategies? How?
Thinking about texts from multiple perspectives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you learn about thinking about texts from multiple perspectives? 2. To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you think about texts from multiple perspectives? 3. Have your views of texts changed after performing the analysis with the strategies? How?
Unveiling hidden messages in texts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you learn about unveiling hidden messages in texts? 2. To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you unveil hidden messages in texts? 3. Have your views of texts changed after performing the analysis with the strategies? How?
Identifying silenced and marginalized voices in texts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you learn about identifying silenced and marginalized voices in texts? 2. To what extent did the strategies taught in class help you see how some voices are silenced/marginalized in texts? 3. Have your views of texts changed after performing the analysis with the strategies? How?

APPENDIX C: CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES TREE

Name		
[-]	1st - a critical reader is able to see authors' position and how it influences readers	
[-]	Gains	
+	Understanding the role of knowledge in positionality.	
+	Understanding the role of language in positionality.	
[-]	Challenges	
+	Having problems to see positionality when readers identify with authors' position or when texts appear to be factual.	
+	Lack of grammatical knowledge.	
[-]	2nd - a critical reader is able to think about texts from multiple perspectives	
[-]	Gains	
+	Understanding the role of multiple perspectives in seeing authors' positionality.	
+	Identifying particular interests behind the adoption of a position.	
[-]	Challenges	
+	Having problems to think about middle positions.	
[-]	3rd - a critical reader is able to uncover hidden messages in texts	
[-]	Gains	
+	Understanding the role of memes in promoting stereotypes.	
+	Understanding the role of multiple perspectives in unveiling hidden messages.	
[-]	Challenges	
+	Lack of cultural background	
[-]	4th - a critical reader is able to see what or who is marginalized or silenced in texts.	
[-]	Gains	
+	Realizing authors give voice and silence based on their intentions.	
[-]	Challenges	
+	Having problems to see marginalized voices due to their alignment with authors' position	

APPENDIX D: COMPARISON TO CONFIRM OR DISCONFIRM FINDINGS

Look for: Search In Nodes Find Now Clear

Nodes

Name	Sources
1st - a critical reader is able to see author's position and how it influences readers	0
Gains	0
Understanding the role of knowledge in positionality.	
<input type="text"/>	4

¿qué más pueden decir sobre la influencia que ejerce la posición del autor? 31:08: Angie Vélez:
 Profe, que cuando uno está leyendo independiente del pensamiento que uno tenga. Uno siempre va a tender a creer más si apenas está empezando a aprender sobre el tema porque no hay nada previo con lo que uno pueda relacionar o contrastar.

[<Internals\Reflections\1st principle\1st question\ - 1st principle, what did you learn about author's position and how they try to influence readers - April 11th> - § 1 reference coded \[35,86% Coverage\]](#)

Reference 1 - 35,86% Coverage

1. What did you learn about authors' position and how they try to influence readers? Aprendí que el autor intenta convencer por un lado o por el otro al lector sobre lo que él cree saber. Por otro lado, hay que tener en cuenta que es fácil que el autor tenga poder de convencimiento sobre un determinado tema siempre y cuando el lector no sepa de ese tema. O sea, uno cree más fácil cuando uno no sabe del tema y ve a alguien hablando con autoridad.

[<Internals\Worksamples\1st principle\Guided practice\ - 1st P - Escobar's Text Analysis - April 4th> - § 1 reference coded \[41,33% Coverage\]](#)

APPENDIX E: COVER LETTER & CONSENT FORM

Medellín, febrero 14 de 2018.

Señores
Comité Sección de Servicios
Escuela de Idiomas
Universidad de Antioquia

Cordial saludo,

Yo, _____, con CC. _____ de Medellín, estudiante del programa “Maestría en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras” de la Escuela de Idiomas de la Universidad de Antioquia, me dirijo a ustedes para amablemente solicitar su permiso para llevar a cabo mi proyecto de investigación titulado “*Aprendizajes y retos experimentados por estudiantes de pregrado durante la implementación de una unidad de lectura crítica: Un estudio de caso en Medellín - Antioquia.*” Dicho proyecto se realizará en el curso Competencia Lectora II que se ofrece a los estudiantes de la Facultad Nacional de Salud Pública en el primer semestre del 2018.

Esta investigación es requisito de grado de la maestría en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras y tiene como propósito explorar los aprendizajes y los retos de los estudiantes de dicho curso frente la implementación de una unidad de lectura crítica. Para lograr este objetivo, durante los meses de abril y mayo de 2018, se recogerán muestras del trabajo de los estudiantes, reflexiones escritas y grabaciones de video de todas las clases durante la implementación de dicha unidad. Dicha información se recogerá con fines netamente académicos y únicamente será vista por mi asesora y yo.

