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**“FOUR CORNERS LEARNING STRATEGY AND THE CRITICAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS”**

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Ambato – Ecuador

2021

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DEDICATION

This important step in my life is dedicated to:

God, who has blessed me with health, wisdom, and strength to achieve every goal I have set for myself.

My mom and dad, who have given me the most significant inheritance in life, education. They have sacrificed so much for me to get me to where I am right now.

My little brothers Sebastian and Francisco, who have been my company and joy in every moment of my life. They are my desire to move forward because I want to show them that they can also go as far as they dream.

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TOPIC: “FOUR CORNERS LEARNING STRATEGY AND THE CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS”

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ABSTRACT

Teachers and learners use different methodologies, strategies, and activities in classes to learn and acquire the English language. However, four corners is an innovative learning strategy that looks up for improving the critical discourse analysis level of students from 5th semester “B” of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros program from Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Firstly, this research paper was a quasi-experimental study that worked with 29 under degree students. They were divided into two groups: 14 people were part of the control group and the last 15 learners belonged to the experimental group. After that, the critical discourse analysis pre-test was applied to the population studied. Then, the study group worked on activities that involved four corners strategy meanwhile the control group received normal classes according to their academic schedule. Finally, all students took the CDA test for second time in order to know if the strategy was effective on the improvement of critical discourse analysis level. As a result, the experimental group raised their grades from 5,21/10 to 8,30/10 while the control group did not have significant improvements. As a conclusion, four corners learning strategy is a good way to work on CDA and other activities of the English lessons.

Key words: Four corners, learning strategy, cooperative strategy, critical discourse analysis, CDA.

TEMA: "LA ESTRATEGIA DE APRENDIZAJE DE LOS CUATRO RINCONES Y EL ANÁLISIS CRÍTICO DEL DISCURSO"

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Fecha: 20 de diciembre de 2020

RESUMEN

Metodologías, estrategias y actividades son comúnmente utilizados en clases tanto por profesores como estudiante para aprender y adquirir el idioma inglés. Sin embargo, los cuatro rincones es una innovadora estrategia de aprendizaje que busca mejorar el nivel del análisis crítico del discurso de los estudiantes del 5° semestre paralelo "B" de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Primeramente, este trabajo de investigación fue un estudio cuasi-experimental que tomó en cuenta 29 estudiantes como población de estudio, en el cual fueron divididos en dos grupos: 14 personas formaron parte del grupo control y los últimos 15 alumnos pertenecieron al grupo experimental. Posteriormente, se aplicó por primera vez la prueba de análisis crítico del discurso a la población estudiada para conocer su nivel de análisis inicial. A continuación, el grupo experimental trabajó en actividades que involucra la estrategia de los cuatro rincones, mientras que el grupo control recibió clases normales de acuerdo a su horario académico. Finalmente, todos los estudiantes tomaron la prueba del ACD, por segunda vez, para conocer si la estrategia fue efectiva en la mejora del nivel de análisis crítico del discurso. De esta manera, el grupo experimental subió sus notas de 5,21/10 a 8,30/10 mientras que el grupo control no tuvo mejoras significativas. Por último, se llega a la conclusión que la estrategia de aprendizaje de los cuatro rincones es una buena forma de trabajar en ACD y otras actividades para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés.

Palabras clave: Cuatro rincones, estrategia de aprendizaje, estrategia cooperativa, análisis crítico del discurso, ACD.

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education of Ecuador demands the learning of the English language in public schools, so it is relevant for teachers to look up methodologies and strategies in which students feel comfortable to learn and acquire the language.

Moreover, it is well-known that English becomes more interactive when it is applied to a real-life context; thereby videos and newspaper articles have content close to reality. However, students do not usually analyze those materials in deep and do not share their ideas with others. That is the reason why it is necessary the application of four corners learning strategy to develop communicative, cooperative, and critical thinking skills in students.

There are four chapters that describe relevant information of this research paper, below explained:

CHAPTER I. Theoretical framework: This chapter presents previous researchers and some other academic papers similar to four corners learning strategy and the critical discourse analysis. Its purpose is to get more knowledge about the topic of this thesis.

CHAPTER II. Methodology: This section provides information related to the research methodologies that are used to apply the four corners strategy and collect data about the improvements that the population studied during the sessions.

CHAPTER III. Results and discussion: The next chapter analyzes and explains numeric and graphic information recollected in order to verify the effectiveness of four corners learning strategy.

CHAPTER IV. Conclusions and recommendations: The final part of the thesis clarifies the hypothesis of this research. It is possible once the data collected is studied and have enough evidence to support that four corners learning strategy improves the level of critical discourse analysis.

