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Abstract

In Colombia, as well as in other world contexts, educators constantly question why young people fail to read regularly. Reasons vary from lack of interest to difficulties to read, as well as lack of efficient training to read texts in the native/foreign language. The 21st century academic world demands the use of students' critical thinking skills to access and produce knowledge effectively. Given that critical thinking skills are seen as a necessary set of abilities to deal with complex and analytical tasks, schools need to structure their curriculum to cope up with such needs. This study aims at presenting alternatives to help students of 11th grade in a Colombian school to learn and apply Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-Skills through a series of tasks in an English literature class. This study shows how students progressively attain a variety of personal tools to analyze and weigh situations, within a critical, as well as an ethical viewpoint.

Keywords: Critical Thinking Cognitive micro-skills, literature, analytic strategies.

Resumen

En Colombia, así como en otros contextos a nivel mundial, los docentes cuestionan el por qué la gente joven no lee. Las razones por una parte, obedecen a la falta de interés, dificultades de lectura, así como a la falta de entrenamiento eficiente para leer textos en la lengua materna/extranjera. Actualmente, el mundo académico universitario del siglo 21 requiere que los estudiantes ejerciten habilidades de pensamiento crítico para poder acceder a producir conocimiento de manera efectiva. Teniendo en cuenta que las habilidades de pensamiento crítico se conciben como imprescindibles para poder interpretar textos y desarrollar actividades analíticas y complejas, es preciso que las instituciones de educación básica y media estructuren su currículo para poder satisfacer estas necesidades. El presente estudio presenta alternativas para apoyar a estudiantes de grado undécimo en un colegio de Colombia, para que puedan aprender y aplicar estrategias de pensamiento crítico cognitivo a través de una serie de tareas en la clase de literatura Inglesa. Este estudio muestra cómo los estudiantes van adquiriendo progresivamente una variedad de herramientas personales para analizar y ponderar situaciones, dentro de un marco crítico, analítico y ético.

Palabras clave: estrategias de pensamiento crítico-cognitivo, Literatura, estrategias analíticas.

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IMPLEMENTING LITERATURE ANALYTICAL STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING COGNITIVE MICRO-SKILLS

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Educational institutes worldwide are concerned about the issue of the low reading levels and the lack of reading habits in different countries. Nations, including the USA, show in recent polls that the average American is reading 6,9 books a year. An article from the UNESCO on reading habits in 2013, shows that people are reading less books each year. While countries like Germany display an average of 12 books a year, and Spain 7.5 books a year, Colombia is a country where the average of books read by a common citizen is no more than two.

Reasons for people to read or not to read vary according to their personal and professional motivations; issues related to age, genre, and literacy level are part of the variables in analyzing this data. According to a Colombian survey (El Heraldo, 2006) performed by the DANE (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística) about cultural consumption practices, it was established that 75,5 percent of surveyed people read for pleasure; 33,59 percent read as a requirement of studies, and 8,72% read for job requirement. Even though schools and universities place a great importance on this process, there is a low rate of reading for the average Colombian. Students of ages 15 to 20 fail to show in general an interest in reading. In his article, Villamil 2013) states how “among young people 12 – 17 years old, 30 percent said they don’t like reading academic texts or school-prescribed texts and 61 percent say they don’t have time.” At the school where this project took place, in Grades 10th and 11th, students have to read about 8 books a year. However, this task is not accomplished by most of them for various reasons. The first main reason is the lack of interest. The second relates to those difficulties to understand or follow the reading tasks proposed by schools.

This percentage of reading habits (less than 2 books read per year) becomes a concern, for once at the university, students are not used to a rhythm of reading that implies positive comprehension skills, added to the specific and demanding tasks that professors need from them to accomplish in very little time. Reading is a skill necessary for further education, but especially for life, which makes this research project appropriate for our context, where students also struggle with the lack of interest in reading, as well as difficulties involved.

Reading is also a concern for the Liceo Cambridge, a school of about 400 students near Cota, a small town on the outskirts of Bogota, Colombia. In a response to providing students with skills and habits appropriate for continuous reading, the school's English program has gone through a process where the improvement and building of reading skills has been addressed by means of implementing extensive reading. As a result of this, students have acquired strategies in reading, such as identifying main ideas, or events in a text, labeling specific elements in a text, creating mind maps describing and comparing aspects in authors or in books, and other strategies that support their reading comprehension processes. The presentation of exams such as the Pruebas Saber 11, or admission tests to apply for universities demand from them higher order skills, rather than basic reading comprehension skills. These are some of the reasons why in the last two years of their school lives, students are exposed to more complex books and are demanded more complex thinking processes, as means of developing their thinking skills as highly as possible. However, this is not the only element related to reading that concerns the school. Throughout the process of analyzing needs, during a period of three months prior to the

design and implementation of this research study, the team of English teachers, along with the psychology department at school, revised some of the situations and typical considerations when entering universities and when taking the ICFES exam (the Pruebas Saber 11). This research provided evidence that, even though students tried to address the challenges of reading comprehension presented in either of these cases, there were elements missing, in terms of how to understand the sense of a question, or how to connect ideas to authors, or in terms of presenting an argumentation with sound grounds. Analysis of students' documents from the English class, samples of the Pruebas Saber, and the material from universities provided by the Psychology Department, led to the identification of a basic set of needs regarding the skills necessary to perform well at those common challenges students have to undergo ever since they reach 11th grade.

The Psychology department of the school has provided the school with data of universities and their requirements for students to pursue a successful education process along their careers. For example, one of the requirements that the Universidad del Rosario, one of the most traditional universities in Colombia, demands in most of their BA programs is for students to be able to analyze a text in terms of the core and intention of a paragraph, which is specifically required for the Law School. Students should be able therefore to understand the intentions underneath a sentence and the possible implications of changing a law bill. There are other cases, in which universities require from their students' fluent reading skills in English, for applicants to be able to enter Master's program; this is the case of the Sabana University. Students from the Andes and the Javeriana University take compulsory placement tests, and are required to be certified B2 students in English, in order

to complete their BA programs. Moreover, most of the students currently going there are required to read several textbooks for their BA programmes which can be currently found only in English. Such skills need specific training, guidance and practice to be learnt and applied, and the time and training availability in such situations is scarce. This is because students are meant to arrive at their BA programmes already knowing how to do all the necessary to address the university academic needs. Developing critical thinking skills is therefore the objective of this research project, as a complement to the program of extensive reading, and as a means of promoting life-long learning skills in students, and supporting students in the undertaking of personal and professional challenges (Ciascai & Haiduc, 2009, p.9). In terms of the background, the strategy presented in this study is well grounded. This project responds to the current needs of the Liceo Cambridge 11th grade students regarding their academic performance. This research aims at developing in students critical thinking cognitive micro-skills that might add to their educational goals by allowing them to compare and contrast ideals with actual practice, to note similarities and differences, to distinguish relevant from irrelevant facts, to make predictions and plausible inferences according to a context, and to explore implications and consequences of actions, to project ideas and foresee results, among others.

In order to pursue this task, I chose to implement Literature Analytical Strategies to foster the development of the aforementioned skills as well as promoting in students an appealing way of approaching the reading process, by having students partly own their processes, and appeal to their personal values and drives in the creation of brief projects that took place based on two novels, thus possibly motivating them to read.

This research, which may well be of value for other institutions and schools, given that it addresses two major issues regarding reading habits, skills and interests, in a time where reading is underestimated and critical thinking skills are necessary to undertake challenges of the Twenty First Century, posed the following research question and objectives:

1.2. Research Question

What is the effect of the implementation of Literature Analytic Strategies in the development of critical thinking cognitive micro skills in 11th graders in the literature class?

1.3. Research Objectives

1.3.1. General Objective

To analyze the development of critical thinking cognitive micro skills in 11th graders through literary analytic strategies.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

To determine learners' development (in any) of Critical thinking Cognitive Micro-Skills.

To determine the influence (if any) of Literature Analytic strategies in the motivation levels of students during the reading process.

1.4. Rationale

Critical thinking has become a major area of study. For this research project it is a response to a current need in professional and academic fields for any student from the Liceo Cambridge. Developing such skills is a demanding task to undertake for students in L1. Therefore, the implementation of this project supports the development of higher order thinking skills that can be applied both in L1 and L2, but which will be developed in L2. For 11th graders at Cambridge School, thinking critically is a set of necessary skills that can be applied and used in a diversity of scenarios, especially in attempts to build their own perspective of their local situation, their projection in their community, their possibilities to approach a text from a different point of view. Moreover, this allows literary works to have an impact in their beliefs, judgments of real-life situations and their cultural assets, since they may then be able to respond to the challenges, both academic and ethical, by building their own criteria and becoming analytical persons. A person who thinks critically might often be able to restate, describe, learn how to gather, and analyze, synthesize, assess information and interpret texts, situations, and problems themselves (Paul, 1989, p. 197). This is precisely the outcome that this study intends to provide for students' learning processes.

Literature learning has the quality of developing a multiplicity of skills, impressions, views of the world, and it even builds upon cultural views. In this project, literature is meant to trigger the scenarios for the development of Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro Skills such as noting similarities and differences, distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts, making plausible inferences, and comparing and contrasting ideals

with actual practice. These strategies may help to build students' criteria in order to assess situations and make decisions or solve problems.

This project might well become the beginning of a line of research to develop critical thinking through L2 in populations of students where English is learnt as a foreign language, with limited exposure to L2, but with an approach that allows effective critical thinking strategies to take place, especially through the implementation of literature classes.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this project, the topics revised are: literature reading, analytical strategies for reading, critical thinking, and motivation towards reading. These elements are the foundations to develop strategies used in order to try to develop critical thinking cognitive micro-skills, and which were worth examining given the level and needs of the target group.

Throughout this chapter, each of the elements mentioned above are developed, considering their role in understanding how these critical thinking cognitive micro skills may have an impact on the way students read, understand literature, and understand themselves as readers. For this reason, certain theories underlying the project are considered core to the development, and others provide support towards the implementation of this research.

2.1. Literature Based Instruction

Harris and Hodges (1995) define Literature-Based Instruction as a learning scenario where high quality or rich-content books are used as core materials, and the use of such materials will in turn foster the development of literacy. Other authors, such as Cullinan (1987) argue that this approach fosters, in addition, meaning that is socially constructed, framed within the Constructivist pedagogical approach.

Literature-Based Learning is characterized by the inclusion of a large variety of books as a vehicle for language learning. It is also characterized by consistent reading practice that may enhance fluency and reading comprehension, as well as vocabulary and

finally, it may also promote discussion of literature among peers and teachers (Newman & Dickinson, 2003). In this sense, this approach is considered consistent with the context of the class, and with the pedagogical rationale of this project, since it promotes discussions and analysis that might be able to reinforce the implementation of critical thinking cognitive micro skills chosen for this research. Through this approach, students could well be better able to understand elements of a story, including title, author, setting, conflict, resolution, events and conclusions; as well as become acquainted with the notion that reading is a transaction between a reader and a text, where a live interaction is created (Khanbeigi and Yalsharzeh, 2012).

Following such thread of thought, Long (1986, p.42) argue that “Literature and language teaching involve the development of a feeling for language”. Teenage students, especially young adults are not commonly interested or driven by activities such as reading, and traditional approaches to teaching have not changed that situation, for the lack of responses literature classes often fail to become interesting for either parts (teacher and learners). In a survey conducted by the National Reading Research Center in the 1990s, the University of Maryland and the University of Georgia), teachers expressed their concern about the lack of academic motivation where the reading achievement of students was to be addressed (Pressley, 2006). Long (1986, p.42) also considers that responses to literature, either positive or negative, show an underlying interest of students for reading. However, this is a difficult goal to achieve, since methodologies and approaches have traditionally followed the presentation for non-native speakers, and this issue augments the concern of students to interpret the text or try to translate it, other than respond to it. Long (1986)

believes that “teaching of Literature to non-native speakers should seek to develop responses,” (p.42). For a literature class to have an impact in students, it has become necessary to use a more communicative approach, in which students’ involvement can take place in the discussion, and presenting the text might well provide the beginning of an inquiry that prompts the elaboration based on world issues, or topics related to their personal interests and concerns. Using the text-as-object (Long, 1986) is an approach that might help transform the learning of literature into a richer experience in the eyes of the students, and an experience that could provide students with wider perspectives of the world. The idea behind using the text-as-object implies for this research, that students will not be centered on merely understanding the content presented in the text, but on how the text is a means to possibly understand their own perspectives of the world better, and in addition, a means of probably understanding themselves as subjects in that world they are constructing.

Literary texts are argued to be rich in multiple levels of meaning, for which an active involvement is demanded from the student, in order to grasp the unstated implications and assumptions of the text (Lazar,1993. p. 19). The action of assuming from a text is part of making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations; one of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills addressed in this project. The literature class may also provide the scenario and the excuse to prompt the development of these and other skills related to critical thinking; This process might well add to the personal formation of students in regard of two basic aspects: how they assume the reading of a book, and the

way this book or text can modify their beliefs, or rectify their understanding of the world, as stated above.

Literature may also become a scenario, where students could possibly improve their understanding of the L2, because it is a rich model of the language that provides specific contexts for use. According to Collie and Slater (1987), literature is a medium, through which students can access the new language (L2) and improve their critical thinking skills, and intercultural awareness, among other aspects. In this sense, literature may well improve their level of understanding, so that they can deal with more complex processes, other than reading comprehension. That is an advantage that is necessary to consider in this research, and these are some of the main reasons for which this approach is considered in this research project, for it implies efforts and critical thinking from students, and it will prompt the creation of links between what they read, and the current situations regarding world problems. This is precisely what might be considered critical reading; namely, a set of abilities that go beyond decoding, and that imply interpretive skills. And this, in turn, leads to the need of integrating reading and critical thinking skills, involving a single process that encompasses elements of both realms. This is precisely what might be considered critical reading, I.E., a set of abilities that go beyond decoding, and that imply interpretive skills, and this leads to the need of possibly integrating reading and critical thinking skills, as a means of a single process that encompasses elements of both realms. As for literature, it may become the provider of scenarios that allow them to learn about the world through the eyes of others, in a creative manner.

2.2. Critical Thinking

Elder and Paul (2008, p.58) define critical thinking as: The intellectually, disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to create beliefs and promote actions. In this sense, it has a purpose, and it is based on intellectual universal values that transcend subject matter divisions. It is also complex since it demands the interrelations of all gathered and observed knowledge in order to build such beliefs and in order to become the sound ground for decision making. According to the Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking, it is also understood as a self-guided, self-disciplined thinking, which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way (Elder and Paul, 2006). People who think critically are thought to be able to use concepts and principles within their knowledge to analyze, assess, and improve thinking. When thinking critically, you usually improve the quality of your thinking by organizing internally the structures inherent in thinking imposing an intellectual standard in it.