La participación de los estudiantes en este proyecto investigativo es voluntaria, lo que implica que podrán retirarse de este estudio en cualquier momento sin ningún tipo de consecuencia. Aunque su participación en él no le otorgará ningún beneficio, tampoco le supondrá riesgo alguno para su integridad física o mental. Por el contrario, le permitirá contribuir a la profundización en el conocimiento de la enseñanza de la lectura crítica en inglés.

Los resultados de dicho estudio podrán ser incluidos en publicaciones o en conferencias a nivel nacional e internacional. En ambos casos, la identidad de los estudiantes será protegida mediante el uso de pseudónimos a menos que ellos autoricen explícitamente usar su nombre.

Agradezco su atención y colaboración con este proyecto. Si requiere más información o le surge alguna duda, puede contactarme a mi o a mi asesora, la _____, en los correos y números que se presentan a continuación.

Atentamente,

Maestría en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad de Antioquia

En caso de aprobar mi solicitud, les agradezco devolver una copia firmada a mi correo.

APPENDIX F: STUDENT'S CONSENT FORM

Maestría en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras
Escuela de Idiomas
Universidad de Antioquia

Formato de Consentimiento de los Participantes

Título del estudio:

Aprendizajes y retos de los estudiantes de pregrado durante la implementación de una unidad de lectura crítica: Un estudio de caso en Medellín - Antioquia.

Investigador principal:

Queremos invitarlo a participar en un estudio investigativo que se desarrollará como parte de los requisitos de grado para la Maestría en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Escuela de Idiomas de la Universidad de Antioquia.

El propósito de la investigación explorar los aprendizajes y retos de los estudiantes del curso de Competencia Lectora II durante la implementación de una unidad de lectura crítica. Dicha unidad será implementada en el curso durante el primer semestre de 2018. Como usted hace parte del curso, considero que podrá brindar información fundamental al respecto.

Este estudio tendrá una duración de 1 mes y medio aproximadamente. Durante este tiempo, se recogerán muestras del trabajo de los estudiantes, reflexiones escritas y videos de todas las clases que forman parte de la unidad. La información se recogerá con fines netamente académicos y será preservada mediante el uso de pseudónimos para proteger la identidad de los participantes.

Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria, lo que implica que podrá retirarse de este estudio en cualquier momento sin ningún tipo de consecuencia. Aunque su participación en él no le otorgará ningún beneficio, tampoco le supondrá riesgo alguno para su integridad física o mental. Por el contrario, le permitirá contribuir a la profundización en el conocimiento de la enseñanza de la lectura crítica en inglés.

Los resultados de dicho estudio podrán ser incluidos en publicaciones o en conferencias a nivel nacional e internacional. En ambos casos, su identidad será protegida mediante el uso de pseudónimos a menos que yo autorice explícitamente usar mi nombre.

Si tiene algún comentario, pregunta o sugerencia a partir de hoy y durante el desarrollo de la investigación, puede contactarme en el número _____ o en el correo electrónico. También puede contactar a mi asesora, _____, en el número _____ o en el correo electrónico _____

Al firmar este documento, usted indica que ha leído este documento, ha tenido la oportunidad de aclarar cualquier tipo de duda sobre el proyecto y su participación en él, autoriza el uso de los datos recogidos durante la unidad, y voluntariamente acepta participar. Una copia de este documento le será entregada para que pueda conservarla.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE TEXT USED IN CLASS

DRUG BOSS PABLO ESCOBAR STILL DIVIDES COLOMBIA

Drug boss Pablo Escobar still divides Colombia

By Arturo Wallace BBC Mundo, Medellin

Jose Giraldo earns his living on the streets of Medellin selling humorous road signs and stickers with iconic images.



It is an eclectic offering, which includes the likes of Hello Kitty, Jesus Christ and Che Guevara. But according to Mr Giraldo, stickers boasting the image of Colombia's infamous drug lord Pablo Escobar are by far the most popular. "The best seller is Pablito," Mr Giraldo says of the crime boss, who was shot dead in Medellin while trying to escape from police 20 years ago.