CHAPTER I

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Investigative background

Researching previous academic papers, articles, and journals similar to this topic helped to get a better understanding about the variables, methodology, process and conclusions that they had in order to write the present research. Additionally, it is important to mention that the information taken in other resources was necessary to investigate the functions, characteristics, and benefits of the use of four corners learning strategy and critical discourse analysis in EFL learners.

According to Kurnia (2018,) debates are an important element for the English language learning because it helps students to think critically and to make, support their opinions, and to improve the language skills. Therefore, she decided to do this investigation whose main objective was to analyze if four corners debate is effective in the improvement of speaking skill in students. It was a pre-experimental research that considered 78 students in which 31 were involved in the application of the strategy and the other 36 students were the control group. Also, a speaking test was used to evaluate their performance and the scores gotten in the pre and post test were analyzed in a paired t-test. The results showed that there was 8.61 points of difference in both test, so that the author concluded that four corners debates was a good strategy to develop the speaking skill in students from 8th grade of EFL learning.

Another study considered relevant for this research was written by Gulnaz (2020). The author claims that it is important to analyze the effectiveness of In-class debate to develop social, communicative, and critical thinking skills. Also, he used the quantitative and qualitative approaches where a survey of 14

questions was applied to 87 English women learners. Those questions were divided into four categories: a) the analysis of collaborative and communicative skills; b) the comprehension of the course content; c) the learners' ability to understand, analyze and evaluate; d) students' creativity and the critical thinking skills development. As a result, there was a positive result because In-class debate was effective on the development of collaborative, communicative and critical thinking skills. However, the author stated that there would be even more positive findings if this research was implemented in a real class using materials such as, rubrics, lessons, and tests.

Moreover, Paramita (2020) expresses that the objective of this academic paper was to develop third semester students' speaking skill by retelling stories using pictures. To carry out this investigation, it needed the classroom action research methodology or also known as (CAR) methodology that divided the implementation into two cycles. The first one was the use of four corners strategy with pictures in a pre-test and post-test, meanwhile the second cycle is a questionnaire related to the strategy applied in the previous step to verify if they were motivated in the foreign language learning. As a conclusion, students had good benefits in the improvement of the speaking skill after analyzing the scores gotten in both tests and the answers of the questionnaire.

The study done by Geraldine (2018) looked up for improving the writing productive skill throughout the use of four corners strategy in students from SMAN 10. This research was a quasi-experimental study, so that two classes were divided into two groups: the experimental and control group. After that, the experimental class was the only one that did activities that involved hortatory exposition texts and the strategy mentioned. Last, both groups were graded by giving a test to know which group had great improvements in writing skills. Finally, the author compared both results with the t-test formula and affirmed that the experimental group got higher scores in the writing skill test. As a conclusion, learners developed their writing skill by using hortatory exposition texts with the help of four corners learning strategy.

Furthermore, the article written by Danesh, Aghagolzadeh and Maftoon (2016,) proposed the achievement of a higher reading comprehension skill by using the critical discourse analysis, so that it was contextualized in a learning environment. This academic paper was a quasi-experimental research in which the TOEFL exam, reading part was used as a material for data collection. A pre- and post test was taken by 61 EFL learners in order to measure students' critical thinking. They were not randomly divided into two groups. While, control group had no instructions about CDA, the experimental group had 16 sessions that included full explanation and application of critical discourse analysis characteristics using The New York Times newspapers. In this way, the researchers analyzed both pre and post test results among control and experimental groups and concluded that CDA was really helpful in the reading comprehension skills.

Another academic research support was done by Marashi and Chisari (2016,) whose aim was to study the influence of CDA on students' writing complexity, accuracy and fluency. There were 100 intermediate English learners which 60 of them were selected by the highest scores gotten in the PET test. After that, 30 participants were part of the control group and the rest of learners were the experimental group which had 17 sessions that included written tasks using the critical discourse analysis. Then, a written post-test was applied in order to notice the difference that they got and the researchers said that there were positive results in favor of the application of CDA in writing CAF skills, so that they recommended the constant use of this methodology in EFL writing lessons.

Moreover, the research written by Fauzi and Ilahi (2017) declared that discourse is the most important part in the language learning because it is found in every textbook, speech, and instructions used inside the classroom. However, it is time to analyze those materials critically and understand the

society and power that influence on people, so that their purposes in this study were to analyze the speech about the education in children and women by Malal Yousafzai applying CDA and to introduce language aspect through persuasive language as a material for EFL learn. The group of students listened to Malal's speech and analyzed the transcript of the video, so that they used van Dijk's approach that consisted of four types of analysis. The first one is the mental model, the second is macrostructure, the next one is superstructure, and the last type is microstructure in which they had to understand and interpret the persuasive language that the speaker said in each sentence. After analyzing the materials given, the authors noticed that students developed a persuasive language by writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills of the foreign language. Also, students became more critical in further speech or reading they worked with because of critical discourse analysis.