Overall, critical thinking as described by Elder and Paul (2006) implies analytical skills; however, very few people are taught how to analyze (Elder and Paul, 2006, p. 2). What characterizes critical thinking is a judgment that is unbiased, impartial, objective, informed and without prejudice, and in order to become critical thinkers, it is necessary to understand the rudiments of thought, which implies taking thinking apart (Elder and Paul, 2006. p.3).

These same authors established in their work “Critical Thinking Framework” (Paul and Elder, 2010) that critical thinking, as a mode of thinking involves three major components: a) Elements of thought or reasoning. b) Intellectual standards, and c) Intellectual traits. Together, they all generate an intertwined process where people develop traits of behavior, thinking and speaking that show fair-mindedness, questioning attitudes, and open mindedness.

The first component aforementioned: *Elements of Thought* include inferences, assumptions, implications, concepts, purposes, questions, information, and points of view. These elements in turn, are capable of promoting the development of *Intellectual traits* (the third component), such as humility, autonomy, fair-mindedness, courage, perseverance, empathy, integrity, and confidence in reasoning. And such traits are usually embedded within *Intellectual standards* that imply accuracy, clarity, relevance, logical sufficiency, precision, depth, significance, fairness and breadth (Paul, and Elder. 2010). Given these specific elements of thought and especially the intellectual standards, the framework of the literature class can be integrated into the project, so as to grant the development of tasks that lead to the learning and practice of Critical Thinking strategies.

The work of Paul and other authors in the Critical Thinking Organization have defined a list of 35 dimensions of Critical thinking which are classified in three mayor categories: Affective Strategies, Cognitive strategies – macro abilities, and Cognitive strategies – micro skills.

The first category, *Affective Strategies*, is based on the *intellectual traits* discussed above, and implies developing in students’ intellectual good faith and integrity, humility,

intellectual courage, confidence in reason, among others. (Paul et. al. 2011) In this sense, these dimensions aim at developing in students an intellectual responsibility regarding what they think and how they think about things. As a researcher and a teacher, although interested in this set of dimensions, within the time frame given, it would be difficult to devise classroom strategies that respond to this category, and it becomes even more complex measuring the development of features that seem to be embedded in people's personality. As such it would require the support of researchers of other disciplines, including psychologists, among others and it would be beyond the reach of the literature classroom.

The second category, known as *Cognitive Strategies – macro abilities* is based on the *Universal Intellectual Standards* mentioned above. These dimensions include about seventeen strategies that frame a variety of contexts, where specific questioning, clarification, and analysis is necessary, considering a variety of possible perspectives. In this case, the dimensions in this category rather than inclusive, seem exclusive for each case, and the purpose is to support students personal and intellectual growth, providing them with tools that might allow them to approach other more complex, and more specific dimensions on their own.

The last category is known as *Cognitive Strategies – Micro-Skill*, and it is based on the elements of reasoning presented previously. These include nine micro skills, such as thinking precisely about thinking, giving reasons and evaluating evidence, exploring implications and consequences, recognizing contradictions, making plausible inferences,

predictions or interpretations, and distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts, among others.

However, the possibility to develop all the 35 dimensions of Critical thinking (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011) within the time-frame of this project needs to be narrowed down to elements that can feasibly promote target critical thinking behaviors, but also that provide students with tools that may allow them to grow both intellectually and ethically. In that sense, the dimensions chosen correspond to the third category, because they can be amplified and they could promote the learning of skills in other categories of dimensions. In order to narrow them down to a handful of strategies and micro-skills approachable from the literature class, the chosen micro skills were thus (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011):

- S-27 comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice
- S-29 noting significant similarities and differences.
- S-31 distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts.
- S-32 making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations.
- S-35 exploring implications and consequences.

These Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-skills (CTCMS) can be framed within the analytical strategies of the literature lessons, and may allow students to develop further their thinking abilities, and their judgments about situations, contexts and standards of life. This could in turn, possibly engage students in reading, since the approach to the reading process is prompted from the possible connections that may result from their own experiences, their own judgments and standards of life.

2.3. Motivation towards Reading

Motivation altogether is an umbrella concept related to the drives that produce in people the desire and will to do something. Dörnyei believes that motivation is the responsible of defining human behavior by giving it direction and impulse (Dörnyei, 1998, p.117). In this article, the author explains how the focus to understand motivation should be placed on the individual's thoughts and beliefs that are transformed into action. There are two subsidiary concepts that support the understanding of the dimensions of motivation: impulse towards and action and sustainability of the effort (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011) and these two components of motivation are thought to be deeply rooted on the idea that motivation, rather than goal oriented or emotion oriented, it is a process, and as such, involves an emotional dimension, an a dimension of accomplishment, and a dimension of consistency (Dörnyei, 1998). This is why it is necessary to consider elements and strategies that provoke changes on their motivation towards reading literature in English.

It is believed by many educators nowadays, that to promote reading, it is necessary to consider material that addresses students' personal interests. Elements that affect motivation towards reading vary from having an understanding of students' personal interests, and also students' learning styles and skills. Reading interests are however, not the only option in attempting to build motivation towards reading. It is also necessary to provide students with materials and activities that build a constructive environment, providing with models and using a variety of motivational techniques (Clary, 1991, p.342). In this sense, the strategies chosen and the pedagogical approach play central roles in the implementation of this project.

Recent research has demonstrated how the motivation towards reading is determined by the proficiency levels that students have to read. Students with difficulties to read, or to comprehend words, or to grasp global meaning within texts show a low level of motivation towards the task, and prefer to avoid attempting to read altogether given the levels of frustration produced by the prospect of the task (Decker, 2000, p.4). The tasks that mainly affect students' sense of self-efficacy are related to basic word comprehension skills. It is therefore necessary to provide students with tasks that build from within students reach and schemata or prior knowledge to topics proposed. In that sense the anxiety caused by the task can be diminished or even set aside, once the focus of the task changes. Tasks that foster discussion are probably ideal to promote the notion that others read differently, and to help them understand how interpretation is a subjective process (Decker, 2000) where opinions are valid within a specific context. In this sense, the critical thinking cognitive micro skills chosen might serve as a scenario to foster discussions that will challenge students' perceptions, interpretations and assumptions, and will therefore modify as well their perceptions of their self-efficacy as readers.

Chapter 3. Research Design

The aim of this chapter is to describe the connection between the theoretical framework that provides support for this project and the elements that show evidence of this theory in action. Hence, the methodology and strategies that were used in this project are included in this chapter, together with the type of study and its main features.

In the past, research was considered a field for professionals other than teachers. However, for over two decades it has become an effective way of practising a reflective and problem focused teaching, where the role of teachers has changed to become an active observer, a participant, and an inquirer through action research (Wallace, 1998, p. 17). This is a qualitative action research study. Qualitative research is an activity which, rather than proposing to measure exact data based on specific gauges, involves observation of behaviours to display and recognize changes in subjects. These changes are described in efforts to provide an insight of how certain elements affect people in certain circumstances. For educators, qualitative methods might provide us with tools that allow some degree of specificity, and tools to make observations worth the change in mind.

Shank (2002) defines qualitative research as “a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning” (p.5). By *systematic* he means “planned, ordered and public”, following rules agreed upon by members of the qualitative research community. By *empirical*, he means that this type of inquiry is grounded in the world of experience. *Inquiry into meaning* infers that researchers try to understand how others make sense of their experience. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) claim that qualitative research involves an *interpretive and naturalistic* approach: “This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings,

attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Ospina, 2003, p. 3).

Action research allows teachers to reflect, analyze and propose solutions for current classroom and learning problems, becoming, in addition an agent for educational change. Action research allows for systematic data collection, which will then work as a means of reflection, diagnosis, and planning for improvement, either in the field of teaching, as a personal development approach, or as an approach to deal with learning difficulties and approaches to improve.

Action research is mainly characterized by its cyclical reflection; it is inquiry based (Wallace, 1998, p.14), and through this process, it considers problems or issues faced in the classroom. This process implies asking questions that lead to collect data, which, once analysed, will lead to an action plan to be applied in the classroom. Once this cycle is completed, the process begins again from the beginning. This way, the action plan will be analyzed and evaluated as well to continue with the development of the teaching practice, or with the implementation of classroom improved methodologies that are expected to support the target population of this action research project. The main benefit of action research is that, “rather than dealing with the theoretical dimension of a phenomenon, action research allows practitioners to address those concerns that are closest to them, ones over which they can exhibit some influence and make change” (Ferrance, 2000, p. 5).

Therefore, the fundamental study basis for this project is action research. This implies an active role in teachers and provides them with tools to observe, analyze and take decisions that are expected to affect the learning process, or to improve specific areas that

need further work. Because it is focused on current classroom problems, it allows the development of a reflective perspective and allows structuring the process of gathering data that might well provide a guideline to continue to improve teaching practices based on students' current needs.

This project follows a qualitative approach, since it takes into account human situations, experiences and behaviours, that allow for a potentially deeper understanding of the research context from the inside, possibly providing insightful data and implies a social and subjective interpretation of data. Given that this research project is also addressing motivational issues in reading literature, the process of observation takes a main role in the process.

3.2. Researcher Role

For this action research project, the roles of the researcher are diagnoser, observer, mediator, and advisor. These roles respond to the moments that this research proposes in the stages of implementation. As a researcher, I played the roles of diagnoser, observer, and monitor, according to the different stages of the process. For 11th graders of the Cambridge School, it is I, the teacher, who provide sources, and ideas for them to develop further their critical thinking skills. This group of students is currently beginning to focus on their possible future academic situations. This implies, in turn, certain efforts and results they might not be prepared to accomplish, unless advanced work is developed in reading, but especially in terms of how they approach what they read. To comply with these conditions, it is important to consider the possible scenarios in which the researcher will

develop the implementation. In that sense, I might have a role as an advisor to students (Wallace, p.172), and also as material designer, among others.

11th grade students are aware of the demands of universities in Colombia, and they are also aware of the fact that many academic texts they will be requested to read are in English. This project aims to provide a response for those needs, as it promotes their involvement in creative tasks that help develop such skills, and that demand from them intellectual and critical efforts.

3.3. Context and Participants

This project took place at the Liceo Cambridge, which is a ten year-old school, in the process of becoming bilingual. The PEI (Proyecto Educativo Institucional) states that by the end of the process students will have a proficiency level B2. According to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference, 2001) a person of this level is able to read a variety of texts that include news, opinion articles, essays, and stories with a fairly good level of comprehension. They should, in addition, be able to express, explain and defend his or her claims through arguments and adequate comments, to present advantages or disadvantages of a situation, to offer fair reasoning, and to clarify perspectives, among other skills (CEFR, p.45). It is therefore important for the school to provide students with the tools necessary to comply with these characteristics.

Throughout my time at this school, I have seen how much students struggle with the reading process, but as a student (both in the Master's programme at the Sabana University, and throughout my BA studies, at the Universidad Nacional) I found it both challenging

and useful to be able to read in English, since plenty of the textbooks that I needed to study were available exclusively in English. However, I also witnessed how reading in any language for my university tasks demanded more than decoding. The fact is that it demanded careful analysis, and it took me time to develop the skills I have currently for reading. This is one of the ground reasons that motivated me to explore the issues presented in this study further, as well as to support students in the development of these skills.

The population of this project is a group of 11th graders, whose ages range between 16 and 18 years old. This group of twenty one students has been reading extensive texts for three years as part of the curriculum, and as a result of that, they are able to read original and unabridged novels achieving a global understanding of the content. They receive English lessons six hours per week, and three of those hours are mainly dedicated to the literature program. The reading process held in the English classes has provided evidence of the learners' consistent difficulty to analyze and link situations to more local contexts, or even difficulties challenging beliefs based on a more critical approach of the reading process. This is why this project is shown as an alternative to respond to the current needs by proposing strategies to support the development of CTCMS along the reading process in the literature class.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

Observational techniques are usually understood to provide a more suitable match for action research projects in general, given its nature, as well as the premise that Action

research concerns the observation of teachers' practices and how to improve them, by means of exploring the realities of their own classrooms (Burns, 2010. p.78). In this research, exploratory and interpretive methods are required, since they allow the teacher to observe and explore a wide variety of responses from the students within the implementation process. According to Burns (2003, p. 80), observation allows teachers to document and reflect systematically, based on classroom interactions and events. These, in turn, imply a constant exercise of analysis, reflection and observation that allow teachers to notice relevant actions that are necessary and useful to understand the changes and happenings of the classroom related to the subject of investigation (Burns, 2003, p. 78). However, it is also necessary to analyze the students' texts, which may provide insightful evidence of the students' current level regarding the development of critical thinking skills. Wallace (1998, p.14 -17) argues that in order to define an area of research and an appropriate approach, it is necessary to consider the current needs of the learners in the area of study. Those needs should also reflect the techniques to be used both in the initial or diagnostic process, as well as on the developmental stage. Therefore, this project data collection process uses both types of techniques.

To keep an accurate account of the events of the classroom, Burns (2010, p.80) suggests to consistently consider the focus of the observation, to identify the specific location in which the observation is taking place, the group to be observed, to keep an observation journal with the events as they happen. The same author also argues for the need to be as objective as possible and to develop a system that fits in with other actions the teacher is compelled to respond to while doing the observation.

In order to keep track of the most suitable data to be analysed in this project, the following data collection tools were chosen:

Table 1. Plan for the implementation of tools.

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
While-stage	Observational	Research journal	To revise responses related to the motivation towards reading.
	Non-observational	Middle-term survey	To keep track of students' current perceptions, and identify changes regarding the approach chosen.
	Non-observational	Students' artefacts or documents	To revise the development of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills
After-stage	Non-observational	Students' artefacts or documents	To triangulate the process
	Non-observational	End-term survey	To triangulate the process

3.4.1. Surveys

Brown (2001, p. xi) argues that using surveys in a language program is the result of identifying an existing need in the classroom that needs to be addressed, and as such, a set of surveys will help the researcher identify emerging patterns in the perceptions students have towards reading in a foreign language. In the initial stage of the implementation, the students filled in a survey, in which they expressed the way they feel about reading in general, and the reading process in the English literature class. From this survey, certain ideas were taken in order to address issues related to difficulties that the participants had when reading in English. This technique is advantageous, since it is a tool of easy response for the pre-determined responses involved; however, the questions needed a specific preparation, for which some adjustments are necessary for the mid-term survey (Appendix C). Moreover, a follow-up survey would be considered an important data collection tool,

since it would provide insight as to the usefulness of this study in students' professional studies.

3.4.1. Documents

Documents are defined as overviews, lesson plans, students' writing, classroom materials, and tests (Farrell, 2007, p. 24-26). These documents were collected, following specific criteria, in order to gather information regarding students' specific performance in each of the micro-skills implemented. Documents also include the field notes or memos.

From each of the micro skills proposed, three samples of students works were collected, as well as the tests developed along the term. These provided the researcher with sufficient information so as to triangulate and revise the validity of the process. A thorough analysis of the students' documents provided an insightful idea of the state of development of each of the micro-skills proposed. Moreover, the field notes or memos written by the researcher provided information regarding students' behaviours and responses to the tasks implemented, as well as insights regarding the overall performance shown by students throughout the research process. This allowed the researcher to analyze the progress of the implementation from different perspectives, thus responding to the principles of triangulation and validity (Burns, 2010 p. 95-97).

