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<b>RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO</b> (Mínimo 80 máximo 120 palabras)	<p>Este estudio de investigación acción usando un blog de clase para promover la lectura crítica del inglés como lengua extranjera, fue realizado con un grupo de quince estudiantes de séptimo grado del colegio San Bartolomé La Merced en Bogotá. Este estudio se centró en la promoción de estrategias para desarrollar la lectura crítica a través del uso de un blog. La investigación se realizó con la implementación de un blog que contenía lecturas y actividades de pre-, durante y después de lectura y la implementación de preguntas para fomentar la lectura crítica. Todas las actividades de pre-lectura fueron desarrolladas en clase y las demás se asignaron como trabajo personal para la casa. Los resultados de este estudio mostraron las numerosas ventajas del uso de blogs, para desarrollar las estrategias de lectura crítica de pre visualización, contextualización y reflexión de creencias personales y sociales. De otra parte, los participantes de éste estudio mejoraron sus procesos de lectura y mostraron una actitud positiva hacia el uso de blogs para desarrollar lectura. Estudios futuros en esta área podrían incluir el uso de blogs para promover lectura intensiva y pensamiento crítico</p>		

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Blogging to Foster Critical Reading

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Chia, 2012

Blogging to Foster Critical Reading

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### Abstract

This action research study on blogging to foster EFL critical reading was conducted with a group of fifteen seventh-grade students at San Bartolomé La Merced School in Bogotá, and focused on promoting critical reading strategies throughout the use of a blog. The study took into account the implementation of a reading class-blog with a set of critical reading questions in the pre-, while and after reading format to develop critical reading processes. All the pre-reading activities were developed in class and the remaining reading activities were carried out as independent work at home. Findings demonstrated the advantages of blogs with the critical reading questions offered to develop certain critical reading strategies such as previewing, contextualizing, and reflecting on beliefs and values. In addition, participants improved their reading practices and showed a positive attitude towards the use of blogs for reading purposes. Further research on this area should include the use of blogs to promote intensive reading and critical thinking.

*Keywords: Reading, Critical reading strategies, Blogs.*

### Resumen

Este estudio de investigación acción usando un blog de clase para promover la lectura crítica del inglés como lengua extranjera, fue realizado con un grupo de quince estudiantes de séptimo grado del colegio San Bartolomé La Merced en Bogotá. Este estudio se centró en la promoción de estrategias para desarrollar la lectura crítica a través del uso de un blog. La investigación se realizó con la implementación de un blog que contenía lecturas y actividades de pre-, durante y después de lectura y la implementación de preguntas para fomentar la lectura crítica. Todas las actividades de pre-lectura fueron desarrolladas en clase y las demás se asignaron como trabajo personal para la casa. Los resultados de este estudio mostraron las numerosas ventajas del uso de blogs, para desarrollar las estrategias de lectura crítica de pre visualización, contextualización y reflexión de creencias personales y sociales. De otra parte, los participantes de éste estudio mejoraron sus procesos de lectura y mostraron una actitud positiva hacia el uso de blogs para desarrollar lectura. Estudios futuros en esta área podrían incluir el uso de blogs para promover lectura intensiva y pensamiento crítico.

*Palabras clave: Lectura, estrategias de lectura crítica, blogs*

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

This research is intended to determine the effect that the use of blogs, as ICT -Web 2.0 tools, might have in the learning process of a language, and its impact to develop critical reading of English as a Foreign Language of students from a private school in Bogotá.

This project emerged both as a result of a personal experience with the use of web 2.0 tools in the teaching of English, and as a way to cope with the new cross-curricular project (presented in the Annual Planning from the school) San Bartolomé La Merced (SBLM hereafter). This project aims to use the ICT strategies in the classroom in order to enrich, complement and enhance foreign reading processes; teaching practices therefore, meaningful experiences for the new generation of digital students the school has. Prensky (2001) claims that these “new generations of skillful technology students –digital natives- have a big gap with -the digital foreigners-, these prior generation of not skillful teachers in technology” (p.1).

Furthermore, this research emerged as a concern to transform the reading process in a group of 20 students from seventh grade, with an A2 English level according to the Common European Framework and studying at SBLM. These students took a need-analysis questionnaire where the learners were asked to comment on elements including reading processes, reading problems and reading skills. As a result, the majority of students answered that they were not good readers in English due to their difficulties to understand all the words in the texts, the lack of enthusiasm and interest to practice this skill because of

the passiveness of the reading activity, the monotony in doing it and the content they were asked to read. Moreover, a large number of students from this grade showed a great interest in reading outside the classroom. Comments like: *“I like reading out of the classroom”*, *“I like to go the reading room”* *“I like to read comics”* (answers from three different students from 7A grade) showed the great interest this group have to transform the reading from a passive to an active activity. They argued that in the reading room they were able to choose their readings, sit wherever they wanted and read at their pace. In terms of the question related to doing electronic readings, almost all of the students showed great interest in them because they could deal with the computer, have a different reading experience and learn more vocabulary: *“Yes, it’s another way to read and I like it”*, wrote some of them. Few of them agreed to know some aspects from blogs, but expressed the uncertainty regarding the use of blogs in the English language class.

Conversely, two students showed rejection to reading through the use of the computer arguing that they get tired reading from computers. Finally in this ten-question need-analysis questionnaire, students argued to like reading in English because they were able to learn vocabulary and study the language. Answering the last question, they presented as reading preferences: stories, comics, short narrations, documentaries and fairy tales.

On the other hand, in May 2010, the school applied the Key English Tests (KET) mock exam to these seventh-grade students. The purpose of this test was to provide data about the English language level in the school to determine strategies to prepare students to take the International English exams established to reach the Common European Framework (CEF) standards. This would also provide students with tools to face the

challenges of the university and a globalized knowledge society in which information and communication skills are a must to be handled. Results showed a lack of analysis and inference in their reading processes. In these kinds of exams, the examinee is assessed not only in terms of language knowledge but also in their ability to trigger their processes of analysis and inference of information from the text. Results showed that in their reading, they only answered questions related to language usage, scanning and sometimes skimming sub-skills processes. With this in mind the research concern was to identify tools which might help these students emphasize in aspects such as inference, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of the reading process in the Foreign Language. The outcome gathered from this KET mock raised concerns about the FL poor reading processes students at SBLM have, which do not fulfill the criteria required by the CEF to the “Colombia bilingüe” project (Zarate and Alvarez, 2005). Besides, this outcome was the teacher-researcher’ main concern to improve the language learning quality of these Colombian students, on one hand, and include technological teaching techniques in the classroom which may also help improve teaching quality of Colombian teachers.

### **Statement of the Problem**

EFL language teachers and students in general focus their attention on reading comprehension skills due to the social and personal development this process has not only to acquire knowledge and different ideas to understand the world, but also to as a way to see the world and interpret the issues stated in it to then socialized it through the writing process. In view of the fact that In SBLM teaching reading in EFL is recognized as a way to facilitate learning of the language and identify main ideas to give accounts of what the reading says. Additionally, considering the need these students have to acquire a deeper

reading comprehension to infer, determine, deduce and analyze texts to restate them and tackle the reading requirements the KET exams asks for therefore, help these students to acquire more tools to comprehend readings and self-reflect on the effects these have to analyze and see world, this research project intended to search for new and different ways of presenting and accessing to the readings not only to review and practice the grammar and vocabulary of the language or give accounts of the contents of the reading passages but also to help them to identify, infer and deduce assumptions, facts and beliefs from these readings which let them create own assumptions to accept or reject ideas presented in these readings.

Consequently, this research study and the researcher is part of those Colombian teacher-researchers who aim to help their community to improve the quality of the reading comprehension of the EF language to teach and the language to learn to reach international language standards. These standards not only prepare students to face a globalized world but also offer them the communicative tools needed to help their country be more competitive, and more committed to reach better educational standards and therefore better standards of life ( Zarate and Alvarez, 2005).

Locally, the application of this research project in SBLM school aims to modify the students' reading processes and be a motivation for other colleagues to start using and discovering the vast amount of information the Internet and especially the use of blogs may offer in the teaching of a foreign language (in this case, EFL), and especially in the instruction of reading skills. In relation to this point, Dudeney (2000) suggests: "Internet is not merely a source of authentic material in English, but also home to encyclopedic information about all sorts of topics to engage students within the classroom" (p.1). In fact,

the use of the internet in the classroom might possibly be the way to present readings in a variety of formats, styles and designs to produce engagement and therefore increase motivation in students at SBLM.

The idea of this project is to promote reading in a class blog for a group of students from seventh grade and determine whether their critical reading skills are developed with the use of this technological tool. Besides, results emerged from this reading blog might certainly show the reading comprehension changes expected to appear in these students' reading processes and the effects in their learning process.

Equally important, this reading blog is expected to have a considerable impact on students' technological management and ideas to use during their free time. Since the implementation of this project was to be carried out through the use of a blog, students were required, to be trained to use it accurately and encouraged to participate in their reading process outside the classroom. Students were expected to read in English out of the classroom and use them as an excuse to share beliefs, ideas, assumptions and points of view with classmates, hence enriching their social and personal language skills. Other expected reactions this study might show are related to the increase of students' technological strategies to work independently, and with autonomy, which are really valuable skills for their personal growth.

In consequence, this qualitative Action Research addresses the following research question with the corresponding objectives:

Research question:

To what extent can blogging *help* seventh grade students from San Bartolomé La Merced *develop critical reading* in EFL?

#### Objectives

To determine whether these students' critical reading process is affected by the use of blogging

To determine the benefits of blogging in these students' reading comprehension skill

To identify these students' perceptions about the use of blogs to read in EFL

#### **Rationale**

The implementation of this research project is expected to have a relevant impact in SBLM students' mental processes to confront readings in EFL not only to give accounts of what reading says but also to offer personal judgments, deductions and state what the reading does on them. On one hand, results from this study estimate to provide insights into the reading processes at SBLM School to be a referent for the teaching community due to the potentially large number of benefits high levels of reading comprehension may offer to the cognitive process in one hand and to the proficiency of the foreign language on the other hand. Since participants are to use web 2.0 tools technology, reading styles and their motivation to use technology for learning purposes, are aspects expected to be affected with this study, apart from the expected improvement of critical reading or the development of this aspect this study expects to have. On the other hand results from this study are expected to have an impact on the teaching community at SBL due to the use of technology in the teaching process. The use of this web 2.0 tool has to connect language, language

learning and learning strategies with students' language needs and interests. This ICTs implementation is expected to provide substantial improvements in terms of technology usage in the English curriculum. In fact, with the use of technology in the classroom students' reading process and students' language proficiency is expected to have an improvement. In addition, participants' learning strategies to study the language to transform the learning process into meaningful experience (Prensky, 2001; Rojas 2011), are other kinds of outcomes this study intends to obtain.

Other contributions this study involves the use of blogs not only as a way to help students in their reading skills but also to be considered as tools to promote critical reading and therefore critical thinking skills. The use of reply options in blogs can offer the possibility to know others' ideas, beliefs, judgments, and exteriorize them in their written comments which can be nourished with others therefore leave the place to deep reflection and analysis, acceptance or rejection. Regarding this aspect Luehmann, (2008) asserts that: "blogging culture, in which frequent updating is expected and ideas and arguments are judged on merit, may encourage constant and thoughtful writing and reflection"; and that making thinking visible makes it available for critique and comment by oneself as well as others" (p. 289).

Furthermore, this study might have an important impact on research teachers in the classroom who are looking for special strategies which involve reading practices, technology in the classroom and its effects on students' behaviors and cognitive processes. The English teaching community might also enrich teaching practices and hence close the gap between the use of technology and English language teaching in the classroom.

In summary, this study intends to show a relevant impact on this group of students' critical reading skills; for colleagues at SBLM as a purposeful way to present reading tasks; for the school as an institutional aim of using ICTs in the teaching process; and for the researcher community for further and deeper studies in this area of blogging in the EFL reading process.

The principle theory which supports this research project is mainly based on the constructs related to reading comprehension, critical reading theory and Computer Assisted Language Learning specifically the use of blogging. These constructs are supported by the following authors: Brown (1996), Wallace (2003), Nuttall (1996) and Aebersold (2007) present conceptions and general ideas of what reading in EFL is. Nuttall (1996), Aebersold and Lee (2007) and Hedge (2000) focus on elements and approaches related to reading in a foreign language. In addition, Kurland (2000), Aebersold and Lee (2007), and Hedge (2000) present concepts, ideas, strategies and ways in which critical reading can be fostered and instructed to EFL students. Finally, Campbell (2003), Nacht and Chaney (2006), Eastmen (2007), Quintero (2008), Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010), and Carney (2009) help the reader become aware of the importance that utility blogs have in the reading and writing English language learning process.

The subsequent chapter presents the literature which support and provide a clear perspective of the theory related in this study. It also presents similar studies done on the use of blogging, and critical reading, the impact these studies have had in the learning of a language and special considerations about the research study.

## Chapter 2

### Theoretical framework

This chapter deals with the theory, concepts, definitions and ideas related to the main constructs presented in the study “blogging to foster critical reading”. In the same way, the chapter presents the state of the art, with outcomes from similar studies done on the use of reading blogs and critical reading, and the impact this study might have in teaching contexts.

Many studies have been carried out with the use of blogs to learn a foreign or a second language, and about reading comprehension skills. Several research studies on blogging for writing purposes have been performed, but a number of studies have been conducted on boosting reading comprehension skills with blogs and none on blogs to foster critical reading processes. Examples of this are the Blog-assisted language learning study, an Iranian study aimed to teach reading (Rashtchi & Hajihassani, 2010), and the Colombian study on Examining reading comprehension through the use of continuous texts and hypertexts, conducted by Coscarelli (2009). Furthermore, critical thinking studies have been carried out with the purpose of helping students to develop critical thinking but none on critical reading. “A Guided Reading of Images: A Strategy to Develop Critical Thinking and Communicative Skills” is one of these studies conducted by Sarmiento (2010) to develop critical reading in EFL contexts. With this view, results from this study are expected to have an impact in the use of blogs for critical reading purposes and be a basis for further studies in this area.

The constructs are presented in the following order: reading comprehension, critical reading and web blogs. The state of the art presents case studies carried out on the use of blogging to foster EFL reading skills, blogs to interchange cultures among EFL and native speakers from Colombia and Canada, and the use of web blogs in the educational field.

## **Reading**

Chamot and O'Malley (1995) and Brown (1996), present EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign Language / English as a Second Language) reading as a process where "the reader uses a series of steps to obtain meaning from the written text" (p. 284). Indeed, these steps are the mental processes the reader uses not only to decode information to say what the text says, but to understand the assumptions, bias and perspectives underlying the discussion. Here the reader can see how the world is portrayed by a text and reading comes to mean understanding the writer's representation of reality (Kurland, 2000).

Furthermore, reading involves the reader, the text, and the interaction between reader and text (Aebersold & Lee, 2007). According to this claim, this study embraces reading not only the interaction the reader might have with the text in the blog but what the reader is expected to do with the text or what the text might provoke on his/her personal reflection: arguing, judging, appealing for sympathy, contrasting, and inferring what the text as a whole means (Kurland, 2000).

In addition, apart from the reader's interaction with the text to get the best of it, a reader also has external and internal reasons to read. Grellet (2002) and Harmer (1999) argue that readers can read for pleasure, to get informed or for academic purposes. In addition, Harmer (1999) also highlights the use of EFL reading texts to "expose the reader

to authentic materials to stick some of the language in the reader's minds as part of the process of language acquisition" (p 68). This means that reading in EFL will not only offer pleasure, information or ideas but also will help the English Language learner to retain language to be internalized unconsciously in the learning process. Hence, the text will serve as a model of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and syntax, and will also serve as the primary tool to stimulate discussion, excite imaginative responses and be the base of inspiration to stimulate the writing process, if the reading text is of great interest (Harmer, 1999, p. 68).

A final aspect about reading in this study is the difference between the written language and the rhetorical structures of the native language and the target language which may affect FL reading processes (Aebersold & Lee, 2007, p. 28). These differences need to be considered when presenting readings to students to ensure that students enjoy (or at least feel comfortable with) reading in a foreign language and reading, without help, unfamiliar authentic texts, at appropriate speed, silently and with adequate understanding (Nuttall, 1996, p.31). Other considerations when presenting readings to FL learners include cognitive development and style orientation, due to the fact that age and level of cognition at the time they begin language study shape their ability to grasp concepts, use strategies and the basic ways to approach the text.

Aebersold and Lee (2007) and Nuttall (1996) also claim that teachers can only try to: promote reading ability in the student by using interesting material selected by them (this can help to overcome difficulties presented when reading in EFL), promote the use meta-cognitive strategies that assist them to self-develop their ability to read, prepare students to tackle texts that they have never seen before by helping them to understand

language differences from L1 and FL and then empowering them to use the target language to become proficient readers. Finally, teachers need to know, and let their students know, that the reader does not need to understand everything to suit the purpose of a read text.

### **Critical Reading**

According to Kurland (2000) critical reading is an analytical activity where the reader identifies patterns of elements such as information, values, assumptions, and language usage throughout the discussion. Critical reading also involves bringing outside knowledge, biases, and values to bear to evaluate the presentation and decide what ultimately to accept as true.

Critical reading then appears to be a skill highly required in both academic and everyday life (Pardede, 2007). A critical reader is able to detect bias, prejudices (adverse judgments or opinions formed beforehand or without knowledge), misleading opinion and illogical conclusions in a text. As a reading skill which involves critical thinking competence, critical reading can be defined as the process of understanding, questioning, and evaluating a text, which is carried out actively and consciously, in order to assess the accuracy and validity of a writer's ideas successfully (Pardede, 2007).

Altogether, critical reading in this study is referred to as those special actions or strategies that the reader has to recognize what the text says about the topic and what the text does on the reader. Readers also have to recognize the sense given to this text by the sequence of thoughts, to understand the information, ideas, and opinions stated within the text from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph to take control of the read text.

They should not only repeat what the text asserts, but also to become the author of one's own understanding.

Paratore and McCormack (2007) relate critical reading with effective readers. In this sense they state that:

The strategies used by successful readers are continually evolving. Research provides new and confirmatory knowledge about how reading “works” and reading theories change in relation to this knowledge. As we learn more about the nature of reading strategies, including generating and monitoring predictions, making inferences, summarizing and synthesizing text information, and critiquing the author's arguments, this knowledge can inform effective reading instruction (p. 11).

