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AFFINITY SPACES AND MULTIMODAL TEXTS FOR CONNECTING ENGLISH
CLASSROOM AND STUDENTS' DAILY TASKS.

BY

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AFFIDAVIT

I, (Zeidy Yurley Agudelo Lopera), hereby declare that this master's thesis has not been previously presented as a degree requirement, either in the same style or with variations, in this or any other university (Article 92 Advanced Education Student Code, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana)

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ZEIDY YURLEY AGUDELO LOPERA

Agus, my great nephew.

His birthday makes me remember the precise date, February 2nd, I started the first class of this process, Introduction to Academic Writing; my hours of studying and thesis work were gone with his first smirks, sobbings, naps, words, games, mess. Sometimes I observed him, the responsible of my pauses. Several times I wished to have a part of his unworried life and his carefree character to play and be unconcerned.

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Abstract

Affinity spaces are virtual learning settings where participants use their digital skills to interact and acquire knowledge about topics they are interested in. Multimodal texts are communicative tools that people observe and read everywhere. This research process described and shared how the combination of affinity spaces and multimodal texts in a public School in Medellin was helping an eight-student group of tenth grade to acquire, investigate, and spread knowledge spontaneously while knocking down the walls that separate the English classroom from language users' daily tasks. The process was developed through a micro project proposed and named by the students "Inspiring and creating horror." The topic allowed integrating movies, stories, and graphic novels as sources of knowledge and inspiration in order to create their multimodal texts.

This plan started inside English classes, and it was also spread throughout Spanish lessons too. The topic of the project and the suggested tasks gave way to the contents of both school subjects. The students' productions displayed how words, sentences, and texts could be mixed with pictures, colors, sizes, sounds, and others, taking advantage of these latter ones for working together expressing and transmitting meaning. The proposed exercises within affinity spaces exhibited how a small modification in the ways we conceive the assessment and the qualified people to evaluate students' tasks can engage learners to participate, research and use knowledge to increase their second language skills.

During the study process, many findings showed multimodal texts and affinity spaces combination as a strategy to transform previous conceptions about composing and answering to current generations' characteristics, needs, and expectations. It also exposed how the audience of

written productions like this invited writers to search about contents, applications, and processes for creating a multimodal text.

Future studies could continue inquiring into how the affinity spaces and multimodal texts in high school processes could promote the integration of some mandatory subjects of the curricula. Additionally, they could establish other ways of acquiring literacy processes in children and adult students.

Keywords: Composing, affinity spaces, multimodal text, second language processes.

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Chapter One:

Reflecting On The Students' School Situation

As human beings, we imitate family members, friends, teachers and acquaintances. Authors like Skinner (1957 as cited in Hall, 2011) express that imitation and repetition are important habits in a language learning process and through these actions we solve daily situations getting information that will become previous knowledge to have access to complex abilities. We create a bridge of knowledge thanks to language; because “we have different learning stories generated from the interaction with our backgrounds, communities, families, teachers, peers, learning/teaching methods, personality, motivation, gender and so on” (Conteh & Toyoshima, 2005. p.25) that allow us to enrich ourselves in diverse academic, social and cultural aspects. Myles (2013) explored “theoretical families” and described them as “groups of theories which focus on the subdomains of second language acquisition” (p.46) In his work, he presents cognitive, linguistic and interactionist, sociolinguistic and socio-cultural approaches; exposing important aspects of language learning process such as the development of linguistic system, psychological dimensions and the roles of social factors and individual differences. In the last-mentioned approach, he defines language as a cultural tool explaining how exploration, interaction and social elements contribute and facilitate its construction. One of the main objectives of learning a language should be to find the better ways of using it to create relationships, explore different cultures and interact with a lot of people. This project aspired to engage students and motivate them to participate inside affinity spaces composing multimodal texts in order to reinforce the sociocultural aspect of English.

Because nowadays English has become an instrument that students require for a boundless amount of leisure activities such as playing video games, accessing social networks, understanding lyrics and watching movies or online tutorials. New ways of literacy have joint to school and communities' processes for accessing required information and developing the necessary skills for participating in these activities successfully. For example, Ramirez (2017) demonstrated that visual literacy helps students to understand symbol systems and indicators within video games to have a better performance, make connections, advance stages and win them. The researcher expresses that “language is the key to knowledge about video games” (para. 6). Zapata (2015) also analyzed how Social Media Literacy (SML) provides a space to expand on traditional literacies that deal with reading and writing to have access to web materials, posts, and resources, meet new contacts, and participate in conversations taking place in online social environments

As an English teacher, I would like to take advantage of DeKeyser's idea where he exalts “there is considerable second language learning that occurs outside of the four walls of the classroom” (2017. p.18) and the fact that all current platforms, video games and social networks are presented in English, giving my students the opportunity to explore other alternatives of using and practicing English inside and outside the classroom, learning new vocabulary, reflecting about principles, lifestyles and values and building their own idea of reality, while they research about meaningful topics and participate in online communities. Adopting virtual spaces as English-practicing settings where adolescents could be engaged to use “new social practices that involve reading, writing and other modes of communication” (Lammers, Curwood & Magnifico, 2012, p. 44) spontaneously while they are asking, answering and looking for

information. Additionally, they have an experience involving different signs, pictures and symbols in their texts.

Gee (2004) and Black (2009), among others, have studied the concept of “affinity spaces”. Gee defined them as “particularly common and important form today in our high-tech new capitalist world” (p. 75) and which have become “effective and organized socio-cultural learning environments” (Gee, 2018. p. 8) where participants share with many people from different locations while they are creating connections based on a “generator” of content related to their interests and passions

Lammers, Curwood & Magnifico (2012) framed affinity spaces as scenarios that allow users to be included in online communities where they can research about topics interest, interact with different kinds of audience and recognize reading and writing as skills that involve creativity and collaboration. In addition, within affinity spaces, learners have opportunities for helping each other to learn and practice by solving particular problems, becoming experimental researchers in order to build knowledge, face challenges and make writing action more accessible, creative and useful. For that reason, I want to show these students affinity spaces as opportunities to discover and learn about the topics they are interested on and virtual places to create and share their written productions.

I have observed how the tenth-grade students of a public School in Medellin use Facebook to keep an effective communication with their classmates, especially when they do not come to class. This specific group asks questions about homework, takes pictures of notebooks and solves school tasks together through the current application. However, they fail to realize that there are more advantages in the implementation of this virtual space. Authors like Kern

(2006) express that “reading and writing are obviously key modes of online language” (p. 195), giving the importance of using these abilities to be able to access information from virtual texts. For example, Zapata (2015) in his study demonstrated some benefits of the usage of “different online applications, as a means to collaboratively build spontaneous and contextualized texts” and transforms “students-teacher-task” (p.37) relationships in an active interaction.

I have noticed the striking motivation and astonishing skills that young pupils show when they are using all the technologies that the global world offers to them, as well as effortless way in which they solve the new situations they have to face in those current applications, even when their instructions are in English. For instance, Gee (2018) did a study based on online games in which he demonstrated that games are educational spaces where gamers solve problems, have socio-cultural experiences and create relationships. However, several learning actions are involved in this leisure activity, participants design tools, access tutorials, write stories that allow them to “recruit new readers and motivate the old ones” (p.11). Mora (2018) and his gaming researchers have demonstrated how video games could become meaningful experiences in a second language classroom. These playing elements offer to gamers different language choices, integrating multimodal texts as learning and teaching tools which help them to expand their communicative abilities, and “provide them new forms of agency and voice to our learners, regardless of age or competence level” (Mora, 2018, parra. 6). DeLuca (2018) also presented a study where fandoms drive the writing process in the classroom in which he observes how mutual aid, affective engagement help in their written tasks.

This group of the public school in Medellin used Facebook in order to facilitate their school processes and to be in touch. This research project wanted to stir them to find the

multiple uses and values of affinity spaces as a source of getting information and an opportunity for exploring research actions as tools to write about the topics they are interested in and answers they find while practicing English language. In addition, it could also facilitate them to reflect about the possible improvements in class routines and the appropriate ways to guide a research process, taking advantage of students' abilities to conduct an inquiry about the topics they are interested in and their spontaneous participation in these digital interfaces.

The English language in this public school has fluctuated. Many teachers and methodologies have guided the teaching processes. Students do not feel English as part of their social context. They have some difficulties to practice the second language out of the school and most of them do not have real opportunities that allow them to come to understand English as part of their lives. As a teacher, I would like to show my students that through English they can find multiple ways to research, learn and solve questions about the topics they are interested in. That is why I want to incorporate other strategies, approaches and tasks where students spend their class and home time participating, building knowledge and practicing English. This study, therefore, recognized the impact of involving tenth grade students in affinity spaces to research about topics that motivate them to write and share their productions. The following research question guided study: *What is the impact of using affinity spaces and multimodal texts in a tenth grade English class?*

Gee (2018) argued that “Today, teachers must learn to curate spaces available on the internet” (p.12) and “help their students to find, create, and join their own affinity spaces” (p.12) which responds to students' interests, passions and needs. Aside from that, learning and practicing English will not be the unique goal. It will also be possible to inspire students to write

about what they like and enjoy while they are learning and attaining new information by interacting through a second language.

To address my research question, I created opportunities that help students to discover the reasons and topics that foster them to investigate, write and share knowledge. Additionally, students found a space of their own to create and their multimodal texts through digital writing tools. All this process could demonstrate how teachers can foster their students to share their written productions through multimodal texts within affinity spaces, having the opportunity to receive comments and feedback from their peers.

Recognizing Affinity Spaces and Multimodal Texts

People learn best when their learning is part of a highly motivated engagement with social practices which they value. (Gee, 2004. p.70) Today's students recognize and use some of the benefits and practices of digital technologies. They are immersed in social media chatting, sending messages, posting and establishing written conversations through several devices and applications they consider valuable for their relationships. These kinds of activities have turned into their favorite hobbies and have created the need to participate, collaborate and find affinities within online spaces, exposing themselves to “Jenkins’ conception the participatory culture which is a key aspect of new media literacies (Lankshear, Knobel, & Curran, 2012). These experiences on the web empower pupils to be familiar with other ways to read and write while they are interacting and facing authentic material from what Rowsell and Walsh (2011) mentioned as “new texts” and what we acknowledge as emails, chats, blogs, and microblogging. The usage of these digital sources requires “a new set of skills” which are nominated as “digital literacy”.

According to Kavalier and Flanigan (2006), digital literacy includes “the person’s ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments” (p. 14). These abilities are necessary to cooperate and to take part in virtual learning communities because they are an essential part of the strategies to have an appropriate consumption of “new” written productions sources.

According to Lankshear and colleagues (2012. p.1), a new literacies approach also stimulates language users to be engage to communicative system across reading, writing and speech using icons, images and visual displays which invites language users to employ communicative competence “acquiring grammar of visual and multimodal design for reading and writing hybrid text types (...) and managing tools for consuming and producing multimodal texts”. (Lankshear, et al, 2012. p.2). Like educational processes are invited to evolve into an important assignment of involving new modes of learning and at the time to acknowledge linguistic, audio, spatial, gestural and visual modes of communication and display knowledge. These multimodal forms have become as part of language class practices (Rowell & Walsh, 2011. p. 54) in order to enhance teaching and give students more ownership over their learning and new possibilities to express what they have learned.

Affinity spaces: Bridges that connect students’ daily tasks outside schools. Different theories and perspectives have appeared to help learners and teachers how to extend language knowledge processes and solve the global world communicative social and challenges. New ways of communication, which are mediated by technology tools, have set forth personal learning environments that allow students to express their individual opinions, develop critical

thinking, have access to up-to-date information and follow the class sequence activities from different locations while they are strengthening their decision-making ability and they practice writing and reading abilities. “The interaction of the peculiar affordances of computer-based and networked technologies and the multimodality of electronic format texts has the effect of multiplying potentially new literacy practices” (Unsworth, 2001. p.15). Supplementary to this theory, new concepts had been developed in language teaching in order to respond to social and historical circumstances.

One of these was Gee’s (2004) notion of affinity spaces. He brings back the concept in his article, defining them as “organized social and cultural settings” (Gee, 2018, p. 8) that link teenagers’ lives characteristics and the means through which they learn online inside and outside schools. These mixtures of the real and virtual worlds offer many young people have a lot of learning involvement and “the opportunity to compare and contrast their experiences with their experiences in the classroom” (Gee, 2004. p.75).

Black (2007) supported Gee’s ideas, complementing the term as “the cutting-edge of effective learning environments” (p. 389) that can make reading and writing actions more accessible. These virtual groups create connections and opportunities for facilitating students to learn in an appropriate way and solving particular problems.

In the boundaries of educational environments, affinity spaces enhance students to find an idea of belongingness, membership and affiliation (Gee, 2004) that they need to grow up and advance in their own learning processes while the apprenticeship concept is being promoted by themselves as a group of partners who share a certain set of practices to improve their abilities and work together for the same endeavor. A group where the experience is not a reason to

segregate newbies participants or avoid interacting with them on the spaces. Because according to Gee (2004) the concept of affinity spaces contributes to incorporate some features to learning processes that traditional education cannot do easily. For example, school contents have transformed into boring topics that students do not connect to their interests.

Multimodal texts: Youth's way of expression using different modes. The development and usage of skills and engage school procedures to digital activities in which students keep them linked using some digital skills. New literacies contributed in the development of academic processes, helping students to understand the benefits to be and participate as a member of affinity spaces because they could interact with peers, find opportunities to learn and solve challenges, while they are reading and writing among images, icons, sounds, movements and gestures on multiple platforms and participating as much as on authentic literacy situations through meaningful tasks. Additionally, from the use of different virtual spaces and devices “can result in different kinds of reading and writing practices for different purposes and interactions” (Rowse et al., 2016. pag. 121).

Álvarez Valencia (2016) stated that multimodal texts require including diverse modes of communication that work together to create meaning and enable readers to navigate and access to the content of the text. These modes involve “base units” which are described as every designed element that belongs to a multimodal performance and it was planned with the intention “to contribute to a general meaning (...) and combine to generate a specific message” (p. 102). Then, its construction also demand an examination of the conditions of production and use, the identification of modes of communication (linguistic, visual and spatial) and their meaning-

making functions and the establishing intersemiotic relationships (ideational, interpersonal, textual).

Most of the social networks, digital and printed media that my students have access to provide them with multimodal texts. Current news information, people's opinions, advertising and publicity are presented on these kind of texts. These are full of colors, layouts, outstanding typography, facilitating readers' understanding and becoming more dynamic the process of reflection.