3.5. Data Collection procedures

As mentioned above, the data collection process was divided in three stages, each of which implied the design and piloting of the instruments proposed prior to the application.

Each of the instruments devised responded to the constructs and elements that were presented in Chapter 2, and were hence necessary to understand and measure the level of progress of students regarding the learning of the CTCMS and the levels of motivation associated to the reading process.

During the pre-stage, students developed a test based on the five micro skills (namely, comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice; noting significant similarities and differences; distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts; making plausible inferences, predictions or interpretations; exploring implications and consequences) implemented, so as to measure the potential development of the aforementioned skills, but also to corroborate the pertinence of this process and the chosen skills. Students were informed about the objectives and nature of the project. Their parents also received a consent letter (Appendix A) that was returned within the week. Parents agreed to have their children participate in the study proposed. Students also participated in the initial survey (Appendix C) that provided information regarding their perceptions as readers, and the perceptions towards reading in a foreign language. The implementation was calculated for 6 weeks, and the lesson plans corresponded to both the aims of this research project and the standards required by the school.

The while-stage took more than the time defined in the beginning, and I took altogether twelve (12 weeks -two terms). One element I considered essential to examine was the need to see the skills in action throughout two books read in the literature program rather than a single publication. In this way, the validity and applicability of such skills in students throughout a longer process could be tested. As a result of this decision, more

lessons were planned to match the time devised for the implementation process. Throughout this process the teacher’s field notes were continuously recorded in order to complement the information provided by the documents of the students.

The post stage of the project implied having students take a midterm survey to revise the potential changes in participants’ perceptions towards their reading skills and performance, and also towards their overall motivation to read. In addition to this, round table sessions were held upon completion of each of the books and also the implementation, so as to share preliminary observations with students. The following time-lines display the process I followed in detail:

Table 2. Timeline of the implementation process – pre and while stage.

	March				April				May				June			
Activity - Date	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Step 1: Initiation																
Step 2: Preliminary investigation																
Step 3: Literature review																
Step 4: Design of Action plan																
Step 5: Implementation																
Step 6: monitoring data collection																

The while and after-stages focused on the end of the implementation, analysis of data and decision making.

IMPLEMENTING LITERATURE ANALYTICAL STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING COGNITIVE MICRO-SKILLS

Table 3. While and after-stages of the implementation process

Activity - Date	June				July				August				September			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Step 5: Implementation																
Step 6: monitoring data collection																
Step 7: analysis and interpretation of data																
Step 8: Reflection and decision making																
Step 9: Sharing findings																

As a result of this cycle, the curriculum of the Literature classes was revised and improved, thus, integrating the implementation of the CTCMS within the lessons, in order to continue to support students’ academic growth throughout the last years of their school life.

Chapter 4. Pedagogical Intervention

The previous chapter dealt with an overall description of the implementation process, and the data collection process. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a more insightful view of how each of the steps proposed in the implementation of this project were followed and how the methodology used responded to the initial intentions of this study.

The initial stage of this pedagogical intervention started with a survey that aimed at understanding the perceptions and feelings students had towards the reading process. For the implementation of this project, it was necessary to begin and end the process with a diagnostic test, which would give insight into the level of the critical skills of the participants. By the end, the participants would present a similar test to prove whether there was an improvement in the application of the CTCMS (namely, comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice; noting significant similarities and differences; distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts; making plausible inferences, predictions or interpretations; exploring implications and consequences) chosen. This initial test was the cornerstone which enabled the design of sensible tasks that could promote the development of CTCMS in literature.

The researcher designed a collection of tasks specifically focused on each of the micro skills to be developed. Based on such tasks students developed artifacts that provided further evidence of their development. Throughout this data collection

participants' responses and reactions were annotated in the field notes, and documents were collected, collected and the participants given feedback.

As a means to foster and promote activities to develop the CTCMS targeted, the books chosen were "The Beast" by Walter Dean Myers, and "The Picture of Dorian Gray", by Oscar Wilde. One of the main reasons for my selection of the first book was because it portrayed people of the participants' ages, and their social, ethical and moral dilemmas. This could certainly promote discussions upon several topics, such as how to choose a university, or what to ponder when facing drug addictions, or how to deal with fidelity in a relationship, or loyalty in a friendship.

On the other hand, the book of Wilde is rich in moral and ethical ambiguities, but it also became a challenge in terms of the interpretive and analytic skills it demanded from the students when reading it.

4.1. Micro Skill 1: Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice

For the implementation of this micro skill, the main criteria to design the tasks were to choose specific issues raised by the books of the literature program. In this case issues such as friendship and loyalty were considered within the context of the literature book "The Beast" (Myers, 2002), and analyzed within it. However, the task needed to include students' involvement in looking at the issue from their personal perspective. In order to do so, essay-questions were proposed.

Essay question sample for Micro-skill 1:

Explain in your own words the following assertions, and reflect upon them based on the characters of the book and on your own personal insight. Where do you stand regarding this assertion?

a. *Ordinary people waited till life disclosed to them its secrets, but to the few, to the elect, the mysteries of life were revealed before the curtains were drawn away.” p.34*

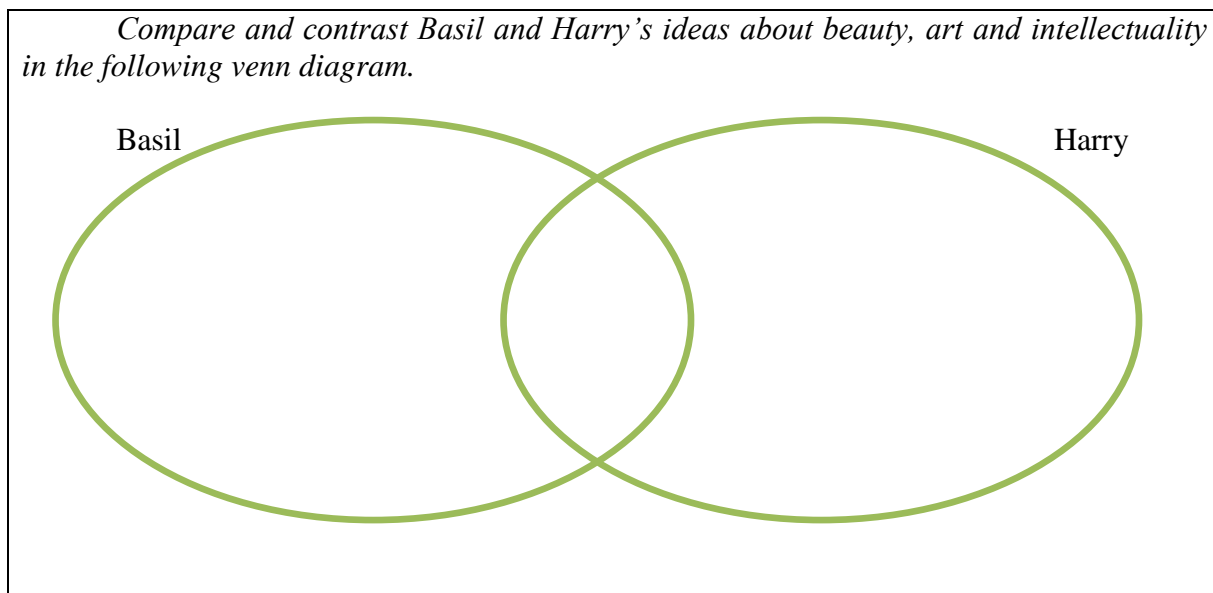
b. *“No woman is a genius” p. 28.*

In that sense, students could begin by discussing the meaning in pairs, and then writing their personal reflection individually in the form of an essay, where they could explain their views, and compare them with those of the characters of the book, and also in terms of their own realities.

4.2. Micro Skill 2: Noting significant similarities and differences

At this point of the implementation process, it was rather evident that this and the previous micro skill were similar in nature. However, the approach for this micro skill was to use tools that promoted plain and descriptive comparisons, in order to help students understand that to establish a comparison, it is necessary first to define specific elements to compare, so as to provide responses possible to analyze in a parallel form. As such, the initial tools explained and implemented were Venn diagrams, which fostered later discussion in groups. Venn diagrams are used as a complement of reading strategies since with them people can ponder the most relevant elements to consider from a variety of cases.

Figure 1 - Venn diagram sample for micro-skill 2.



One of the advantages of Venn diagrams as a tool is that it can become a versatile tool to display significant commonalities and differences not only between two elements. For this, this micro skill was merged with the first and they could be included in the analysis of moral traits of the characters and their own set of values.

4.3. Micro Skill 3: Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts

This micro skill could be developed from a variety of tasks that graded from the least to the most complex process of identification of information. The following samples correspond to different stages of the implementation process, thus depicting the development of the strategy further.

Micro-Skill 3 - Task sample 1:

1. *Make a list of the main events of chapter 2 (no more than 5).*

Micro-Skill 3 – Task sample 2:

*Considering that all answers are true, which ones respond to the questions better?
Choose.*

III. Spoon feels it is very hard to love Gabi because:

- a. He doesn't want to get married to her anymore.
- b. He had to leave Wallingford
- c. They were becoming strangers little by little.

IV. When Spoon confronted Gabi about the needle in her dresser, she:

- a. Didn't give it much importance.
- b. Felt embarrassed and cried.
- c. Made an excuse

What each of the stages fostered in students was the construction of a set of criteria that could support decision making, as well as the consolidation of an overall judgment of issues, presented in the literature class.

4.4. Micro Skill 4: Making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations

As with the previous micro-skill, the tasks proposed to help students learn and apply this micro skill consisted in the careful choice of specific scenarios and moments in the book that had the quality of narrative “crossroads”. This means that a critical moment of the story was reached, and characters needed to make important decisions that would deeply affect their lives, and other people’s lives in the story. Such critical moments under the light of discussion is a scenario where students can think about possible predictions based on the information and tendencies of the characters of the book “The Picture of Dorian Gray”. They also promote possible interpretations as to the intentions and motivations of the characters or the authors, to take certain actions or to write certain ideas.

As with the previous micro-skill, the approach is to begin with simple and obvious tasks, and move on to more complex pertaining to this micro-skill.

Micro-Skill 4 – sample 1

*Look at the title of the book and its cover. What do you think this book is about?
Read the prologue of the book. What do you think about the author? What do you think this book is about? Are your predictions based on title and cover confirmed or not?*

Micro-Skill 4 – sample 2

Read the following phrases made by Harry to either Basil or Dorian.

- a) What is the overall meaning of these aphorisms?*
- b) What were Harry's original intentions in telling Dorian or Basil this? How do you reach to this conclusion? Support your assumptions with specific elements in the book.*

Through these tasks, the researcher was able to obtain a clear panorama of the degree of development of the micro skill addressed here. In each of the cases the responses collected needed a careful development by students, because they imply pondering the intentions of people and supporting each of their assumptions with sound and concrete evidence from the book.

4.5. Micro Skill 5: Exploring implications and consequences

In this specific case, the tasks designed were largely connected to the previous task. Moreover, this is a micro-skill that implies understanding people's motivation to do or say, or think about events, situations, contexts, among others. Through this micro skill

participants tried to analyze specific situations from the book, and tried to place themselves in the shoes of the actors of the story, to try to understand their motivations, reasons, and responses to specific situations. This type of task fostered discussions along the process.

Sessions Weeks 1 & 2

During the first two weeks of the implementation process, the focus was to review learned reading strategies, and their specific purposes in the process of reading texts. The second focus was to guide students through a process of becoming acquainted with the author and the historical context in which he was embedded, so as to understand specific elements found later on in the process of reading the book. Finally, the last focus of these weeks work was also to foster an initial reflection about the social prejudices of people of that time.

The implementation process depicted above demonstrates a thorough use of the strategies chosen, and even though adjustments were necessary, both in the planning of the lessons, and for the tasks presented to students, they did not affect the overall plan designed. As a result of this process, the following chapter will describe the main findings of this research.

Chapter 5. Data Analysis and Findings

Data analysis allows researchers to understand and present a clear panorama of the phenomena studied through reflection, interpretation and close examination. This chapter will cover the procedures of interpreting data. Furthermore it will explain the steps of analyzing the data that emerged from the implementation process, the categories that resulted from the study and how they relate to one another. It will also present the findings of this action research project. In the context of this study, a qualitative analysis was the most appropriate approach, since it deals with responses and perceptions of participants, and especially the way in which the participants' thoughts were being shaped under the light of critical thinking cognitive micro-skills.

Within the range of qualitative approaches, the grounded theory by Corbin and Strauss (2008) was the method chosen. Grounded theory is aimed at developing theory based on the data analyzed. According to Creswell (2009), grounded theory is a “qualitative strategy of inquiry in which the researcher derives a general, abstract theory of process, action, or interaction grounded in the views of participants in a study.” (p.13). This analysis is built upon a series of steps that involve the careful coding of the data into categories that are intertwined with each other (Charmaz, 2006) and that explains the phenomenon studied. According to Corbin and Straus (2008, p.62) raw data is broken down into delineating concepts. Such concepts understood as categories will help researchers understand the issues under investigation.

In order to do so, Strauss and Corbin (2008) determined that those categories, along with the research question, should be compared and contrasted constantly throughout the analysis process to identify major categories that emerge from the phenomenon studied. Furthermore, Corbin (2008, page –location1119 of 8357 from Kindle version) states that in order to analyze data, the researcher should break apart its components in order to identify their properties and dimensions. The categories identified in that process will become the foundation of a theory that leads to answer the research question. With this in mind, the information gathered led me to define two different categories that allowed me to assess the effects of the implementation of critical thinking cognitive micro-skills in the study.

In the current study, data was grouped into categories that aimed at narrowing the information considering common patterns, as suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 47). However, the concepts that overall shaped the storyline in this work were also considered, since they reflect the essence of what was experienced along the study.

The first steps involve classifying and organizing data according to the common patterns found. Such patterns become concepts that are the base to define the categories for the project. This process is understood as axial coding. Once the categories were found, the next step was to analyze relationships among categories that aim at responding the initial research question: What is the effect of the implementation of Literature Analytic Strategies on the development of critical thinking cognitive micro skills of 11th grader literature classes?

Since analysis involves interpretation (Blumer, 1969) in order to “set forth the multiple meanings of an event, object, experience, or test” (Denzin,1998. p.48) the

categories arisen should be labeled in a way that they respond to both the objective of the study and the research question. Such labels should be meaningful, and dynamic, since they led to determine whether the implementation of Task-Based Learning had an effect in the development of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills addressed in this work. However, given the complexity of the analysis process, those categories needed be narrowed down or reduced into a final set of categories that result from the beginning mass of information. Subsequently, selective coding was applied, and the relationships among categories explored, so as to become a storyline that stems from a core category.