Therefore, the successful reader is the one who knows the reading strategies and use them to not simply synthesize text information, but also to critique author's arguments and takes own positions based on the knowledge found in the text. As a consequence, in this study effective reader and critical reader are considered as this reader who uses special actions or strategies to recognize what the text says about the topic and what the text does on the reader. In other words, effective reader and critical reader will be taken as synonyms indistinctively.

Some other actions established by Aebersold and Lee (2007) to become effective readers, include the speedy recognition of words, use of text features (subheadings, transitions, etc), use of title(s) to infer what information might follow, use of world knowledge, analyze unfamiliar words, and distinguish main ideas from minor ideas, among others to be a critical reader (p. 16).

Aesbersold and Lee (1997) also argue that:

Identify the grammatical functions of words, read for meaning, concentrate on construction meaning, guess about the meaning of the text, evaluate guesses and try new guesses if necessary, monitor comprehension, keep the purpose of reading the text in mind, adjust strategies to the purpose of reading, identify or infer main ideas, understand the relationship between the parts of a text and tolerate ambiguity in a text (at least temporarily), paraphrase, use context to build meaning and aid comprehension, continue reading even when unsuccessful, at least for a while. (p. 16)

Regarding this ideas it can be said participants in this study could be called effective readers or critical readers if in their reading practices they read for meaning, guess about the meaning of the text, monitors comprehension, identify and infer main ideas, paraphrase, use the context to build the meaning and present own believes and points of view on the readings done.

On the other hand, Johnson, (2004) argues that critical readers are those who experience, and not simply “encounter” or react to what they read – but they engage in a dialogue with the text, ask questions about it and make demands on it. In all, being an effective reader is an ongoing process that involves experience, practice, and reflection, taking an active role is what “effective reading” is all about.

In the same way, Hedge (2000) claims that a critical reader views reading as a social process where texts are constructed in certain ways so that these texts shape perceptions of readers towards the acceptance of text’s ideologies (p.197). Certainly, texts should widen horizons by introducing readers to unfamiliar values and cultures, but teachers should be

aware of avoiding presenting texts that try to persuade readers to identify the writer's own moral vision; or, in addition, help students to value these perspectives.

For the purpose of this study critical reading is taken as an individual act of analyzing and evaluating readings as the reading action progresses, reflecting back on it. Critical reading in the blogs will be discovered by those further steps in which the participants have to recognize what a text says, reflecting on what the text has: values, assumptions, information and language usage to decide what ultimately to accept as true (Kurland, 2000).

Craving to find out ways and strategies to determine whether practitioners develop critical reading in this study, Hedge (2000) and Kurland (2000) provided insightful ideas useful to foster critical reading. Hedge suggests the use of critical questions and Kurland promotes seven strategies to foster critical reading.

Hedge (2000) underlines several critical questions which can be built into reading materials to foster critical reading development in readers by supporting the application of critical questions in the texts.

For what purpose and for what audience is this intended? What knowledge and attitudes does the author presume of the audience? Are you convinced by the evidence presented by the author to support the claims made? Does your own experience support the conclusions reached by the author? And do you share the author's point of view? (p. 56)

The modification of these questions and their implementation in the reading blog was a significant source to determine practitioners' critical reading steps. In addition,

Hedge (2000) cites a detailed set of questions to be used in the pre-reading phase to help readers tackle texts.

Before reading text: Ask yourself the following questions:

Why I am reading this? What is my purpose? Why is it in my reading list? What do I know about the author, the publisher, the circumstances of publication and the type of text? How do these affect my attitude towards an expectation of what I am about to read? Why? What are my own views of the event(s) or topic before I start reading this particular text? What other texts (written and spoken) on this similar topics am I familiar with? What are my views about them? (p. 120)

The previous ideas described by Aebersold and Lee (2007) and Paratore and McCormack (2007) regarding the strategic reader, the one who reads and learns from the reading, and Wallace's (2003) point of view about reading as a social, critical and interpretative process rather than as a skill or set of skills which no longer present what the text says are crucially linked. It can therefore be argued that there are certain kinds of texts, which are more appropriate and highly help students in the processes of getting the meaning from reading, learning a foreign language and highly crucial to develop learners' critical and social skills, therefore allowing them to interpret the world. These kinds of texts are expository texts, and include biographies, essays, how-to books, encyclopedias, reference books, experimental books, scientific reports and newspaper articles among others. These texts can offer throughout the reading comprehension, learning of the language and development of critical reading process (Iwai, 2007 & Baldwin, 1990).

The prior thoughts on expository texts, and the structure these have (descriptive, listing, comparison contrast, cause/effect, problem and solution and retelling among others) (Moss, 2004), and considering Aebersold and Lee (2007) and Nuttall (1996), claims on students' interests when reading in EFL, the blog in this study will consider these authors' assumptions, selecting a series of readings based on students' interests in reading. This information was collected from the need-analysis questionnaire applied to start this research project and results showed that their reading interests are: fairy tales, comic strips, scientific texts and narrations in general.

The prior information is presented in detail in the Instructional design for the selection of texts. In the Instructional design there is also presented the questions and strategies presented by Hedge (2000), Kurland (2000) and Pardede (2007) as ways to help students to develop critical reading.

Thus far in our discourse reading and critical reading have clear definitions and are stated accordingly with what this study intends. Additionally, tools to determine the critical reading process in participants of the study were stated as well. The subsequent paragraphs deal with the third construct in this research: blogs. Concepts, kinds of blogs, special features and ways in which blogs can be used in EFL/ESL contexts are presented below.

### **Blogs**

With the rapid expansion of the Internet and the vast technological advances, blogging tools have been spread not only to social, political and commercial contexts but have also reached the teaching context, offering teachers multiple possibilities to present information to students, and store deep reflections about teaching practices. To the learner,

blogging has offered virtual forms to learn collaboratively, sharing information, ideas, beliefs and thoughts with others to agree, disagree and keep information so that students, or readers, can use it in the process of learning the language (Campbell, 2003).

Many definitions can be found for the concept of blogs, web blogs or blogging, terms which can be used synonymously. According to Nacht and Chaney (2006) a blog is “an easy-to-use Web-based content management system. It is a software platform that allows people with little or no technical background to publish, maintain, and update content” (p.1). Campbell (2003) argues that Weblogs are like online journals that an individual can continuously update with his or her own words, ideas and thoughts. He also adds that these weblogs are interactive in the sense that readers can respond to any given comment or discussion. The author offers three Weblogs to use in the ESL classroom: The tutor blog, run by the tutor for learners; the learner blog, run by individual learners themselves or by small collaborative groups, and the class blog, the result of the collaborative effort of an entire class. Finally, Quintero (2008), links blogs with an English learning tool and refers to blogs as a personal web space where learners can spot any kind of information they want.

Thousands of blogs can be created and are now easily accessible to anyone who thinks these can be useful to their own life. In terms of its utility and usage that a teacher, researcher or student can give to blogging, Campbell (2003) has categorized blogs in the ESL classroom, according to their use. Thus, there are, for example, blogs as *Tutors* which promote exploration and support for the learning process. Secondly, as a *tool to learn*, they have been found useful to read and write, as means of a platform where many or just one student can manage it and conduct the learning process. Finally, as *class blogs* to activate

learners' conversations, language classroom exchange and to read and write in classes. The author presents nine features an ideal blogging tool should have in the processes of ESL or EFL language learning. This ESL/EFL blog should:

1. Have a simple, user-friendly, intuitive interface, allowing learners to post, edit, and comment with ease.
2. Have a WYSIWYG<sup>1</sup> text editor, making formatting and hyper-linking text as simple as possible, while eliminating the need to use HTML entirely.
3. Give learners the ability to set access levels and to moderate comments as they see fit, thus creating a sense of control and privacy if needed.
4. Offer an extensive variety of template themes and colors, allowing learners to customize pages.
5. Come with built-in, easy-to-use social networking features, like personal profiles, friends lists, tags and tag searching, user communities, etc., so that learners can easily find conversation partners who have something in common with them and are willing to interact.
6. Have a built-in aggregator, making it possible for learners to subscribe to weblogs of interest, thus giving them relevant and stimulating reading material.
7. Allow learners to easily post and share photo, sound, and video files, thereby extending and enhancing their means of expression.
8. Have a spell check function.
9. Be web-based, totally free of service charges and advertising, and have an easy sign-up process.

Consequently, Campbell (2003) reports three useful blog platforms which offer these features mentioned by the author: Blogger, MSN Spaces and Live journal, established like the large usage communities; Yahoo! 360 blog because its recent appearance and the last four: Elgg, Learnerblogs, Blogmeister, and Free ESL blogs because of their purpose in teaching and learning.

From this selection presented by Campbell (2003), the use of [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) was the chosen option in the selection of the blog for this research. This selection was made based on the components that a good blog should have, according to Campbell (2003), the well-known name a blogger has, its free usage and although its creation is not easy, the easy posting on it.

On the other hand, Camilleri, Ford, Leja and Sollars (2007) highlight the multiple uses and building techniques teachers can develop with the use of blogs, as for instance, posting references to useful websites on teacher blogs offering student's concurrent learning opportunities outside the classroom and encouraging students to comment. The author also suggests that blogs are for reading purposes in the classroom specially, because they promote "self expression and highly personalized content" (p. 20). In a review of existing blogs, Camilleri et al, (2007) summarize some advantages offered by the blogging medium, suggesting that bloggers can collect news and stories to write about them and then edit/react to each other's work; bloggers can both add comments or critiques to share class readings.

Having offered a definition to the term blog and having offered a description of the special features and ways in which blogs can be used in EFL and ESL contexts, the

subsequent paragraphs deal with the impact this study might have in this community of practice and the studies done in this area of knowledge that is critical reading through the use of blogs.

### **State of the Art**

Several studies have been carried out on the use of blogs web 2.0 tool for the Teaching of English, as an essential technique to catch students' attention, motivate them in their learning process, interchange cultural experiences with two different language cultures, and help students to develop writing and reading language skills and deal with technology in their classrooms (Eastmen, 2007 ; Camilleri et al, 2007).

Conversely, very few studies have been presented about blogs for reading purposes. Examples of them are: "Blogs: web journals in language Education" by Camillery (2007), "Language study through Blog Exchange" by Carney (2009) and "Blogging an Emergent L2 literacy development in an urban elementary school" study conducted by Gehhard (2011) among others. Less for the boost of critical reading (e.g. "Develop practices of resistance: critical reading for students of Politics" by Clarck, 1993), In the Internet, readers can find hundreds of blogs with a gamut of readings, and reading activities to help net readers in any specific need they might have. In addition, several studies have been carried out to foster blogs in the classroom. However, no more than a small number of studies have focused on reading using blogs, or in the use of blogs to foster critical reading to EFL seventh-grade students in a school. Thus, this study gains interest and importance due to the innovation in the teaching technique to present readings to a technological

generation, and to engage students to improve the boring foreign reading skill (as they perceive it), and therefore become competent bilingual language readers.

The kind of blog used in this study is classified according to what Campbell (2003) defines as a *class blog*: “type of blog, which is the result of the collaborative effort of an entire class and can be used for reading and writing classes” (Three Types of Weblogs for Use in ESL Classrooms). Consequently, there have been several studies carried out with the purpose of presenting class blogs in the teaching field and for EFL educational purposes. There is the case of the study to foster the use of blogs to improve writing skills in foreign language classes, by means of starting with an in-depth analytical reading to then edit and add personal reflection to give it a written context (Camilleri et al., 2007). In this study, presented thorough statements which support the idea of using blogs to boost critical reading processes to the users due to higher order thinking skills (evaluate and synthesize) bloggers need to read other ideas, connect them to other ideas and to content and decide what is important and worth (Camilleri et al., 2007).

In the same way, some studies carried out using blogs for educational purposes present the reward that this tool has in the teaching of English to help students develop writing processes. The first is the Action Research study conducted in Bogotá, Colombia by Quintero (2008). In this study the researcher aimed to gain insights into EFL writing and to analyze the role that feedback played in the process of writing. The experience was implemented through the interaction of two groups of students, one group in a public university in Colombia and the other a group in Canada. The last group had regular interactions with the former group through the use of blogs. The use of blogs was a medium

to exchange experiences and interests in a writing community, and so then receive feedback from this process.

As a result, there was understanding of writing and feedback in writing but there appeared poor interaction among the participants (eight students from a public university and students at a Canadian university), and lack of meaningful writing in their blogs, whose purpose was the creation of a community where interests, objectives and constant interaction could motivate the participants to produce thoughtful writings. Strengths presented in her study were the use of blogs where the written process took place and the role of the Canadian' feedback, native speakers, and teachers' feedback provided to the language learners students in Bogotá, which was fundamental to improve these students' writing to some extent. It is important to notice the great benefit this web blog tool offered to the exchange of information from cities highly apart. Furthermore, the reading blog appeared to be a highly motivational tool to engage reading processes and to provoke a written interaction with the reading and with the readers' community in this study.

Following the same writing pattern, Rojas (2011) conducted a study on the implementation of a blog with activities, strategies, suggestions and links to increase written communication in English of a group of 43 ninth grade students from a school in Bogotá. The purpose of this author was focused on the presentation of enough interesting input through the use of webquest activities to the participants so that they were motivated to write and then develop the writing skill. Students were instructed and motivated to create their own blogs about free students' interested topics. Group work was allowed and students' engagement in the blog and the writing process was presented due to the chance participants had to use different technological tools (e.g. cameras, mobiles, and computers)

in their blogs and writings. As a result participants tried to write more and of a higher standard. They showed great engagement not only in writing but also in using the technology to learn English because it was a different way to learn. The researcher also confirmed the claim about the substantial help that technology can offer to teachers in the classroom, and acquired a vast knowledge required to create and maintain blogs in EFL contexts.

Sun and Chang (2012) used blogs to demonstrate that this tool allowed EFL graduates to scaffold each other in navigating their writing tasks and processing academic writing knowledge. Taiwanese TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) students helped each other to understand the academic writing process and build their identity as EFL writers. Results also showed the kind of roles blogs can play in the writing instruction, and how these can be incorporated in pedagogic practices. Overall, this study reinforced the positive effect technology, especially blogs, may offer to the writing process and the support and engagement this tool may offer to learn a foreign language. Similarly, Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010) conducted a study aimed at determining whether the use of blog-assisted improved the reading comprehension processes for a group of 52-undergraduate Iranian EFL students and their attitude towards EFL reading skill. Participants, with a homogeneous reading comprehension performance, were divided into two groups: The control and the experimental group. Both groups received 10 classes, one-hour and a half each. The experimental group had reading through a designed blog to this purpose, and linked to answer different reading comprehension activities (e.g. questions, quizzes and vocabulary tests) to finally write the summary of the text. The control group

did the same procedure with the same readings but using the traditional form (paper and dictionary).

Results showed a slight and no significant improvement in the reading comprehension process in students who used weblogs in the reading rather than in the control group. Moreover, the significance this study had was presented in the time students used to do the activities which was less than the control group, and the increase of positive attitude and motivation towards weblog in EFL reading. Using weblogs in language classes could encourage learners to actively participate in classroom discussions and activities while promoting cooperation and cultivating peer learning, group work activities, and autonomy in the learning process Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010).

Rashtchi and Hajihassani's results and those found in the study conducted by Ahluwalia, Gupta and Aggarwal (2011) with Engineering students in India, presented the same positive results on the acceptance and positive attitude towards the use of blogs to learn the language. These results are part of the further findings this study intends to find: effects on the use of weblogs in the critical reading process. Though not dealing with the same population, or the same kind of study, these Iranian and Indian studies support the positive possible outcomes that this critical reading weblogs intend to find.

By the same token, a study conducted by Gebhard, Shin and Seger (2011) in Massachusetts, United States, analyzed the use of a designed blog-mediated writing curriculum based on systematic functional linguistics, to support second grade English language learners' (ELLs) literacy development and abilities to use computer-mediated communication tools for social and academic purposes in and out of an urban school. This study, framed under Halliday and Vigotsky's language learning approach, lasted two years

and was focused on one of five second graders. This girl was a Puerto Rican second language learner who had problems with reading and writing in English. Born in USA, and a speaker of mainly Spanish at home, she was involved in a project where parents and relating family stories, letters, and arguments were part of the narrative project. These five students were instructed on how to write drafts and post them in the blog. During the second year data was gathered exclusively on the blog posts that students produced –more independently. This study reported the highly positive result which this blog had to help a second language learner to communicate, expand audience for academic and social purposes and according to her semiotic resources. Students developed sophisticated ways of responding to each other’s writing using the class blog, and literacy was expanded in regards to lexicography and discourse semantics. The Puerto Rican learner appropriated the class blog to transcend the physical limits of the classroom to communicate with an expanded audience for a wide range of primarily social functions. She used the blogging in interpersonal ways to perform identity work by constructing and displaying social roles as a technological expert and a valued peer, and as a result her reading and writing processes were significantly developed as the framework supported.

Results from this study are of a significant impact on the present action project, due to the fact that the researchers used the same kind of blog (class blog), had similar language needs and learner contexts “foreign reading practices” and aimed to have similar results, this study intends: “improve foreign reading and language learning processes”. This study also both supports and anticipates positive technological outcomes on the use of blogs in the classroom, and offers a way to engage students in the learning process.

Equally important, Carney (2009) presents two interesting studies conducted in Japan with students from California, New York and Japan. These studies presented blogging as a medium of communication and thought-sharing, and as a language cultural exchange and collaboration tool over a regular course for these students. The idea of using this blogging was to exchange language competence and intercultural competence with two classes of students, both maintaining blogs, either individually or as a group and then commenting on each others' blogs over the course of a certain amount of time. One study linked the author and one student from New York, referred to as "*New York Exchange*"; the other linked students from Japan and intermediate EFL learners of Japanese in California, in the United States, named as "*California exchange*".