According to Álvarez Valencia (2016), students' processes inside language classes can be enriched through the use and analysis of these current possibilities of expression. He stated that the benefits of "providing students with tools to understand multimodal texts" (p. 108) in second/foreign languages processes. He expresses that this kind of pedagogical material will help both Colombian students and teachers because they could be transformed into better meaning makers and teachers will have an extensive assortment of sources where they can find materials for developing their lessons based on the contrast of American cultural values, stereotypes, behaviors and beliefs and Colombian ones.

Multimodal texts within tenth grade students' affinity spaces. Nowadays, second language users can find plenty of digital environments that afford some ways of practicing and being in contact with the languages. Sometimes, these educational websites do not provide learners with comprehensible and contextualized exercises that link their lives, realities, passions and daily activities. Affinity spaces afford users to find affinities with other participants establishing own goals and promoting mentoring and instructional responsibilities while they are

connected, participating collaborating and creating inside them. Affinity spaces could also be sources of information where my students find facts and news.

Understanding the characteristics and English previous knowledge of the tenth grade students, the messages and reading comprehension took time to internalize structures and build messages but the interaction with digitized material showed students that require awareness to read and write in order to understand the information and posting their opinions, interests and beliefs about it. For that reason, they needed to increase their abilities to interact inside affinity spaces in a comfortable and spontaneous way because, as Rowsell and her colleagues said, “Digital literacies are many things all at once—highly visible, globally dispersed, differentially proportioned, socially participatory—not to mention that they make us think in a multitude of ways. (2016, p. 121)

The participation within spaces and the collaborative work put them in contact with language expressions, signs, grammar and new vocabulary to improve their communicative competence for consuming and producing their own multimodal texts as Lankshear and his colleagues expressed in their research work (2013). Furthermore, they had an exchange with cultural practices that I expected help them to make their own meanings of the society they belong, the places they visited and people who they shared while they “transform ways of reconstructing and negotiating their identities” (Rowsell & Walsh, 2011, p. 56). In this way, affinity spaces and multimodal texts joint them to build a bridge between students’ academic written performance, daily tasks and their social ability to create connections on the web.

For conducting the process it is necessary to contemplate that students needed to consider and understand the features of design such as layout, composition, use of text and image or

graphics – including aspects such as colour, size, medium, angles – and the way these are appropriate for a specific audience (Rowse & Walsh, 2011. p.58) to produce multimodal texts that reflect their knowledge, thoughts, emotions, passions, affinities and beliefs.

In that process, digital skills guided pupils to recognize what tools use and how, and digital literacy skills to know why, when and for whom choose and share the content of their productions as Bali (2016) communicates in her article. Multimodality allowed them to use colors, pictures, sounds and layout their own “new” texts or flashy productions that are “the result of the semiotic work of design, and of the processes of composition and production” (Kress, 2003. p.36) and show the interests of their makers. They could be “resources for sending messages simpler to understand” (Mejía-Vélez & Salazar Patiño, 2014. para. 1) which help to internalize concepts, building more knowledge and exposure to the target language.

Mora (2019) has explained that “powerful texts” are realistic productions that could blend the “kinds of literacies our students use in their daily lives” (p. 363) and their disposition as writers. He also expressed, “a carefully designed multimodal text helps writers to realize that the picture needs a thousand words to go with it” (p. 364) but he highlighted that the picture and its words also require other elements to create the richer messages and more complex multimodal creations that the target audience expects. Moving pictures, gifs, sounds, icons and other semiotic resources will aid my students to make possible the construction of these realistic and original texts.

Furthermore, Mora (2019), as a result of his previous studies about the concept of multimodality (Mora, 2014b, 2015, 2016b); unveiled three essential features for the multimodal text design, which he described as *intention* (i.e. the audience who will be the readers and

interpreters of the text), *meaning* (i.e. what writers want to say through their compositions), and *design* (students' flairs for creating the essence of the message).

These previous perceptions have been part of several research studies which have lent a hand so as to be contextualized and be adaptable in different learning environments. I carried out a deep and thorough search looking for strategies, methods, procedures that other researchers inquired about and their results gave me some ideas with the intention of starting to think how I could transform my teaching practices taking small steps.

I chose the concepts of multimodality and affinity spaces as the basis of answering the following research question: *What is the impact of using affinity spaces and multimodal texts in a tenth grade English class?*

These terms allowed me to figure out how my English classroom practices could be modified for answering my students' interests and characteristics, my school processes and my professional goals. The use of affinity spaces could permit my students to practice English outside the class. The students' passions and interests for using digital devices and applications could facilitate the composition of multimodal texts and the research of other forms of creating.

Chapter Two:

Recognizing Previous Studies To Support My Research

Teachers and students are fundamental participants in all academic processes. They have several goals to achieve, and different roles to assume inside and outside at school. Learning and teaching have been transcendental activities that have shown human beings how to live and survive in better conditions. Each generation has required appropriate strategies, tools, and aptitudes to carry out the educational task; that is why the activities development has been changed trying to make it better for students and teachers' characteristics. Now, the global world offers multiple strategies to guide the essential processes at educational institutions. Several researchers have studied how to form meaningful experiences regarding learning and teaching actions. Additionally, some authors have made efforts to guide literacy processes through contextualized activities that provoke eloquent participation without forgetting the social reality and the benefits of being part of a community.

As a researcher, I like to explore how the creation and usage of affinity spaces accompanied by the construction of multimodal texts bring opportunities to Colombian English Second Language Learners to connect this language to their daily activities inside and outside the school.

I have found out that quite a few authors have worked on the concept of affinity spaces for promoting virtual places for their students to find people with similar attractions, hobbies, and likings. Within these settings, they can share knowledge, learn from each other, assess by themselves, and enjoy the same activity, game, topic, or book. Others have researched for

applying multimodality as a way of written expression where different semiotic elements are associated with sounds, pictures, colors, sizes, and forms for making meaning and represent it.

Below, I introduced some of them. I described some of the authors' studies and how they carried them to explain their findings. For example, Mills and Chandra (2011) explored the advantages in the implementation of “authentic digital communication tools in educational settings” (p. 36). In their study, the researchers propose firsthand usage of EDMODO, a platform designed for developing academic purposes which future teachers can put into practice during their lessons. The platform involves students in microblogging activities where they can investigate and reflect on their literacy learning process while the teachers increase technical competences for using it.

During their research, students worked out in several literacy exercises such as narrative examples, reflective writing drills, and tutorial groups. As a favoring circumstance, the inquiry act started these practices doing concept maps as graphic organizers for the content, not dissociating itself from traditional methods for starting the writing process. As a consequence, the authors found that the students' participation in supportive virtual communities promotes learners' self-initiated literacy practices. At the same time, the writing process elements were transformed thanks to the given feedback and previous editions that students did on sentence structure, capitalization, and punctuation before posting text messages and sending online chats.

Black (2009) studied English language learners' processes in online contexts using technology as a means for involving 21st-century skills with literacy practices. The author proposed *Fan fiction* texts or fan-written compositions that talk about media and popular culture. The principal objective was to explore "how this online writing space might provide English

Language learners (ELLs) with access to literacy learning and how the virtual environment might promote affiliation with composing and interacting in English" (p. 691). The study took into account three participants who were learning English as a second language; they explore the usage of *multimodal texts* as an innovative way to connect textual and visual elements (images, colors, and sounds) and communicative ways in online networks for improving composition skills, too.

Findings demonstrated how this meaningful strategy helped these focal students to increase their social skills and the effectiveness of collaborative learning in the co-construction of knowledge. Besides, it supported how ELLs youths can be seen identity as "powerful learners, language users, and as active producers of their own social, cultural and ideological materials" (p. 696).

The two previous studies described the experiences of promoting collaborative composition and reading practices in online communities throughout the co-construction and co-creation of new versions of stories. Black and Mills & Chandra studies involved specific purposes that fit for their participants. Black based her studies on the transformation of readings in order to explore how the forms of literacy inside fandoms the adolescences literacy practices could be extended out of school places. Mills & Chandra based their studies on Microblogging as a literacy learning resource for Future teachers and how Edmodo could be applied for educational aims.

The reflection process was part of both studies. The University participants used the platform as a private blog for reflecting in order to consider how applicable could the microblogging in their future teachings. Adolescent participants took advantage of their

participation for knowing about "technological literacy or the ability to choose the appropriate technology for specific activities and use it in the most effective ways" (Black, 2009. p. 693)

A Chinese study reported the effect of individual differences in virtual communities in terms of e-quality which "refers to information quality, system quality and service quality of virtual communities" (Zha, Zhang, Yan and Xiao, 2014. p. 185) and the affinity which users could establish on them (virtual communities). The authors demarcated individual differences in terms of Physical (age, gender, position and experiences with virtual communities) and physiological differences based on personality traits: extroversion (being sociable and active), agreeableness (cooperative and friendly), and openness to new experience (imaginative and curious), conscientiousness (self-disciplined and organized) and neuroticism (state of emotional instability).

The authors defined virtual communities as "computer-mediated spaces where there is an integration of content and communication" (p. 186) such as blogs, microblogs, and social networks, and quality as a concept that is concerned with excellence and effectiveness. Also, they suggested, "affinity with virtual communities which reflects the attitude towards the impact of virtual communities develop from the past experience with them" (p. 187).

The analysis of the practice with computer-generated populations demonstrated that expert users are more demanding participants than, and they expect more quality to satisfy their information needs. From the exploration of personality traits, Zha and colleagues found that psychological differences affected the way people think and perceive the quality, success, and effectiveness of virtual communities. Starting at this part, a possible aspect of being evaluated can be the connection of these personality traits (extroversion, agreeableness, openness to new

experiences, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) in the development of digital literacy skills through cybernetic groups.

In addition to the previous instruments, different authors established *Fandom* as a strategy to implement in the language acquisition process. For instance, De Luka (2018) featured a study where fandoms drove the writing process in the classroom and motivated students to share their written compositions in public digital spaces. Her principal activities used literacy as the practice that encouraged the written composition through multimodal texts in order to make public the individual productions via online fan communities and affinity groups.

As a result, she discovered that "through public multimodal compositions, participants in their affinity spaces are creating boundaries and shaping the contours of their fan community and affinity groups" (p. 84) In the process, "affective engagements" appeared, encouraging students to make public their written reports in virtual communities. Mutual aid and collective endeavors were observed. They helped pupils to attain common goals while they enjoyed interacting and doing collaborative work. For teachers, Fandom is an excellent opportunity to give feedback to their students about their compositions. During its usage, they strengthen peer learning, without isolating the writing abilities. De Luka (2018) invites writing instructors to "see fandoms as an opportunity for students to teach and share with them about topics with which they are passionately engaged and invested in" (p. 90)

Abrams and Gerber (2014) studied multimodal texts and digital literacy as they analyzed the changes of literacy concept over the border of print text as a traditional source to new notions of literacy in today's world. The starting point of this action was the reflection and

transformation of the English language learning process supported on collaborative practices, multi-sourced information, and connected learning in online and offline spaces.

During the study, the authors found the need to transform traditional teacher-driven assessment that required to be revised or removed while the educational process was promoting the role of peers and appropriated teacher feedback. They focused on "iterative performances, monitored progress and opportunities to improve" (p.19) in order to "create a culture that embraces connected learning opportunities and empower learners" (Abrams & Gerber, 2014. p.19). Inside the research action, multimodal and digital texts were a complement of habitual printed texts, emphasizing the writing creations as a strategy to make meaning, developing critical thinkers, and spreading their English vocabulary.

Gee (2018) studied "how young people live and learn online and out of the school" (p. 8). He discovered in video games a "well-designed educational environment" (p.9) that offers students the possibility to handle students' interests and passions successfully. He emphasizes his idea of seeing affinity spaces as areas where adolescents follow the interests and passions that define "whom they want to be and develop important knowledge and skills" (p. 12) through this study.

The Sims game was the alluring portal that captivated two students with a common endeavor, which was to generate knowledge and transform content to participate properly within the video game. Mary and Alex were devoted gamers who spent much time playing and designing Sims characters and scenarios. Both of them explored several spaces laboriously to get information about the game conventions and used different digital tools for editing and modifying characters, environments, and events.

Mary visited fan-based websites and participated in more than one affinity spaces. She discovered participants with her same passion and interest. Mary and her fellows also learned and taught each other about "the Sims and how to use Photoshop to make art based on video game characters" (p. 10). Alex used The Sims to create her own vampire romance stories. She also designed the vampires' characters of her stories based on Sims' members. She fabricated online networks to access and build tutorials, post texts, respond to comments, and recruit readers and fans.

Lammers & Marsh (2015) studied "fanfiction as literacy practice" in a digital age, where writers create different versions of texts, movies, books, musicals, or video games. This study based its analysis on Laura's public writings, and it looked for describing and exploring the benefits of her literacy participation deeply. She found on fan fiction spaces a flexible, creative, and innovative way of writing that she could not find in school spaces. She came across multiple contexts where she shared her textual creations and "interacted who shape her writing more directly through feedback" (Lammers & Marsh, 2015. p 278).

The authors ascertained that "network writing" spaces offer some types of audience and boundless access for writing affinitive and provoking way. (Lammers & Marsh, 2015). They applied interviews, digital artifacts analysis, and reflective memos for understood how significant Laura's participation in fanfiction networks was and how writing skills are being recontextualized in this digital age.

"We don't twitter. We Facebook" was the answer that Reid (2011) got when he asked his second-year language students how to use twitter. Since this moment, Reid started using a closed group Facebook pages as an alternative to making possible the connection between critical

practices and writing exercises. He got his first closed Facebook group, engaging his students to join on it, participating in asking or giving advice. His invitation allowed his students to use their own communicative writing codes.

The students' membership was voluntary and encouraged to appreciate the diversity of language, opportunities for "negotiating identity, building relationships, staying connected" (Reid, 2011. p. 59), conveying social values, and creating secure spaces for learning. The study orientated the investigation into four concepts: the power of reproducing and maintaining dominance, access to diverse language discourses, diversity of identities, cultures, and languages; and finally, the design which allowed the possibility of drawing, creating, and using human creativity.

Facebook was the platform that helped Amicucci (2014) to experiment on how Sarah and Craig, two students of the first-year college academic writing, use the social network to show improvement in their Spanish Foreign Language class.