5.1. Procedures for data analysis

Data analysis is a delicate and time-consuming task of action research, and it is also a complex process. Furthermore, the approach of grounded theory provides a narrative and in-depth manner of analyzing data.

5.2. Data management

For this work, the initial organization process was to code the names of participants into a simple letter-number coding system (e.g.: María Díaz – number one in the attendance list, from 11°B = 1-11B). The work belonging to each participant was collected in a physical file, as in this case, a binder. This binder contained documents, rubrics and tests developed by students. The second instrument to gather data was a log, where the perceptions of each lesson in the implementation process were jotted down in the form of a memo. Such memos are in a virtual file under the label of *blog*. The last instrument used to

gather data was a pair of surveys applied to students in the beginning of the process and during the process. This data was saved in www.surveymonkey.com, and a copy was kept in a data chart labeled as 'initial survey' and 'mid-term survey'.

The initial step in analyzing data was the open coding process. As stated previously, open coding is the process of analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found (Borgatti, 2005). The students' documents were the first to be observed, and each of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills was colored with a number-letter that responded to the initial categories, and subsequently saved in an excel document. This facilitated the identification of initial data, and allowed for a more organized way to manage the data, while allowing for the identification of initial concepts to analyze further. As a result of this initial process, repeated patterns were found and a list of initial concepts emerged. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008, location 1238 of 8357) the use of concepts provides a way of grouping and organizing data. The notions that emerge enables the researcher to group objects together and explore such objects in greater depth, identifying similarities, differences and effects of the notions within the study done; hence, the relevance of identifying common patterns and their transformation into concepts and categories.

A similar procedure was followed for the teacher log and the surveys applied at the beginning and during the process. The responses were saved in a data chart and the emerging patterns were annotated in the same document.

As a result, an initial version of emerging categories was formed from the repeated patterns. These concepts were revised and summarized into a reduced number of final categories.

The first main category was labeled *Critical thinking Cognitive Micro-skills*, from which five sub-categories derived, each corresponding to a micro-skill. Each micro-skill was revised and analyzed under the light of students' documents and excerpts which were carefully read, and underlined using the color codes devised. The result of this analysis was consigned in a data chart for each of the 25 participants in separate tabs. Those tabs contained a table which had on the left column a space for each of the five micro-skills worked in class; and the next column to the right had a space that included excerpts of students and a comment or reflection of the degree in which the micro-skill was evident in their work (Appendix F). The documents of students were organized by each student, and each document was labeled with a numerical system. They were carefully revised and compared to one another to see the quality of the development of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills chosen.

A second category was labeled as *Motivation*. This was concerned with the responses of participants towards reading, as a result of two surveys applied in the beginning and developmental process of the implementation, and a follow up survey that was recently applied in order to see the impact of the study on the participants' current life. These surveys were delivered in a digital format through a survey-monkey invitation, and students had to respond to the surveys during a lesson time. All questions were both asked and answered in English. In this case, the development of tasks was also an indicator of the

dedication to read displayed by students, since those who failed to read were unable to respond grounded on the source of thinking material in the books of the program. For this specific case, the analysis relied on the teacher's logs.

A third category was labeled *Literature*, and it was used to distinguish the context used for the implementation. As a result of this process, there were 3 main categories defined, and each had several sub-categories that needed further reduction.

5.3. Data reduction

The concepts cited above arose from the initial analysis. However, with the intention of making data more manageable and especially an improved object of in-depth analysis, the categories were revised again, and thus reduced, shaped by the process described below. Corbin and Strauss (2008, location 1251 of 8357 from Kindle version) argue that *“The more one moves up the conceptual ladder, the broader and more explanatory the concepts become, (...). However, if the conceptual pyramid is carefully crafted, the higher-level concepts will rest on a solid foundation of lower-level concepts, (...).”* This demonstrates how, rather than becoming more schematic, the more defined the higher-level concepts, the deeper the analysis can become. Corbin (2008, location 1259 from 8357 in Kindle version) also claims that the immersion in the data provides the researcher with insight, that allows him/her in turn to group events under a more conceptual label. This explains why the need to revise and re-read the data collected to device more targeted concepts that will allow for improved interpretation and analysis.

Given that the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills were each developed in the implementation process, they remained the same, under the same category, and as sub-categories. The category related to literature as a means of literacy was under discussion, since as a context of implementation, it is relevant, but it was not considered a key issue without which the study could have been implemented otherwise. Notwithstanding, it is important to highlight that literature is the main context that allows critical thinking to take place in this specific group of participants, and the implementation of this study in the context of language would have been forced, rather than naturally developed by the participants; especially the design of tasks made by the researcher. This issue presented a challenge related to the angle under which this element could be observed. All tasks resumed literature, and the way certain participants became involved in the discussion proposed by the works of literature provided even more insight in the development of the tasks, and the evolution of the evidence in the use of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills. In this case the category of Literature was embedded within the subcategories of the micro-skills, given that in the context of the discussion of literature, the author, and the style make always an essential component of the development of such micro-skills as evidence of the level of improvement or development of each. This lead to the understanding that the context of literature was framed within the strategies chosen to implement and develop the CTCMS targeted, and as such these critical thinking cognitive micro-skills became a category of its own labeled in the following manner: Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-skills enhance students' capacity to analyze and extrapolate literary knowledge to other contexts. *Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-skills enhance*

students' capacity to analyze different situations and contexts based on literature books and considered within other contexts.

Motivation, on the other hand, was collected in the surveys mentioned, but it was also an observable aspect based on the way the respondents addressed the tasks worked. This second category was labeled like this: *Motivation towards reading fosters a sense of self-empowerment and accomplishment.* In this case, there were two evident sub-categories: *Intrinsic motivation*, for those who were motivated to read because of the comprehension and insight they could grasp; and *Extrinsic Motivation*, which resulted from those cases that read the minimum, not because of the level of comprehension, but where the lack of interest was evident, and the need of a standard minimum grade to pass was necessary. This subcategory was labeled thus: *Extrinsic motivation – Students were reading for a grade.* On the other hand, the other side of the coin demonstrated how students were addressing each new task with less and less stress on behalf of understanding that the most relevant responses emerged from their own perspectives, and the book became an excuse or scenario to promote discussions. In that sense this subcategory was labeled: *Intrinsic motivation – Students started reading for comprehension and insight.*

5.4. Data display and verification

There are two important instances of verification that will be addressed in this work: validity and triangulation. The first concept, according to Sagor (2005, p. 93) refers to how the “*data actually reflect the phenomena they claim to*”; and its purpose is to ensure the

trustworthiness of the methods used to collect data, and that the conclusion have a solid foundation based on the data collected (Burns, 2010, p. 25).

The data collected was framed within a variety of data collection instruments. In the implementation process data was collected by means of surveys, teacher log, and students' documents. These instruments were chosen in order to obtain clear evidence of the patterns of critical thinking cognitive skills used and applied by students, as well as to understand the perceptions that students had about reading in English. By using the instruments chosen, not only was I able to identify a positive maze of data to analyze from, but also the variety of tools allowed ideas to become intertwined, finding evidence in various pieces of data from different sources. The emerging patterns from the data collected allowed for a clear discerning of concepts and those concepts revealed relations from which the categories were formed.

5.5. Triangulation

As stated above, to ensure the validity and reliability of this study, different instruments were used to triangulate the data collected. In this way, data was confirmed in the use of other instruments, thus achieving triangulation. According to Sagor (2005, p. 93), triangulation is a strategy that helps corroborate information by presenting additional, yet independent evidence that lead to the same conclusion. Burns (2010, p. 97), on the other hand, claims that triangulation increases the quality and rigor of the research, because data was analyzed from more than one theoretical perspective. In this study, this was achieved by means of using three different tools along the three stages of implementation.

This also diminishes the possibilities of bias as a result of considering the different results in the light of different tools.

The responses of the surveys of participants during the implementation of the study were compared with the follow up survey in order to grasp the real impact of the strategies worked. Moreover, the responses were also considered under the light of the students' written production, showing clear relationships that can be compared and analyzed further in the categories defined.

5.6. Categories

The chart below shows the categories and sub-categories formed as a result of this analysis:

Table 4. Chart of categories

RESEARCH QUESTION	CATEGORIES	SUBCATEGORIES
What is the effect of the implementation of Literature Analytic Strategies in the development of Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-Skills in 11 th graders?	Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-skills enhance students' capacity to analyze and extrapolate literary knowledge to other contexts.	Students compare ideals vs. their own reality
		Students think of implications and consequences of people's actions
		Students identify similarities and differences
		Students discriminate relevant from irrelevant facts
		Students predict, interpret and infer based on different contexts
	Motivation towards reading fosters a sense of self-empowerment and accomplishment	Students reading for comprehension and insight as opposed to students reading for a grade

5.7. Data analysis

In the following section the disclosed data gives insights on the development of critical thinking cognitive micro-skills

5.7.1. Category 1: Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-skills enhance students' capacity to analyze and extrapolate literary knowledge to other contexts.

For the first specific objective of the study, namely, to determine whether students actually learned Critical thinking Cognitive Micro-Skills, the data was classified and analyzed accordingly. This is why the first category presented in this section is related to the development of participants' Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro-skills. Consequently, the theory that stemmed from this analysis intended to corroborate whether the use of analytical strategies in literature could be used as a means of learning or improving critical thinking cognitive micro-skills. Notwithstanding, in order to analyze each of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills addressed in this work, a few definitions are necessary.

Paraphrasing, which was explained in Chapter two, Critical thinking skills are considered one of the most important attributes for the 21st Century. Facione, Giancarlo, Facione, & Gainen (1995) define Critical Thinking as a purposeful, self-regulatory judgment, and human cognitive process. As a result of this process, a person is capable of forming a judgment of what to believe or what to do under specific situations or contexts (Facione, et al., 1995, p. 3), as was explained in the theoretical framework. However, these authors and others, claim that CT skills are not only traits that people are born with. In their work it is claimed that there must be a disposition towards the learning of such CT

skills (Facione et al., 1995), and that this disposition can be formed within an educational setting. In this sense, this category shows how students used their new and acquired knowledge of literature, in order to think and reflect about their own lives, or the cultural context they are immersed, and build their own criteria about several topics addressed from the book. Therefore, it can be concluded that the CTCMS addressed in this work can be taught and practiced within a setting where participants can acquire and learn those skills, and show evidence of such development in the quality of their responses and reflections.

To narrow down the main skills that this work wanted to address, it was necessary to choose from within a list of 35 dimensions of critical thinking skills (The Critical Thinking Community, 2011). The five CTCMS addressed for this study were chosen because the setting in which they were implemented could respond more naturally to the specific features and characteristics of each. Therefore, the subcategories of students comparing ideals with their own reality, students thinking of implications and consequences of people's actions, students identifying similarities and differences, students discriminating relevant from irrelevant facts, and students predicting and inferring based on different context support the present category in so that these always use a context, whether hypothetical or real, in order to present students with scenarios where their reasoning and their moral and ethical standards are subject of analysis, questioning, and restatement. This was a constant element to be addressed throughout a variety of tasks and exercises that enriched every time the reflection and thinking process of students.

5.7.1.1. Subcategory 1.1.: Micro Skill 1 – Students compare ideals versus reality

The first Micro-Skill (MS-1) was *Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice*. This MS-1 is related to being able to compare ourselves with others, and discriminating facts from ideals. But it also aims at “recognizing the gaps between ideals and practice” (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011) in order to judge values and truth and consistency, and thus developing in human beings a sense of evaluating situations and methods in order to minimize the gap evidenced in the process.

Excerpt #1, Task August 12th 2010 – Essay based on a quote of Harry (Wilde, 1891) by student 2-11B.

“To be good is to be in harmony with one’s self.” (Wilde, 1891)
“...I feel like if I have be very confuse lot of times along my life when I feel good or happy, actually I think I can understand some unconformism I have been through, ~~for~~ now I see, this may happened because I'm good in many aspects of my life, but I'm not full, I'm not happy. Probably this is very common in lot of people and that's why, aparently their lifes are going very good, but their "hearts", or whatever can be call that, that make us feel full, is not going well.[sic]”

As stated before, what this student considers an ideal is the notion of feeling “full”, but she also considers the notions of “happy” as a satisfaction of a moment, whereas being full implies a more complex notion. However, the participant is only capable of presenting an explanation from an example, “*aparently their lifes are going very good, but their "hearts", or whatever can be call that, that make us feel full, is not going well [sic]*”. She states later how “*I’m completely agree when Harry says that everything for being good, depends of harmony, and this harmony comes from our inside, not from what we see around ...[sic]*” In this case, she is making the distinction between what Harry is implying,

along with his intentions towards Dorian, and her own concept of harmony and where it should come from, but the explanation lacks the specificity of the terms necessary to explain the ideal of what being a ‘good’ person and being ‘bad’, and she kept to the notion of being happy - unhappy. This reflection gives the sense of not being in full understanding of the participant’s personal notion of happiness, or being a good person. However, the text reflects a potential for the development of this skill.

After this text, the following excerpt of the same participant shows a more refined definition of ideas regarding another moral issue within the same book.

Excerpt #2, Task August 25th 2010 – Essay based on a fragment of chapter 8 (Wilde, 1891) by student 2-11B

“What did it matter what happened to the coloured image on the canvas? He would be safe. That was everything. He drew the screen back into its former place in front of the picture, smiling as he did so, and passed into his bedroom, where his valet was ready waiting for him. An hour later he was at the Opera, and Lord Henry leaning over his chair.”

“Dorian’s new attitude, about Sybil’s death is very ‘unfeeling’ ... his picture could be affected, but he realized that all ‘nasty’ changes in his image where only in it, he wasn’t really being affected. This ‘uncarefull’ attitude, empty of sadness or any guilty feeling (...)this obsession has been elevated, also, by Harry, who feels a real pleasure – knowing this new faces of Dorian, manipulating him to his own benefit, or even because of some observative thing that make Harry see how works beauty in the world.” [sic]”

In this case, Excerpt #2 shows how through a fragment from the same book, the participant describes not only events from the context, but also reflects upon the changes making judgments about the emotions and lines of thought displayed. In this case, the student tries to use more specific vocabulary, but acknowledging that those terms might not be accurate linguistically; she uses quotation marks. Here the terms “unfeeling” and “uncarefull” (sic) arise. The student also used the expression ‘observative’(sic) that somehow explains the intentions of Lord Henry towards the main character of the book.

The student is trying to find a more specific terminology to describe and explain her position. However, in this case we have to interpret her personal position by means of finding expressions that have a clear positive or negative connotation, such as “manipulating”, or “empty of sadness”, “uncarefull”(sic), and “nasty”, which show how she clearly disagrees with the actions of these two characters in life.