As a conclusion Carney (2009) claims widespread potential improvement in student's linguistic abilities, though the blog comments were full of grammatical and orthographic errors. On the other hand, related to intercultural competence, lack of willingness to exchange culture, and "cultural factors" was evident, which restricted the exchange of intercultural competence. Therefore, conclusions were drawn towards the drawbacks blogging has when being used for cultural language exchange in a continuous way because these exchanges took place weekly and therefore the need to change subject and not to discuss in a deeper way previous thoughts stated in the blog were identified.

With similar blog usage purpose, Alm (2009) carried out a study in New Zealand using blogs as a way of protecting spaces for language learners. This study was conducted with 15 learners of German as a foreign language who used blogs for self-reflection and peer-to-peer interaction. The experience showed that blogging can provide language learners with a personal space in which they feel safe to express themselves and to interact

with other learners. Blogs could offer positive effect on their willingness to communicate in real-life.

Alm's methodology is the one used in this study: weekly readings administered by the researcher, based on class-related topics and interests (e.g. current affairs), grammar exercises and chosen topics. This can be called the text or input for practitioners to read and then answer some critical reading questions and comment on each other's answers in the blog. Although this study did not use students' own blogs, the blog format from Alm's blog has the same format: a free-domain blog created for them. The reading blog in this study has a text for 15 students to read, answer, comment and they are encouraged to restate, describe and interpret the reading, and then post comments about those interpretations, statements and descriptions obtained. These reflections were the product of answering reflective questions prepared to try to find students' evidences of the kind of reading they have done, and offer comments to their classmates' posts likewise.

Thus far, several studies have been cited regarding the implementation of blogs to help students in their foreign language learning process, reading and writing. It has been stated the worthiness weblogs have had in the classroom to help students: develop writing when boosting the study of the grammar and vocabulary in a different way from the typical way in which grammar is presented in the classroom; change students' attitude towards reading in EFL settings and link cultural awareness with the EFL language usage. At this stage it is appropriate to investigate whether the use of blogging can help participants from a school develop their critical reading process, and take advantage of the functions this tool has in the learning of a foreign language in different aspects such as language structures, vocabulary, grammar and in an overall way comprehension. Despite the fact that a few

blogs have been designed for reading purposes, Johnson's (2004) words gain value when presenting the role of an active reader in his article *Student writing guide*, from the University of Minnesota.

In summary, there seems to be a predictable positive impact on the use of blogs to develop reading and writing skills therefore critical reading processes. Researchers such as Brown (2007), Krashen (1997), Harmer (1999), and Oxford (1990) have agreed on the fact that students need to enjoy what they do, reduce levels of anxiety and find the activities interesting so that the learning can be more effective. Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010), Ahluwalia, Gupta and Aggarwal (2011), Gerbhard, Shin and Seger (2011) and Alm (2009) also found in their studies the positive acceptance of blogs by their students in the classroom and to learn the English language.

In addition, these research reports lead the reader to draw conclusions on the positive perspective of using this technological tool in the class to enrich teaching practices and engage students to learn differently. Now, there is a clear view and an eager desire to conduct this study with SBLM students to find out whether critical reading processes might be afforded by the use of this valuable teaching tool and, in turn, offer possible better understanding of EFL reading learning process to a new technological generation with rather low levels of reading comprehension in EFL contexts. Reading not only for the mere product of a conscious, reflective, and valuable text but in the study of those exceptional mental actions taken to interpret, define, and extract the main corpus of a text and express them and make them alive through the writing process (ideas put in writing) in a tool mainly used to develop writing skills.

The following chapter presents the entire process carried out to design instruments, literature about the methodology to follow, description of the target population whose study is to be applied and the procedure considered to conduct this study.

## Chapter 3

### Research Design

This chapter deals with the type of study used to conduct this research: action research, the description of the setting where it was conducted, principles of ethical considerations to guaranty participants' anonymity, the role of the researcher, the description of the instruments and their validation triangulation and reliability process to gather data. Finally, an action plan is presented as guide for the stages and time spent during the implementation period.

### Methodology

This study was developed based on the qualitative descriptive approach defined as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic Kothari (2008). According to the nature and the core of this research, it is framed into the qualitative approach, because it included the diagnosis of the problem, the implementation of a proposal and the evaluation of this proposal, basic aspects qualitative research should have (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

Furthermore, Kothari (2008) claims that Qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior and adds the function of researcher's insights and impressions. Such research generates results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which is not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis. Techniques such as group interviews and depth interviews are used. In a similar manner, this study, described as qualitative research due to the inquire method to find out answers to a natural behavior appeared in a natural setting (Burns, 1999). Diagnosis of a

problem, implementation of a proposal its intervention and evaluation are features of this research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007). In this research type a variety of data-gathering instruments are used. These include subjective assessment of information, attitudes, opinions, behaviors and judgments of the participants when dealing with the reading blog. In addition, the researcher's insights and impressions from the information presented in the reading blogs, the learners log and the teacher's log, are used to generate some observable results. These were partly quantitative but subjected to qualitative analysis due to the fact that it is required the description, interpretation and clarification of these human behaviors to get the best information from it (Burns, 1999).

### **Type of study**

This research study is framed as a qualitative Action Research because it used everyday methods, such as observing, reflecting on events and behaviors to then present a problem, a proposal in order to try to solve the problem and an implementation with the corresponding evaluation (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Since action research is placed in natural settings and using methods of qualitative research (Burns, 1999), the natural setting used to apply this proposal was the school SBLM. After having observed, analyzed and made decisions to design a proposal which could help students from this school develop critical reading, the pedagogical intervention and the research results were supported by the process of theorizing and supporting researcher's ideas with alternative ideas and theories.

Action Research then has approaches essentially participatory in that they are conducted by and with members of the actual community under study (Burns, 1999). Special characteristics from the AR are: reflective practice to produce professional growth

and development, presented for classroom teachers, the possibility to triangulated -process in which data gathered from different sources-, so that the findings or insights can be tested or compared against each other (Burns, 1999).

Additionally, AR is defined as “the application of a systematic process of investigating practical issues or concerns which arise within a particular social context” (Burns, 1999, p. 27). Therefore, this reading blog study looks for -by following some moments-, insights or features that show how useful and accurate the implementation of the reading blog has resulted in helping participant to discover their language problem or their reading needs. In this sense, Burns (1999) claims that:

Action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential moments: planning, action, observation and reflection. These moments are the fundamental steps in a spiraling process through which participants in AR group undertake to follow these actions:

- Develop a plan of critically inform action to improve what is already happening,
- Act to implement the plan,
- Observe the effects of the critically informed action in the context in which it occurs, and
- Reflect on these effects as the basis of further planning, subsequent critically informed action and so on, through a succession of stages (p.32).

Under this perspective, this research study was entitled as Action Research because it had a designed plan to help students improve their reading skills in the EFL by presenting

a new way to see reading in EFL, a new way to react to their reading by presenting expected personal reflections based on the critical reading process the selected participants might have. This plan was implemented during a certain time established to observe, infer and lately analyze the gathered data to finally produce the findings and implications. With the mentioned aim this study sought– through the use of a technique and three instruments to collect data– analyze, reflect and evaluate the whole process to determine whether there was a prevalent change in the language reading process presented in the community under study.

### **Research Setting**

The described stages presented above were the basic framework considered in the implementation of this research project. It set the everyday actions taken by the researcher with the participants involved in this implementation. Below there is described in detail the context and the setting in which the study took place.

### **Context**

The setting where the pedagogical intervention of this study took place was San Bartolomé La Merced Catholic School, in Bogotá, Colombia. This school follows an educational philosophy based on Saint Ignacio de Loyola's ideas. This means, to educate students in their eight human dimensions (ethic, cognitive, communicative, corporal, spiritual, affective, esthetic and socio-political dimensions) in order to have holistic educated human beings, willing to help their surrounding community. The teaching practices in this school are followed by the Personalized Education that takes into account the person as a particular and unique human being. For this reason, during their school life,

students have the opportunity of enriching and building their values, creativity, socialization and transcendence, while articulating the excellence in the academic area in a whole.

Additionally, the PEI (Institutional Educational Project) is based on the Constructivism approach, which means they can use their previous knowledge to build up their new understanding. This academic approach, joined with the personalized education, is the philosophy to follow in the teaching of each subject. Hence in the English area, using these principles, values, philosophy from school, as well as being incorporated under the umbrella of the communicative approach and task-based instruction, teachers design four different worksheets during the school year to attend students' needs, school principles, curriculum and school philosophy. Each term, teachers present the worksheet as a thematic unit. This topic is reinforced with the supplement of the Internet, (used to download readings, lessons and present grammar tutorials) and a graded reading program. This Teaching of English follows the principles of the Communicative Approach and works under the Common European Framework standards. Students take six hours of English in a week from sixth to ninth grade, and five hours in a week, in tenth and eleventh grades. In addition, other curriculum subjects are given through the medium of English, including Science, Computers and technology and mathematics, this last subject given from first grade to fifth grade. As a result, eleventh grade students take the International English Language Testing System, IELTS.

## **Participants**

Participants in this pedagogical intervention within this study were fifteen graders between twelve and thirteen years old. Though, 20 participants consented to take part in the study, only 15 completed all the reading sessions from the intervention. Most of them have been studying in the school since kindergarten, attending 6 hours of English classes per week. Some have taken immersion courses in Canada during their fifth grade and have had the chance to use the English language in a natural context due to their trips during their vacation to English speaking countries.

At present, these student-participants are taking three subjects in English. These are Science, Systems, Mathematics (in elementary) and English. In this last subject they take six hours per week and a series of activities focused on encouraging and assessing communication in the four language skills, vocabulary and grammar. Students' interests are focused on the use of technology, sports, T.V., friends and music. Some of their preferred activities carried out in the free time are the use of social networks, online games and playing soccer. Students' cognitive needs are in relation to reading inferences and deductions. They need to start interpreting the read texts to evaluate them and give points of view and judgments based on what they read and not only to recall information from it or identify ideas, main ideas or supporting details. They also need to identify the non literal meaning EFL texts have and which can convey different meaning from the literal meaning presented, value the text according to the kind of language used, and the intention of the writer, summarize a text not by recalling what it says, but by restating it with own words and sensitizing it by stating the core of the reading. Among students' affective needs, there

is a very positive engagement on learning through games, songs and technology, and a rather negative attitude towards extensive reading sessions or reading in general.

To have a better framework of these participants' reading process a characterization instrument was applied to collect information about their perceptions, opinions and interests in the reading skill (see Appendix 1). As a result, this instrument showed that in terms of language preferences most of them like to read fairy tales, stories and texts which teach something. A few students (three from the 17 students) expressed a dislike to reading through the computer arguing that they get tired. The majority liked to read in English because they liked the activity of reading to understand and learn new vocabulary while practicing the reading language. They said: *"I like to read because I can learn more vocabulary and improve English"*; *"I like to read in the reading room"*. Additionally, the few students who mentioned not to like the reading activity supported their answer with the lack of enough vocabulary therefore the misunderstanding of the readings and the boring viewpoint. *"I don't like it because is boring"*, *"I don't like it because I don't understand many words"* Almost all of them know what a blog is but do not know how to use it properly.

### **Researcher's Role**

This research study had two kinds of participants. One was the group of 15 seventh graders described above and the other was the researcher (unique teacher –researcher) who took the role of participant, teacher researcher and observer (Burns, 2010). As a teacher researcher, there was an interest sprung from finding new issues intended to help participants change reading comprehension processes and develop useful material designed

for the EFL teaching. As a participant, the role was focused on guiding the process of implementing and applying the reading blog in this study. The researcher in this study was also a careful observer during the implementation process, and a tutor teacher when providing guidance to the instruction of reading blogging to raise these students' English level.

Accordingly, Cohen et al., (2007) present four roles of the researcher: “stranger, visitor, insider and initiator” (p.308). The first two maintain the outside role, while the latter two attempt to reach into the school from an insider perspective. According to these roles, the insider and initiator roles were taken in this study, since the researcher was with the target population, providing the tools, and activities in order that the target population started taking the challenge, and at the same time observing the phenomena with deeper objectivism, to avoid sensitive issues in the described observations (Cohen et al., 2007). As an observer participant the researcher had to deal with the ethical and moral considerations of the research and took steps to present resolutions. Finally, following considerations stated by Cohen et al., (2007), just three researcher's roles were taken to avoid anxiety and stress due to the psychological and emotional charge this action may produce. Finally, the researcher assumed the criterion of reflexivity, central in action research, to be self-aware about the effects that participants-as-practitioners and the teacher as researcher had on the research process. This meant the researcher raised awareness of how one's own values, attitudes, perceptions, opinions, actions, feelings etc., feed into the situation studied (Cohen et al., 2007).

## **Instruments**

For the purpose of this study, data was collected by using three specific data collection instruments: two from the students' point of view and one from the teacher-researcher point of view. In addition, the students' artifacts – from the comments based on critical questions about the reading in the blog- were considered a valuable source of information in this study. These instruments are described below in detail.

### **Students' Questionnaires**

Students' questionnaires are useful instruments for collecting survey information, providing structured and numerical data. They are considered personal subjective documents (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Two questionnaires were used in this study. To design the first questionnaire the open-ended items category cited by Burns (1999) was followed. The first one intended to do a characterization of the students in relation to their language reading needs, their reading interests and explore personal perceptions about reading in EFL to personalize the information that later was presented in the implementation. In the second questionnaire questions were focused on identifying whether the participants used five of the seven strategies (Previewing, contextualization, reflecting on challenges beliefs and values, evaluating arguments and comparing and contrasting readings) presented by Kurland (2000) and Pardede (2007), to promote critical reading. The five strategies were evaluated in this questionnaire by asking some specific questions to gather this information.

Furthermore, there was a combination of open-ended questions with closed questions to obtain detailed and exact information so that extra information can be avoided.

The language level of practitioners, the brevity and clarity of the questions and the extent of students' knowledge required to answer the questions were taken into consideration (Burns, 1999, p. 129) (Appendices 1 and 2). Altogether, questionnaires in this study constituted the instrument to gather primary data about participants' profile and data about the impact blogging had in critical reading processes.

### **Teacher Journal Log**

The use of journals in this study had the purpose of giving an account of the researcher-observer process in the implementation stage. This instrument was the support to take all reflections, interpretations and appeared thoughts during the observation of the intervention of the reading blog Burns (1999). Moreover, since this kind of instrument aimed to record events that happened rather than presenting opinions or beliefs from the implementation process, they had to be highly structured to present precise and specific selected data at a certain time, Moon (2010). This Teacher's journal log was planned with 9 questions aimed to answer the reactions students had in the blog and the perceived actions and attitudes these participants had when presented with the pre-reading activity and when accessing the blog and working with it –during the two sessions worked in the computers room from the school-. In conclusion, this instrument collected data from the researcher's point of view regarding the detailed actions and relevant information taken by the students in each one of the 20 sessions. This data was a relevant source of information for the triangulation process of data analysis to find outcomes about the use of a blogging tool to develop critical reading in the target population. (Appendix 3)

### **Learning Logs**

Learning logs are documents of high value for the learner. Considered a personal document, Students' learning logs were of a significant importance in this study because they presented feelings and reflections about these learners' process. This was insightful data from the students' interactions with the designed tool to be fostered (Moon, 2010). In addition, this being a student-generated data, this tool helped to trace feelings and emotions, difficulties, and perceptions presented in the pedagogical implementation (Hendricks, 2006, p. 75). By using this instrument it was aimed to have students think about their own learning process and have them think about the steps they were taking towards the main objectives set in the study, and their perceptions and feelings towards the technological tool used to present the reading technique. This instrument gathered data from the participants during their appropriation of the strategy. There were two learning blogs in this study (Appendix 4).

### **Students' Artifacts**

Since artifacts were the practitioners' main and own product in each one of the reading sessions in this study, these were highly considered in the process of data analysis to validate and triangulate with the other instruments in this study. These artifacts were considered as essential evidence of the students' critical reading progress, they were very useful to shed some light on the participants' critical reading process, their improvements and a proof to confirm and decline data from the other three instruments.

All the six readings presented the comments session where students answered the critical questions about the reading. The comments section had six critical questions where

students had to give accounts of the features and strategies used to read critically. They were asked to give accounts of the reading, expressing what the reading said, did and meant to them. (Appendix 5A)

### **Validation of Instruments**

The design of these three instruments (student's questionnaire, Teacher journal and Learning log) and the practitioners' artifacts for data collection had the intention to present accounts and solid results from four different sources. In this way validated and reliable outcomes were obtained in order to accomplish the objectives of this study to be used by other teachers in their classes or further researchers (Burns, 1999). Thus, each instrument was prepared to have a specific function in the research so that information could be triangulated ("process of comparing different kinds of data (e.g. quantitative and qualitative) and different methods (e.g. observation and interviews) to see whether they corroborate one another" (Anne Burns, 1999 p.163)), to present confidence and trustworthiness in the study (Cohen et al., 2007).

To validate instruments, these were piloted with some students and colleagues from SBLM school to see how effective the questions and information were and if they met the intention they had to answer the research question and sub questions of this study. Additionally, they were reviewed and piloted by colleagues and the research instructor from the University where the researcher was enrolled in the Master's program. The questionnaire and the learning log presented students' perceptions, opinions and knowledge about the use of blogs and critical reading strategies. In addition, the learning log stated the extent of information gathered from the reading blog and the extent of critical reading

participants could obtain from the reading and attitudes they had towards the technological tool. Finally, the teacher's journal had the researcher's point of view about the implementation of the study, and the sources to gather reflections from an external point of view. Since this instrument was filled each two (2) blog reading sessions, this gathered observations, reflections and insights about the use of this tool and the development of critical reading of these participants through the use of the blog.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Three consent letters were sent to the practitioners were addressed in this research study. These ensured that the research project was publicly known, that the confidentiality of student's would be guaranteed, as well as creating an opportunity to put in practice a pedagogical intervention which might benefit participants directly. These letters were for the school sponsors, for the participants but regarding the fact that they are not adults and are under the supervision of their parents, it was mandatory to present a consent letter to the participants' parents (Appendices 6, 7, 8). In this way this study obtained the permission and support from all the members who took part in this research study directly or indirectly. Hence, data could be freely collected because participants knew the study and were freely prepared to participate in it. This study addressed all the ethical considerations stated by Burns to set the rigor this Action Research must have (1999). These included the three key principles in the ethical conduct of action research; namely, responsibility, confidentiality and negotiation (Burns, 1999). Students' names were not made public, and they were assigned an initial letter name and a number in the analysis of data and the pedagogical intervention of this study to maintain their anonymity. To ensure the implementation of the



, monitoring and Analysis of data collected.										
Step 8 Reflection and decision making										
Stop 9 Sharing findings										

In order to follow a schedule and set a plan to carry out this project, an action plan is presented above which guided the Action Research project. This chart shows the time and the action research steps followed in order to conduct this study.