She enhanced her students to try out digital ways of written composition such as blogs, wikis, and social networks platforms. Sarah and Craig employed several abbreviations and acronyms within their virtual conversations and friendly exchanges. This feature is called Net-speak, and it has become a part of the concept "Social Language" that Gee (2000 as cited in Amicucci, 2014. p.486) denominated in his studies.

During their intercommunication, Sarah and Craig demonstrated how their interaction with an existing audience, repeated exercises of posting, and conversations with virtual peers benefited their language development, practice, and motivation for using Spanish. This language transformed itself as a tool that involved their non-academic activities and daily lives.

One of the instruments used for collecting data replayed Sarah's opinion when she expressed that writing activities allow learners to draw on non-academic skills, and teachers would make it possible that language learning environments could offer more opportunities and different ways of participation to students in their classroom processes. Sarah invited teachers to accept the ways how students use language in communication outside the school and generate spaces within the classroom where they can use it. (Amicucci, 2014). Through these spaces, teachers could invite their students to reflect on when and how to switch between netspeak and formal writing ways.

Stornaiuolo & LeBlanc (2014) developed a research study based on a virtual space called *Space2cre8*. It was a teaching community that linked five teachers from India, South Africa, The United States, and Norway. *Space2cre8* allowed the connection between these teachers and their students through this educational, social network. The teachers' and students' relationship was mediated by technologies that made it more comfortable to construct a cross-cultural environment where its members could share their digital artifacts.

As a part of the methodology, the project proposed some scales as a system of measurement that helped participants to understand how global and local literacies could be mutually made. Scaling also aided teachers in handling the demands, challenges, and complexities that appeared within the dynamics of their everyday practices. The connection of these cultures facilitated students to be prepared to negotiate the responsibilities of the globalized world offers them. The digital dialogues the participants had with wider audiences lent them a hand to deepen their knowledge, understand, and get ready as young generations to be "global

citizens" who can live and work in a transnationally connected world" (Stornaiuolo & Leblanc, 2019. P. 193)

In Colombia, Cañas & Ocampo (2015) explored "the characteristics of children's personal literacies" (p.15) in two private schools in Medellín. They worked on multiliteracies, multimodalities, and literacy practices and went more profound to these concepts through a qualitative study with an ethnographic approach. They interacted with eight children, their parents, and seven teachers to analyze their opinions around children's literacy practices. Children's in and out-of-the school literacies, parents, and teachers' perceptions about these literacies were as categories researchers studied in order to examine the data and present the results.

As a contribution to my study, Cañas & Ocampo (2015) expressed that children use multimodal texts from sources like video games, internet, songs, movies, and others., for extracting knowledge about the world and trying to understand it. The researcher also expressed that "children create new alternatives for their reality and for what they interpret from the world" (p. 65). These were choices that gave students a compelling voice to express their points of view, explore different topics, interact with different people, and "show their values and desires to change their world" (p. 81). Cañas & Ocampo (2015) did a study with children. However, they suggested that further investigations should apply to participants with older ages for analyzing how multimodal texts contribute in their ways of expression and of using English as a Second Language.

The previous studies demonstrated the advantages that virtual communities could offer to teachers and students to guide the reading and teaching process, establishing stable connections

to technological tools that proffered the real world. Schools could lead these activities with academic processes without taking off students' confidence, spontaneity, and benefits they find doing them and participating in online communities.

Regarding the use of affinity spaces in language classrooms, I did not find academic works that have integrated its characteristics inside language learning processes. I expect to find essential elements that make me understand how they can benefit and involve the English Language Learners of a public school in Medellin.

Chapter Three:

Affinity Spaces And Digital Literacy For Constructing And Sharing Students'

Multimodal Texts: A Qualitative Study

Teacher research "is an exploratory activity, drawing strength from an understanding of the educational and social world it inhabits" (Richards, 2003. p. 9). Teachers take advantage of this action to find approval and support in their lessons. Through this research study, I expected to reveal to young people that the English language is everywhere and not just inside the classroom and to appreciate how my students' experiences, efforts, knowledge or reality will be transformed through this virtual-social interaction and to examine the effects of the implementation of this social activity within English lessons.

Although this research proposal was an exploration of "an object of study" (Creswell, 2012) where students started using affinity spaces to express themselves and also researched the topics they were interested in. Furthermore, as a learning environment where they could practice their writing skills and share their productions. The main aim was to understand better how this practice could be a means of involving learners in their English development and improving their connection and relationship with this language.

The *planning, acting, observing, and reflecting* movements were presented as stages of this process. Some outcomes about which and how the impact of involving tenth-grade students to affinity spaces as places where they showed what they researched about the topics they were interested in and to share their multimodal texts was the first aim. However, it is essential to put into words this research exercise I did not seek to impose my ideas, perceptions, and analysis on the application benefits and disadvantages of this tool. On the contrary, I wanted to burrow

through my students' perceptions and find better ways to conduct their interests, knowledge, and abilities.

Gaus (2017) described the social world as a mutual construction of social interactions with the usage of language (symbol). He affirms that "through the use of language, people come to share the same meaning and understanding in their social interaction" (p. 101). This qualitative research study helped me to describe how teacher-researcher practitioners could lead intervention means that contributed to making possible the students' affinity spaces interactions while they were enriching, practicing, and using the language, which was the starting point of this study.

To avoid losing this starting process, I used the following three sub-questions to follow the research study and remember its main goal: (a) How could students use spaces and opportunities that help them to discover other ways of expression applying their skills of manipulating technological devices? (b) How could students' passions provoke new forms of investigation and expand their driving force to use the language outside the classroom? (c) How could students and teachers take advantage of the opportunity to give and receive comments and feedback through affinity spaces?

The School Context: Colossus School

Colossus School (pseudonym) is a small public institution located in a neighborhood of Medellin. Two hundred (200) children in kindergarten and Elementary school, plus 250 adolescents in high-school, comprise the student body. The number of students is small as a consequence of the enormous educational offer in the neighborhood. However, the school also faces attrition problems: few students have started and finished their studies in this place. They

spend three or four years at Colossus, and then they either transfer to other institutions or arrive at this school to get their bachelor's degree here after starting their education in other schools.

As a public school, all processes and programs are guided by the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) and follow official statements claiming that all “standards are intended to be implemented in all urban or rural, public or private schools of the country in order to have the same quality in education” (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1999).

Our English syllabus was transformed in 2017 when Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) proposed some books and sent them to the school, suggesting some modifications. Now, the Basic Learning Rights (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2016) and "Lineamientos Curriculares" (Curricular Guidelines, Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1999) are included as an essential part to guide English Language Learning and teaching processes. As teachers, we had to adapt and take account in the "mallas curriculares" which are a pedagogical and planning format that teachers use to integrate subject content, competencies, goals, basic learning rights, methodological strategies, and assessment criteria that lead class procedures. These are also connected to the "plan de area" and lesson plans.

Teachers who do not speak English guide the second language processes in Elementary grades. They have an hour per week. In high school, students have three hours at the basic levels (sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth). Tenth and Eleventh graders have two hours per week. There is an English teacher for all these grades. English level in the school is low as a consequence of weak courses of action in the elementary grades and the unsteady population at high levels.

The school has started to implement "Project-based learning (PBL) as a model that organizes learning around projects" (Grant, 2002. p.1). This approach allows students to ask

about the topics and the subjects they are interested in. The PBL processes contribute to answering them, creating spaces to talk, investigate, and share what they learn. Even though the PBL method involves more features than this step, the school wants the students work to become active participants in their learning, and it is working to achieve this aim. Because as Grant (2002) expressed students are the center of learning and teaching processes using this methodology, they build their knowledge from an authentic ("driving") question or topics which they are engaged; solving the questions through a community of inquiry process and using different resources or tools.

Participants. The tenth graders were the participants whom I chose to develop the inquiry process. They have been my students since 2015 when I started at this school, and they were in seventh grade. We have built different ways to develop English classes. I have created a special relationship with the majority of these students because they always are available and interested to be active participants in my classes. Besides, this group has a particular curiosity for taking part in English activities. The learners enjoy the classes and show the motivation to continue improving the language. We could be able to read different kinds of texts and start creating story tales using the skills we have practiced. They participate in oral activities, doing remarkable closeness to the class objective. After each activity, they take advantage of their mistakes to continue learning.

As young people students spend much time on the Internet, teachers could improve the school methods if they turn "new media and new literacies" into their allies to connect their interests and passions to school life, and instructors could use those aspects to drive subjects' contents. Transforming the ways to teach English and put the typical contents explanations

teachers could convert English classes in opportunities where students "gain valuable skills and self-confidence, which can then be transferred to their success in schools" processes (Livingstone, 2014, p. 287).

The participants' selection considered picking a small group that contains the most appropriate number of participants, as Saldaña (2011) recommends. He expressed that "Who and how many students should" (p.74) was determined by the need of the researcher. Inside this study, it was necessary to observe "interaction, social actions" and language use and participants' reactions in the use of affinity spaces. The selection depended on the students' attendance, continuity, and their answer to the consent format (because the requirements for it were related to the family members and parents' participation at school). I sought that these students used affinity spaces as virtual common areas "where they can examine their relationships with each other, with texts, and with the world" (Mirra, Filipiak, & Garcia 2015).

Furthermore, they could assume roles in the creation, implementation, and diffusion of their knowledge inside these spaces. This group of students should have had excellent relationships. As a researcher, I hoped and expected that the research process involved them in a collaborative and cooperative job allowing the learners' teams to be engaged in the exploration of the topics they chose for the micro-project, in the researching of applications for composing their multimodal texts and in the interaction among their partners and their texts. Table1 below summarizes the students' pseudonyms who were part of this meaningful research project, as well as their ages and the number of years they have been studying at Colossus school.

Table 1: Focal Participant's Information

Students' name	Age (years old)	School term.
Eva	16	Eight years
Kitty	16	Ten years
Juan Eduardo	15	Nine months
Camilo	19	Five years and nine months
Sergio	15	Four years and nine months
Julio Javier	18	Four years
Estemancito	15	Five years
Sandro	16	Seven years

The Spanish teacher: She is a skilled woman who has worked at the school for 23 years old. As school mates, we have a close relationship because we have made an effort to work the contents of our subjects in harmony, trying to expand the students' reading comprehension, speaking, and writing abilities in both languages.

Spanish has 6 hours per week at school, English has 2. In order to have a more consistent process in some lessons, we have planned some exercises involving both subjects. For this reason, the teacher disposed of her class hours to continue watching the movie and reading the stories.

Her role switched when I developed the lesson about literary elements because Spanish curricula proposed to work on Universal Literature during the third quarter. The research project methodology had proposed Edgar Allan Poe's readings. At the first reading exercise, students demonstrated that those readings were too complicated for being read in the second language. The Spanish teacher accepted to read the proposed stories and socialized the literary elements in

her classes as the previous step of the Poe's multimodal compositions. At the end of the lessons, I asked the Spanish teacher to write a reflective journal where she described some facts which could help me to complete the data and to develop the accurate process of trustworthiness.

Data Collection

Richards (2003) stated that qualitative research projects require "multiple sources of information for generating a sufficiently rich description" (p. 20), which can be able to describe the project effects in the context and the teacher's and students' strategies in detail.

Stake (2010) stated that the design of every data-gathering instrument is a gigantic and detailed job because it is the way to look for information that represents priorities and illustrates the meaningfulness of the projects. Rimando et al. (2015) defined this process as "the first stage in the research process. (...) and as the systematic gathering of data for a particular purpose from various sources" (p.2026), it can be impacted by some challenges that the researchers have to face, the engagement and participants' feelings, and the locations of the research setting.

According to the research design, purpose, and questions, the sources of information were:

Pilot project. the first instrument to apply was the pilot project in a Padlet wall where students participated in this virtual place. The students chose the main topic through the project-based learning methodology. The purpose of this element was to check out what the students can do in order to practice English and how they can interact with them. The link to space is <https://padlet.com/zeidy26/englishprojectrqp>. The tool was presented and explained in the English class, but students were interacting spontaneously from their houses too. The idea was to

get useful information about their modes of participation and interaction and take advantage of this previous experience to propose the main exercise for data collection.

Interviews. For collecting information through participants voices about their "perspectives, feelings, opinions, values, attitudes and beliefs" (Saldaña, 2011. p.32) and encourage and give them access to produce their "personal narratives" (Tanggaard, 2009) around their participation experiences and development of actions, applied the interviews. These were spontaneous or prearranged, sometimes individual (one-on-one, Creswell, 2016), and others for the focus group depending on the purpose of the interview questions. The selection of the interviewees could be a tactical, accidental, or unforeseen process, as Saldaña (2011) indorses. I tried, as much as I was able, to conduct these interviews in-person to make them an attractive and comfortable experience. Some steps were followed carefully in order to respect students' participation. These (taken from Creswell, 2016) were:

- Invitation for participants
- Presentation of interview protocol (necessary information about the interview, and presentation of the purpose of it)
- Asking for permission to arrange audio equipment as a tool for recording the interview.
- Clarify possible participant(s) question before interviewing him/her/ theirs.
- The ice-breaker question is to relax the interview atmosphere.

I transcribed each interview, including verbatim details, informed speech, pauses as a way to understand and analyze better gestures and body language (Saldaña, 2011).

Teacher and Students' Reflective Journals. Ortlipp (2008) shows "how reflective journals were used in engaging with the notion of creating transparency in the research process,

and how keeping a reflective journal can have concrete effects on the research design" (p.696).

These journals were the instruments I applied in order to relate how the strategies worked and how the participant took part in the lesson. These came in handy when exploring the implications of strategies, the employment of resources, and the effects on the context.

The previous instruments aided to explore with deep attention the process, the changes, and the details of the research study. They also conducted the data analysis and the findings with transparency. I "documented the research processes and my practices as a researcher, and reflected critically on those processes and practices" (Ortlipp, 2008. p. 696)

Media material - students' artifacts. Saldaña (2011) points out Media Material "the new sources of data" from digital culture. These are internet sites, electronic messages, instant/text messages, chat conversations, tweets, blogs, vlogs, and other forms of digital communication used by participants of qualitative research. These media materials were the artifacts collected from the students' interaction and participation inside the affinity spaces. These were analyzed through the historical context. The transformation of writing skills and the language use were scrutinized within these instruments. Collecting and interpreting the students' participation within affinity spaces, discovering how the topic was chosen, engaged them in writing processes. The interaction for sharing, giving, and receiving feedback from and to their partners, too.