The last support article was done by Najarzadegan, Dabaghi, and Eslamirasekh (2018.) The writers of this research stated that there were some authors that studied the critical discourse analysis, such as, Fairclough, Wodak, van Leeuwen. However, their objective was to prove if critical discourse analysis, based on Dijk's model, influenced on EFL students' critical thinking skill. Further, it was an experimental research which 10 undergraduate students, experts in critical thinking subject, were interviewed in order to know if they had studied and used van Dijk's critical discourse analysis model in classes. After that, the Oxford placement test was applied to 3 different classes to categorize students according to their English level (high level, mid level, and low level.) Next, the students got involved in the treatment process where learners compared two speeches from the president of Iranian and the president of U.S.A, so they reviewed each paragraph taking into account the political and ideological analysis. Finally, the authors considered the 'Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal' test as the last part of the process where they tested the validity of critical discourse analysis on students' critical thinking (CT) development. As a conclusion, this paper suggested that CDA had some advantages if it is applied in the EFL lessons because the population had a

better speech analysis, and they had better critical thinking abilities, despite of the three different English level of each learner. Last, the writers of this article ensured that it helps in tasks and also to think in depth the materials they use in their classes because they knew how to interpret, control, and analyze the class content.

After all these articles were reviewed, it could be inferred that they were helpful for the development of the present academic research. There were found a lot of information that were added in different parts, such as theoretical framework and the methodology. On the other hand, the article written by Gulnaz (2020) had some similarities in comparison to this investigation because critical thinking, social and collaborative skills were developed through four corners strategy. However, the author did not use the critical discourse analysis to develop the mentioned skills as this investigation did. Finally, four corners debate strategy did not apply an experimental methodology, so that the recommendation of the author was followed in order to apply the strategy in a real class context.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

1.2.1.1 General objective:

To evaluate the effectiveness of four corners learning strategy and the critical discourse analysis.

1.2.1.2 Specific objectives:

- To develop decision-making and critical thinking skills in students.
- To apply social practice through a cooperative strategy.
- To measure student's interests using controversial topics.

1.3 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

1.3.1 Independent variable

1.3.1.1.1 Four corners learning strategy

Nowadays, there are a variety of approaches, methods, and strategies that teachers apply in the classroom in order to improve their lessons, make the classes dynamic, and motivate students to get a better English learning experience. Alhaysony (2017) claims that learning strategies have been used for many years, but it started to be strongly used since 1970 because teachers and students realize about the effectiveness that it brings.

The author also affirms that learning strategies have good benefits on learners because they become more responsible, autonomous, and independent. Moreover, the objective of learning strategies is to face new situations in an easy, faster, effective, and faster way. Once they have understood what strategy they are using in their learning process, they will know their preferences in order to achieve the goals for each class.

Also, the application of strategies is important inside classroom because both teachers and students can notice some advantages by using any strategy. Teachers can see if their classes motivate students and are easy to comprehend while students progress in their EFL classes, they notice the skills they developed because of it.

For this reason, four corners is the strategy applied in this research because this is a way in which students can actively participate in class. According to Geraldine (2018), this is a strategy that helps them to enhance their speaking skill throughout giving their position depending on four different points of view: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' about a specific topic or social issue that could be discussed in class.

Moreover, this strategy is considered a cooperative strategy because participants must constantly interact with others; they should talk, discuss, share opinions and work in groups. Holovko and Drach (2020) explain how a cooperative strategy works in class. They firstly define the cooperative strategy and say that its principle is the communication and interaction using the second language among students. Furthermore, there are some aspects that makes a cooperative strategy be successful, one of them is how teacher manage the class, and apply the materials to make students feel comfortable in the class environment and encourage them to start participating and learn with the help of their partners.

Another characteristic of this cooperative strategy is that it encourages learners to improve their critical thinking skills, to make arguments, to agree and disagree supporting their ideas, to make collaborative students. Additionally, this type of strategy has many goals that should accomplish and some of them are: to fulfill the objectives for each class, to use good resources that learners use easily, students should have a role and respect some characteristics such as, the organization, the speaker, the listener and the observer. Another objective of four corners strategy is to respect the time for the speaker and it depends on students' language level.

According to Altun and Savah (2020,) working in groups and interaction are elements that people face daily either in an academic or job environment, so that it is important for students to get involved in many activities that includes interaction. Thus, the purpose of four corner cooperative learning strategy is to develop oral communication skills because English learners must learn how to work with their classmates. It can be possible because of the application of some activities that involve group working. Using the communicative skill, students learn how to send and receive information in an appropriate way.