Excerpt #3, Task August 25th 2010 – Essay based on a quote of Lord Henry by student 2-11B

“We live in an age that reads too much to be wise, and thinks too much to be beautiful.” (Wilde, 1891)

: *"Harry is criticizing this society full of stereotypes that make us part of it. Everybody is einvolved in this game of beauty or wisdom to be accepted in anyway the world can accept it. For this, everybody answer or reacts to some particular close relation with someone. For example Harry "has the brain" in his relationship with Dorian, in this way, he can manipulate him to manipulate other people using his beauty. (...) , in this society or age, we think we have the "power" to put someone in just a classification only because this someone is relevant (...) but actually, I think that this is not true, everybody can be "put" in many characteristics, that's why we are all different.[sic]"*

Excerpt #3 shows how through a quote from "Dorian Gray", the participant addresses what she considers reality and idealization, the idealization of stereotypes, and the needs of individuals to belong to a group or being accepted. In this case, as a distinction from Excerpt 2, the student was able to express explicitly the situation in the book and make a parallel to what she considers happens in her own context, and what she

deems ‘right’. The student is clearly attempting to minimize the gap in her own set of values, by addressing the idea that we are all different and that is just the way it should be taken. If there is one particular flaw in this process, it is the evident lack of vocabulary that makes the student work on explanations and examples to illustrate her point of view more succinctly. However, the student is very aware of that when using the resource of the quotation marks. Notwithstanding, what is relevant, and what characterizes MS-1 is what she was actually able to do: to weight what we see in reality and what should actually take place within a frame of what is right and what is wrong for everybody.

Similarly, certain observations recorded in the researchers log were useful in providing a more rounded view to triangulate the study, where there is further evidence to the situations already noticed.

Memo #1 – Question about participants’ personal feelings about homosexuality.

April 15th 2010.

Students’ Actions	Teacher - Reflection - Comments
<p>Girls were amused right away, and in general they all started to laugh ‘nervously’. It is a question for which some boys responded with noises of disapproval.</p> <p>“I have nothing against them, but I don’t like them looking at me with ‘ojitos locos””</p> <p><u>Girls said it was normal, and that everybody had the right to do whatever they wanted in their lives.</u></p>	<p>MS-1 – It is evident that this is a delicate topic. Boys find it hard to express their feelings without sounding disrespectful. There is a huge gap related to the concept of tolerance. Girls tend to be more understanding, and more into the notion of individuality and respect to others. They seem to be able to recognize that individuals have the right to make choices, as a response to the situation of the author of being in prison for being a homosexual, which was interpreted as a criminal behavior a century ago.</p>

This memo corresponds to one of the first lessons in the implementation process, right before starting to read the book, and in the stage of getting acquainted with the author and his context (Oscar Wilde). This demonstrates that there is a variety of responses to

issues that are not usually addressed in an English classroom, but that here took shape as a connection to one element of the life of the author. One of the objectives of this question was to understand the historical and social context which surrounded the author. On one part, it is evident that it triggered reactions of different kinds; from sounds, to laughter, to comments, which made evident somehow some of the students' personal impressions. On the other hand, it was necessary to foster discussions that would make their values emerge into this, in order to challenge them or in order to have the possibility to elaborate around them. Such was the case of the last two students in the memo, who were able to express explicitly where they stand regarding the topic of discussion. Regardless, it is also evident that the subject is far from easy, since even those students did not try to dig any deeper into the issue presented. In order to move closer to achieving our ideals (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011), it seemed necessary to be able to elaborate on the arguments that make us believe strongly regarding a certain topic or other, and that reflection was evident in the observation of the first memo.

Memo #8 - What is understood by innocence? 13th May 2010 – discussion.

Actions:	Reflections and comments:
<p>The word was annotated on the board. Students added with ideas about the concept, and then started to include more elements specifically related to the characters of the story. Students' contributions were included in the brainstorm in the board. They showed a good understanding of the characters when attaching aspects of innocence to Basil and Dorian, according to their roles up to chapter 4. They also grasped the some personality traits regarding Harry, his actions and his intentions during these 4 chapters.</p>	<p>Most students agreed that to be innocent is not only related to sexuality, but also related to the idea of 'malicia' that people use to be in a position of power, or to have advantage over others. (...) Ss tell how Harry seems to dominate the other characters to his own benefit. They also seem to understand that the benefit that Harry is getting from this is not economical or social, but merely intellectual. They started asking why. It is a very difficult question to address and especially to avoid providing them with my personal answer. The answer needs to come from them.</p>

The information in this Memo suggested that students were becoming more involved in the story, enough to identify traits and agree or disagree with them. They start asking themselves important critical questions related to the intentions of people when making statements that can affect or hurt others. It is also evident that even though they can identify the issues, they need a reflexive exercise to draw those big issues from their own points of view in order to define where they stand regarding these attitudes from people in the story, people around them, and themselves. This work that needed deeper reflection was worked through argumentative essays, to help them organize their ideas, and find support for their arguments. Writing was an important issue, because it is through the written work that they started committing to their ideas, opinions, and values. When revising again Excerpts One and Two, it is clear that this is a difficult task for this student to find the precise words to express her opinions and feelings about the issues posed. The precision in this case, responds more to thinking about the way that felt right for her to present her judgment, and not only responded to a lexical difficulty. This student was beginning to find her own voice in the light of a story that had no real personal meaning for her, initially.

Memo # 17 - list down a set of values that have been addressed by the novel.

August 6th 2010

Actions	Reflection – Observations
<p>Students highlighted those values that seemed more important to them. But in trying to think why, the noise increased in the classroom. It was like boiling with questions. Some of them even asked if they could do it on two topics. They were reminded the need to be able to write something sound in the time given – 1 hour.</p>	<p>In the beginning I thought this would fail to generate responses from students, (...). However, the response was actually very active, (...) they were inquiring one another with questions what they would be discussing about. They were eager to share ideas, regardless of the instruction. I forgot that the point of this skill is to actually be able to confront others' principles in the face of my own.</p>

This memo was very enlightening for me as a researcher. One of the doubts throughout this research process was the need to measure the development of the above-mentioned skills. Unfortunately, in this case there appeared to be no numerical basis from which any measurement could be made. However, the signs of the behaviors of students when addressing a task showed how much more they grasped the principles involved in this critical thinking skill, as shown in the reflection.

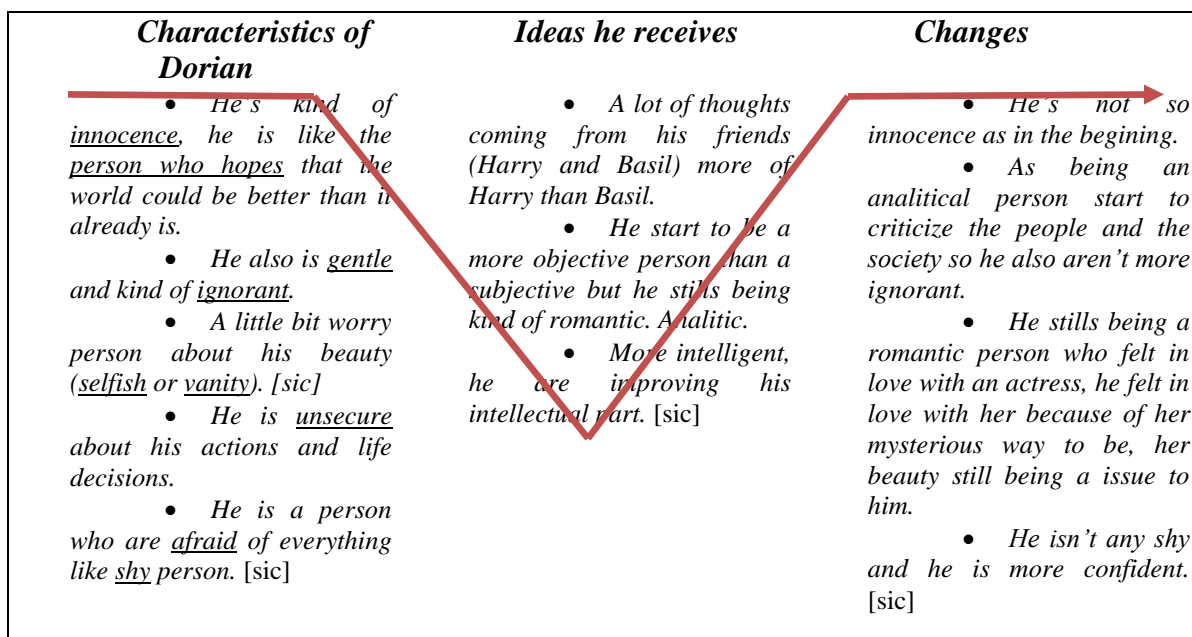
The analysis presented for Sub-category 1.1 (*Students compare ideals versus reality*) shows a clear growth in the sense of the complexity of the process taking place in the classroom. This was not an individual process altogether because they could confront each others' values against their own. They started to become even bolder when presenting their judgments on the matters discussed, and in each case, some more elaborate than others, most students were able to "*highlight discrepancies between facts and ideals*" as stated by (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011). Facione (et al. 1995, p.5) describes an open minded person as one who seeks to understand what others think about things. The changing behavior shown in the development of memo # 12 shows how this was becoming part of their reasoning related to values, and still elaborate from within their own set of values.

5.7.1.2. Subcategory 1.1.

5.7.1.2. Sub-category 1.2: Micro Skill 2 – Students think of implications and consequences of people's actions

The principle underlying this critical thinking cognitive micro skill states that it is necessary to understand the beliefs and policies behind actions and statements. This also explains how in order to understand the meaning of an action or statement, it is necessary to “accept its implications” (Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2011) and understanding implications implies as well considering the potential consequences of it. A critical thinker, who uses this micro-skill, is able to understand the motivations of people doing certain actions, and the possible consequences as a result of these actions.

Excerpt # 4 – June 1st 2010 – Explaining the process of Dorian’s feelings towards Sybil Vane, by student 7-11B



This initial exercise was meant for them to explore any implications from the characters’ interactions, and how they have an influence on each other. However, the

central space was for readers to include any recognized specific influences. They were meant to state what phrases produced by Harry or Basil made him take decisions, or change his mind about any subject. In this sample it seems evident that the participant is able to identify an original thought and a result, but he is not able to point at how it began to change, or through which means he started to modify both his ideas and his conduct. This task was revised and commented upon orally for all to get an idea of how to approach this kind of exercises.

Excerpt # 5 – June 5th 2010 – To explain Dorian’s feelings and ideas towards women, by student 7-11B

<i>Dorian’s feelings and ideas towards women in the beginning of chapter 4</i>	<i>Phrases that might have affected his judgment in chapter 4</i>	<i>Possible result and effect of the changes Dorian suffers regarding women</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He thinks that they are kind of perfect that they are geniuses and that once you fall in love with some woman you will always love her.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Harry’s opinions and thoughts about how are the women in that society and wich are the best ones and how not to fall in marriage. [sic]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dorian might think that his loved one still being kind of perfect for him but also that he will never marry with her and either fall in love with a silly woman. [sic]</i>

In this second task, the participant is keeping in mind the voice of Harry to define the possible effect on Dorian. He tries to be more specific as to the words that influenced Dorian, and also tries to think about the possible consequences, considering aspects such as Dorian’s sense of romanticism, his perception of Dorian’s feelings towards Sybil, and his perceptions of the degree of influence that Harry has shown to have on Dorian. This shows

that the participant is considering more than just one variable to decide upon something where he has no certainty of the result.

Memo # 12 – June 2nd 2010 - Discussing about ‘Youth and Freedom’ based on the case presented in the Picture of Dorian Gray

ACTIONS	REFLECTION/COMMENTS
<p><i>(...)They expressed how they felt a contradiction between what they want to do and what they are expected to do (...) most of them showed conflicting emotions about this topic, and most of them seemed to find difficulties to present a way to confront the issue at hand. Some of them were also thinking about their career prospects, and how those prospects needed to fit their parents’ expectations, or else forget about studying it. (...) Only a few students presented the class with ideas that made them understand the role of parents in their lives. (...)</i></p>	<p><i>(...) As for the notion of freedom, the final product involved coming up in pairs with a definition of the terms discussed and the implications of being young, and discussing the implications of their own definitions of freedom. (...)They talked about pregnancy, and about living without parents, but some of them also criticized the idea of fulfilling their desires, and not considering their real possibilities of success when attempting their desires. This was an interesting point of the discussion. (...) girls seem to be more targeted on thinking about implications and consequences, boys seem a bit stubborn in their own ideas, at least in open discussions).</i></p>

This memo depicts a classroom discussion where students had to elaborate on two concepts drawn from the book: Youth and freedom. What came as an immediate response was the notion of positivity associated to being young. Apparently there is no downside to being young, and the whole world seems to be at their feet. However, in this memo I also expressed how students started to see evidence of the constraints they are subjects of as a result of being too young and their parents’ charge. It was only when starting to imagine and present possible scenarios, including the pregnancy, which they showed an insight related to the implications of leading an independent life when they are not ready yet to assume everything involved. Certain examples drawn from the book allowed them also to understand how even the words we speak can have an impact on others adjacent discourse

(the case of Sybil's suicide, and the deep changes operated in Dorian after the conversations with Harry). The possibility of thinking about the consequences of actions and implications was more plausible when trying to widen the panorama under which the situation was analyzed. In this sense, students could try to see themselves not only in their ideal scenarios, but also in difficult situations, so as to also imagine how they could react the best possible way. In that sense, Bickenbach (1984) states how deductive reasoning implies always exploring possible consequences of hypothetical situations, and to keep in mind which aspects can become counterarguments to our reasoning, using the notion of proof. In this context, students showed insightful changes, when pondering ethical dilemmas, and situations in which they could picture themselves, and their possible reactions. They could also place themselves in the situation of others, in order to assess their reasoning to make choices under complex circumstances. On the other hand, Paul (1982) also explains the relevance of putting scenarios in different perspectives to construct alternative arguments that explain better the problem in discussion, allowing students to anticipate problems.

5.7.1.3. Sub-category 1.3: Micro Skill 3 – Students identify similarities and differences

This third MS is understood as the sensible observation of phenomena and how the reasoning derived from it allows us to determine common grounds and differences that respond to a careful observation of the characteristic features of such phenomenon. When through practice, people become more sensitized to significant similarities and differences,

this affects in turn how people experience, describe, categorize, and reason about things (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011).

The following analysis will demonstrate the development of MS-2 in the participants.

Excerpt #6 – March 3rd 2010 – Task on the concept of sarcasm and irony by student 17-11B

<p>Irony:</p> <p>To point an incongruity or point the obvious. Humour or ridicule. To provoke antagonism [sic]</p>	<p>Use words to imply the opposite of what the words mean</p>	<p>Sarcasm:</p> <p>To expose to open ridicule Maybe would contempt or disgust Degrading making ridiculous Woend feelings. [sic]</p>
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In this case, the participant could focus on no more than definitions taken from a dictionary. The effort in finding common ground fails evidently, since most of the elements in the field of differences tend to be related, such as ‘ridicule’. There is no attention to finding examples in the text-base to illustrate her understanding of both or any concept.