These elements were analyzed, taking into account the following aspects:

1. Usage and connection of different communicative modes
2. Required content and purpose are exposed within the multimodal text
3. Usage of the applications for designing the artwork

Data Analysis

Watkins (2017) stated that "the essential step of any qualitative project is analyzing the data in a manner that is both thorough and efficient" (p. 2). It starts "from the beginning of interest in the topic and continues into the hours at the keyboard writing up the final report" (Stake, 2010. p. 137). In this stage, it was necessary to manage, categorize, code, and organize the data according to the concepts that built my research question and the parts that the researcher needed to study, analyze and see again and again (Stake, 2010). These categories were:

New students' ways of composing: Tenth-grade students recognize writing as an action that includes letters and words. This exercise was tedious and complicated for them. Multimodal texts showed them the multiple semiotic resources that as writers, they could also include in their written messages for communicating meaningful *sense*.

Students' passions for promoting their investigations: The invitation to write is more exciting when authors do about a theme they like and have vast information about it. Inside this project, these students' passions were headed toward Horror (a topic they watch in movies, series, and some books) and digital applications understanding that current generations download different apps in their cellphones and computers, adapting them to the features of games and activities. They discover the best apps, version, and functions in order to participate in online games, communities, and to create memes and gifs. They do not require instructions for this research. They are driven by their interests, passions, and motivation.

Students' and teacher's ways of feedback: The number of students per class and the little time per class interrupts the constant revision and feedback process between the teachers and

them. The opportunities for showing the learners' productions to their classmates and receive their comments and suggestions are fewer. Participation in the affinity spaces allowed all of them to display their compositions and observe those of their partners. Additionally, constructing a reflection place where teachers and students could reinforce their knowledge together.

Connections between English classes and home time: Language is everywhere, I consider the practice and the usage to be circumscribed to a specific place. Tenth-grade students have learned many expressions, words, phrases from songs, movies, games, and they did not use them in their writings. They are experts creating gifs and memes, and this skill has not been applied at school tasks. There, they learned many things inside the classroom, and a few times, they connected them to their home activities. The essential purpose of this process is to combine all this knowledge, transforming this idea of school and home operating separately.

Each used instrument for collecting information gave me valuable evidence to answer the questions that lead the study. The interpretation and analysis of the interviews, media artifacts and reflective journal schemas was a cautious job. This data was sorted into these categories as a part of the interpretation procedure.



Figure 1. Initial Apps. Source: Own authorship

Before applying, the lessons were necessary to explain what a multimodal text is. I prepared a PowerPoint presentation about a description of the concept. Different modes could be included within the texts — the examples of different kinds of compositions. We analyzed them by helping students recognize some of their features. I proposed some applications for starting their first designs. (See Figure 1) The participants post their comments and opinions about Artificial Intelligence. The students' productions are replicas of the first example. The comments were written in English by students, expressing the emotions or feelings the videos and histories caused to them.

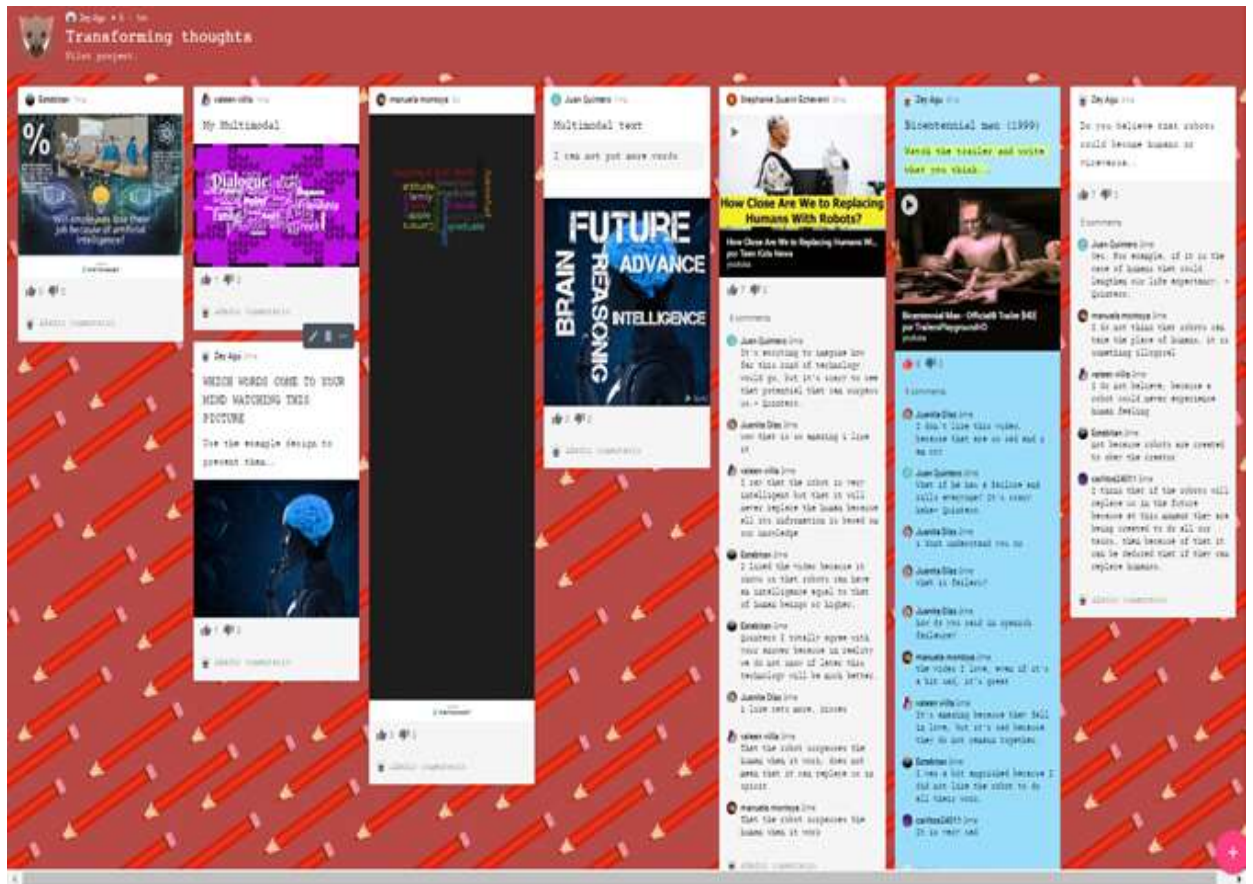


Figure 2. Transforming thoughts. Sample 1 <https://padlet.com/zeidy26/englishprojectrcp>

Figure 2 collected the first try, and we did it as a group. The students proposed the pets' exercise in order to make their first attempts creating multimodal designs. Then students produced texts, videos, gifs, and others, talking about what their pets meant for everyone. They used some of the applications I shared with them.

The students began their multimodal task at school; using the computer classroom, they realized they needed more time for this kind of work, so they proposed me to finish it at home and to post them later. (See figure 3). The following class session, students presented their designs and the application they made use of, we analyzed them together. Giving a chance

among classmates, they could give comments and suggestions, and teach some tips to each other when using the applications.

The First Students' Multimodal Compositions was presented in the following schema. It combines the students' multimodal texts and videos.

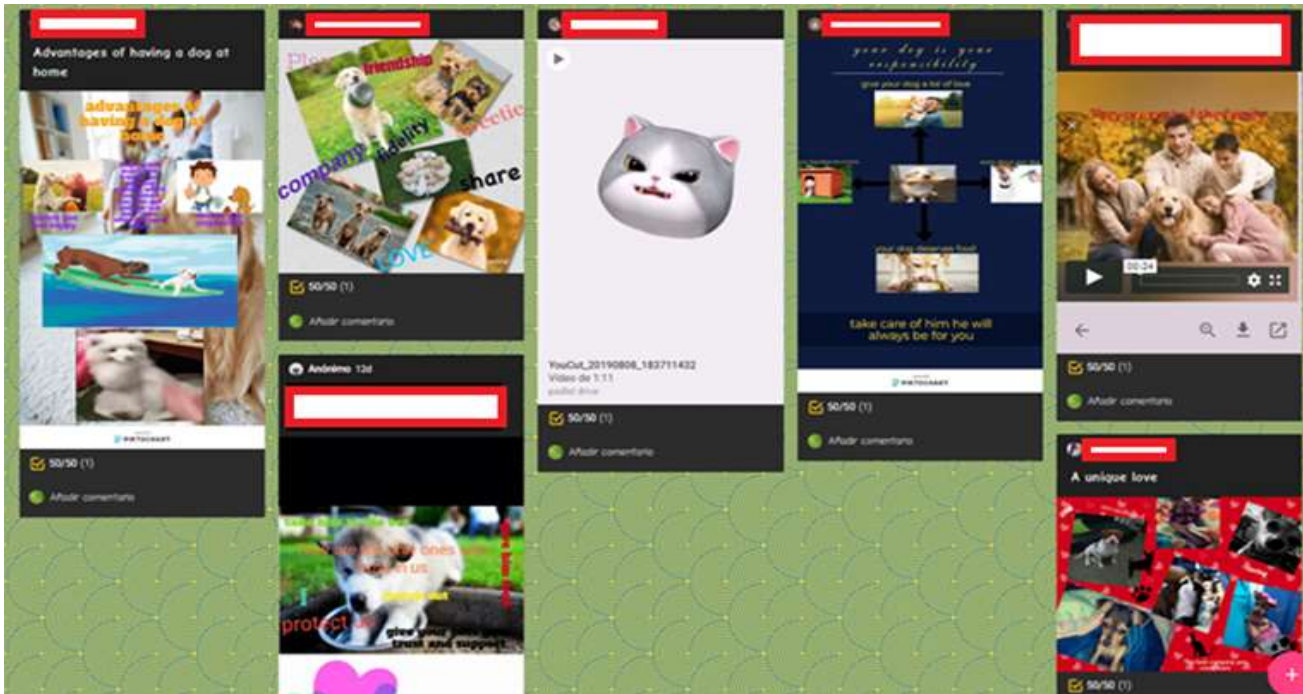


Figure 3. Our pets Sample 2 <https://padlet.com/Zey0326/ourpets>. Students' designs

After these previous design exercises and classes dedicated to receiving their classmates' feedback. I appealed to the students for starting the election of the central topic of the micro-project, and based on their affinity and natural inclination for horror movies, I presented them my first idea, and they nourished it providing their comments and opinions, assisting my students' thoughts in the best manner possible. The lesson was established in the following way.

Table 2: Lesson Plans_ Project Name: Inspiring and provoking horror

Lesson	Objective	Name/ type of resource	Summary	Lesson Actions	Final Production
Horror movies	Analyze movie story, characters and students' impressions about them	Split (2016) Movie	One of the movies that composed the unbreakable trilogy. It tells the story of a man who suffers a mental disorder disease. This illness allows him to develop 24 personalities. Some of these participate in the kidnapping of three girls.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare students to watch the movie, giving information about some relevant aspects they require understanding. 2. Socialize the students' impression of the story. 3. Analyze the characters' behavior 4. Discuss which actions or characters made them feel horror, fear, and abomination. 5. Choose a character/personality for describing. 	<p>Design the draft of multimodal text on paper</p> <p>Work at home: Multimodal text that describes the characteristic of one of the personalities</p>
Horror stories characteristic	Do a literary analysis of three horror stories	Edgar Allan Poe's stories	<p>The Black Cat.</p> <p>The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar.</p> <p>The Oval Portrait.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show students parts to take into account inside the literary analysis. 2. Read the story by teams 3. Socialize its stages or aspects and characters 4. Discuss students' impressions about stories. 	<p>Do a draft by groups.</p> <p>Work at home Each student created a multimodal text that shows the parts of a literary analysis of the stories.</p>
Horror character Profile	Recognize Frankenstein's story and understand some of the reasons that	Cartoon book	The graphic novel shows the creation of this character as part of his story.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look into students if they know the story. 2. Read the cartoon stages and use the artwork as a resource to understand the story. 3. Describe Frankenstein profile taking into account the 	Create their horror story character. The students should include some of their personal and physical characteristics

	explain why he looks like a monster.		previous reading	4. Design and present horror characters profiles	Work at home Present their profiles inside the Padlet
Horror story create d by studen ts	Create a horror story using the designed character.	Virtual platforms	Final task: Share the character's design through Padlet.		

This part is the design step, which includes the preparation and design of the units. I planned three different lessons where students had as a final assignment, the production of a multimodal text.

In order to have a trustworthy research process, I chose to apply some of the proposed instruments during each lesson. These two were:

Reflective journals: These were developed by two focal students and the teacher at the end of each lesson.

- The students answered the following questions:
- Did you enjoy the lesson?
- Which was your favorite moment of the lesson?
- When did you do your multimodal text?
- Which applications do they apply to develop it?

The teacher reflected:

- How were the strategies the teacher and the students used?
- How the students participated in the tasks
- Students' answers after applying the strategies.

- The students' perceptions of the kind of material were employed.

The second instrument was the Media artifacts analysis where I described

- What kind of material do the students share?
- How was the students' participation within affinity space?
- Which were the elements they prefer to write and share?
- How was the interaction among students for giving and receiving feedback from their partners and other virtual spaces' participants? How often do they participate?

At public school, there are a lot of extracurricular activities that interrupt the development of the curriculum. For avoiding these kinds of eventualities interposed in the micro-project process, it was necessary to construct a schedule to follow, taking into account the activities planned within each lesson and the dates so as to accommodate the moments of the lesson, to have enough time for applying the instruments and accomplishing all tasks. It was presented to the school principal before starting, and as a way to ask their help during moments, it was indispensable to modify the school calendar.

Table 3: Lesson plan Schedule

Lesson Number	Dates	Death line posting
1_ Horror Movies	September 2nd to 13th	September 13th
2_ Horror short tales	September 17th to 27 th	September 27th
3_ Horror character profile	September 30th - October 18th	
4_ Horror story	Until October 30 th	

This chart describes the lesson units and the proposed dates and time to develop them.

The next step was **The Data Interpretation** of the research study. In order to carried out this step, it was indispensable to apply some techniques that allow me to "to focus more on the content of the data and less on the bells and whistles that qualitative data" (Walkins, 2017. p.2)

I used Watkins's (2017)'s technique, where suggests making "rigorous and accelerated data reduction" (p. 2) using word and excel as tools to follow these steps. I followed some of them with his advice on data transcripts, data tables, and the rows to sort the data. These elements included categories, codes, and interpretative notes.