The chart shows the nine steps required in this study to conduct this project. Given that this Action Research project started last year, 2010. In the Initiation steps, deep observation and constant reflection in the practices were taken to try to find questions which could lead to the finding of the researchable question. The preparation of an instrument which could be useful to characterize students and their language problem was created in this step too. This chart shows the starting point of the study in February 2011, with the finding of the problem and the planning of the need-analysis instrument. Three months were required to refine research questions, check bibliography and design an action which could provide the mean of carrying out this study. During these three months and part of the fourth month actions were given to enrich the study with the literature reviewed and the design of the instruments which allowed the researcher to gather the appropriate data needed to characterized the participants and start building the action plan to conduct this study. From April to June, literature was enriched; instruments were selected, designed, piloted and revised in order to prove their effectiveness in the research study and in the

design of the action plan. During September, October and part of November (2011), decisions were made to start the action plan setting up the blogging tool intended to help students develop critical reading, and implementing it with the target population. In this stage literature was reviewed to adjust and justify questions in the blog and strategies to foster critical reading. This literature is presented below.

In order to help participants challenge the views of the writers by creating their own assumptions and opinions about the stories (Mellor, O'Neil, and Patterson, 1987; and Hedge, 2000), and in order to help them avoid falling into the vulnerability of accepting writer's points of view or being positioned by the language in the text due to the insufficient experience, strategic questions were set in the blog to help students resist reading Hedge (2000). These modified questions were intended to help students reflect on the readings and go deeper in their analysis.

How do the ways in which stories are read change over time? Can it become impossible for readers to read some texts in the way the stories ask? Is it relevant for a reader to question how and why a story asks to be read in a particular way? Do certain kinds of readings support particular beliefs or assumptions? (O'Neil & Patterson, 1987, p. 64).

Aspects mentioned above are of relevance as they present theoretical support to this study to illustrate and formulate questions to the participants so that they are be able to analyze the stories, narrations or non-chronological texts and present their own points of view, judgments and assumptions of what they have previously read and understood.

Critical questions, mentioned and supported above, were set in the comments icon in the blog and used in the pre-reading and after-reading phases of the texts in the blog.

In addition to these questions, it was necessary to find out a tool which can help the researcher to know the extent of criticism these participants were developing or had when doing the proposed readings. To do so literature form Kurland (2000) offered seven strategies to help students become critical readers. Furthermore, Pardede (2007) reported four specific techniques, used in his study, conducted with students from Indonesia University, to promote critical reading. Both, Pardede's and Kurland's strategies and techniques are compared below to obtain enriched strategies. These strategies were highly considered as tools used to measure the critical reading of students in this study. Thus, if students followed one or more of these strategies, then they were to be developing critical reading processes in their EFL reading blogging.

1. **Previewing:** to get a sense of what the text is about and how it is organized before reading it closely. This strategy includes seeing what you can learn from the head notes or pictures, skimming to get an overview of the content. Pardede (2007) suggests the use of interpreting connotation of words while reading. Readers should think about the connotations of words used in the text and examine why they are written.
2. **Contextualizing:** Placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts. When you read a text, you read it through the lens of your own experience. Your understanding of the words on the page and their significance is informed by what you have come to know and value from living in a particular time and place, but when the texts to read are all written in the past, sometimes in a radically different time and place,

the critical reader needs to contextualize, to recognize the differences between his/her contemporary values and attitudes and those represented in the text.

3. Questioning to understand and remember: Asking questions about the content often works to understand it better. Questions are designed to help the reader understand a reading and respond to it more fully. When you need to understand and use new information, it is most beneficial if you ask yourself questions about the reading as you read the text for the first time and then write them. Each question should focus on a main idea, not on illustrations or details, and each question should be expressed in one's own words, not just copied from parts of the paragraph. Pardede (2007) suggests that readers need to develop the ability to distinguish facts from opinions since it helps readers decide whether an author's opinion is justified or not. An opinion is justified if the author has a number of convincing facts to support a personal belief.
4. Reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values: Examining personal responses. The reading might challenge attitudes, unconsciously held beliefs, or positions on current issues. Here Pardede (2007) claims that students need to get familiar with three common fallacious: Overgeneralization, false analogy and assumptions which can influence readers when valuing the text.
5. Outlining and summarizing: Identifying the main ideas and restating them in own words. This strategy is especially helpful for understanding the content and structure of a reading selection. Whereas outlining reveals the basic structure of the text, summarizing synthesizes a selection's main argument in brief. The key to both outlining and summarizing is being able to distinguish between the main ideas and the supporting ideas and examples.

Summarizing begins with outlining, but instead of merely listing the main ideas, a summary recomposes them to form a new text. Whereas outlining depends on a close analysis of each paragraph, summarizing also requires creative synthesis. Putting ideas together again -- in your own words and in a condensed form -- shows how reading critically can lead to deeper understanding of any text.

6. Evaluating an argument: Testing the logic of a text as well as its credibility and emotional impact. All writers make assertions to make the reader accept as true. As a critical reader, you should not accept anything on face value but to recognize every assertion as an argument that must be carefully evaluated. An argument has two essential parts: a claim and the support. The claim asserts a conclusion -- an idea, an opinion, a judgment, or a point of view -- that the writer wants you to accept. The support includes reasons (shared beliefs, assumptions, and values) and evidence (facts, examples, statistics, and authorities) that give readers the basis for accepting the conclusion. Pardede (2007), suggests that readers should discover the author's point of view so that it can be detected the writer's purpose of bias and understand the reason why cultural aspects are influenced or not.
7. Comparing and contrasting related readings: Exploring similarities and differences between texts to understand them better. Many of the authors we read are concerned with the same issues or questions, but readers approach how to discuss them in different ways. Fitting a text into an ongoing dialectic helps increase understanding why an author approached a particular issue or question in the way he or she did.

After the blog was set with six selected readings with the strategic questions, the strategies to determine the level of critical reading from the participants were determined it

was preceded with the scheduling of 20 session classes to apply the selected readings. These intended to help participants comprehend readings, and see whether students' develop critical reading by using the reading blog with the critical reading questions, in the pre-reading, and the comments blog section, after the reading comprehension activities. During the collecting of data, processes of analyzing data were given to avoid losing or forgetting information relevant for the study (Burns, 1999). During October through February the collected data was analyzed and the researcher made reflections upon the results shown in the triangulation of the data. Then, from the end of February, March, April, and June (2012) last steps were followed in the study: refining of the chapters, including conclusions, pedagogical implications, further research and the sharing of the findings.

## Chapter 4

### Pedagogical Intervention

This chapter presents the process carried out to gather the data needed to achieve objectives of promoting students critical reading by using reading blogs intended to foster critical reading. The use of reading lesson plans with their pre, while and after-reading phases, which were hoped to be enhanced by the adopted reading-blog methodology. The methodology included the teaching principles, the criteria, the material, the timetable selected and applied, and the samples of the lesson plans.

#### Instructional goals

The main aim this stage of the project was to provide students with a strategic web 2.0 tool which helped participants increase their critical reading in EFL context through the use of some readings with strategic questions. It was hoped that with this reading-web 2.0 tool, participants were able to show critical reading features to give accounts of the reading and letting know what does the readings produce on them.

To identify the problem in this group of participants the researcher used the results from an International mock exam applied to these participants in the school. Results showed the low averages in reading comprehension seventh grader in general, presented in the reading section. More than the 50% of the students obtained below 3.9 in the reading section, being this the communicative skill with lower average. In addition to this aspect, the students' rejection to have teachers selected readings from old books in the classroom were strong aspects considered to adopt the use of technology in this study. Finally the use of an instrument to characterize participants in this study was the supported reason for the

researcher to conduct this study. Results from the characterization instrument showed a great acceptance of technological devices in the learning process and the positive inclination these students have to the Internet and the computers. The table below presents some of their answers.

(Table N.2, Results from the characterization questionnaire)

# QUESTION	# STUDENTS	ANSWERS
3. Do you find interesting and motivating to read from a reading blog in the Internet?	16 of 20	Yes, "different way to read and learn vocabulary" (10 students) Yes, "I like Internet, it is motivating" (3 students) Yes, "I can learn more verbs" (1 student)
6. Do you like reading in English?	14 of 20	"No, because is boring" (8 students) "It is difficult to understand" (4 students) "I don't like it" (1 student) "I can't understand all the vocabulary" (1 student)
8. Would you like to do readings through the computer and using Internet?	17 of 20	Yes, "it is a different way to read and learn" (12 students). Yes, "I like the Internet" (5 students)

The above results and the researcher perceptions and concerns on reading processes in EFL were the main reasons to think about the research question in this study. Once the problem was identified, it was imperative to find out a pedagogical tool which, implemented, could help these participants obtain better results in their exams, change the view in which reading is seen by them and raise their motivation towards reading. As a result, the use of a blog fed with a number of selected readings, was the technological tool chosen to be implemented in this study. Below there is described the work carried out with the participants during the pedagogical intervention.

Under this perspective, the implementation of the reading blog lasted around twenty four hours with three-hour and a half reading sessions each one of these readings mainly sought:

- ✓ To promote reading through blogging.
- ✓ To promote the use of blogging to develop critical reading.
- ✓ To present readings related to participant' interests following the pre- while and after reading format to enhance better interaction with the reading (Lopera, 2008)
- ✓ To provide students with new views to see blogs as a tool to learn English.

After having decided on the Instructional tool, the goals and the design of the blog to be implemented with these participants, it was necessary to establish the methodology in this implementation. The next section describes the Method and the procedures to deed the blog.

### **Instructional Method**

Reading is understood to be a construction of meaning from a printed or written message (Lopera, 2008). The reader is the one who gives meaning to the written words, expressing what it does and makes on the reader and letting the message be accepted or rejected. Therefore the methodology carried out to foster this critical meaning construction throughout the use of blogs was developed as follows.

In EFL contexts, the construction of meaning has to be guided by the teacher who should follow some specific activities to develop reading in EFL (Lopera, 2008). This can

be achieved through the use of pre-reading, while reading and after-reading activities which make students see the reading like an active process and not just as a passive activity where grammar and language are reinforced (Harmer, 1999). In the active reading process students apply simple required reading skills (skim and scan) to make predictions based on the titles and images. Besides, contrast and reflect upon the possible values or insights the reading might have with their own lives and then summarize it.

Following Harmer's principles about the teaching of reading: Reading not for a passive skill namely, reading for the engagement with what students are reading, the encouragement to respond about the reading not only about the language, the activation of prediction in the reading, the matching of the task to the topic and "the exploitation of the full text in the reading" (page 70); a series of six lesson plans were organized with activities which aimed the use of the strategies to foster critical reading stated by Kurland (2000) and Pardede (2007), and following the format (pre-while and after reading) supported by Lopera (2008). By using this Instructional tool, students are expected to develop their inner capacities to interact with the text following steps presented by the authors.

The material used to feed the blog and carry out within this implementation was mainly characterized by the use of the computer, the Internet and the access to some specific sites set in the blog. The readings were gradually implemented in the blog and finally there were six different sites. In addition, the blog presented three different gadgets - pieces of reusable code which can be plugged into the virtual blog- with two monolingual dictionaries and a word-of-wisdom gadget. These gadgets had the intention of helping students with unknown vocabulary and as a way of reading for pleasure. The blog was

nourished with the six different readings sites. These readings were mainly stories and non-chronological reports; they can be seen at <http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/>

Figure 1. Screenshot of the Instructional blog “Read, Reflect and Speak Up”

The screenshot shows a Blogger blog post on a blue background. At the top, the title "Read, Reflect and Speak up!" is written in a white, stylized font. Below it, a short paragraph reads: "Reading this blog you will find out not only pleasure with the readings but also a deep feeling of reflection which will evoke self-awareness to express your most remarkable feelings!". The post date is "Wednesday, September 14, 2011". The main title of the post is "The Broken Mirror, The Black Cat, and Lots of Good Luck". The author greets "Bartolinos from 7A!". The text of the post discusses superstitions and asks readers to share their own. There are two illustrations: one of a boy and a black cat, and another of a man falling over a sign that says "FRI 13". At the bottom, there is a URL, publication information, and reaction buttons for "funny", "interesting", and "cool".

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

## The Broken Mirror, The Black Cat, and Lots of Good Luck

*Hello, Bartolinos from 7A!*

I am really glad to read you have enjoyed "A Serious Case reading". I am really glad to observe your bright comments about the reading.

This reading session deals with *Superstitious*. **Are you a Superstitious person?** Do you really know what a superstition is? What superstitions do you know from other countries?

...more in this reading.





*Be very welcome to this blogging reading session!*

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/broken-mirror-black-cat-and-lots-good-luck>

Publicado por Elizabeth Cuellar G. en 5:34:00 PM 17 comentarios

Reacciones:  funny (0)  interesting (0)  cool (0)

This blog was created with [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com), free website designed to create blogs and which was well examined and approved by using the criteria to evaluate online sites from Berkeley Library' site *from* the University of California (2010).

### **Instructional Lesson plan**

The lesson plan was a sample format of the readings set in the blog (see Appendix 9). All the lessons followed the ICALT (In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching) criteria to offer credibility and guarantee a formal process in this study. The first, fourth and the last reading (sixth) sessions were done in the school in a F2F environment, and the others were set as personal work to be done at home. Additionally, all the pre-reading stages of the reading were done F2F, to promote motivation to read the stories and as a way to present the critical reading questions suggested by Clark (1997) and Hedge (2000), mentioned in Chapter 2. The readings did not have a summative assessment, but students received feedback and the comments posted on the blog by other participants. Taras (2005) describes this action as formative assessment. The majority of the readings were taken from the British council webpage in its Learn English, listen and watch stories & poems section, at <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case> (See Appendix 9).

A description of the first lesson plan is presented in the following paragraphs. In the first lesson participants were introduced to the reading blog, the sections it had and the links to get access to the first reading. After the participants had seen how to use the blog (used of post and replays for the posts, saw the blog sections), they were introduced to the pre-reading stage of the reading. The teacher used some of the strategic questions (Hedge, 2000 and Clark, 1993) designed to this stage. Students worked in pairs answering these questions the teacher was giving to them “By watching the images and the title what do you think is the reading about? Why are you going to read it? What is your personal purpose with the reading? What does the author want to tell you? Do you have phobias? How would

you cure them? The following activity was to introduce the new vocabulary for them from the reading. Participants did a matching game activity where they had to join meaning with the word or picture from the lists.

After this stage was completed, participants read the story (some read and listen), and did the after reading activity which was intended give accounts of what the reading says. After this stage was accomplished, students were conducted to the reading blog to leave comments from the reading through the post reading questions set in the blog. They were “What did you read today? Did you like the reading? Why? Do have phobias like this? Would you take the same therapy the character took? What did you learn about life with this reading? Do you think animals deserve to live with humans? These post reading questions were intended to identify degrees of contextualization, understanding of the reading and summarizing ability the participant may present with the reading and the personal reflections, believes and evaluations they might take from the reading.

The subsequent reading lessons had the same stages with the difference that after-reading questions were modified according to the reading and the during-reading and the after-reading stages were assigned at home as personal work to be done during the weekend. Pre-reading and after-reading questions were modified in each one of the readings according to the reading content and the critical reading strategies intended to analyze.

### **Timetable**

The timetable prepared for this Implementation was adapted from the model presented by Byram (1992). Three hours and a half was allowed for each one of the virtual lessons applied. The implementation lasted twenty-four hours approximately and three

additional hours were required to explain and let students work with the web 2.0 tool. Reading sessions one and six (first and last) lasted four hours and were done F2F, due to the time participants required to manage comments in the blog and complete the students' log. All reading sessions had one-hour F2F for the pre-reading activity. They started on Friday with the pre-reading activity and closed on Sunday 10:00 p.m. with the comments section on the blog. (See Appendix 10)

In the third and fourth reading sessions participants worked from September 8<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>, and in the fifth and sixth they worked during October 2011. In sessions one three and six the teacher's log and the students' learning log were completed (see Appendix 10).

### **Evaluation**

To evaluate this tool and its effect on students' development of their critical reading, the students' logs and the Teacher's logs were used with the objective observation on the process. The questions in the students' log aimed to determine steps and strategies used by the readers' participants to understand it and perceptions from the reading blog tool. In this sense, question 1 aimed to see if participants were able to summarize or outline and evaluate arguments and beliefs. Questions 2, 4 and 5 aimed to see whether the participants were able to contextualize, reflect on values and beliefs and evaluate arguments. Questions three and six aimed to see whether they were able to use one of the seven critical reading strategies (pre-viewing, contextualizing, questioning to understand, reflecting on challenges, outlining and summarizing, evaluating arguments and comparing and contrasting). Questions 5 and 7 aimed to see students' perception on the use of the reading

tool. The analysis of this instrument showed valuable information on the reading critical reading steps these students were acquiring during the implementation of the six readings. These instruments presented highly informative insights to the study. Furthermore, the use of the after reading activities and questions specially, presented valuable information about the understanding of the reading on one hand, and the presentation of own perceptions, beliefs and reflections from these readings therefore, show the application of the critical reading strategies in each one of the six readings offered on the other hand. In addition, answers from the students' artifacts were valuable sources of primary information about participants' reading understanding and primary source of reflections and evaluations of the reading done.

In conclusion, all the activities planned for this research study were carefully planned to help students foster their critical reading skills and improve their reading process. Activities were planned, controlled, guided to free practice and encourage to be evaluated and commented by the participants so that they were able to raise awareness of other ideas learn from others (Harmer, 1999).

## Chapter 5

### Data analysis and findings

This chapter presents the data analysis. Systematic procedures and techniques were used to transform raw data into a more coherent and meaningful information, “a coherent and explanatory story” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.47) that promotes understanding and increases professional knowledge to answer the research question. Moreover, the chapter aims to depict the story that is lying inside the data gathered and discover the form and implications that reading blogging may have in terms of critical reading.