For the same task, another student demonstrated more insight in finding his own words to explain the nature of the concepts seen in class:

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Excerpt #7 – March 3rd 2010 – Task on the concept of sarcasm and irony by student

7-11B

<p>Irony: Contrast opposite Use humour and light sarcasm Use to explain something with the opposite words [sic]</p>	<p>Use of words or a rhetoric way Doble sense</p>	<p>Sarcasm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful intention • Intention of hurting the feeling of other people • Use to explain the opposite looking for insult or someone [sic]
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This excerpt demonstrates the intention of the participant of finding a sense of his own understanding of both concepts, and even though there is a repetition of notions from one set to the other, the main difference expressed here is related to the intentions of the user of such linguistic tools.

Excerpt #8 – March 9th 2010 – Task on the concept of sarcasm and irony by student

7-11B

<p>Spoon: Spoon feels kind of weird when he arrived at the hood of Gabi, actually their hood, because everything look so different but the true and the fact is the one who has changed is he. Even if he try to help Gabi, he have to care about his future in the Wallingford Academy.</p>	<p>Both of them have a lot of issues right now. Their relationship have been affected by the new attitudes of both and their new lives. [sic]</p>	<p>Gabi: Gabi's so lost, in the way that she don't look happy by Spoon's arrive. She is focused on her mom and she don't pay attention to Spoon either to his brother. Now she is kind of messy people without order or a straight person.[sic]</p>
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This excerpt of Participant 7-11B demonstrates how he uses events of the story to identify differences. However, his strategy to understand commonalities is to think outside

of the events, and focus on the emotions and the feelings of both characters, which in a sense are not explicitly described, but needed to be grasped from within the events and their actions. This is evidence of an initial state of the strategy working. However, two of the elements written in the difference fields show a more insightful view of the situation: *“because everything look so different but the true and the fact is the one who has changed is he [sic].”* In this case, there is a clear interpretation of the views of one of the characters that allows him to provide a different perspective regarding his emotions towards this new situation.

Memo #13 – Debating about the best times (1890s or 2010s). June 3rd 2010

ACTIONS	REFLECTION/COMMENTS
<p>Students were confused in the beginning about the nature of the task. We needed to complete an example of the comparison of one aspect on the board. Then each pair of students discussed and drew a venn diagram to present their points as to which time they prefer to live in and why. Some of them participated actively, using examples from the book, like the way people spend their free time, and the way people treated others according to their socio-economic status and education level. At this point a group of students (12-11B & 16-11B) mentioned that nowadays people judge others likewise according to the money they have, and there is not much difference because of that aspect. Others argued that it would be impossible for <i>“gay people”</i> to live in that time without facing the jail. Others talked about the control that parents exercised on their sons and especially daughters. One of the students (2-11B) remarked how neither of the times was perfect and that she would prefer a different time where such difficulties did not exist.</p>	<p>The present won the battle. Even though some students presented reasonable arguments to defend the past, it was inevitable to see that our times, regardless of the violence, seem to be more intently tolerant facing the differences. <i>“It makes part of being educated (7-11B)”</i>, to be able to understand that we are all different, and that it is respectable.</p>

This memo demonstrates shows how students are showing reasoning that is getting closer to an objective view of things. This reasoning allows them to see more sensibly many of the possible aspects involved in living in a context with specific characteristics,

and provide sound arguments to make a choice as to what time is more convenient for them and why. In addition, this demonstrated that the hierarchies of what they deemed more important to live in a time, and making use of MS-1, they even talked about an alternate time in which none of the negative aspects of both times existed for them to experience . Siegel (1984) establishes how people must, within their disciplines, ponder reasons for and against their own hypotheses. In addition, comparisons should be made “with other relevant reasons”. This skill implies in his views learning the “standards governing the appraisal of reasons” (Siegel, 1984, p.73) and understanding how these standards evolve or change, prompting in a critical thinker the need to constantly revise his or her own assumptions, and the standards to which we establish comparisons that can be deemed valid in a specific context. The Organization of Critical Thinking (2011) states as well that when using higher order thinking we set ourselves in a framework where we can consider the possible consequences of our actions and words, assessing different scenarios under different perspectives. That makes them as a consequence of this process keener to analyze not only their wishes, but also the possible affections of their decisions and actions.

5.7.1.4. Sub-category 1.4: Micro Skill 4 – Students discriminate relevant from irrelevant facts.

This subcategory is based on the principle that something should be deemed relevant, according to the topic from which they are revised. According to Reed (1998), a critical thinker is a person who is prudent in making choices, diligent in seeking relevant information. However, being able to distinguish relevant information is also being able to

understand the viewpoint from which the ‘seeker’ has to stand. Hence not every piece of information is either relevant or irrelevant, but it becomes relevant or true in the light of a specific discipline or topic (Davidson, 1969).

Excerpt #9 – 6th 2010 – Multiple choice task, by student 2-11B

<p>III. Spoon feels it is very hard to love Gabi because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. He doesn't want to get married to her anymore. e. He had to leave Wallingford f. They were becoming strangers little by little. 		<p>IV. When Spoon confronted Gabi about the needle in her dresser, she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Didn't give it much importance. e. Felt embarrassed and cried. f. Made an excuse
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This excerpt was considered particularly important because, for these two questions, all the answers were true; however, there were reasons of more weight to what was happening. This participant was able to understand and distinguish which elements were more relevant in the light of the story. As an initial exercise in verifying the capacity to discern relevant from irrelevant information, this was a key element to identify difficulties.

Excerpt #10 – 6th 2010 – Multiple choice task, by student 7-11B

<p>III. Spoon feels it is very hard to love Gabi because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. He doesn't want to get married to her anymore. h. He had to leave Wallingford 		<p>IV. When Spoon confronted Gabi about the needle in her dresser, she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Didn't give it much importance. h. Felt embarrassed and cried. i. Made an excuse
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i. They were becoming strangers little by little.		
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In contrast, this participant read the one thing that would appear as the first reaction of the character facing this situation. This shows the depth of comprehension of the situation for him as far from clear.

Excerpt #11 – April 8th 2010 – Task on identifying the events that trigger changes in a relationship of the book, by student 2-11B

Current state of relationship	Events that trigger changes
<i>In the prologue, Gaby and Spoon are completely in love, they talk about their dreams together.</i>	<i>Spoon is moving to Wallingford Academy to study, far from Gabi.</i>
<i>Spoon start to feel confuse about Gabi and Chanelle, his friend of the Academy.</i>	<i>Chanelle is flirting with him. They have space to be alone, and he can met her well.[sic]</i>
<i>Gabi start being different with him, she also love him but her trust is not the same.</i>	<i>Distance made the relationship weak.</i>
<i>Spoon feel estrange and very disappointed about his new relation with Gabi.[sic]</i>	
<i>They act as if they have been friends since a short time, and they are not confident.</i>	<i>Gabi doesn't trust him as she used to do, and Spoon don't know how to express his feelings.[sic]</i>
<i>Spoon is a little distance from Gabi, although he is always with her in those moments of problems, his mind is "a little out" of it. [sic]</i>	

This excerpt shows how the participant is always combining events of the story with insights related to their relevance to this analysis. When she stated that “*distance made the relationship weak*” she is able to paraphrase an element of the story that has to do with Spoon going far away, and the resulting situation of it, that is implicit in the list of events taking place in the story.

Excerpt #12 – April 8th 2010 – Task on identifying the events that trigger changes in a relationship of the book, by student 7-11B

Situation	[sic]	Events that trigger changes
Spoon describe how it's his new school, how it's the people and with who he hang up.		The fact of receiving or not receiving letters from Gabi and in the form he received what she wrote on them.
Spoon got on a trip with his friend Chanelle in the road the talk about Spoon's life and also about Gabi and what about to do when they arrived.		Spoon start to think a little bit in Chanelle in a lover way, most than a friendly way and make him feel kind of awkward.
Spoon finally arrived to his neighborhood but he thinks that something has changed he felt weird.		The metting with Spoon and Gabi make the things even worse, they felt like there is too many distance between them.
After the shallow meeting between Spoon and Gabi, they met again at Gabi's house to have breakfast.		While they were talking in Gabi's roof, they realized that too many things have changed since Spoon left and that they were having some issues that were affecting the relationship.

Facing the same task, this participant was able to describe events, for which in some cases he provided unnecessary information. E.g.: “Spoon describe how it's his new school, how it's the people and with who he hang up.[sic]” In this case there is no insight on the matter, and the information is not relevant (highlighted in yellow) to understand the changes, unless he adds an insight that makes the connection. On the other hand, not everything is treated thus. In the following fragment, even though he includes irrelevant information, there is an insight about the previous event described when he states that “After the shallow meeting between Spoon and Gabi, they met again at Gabi's house to have breakfast.” In addition, the following fragment provides irrelevant information, although the insight presented demonstrates that he is becoming more aware of what makes a relevant piece of information in the story, in the light of the analysis requested: *While they*

were talking in Gabi's roof, they realized that too many things have changed since Spoon left and that they were having some issues that were affecting the relationship. In short, it is how he reflects about the situation what deems something relevant or not.

Excerpt #13, June 1st 2010. Listing the most relevant ideas expressed by Lord Henry Wotton in a social meeting that relate to Dorian (in their own words), by student 7-11B.

1. *Ordinary people waited till life disclosed to them, they aren't interested in life.*
2. *The people knows the value of everything, but they don't appreciated it.[sic]*
3. *The romantic life is kind of bad for both, husband and wife.*
4. *He distinguish between two kinds of women that lives in the England of that time.[sic]*

Even though in this chapter there are a number of more relevant ideas that were intended to impress Dorian's naïf mind, this was the choice of the student. Somehow, the bias of the student did not allow him to see further elements that were of relevance to the development of the story. However, the ideas chosen have the quality of aphorism, which is one of the concepts studied during the term. The student is showing more sharpness in his judgment, but he seemed to forget that these aphorisms were directed to Dorian, and hence needed a more detailed explanation regarding the intentions. Citing Reed (1998, p. 82) about relevance, "*What is the most important data, information or evidence? (How do*

they know what they know? Is the information relevant sufficient to support conclusions?)

In this case, as the author suggests, it is useful to ask oneself questions to validate the quality of the information presented. E.g.: Does the phrase #2 vouch for the intention of the speaker? The quote from Lord Henry stated that “*Nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing.*” (Wilde, 1891) trying to convey how we appreciate the wrong things in life. Probably it also intends to convey the notion that not everyone actually knew what was worth appreciating or not. However, there is a hidden message directed towards Dorian that suggested that he, Henry, had a good idea of what was worth appreciating or not. He wanted to place himself as an authority in matters of life, in order to make him believe somehow that everything he said was valid and true.

Memo #5 – May 4th 2010, Identifying relevant character traits in the three principal male characters of the story

Actions	Reflection - Comment
<p><i>Since students had been reading the first two chapters of the book, they were asked to identify specific traits of the three characters of the story. They were confused, so I tuned the instructions, and decided to ask them first to use 3 colors to identify the speeches of each of the three characters, especially the quotes that could tell them more about their personality.</i></p> <p><i>They started to ask me if this or that info they chose was relevant. I hesitated to tell them, since it might be more intelligent to use their raw info as a mini-diagnostic exercise, and then provide feedback and refine the task once the ideas were clearer.</i></p>	<p><i>By the end of the class, more than knowing exactly which ideas would be more important, they started to argument why those ideas were important for them. The cases that needed attention were directly addressed through questions.</i></p> <p><i>I have found the value of asking questions to challenge their initial assumptions, or at least to help them find better arguments to stick to their ideas.</i></p> <p><i>The strategy of the color worked better for them, because the revision done implied a careful revision of the authors of the ideas, and a revision as well of punctuation and meaning to identify the true voices of each of the characters in this chapter.</i></p>

Even though the result of this task was in appearance flawed, the real impact of this experience was the possibility of students discussing their own ideas about the characters

and the way they saw them through their speeches. However, in my case as a teacher the impact was the possibility to learn how to guide the process better without completely intervening in their understanding of people, but helping them through questions how to consolidate their ideas and connect them to the fragments they chose from the book. I learned the relevance of what I need to know, what I need to say, and what I need to ask to students to help them refine their own critical thinking process. In other words, I was becoming a more critical thinker as well. The notion of relevance has several contexts to be considered. An initial notion of relevance can be considered in the context of finding information that can be useful for our purposes (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011). A different consideration regarding relevance of information is the relevance of facts within a maze of information that might induce students to lose the focus of the inquiry they are proposing. In that sense this skill is necessary to help learners assess materials, information, usefulness, and pertinence.

5.7.1.5. Sub-category 1.5: Micro Skill 5 – Students predict, interpret and infer based on different contexts and approaches.

According to the Critical Thinking Community (2011), MS-5 is based on the principle of reaching to sound conclusions by means of observation and information. In this case, it is argued that it is important to distinguish observations from conclusions. More than identifying events, or fact, it is what they imply what matters. They can project their ideas based on fragmented information, where guessing is not only the result of a

casual observation, but the result of observations of tendencies that result in sound conclusions. They should be able to reach to conclusions and even propose hypotheses presenting plausible explanations or possibilities (Reed, 1998).

Excerpt #14 - Excerpt #12 – April 7th 2010 - Understanding the reasons why alike people treat each other badly. Based on the book of “The Beast” (Myers, 2002); by student 7-11B.

“When the doorman addressed Spoon, he was disrespectful because ... he didn’t like African American people”

In this case, the participant went straight to the most typical assumption based on racism. However, in this case the doorman was also an Afro-descendant, and therefore he couldn’t be thus biased against his own kind. After this mistake, the participant was compelled to revise the description of the doorman in the book and think again about his answer. The reflection completed, made him think further about the sources and the observations necessary to get to conclusions.

Excerpt #15 – May 12th 2010 – Expressing their impressions about Dorian based on the initial chapters (1-4) of “The Picture of Dorian Gray” by student 7-11B.

“The first impression I had about Dorian when I read the chapter 2 was, that he was a gentleman but also maybe because of his handsome look, he should be fool, but it wasn’t like that, even when tried to spoke about philosophy and Henry didn’t allow him to do it, he ask why. So he’s kind of good, smart and a gentleman person.”

[sic]

This excerpt demonstrates how the participant is trying to support his impressions based on specific elements provided in the story, including the conversation between Harry and him. Even though this exercise shows a more tuned skill or determination to look for evidence, it lacks the precision to understand why he has these ideas about the character. The explanation runs short somehow, since he cannot point specifically at the moment in which Dorian stands for his friend, even though he seems to have the same impressions about Basil than Harry, thus behaving like a true gentleman.

Excerpt #16 – May 12th 2010 – Identifying the phrase that impressed Dorian the most in the first encounter with Lord Henry Wotton, by student 7-11B.

“The expression was the thing about the youthness, and how it’s the only that matters or should matters to him and even when he were old he would value the youth as he hasn’t done before. It impresses Dorian at most that made him wished to be young forever and the only than that remains getting old will be the picture.” [sic]

This question was posed after two more reflection questions regarding the first chapters of the book. The response of the participant then becomes more specific, showing that he is able to reach to plausible explanations to the thoughts, emotions and opinions of the two characters involved in this fragment. He was even able to identify the immediate consequence that this line of thought triggered in the main character of the story: the wish of never growing old.