1980s terror

Unfortunately, Mr Giraldo is by no means the only one cashing in on the image of the man many consider the greatest outlaw of the 20th Century. At the height of his power, Pablo Escobar was the seventh richest man in the world, with his Medellin drugs cartel that was behind up to 80% of all the cocaine shipped to the United States. His cartel not only trafficked drugs, it terrorised Colombia in the 1980s and early 1990s, bribing, kidnapping or killing all those who stood in its way. Such was his ruthlessness he was responsible for some 4,000 deaths. Others say the real number is closer to 5,000. Sadly, here in Medellin, some people still affectionately refer to Escobar as "Pablito", and in the commercial district of Junin T-shirts and wristwatches emblazoned with his face as well as books and DVDs telling his story are on display.

Mixed memories

But not everybody in Colombia is happy about the commercial success of all things about Escobar. "In a way it is an example of the triumph of culture embodied by Pablo Escobar, in which profit, making three bucks, is more important than anything else," says Rodrigo Lara Restrepo, whose father, Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, was shot dead on Escobar's orders in 1984. Federica Arellano agrees with Mr Lara. He lost his father in the 1989 bombing of a commercial plane ordered by Escobar in an attempt to kill presidential candidate Cesar Gaviria. Mr Gaviria was not on board the plane - having cancelled his plans for security reasons - but all 107 passengers and crew, and three people on the ground, died in the attack.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-25183649>

APPENDIX H: SAMPLE TEXT USED IN CLASS

How a Vegetarian Diet Could Help Save the Planet

By **JUSTIN WORLAND**

March 21, 2016

Evangelists of vegetarian and vegan diets are quick to cite growing evidence that reducing meat consumption improves human health in attempt to win over converts. Likewise, climate change activists often cite the strain that animal products place on the environment to advocate for changed practices.

Now, new research published in the journal *PNAS* combines the two perspectives to show that the widespread adoption of vegetarian and vegan diets could save millions of lives and trillion of dollars. “There is huge potential,” says study author Marco Springmann, a researcher at Oxford University, “from a health perspective, an environmental perspective and an economic perspective, really.”

Researchers assessed four different scenarios with humans consuming varying levels of meat to evaluate the links between diet, health and the environment. The lowest level of meat consumption—widespread adoption of the vegan diet—could help avoid more than 8 million deaths by 2050, according to the study. A vegetarian diet would save 7.3 million lives.

The environmental impacts of a dietary shift could be just as dramatic, according to the researchers. Livestock alone account for more than 14% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and by 2050 the food sector could account for half if cuts are implemented in other sectors along the lines that countries have committed to doing. A vegan or vegetarian diet could cut those emissions by 70% and 63%, respectively.

Changing dietary patterns could save \$1 trillion annually by preventing health care costs and lost productivity. That figure balloons to as much as \$30 trillion annually when also considering the economic value of lost life. And that doesn’t even include the economic benefits of avoiding devastating extreme weather events that could result from climate change.

Placing a dollar value on the benefits of the vegetarian diet could play a significant role in public policy on these issues, according Springmann. Policymakers often conduct cost-benefit analyses before implementing new rules and the new research could provide them with a starting point for accounting for the economic benefits of policies to wean the world off meat. The study also illustrates how the benefits of changing dietary patterns vary from region to region. Some areas—namely, East Asia, Latin America and Western high-income countries—benefited from reduced red meat consumption. Others in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa will benefit the most from increased fruit and vegetable intake. Those details could help policymakers create narrowly targeted policies; researchers say.

<http://time.com/4266874/vegetarian-diet-climate-change/>

APPENDIX I: SAMPLE TEXT USED IN CLASS

Colombia and FARC sign a historic ceasefire deal

Presenter: They wept, they embraced and they danced at the announcement they waited for four decades and that came from Havana.

Participant Sympathizer 1: I am very excited; I have never believed in a Colombia where there was not war. So, this is a very historical and important moment for all the Colombians. And no matter how you feel about what is going to happen, it's very exciting to see the words.

Presenter: They came from all walks of life holding Colombian flags, banners or pictures of the legions of the victims of the 50-year-old conflict that ravaged their country. And united by the hope that this deal will finally mark a new beginning.

Participant Sympathizer 2: This is the result of work by so many Colombians that have come together and joined their efforts and dreams hoping to see this day come true. We're really happy.

Participant Sympathizer 3: It means so much for me as a young person, this is the beginning of a new history truly silencing the guns and giving us a new opportunity to live in peace.

Presenter: Some wanted to share their feelings.

Participant Sympathizer 4: I think if it means happiness, it is possible (starts crying).

Presenter: But not everyone agrees with the peace deal. Followers of former president Álvaro Uribe or those who believe that many concessions have been given to the FARC Rebels.

Participant Sympathizer 5: I want to tell those who oppose the process that the time has come for Colombians to build a better future. We've been through so many decades of war which has been particularly harsh on minorities and indigenous people

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz_x3JOIQHI