#### Data Analysis Approach

The approach taken to conduct this analysis is a qualitative approach based on the grounded theory principles. Corbin and Strauss (1990) define the grounded approach as “a qualitative research *method* that uses *a systematic* set of *procedures* to *develop* an inductively derived grounded *theory* about a *phenomenon*” (p. 21). Glaser and Strauss (1990) define it as “the constant comparative method of analysis based on coding process by means of conceptualizing and categorizing data” (p. 62). Since this study aims to find any relevant issue that demonstrates the effectiveness of blogging to develop critical reading, the raw data gathered from all the instruments was compared and validated by using the triangulation process (Burns, 1999), and examined by using some of the analytic tools (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), commonly used in educational research and used to carry out open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

### **Data Management**

During this study the use of a designed and piloted blog was the first source of data. This blog, which was filled with readings from the British Council page (see Appendix 5B) had a set of six critical reading questions and general comprehension reading questions, suggested by Clark (1993) in the literature review. These questions were set in the comments section of the reading blog so that participants might answer them as part of the post-reading activity. These questions were focused on extracting information about students' analysis, evaluations, perceptions and judgments from the reading passage on the one hand and on the other to help participants raise their awareness about the impact readings might have in their lives. After finishing the third and the sixth reading session, which were developed in the school's computer room, participants were required to fill in the second source of data: the Learning Log which aimed to find data which helped to answer the research question. Furthermore, the teacher-researcher filled in the teachers' log, the third source of data. The two teacher's logs aimed to collect data to be analyzed and contrasted with the two other sources and view the information from different perspectives, Burns (1999). To finish the data collection, at the end of the sixth session, students filled in the last student's questionnaire, aimed to support information found, which also provide validation and trustworthiness to the study. Each time data was gathered, this was organized in charts and MS (Microsoft Word). The name of students was changed with a number and an initial of the name to maintain participants' anonymity.

Table N.3. Chart on method of data analysis

<b>Data collection Instrument</b>	<b>Nature of data</b>	<b>Analysis method</b>
Students' logs	Qualitative	Categorizing
Teacher's logs	Qualitative	Categorizing

Students artifacts	Quantitative/ Qualitative	Descriptive and Inferential statistics/ categorizing
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### Data Reduction

To start the process of data reduction it was felt mandatory to follow the theory by (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The open coding technique was applied to organize and identify and colored common, repeated and important data presented in the instruments. Here it was necessary to go over the information several times to identify those special patterns which caught the researcher’s attention and used MSWord to highlight and underline the important and repeated information. First of all, and as a process of organizing the data and extracting it from each one of the instruments, the data from the instruments (questionnaire, the students’ log, the artifacts and the teacher’s log) was typed in MSWord documents. This data was organized according to the research question, following the four steps to organize data suggested by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007; p, 468). A screenshot of the students’ log is presented below to show how this process was carried out.

Figure N. 2. Screenshot of the students’ log data management

Why?	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
S1 MP	A girls that had arachnophobia, it was a serious case (main idea reading)	Opinion I don't have phobias but parents yes	Opinion Lots of people have and if better not to have it	Relating with her life If i have one i would definitely do that	Opinion I like the reading because it was interesting reading/cool	Opinion Si, Help people in a particular way	Ch a a a	Judgment Good/not all are helpful
S2 JPC	Opinion Interesante historia de una fobia	Judgment No es muy parecido [g] yo no tengo fobias	Opinion No depender de esta porque nos puede causar problemas	Opinion Dejar la fobia atrás para seguir adelante	Opinion Me gustó como lograron solucionar las cosas	Opinion Si, uno puede aprender varias cosas		Judgment Good. No todo en los blogs es bueno pero de todo se aprende
S3 NP	Opinion Something	Relate with experience	Sintetize We need to	Opinion Nothing	Expressing likes It is Not bored	Opinion Yes. All persons have		Judgment Very good. like this!

The researcher question then was placed at the top of the page, key words from the research question were underlined and bolded, to know which specific data should be sought. Subsequently, below the research question, the seventh questions from the students' log were placed. A chart was made with the seven questions from the log placed horizontally and the number of students placed vertically (see Appendix 12). In front of the number of each student, units of analysis were identify and coded for meanings. At that moment there were plenty of repeated words, patterns and ideas from each one of the instruments. These were highlighted and labeled as the main ideas expressed by them. Furthermore, those repeated patterns were part of the conceptual world used to categorize them. Thus, the appeared codes which resulted from the constant comparison were then analyzed to seek for connections to integrate the identified patterns with new axes of main categories. Moreover, in addition to the open coding this data had to be analyzed, techniques suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008) of "asking questions, making comparisons and thinking about the various meaning of a word" (p.69) were used to code the data and thus develop concepts which lead to establish categories and subcategories for the data. These techniques were useful at the moment of generating the ideas and getting deeper into de data.

### **Data display and verification**

In order to identify the core category, main categories retrieved from the process of open coding and axial coding were read and analyzed several times to find possible relationships among them. Finally, this process of data analysis and comparison was completed in order to corroborate with one another, and, thus validate findings. The core category emerged with the answer of this research question. All this process is described below.

With the above analysis techniques decided, first students' artifacts, questionnaires and logs were compared and contrasted with the last ones. The new and MSWord document was created with changes, comments and new ideas presented on them. Short-summarized words were assigned to the contrasted data and it was assigned a color. Then the use of the coded data from the Teacher's log was compared and contrasted among them. The obtained patterns were contrasted and compared with the data found from the participant's points of view. Some ideas and words were used to group concepts emerged from this instruments. As mentioned before, this process of triangulation was used to corroborate data therefore validate the process of the data selection and analysis (Burns, 1999).

The subcategories emerged from the clustering and deducing processes applied to the repeated expressions and words used by the participants and teacher in their answers. The idea was to find out the strategies used by the participants to give accounts of what the reading says and does on them (Kurland, 2000). Patterns and words used to label the common responses from the participants were extracted from the seven strategies proposed in this study to foster critical reading (Kurland, 2000 and Pardede, 2007). In doing this selecting process, there appear some responses which did not fit into any of the categories. There was also one strategy which did not have patterns or common words to give accounts of it. These statements and irregularities were put into a miscellaneous category (Burns, 2010) to be used latter in the further research chapter of this study.

Two main categories were elaborated on top of the subcategories appeared. They emerged after the sub-categories were established in order to continue the reduction of data into more concrete concepts. These new concepts helped the researcher to make

connections with the research questions and the data reduced in that point. Two main categories emerged in this study:

Table 4. Chart with research question, main categories and core categories

Research question	Subcategories	Main Categories	Main Category
To what extent can blogging help seventh grade students from SBLM develop critical reading in EFL?	1. Use of pre-viewing (skimming, scanning and Re-reading) 2. Outlining of main and secondary ideas. 3. Judgment of characters and readings holding positions against or in favor.	Reading understanding and Critical reading presented	The use of blogs as a web 2.0 tool to promote reading comprehension, fosters critical reading and motivates students to do readings in EFL
	1. Positive opinion on the use of blogs to engage reading, and learn new vocabulary	Blogs as a positive and useful tool to read and boost critical reading	

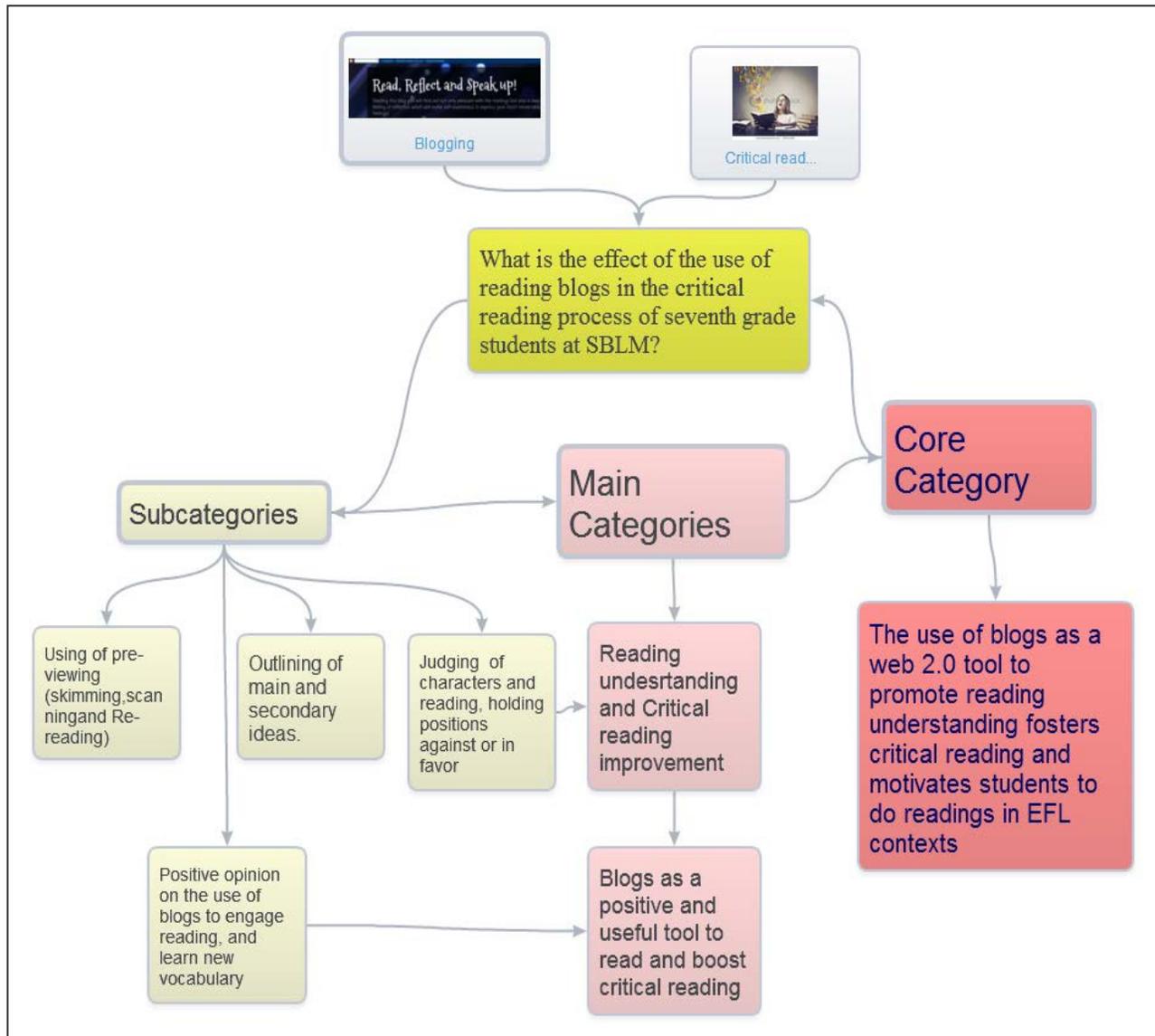
The two categories emerged were: 1. *Reading understanding and critical reading presented*, and 2. *Blogs as positive and useful tool to read and develop critical reading*. Since these two emergent categories appeared to have interrelationship between them, this conducted to obtain one big category which embraced the main categories and subcategories. This was: “The use of blogs as a web 2.0 tool to promote reading understanding fosters critical reading and motivates students to do readings in EFL contexts”.

**Core Category**

The central part of this study was to find the answer to the research question: To what extent can blogging help seventh grade students from SBLM develop critical reading in

EFL? The result of this data analysis and the triangulation of each instrument with the corresponding verification and constant comparison to reach the point of “saturation”, (“reached when no new insights, codes or categories are produced even when new data are added” (Cohen, et al., 2007, p 494) found as a core category that: The use of blogs as a web 2.0 tool to promote reading comprehension, fosters critical reading and motivates students to do readings in EFL contexts. The reading comprehension appeared from the readings in the blog -as a basis to answer the post-reading questions-, was of value to the students and to the teacher because this let the students *learn vocabulary, understand the reading, get engaged with the reading blog and apply some aspects of critical reading* (see the mind map below).

Figure N.3. Process of data analyzed to obtain the categories and core category.



The analysis of the emergent core category indicated that the use of a reading blog helped these students to learn new vocabulary. This led to improvement, in some way, for the reading understanding to give accounts of what the reading means. This, in turn, enables learners to use certain features (explained below) of the critical reading strategies stated by Kurland (2000) and Pardede (2007) to give accounts of what effect on them the

reading had. In addition, the findings showed the motivation and positive attitude towards the use of blogs to do readings, namely, enjoy them and engage them in the reading practice. Finally, considering the finding from the observations and reflections provided by the teacher-researcher in the teacher's log, the teacher is an important promoter of critical reading when applying questions which make their students analyze, judge, contrast and evaluate readings and not just says what it is about.

The subsequent paragraphs explain the subcategories that emerged from the data analysis and the corresponding illustrations from the findings.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Main Category: Reading understanding and Critical reading improvement**

#### **Subcategory 1: Use of pre-viewing (skimming, scanning and Re-reading)**

The first subcategory indicates that the students applied this critical reading strategy of pre-viewing in their readings and used skimming and scanning sub skills in order to get the sense of what the readings were, get some of the possible contents and make connections with words and meanings. This is mentioned by the teacher-observer in the teachers' log Number 1 and two.

*In the Pre-reading (F2F). Students, present their point of view about the title of the reading. They try to predict based on the title.  
'Students relate questions from the pre-reading with the story. Skimming and scanning is applied'  
(Questions 1 and 2, Teachers' log. September 9<sup>th</sup> 2011)*

*'They first read, then go back to confirm answers.  
Thought all the students participate in the pre-reading session just six of them are taking part of this last session they answered'  
'They make associations of images and words and outline min ideas'  
(Questions 1 and 2, Teachers' log. October 27<sup>th</sup> 2011)*

In the comments above readers should have thought about the connections of words used in the text and get sense of what the text could be about to express their assumptions about the text. This is what Kurland (2000) presented as actions to pre-view the reading. Here students did a quick recognition of words, associated it with pictures and the context itself so then could infer what might follow in the reading. Aebersold and Lee (2007) named this process as the actions to become “effective reader” (p.16). Hence, it appeared that these seventh grade students are applying the critical reading strategy described by Kurlad (2000) as a “previewing strategy”. Below there are two of the answers students offered to answer the critical reading question: based on the images and the title, what do you think is the reading about? (in the pre-reading activity).

*“well, I think the reading is about the fears and phobias we have like for example fear to spiders” S3*  
*“I think is about superstitions” S5*  
*(Question 1: F2F Pre-reading activity, October 27<sup>th</sup> 2011)*

This strategy emerged from the teacher’s log also offered support to confirm what Aebersold and Lee (2007) and Nuttall (1996) claimed about the teacher as a promoter of the reading process by the use of interesting and selected material which can help learners to overcome difficulties. In this sense, the correct use of critical reading questions in the pre-reading was one of those prompts used to help these students to apply this strategy.

### **Subcategory 2: Outlining of main and secondary ideas.**

This feature of the fifth strategy stated by Kurlad was developed by these students to a considerable extent. When analyzing the first artifact with the last one (See Table 5 below),

there is clear evidence that they were identifying main and secondary ideas and some students restated them with own words.

*S1. "a serious case"*

*S.7 "A woman with a phobia" First Artifact: Q1. September 2<sup>nd</sup>*

*S1. "I red A nice story of neighbors that were cats and dogs."*

*S7. "I read a text about two different neighbors and their fights" Last Artifact: Q1. November 16th*

The data also showed that the majority of these students only reached just the outlining process defined by Kurland (2000) as listing the main ideas from the reading by applying a deep analysis of the paragraphs in the reading. And the majority was unable to summarize the text doing a creative synthesis of them.

Table N. 5. Outlining critical reading strategy use. Data from the first and the last artifact, students and teachers' logs.

First data collected	Last data collected
<p>S4. "A girl that have a serious phobia"                      S7. "<b><i>A woman with a phobia</i></b>"                      S9. "Read a text called a serious case"                      S10. "La fobia de una persona a las arañas"                      S11. "I read a text about arachnophobia"                      S16 "The phobias, the arachnophobia"  <b><i>Q1.S1 "a serious case"</i></b>                      S4, 5, 6, 7. "A serious case about arachnophobia"                       "When answering about the summary, <b><i>they said the title of the reading.</i></b>" (Q1, teachers' log)</p>	<p>S1, 2. "i read a text about the neighbours"                      S3. "i read a text about the neighbours and that there are many kinds of neighbours"                      S4,5,6. "i read a history from a neighbours and their fights".   <b><i>S1. "A nice story of neighbors that were cats and dogs".</i></b>  <b><i>S7. "I read a text about two different neighbors and their fights"</i></b>                       "They make associations of images and words and outline main ideas" (Q1, teachers' log)</p>

Thought all the participants did not take part of the last reading activity, there appeared new information which states a slight improvement in the process of identifying the main ideas. Student 1 and 7 highlighted in the chart, give evidence of this fact. From the data

analyzed it was assumed that students used the comments section from the reading to read comments from their classmates, analyze them and then restate students' answers agreeing or disagreeing. In the comments below this student takes information from his partner, agrees on his ideas and then presents his own ideas and points of view extracted from the reading. Then the second student states an opinion about the reading and builds values from the reading.

*“mmm that we have to respect the others and they differences. also likeXXXXXX says, some animals probably take advantage of use and take us like stuff, but i think that no in all the cases.”*

Artifact Reading session 4. S3

*“It was interesting but it wasn't very funny for me”.*  
*Artifact Reading session 1 September 2<sup>nd</sup>*

This idea of reading comments to reflect on them, and then write adding personal reflections, agreements or a disagreement was a clear step followed to improve reading comprehension, review information gathered and improve writing. (Camilleri et al., 2007).