Memo #9 – 26th May – Understanding the fate of the painter based on Harry and Dorian’s current behavior towards him, and on his behavior towards Dorian.

ACTIONS	REFLECTION/COMMENTS
<p>When posing the two concepts on the board students could speak about the way they feel about Basil, and how this abandonment was unfair from both his friends. Most of them were talking about their possible reactions under similar circumstances if they were Basil, and others even showed frustration regarding the behaviour of Basil for his friends. Some of them mentioned that the only true friend here was Basil, and the others were only selfish people. (...)</p>	<p>Now that there is some practice to this getting involved in the story, what seems to be harder now is to detach them from the emotions fostered by the reading and have them think about how to make an analysis through a somewhat objective point of view, and to consider sources other than their own set of values, or personal emotions.</p> <p>Their predictions here were related to their own set of emotions, and their own reactions to these situations. This group has suffered along the years (especially girls) a variety of crisis of friendship for different reasons, so the context of loyalty and friendship as a subject of discussion is not unfamiliar. (...)</p>

Most of the predictions made here were related to their personal choices, rather than the evident fate resulting from Dorian’s evil deeds, and his need to not allow anyone else to know his secret. This memo shows a major concern regarding the development of this micro skill, and it is related to the need of thinking about how to include personal views, but also to look at the situation using different sources, in order to grant a somewhat fair reasoning, and as a result of this fair reasoning, producing a plausible inference or prediction. This micro skill checks for consistencies among data and information (Critical Thinking Organization, 2011), and as such it compels students to consider different variables and scenarios before reaching to sound conclusions.

5.7.2. Category 2: Motivation towards reading fosters a sense of self-empowerment and accomplishment in students.

As explained in the beginning of this chapter, motivation became a main category once it was evidenced how this affected the responses of students towards the work proposed in class.

5.7.2.1. Sub-Category 2 – Intrinsic Motivation Vs Extrinsic Motivation – Students reading for comprehension and insight, as opposed to students reading for a grade.

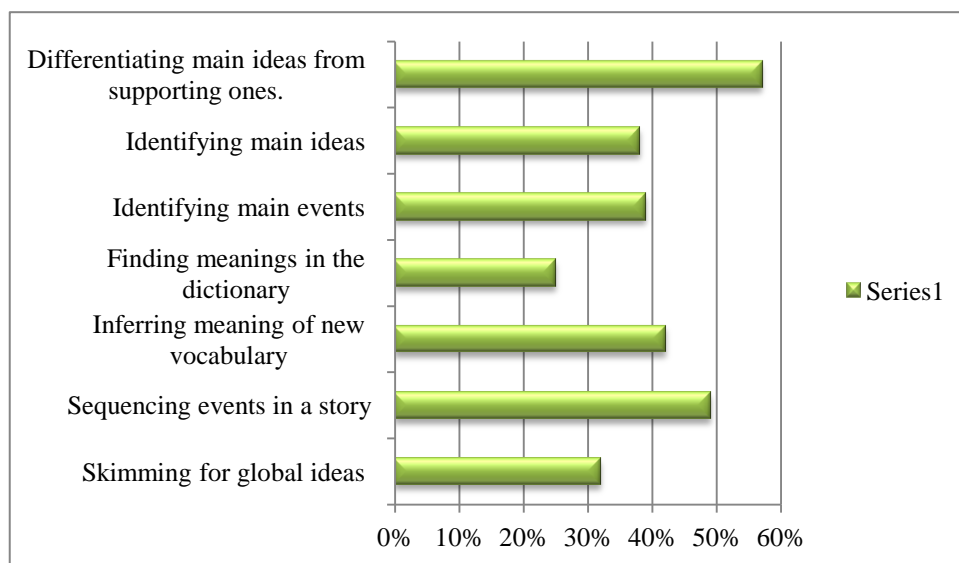
According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), extrinsic motivation is referred to as the kind of behavior that is driven by an outcome or result, such as a reward or a punishment (understood from a positive or negative perspective). In their work, the authors also explain how it is believed that extrinsic motivation can diminish people's intrinsic interest in something when an extrinsic requirement is met (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2001, p. 24). On the other hand, the authors explain how the intrinsic motivation is the one that deals with the satisfaction of learning something new; that copes with challenges thus fostering a sense of self-accomplishment, and that produces stimulation to forego a task or an activity.

An initial survey applied in this study shows how 47% of students read 1 to 5 books per year. However, these books they read correspond to the reading program that is mandatory in every school. In that sense, the motivation the participants show to have for reading is a result of an extrinsic requirement, in this case the school (See Graph 2). Only 4,8% of students read more than ten books a year on their own, which means that this number represents the students who are intrinsically motivated to read. On the other hand, this same survey shows how students are not motivated to read if the topic is not of their interest (23%), or when the book is too extensive (4%), and also when the language is hard

to understand for them (9.5%). This seems to be a consistency in motivation towards reading English, when responding to the questions of what they find the most difficult, 90,4% of the participants write that what they find as a common drawback is the unknown vocabulary, and especially when it does not allow them to understand a global idea of the text. On the other hand, when asked about what they found the easiest about reading in English, they express that they find it easy to understand main ideas (23%), the grammar structures (9.5%) and the roles of the characters (9.5%). In this case, these figures show how the aspects with which they are more familiar with are strategies that deal with the grammar of texts, and also the identification of main ideas and events, as a common reading comprehension skill they already manage. This can also affect the way they relate to reading in a foreign language. According to Decker (2000), students who struggle with their reading because of their level, see this process not as something to undertake, but as something to avoid. Moreover, she states how reading comprehension is for this student a matter of understanding the meaning of isolated words, “rather than making sense of the material.” (Decker, 2000) This is one of the reasons why building confidence in students as successful readers becomes an important goal in a classroom. The author also explains the how it is necessary to highlight the importance of relating new information in the text to what is already known by students, in order to make sense out of what is being read; and that is what makes reading a successful event for students. This initial survey also shows how students rated the strategies learned traditionally according to their level of difficulty. As a response to that question, students rated ‘*finding meanings in a dictionary*’ as the least difficult strategy, and therefore one they are quite familiar with. The next least difficult

strategy of comprehension is the one of *'skimming for global ideas'* and this is the first reading comprehension strategy that they are in constant use of in the literature class. On the other hand, the two mayor difficulties they are expressing in this survey is the distinction between main and supporting ideas (58%) in a text, as well as the strategy that implies sequencing events in a story (49%), and this has certainly an impact on their motivation towards reading, given that the more difficult a text is to decode, the least they become interested in approaching it. This shows how (See figure below).

Figure 2: Perceptions of the level of difficulties when reading in L2



This confirms how the comprehension of vocabulary plays an important role in the way students perceive themselves as efficient readers. Among students, there are certain who feel they need to understand all the words in a text in order to feel they can read well. Thus, the level of satisfaction when reading a book is connected to how much sense they

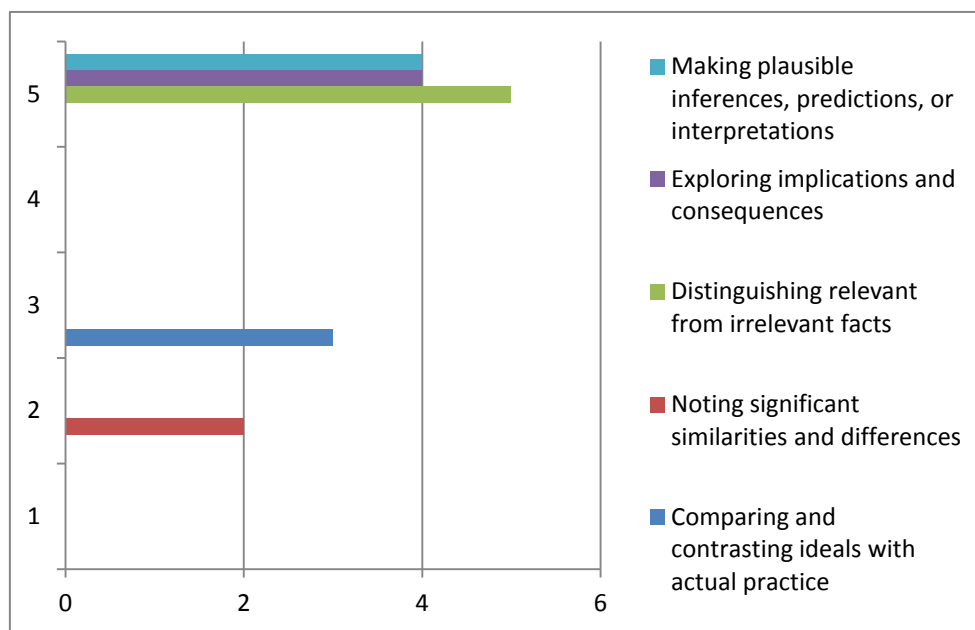
can make at word-level. In this sense, Bandura explains how the “expectations of personal efficacy” (Bandura, 1977, p.191) determine the degree of effort invested in a task, as well as the endurance of this sustained effort in case obstacles arise in the process. This probably explains why students with low levels of self-confidence related to their sense of self-efficacy in reading in a foreign language show little disposition to develop the tasks that implied large sessions of reading and answering to reading comprehension questions.

A midterm survey performed 6 months later showed the utilitarian use they gave to their reading skills; on one hand they used it for enjoyment; and on the other, they used it for finding specific information and to check on sources. Overall, this survey shows how their perceptions on their sense of self-efficacy was building, and was modifying their behavior towards reading. When asked again about the things they like and dislike about reading, the positive responses expressed how “you can put your mind in other place” [sic], and how you can enter a reality “to have many points of view of your life” [sic]. Another respondent expressed how “it carry me to another world while I read” [sic], or how “imagine what it tell me.” In a sense, this was clear evidence that the anxiety for reading regarding the comprehension of vocabulary had diminished meaningfully. On the other hand, the focus of what they did not like about reading was related now to not understanding specific aspects of the literature (figures of speech, etc.), or in other cases, when the book was not of their personal taste. In this sense, the notion of self-efficacy explained above increases as a result of the practice of the CTCMS. The approach of using critical thinking cognitive micro skills has made students involved in the process of getting meaning from a text, but also it provides students with “the opportunity to actively engage

in texts while simultaneously considering ideas, values, and ethical questions” (Collins, 1994). Since students have their own voice when addressing the literature lesson, they feel deeply engaged in the tasks associated to the reading process, and the intrinsic motivation is thus increased.

A follow up survey performed early in April showed how two years later certain students were still using some of the skills learned throughout this process. Now they are studying a variety of careers (Visual Arts Major, Literature, Medicine, and History, among others) and their responses show how they still use with frequency (on a weekly basis) at least three of the CTCMS (distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts, exploring implications and consequences, and making plausible inferences, predictions or interpretations). In a way, they assume an active role as readers, and they still know how to use the strategies systematically. When asked whether they feel they are motivated to read in English, a participant answered that what matters is the book and not whether it is in English or not (participant 11-11B). This demonstrates that for the respondent the language is no longer an issue, and the motivation is strictly related to the quality of the book, rather than the potential difficulties when reading the text.

Figure 3: The most used strategies and skills in their current university experience



Students also acknowledge the fact that some of the textbooks they are compelled to read at university level are in English, and mention how this experience has affected the way they read because “*it taught me efficient strategies to analyze and comprehend various types of texts*” (participant 16-11B), or because “*Because I learned to be more discerning at time of reading. Although I have to admit that there was too difficult for me reading in English, especially Shakespeare.*” [sic], by (participant 2-11B). This survey demonstrates in addition, that the impact of this study on the long run, and their perceptions of themselves as readers have changed in a positive and practical way, so as to affect positively their performance in their own careers. All those students who responded to this survey agreed that they feel they have become more critical thinkers as a result of this process, and as a result of their ongoing development, and it is this notion of self efficacy which motivates them to improve their reading in any language given. This confirms “that

students who consistently read for their own interest are often quite competent and are usually highly achieving readers.” (Barnes and Monroe, 2011, p.2). Moreover, according to Bandura (1977), the behavior of a motivated person is that which relates to the outcomes and consequences rather than momentary effects. This confirms the notion that the intrinsic motivation towards reading was fostered through the implementation of the strategies taught and practiced in this study. In addition, it provides evidence that in the students’ current performance at their own professional studies, the use of the strategies has allowed them to experience being self-efficient in their academic endeavors, demonstrating that the practice of critical thinking correlates with positive outcomes in their reading efficiency.

Chapter Six: Conclusions, Pedagogical Implications and Further Research

In the previous chapter it was demonstrated how the analysis of the research findings helped understand the actual impact of this study in students' overall performance in the literature class. Furthermore, the critical thinking cognitive micro skills they learned proved valuable for their overall perception of their reading efficiency in a foreign language. Moreover, this last chapter will also report on the implications and pedagogical considerations for further research studies.

6.1. Conclusions

The interpretation of the findings led to the following conclusions in terms of the specific objectives initially proposed for this action research:

The first objective was related to determining learners' development of CTCMS. The learners' involvement throughout the process of implementation evidenced through a variety of products an insightful view of situations, contexts, moral issues, specifically within the processes of analyzing, judging, and reflecting upon issues.

Based on the Sub-category One: *Students comparing and contrasting ideals versus reality*, students showed little by little a deeper involvement on the issues portrayed by the books chosen (loyalty, friendship, vanity, freedom, independence, among others). It was so clear how they started to understand other people's viewpoints and actions, and were able, in addition, to recognize their own perspectives, and reflect upon them, even recognizing mistakes of a personal nature. According to Paul (2010), a person who applies this strategy

is able to understand the gap, and strive to minimize it, hence becoming more aware of issues that imply fair-mindedness, and this was one of the evidences shown throughout this process.

The results regarding Subcategory Two: *Students thinking of implications and consequences of people's actions*, has made a significant impact on students reasoning. Thus, they were not only able to discover, discuss and analyze the actions of others, but were also able to use other people's actions. The latter became an element to define their own moral standards, their own limitations, and their ethical drives and motivations regarding a variety of situations that placed them in the position of making decisions. Paul (1986), claims that anyone who thinks critically is able to test conclusions and solutions against relevant criteria and standards, something that provides students with the capacity to ponder the validity of a judgment in the face of different, either attenuating or compelling circumstances. Another of the characteristics presented by Paul (1986) clearly states that such critical thinker can assume logically alternative systems of thought and belief, provided they pondered the possible scenarios where they can be applicable.

Following with the next category: *Students identifying similarities and difference*; this implied that students might develop, not only the capacity to see similar elements in cases that seemed superfluously unrelated, but it also allowed them to reflect about this and in some cases, even become tolerant with situations and people they had not understood in the first place. This characteristic corresponds to a person who, as a critical thinker, is

capable of compromising their beliefs, in order to understand the situations and positions of others (Paul, 1986).