After developing each step, I was transcribing the data I was getting.

Firstly, I collected consent forms to verify the possibility that these eight students' information could be gathered up. Then, I organized students' interviews taking into account each question, and I reduced them to a chart. I accumulated the students' reflective journals. I stored the Media-artifacts analysis. Subsequent clarify the categories, I began to code compiled data and classify them.

The Trustworthiness, validity, and reliability of the study, I implemented the Polyangulation as one of the strategies to understand and read the data. It was used to "building evidence from different sources" (Creswell, 2017.p. 191), including these aspects that Mora (2014) suggested a researcher should take into account during the analysis and interpretation processes of an inquiry study. The polyangulated analysis and interpretation step portrayed the participants' socio-cultural realities and the features of their participation, the social environment where the research was taking place, and the essence and individual characteristics of the researcher. Joining these three elements to the collected information, I could have a multidimensional reading and clear evidence that helped me interpreting and coding data looking

across the different moments, experiences, and from diverse points of view. The polyangulation of the information allowed me to get a "realistic picture," which also led me to do an exercise in reflexivity. As a researcher-practitioner, I could minimize my biases at the moment of interpretation allowing me to rethink the students' processes and teaching practices "way in compliance with the reality in which we live" (p. 4-5) as Mora (2011) expressed recapturing Bourdieu's concept (1990) about reflexivity.

Member checking also provided legitimacy to the study because it presents the participants' views about what they agree or they disagree with the strategies through an extensive compendium of statements of the data. The students' reflective journals made it possible to keep in mind my students' considerations about the processes and to permit them to be involved in decision making, turning this process into a collaborative research study.

Being Ethical within the Inquiry Process was the first advice I received from my thesis advisor, who also taught me that a research project is "a mutual activity" where researchers and participants involved their characteristics, needs, and aptitudes. They are individuals who are vulnerable to any effect that the inquiry process can have, and as a consequence, they could be exposed to benefits or risks, affecting their future experiences and transforming their personal lives. Costley & Gibbs (2006) prevailed "ethics of care" as an anticipated strategy to minimize risks and maximize benefits. The authors express that caring must be "a learned process and one which can be incorporated in the training of researchers" (Costley and Gibbs, 2016. p. 93) in order to develop the reflective processes properly.

Lindorff (2010) exposed that "ethical researching is more than compliance, 'following the rules' or the law" (p. 53), it requires "continual engagement" that helps researchers to be responsible and respectful to academic and moral requirements. As a practitioner-researcher, I know there are many ethical requirements to take into account before, during, and after my research proposal application. I have moral obligations and social responsibilities with the school where I belong to and my students' lives and learning processes.

Smith (2003) expressed that students are helpful tools that contribute to finding answers, accept limitations, and identify mistakes; in other words, without my students, I could not carry out my proposal. In addition, she presented some crucial principles related to ethics in the educational research project. There is justice and respect for participants, beneficence, and limitations of the study, the development of proper procedures and the importance of appreciating and watching over people privacy and confidentiality, which I respect and follow in order to mature this inquiry activity in a great learning experience, without depending on it being a success or an opportunity to grow up.

Costley & Gibbs (2006) brought up the Aristotelian concept of "Virtuous Person" for remembering us our responsibility as practitioner-researchers. We must be honest, harm-free, and careful, establishing as a first goal being respectful for our human rights and dignity. I did as much as possible to have this concept present at all moments, reminding me that I was working with the research population because my job did not depend on the data that I collected. All of that was feasible, thanks to my students' participation and their experiences. Ultimately, my learning and findings came from them.

During the process, **My Role as a Researcher- Practitioner** was slowly becoming in something more vital because I recognized many elements of the research depended on it. I realized that becoming a good researcher is an arduous task to accomplish. Some skills are required to develop the inquiry process. Creswell (2016) remarks the importance of knowing people's perspectives in an inquiry process; he says that participants' quotations are the voices of individuals and through them, they are heard; as researchers, we can sightsee their thoughts and points of view, the forms of expressing their opinions, their proceeds on the situations. For that reason, I considered I had to be a good listener and a reasonable observer because it was the best way to listen to my students' voices and to learn from them.

I also expected to become a more reflexive person using the self-reflective journal as an instrument to examine personal assumptions, to bear in mind the main goal, and to carry out the processes with transparency (Ortlipp, 2008). Feuer (2007) expressed that the qualitative research process requires "mutual reflexivity" of processes. That is why, as a researcher, I should develop the ability to understand individuals' perceptions, explore participants' backgrounds, and encourage meaningful experiences inside the classroom. I knew that many of my previous thoughts about learning/teaching are going to be transformed because the research purpose is to discover the topics that motivate students to research and the digital written tools they prefer to use and how they use these skills in order to interact inside affinity spaces. Thereby, I could promote "different ways of constructing knowledge in order to produce different kinds of knowledge" (Wasser & Bresler, 1996, p. 6).

I needed to be an explorer because I dug for alternatives to transforming learning strategies and teaching practices trying to understand the process that students are carrying out.

Monitoring it constantly in order to solve the initial question and understanding the contributors' positions and behaviors. Besides I designed the instruments, tools and planning activities to involve participants in this process taking into account that these tasks should be "fluid and flexible as much as possible" (Saldaña, 2011, p. 81)

Chapter Four:

Understanding My Students' Compositions: Designs Full Of Meanings.

My principal aim during this study was to seek the impact of connecting multimodal texts and affinity spaces within my class lessons, recognizing how the use of both concepts encouraged my students to use and to improve their English language. I also expected to study carefully if an active multimodal composing could promote a deep interaction of their learning and daily tasks.

According to Mora (2010), "the process of answering the [research] questions required the design of a framework for analysis" (p.74). This structure demanded to have some clear parameters in order to establish a suitable path during the inquiry exercise. I set them since the earliest drafts, and these were a little bit modified, taking into account the categories and codification of gathered information.

I got the subsequent three sub-questions as a result, and they enabled me to group and to standardize the collected data in order to code it (Mora, 2010).

These were:

How can students use spaces and opportunities that help them to discover other ways of expression applying their skills of manipulating technological devices?

How can students' passions provoke new forms of investigating and expanding their driving force in order to use the language outside the classroom?

How could students and teachers take advantage of the opportunity of giving and receiving comments and feedback through affinity spaces?

The previous subquestions also allowed me to state four categories for staring at data carefully. These categories were *new students' ways of composing, students' passions for promoting their investigations, students' and teacher's ways of feedback, and connections between English classes and home time.*

For starting the process, it was essential to work on the concept of multimodal text and present some examples to be examined and seen in detail before designing their compositions.

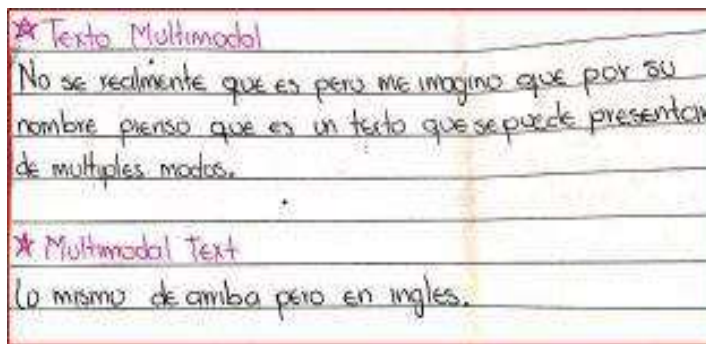


Figure 4. Student' definitions Sample 1

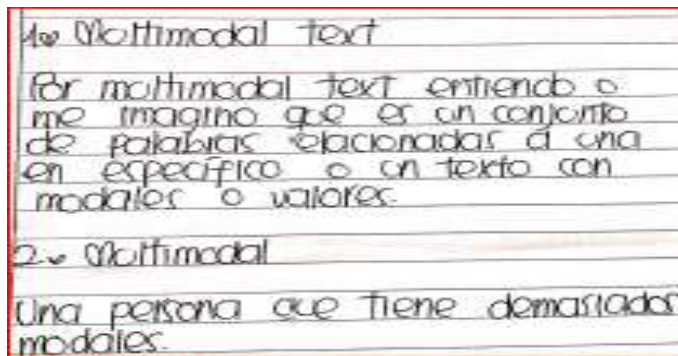


Figure 5. Student' definitions Sample 2

The name "multimodal" was new for them. I asked them to define the concept, and they described "multimodal texts," as figure 4 and 5 showed. However, their features were not; because when I exhibited the examples, they immediately connected the concept with memes,

gifs, advertisements, and posters they see around the city and the virtual communities and groups they participate in. I exposed the concept as new ways of writing or composing that we could create using their devices where we could practice English and learn about language expressions and words.

Colossus School students were used to working in their English classes using traditional and standard tools such as slides, markers, color, and white sheets of paper, story tales, among others. Juan Eduardo answered during the interview, "Mis actividades favoritas son las interpretaciones de texto y mucho más si hay que leer. Para la clase, utilizo los útiles escolares comunes" ("my favorite activities are text interpretation and much more if you have to read. I use my regular school supplies for the class") (August 27th, 2019). Sergio, Kitty, and Julio Javier agreed on the materials and elements that had been applied in my composition lessons were "Hojas de colores (hojas iris), marcadores, Cartulina, colores" ("color sheets –iris sheets-, markers, poster board, colors") (Interview answers. August 27th, 2019). Their replies showed that, as a teacher, I was linked to the conventional tools for doing my classes. I have not taken advantage of the current applications, tools, and ways I have at my disposal for connecting the English classes to the students' home time and leisure activities. Pondering on these answers, I felt like my English classes were as conventional as the materials that my students used for developing the English practices. I also conceived that it was the time for starting a process where the materials and the class procedures were transformed little by little.

Reflecting on that objective, I got underway of understanding how my students applied reading, writing, listening, and speaking in their daily lives. I quickly recognized the digital and technological elements as a proper response and a way to carry out this objective. I had

perceived how young generations were interested in online communities, virtual conversations, and being part of the digital world during some nonacademic observations. I corroborated this fact when seven out of the eight students expressed they have been part of virtual groups where they have been talking about homework, posting memes or gifs, playing games, sharing information about school subject tasks, and planning outings.

The interviews revealed that when they spoke about the communities, social networks, virtual sites, games, and applications, they did accurately. They mentioned free fire, Duolingo, Asplas, Snifantes, Clan de Troya, the crew, Stem, Twien, Meme free, and Twitch, among others. I did not even recognize some of those. The English language was only used in a few moments during my students' daily activities, according to them. Eva, Julio Javier, and Camilo revealed they wrote in English for doing homework "Si escribo en inglés, cuando necesitan ayuda en trabajos" ("if I write in English, [it's only] when they need help with homework"). (Camilo's Interview, August 27th, 2019) "Escribo siempre en inglés para tener apuntes y estudiar, si hay examen me gusta usar el pc o las tablets, como en Word y así" ("I always write in English in order to have notes and to study; if there is an exam assigned, I like to use the PC or tablets, like in Word [application] and such"). (Julio Javier's interview, August 27th, 2019) Furthermore, "cuando es necesario para cumplir con las tareas" ("when is necessary in order to fulfill homework tasks") (Eva's interview, August 27th, 2019). Others manifested they sometimes practiced the second language using some other elements. For example, two of them stated, "A mi novia y a mí nos gusta escribirnos cosas cursis en inglés, generalmente sólo escribo en esas ocasiones" ("My girlfriend and I like to write corny things in English to each other. Generally, I only write in those occasions"). (Juan Eduardo's interview, August 27th, 2019) Moreover,

"Cuando juego videojuegos, para comunicarme, muy poco" ("When I play videogames, in order to communicate, just a little"). (Estemancito's interview, August 27th, 2019). Both actions were separated from school actions. My predominant desire of teaching English is to get my students acquainted with this language as a tool that gives them a helping hand in order to know and understand the world. They can be able to apply what they learn inside the classroom for assuming the challenges of their real and social lives and researching for transforming and building a better one.

Multimodal texts and affinity spaces were the instruments I chose to lead the way for taking my students to know how to associate their passions and interests regarding spending their time using devices and participating in digital communities.

The main topic of the lessons was chosen by the students. We had started working with artificial intelligence, but when socializing the productions of the pilot project, they expressed they felt exhausted with the topic, and I realized that this could be a limitation by the time I started developing the lessons and collecting data.

I proposed the tenth graders to work on a micro-project since English Classes as a tactic allowed me to involve them in the development of the lessons. They proposed to watch movies or to design games in English. I asked them about the movies they want to watch, and their answers were "It," "Anabelle," "Child's play," "The curse of la Llorona," and "The boy." Having found an aspect in common in those movies, I suggested them to choose "Horror" as the main topic. The participants chose "Inspiring and creating horror" from their ideas of titles.

As a guide to the research process, I decided to use a movie that could allow my students to have several aspects to talk and could invite to search for information about it. Now, I could

say that it was a good election because it motivated my students to reflect on other ways of being afraid or feeling aversion. For example, Eva wrote in her reflective journal, "Mi parte favorita fue en el transcurso de la película porque todos éramos súper concentrados con el contenido" ("My favorite part was during all the time frame of the film because we were all super concentrated with its content"). Juan Eduardo expressed: "Fue muy original de parte de la profesora que por medio de una película (Split) nos introdujera en el tema del multimodal text. Mi parte favorita vino a la hora de llevar a cabo el texto multimodal. Teníamos que realizar un texto de este tipo con base en un personaje de la película con el cual nos sintamos identificados. Debíamos describir a este personaje y resaltar aspectos, rasgos, curiosidades, comportamientos de él mismo" ("It was very original, coming from the teacher, that thought a movie, "Split," she introduced us to the Multimodal text topic. My favorite part was when we had to carry out the multimodal text. We had to come up with a text of this sort based on a character from the movie we felt identified with. We had to describe this character and highlight traits, features, curiosities, and behaviors from it"). (Reflective Journal 1, September 9th, 2019).

The movie had given them many ideas to discuss and plan their compositions. I could say that every student had diverse opinions for expressing what they wanted about their chosen character. Camilo narrated that "Realizar el texto multimodal fue algo muy bueno, ya que todos dábamos una idea diferente de lo que pensábamos." ("Composing the multimodal text, it was very good because we all gave a different idea regarding what we thought") (Reflective Journal 1, September 9th, 2019).