### **Subcategory 3: Judgment of characters and readings holding positions against or in favor.**

Data emerged from the instruments to support this critical reading strategy. Students examined personal responses in their answers but also presented judgments to characters' attitudes and behaviors, and judgments to the readings. They state a position according to their values and beliefs and agreed or disagreed with the reading and contextualized them related these with own experiences and beliefs. (See the Table 5 below)

*“yes because is like the best way to resolve the phobia” S8 Q3 Artifact 4 October17th*

Here the participant accepts that the best way to solve the phobia is

by following the writer treatment. The kind of judgments offered by the students and the information provided in the instruments led the researcher conclude that they did not reach strategy six “evaluating an argument”. On the other hand, results showed that they applied the strategy two: “contextualization” Kurland (2000). Since the majority of them (see the Table 6 below) accepted assertions made by the author as true without testing the logic of the text, the credibility or the impact of the accretions made by the writer, it was inferred that they accepted information unknown for them as true without evaluating the source, the author or the text itself Kurland, (2000) and Pardede (2007).

From the table 5, student 17 in the question 3, answers “*Aprendí sobre formas de solucionar la fobia*”. And Student 7 “*That if you have a phobia, you have to cure it*”. Artifact 4, present the credibility they give to the reading passage on the ways to cure phobias and the imperative need to cure it. These assumptions did not let students think about the reliability of the information from the text.

Table N.6, information gathered from the instruments showing judgments and holding positions and accepting assertions and claims as true

Readings and character’s judgments, contextualizing them with own views and beliefs	Acceptance of author’s assertions and claims as true.
S1 Q2, “i think that not always <b><i>you can have bad luck</i></b> from the superstitions but you can have good luck so you don’t to believe that the superstitions can give you bad luck”. <i>Artifact 4</i> .	S13 Q3, “The differences from the people and the differences of the procedures <b><i>like touch a plastic spider and then a real spider</i></b> ”. <i>1<sup>st</sup> Student’ learning 1 log (SLL)</i>
S14 Q, “Un texto acerca de las fobias como tratarlas, pero con <b><i>un cierto modo de enseñarlo como infantil</i></b> ” SLL No1	S17 Q3, <b><i>Aprendí sobre formas de solucionar la fobia</i></b> . <i>1<sup>st</sup> Student’ learning log</i>
S14 Q6, “son textos <b><i>infantiles para</i></b>	S7 Q4, “That if you have a phobia, you

<p><i>aprender (para mi)</i>” SLLNo1</p> <p>S8 Q8, rates the blogs to reading as “Good cause is a way, but is not efficient” SLL No1</p> <p>S8 Q3 “<i>yes because is like the best way to resolve the phobia</i>” Artifact 4</p> <p>S10 Q2, “<i>well, i think that everyone has a reason to be superstitious and that the luck doesn’t depends of anyone or anything. is your personal luck</i>”. Artifact 6</p>	<p>have to cure it”. Artifact 4</p> <p>S7 Q2, “<i>Yo tengo una fobia de altura y me puede enseñar a superarla</i>”. Artifact 4.</p> <p>S10 Q2, <i>I Knew with this to remove phobias</i>. Artifact 4</p>
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In addition, the most appeared action done by these participants was the contextualization of the reading passage with their lives. Phrases like: “...es muy parecido Porque yo no tengo fobias”, “...Yo tengo una fobia de altura y me puede enseñar a superarla”, “...If I have a phobia I can take a help” Artifact 1. And “They say they learn new things and ways to solve problems” Teacher’s log., showed how they make the reading as part of their lives and how information from the reading is accepted in their lives as true. This information if confirmed with the teacher’s observation when presenting her reflection on the question “Did they learn something?”

Participants showed understanding of the reading by presenting connection from their own experiences with the facts presented in the readings. The contextualizing strategy students read quickly the text to understand it and accept claims from the readings which were based on their own experience and knowledge Kurland, (2000) and Pardede (2007). Comments below are from the question: Would you do the same the main character did?

S8, yes, “*because is like the best way to solve the problem*” Artifact reading 6  
 S10, well I think I would do the same this man do to solve the problem, it was a good solution” Artifact, reading 6

**2<sup>nd</sup> Main Category: Blogs as a positive and useful tool to read and boost critical reading**

**Subcategory: Positive opinion on the use of blogs to engage reading, and learn new vocabulary**

Data gathered from this study showed the acceptance, and the positive opinion on the use of blogs to read and work in the class as well as at home (see Table 7 below).

In fact, this teacher researcher found that at the end students showed positive attitudes when stating dates for the reading sessions in the study, and asked about the next reading session in the computers room. Consequently it can be said that reading through blogs was positively accepted and helped students to get engaged in the readings, learn vocabulary and therefore promote reading understanding of EFL readings, similar results obtained by Sun and Chang (2012), Rojas (2011) and Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010).

Table N.7, Data gathered from the learner' logs, artifacts and teacher' log showing the impact blogs have in the reading process and to engage students to read and learn

Learner's log

Q4, S10 "I learn that there are *other ways to read*"

S 9 "That are *many easy ways to learn many things*"

S 12 "I learnt that are *other form to do homework*"

Q5, S3 "That *is no so bored* I liked so much"

S7 "*I can do it at home so it was more comfortable*"

S9 "That *we are recycling paper*".

S14 "*I liked* because *I can search in the Internet readings like that*".

S17 "**I like that** *I can read the opinions of my friends*"

Q8, S3 "Very good, because I think that like this *I learn so much* and I

liked. And obviously I *do better my works*”

S4 “Very Good because we *use new vocabulary*”

Artifacts

Q4 S5 “To read a *different reading* and to get *knowledge of new vocabulary*”. opinion

Teachers’ log

Q1, “Students seem to be *engaged* with the reading, many of them *participated* offering their beliefs and opinions about the reading”.

From the chart above and from the highlighted comments made by the participants on the use of the tool, it was deduced that participants not only showed the acceptance of the blog tool in their learning process (“...read a *different reading*”, “...*use new vocabulary*“, “*I learn so much...*”, “*I like that I can read the opinions of my friends*”, “*I liked because I can search in the Internet readings like that*”, “...*other ways to read*”) but also give information on how they were able to improve their language learning itself “*to get knowledge of new vocabulary*”, their learning “*because I can search in the Internet readings like that*”, “*I can read the opinions of my friends*” and learn new information useful for their lives: “That are many easy ways to learn many things”, learnt that are other form to do homework”, “That we are recycling paper”.

As a conclusion, the findings in this chapter, result of a though work carried out where triangulation was the main source to validate the information gathered, showed how the research question was answered by following the processes of data reduction. Data collected from the instruments was used to proof the use reading blogs had in the critical reading development and the positive acceptance blogs had for the reading and learning process in these participants. Students not only discovered the possibilities they had to learn through blogs but also used key-questions which guided them to give accounts of what the

reading said, what reading implied and what the reading did on them. Based on the answers analyzed it was seen that all the strategies were not used by these participants and that some of them were more presented than the others. For instance the contextualizing strategy was the critical reading strategy more used by these students and the strategies of reflecting on challenges and values and evaluating arguments, were the less used by them due to their thinking skills they demands (Kurland, 2000).

## Chapter 6

### Conclusions, Pedagogical Implications and Further Research

This chapter presents the findings of the study carried out with 15 students from a secondary school in Bogotá in relation to the fostering of reading strategies to help these participants become critical readers through the use of blogging. Furthermore, the Limitations encountered throughout the implementation phase and the recommendations for further research are also presented in this chapter.

#### Conclusions

This study involved the implementation of a class reading blog to a group of 15 students at SBLM School in Bogotá, to investigate whether students' critical reading skills were improved and see effects in the use of blogs in the classroom. By addressing the research question (to what extent can blogging help seventh grade students from SBLM develop critical reading in EFL?) through the findings it can be identified that for the purpose of this project, the use of reading blogs proved to be somehow effective to foster critical reading processes in seventh grade students. The reading blog helped these participants see reading as a different way to get information, learn vocabulary and learn the language. Participants also followed critical reading strategies such as "pre-viewing, contextualizing, opinions and outlining and summarizing main and secondary ideas and evaluating arguments" to some extent. Students experiment the use of critical reading questions in the pre-reading and after-reading stages which helped them to become more aware about the effects reading does on them and were able to give accounts of what the reading says and set their position against the effects of the reading on them. Hence, there was an improvement in their reading process letting them extract main ideas and secondary

ideas from the text, contextualize the reading with their lives and reflect on the challenges on values and beliefs they might have to their lives.

The findings also showed how the students became engaged with the reading texts, raising their motivation to read in the English language and therefore learn new and different vocabulary and aspects for their life in their readings. These results also offered accomplishment to the objectives set in this study (determine the benefits of blogging in these students' reading comprehension skill, identify students perceptions about the use of blogs in EFL) Participants showed through the use of reading blogs another tool to be used among them, this was the collaborative help to build knowledge, to take other ideas and agree with them or argued against them. They experiment the use of the blog to discover new forms to confront readings and saw on them an ecologic way to save paper and time. Since they were in the age of the technology, they also showed the positive acceptance of the blogs to have readings and in fact there was seen a learning from them.

The results showed total agreement with the theory stated in this study, due that Hedge (2000) and Clark (1993) critical questions and Kurlad (2000) and Pardede (2007) strategies to foster critical reading helped students to show their critical reading skills and their awareness with the reading encounter. Some students from this project were satisfied and interested with the idea of having readings through blogs and applied their own critical reading questions before starting the readings.

Findings from this study on the use of blogs to foster critical reading are described below.

Students did not reach the use of the seven due to the higher order level some of the texts required and which these seventh-grade students are in the processes of developing.

In an overall way, participants liked the experience of using blogs to read in EFL context. They showed a positive acceptance of reading by using blogs. The use of blogs to foster reading comprehension helped them to consider the orthography, spelling and in some way wording when writing comments, replays and answers about the after reading questions. In addition, Blogs helped them to increase their communicative expressions to agree, disagree and ask for clarification, among other skills. According to the teacher's log, observations obtained in the use of blogs showed that Blogs helped to create a sense of independence, commitment and responsibility when doing tasks among the learners and increase the desire for searching for personal readings, and for developing their language. Finally, in the use of blogs to foster critical reading, it was seen that some readings facilitated more the critical reading process of these students than others. Some of them included the comparison /contrast and cause and effect.

As a conclusion, this study showed the positive use of blogs to foster reading comprehension and critical reading steps in EFL contexts. Blogs can be considered an engagement tool to present readings in English and a motivator to increase reading processes in the classroom. Finally, to increase and foster critical reading in students it is necessary that the teacher acquires the responsibility to help students see reading as an active process which has many ideas to be argued, discussed and evaluated according to beliefs, judgments and facts from it.

### **Implications for Pedagogical and Research practice**

Based on the theoretical framework and the findings of this study, a number of implications were identified in relation to the use of technology (Internet, blogs) and critical reading skills used in the classroom or with this kind of population.

Considering the students use of netiquette rules to train students on the use of this tool to write about the readings not about their classmates or about social issues they are living which can interfere in the comments in the blog therefore, a class on netiquette and use of public documents can help the teacher to avoid facing these unusual comments. Time to implement the readings should be another aspect to be considered when implementing this tool; it can be used more than six readings to have a better result in the use of the strategies to foster critical reading. Other possible way to conduct studies with these strategies is by using the most relevant strategies or these special strategies the population needs more.

Regarding the results showed in the comments and replays participants gave in the comments section from the blog, It would be interesting to analyze writing production of students in the Internet, the use of Netiquette or formal language and the use of informal language or contracted one. What is more, answers presented in the comments from the blog may give more information on students' critical thinking development and the effects of these kinds of readings in their critical thinking and critical writing process. This aspect regarding ideas and beliefs students may have after reaching high levels of thinking. A final implication this study may have on further research is the use of blogs to foster autonomy and self –independent learning in these students. Since their self-motivation, learning engagement and curiosity to find more in the Internet were aspects presented in this study, the use of blogs to foster their meta-cognitive strategies to self-learn and monitor their learning is a field that needs to be explored.

In sum, results presented in this study about the use of blogs to foster critical reading, showed the great possibilities the use of this technological tool in the EFL contexts

to expand and increase self-learning processes and present new and motivating ways to learn the language and develop cognition.

### **Limitations**

Limitations presented in this study are mentioned below as a way to be considered in the case that teachers want to apply this study in their educational context.

Students' low commitment can be a limitation in the implementation of this study due to the fact that some students of this age are used to doing activities by the reward a grade can offer them, not just learn with the activity. In this study, there was a big effort to have students understand the help these sessions may offer to their personal learning and the variety of readings the blog had to their pleasure.

The Internet access and the use of computers was another limitation in this study. At the beginning of the study there were 20 students in the research, then two students decided not to take part in the study due to the fact that they did not have internet access at home. There was also an inconvenience with the kind of programs computers may have which prevent the display of other programs required to the use of blogs. In one of the F2F sessions, computers from the library did not have one of the programs required for the display of the blog, so the researcher had to solve the solution, downloading the program in the entire computer, this took more than 30 minutes, which was wasted by students chatting and playing with the computer. For further studies using Internet there is imperative the preparation and adjustment of these electronic devices so that students may have all the required software and hardware to carry out with the activities proposed.

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**APPENDIXES**  
**Appendix 1**

Questionnaire to be applied to the students #1

Dear Student, these statements seek to find information related to the use of the blog for reading purposes. I appreciate your complete answers for this questionnaire.

1. What do you know about blogging/blogs?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you used blogs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (mark with an X)  
If yes what has been the purpose \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you find it interesting and motivating to read from a reading blog in the Internet?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you better like to read:  
Fables \_\_\_\_\_ news \_\_\_\_\_ short stories \_\_\_\_\_ comics \_\_\_\_\_  
Fairy tales \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ which one? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you think every single reading has something to teach us about life?  
Always \_\_\_\_\_ frequently \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
almost never \_\_\_\_\_ never \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you like reading in English? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you think you are a good reader in English? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Would you like to do readings through the computer using the Internet and blogs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Questionnaire to be applied to the students #2

Dear Student, these questions seek to find information about how much you understood the reading blogs assigned. I appreciate your complete answers for this questionnaire.

1. Did you like reading through blogs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Were you able to identify the topics from the readings presented?  
Yes, in both of them \_\_\_\_\_ in one of them \_\_\_\_\_  
No, in none of them \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did you react against the situations occur in the stories you read?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, what reactions did you have? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you identify yourself with any character from the story read?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you find any message in the blog readings?  
Yes, in both of them \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, in one of the two \_\_\_\_\_  
No, in none of them \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did you relate this message to your life? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Did you increase your reading comprehension with the use of blog reading activities?  
Yes \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Did you find your classmate' comments useful to understand the blog reading better?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What is your opinion about the use of blogging? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think about the interaction with your classmates using blogging?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 3**  
**Teacher Journal blog**

This journal blog is intended to be an account record document to the students’ visits to the reading blog and a reflective source for my own perceptions and thoughts about the research and the collected data.

Date	Session	Reading title	Questions	Actions	Reflections	Time spent
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Did they answer all questions?</li> <li>✓ Did they present link pictures with titles?</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓ Did they summarize the blog reading?</li> <li>✓ Did they find any value from the reading?</li> <li>✓ Did the shared personal info with the topic to deal with?</li> <li>✓ Did they comment insights about the blog reading?</li> <li>✓ Did they accomplish all stages of critical reading?</li> <li>✓ Did they compare the blog reading with own life?</li> <li>✓ Did they criticize the story?</li> </ul>			

## Appendix 4

### Students' Learning Logs

Ask directly if they consider any they have had any improvement in critical Reading, etc.

This learning log is intended to keep a record of the reading texts you have done in the reading log and some relevant information about the readings.

Student's name:

\_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What did I read today? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How does this reading relate to my personal life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What did I learn after reading the story? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What did I learn about life through the use of Reading blog? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What did I like about reading in the blog? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Could these reading blogs help me to know more about life? Yes \_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How would I rate the use of blogs to do reading? (mark with an X)

Very Good \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ OK \_\_\_ not good \_\_\_ Bad \_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 5A**

Publicado por Elizabeth Cuellar G. en 9:07:00 AM 

Reacciones:  funny (0)  interesting (0)  cool (0)

**0 comentarios:**

**Post a Comment**

1. What did you do in this reading session?
2. Would you have the same attitude if you were Alberto or Mimi? Why?
3. What ideas can you have about life with this reading?
4. What is the purpose of this reading?
5. What does this story tell you?

Comment as: Select profile...

**7 comentarios:**

 **teacher** October 3, 2011 7:05 AM  
*This comment has been removed by a blog administrator.*  
 Reply Delete

 October 3, 2011 7:14 AM  
 1. i read a text about the neighbours  
 2. no, because i tink that the persons are friends, no staff  
 3. that some persons are sttaf of the animals so the animals take advantage of the situation  
 4. that you learn vocabulary because some words are stranger than anothers.  
 5. the story tellme that the dogs are best company that the cats  
 Reply Delete

 October 3, 2011 5:08 PM  
 1. i read the text about neighbours.  
 2.no, because the people are not stuff they are or frinds or owners.  
 3.that the cats thing that the owners are stuff.  
 4.my proupuse is that we cant thing bat about neighbours if we dont know them.  
 5.that the cats see bat the dogs.  
 Reply Delete

## Appendix 5B

Already a member? [Sign in](#)

Sunday, October 2, 2011

## Alberto's New Neighbours



Hello dear Bartolinos

This is our third reading for the month. I hope you have taken the most of each reading presented in this blog. Today's reading is related to the relationship among your neighbors. Imagine what would it happen if the new neighbors were noisy as their car, big and smelly as well? What about if your pet's neighbors were like that? What would your pets do?



Let's Read Alberto's story, click on the title to go to the reading and remember:

- do the pre reading activity to get information about the vocabulary you will find in the reading.
- If you think you do not get the idea of the text. Read it again!
- Ask questions meanwhile you read about what the end of the story could beand ...
- compare it with your own life. Would you do the same this character did?

Time to read...

Publicado por Elizabeth Cuellar G. en 6:00:00 PM 7 comentarios [Enlaces a esta entrada](#)

Reacciones:  funny (0)  interesting (0)  cool (0)

**Appendix 6**  
**CONSENT LETTERS**

Bogotá D.C. \_\_\_\_\_ de 2011

Sra.  
JUANITA AFANADOR  
Directora Académica

COLEGIO SAN BARTOLOME LA MERCED

Respetada directora:

El proyecto de grado que pretendo trabajar con los estudiantes del colegio San Bartolomé La Merced se titula “Blogging to Foster Critical Reading “Con este proyecto contribuir y enriquecer los procesos de aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera, al mismo tiempo que orientar practicas en estrategias de lectura.