Furthermore, the data relating to the category of *Students discriminating relevant from irrelevant facts*, demonstrated that the participants of this study were deeply involved in tasks where the main subject was to go through information. The participants were then able to extrapolate those elements that were subject of a variety of analysis, including those as simple as identifying the main events in a chapter, or something as complex as distinguishing the core of an ethical conflict in a story. In that sense, students demonstrated their capacity to ponder fragments of texts and identify arguments, main ideas, global ideas, supporting ideas, among others. This shows how discrimination happens at different levels even when based on the very same object of study.

Finally, considering the last subcategory: *Students predicting, interpreting and inferring based on different contexts*, even though this was considered by participants as one of the most difficult skills to attain, they showed great capacity to discern the intentions of speakers in a story, how they have a specific intention based on the variety of evidences presented in the books. They were also able to identify how the author (as well) has specific drives, interests and beliefs which permeate the text, and how they could discern such foundational ideas within a set of apparently inconclusive fragments from the text. Moreover, they were able to test the applicability of such skill out of the context of the book, when revising in a discussion, events of their current social and political background.

The second objective, related to the determination of the influence of literature analytic strategies in the motivation levels of students during the reading process, it was evident that by the end of this process, students were evidently noticing how their English level was no longer an issue when it came to perform analytical tasks that involved understanding their own perspectives upon a story, or upon a set of values to assess and discuss. It seemed evident also that regardless of their desire to or not to read in English more, the reading comprehension skills were no longer regarded as an obstacle, for they increased their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) to perform tasks that were challenging but within their reach. This was evident in the conclusion sessions of each book, when they had to present the class with their impressions of the books read, and how they felt about them and about themselves. Students could understand that they were able to read, and grasp different layers of meanings within a textbook, and also become involved in the story by means of finding connections to their ideas, beliefs and values.

Moreover, regarding the subcategories that emerged from this study, the *Pedagogical Implications* were as follows. It appears relevant to highlight that some of the critical thinking cognitive micro-skills worked with during this study were mentioned by some students as useful in their current university contexts. This is the case of subcategories 3, 4 and 5. This study could be useful to understand the trends of university needs, and it could be used as a means to analyze the trends of schools in the last years, so as to re-shape the curriculum to match those trends that start to become evident in their educational process.

Following such a thread of thought, it is also relevant to highlight the need of institutions to revise as well the training necessary in teachers, should they need to apply this experience on their own settings, given that becoming critical is not a matter of simply reading on the issue. This requires practice, testing, reading, and discussing thoroughly, in order to establish the foundations of criteria to be an efficient critical thinker. Considering that teachers are meant to educate those citizens of the 21st Century, this generation of teachers needs to be prepared for the challenges of education, by promoting the spaces, interactions and discussions that will foster the understanding and the practice of critical thinking in the classrooms, and as a result, the critical thinking expected once they leave their school years.

However, considering that there are authors, but no manuals, it is important to promote the creation of academic and pedagogic initiatives that fit the needs and values of our own context and society, understanding that regardless of the common traits among children in the rest of the world, and our own, our population has specific qualities that are worth nurturing, provided that they will eventually become the main actors of a coming society with all the cultural richness that characterizes Colombian children, young people, and adults. If our proposal fails to match our own drives, motivations, social and cultural characteristics, then by definition it is not critical.

6.2. Limitations

Several of the limitations faced along this study are related to the need to carefully choose the books to perform the tasks that will exemplify and promote the use of CTCMS.

In that sense, institutions might be reluctant to allow changes in the choice of books determined by the school board, and some samples might need large adaptations in order to actually promote reflection, analysis and discussions that address the specific set of CTCMS chosen in this study.

In addition, the implementation and guidance necessary for students to understand the skill and its devices, implies the preparation and study from the teacher, in order to respond to the specific needs of the groups in his/her charge. In other words, working with CTCMS implies careful planning, studying, and preparation, because they are concepts and skills that will raise difficult questions from students, and will imply from the teacher being consistently critical him/herself.

At the beginning of the implementation of this study, one of the most critical limitations was the lack of well-developed material for the use of teachers in a classroom. However, there is more and more material developed by teachers all around the world that could be used as models to create materials that respond to teachers' actual contexts.

6.3. Further Research

As a recommendation for further research, it would be deemed necessary to identify and reinforce those strategies that are involved in students' long life learning, so as to match a current need related to academic performance, but also those others that imply becoming fair minded, and socially responsible citizens (such as the skills of Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice, and Exploring implications and consequences).

In this case it would appear useful to analyze how the trends in our current educational system are deemed to be more important, especially those practical skills that make students and people more efficient readers, but not more ethically consistent citizens. In that sense this is a call for a more integrative approach to revising and proposing a curriculum that affects not only the intellectual capacities of our students, but also their ethical values.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Consent Letter



LICEO CAMBRIDGE
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Bogotá, Mayo de 2010

Estimados Padres de Familia,

Es de conocimiento actual que los estudiantes requieren de habilidades específicas para poder dar respuesta a las exigencias académicas de las instituciones universitarias, y el Liceo ha ido planteando cambios y mejoras al programa de inglés paulatinamente. Como parte del desarrollo de mis estudios de Maestría en didácticas del Inglés en la Universidad de la Sabana, vengo adelantando un proyecto para el desarrollo de habilidades de pensamiento crítico desde la clase de literatura, que puede apoyar el proceso de aprendizaje de esta lengua en los estudiantes de undécimo grado.

Para este propósito se llevarán a cabo talleres y proyectos de aula que promuevan el desarrollo de las habilidades esperadas en pensamiento crítico, y se realizarán encuestas, video-grabaciones de clases, y se llevarán diarios de lectura.

Le garantizamos a los estudiantes estricta confidencialidad con la información que se obtenga de los trabajos desarrollados, y este proyecto, más que tener incidencia en sus notas, tendrá incidencia en sus vidas académicas, profesionales y personales a mediano y largo plazo.

Para que quede constancia de su conocimiento y aprobación de su hijo(a), favor firmar este consentimiento. Agradecemos de antemano su colaboración e interés,

Atentamente,

Amanda Romero

Rectora

Cristina Díaz Granados

Head of English Department

Carmen Elena Díaz Centeno

Directora General

Nombre del padre: _____

Nombre de la madre: _____

Nombre del estudiante: _____

Mi hijo(a) puede participar en el proyecto 'Developing Critical Thinking Cognitive Micro Skills in 11th

Graders through Literature'

Si: _____

No: _____

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APPENDIX B

Sample of Lesson Plan

RE SEARCH QUESTION	What is the effect of the implementation of project based methodology on the development of critical thinking cognitive micro skills in 11th graders in Literature class?			
Me mo 1	<p>General → To measure the development of critical thinking cognitive micro skills in 11th graders. Specific →</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To design strategies that promote the development of critical thinking cognitive micro-skills in the development of literature projects. To measure the impact of project based methodology in the motivation levels of students during the reading process. 			
DA TE	OBJE CTIVES	ACTIVITY	ACTIONS	REFLECTION/COMMENTS
15t h April	<p>To learn and search about the author and about the XIX century.</p> <p>To reflect about cultural matters that permeate time.</p> <p>To identify relevant information</p>	<p>Warm up: Asking questions about their personal feelings about homosexuality.</p> <p>Brainstorming and question: How do you think people reacted at the idea of homosexuality 100 years ago?</p>	<p>Girls were amused right away, and in general they all started to laugh 'nervously'. It is a question for which some boys responded with noises of disapproval.</p> <p>"I have nothing against them, but I don't like them looking at me with 'ojitos locos'"</p> <p>Girls said it was normal, and that everybody had the right to do whatever they wanted in their lives.</p>	<p>P: it would be interesting to have students answer this as a survey to check the types of responses regarding their personal feelings and opinions about it. Boys and girls have very distinctive opinions.</p> <p>D: I was reading a chapter of the book "Teaching and Researching Motivation" (Dörney, Z. 2001), where the author cites how the individual's social environment is a type of motivation that is driven because of its interpersonal nature, and is related to social approval. (Weiner, 1994) as cited by Dörney, Z. 2001. Therefore, it might be quite useful to foster a stronger participation by identifying these critical issues that motivate them to present their beliefs and challenge them in the light of critical thinking.</p> <p>MS-1 It is evident that this is a delicate topic. boys find it hard to express their feelings without sounding disrespectful. There is a huge gap related to the concept of intolerance. Girls tend to be more understanding,</p>
		Ss will be taken to the IT	Students were quite	P: The school has 2 I.T. rooms, but the

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COGNITIVE MICRO-SKILLS

	<p>from the sources given.</p>	<p>room to participate in a web quest by groups of 4. They will find information related to the time of Oscar Wilde, and to his life. They will answer develop a project of a scrapbook related to 4 aspects of life in Wilde's time. They shall prepare their presentation to perform in front of the class and explain their beliefs and their gathered information.</p>	<p>uncomfortable with the display of the classroom. There were not enough chairs to have them work. However, they managed to find the information guided by the web-quest prepared. They started organizing their products. They had difficulties to understand the idea of a scrapbook; some of them preferred making a PPT, which was accepted.</p>	<p>teachers that administer the rooms do not use one another interchangeably. I need to get to an agreement about the schedules of the rooms, because the room in the elementary has not enough equipments nor chairs for students to develop their tasks appropriately. D: Another aspect to be improved from this lesson has to do with the part of understanding instructions. Even though it is 11th grade, I will try to have them copy the procedure in their notebooks, so that when they get to the IT room, they try to follow all the instructions and procedures. T: I need to review aspects of learning to become digital learners. I need to review some of those aspects worked at SOLRC, because students need help to understand instructions, tools, and be resourceful to deal with problems in the online lessons.</p>
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APPENDIX C

Surveys

C.1. Initial Survey – 2009

1. I like reading

- I like reading Short texts
- novels
- magazines
- Fantasy
- articles
- Sci-Fi



2. Rate the genres you prefer being 1 the least interesting genre and 6 the most interesting genre for you.

Sci-Fi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fiction novels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Romantic novels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Real life Stories	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Articles and reports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fantasy novels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

3. How many books do you read during a year? Include the text books of literature assigned at school.

- between 1 - 5
- between 6 - 8
- between 9 - 10
- More than 10

Other (please specify)

4. What things do you like about reading? What things don't you like about reading? Make a list

What things do you like about reading? What things don't you like about reading? Make a list

5. Name two books you enjoyed reading this year.

Name two books you enjoyed reading this year.

6. Name two books you didn't like reading this year.

Name two books you didn't like reading this year.

7. What do you find more difficult about reading in English?

Describe briefly.

What do you find more difficult about reading in English? Describe briefly.

8. What do you find easier about reading English books?

What do you find easier about reading English books?

9. Rate the following reading strategies from the least difficult (1), to the most difficult (7).

Skimming for global ideas

Inferring meaning of new vocabulary

IMPLEMENTING LITERATURE ANALYTICAL STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF CRITICAL THINKING COGNITIVE MICRO-SKILLS

3

Finding meanings in the dictionary	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying main events	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying main ideas	<input type="radio"/>
Differentiating main ideas from supporting ones.	<input type="radio"/>
Sequencing events in a story.	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

Available at [SurveyMonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)

Appendix D

Midterm Survey – 8th June 2010

1. What do you read for? Mark 1 the less used purpose in reading and 6 the most used one.

	1	2	3	4
To consult sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To do classwork and homework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To enjoy a book	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To find out specific information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To interpret graphs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To learn about topics of your interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

2. What are the most important aspects or benefits of reading for you?

List them down.

What are the most important aspects or benefits of reading for you? List them down.

3. What are the least important aspects or benefits of reading for you?

List them down.

What are the least important aspects or benefits of reading for you? List them down.

4. What things do you like about reading? What things don't you like about reading? Make a list

What things do you like about reading? What things don't you like about reading? Make a list

5. What have you found more difficult of this book you are currently reading?

What have you found more difficult of this book you are currently reading?

6. What activities do you prefer doing when reading a book in the literature class?

What activities do you prefer doing when reading a book in the literature class?

7. What activities don't you like about the literature class?

What activities don't you like about the literature class?

8. Rate the following reading strategies from the least difficult (1), to the most difficult (7).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	/A
Skimming for global ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Inferring meaning of new vocabulary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Identifying true or false statements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Identifying main ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

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	1	2	3	4	5	/A
Predicting outcomes and possible developments in the story	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Sequencing events in a story.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Other (please specify)

9. Do you think that

	strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree
your teacher explains sufficiently?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
your teacher answers your doubts and questions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
your teacher uses appropriate classroom management techniques?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
your teacher uses a good variety of classroom activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
your teacher can improve her lessons?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
your teacher is patient?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. What activities would you like to do in the literature class?

What activities would you like to do in the literature class?

Appendix E

FOLLOW UP SURVEY – March 2013

LICEO CAMBRIDGE

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Name: _____

Dear Students,

After three years from your graduation, it is a great pleasure to get to know of you.

This survey aims at finding out the impact of the implementation of strategies in the literature class of English. Please answer the questions, and send the document to this address:

krisdg76@yahoo.com or krisdg76@gmail.com

Thanks,

Cristina

FOLLOW UP SURVEY

1. Which skills have you found more useful in your academic endeavors after going through the experience of learning critical thinking cognitive skills in the class of literature? Rate the skills from one to five, being one the least useful and 5 the most useful skill:

	1	2	3	4	5
Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice					
Noting significant similarities and differences					
Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant					

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facts					
Exploring implications and consequences					
Making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations					

Why did you rate them that way?

2. How often do you use the skills mentioned above in your academic life?

On a weekly basis	On a monthly basis	On a year basis
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Why?

3. What do you like reading now?

Explain why:

4. Has the experience in literature class affected the way you read?

IMPLEMENTING LITERATURE ANALYTICAL STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING COGNITIVE MICRO-SKILLS

Yes	No
-----	----

Explain Why:

5. Has the experience in literature class motivated you to read in English?

Yes	No
-----	----

Explain Why:

6. Has the experience in literature class motivated you to read in other subjects?

Yes	No
-----	----

Explain Why:

7. Do you consider you have improved your role as a critical thinker?

Yes	No
-----	----

Explain:

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APPENDIX F

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1			MS-1 v	MS-1 X	MS2 v	MS-2 X	MS-3 v	MS-3 X	MS-4 v	MS-4 x	MS-5 v	MS-5 X
2	1-11B											
3	2-11B		4	0	1	0	7	0	6	1	2	0
4	3-11B		0	4	0	1	7	2	3	4	4	1
5	4-11B		3	1	1	0	8	0	5	2 to 3	4	
6	5-11B		4	0	1	0	7	1	4	2	4	0
7	6-11B		4	0	0	1	6	2	4	1	4	1
8	7-11B		1	3	1	0	6	1	4	1	8	0
9	8-11B		3	1	1	0	8	0	5	2	4	1
10	9-11B		4	0	0	1	8	0	3	4	4	1