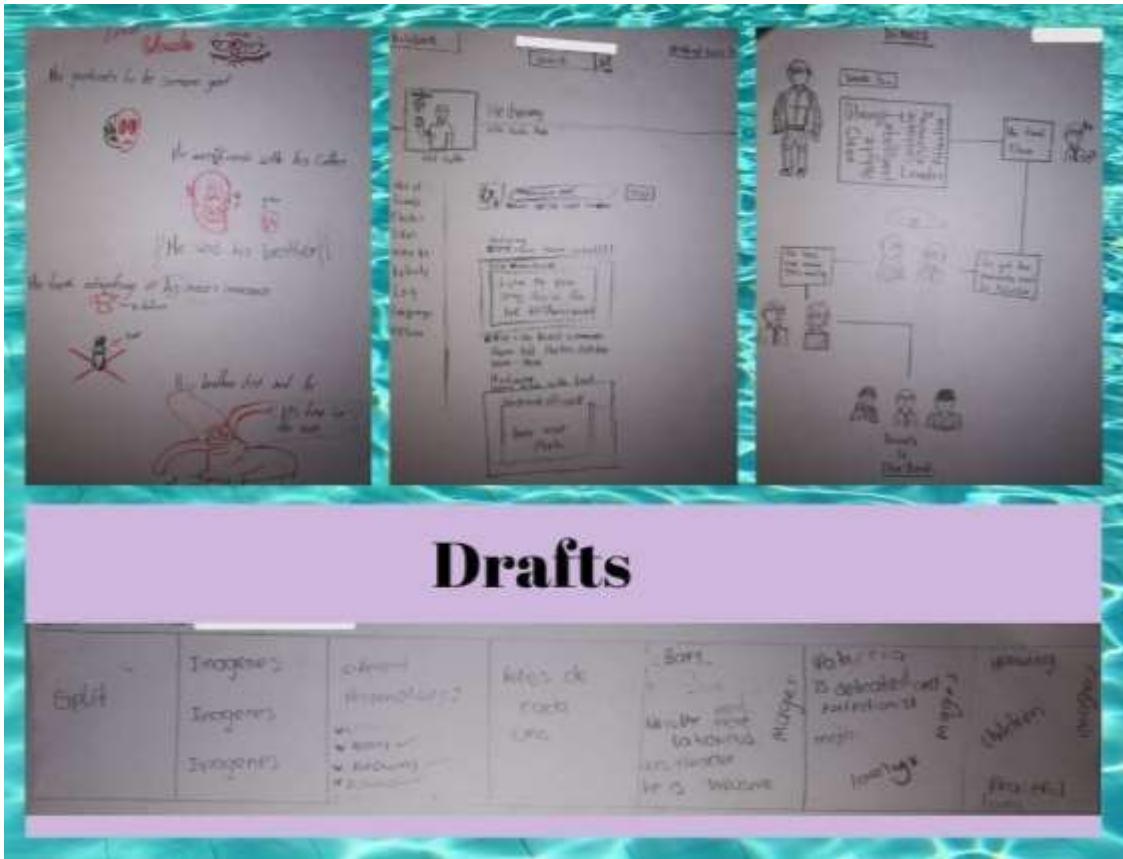


Figure 6. Students' drafts_ Movie characters.

During the first two experiences, I solicited my students they presented a draft with the schema and the ideas they wanted to include within their compositions and some of the ideas they used to build the exercise (Figures 6 and 7). These workouts allowed me to recognize how the printed paper could limit some students in their composition practice.



Figure 7. Students' Movie Final Compositions

In the analysis of artifacts, I noted there were several differences between the drafts and the final productions. For example, I compared Sandro's processes (figure 8) and could highlight "comparing the draft exercises and the final productions, I could say that students do not feel limitations to express themselves. Colors, shapes, gifs, sizes, sounds, pictures, and schemas worked for making their ideas be known". (Artifacts and Media material analysis Lesson 1, September 10th, 2019)



Figure 8. Sandro's Movie productions comparison



Figure 9. Kitty horror character.

Another fact that caught my attention was the relationship between students' creations and their individualities. I could say that multimodal texts captured aspects of their lives and reaffirmed

that "literacy practices that are very familiar to members of a culture" (Unsworth, 2001. P.14). Thus, "this kind of job also helped me to recognize that every design had a personal touch of its creator's personality and style." (Digital Artifact Analysis, Lesson 3, October 7th) I found out Julio Javier's personality in his multimodal productions when I started watching his work in detail. He is a young boy who likes punk and hardcore music. He expresses critical questioning because he is very analytical in every situation. I consider this is due to the kind of music he listens to. He uses his satirical speech for taunting and joking of current topics. These characteristics stood out within his production. (See figure 10).



Figure 10. Julio Javier Compositions. Movie description character and horror character design.



Figure 11. Eva's horror character design.

Eva and Kitty are colorful and tender girls. They like colors and fancy dresses and several glamour accessories. These features are present inside their designs. (See Figures 9 and 11).

Furthermore, seeing my students' characteristics reflected in their compositions, I could say that they use these proposals as an invitation to look for information that fulfilled their aims of each exercise. The participants did their research processes for getting other details about the topics of the lessons and the usage of applications.

The Spanish teacher narrated how some students enjoyed and participated while the resources, such as the movie, stories, and the comic novel, were applied. She wrote “Decían que les habían gustado mucho las historias y a algunos los vi escuchando los audiolibros en Youtube. Buscaban la biografía de los autores y lo hacían con agrado” (“[they] said that they have liked a lot the stories, and some of them were seen listening to the audiobooks in Youtube and even

looked for the biographies of the authors, and they did it with pleasure") (Spanish Teacher's Reflective journal, October 18th, 2019).

As well as that, their interest for using applications and creating their own designs invited them to investigate other digital resources that helped them to accomplish the goal of each task. Sergio made the following comment in his reflective journal "He aprendido a manejar ciertas apps pero en multimodal he descubierto una gran creatividad en mí gracias a eso" ("I have learned to handle certain apps, but in multimodal, I have discovered enormous creativity in me thanks to that"). (Reflective Journal 3, October 4th, 2019). Juan Eduardo said: "Para realizar el texto utilicé la aplicación de móvil Picsart, que se encuentra completamente gratis en la Play Store de Google, no requiere de internet" ("In order to do the text, I used the Picsart mobile application that is free through Google's Playstore, not requiring Internet") (Reflective journal 1, September 9th, 2019). Besides, Eva expressed that while she was doing the activity, she learned much vocabulary using the applications and describing the character. (Reflective Journal 1, September 9th, 2019). The Spanish teacher was very interested in seeing students' creations after accomplishing some steps of the process. She concluded that "cada trabajo realizado por los jóvenes muestran la experiencia que han alcanzado con los ejercicios hechos y observarlos permite ver al docente las maravillas que se pueden lograr con estas herramientas digitales" ("each assignment done by the kids show the experience they have achieved with the work done, and when you watch them, it allows the teacher to see the wonders that can be achieved with these digital tools"). (Spanish Teacher's Reflective journal, October 18th, 2019)

The students' motivation drove them to use their resources in order to answer each task of the process. They inquired about applications, language vocabulary/expressions, and the required

elements in order to build meaning. Unsworth stated this process through three stages. I could say that they accomplished two of them, which are named as "recognition literacy" and "Reproduction Literacy." The first one "involves learning to recognize and produce the verbal, visual, and electronic codes that are used to construct and communicate meanings" (Unsworth, 2001, p.14). For example, the second text analysis showed that "The multimodal productions include different elements inside their compositions that writers did not include in their drafts. The information is accurate, and it gives a clear idea of the Poe's readings" (Artifacts and Media Material analysis 2, September 27th, 2019).

The second stage, "involves understanding and producing the conventional visual and verbal text forms that construct and communicate." (Unsworth, 2001. p.15). Research participants started working on it on a small scale. All the productions were discussed in class. "Most of the students participated in on the Paddle. They posted their works and socialized during the classes where their partners gave great comments" (Artifacts and Media Material analysis 1, September 9th, 2019). During the second final task, "some students have started to write comments about their partners' designs. Some of them are in English; others have an interlanguage (some words in English and others in Spanish) because the diversity of the stories invited other students to feel curiosity to read and know the others". (Artifacts and Media Material analysis 2, September 27th, 2019).

As a participant of the process, I could state that many aspects of the students' improvement had during every stage were increased through the constant feedback we received as members. Students felt comfortable when they could handle class situations and topics. Kitty reaffirmed this fact saying, "she enjoys the English classes when I understand the topics" ("Si las

disfruto mucho. Cuando el tema lo entiendo" (Kitty's Interview, August 27th, 2019). Indeed, one of my students' first goals of creating virtual communities was to have a means where they could solve homework and know some details of the school's staff when they did not attend classes.

From my experience as a teacher, I could confirm that the students get better results when they have the opportunity of sharing and solving their doubts and questions. Juan Eduardo agreed on his reflective journals; he felt so comfy and relaxed thanks to his teacher, having answered his requests. He said, "Me sentí muy cómodo en todo momento y gracias a que la profesora atendía cualquier inquietud, pude realizar la lección de manera exitosa" ("I felt very comfortable at every moment, and due to the teacher helping out when having any doubt, I could successfully complete my task"), (Reflective journal 1, September 9th, 2019).

The feedback among student-student was equally important. Since the first lesson, students produced their knowledge to help their partners. Julio Javier said that he helped two of his classmates during the multimodal texts productions. (Reflective Journal 2, September 27th, 2019). It was even easy to discover which of these compositions were supported by Julio Javier because they held some of his personality characteristics.

The composition stages had several steps. Each lesson started sharing and discussing the previous elements from the former class. We watched the movie; we read Poe's stories and a Frankenstein graphic novel inside the classroom using some English and Spanish class time because tenth graders have just two classes per week on Mondays and Tuesdays. The time was not enough because some of these Mondays were holidays. Most of the students' designs were uploaded from their homes, which I considered it was an excellent way to demonstrate the passion that students felt in the development of this project. They used their home time for

practicing and creating multimodal productions when it was a hard task to make possible all students completed homework during their time outside school.

The previous analysis demonstrated how affinity spaces and multimodal texts built these bridges that connected public institution students' daily activities outside the school to English classes. They were working a lot from home designing their magnificent compositions. Most of them were investigating which application could be the best for presenting their ideas and how they looked for information that helped them to reach each aim of the project, "inspiring and creating horror."

It also allowed me to recognize how multimodal texts became their most useful and creative way of expression and how this way of composition encouraged the students to use their home time for discovering new digital resources and getting information as part of their research practice. The students accomplished the steps mentioned above for guaranteeing a feedback process through this project. However, this required more participation and willingness from them since I consider it is determining to analyze what factors were missing to get the process of feedback.

Chapter Five:

Answers, Thoughts, and Ideas For Future Studies

I want to highlight two memorable sentences students wrote in order to describe all this process. "Fue productivo y muy chévere haber podido leer y aprender sobre ese tema, lo disfruté y me agradó mucho" ("It was productive and very cool to have been able to read and learn about this topic; I enjoyed it and liked it a lot"). (Sandro's Reflective Journal 3, October 4th, 2019).

Also "Quiero resaltar el proceso que llevamos con nuestra docente, enseñándonos nuevos temas, y de manera más actual, sacándole provecho a la facilidad que nos brinda la tecnología" ("I want to highlight the process we had done with our teacher, teaching us new topics, and in a very modern way, taking advantage of the convenience offered by technology"), (Juan Eduardo's Reflective Journal 2, September 27th, 2019).

These ideas have summarized some of the implications of working with affinity spaces and multimodal texts. Introducing these new concepts inside the Colossus school has demonstrated how those could transform many aspects of the learning and teaching processes. I will discuss the main findings related to my research question in the following section.

What Multimodal Texts Became For The Students

My students recognized memes, gifs, sounds, and emoji. They used them in their virtual conversations in order to express feelings, points of view, and suggestions in front of friends and classmates. These elements, along with free time activities, were separated from the School duties. Students came to realize that these funny and colorful elements could be part of their written tasks using multimodal texts. They learned that multimodal texts could be:

An innovative way of writing compositions where students mix their creativity, abilities, and knowledge. Students at Colossus School used to have a negative attitude towards the exercises they had to create texts based on the contents they had seen and shared before. The idea of writing had been frustrating and hard to work on for them. They preferred to be engaged in other activities instead of composing a text in English. They expressed they were just able to write a few things, and only when the teacher requested it. For example, Kitty said she only wrote in English "cuando es necesario para cumplir con las tareas" ("when is necessary in order to fulfill homework") and Sandro "Poco, ahora en clase no" ("little, not now in class") (Students' interview August 27th, 2019). After the multimodal lessons, the students stated, "Aprendí palabras nuevas, aprendí gran parte de multimodal text como se pronuncian ciertas palabras. Aprendí como resumir los textos" ("I learned new words, I learned [thanks to] multimodal text how to pronounce certain words. I learned how to summarize texts") (Kitty's Reflective Journal Lesson 2, September 27th, 2019). Julio Javier "Aprendí a formular textos multimodales y cómo simplificarlos y que se entiendan" ("I learned how to formulate multimodal texts and how to simplify them and how to make them be understood") (Julio Javier's Reflective Journal Lesson 2, September 27th, 2019). This original alternative way of practicing written skills, summarizing and highlighting main ideas from different sources, also helped students to write and combine their artistic abilities. Sandro said, "en multimodal he descubierto una gran creatividad en mí gracias a eso" ("through multimodal, I discovered great creativity in me thanks to it") (Reflective journal Lesson 3, October 4th, 2019). Eva also reflected "El texto multimodal también abre una parte dinámica, lo que hace fácil de aprender, lleno de creatividad y eficiente" ("the multimodal text also opens a dynamic part, which makes it easy to learn, full of creativity and efficiency")

(Eva's reflective journal Lesson 1, September 9th, 2019). Rowsell & Walsh (2011) recognized that "designing on-screen has not only transformed how we create meaning, but also, transformed ways of reconstructing and renegotiating our identities" (p. 56). I could corroborate this aspect because most of the students' designs gathered up aspects of their personalities and likes. Reflecting on their ways of how they perceive and see the world. The monster productions were evidence of it. Because "this kind of job also helped me to recognize that every design had a personal touch of its creator's personality and style." (Digital Artifact Analysis Lesson 3, October 7th). I have shared much time with my students, and I could recognize many of their identities and individual characteristics. The following picture displayed this fact. (See figure 12)

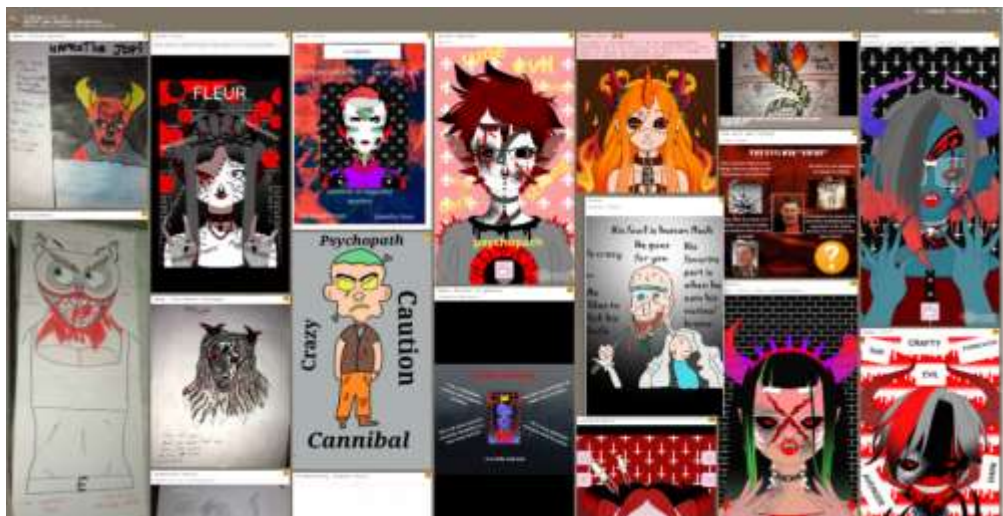


Figure 12: Monsters Designs. Lesson 3. Inspiring and creating horror.