El Objetivo con este estudio es el de presentar la lectura de una forma diferente a la habitual haciendo uso de los blogs como medios de comunicación en la Internet a través de trabajos de tareas específicas en donde ellos seguirán una serie de pasos para llegar a desarrollar una estrategia de lectura. Es de resaltar que esta investigación hace parte de los requisitos de grado de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad de la Sabana.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración para realizar mi propuesta de Investigación, la cual se llevará a cabo durante el primer semestre del año escolar 2011 – 2012. Esto implica recolectar datos y analizar resultados, razón por la cual debo tener acceso a las producciones de los estudiantes con el fin de analizar el proceso de lectura de los estudiantes.

Igualmente, garantizo total respeto de identidad, la cual se mantendrá anónima; además habrá estricta confidencialidad con la información y la precaución de la desunión de evaluaciones y notas parciales y /o finales del curso con este proyecto.

Agradezco de antemano el gran aporte para llevar a buen término mi investigación.

Atentamente,

Elizabeth Cuellar G.

**Appendix 7**

Bogotá \_\_\_\_\_ 2011

GRUPO BASE GRADO 7A

Clase de Inglés

Colegio San Bartolomé La Merced

Estimados estudiantes,

En la actualidad me encuentro realizando la Investigación titulada “Blogging to Foster critical Reading” dirigida a estudiantes del colegio San Barolomé La Merced, el que busca contribuir con el proceso de lectura comprensiva, análisis crítico de la lectura, con los procesos de trabajo pedagógico de herramientas de la Internet, además de una ayuda en la práctica pedagógica.

El Objetivo con este estudio es el de presentar la lectura de una forma diferente a la habitual haciendo uso de los blogs como medios de comunicación en la Internet a través de trabajos de tareas específicas en donde ellos seguirán una serie de pasos para llegar a desarrollar una estrategia de lectura. Es de resaltar que esta investigación hace parte de los requisitos de grado de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad de la Sabana.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración para realizar mi propuesta de Investigación, la cual se llevará a cabo durante el primer semestre del año escolar 2011 – 2012. Esto implica recolectar datos y analizar resultados, razón por la cual debo tener acceso a las producciones de los estudiantes con el fin de analizar el proceso de lectura de los estudiantes.

De igual forma, garantizo la reserva de identidad y confidencialidad con la información en este proyecto. Este proyecto no tendrá incidencia alguna en evaluaciones y notas finales y/o parciales y el resultado de este será compartido con Uds., posteriormente.

Agradezco de antemano su aporte valioso para desarrollar mi investigación.

Atentamente,

Acepto participar

Elizabeth Cuellar G

Profesor de inglés

Nombre:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix 8

Bogotá, Marzo 14 de 2011

Familia: \_\_\_\_\_

Como es de su conocimiento, soy la profesora de inglés de sus hijos. Durante el periodo de trabajo con ellos en la clase de Inglés he venido evidenciando el gran gusto que sus hijos tienen hacia el trabajo en los computadores.

Viendo la afinidad con la tecnología y algunas falencias en sus procesos de lectura en la lengua extranjera, tenemos un gran interés como comunidad educativa de proporcionar a los estudiantes herramientas que les puedan ayudar en su enriquecimiento de la lengua extranjera inglesa y así posibilitarles una efectiva comunicación en dicha lengua.

Para éste fin, tengo como objetivo presentar la lectura de una forma diferente a la habitual haciendo uso de los blogs como medios de comunicación en la Internet a través de trabajos de tareas específicas en donde ellos seguirán una serie de pasos para llegar a desarrollar una estrategia de lectura. Es de resaltar que esta investigación hace parte de los requisitos de grado de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad de la Sabana.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración para realizar mi propuesta de Investigación, la cual se llevará a cabo durante el primer semestre del año escolar 2011 – 2012. Esto implica recolectar datos y analizar resultados, razón por la cual debo tener acceso a las producciones de los estudiantes con el fin de analizar el proceso de lectura de los estudiantes.

Igualmente, garantizo total respeto de identidad, la cual se mantendrá en estricta confidencialidad con la información y la precaución de la desunión de evaluaciones y notas parciales y /o finales del curso con este proyecto.

Agradezco de antemano el gran aporte para llevar a buen término mi investigación.

Atentamente,

Elizabeth Cuellar G.

## Appendix 9

## ICELT LESSON PLAN FORM Electronic Version

<b>Name of teacher:</b> Elizabeth Cuellar G		<b>Candidate Number:</b>	
<b>Institution:</b> San Bartolomé La Merced Catholic School			
<b>Date of Observation:</b> DAY MONTH YEAR __8th__09__2011__		<b>Time of observation</b>	<b>Length of class</b> 120 minutes
<b>Class/grade:</b> 7th graders		<b>Room:</b> 429	
<b>Number of students:</b> 20		<b>Average age of Students:</b> between 12 to 14	
<b>Number of years of English study (students):</b> Six years		<b>Level of students</b> High Elementary	
<b>Lesson Number</b>  1		<b>Observer:</b> Elizabeth Cuellar (use of a teacher's journal)	
<p><b>Aims:</b> By the end of the class students will better understand the message of the reading “ A serious case” by using the reading strategies to understand and criticize the reading, offering insightful comments on the blog “sharing what I have read”</p> <p><b>Personal aims:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To promote reading through blogging.</li> <li>✓ To promote the use of blogging to develop critical reading by their insightful comments about the readings done though a reading blog.</li> <li>✓ To present readings related to participant' interests following the pre- while and after reading format to have a better interaction with the reading, Lopera (2008)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Assumed knowledge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use of the computer to search on the net</li> <li>✓ Address of the place they are going to search <a href="http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/">http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/</a></li> <li>✓ Information regarding this activity. (pre, while, after reading activity)</li> <li>✓ Decoding and coding graphemes in English.</li> <li>✓ A dictionary source to look up unknown words.</li> </ul>			

**Description of language item / skill**

Students will apply some critical reading strategies which will help them to develop their reading skill and promote critical reading on them.

**Materials :**

- ✓ Reading blog : <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case>
- ✓ Critical reading blog group: “ sharing what I have read” blog
- ✓ Computer with Internet access

**Rationale****Profile of learners:**

- 20 students ranging from 10 to 13 years old. With a high elementary English level according to the Common European Framework. They all are in sixth grade of secondary school
- **outline linguistic and affective needs**  
Among their linguistic needs, vocabulary building and the speaking ability are the most important communicative skills to be worked on. Some special affective needs are in relation to effective interaction in English due to the lack of vocabulary and the shyness this age has. They also enjoy the technology despite the short time they have to have access to this.
- **explain how learners’ needs relate to aims of the lesson**  
Considering that the reading function in teaching of English is the understanding of the language in a specific context and helping students to practice their grammar and vocabulary, this readings will be focused not only in this aspect, but also will go further to develop their critical reading processes and as a result achieve the most of every single reading.

**Anticipated problems**

- ✓ Students cannot understand where to go in the net.
- ✓ Students may find a difficult term in the reading which cannot be inferred by the context.
- ✓ Students may be confused with some aspects from the reading related to vocabulary

**Planned solutions**

- ✓ They will have the site in their personal e-mails and in the blogging group created in blogger.
- ✓ They will have a site of a good bilingual dictionary online.
- ✓ Teacher will clarify provide help to guide them in finding concepts in the F2F sessions

Stage	Aim	Procedure Teacher and student activity	Time and interaction	# of sessions
<p><u>Warm up</u></p> <p><u>Pre-reading stage</u></p> <p><u>While reading activity</u></p>	<p>Reading a comic and commenting on it</p> <p>To activate knowledge and schemata about the topic of the reading</p> <p>Getting the main and supporting ideas from the text</p>	<p>The teacher shows the images on the blog to have students activate knowledge about what the reading is about</p> <p>Students are to complete some questions related to the title and the vocabulary on the reading. In the preparation stage at <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case</a> (this activity promoted critical reading)</p> <p>Students will complete series of activities (see appendix 11) to understand the main idea of the reading and some details from it in the task 1 and task 2, at <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case</a></p>	<p><u>5 minutes</u> <u>T - Ss</u></p> <p><u>7 minutes</u> <u>Ss</u></p> <p><u>35 minutes</u> <u>Ss</u></p>	<p><u>First and second hours</u></p>
<p><u>Warm up</u></p> <p><u>After reading activity</u></p>	<p>Vocabulary matching referring to the reading</p> <p>To apply the critical reading strategies of relating the reading to one's own life, summarizing, reflecting and comparing and contrasting it</p>	<p>Teacher recycles vocabulary from the reading and prepares the activity to extract the most information possible from the reading.</p> <p>Students answer 5 questions related to the reading and aimed to get the most personal opinion and reflections about the reading on the comments section on the blog at <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories/serious-case</a> (this activity promoted critical reading).</p>	<p><u>10 minutes</u> <u>T - Ss</u></p> <p><u>30 minutes</u> <u>Ss</u></p>	<p><u>Second session</u> <u>First hour</u></p>

**Appendix 10**

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Instructional Objective</b>	<b>Task In the classroom</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Preparing students	<p>Preparing students for participation in the reading blog</p> <p>Familiarize students with the reading blogs</p> <p>Provide students with opportunities for choosing the reading from the proposed site</p>	<p>Explain what the reading blog is and the creation of the reading blog.</p> <p>Have a reading activity from the British council site</p> <p>Students will complete a form with some uploaded readings to be read.</p>	<p>Computer with Internet and handouts</p> <p>Computer with Internet access</p> <p>Some after reading handouts Handout</p>	August 15 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> .
Sessions 1 and 2	<p>Present the first reading through the blog.</p> <p>Students will fill out the first learning log</p>	<p>Develop the pre-reading and after-reading activities to develop CR</p> <p>Students will complete the learner log.</p>	<p>Computer with Internet, blog <a href="http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/">http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/</a></p> <p>Handout with the information</p>	September 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup>
Sessions 3 and 4	<p>Present the second reading activity to be done at home and set the time.</p> <p>Students will fill out the</p>	<p>Develop the three format activities proposed by Lopera Medina (2008) in the reading “The Broken Mirror, The Black Cat, and Lots of Good Luck” in the blog</p>	<p>Computer with Internet, blog <a href="http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/">http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/</a></p>	September 16 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup>

	comments blog section	Students answer the comments questions on the blog.		
Sessions 5 and 6	Present the third reading through the blog. F2F session.  Students will fill out the second learning log	Develop the three format activities in “Alberto's New Neighbours” reading.  Students answer the questions on the learning log.	Computer Internet, blog with <a href="http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/">http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/</a>  Handout with the information	October 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup>
Sessions 7 and 8	Present the fourth reading through the blog.  Students will fill out the comments blog section	Develop the three format activities in the reading proposed  Students answer the comments questions on the blog.	Computer Internet, blog with <a href="http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/">http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/</a>	October 17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup>
Sessions 9 and 10	Present the fifth reading through the blog.  Students will answer the comments on the blog Students will fill out the second learning log	Do the three format activities in the reading proposed  Students answer the comments questions on the blog. Students answer the questions on the learning log.	Computer Internet, blog with <a href="http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/">http://fostercriticalreading.blogspot.com/</a>  Handout with the information	September 27 <sup>th</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup> 2011

Appendix 11

Preparation Text Task Task 2

After reading the story try this activity.

BRITISH COUNCIL Serious case

science silent psychologist  
phobia folder phone  
psychiatrist siren photo  
psychedelic

'f' sound 's' sound

Help Instructions Reset Check Answers Finish

Preparation Text Task Task 2

Next try this activity.

BRITISH COUNCIL Serious case

Question 1/13

Not many people are afraid of spiders.

a. true  
b. false

Next question

< 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Help Instructions Reset Check Answers See Answers

After-reading activities that students were to do when having finish the reading

**Appendix 12**

Data Analysis

Students' LEARNING LOG September 13<sup>th</sup> 2011

Question

**Q1** to what extent can blogging help seventh grade students from San Bartolomé La Merced develop critical reading in EFL?

Sub questions

**SQ1.** What features of critical reading can be identified through the use of blogs?

**SQ2.** What insights can be gained on the use of reading blogs?

Students' Log

Q1: What did I read in the blog?

Q2: How does this reading relate to my personal life?

Q3: What did I learn after reading the story?

Q4: What did I learn about life through the use of Reading blog?

Q5: What did I like about reading in the blog?

Q6: Could these reading blogs help me to know more about life? Yes \_\_\_NO\_\_\_ Why?

Q7: Did I increase my critical reading with this activity from the blog? Yes \_\_\_  
NO\_\_\_ Why?

Q8: How would I rate the use of blogs to do reading? (Mark with an X)

Very Good \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ OK \_\_\_ not good \_\_\_ Bad \_\_\_

Why?

STUDENTS' LOG ANALYSIS

Data	Strategy to be assessed
<b>Question 1 WHAT DID I READ IN THE BLOG?</b>	5. outlining & summarize
S1. A girls that had arachnophobia, it was a serious case	Outline main idea-
S2. <b>Interesante</b> historia de una fobia	<b>Opinion</b> & <b>Outline main idea</b>
S3. Something <b>interesting</b> called a serious case	<b>Opinion</b>
S4. A girl that have a serious phobia	<b>Outline main idea</b>
S5. I read <b>a funny</b> text about the arachnophobia of a girl	<b>Opinion</b> & <b>Outline main idea</b>
S6. Un caso serio de una niña que tenia aracnofobia y como la soluciono	outlining & summarize
S7. A woman with a phobia	<b>Outline main idea</b>
S8. A text about phobias specially arachnophobia	<b>Outline main idea</b>
S9. A serious case about arachnophobia	<b>Outline main idea</b>

S10. Read a text called a serious case	<i>Present a fact –restate title</i>
S 11. La fobia de una persona a las arañas	<i>Stating an assertion</i>
S12. I read a text about aracnophobia	<i>Outline main idea</i>
S13. I read something <b>interesting</b> because it shows the people’ phobias (insectophobia)	<i>Evaluating an argument</i>
S14. Un texto acerca de las fobias como tratarlas, pero con un <b>cierto modo de enseñarlo como infantil</b>	<i>Evaluating an argument</i>
S15. I read a story of a phobia of spiders, that a person has this problem.	<i>Outline main idea</i>
S16. The phobias, the aracnophobia	<i>Outline main idea</i>
S17. Sobre fobias y formas de resolver estos problemas	<i>Stating an assertion</i>
<b>Q2: HOW DOES THIS READING RELATE TO MY PERSONAL LIFE</b>	<i>2. contextualizing &amp; 4 reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values</i>
S1. It relates in the way that I don’t have phobias but parents yes	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S2. No es muy parecido Porque <b>yo no tengo fobias</b>	
S3. The reading is about arachnophobia and <b>I have it</b>	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S4. My mom has a phobia to the snakes	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S5. NO relate to my life because <b>I have no</b> phobias	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S6. Se <b>parece porque Yo tengo una fobia de altura y me puede enseñar a superarla</b>	<i>Contextualizing &amp; reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values</i>
S7. Many persons <b>in my family have phobias too</b> (snakes,darkness,etc	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S8. In a high level <b>cause I have many</b> phobias and fears and one is arachnophobia	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S9. The reading relates because I Knew with this to remove phobias.	<i>relate with experiences</i> <i>Stating an assertion</i>
S10. Is not related to my life because I do not have phobias	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S11. <b>Se relaciona con mi mama</b>	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S13. The people phobias that <b>I need to help them like her friend</b> . And I can do that	<i>accepting assertion</i> <i>reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values</i>
S14. Para mi no se <b>relaciona. Yo no tengo</b> fobias	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S15. Is related to my life because <b>my uncle Diana has</b> this phobia	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S16. It relates <b>to my life because my phobias are the butterflies</b>	<i>relate with experiences</i>
S 17. Si <b>porque yo también tengo muchas fobias</b>	<i>relate with experiences</i>
<b>Q3. WHAT DID I LEARN AFTER READING THE STORY?</b>	<i>All of them 7</i>
S1.Lots of people have phobias and is better not to have it.	<i>Asserting a conclusion</i>

S2. Aprendí que no siempre se debe depender de las fobias porque nos puede causar problemas	Asserting a conclusion reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values Contextualizing
S3. We need to super our phobias but sometimes you can not.	Asserting a conclusion
S4. Phobias are bad and we have to overcome and enjoy life without phobias	Asserting a conclusion Contextualizing
S5. That a phobia can be extremely in some cases	Asserting a conclusion
S6. Las fobias son malas y hay que superarlas	Asserting a conclusion Contextualizing
S7. I learnt that many people can have phobias, but if they want they can disappear	Asserting a conclusion reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S8. Many people have phobias and there are method to avoid them	Asserting a conclusion
S9. It's not so bad to have phobias.	Asserting a point of view reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S10. If someone have phobia it is better to cure it.	Asserting a point of view reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S11. Disfrutar la vida	Asserting a point of view Evaluating an argument
S12. If I have a phobia I can take a help	Asserting a conclusion Contextualizing
S13. The differences from the people and the differences of the procedures like touch a plastic spider and then a real spider	accepting an argument Contextualizing
S14. Aprendí una buena técnica sobre como curar una fobia.	accepting an argument Contextualizing
S15. I learnt that we can overpass the phobias but in very specific cases	accepting and evaluating argument
S16. That the phobias have a solution and that they are very serious.	accepting an argument reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S17. Aprendí sobre formas de solucionar la fobia	accepting an argument
<b>4. WHAT DID I LEARN ABOUT LIFE THROUGH THE USE OF READING BLOG?</b>	<b>opinion</b> – <b>evaluating argument</b> (judgment)
S1. That if I have a phobia I would definitely do that	accepting an argument <b>opinion</b>
S2. Dejar la fobia atrás para seguir adelante	accepting an argument
S3. Nothing because Is not related to my life	evaluating an argument
S4. Nada	<b>Opinion</b>
S5. Everything can be overpass	Assumption