An opportunity for promoting students' inquiry and recognizing technological tools

Current students have established a secure connection with the digital world. They participate in several virtual communities more than they interact in real physical places. As the interview answers showed, my students spend a lot of their time in virtual groups — Eva, twice a week; Kitty, once a week; Julio Javier almost all week. The rest of the group said, "Every day."

Their purposes of being consistently communicated are different: homework, games, relationships, and friendships. However, this means spending a considerable quantity of time online, which could be potentially useful for reinforcing learning and teaching processes. They are in those communities in order to be connected to their interests and to learn about what they deem it is vital for them and fun. Gee and others (e.g., Knobel, 2001; Kist, 2000) have demonstrated that students learn more outside the school than inside using different resources and activities that involve their daily lives. When applying multimodal texts within my English classes, they started using their time and resources more to know the best digital tools that work better according to their devices, the available signal for web connection, and skills. Juan Eduardo wrote "Para realizar el texto utilicé la aplicación de móvil "Picsart" que se encuentra completamente gratis en la Play Store de Google, no requiere de internet y por eso me motivé y comencé a realizar esta lección en el aula de clases desde mi dispositivo móvil" ("In order to do the text, I used the Picsart mobile application that is free through Google's Playstore, not requiring Internet and that is why I felt motivated, and I started to carry this lesson out in the classroom through my device"). Eva "la aplicación que utilicé fue Canvas. Me pareció súper útil porque pude demostrar la actitud y personalidad de mi personaje (Dennis)" ("I used the Canvas application. I think it was super useful because I could show the attitude and personality of my character"). Additionally, Camilo "Utilicé la página de Facebook, Paint y Piktochart para modificar. Aprendí a utilizar Apps que no sabía para qué funcionaban" ("I used the Facebook page, Paint and Piktochart to modify. I learned to use apps I did not know what they were for.") (Reflective Journals, Lesson 1, September 9th, 2019). Every participant of the research process remarked with a similar sentence regarding what they learned about digital resources. English

knowledge was increased using the applications and creating their texts. Estemancito said "Sí disfruté mucho porque del texto pude aprender muchos verbos y como pronunciarlos" ("Yes, I enjoyed it a lot because through the text I could learn many verbs and how to pronounce them") and "Aprendí a pronunciar palabras desconocidas y con el monstruo aprendí a hacer caricaturas en Android" ("I learned to pronounce unknown words, and with "The Monster" I learned how to make cartoons with Android"). Sandro claimed, "utilicé Autodesk y Sketchbook para realizar el monstruo y una gran cantidad de palabras en inglés que la profesora en varias ocasiones me las recordó" ("I used Autodesk and Sketchbook in order to make The Monster and quite a great number of words in English that the teacher reminded me in several occasions") (Reflective Journals, Lesson 3, October 4th, 2019). Eva also exclaimed, "de la actividad aprendí mucho vocabulario. La razón es porque al utilizar las aplicaciones, uno cada vez que las utiliza va aprendiendo palabras" ("I learned a lot of vocabulary from the activity. The reason is because, when using the applications, you can learn new words as you use them") (Reflective Journal, Lesson 1, September 9th, 2019).

I felt this was an additional part of their research actions; they were more engaged in discovering how they could create multimodal texts rather than learning English words, expressions, among others. Most of the first applications I presented were dismissed by other options the students already had when creating their multimodal composing tasks. They unexpectedly found other activities in order to link their leisure habits and pastimes. For example, Juan Eduardo said, "Gracias a la actividad descubrí nuevas ayudas o herramientas virtuales, pero sobretodo me ayudó a encontrar un nuevo hobby, esto de las lecturas en inglés me resulto muy interesante para practicar de vez en cuando desde mi hogar" ("Thanks to the activity,

I discovered new helping options or virtual tools; but most of all, It helped me find a new hobby. These reading activities in English turned out being very interesting for me in order to practice from time to time from home"), (Reflective journal, Lesson 3, October 4th, 2019).

An explorative exercise of moving students' processes. Learning and practicing strategies not just within the English classroom but also outside the school. The research participants did an outstanding search of digital resources, which allowed them to construct their multimodal texts as similar to their first drafts. They had some big expectations to fulfill in their multimodal compositions. The available resources the school offered to the students were not enough. This situation forced them to look for some spaces and moments outside the time class to carry out their ideas. That why Estemancito declared, "hice el texto multimodal en mi casa ya que tengo mejor internet y me concentro mejor" ("I did the multimodal text from home because I have better Internet there and I focus better") (Reflective Journal, Lesson 1, September 9th, 2019).

Kist (2000) stated that a large number of significant learning experiences took place in areas different from their institution. "Outside of school, students may already be experiencing this flow state through their involvement with multiple forms of expression, via uses of technology" (p. 716). For example, Juan Eduardo said "Realicé mi personaje en casa con la ayuda de mi PC, para llevar a cabo la creación del mismo, utilicé una aplicación que trae por defecto Windows 10. La cual es "3D en casa" dicha aplicación nos ofrece un montón de herramientas para editar y crear imágenes, bocetos, planos, etc. incluso en 3D" ("I did my character at home using my PC. In order to carry that out, I used the default Windows 10 application, which is "3D At Home". That application offers us a bunch of tools to edit and

create images, sketches, blueprints, etc., even in 3D”) (Reflective journal, Lesson 3, October 4th, 2019).

Affinity spaces as new scenarios of sharing students' multimodal compositions and interacting among them

The modes the students used to connect their ideas, and how they displayed their tasks, permitted them to see their partner's proposals, thus creating a bigger audience for their designs and productions. The teacher is not the person assigned to read the students' creations. According to Rowsell & Walsh (2011), "Most of the studies about multimodality found that the increased collaborative learning opportunities help students to refine their thinking and engage in deeper analysis" (p.57). The exposure of students' multimodal texts and the interactions among their classmates engaged themselves to participate and establish bigger goals for their next productions.

The implications were connected to the previous studies I read and which gave me some ideas for developing my research project inside Colossus School. Even, these practices were settled in different contexts and goals. Those had some closeness to the usage of multimodality and virtual spaces as environments to learn.

For example, Abrams and Gerber (2014) explored the benefits of using the multimodal and digital texts as complements of habitual printed texts. This idea aided me to acknowledge how printed composition exercises limited students in creativity and imagination. However, they also allowed verifying that the multimodal texts productions were built by themselves. The

writing creations were evidence of how my students worked for making meaning, developing critical thinkers, and spreading their English vocabulary knowledge.

Gee's study (2018) proved how a game could generate knowledge and encourage students to use different sources for getting information. I could say that multimodal texts were the sources students use to know about other books, movies, graphic novels, and the like, as the progress of my students' research moved on. Besides, also taking into account Lammers and Marsh's (2015) ideas about using digital artifacts for creating different versions of their resources.

Cañas and Ocampo (2015) discovered that children use multimodal texts from sources like video games, internet, songs, movies, et al., for extracting knowledge about the world and trying to understand it. My students took some steps forward using their multimodal compositions as sources for increasing their knowledge.

Implications

“Changing times, changing literacy practices” (Mora, 2010, p. 9) is the statement the author remarked in order to declare that old-style beliefs about reading and writing have had a long process of modifications and adjustments in order to be suitable for new population standards.

Mora (2010) additionally stated that old and new teachers should “think of literacy as the process of interpreting and creating text using multiple means and media, including technology, multiple languages, and diverse aesthetic forms of expression, in addition to the written and spoken word” (p. 1). The findings of my research practice revealed the importance of looking for

ways of permanent updating, allowing us to take into account the characteristics and demands of the young generations that we receive as educators in our classrooms.

I realized that in a public school, teachers and students could take advantage of multimodality strategies and the usage of virtual learning environments in our context following Sarah's (the participant featured in Amicucci, 2014) advice who invited teachers to create possibilities where students could be themselves. It could be possible accepting their ways of how they use language in communication outside the school and also generating spaces within the classroom where they can use multimodality to exchange opinions, critics, and points of view.

New strategies bring changes to the aspects which are related to educational processes. Some of those modifications are associated with:

Colombian Public Schools, where classes are cut off by multiple extracurricular activities proposed by the Minister of Education. The academic progressions could be more constant using strategies like this project in order to involve other school subjects' processes and integrate the contents of those subjects that allow it. The few time left for classes could be used to build and share knowledge. Students will understand homework as real practices for transforming and increasing social and cultural skills. The socialized topics will be part of the real concepts in which students talk and want to improve their knowledge.

Awareness of reading and writing skills should be more present in teaching bachelor degree programs, not only focusing on the development of improving academic skills. Teachers should start working more on a study syllabus besides engaging their students to understand writing and reading as social and influential instruments of expression, thus promoting culture,

friendship, and technology usage (Mora, 2010). This practice of updating and transformation should emerge from University students who will be future teachers and the people in charge of designing teaching and learning approaches and strategies that confront coming literacy challenges and approaching students.

"The evolution of literacy beliefs and practices" (Mora, 2010, p. 129) is in charge of graduated teachers and instructors who will promote experiences and thoughts regarding the new ways of understanding, facing, and using reading and writing. On this behalf, educational master programs will have the responsibility of encouraging research exercises to contextualize and adapt new concepts, strategies, perspectives, and procedures for learning and teaching demands.

Colombian educational policies could facilitate the processes inviting to see multimodality and digital learning environments as part of the new schools' curricula, universities syllabus, and all educational learning spaces. Considering the possibility of integrating technology in most of the subjects, and dismantling the idea of presenting it as an individual process. Promoting literacy practices as cultural, social, and critical exercises that drills students in the use of values, justice, ideologies, beliefs, and knowledge.

Knobel (2001) examined how the reading and writing testing standards could be related to some school "failure" cases because some students who are not able to reach the benchmark measures within classroom exercises are adjudged as underachievers without taking into account their literacy practices outside school. The author described Jacques' school participation, and the first compared them to his everyday literacy practices out of school in order to demonstrate how the latter daily activities are associated to literature, values, social issues, personal beliefs

and "in a wide range of reading, writing, speaking, and listening practices" (p. 408). However, Jacques' out-school literacies are not meaningful in his school progress.

For that reason, Knobel (2001) called teachers "for going beyond the literacy benchmarks to teach literacy in ways that make it culturally and sociocritically meaningful to students by embracing models of literacy teaching that are not limited to code-breaking or operational literacy practices" (Knobel, 2001, p. 413).

Teaching literacy is a broad field; my research study is a tiny step that revealed it is possible to modify and adapt English teaching practices overthrowing traditional ones and reflecting on resources, materials, contents, and actions that fit better to new paradigms and contexts.

Limitations

According to Richard (2003), "The description in a research study suggests an eternal cycle spiraling through a professional life, but in practice, there will be limits to what is possible or desirable, and a project may concentrate on a single cycle." This cycle is delimited by some facts, which not only depend on researcher-practitioner or participants. These facts interfere in the assessment and construction of outcomes during the proposal development. As one of the leaders, I tried that those did not hamper the research path.

One of them was my familiarity with the school learners because I have been working there since September 2015. My amount of time there has helped me build several relationships with the students and to have empathy with them. These kinds of affections could be challenging to handle when reconstructing previous conceptions about the students' processes;

notwithstanding, the Spanish teacher participation helped to avoid those that could severely interfere in the interpretation and the data analysis.

The fluctuating attendance of high school population

Some students from this group did not attend school. So, they missed some of the lesson parts. Nevertheless, I used some extra class time to guide them, although the development was not the same. These students accomplished the task, and the interaction and discussion among them strengthened their opinions and points of view.

The institutional timetable was proposed from the beginning of the school year; however, many governmental and city activities interrupted the constant progress of the classes during its course. I used class time appropriately in order to have continuity in the stages of the project, and Spanish classes were also a helping hand to have more continuity.

The school has two computer rooms, some portable computers and some tablets with internet access. The repair of this service and the equipment maintenance is in charge of a company outside the school. Due to failures from these services, the secretary requested the examination. The company was scheduled for a visit according to its availability. This fact was an element that delayed the application of the strategies in some moments of the project. The group discussions and sharing sessions were limited by the resources disposal and the weak network signal. Some days the connection did not work, so the sessions had to be postponed.

Many aspects had to be worked out during this process. Findings which guided the possibilities to face the educational goals and current characteristics; however, the research never

ends in a field where population, needs, and interests are changing every day. There are many facts to develop in future studies. Some of these could be:

Students' multimodal texts as resources for introducing new topics. Gee said, "To really learn a language, you have to know how it applies to the world" (Mora, Gee, Hernandez, Castaño, Orrego & Ramírez, 2020). I would like to know if the older students' multimodal texts could become resources for English practices in order to introduce a book, a movie, a graphic novel, or a topic. In that way, these compositions will be cycling resources among many generations at school. Álvarez (2016) establishes that "design tasks that require students to create multimodal texts in connection to the various topics and communicative functions of the language curriculum discuss the characteristics of genres such as textbooks, brochures, postcards, letters, chat scripts, articles from newspapers, websites, and video clips, design materials articulating modes of communication and genres that provide different sources of input to the topic or language function being studied, and link student's learning styles to multimodal projects" (p. 112). I would love to have the students' designs to be used in the future as material for upcoming younger graders, as a sort of informative sources. In that way, pupils will understand that all their productions will have a purpose and a meaningful usage for all processes inside the school.

Involving other school subjects: During this project, the Spanish teacher was involved in some of the lesson parts. This situation was a strategy for carrying out the process correctly. Time Schedule in Public School is continually oscillating due to the multiple extracurricular activities that are directly planned by the Secretaría de Educación. Spanish contents were focused on Universal Literature. The Spanish teacher shifted the initial reading; she previously

selected Edgar Allan Poe's stories. In that way, the Spanish teacher reinforced the Literary Analysis and guided the students to read the literary pieces. The English teacher and the students discussed the stories during English classes for starting their drafts and final productions. Reading the books on their native language gave them more elements for their productions. Reading in English could take more time, and having a variety in the stories could require more class spaces. The initial idea of doing an appropriate process of feedback among the students through the affinity space should have been modified. It was proposed to take into account the variety of readings having a diversity of stories. (See figure 13).

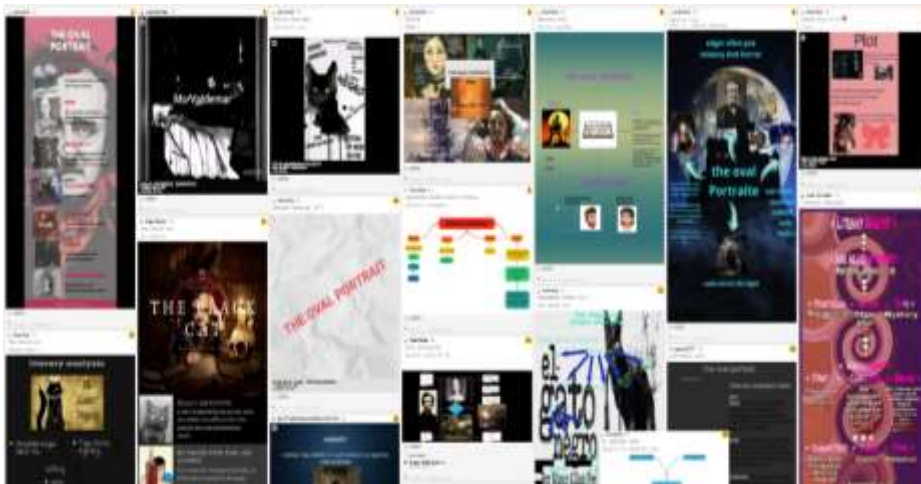


Figure 13: Edgar Allan Poe Literary analysis_ Lesson 2_Students' Multimodal

A virtual place to start promoting different ways of feedback among teacher - students and students-students: The interaction could be directed to having an appropriate process of feedback. Some of the stages were proposed in order to promote it. Nevertheless, I consider it is pertinent to have another process where the students could recognize the concept and its features. Presenting this way of assessment, the students could oversee this way of

interaction in a collaborative practice of improving their learning. At the same time, the teacher could use the digital place for giving directions and promoting different ways of assessment.

The findings and conceptions I previously described are a small part of a rewarding process that forced me to evaluate the accuracy of my teaching actions and revamp other means of guiding my students' English processes. Seven years have passed since I finished my bachelor's degree, and all notions I have learned to promote writing practices are history. I am so, so sorry for those students whom I obliged to write long pages in order to improve their written abilities. These studies permitted me to understand that I do not require an extended paragraph to assess grammar, coherence, or clarity. My tenth-grade students showed me that just with a sentence, a mind map, or a paragraph, I could have more elements to assess and analyze linguistic elements than with an essay. They also exhibited that words could be completed with colors, shapes, sounds, and pictures, proving that their meaning could not be affected.

However, the most bewildering learning thing for me was to recognize that listening to my students could help me develop amazing English lessons. Just welcome their ideas. They are quite creative, and their way of reading and seeing the world gave magnificent ideas for practicing and improving their English.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent formats

A. 1

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN TESIS DE MAESTRÍA EN PROCESOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

Estimados Padres de Familia,

Cordial saludo.

Yo Zeidy Yurley Agudelo Lopera, estudiante de la Maestría en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Uno de los requerimientos para aspirar al título de magíster es el desarrollo de un proyecto de investigación como parte de nuestro trabajo de grado (tesis). Para dicho trabajo, hemos propuesto la investigación *“Espacios de Afinidad para Construir y Compartir Textos Multimodales Digitales Diseñados por los Estudiantes”*, cuyo objetivo es explorar el impacto del uso de los espacios de afinidad en la creación de textos digitales multimodales en décimo grado. Este trabajo de investigación está dirigido por el Dr. Raúl Alberto Mora Vélez, Profesor Asociado de la Escuela de Educación y Pedagogía de la UPB.

Como parte de la investigación los alumnos interactuarán en espacios virtuales con sus compañeros y conmigo como otro participante y docente investigador. Por medio de sus participaciones e interacciones, yo recogeré datos como observaciones, pantallazos de las interacciones y entrevistas, las cuales me ayudarán a analizar las implicaciones del uso de estos

ambientes digitales en las clases de inglés. Esta recolección de información esta propuesta desde el mes de Agosto hasta Noviembre del año 2019.

Esperamos que los resultados de este estudio me ayuden a recoger datos que me ayuden a dar respuesta a mi pregunta de investigación a través de apuntes de observación sobre las clases, el desempeño de los estudiantes y sus producciones mientras se promueve el uso y la interacción de los jóvenes dentro espacios virtuales. Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de campo también se podrían utilizar en futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos, a no ser que usted autorice lo contrario.

Esta carta, entonces, tiene por objeto solicitar su autorización para que yo, en el marco de este proyecto de investigación, pueda contactar a su hijo/a y pueda participar en diversas plataformas digitales, compartiendo textos multimodales construidos y apoyados desde la clase de inglés, usando diversas aplicaciones digitales.

Usted está en completa libertad de aceptar la participación de su hijo/a, sin ninguna forma de coerción para su colaboración y sin ninguna posibilidad de represalias en su institución educativa o en la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana en caso de no aceptar. Usted tiene derecho a ver [anotar qué pueden ver] el producto final y, de no estar de acuerdo con algo en el mismo, se harán los cambios del caso.

De antemano agradezco su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual me ayudará en mi formación como investigadora. En caso de cualquier inquietud con respecto a este

proyecto de investigación, puede contactar directamente al Dr. Mora en su correo raul.mora@upb.edu.co, o en su celular 313-702-6386.

Atentamente,

Zeidy Yurley Agudelo Lopera

Candidata a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas

Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con la participación de mi hijo/a en esta investigación

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

A. 2.

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN PARA TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

Clara Astrid Ceballos Agudelo

Rector/a

Institución Educativa Rodrigo Correa Palacio

Estimado/a Rector/a:

Cordial saludo,

Yo Zeidy Yurley Agudelo Lopera, estudiante de la Maestría en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Uno de los requerimientos para aspirar al título de magíster es el desarrollo de un proyecto de investigación como parte de nuestro trabajo de grado (tesis). Para dicho trabajo, hemos propuesto la investigación “*Espacios de Afinidad para Construir y Compartir Textos Multimodales Digitales Diseñados por los Estudiantes*”, cuyo objetivo es explorar el impacto del uso de los espacios de afinidad en la creación de textos digitales multimodales en décimo grado. Este trabajo de investigación está dirigido por el Dr. Raúl Alberto Mora Vélez, Profesor Asociado de la Escuela de Educación y Pedagogía de la UPB.

Como parte de la investigación los alumnos interactuarán en espacios virtuales con sus compañeros y conmigo como otro participante y docente investigador. Por medio de sus participaciones e interacciones, yo recogeré diversos datos (entre observaciones, entrevistas y otros artefactos) que me ayuden a analizar las implicaciones del uso de estos ambientes digitales en las clases de inglés. Esta recolección de información esta propuesta desde el mes de Agosto hasta Noviembre del año 2019.

Esperamos que los resultados de este estudio me ayuden a recoger datos que me ayuden a dar respuesta a mi pregunta de investigación a través de apuntes de observación sobre las clases, el desempeño de los estudiantes y sus producciones mientras se promueve el uso y la interacción de los jóvenes dentro espacios virtuales. Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de campo también se podrían utilizar en futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos. En el

caso de la institución, solo si usted como líder de su institución lo permite, se hará referencia al nombre de la misma en el trabajo investigativo a realizar.

Esta carta, entonces, tiene por objeto solicitar su autorización para que yo/nosotros/nosotras, en el marco de este proyecto de investigación, pueda llevar a cabo nuestro trabajo de campo para desarrollar nuestra investigación. A los docentes y padres de familia que vayan a apoyar esta tarea se les entregará una forma de consentimiento similar. En el caso de los estudiantes, se les enviará copia del consentimiento a sus padres o acudientes.

Los docentes, padres de familia y estudiantes que participen en esta tarea lo harán en completa libertad y se espera que no haya ninguna coerción para su colaboración. Ellos estarán en completa libertad de no participar, sin que ello pueda constituir motivo de represalias en la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Ellos estarán en derecho de ver el producto final y, de no estar de acuerdo con algo en el mismo, se harán los cambios del caso.

De antemano agradezco su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual me/nos ayudará en mi formación como investigadora. En caso de cualquier inquietud con respecto a este proyecto de investigación, puede contactar directamente al Dr. Mora en su correo raul.mora@upb.edu.co, o en su celular 313-702-6386.

Atentamente,

Zeidy Yurley Agudelo Lopera

Candidata a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas

Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con la participación de los estudiantes y/o docentes de esta institución en esta investigación

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

Appendix B: Data Collection Instruments

INSTRUMENT # 1: Students' Reflective Journal

Time:		Place:	
Observer name :			
Lesson Number:			
Questions for answering		Students' reflections	
<p>Did you enjoy the lesson?</p> <p>Which was your favorite moment of the lesson?</p> <p>When did you do your multimodal text?</p> <p>Which applications do they apply to develop of it?</p>			

Aspects

to

highlight:

INSTRUMENT # 2: Interview

Interview introduction

This interview is one of the tools I am going to use in order to analyze how the combination of affinity spaces and multimodal texts in English classes of Public School is helping tenth-grade students to acquire, investigate and create knowledge spontaneously and how they use this language in their daily tasks.

This is a semi-structure interview where you can find some answer options which you can justify expressing comments or opinions when you consider it is necessary. The interview has 13 questions and it lasts 30 minutes approximately. As a researcher I will keep your personal information in confidentiality and anonymity. My thesis advisors and I will only have access to this material. Your answers will be recorded in order to use the information you give me to ask the project question.

As a research participant you can request for clarification when you consider necessary, abstain from answering any question and ask questions about the research project at any moment.

For starting the interview tell me a little about your background.

What is your name?

How old are you? _____ Years old

Where do you study?

Which grade are you in? _____

How long have you been at School? _____ (months, years)

Do you enjoy English classes at school? What are your favorite activities? Which materials / tools do you use for developing these activities?

Digital resources and usage of virtual applications

Do you participate in virtual communities (social networks)? How many virtual communities have you sign up? What kind of activities do you do inside these online networks?

Do you participate in virtual groups? Have you create a virtual group with your classmates? What actions do you do with the members of these virtual groups? What kind of activities do you do through the virtual groups? Which language do you use to interact with them?

Do you share elements through the virtual communities? What kind of elements do you share (texts, memes, gifts, link articles, etc.)? How do you get these elements? Do you create them? Which applications do you use?

How many times a week do you use the virtual groups to communicate with your partners? Why do you communicate with them? (Ask questions, do homework, talk about interesting topics, share information)

Does your teacher use digital resources at class? What kind of activities does she invite you to do? How often does your English teacher promote the usage of digital resources for developing class activities and homework during the week?

Written process

Do you write in English? When? What for? Do you like to use digital applications and resources for writing? Which applications do you use?

Do you know what a multimodal text is? Where have you seen multimodal texts? Have you create a multimodal text? Which elements do you include for making them? Which applications do you apply for doing these kinds of texts?

INSTRUMENT # 3: Artifacts and Media Material

Date:	
Task name:	
Task objective:	
Aspects to analyze What kind of material do the students share? How was the students' participation within affinity space? Which were the elements they prefer to write and share? How was the interaction among students for giving and receiving feedback from their partners and other virtual spaces' participants? How often do they participate?	
Screenshot digital artifacts	Interpretative aspects

INSTRUMENT # 4: Teacher's Reflective Journals

Date:	
Lesson name:	
Task objective:	
<p>Aspects to analyze</p> <p>How were the strategies the teacher and students used?</p> <p>How the students participated in the tasks</p> <p>Students' answers after applying the strategies.</p> <p>The students' perceptions about the kind of material that was employed.</p>	
Lesson planning parts?	Reflective notes in each class moment.

Author's Biography

My name is Zeidy Yurley Agudelo Lopera. I was born in Medellin and I have lived in Copacabana since my birthday. My parents' names are Martha Luz Lopera Palacio and José Alfonso Agudelo Cadavid. I have two sisters Leidy Ineana and Karen Jasmint.

I started my kindergarten studies at Aurelio Tobon School. It was small elementary school that lost its name when it was joined to another school. I have good memories of that place. I began first grade at Institución Educativa Normal Superior Maria Auxiliadora School. I passed amusement thirteen years of my life in that place. My friends and some colleagues were met during these awesome years. I feel sincere gratitude to their old teachers because they helped me to love what I am and do.

I really love music and enjoy going to concerts and music festivals. Movies are part of my life, through them I learn, fell and grow up.

I have been a teacher since 2004. I started with kindergarten learners and I have gone by different elementary grades in different private schools of Medellin. During these years I was completing my bachelor's studies. Fortunately, I got a degree in 2011.

The first of September in 2015, I entered public school in Medellin. After a year, I participated on a scholarship summon to get into the magister process. I was chosen by good fortune. The next year, I embarked on this new learning and impetus process at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana thanks to a Scholarship of Ministerio de educación de Medellin. I have learnt several things for my personal and academic interests. My desires of continuing learning are still vivacious.