S6. Que las fobias son malas y que hay que superarlas	Opinion
S7. That are many easy ways to learn many things	opinion on the use of blogs facilitate the learning(blog)
S8. There is always someone who understand and a reading for it	Assumption
S9. I learn that there are other ways to read	opinion on the use of blogs
S10. Try to cure your phobias	evaluating an argument
S11. NO ANSWER	
S12. I learnt that are other form to do homework	opinion on the use of blogs
S13. It is a good way to read easy and to understand easy.	opinion on the use of blogs
S14. Que la vida está llena de temores, no importa que tan absurdos sean.	evaluating an argument
S15. I did not learn anything	Opinion
S16. I learn that different people have different phobias that are serious	accepting an argument
S17. What I learnt is that I can communicate	Assumption
<b>Q 5. WHAT DID I LIKE ABOUT READING IN THE BLOG?</b>	opinion on the use of blogs
S1. I like the reading because I think it was interesting and cool	Positive opinion
S2. Me gustó como lograron solucionar las cosas	opinión on the Reading Contextualizing
S3. That is no so bored I liked so much	evaluating the use of blogs opinion (valuing use of blogs)
S4. Es una manera nueva de aprender	opinion (valuing use of blogs)
S5. I didn't know anything about blogs and is the First time to use one	opinion on the use of blogs
S6. Ver la transformación de tenerle fobia a algo a amarlo	opinión on claims in the Reading Contextualizing
S7. I can do it at home so it was more comfortable	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S8. There are many people with phobias and we don't need to feel frighten	evaluating an argument
S8. I Like the task about a serious case	opinión on the Reading
S9. That we are recycling paper	opinion (valuing use of blogs)
S10. Como curaron la fobia de las arañas	opinión on arguments in reading
S11. I like that we do not have to write	opinion on the use of blogs
S12. The easy way to read and to answer the questions	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S13. Fue muy entretenida, es buena para pasar el tiempo	opinión on the Reading

	evaluating an argument
S14. I liked because I can search in the Internet readings like that.	opinion on the use of blogs
S15. I like I can do the homework with the computer and you don't lose time	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S16. I like that I can read the opinions of my friends	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
<b>Q6. COULD THESE READING BLOGS HELP ME TO KNOW MORE ABOUT LIFE?</b>	All of them
S1. Si, because I think blogs Help people in a particular way	opinion (valuing use of blogs)
S2. Si, uno puede aprender varias cosas	opinion on the use of blogs
S3. Yes, All persons have different life and we can learn from his lives and don't do the same errors that they do.	evaluating an argument
S4. Yes, because the reading blogs can share opinions.	opinion valuing the use of blogs
S5. No, because there are situations from other people, not me	opinión on the Reading and contextualizing
S6. Si, porque enseña como superar una fobia	opinión on the arguments in the Reading
S7. Yes, they have many interesting information	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S8. Yes, because Phobias and fears are normal in our lives but we have to know how to avoid	evaluating an argument
S9. No. because phobia is life but I do not learn about life	opinión on the Reading
S10. Yes, depending in the texts.	opinion readings in the blog
S11. Me enseñó mas sobre la fobia en las personas	opinión on the Reading contextualizing
S12. No, because we have other manners	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S13. Yes, because there I can see people' lives	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S14. No, son textos infantiles para aprender (para mi)	opinión on the Reading and contextualizing
S15. Yes, because I know how a person do with a phobia.	opinión on the Reading and contextualizing
S16. Yes, because it is easier to do homeworks	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
S17. No, because is only opinions and exercises.	opinion (valuing the use of blogs)
<b>Q8: HOW WOULD I RATE THE USE OF BLOGS TO DO READING?</b>	Use of blogs

S1. Good/I put “good” because not all of the blogs are helpful	(positive evaluation of the use of blogs)
S2. Good, No todo en los blogs es bueno pero de todo se aprende	(positive evaluation of the use of blogs)
S3. Very good, because I think that like this I learn so much and I liked. And obviously I do better my works	(positive evaluating the use of blogs)
S4. Very Good because we use new vocabulary	very positive evaluation on use of blogs in the learning of a language)
S5. Ok, because there are other ways to do it	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S6. Good. me pareció bueno la historia, ya que porque fue un tema interesante anqué pudo haber sido mejor el tema	opinión on the Reading
S7. Ok, I could do it at home but I had some complications with the page and the comments	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S8. Good I think that we all have qualities and difficulties but in that blog it was a good experience and appreciate that kind of learning	opinión on the Reading positive evaluation on use blogs)
S9. Good cause is a way, but is not efficient	( not positive evaluation on use blogs)
S10. Very good no gastar papel	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S11. Ok, because is a good activity and are more options	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S12. Good, I like it	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S13. Good, son muy entretenidos	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S14. Ok, because I like more the books	( not positive opinion of the use of blogs)
S15. Good, it is good because you do not waste time	(positive evaluation on use blogs)
S16. Good, I like to read and practice comprehension.	(positive evaluation on use blogs)

Analysis of the artifacts reading a serious case

Data	Strategy to be analyzed
<b>Q1. WHAT DID YOU READ TODAY</b>	5. Outlining & summarizing
1 a serious case	restate the title
2 A serious case about arachnophobias	restate the title
3 a serious case of a girl that have arachnophobia and how	summarizing

<i>she overcomes the phobia PRESENTING INFO from read</i>	
<i>4 idem</i>	
<i>5 ,6,7,8 A serius case about aracnopobias.</i>	restate the title
<i>9,10,11 a text of phobias (arachnophobias)</i>	restate the title,
<b>Q2. DID YOU LIKE THE READING? WHY?</b>	2. Contextualizing, 4 reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values, 6. evaluating an
1 yes because was very funny	contextualizing – set an opinion
2 It was interesting but it wasn't very funny for me.	set a opinion commenting on o's opinion
3 yes because i like to know how she overcomes the phobia Get information	contextualizing setting opinion
4 Yes, because it was interesting	Setting opinion
5 yes, I like because i learn about phobias	contextualizing
6 Yes, I like the text because is true and interesting.	Getting info, expressing likes contextualizing
7 Yes, because it was funny.	Expressing likes OPINION
8 yes, because is the real of some people	Contextualizing
9 a little bit because i dont like that topic to much	Expressing likes OPINION
<b>Q3.1 DO YOU HAVE PHOBIAS?</b>	Contextualizing
1. no I dont	Contextualizing
2 <i>No i don't.</i>	Setting opinion OPINION Contextualizing
3 <i>the heights</i>	Setting opinion OPINION
7 <i>No, I dont have</i>	Setting opinion OPINION

<i>8 yes,the darkness</i>	Setting opinion <b>OPINION</b> Contextualizing
<b>Q3.2 WOULD YOU TAKE THE SAME THERAPY, THIS AUTHOR TOOK?</b>	6. Evaluating an argument
<i>1 if i have phobias, yes i will do it</i>	Contextualizing summarizing Accepting an argument
<i>2 I will prefer talking ( if i have any phobia)</i>	Contextualizing Evaluating an argument
<i>3 yes</i>	Accepting an argument
<i>4 yes because is a way to remove this phobia</i>	Accepting an argument
<i>5 no,i would not.</i>	refuting an argument
<i>6 Judging the reading</i>	
<i>7 If I have phopias, yes, i will take it</i>	Accepting an argument
<i>8 yes because is like the best way to resolve the phobia</i>	Evaluating an argument
<i>9 i dont know because maybe i can reflect about that phobia.</i>	Evaluating an argument

Analysis of the artifacts reading two I READ THE BROKEN MIRROR, THE BLACK CAT, AND A LOTS OF GOOD LUCK

<b>Data</b>	<b>Strategy to be analyzed</b>
Q1 What did I read today?	5. Outlining & summarizing
1 I READ THE BROKEN MIRROR, THE BLACK CAT, AND A LOTS OF GOODLUCK	restate the title
2 THE BROKEN MIRROR, THE BLACK CAT, AND A LOTS OF GOOD LUCK	restate the title
3 I read the broken mirror the black cat and a lots of good luck	restate the title
4THE BROKEN MIRROW, THE BLACK CAT AND LOTS	restate the title

OF GOOD LUCK	
5 THE BROKEN MIRROR, THE BLACK CAT, AND A LOTS OF GOOD LUCK.	restate the title
6 i read the broken mirror, the black cat, and a lots of good look	restate the title
7 title	restate the title
8 I read "the broken mirror, the black cat, and a lots of good luck".	restate the title
9 that the good luck or bad luck depends if you believe in yourself	outlining ideas
10 i read the broken mirror, the black cat, and lots of good luck: the story was about a boy who doesn't believe in superstitions but that many thing happen to him and he start believe in, but then he discover that he had to be self-confident and to trust in his self again.	outlining and summarizing
11 THE BROKEN MIRROR, THE BLACK CAT AND LOTS OF GOOD LUCK.	restate the title
12 THE BROKEN MIRROR, THE BLACK CAT, AND A LOTS OF GOOD LUCK	restate the title
13 The broken mirror, the black cat and a lots of good luck	restate the title
14 The broken mirror, the black cat and a lots of good luck	restate the title
<b>Q2. WHAT IDEAS CAN YOU HAVE ABOUT LIFE WITH THIS READING?</b>	Contextualizing Evaluating an argument
1 I THINK THAT NOT ALWAYS YOU CAN HAVE BAD LUCK FROM THE SUPESTITIONS BUT YOU CAN HAVE GOOD LUCK SO YOU DONT TO BELIEVE THAT THE SUPESTITIONS CAN GIVE YOU BAD LUCK.	Evaluating an argument Contextualizing
2 that the superstitions are mental so if you believe that you are going to have bad luck you are going to have it	Evaluating an argument
3 That i can do things that are impossible for me to do it.	Evaluating an argument
4 THAT YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT IS REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN, AND CAUSE OF THE THINGS ARE FOR SOME REASON	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values Evaluating an argument
5 That some people can be mentally superstition and they believes with the good and bad luck.	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values Evaluating an argument
6 that some people believe in bad and in good luck, and if you believe that you are going to have bad luck, you are going to have it Judging	Summarizing, Evaluating an argument
7 That you dont have to be superstitious all the time, because it	reflecting on challenges

becomes a problem. Opinion of read	to beliefs and values
8 That the superstition only function if you believe that, and is not real that if you broken mirros, see a black cat... it dont give you good luck Opinion	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
9 that the good luck or bad luck depends if you believe in yourself	Evaluating an argument reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
10 well, I think that everyone have a reason to be supertisous an that the luck doesnet depends of anyone or anything is your personal luck	evaluating an argument reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
11 that people's belives can become true.	evaluating an argument outlining and summarizing
12 that the surperstitions are true if we thing all the days in that.	outlining and summarizing evaluating an argument
13 i think that the superstitions are not so important because this topic is all about us. I could conclude that the bad and good luck is only in your mind	evaluating an argument outlining and summarizing
15 think that the supestitions are not true is the security that we have to do things like Niko	evaluating an argument
Q3 WHAT DIFFERENT SUPERSTITION DID YOU KNOW WITH THE READING? WHY DO YOU REMEMBER IT	Contextualizing
1 Didn't answer	
2 like all of then because i see it in tv shows when i was a kid	Contextualizing
3. no answer	
4 I DIDN'T KNOW THAT IF YOU SLEPP WITH YOUR WALLET YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE "BAD LUCK".	Getting info
5 I like all because it is an interesting thing when misteriously he have always bad luck	Opinion
6 i know that it is bad luck sleep with your wallet	Getting info
7 No answered	
8 I didn't know that if you left a hat on the bed you will have bad luck.	Getting info
9 that if you put a candle in front of the mirror it give you bad luck	Getting info
10 mm anyone.. ther where all the superstitions that i ever know.	Contextualizing
11 No Answer	

<i>12 No, all the superstitions that i know are in the text.</i>	Contextualizing
<i>13 i know the one that says that if a black cat pass in from of me i would have bad luck</i>	Contextualizing
<i>14 I don't know another superstition.</i>	Contextualizing
<i>15 i know that is bad luck is leave empty bootles in the table</i>	Contextualizing
Q4. DO YOU AGREE WITH THE READING BELIEFS ABOUT SUPERSTITIONS? WHY?	evaluating an argument
<i>1 Didn't answer</i>	
<i>2 no because the superstitions are mental</i>	Stating an assumption
<i>3 no, because the superstitions doesn't exist if a person thing that he is going to have good luck, he have good luck</i>	evaluating an argument
<i>4 NO I DON'T BECAUSE I FOR EXAMPLE PILT SOME SALT ALL THE TIMESAND IT NEVER HAPPENS SOMETHING BAD ON THE DAY</i>	Contextualizing Stating an assumption
<i>5 No but is an interesting topic to read.</i>	set an opinion
<i>6 no, the superstitions are not real, they are just mental</i>	Judging the reading evaluating an argument
<i>7 no all times because you dont have to depent all time in superstitions.</i>	Contextualizing Stating an assumption
<i>8 No, because the superstitions are mental, depends on each person's thoughts</i>	Judging the reading evaluating an argument
<i>9 not because it's all in the mind</i>	Stating an assumption
<i>10 mmmm...i think that the reason to be superstitious is iffereent in all the cases and we mayrespect that point....</i>	evaluating an argument reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
<i>11 no because superstition just doesnt exist.</i>	Stating an assumption
<i>12 No because the superstitions are mental things.</i>	Stating an assumption
<i>13 i dont beleave in the superstitions because i think than is a way to scare the people.</i>	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
<i>14 No, I dont agree with the reading beliefs because I think most of superstitions are on your mind and the rest are simply casualities</i>	Stating an assumption
<i>15 No because he try to prove the supestitions that he forget that he didn't believe in that</i>	Stating an assumption
Q5. DO YOU HAVE ANY SUPERSTITION?	Contextualizing
<i>1 Didn't answer</i>	
<i>2 no</i>	Contextualizing
<i>3 no</i>	Contextualizing

4 no	Contextualizing
5 no	Contextualizing
6 no	Contextualizing
7 but im traying to not not belive in they.	evaluating an argument Contextualizing
8 No, i dont believe	Contextualizing
9 no	Contextualizing
10 well..YES. i think that if im alone and i made a bad thing to an other person.. something bad is going to happen me alone.	Contextualizing
11 NO	Contextualizing
12 no i dont have	Contextualizing
13 no, i dont have any superstition.	Contextualizing
14 no	Contextualizing
15 no	Contextualizing
<b>6. DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHARACTER'S GOOD LUCK? WHY?</b>	Evaluating argumnet reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
1 Didn't answer	
2 yes because he doesn't care about that	Judging charater Evaluating argument
3 i think that he had good luck because he want to desmostrate that bad luck doesnt exist	Stating an assumption
4 YES BECAUSE HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT IT.	Stating an assumption
5 i thing that he has good luck because he doesnt thing in superstition. And it is mental.	Judging charater evaluating an argument
6 yes, because he doesent care the superstitions	Stating an assumption
7 no the only that i have to do is to belive in me.	Stating an assumption Contextualizing
8 I think that the character's good luck was real because he believe that the superstitions caused good luck.	Stating an assumption Contextualizing
9 no because the only thing that he do is to belive in	Stating an assumption
10 i think that the good luck does not depend os anybody and if someone have bad or good luck its because a good reason. it may have sense.	evaluating an argument
11 yes because it doesnt seem to care to him	evaluating an argument
12 no, because the good thing are because god do them	Stating an assumption
13 i thing that yes because he doesent think and belive about it.	Stating an assumption
14 Yes, I believe about the character's good luck because it happend to him some very strong suspicious coincidenses, for example he won the lotery two following times with the tree primes.	Contextualizing evaluating an argument
15 6no it was his security of himself	Stating an assumption

Analysis of the artifacts reading: Alberto's neighbor

Data	Strategy to be analyzed
<b>Q 1. WHAT DID YOU DO IN THIS READING SESSION?</b>	5. Outlining & summarizing
S1 i read a text about the neighbours	restate the title
S2 i read the text about neighbours	restate the title
S3 i read a text about the neighbours and that there are many kinds of neighbours and we have to respect each other	evaluating an argument, contextualizing, outlining and summarizing
S4 i read a history from a neighbours.	restate the title
S5 i read a history from a neighbours.	restate the title
<b>Q2 WOULD YOU HAVE THE SAME ATTITUDE IF YOU WERE ALBERTO OR MIMI? WHY?</b>	Contextualizing, evaluating an argument, reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S1. no, because i tink that the persons are friends, no staff	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values, Stating an assumption
S2. no, because the people are not stuff they are or frinds or owners.	evaluating an argument
S3 no because i thinks, the people and everything have an special "valiue" an i think that the way the werw with the others was no so pollite	evaluating an argument, reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S4. no, because there are people not things.	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S5. No because the people wouldn't be treat like objects	evaluating an argument
<b>Q3. WHAT IDEAS CAN YOU HAVE ABOUT LIFE WITH THIS READING?</b>	, contextualizing
S1. that some persons are sttaf of the animals so the animals take advantage of the situation	Stating an assumption, accepting an argument
S2 that the cats thing that the owners are stuff.	outlining ideas, accepting an argument
S3. mmm that we have to respect the others and they differences. also like mendez says, some animals probably take advanage of use and take us like stuff, but i think that no in all the cases	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values, contextualizing
S4. that some neighbours think that other people are stuff.	evaluating an argument, contextualizing
S5. That maybe the fights are not just see in humans but in animals too.	accepting an argument
<b>Q4. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS READING?</b>	Contextualizing
S1 that you learn vocabulary because some words are stranger	outlining ideas &

than anothers.	summarizing
S2. to show the way in wich the animals take advantage of us... and also to learn about the way we should respect our neighbours	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values, contextualizing
S3. my proupuse is that we can't thing bat about neighbours if we dont know them.	Contextualizing Stating an assumption
S4. in proupuse the reading and not judge the neighbours	Stating an assumption
S5. To read a different reading and to get knowledge of new vocabulary.	Stating an assumption outlining ideas
<b>Q5. WHAT DOES THIS STORY TELL YOU?</b>	Contextualizing, Outlining and summarizing
S1. the story tell me that the dogs are best company that the cats,	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values
S2. that the cats see bat the dogs.	outlining ideas
S3. that every time we will find people that take advantage and others who stay with us	reflecting on challenges to beliefs and values evaluating an argumen , contextualizing
S4. we have to respect all the people	outlining ideas & summarizing, contextualizing
S5. That the troble in diferent families and species are very interesting and curious	Stating an assumption opinion