Yonantha (2018) states that there are three main benefits of four corners learning strategy. The first one is the development of different skills such as, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. It depends on how the strategy is applied in the class and also depends on students' needs. Second, he also

mentions that it lets students be imaginative because they think in a variety of arguments that could support their decisions. The last advantage he mentions about the use of four corners is that teachers notice how student's knowledge progresses and to know how they behave or what attitude they have before starting the class or at the end of the class.

On the other hand, debates are considered as a way in which people can actively participate in an organized way. The arguments and decisions taken should be structured in order with details that people would like to transmit and at the same time to be understood by others. Snider and Schenuder (2002) called debates as 'structured communication.' (as cited in Kurnia, 2018). It means that arguments are delivered with anticipated preparation and ideas that support them.

Furthermore, Kurnia (2018) claims that debate is considered as a multifunctional activity in class because it could be adapted to any level and students' needs. For example, debates can be used as a game rather than a common class. She explains that debates and four corners learning strategy is interesting for students with different learning styles, such as visual, reading-writing, auditory, and kinesthetic. Furthermore, the author explains that this learning strategy reduces the anxiety that students present at the moment of participating because there is not a right or wrong answer. It is about giving an opinion about what they think and defend it.

To get a successful debate in the classroom, there are some characteristics that are important to know. Syaprizal (2018) lists the following six elements. The first one is the organization of the debate. For example, the members of the group that agree with a certain argument must defend it and not to contradict it because debates are a structured argument. The next component is style, it is about the way students present their ideas in a persuasive and confident way. The third one is the speed, people should find an equivalent between talking fast to express what they want to communicate in an efficient time, but slowly enough to be understood by others. Then, the tone of voice is a good characteristic because it is better if they raise their tone in important

information, otherwise, a flat tone would be boring. After that, volume refers to people who are involved in the debate need to hear the other's arguments in order to add more information, but shouting is not part of an appropriate debate. Finally, the clarity of the ideas makes people sound confident and to be sure about students' ideas

There is not a rule to follow about a specific time to apply four corners, but Atiah (2018) strongly recommends the use of this strategy as a warm-up because students get involved in the activity throughout speaking, listening, or reading, and they will get an idea about the topic they will study in the class. Also, the author said that students feel motivated in the class especially if the teacher uses extra material, such as reading passages or visual stuff. On the other hand, it has other advantages if four corners is used as a wrap-up activity. For example, after the class, students could share their ideas with others because it is common that people learn from themselves and from others too. Another example of four corners as a final activity is that this strategy helps students to remember all what they have learned, they could discuss what they have watched, written, read, and heard during the class.

Asmara (2019) sets a procedure that explains how four corners strategy works effectively on students. Firstly, it is necessary to get a topic to be discussed between students, such as education, economy, hobbies, and other topics depending on their needs. After that, preparing materials to work on this strategy is useful too. In this way, both teachers and students support on the use of images, videos, texts, or other input materials. The last part before starting the activity is about the clear instructions that the teacher must give to let students know what to do and not to get them lost.

Then, the classroom must be divided into four corners as it was mentioned before: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). However, this step is easily applied even in a virtual class. Zoom is a platform that offers an option called reactions, so students choose one to determine their idea. For instance, a heart is (SA,) thumb up is (A,) hand up is (D,) and surprise face is (SD). In this way, students read and analyze the

material used in class to choose the corner or reaction appropriately to their opinion. Then, they group together and start giving their ideas using main ideas and details supporting their point of view with their station's partners. Next, the teacher chooses a person who represents each group and shares the arguments they have agreed with the whole class. Finally, participants are able to change of corner it means that they can change their mind if other participants convince them or they change options because of their own thoughts while the discussion is in process. This process could be repeated as many times as they need.

1.3.2 Dependent variable

1.3.2.1 Critical discourse analysis

Amoussou and Allagbe (2018) defines Discourse Analysis (DA) as a disciplinary approach that works with a sort of different topics, studies or even social domains. In other words, discourse analysis is a good way to analyze theoretical and methodological studies. On the other hand, other people employ this approach in order to analyze syntax, semantics, and pragmatics about a written or spoken discourse.

Once discourse analysis has been a little explained, now it is time to focus on critical discourse analysis the one that will be applied with four corners learning strategy in this research. Sriwimon (2017) defines it as a type of discourse analysis in which people study social issues, or how a certain social group represents their ideology. Language and society establish connections among them because in this way problems are listened and solutions are given to people that need them.

According to Amoussou and Allagbe (2018), there is a difference between discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis. They say that DA is only the analysis and description of a speech or part of it while CDA is more than an

analysis because of the interpretation of dominance, power abuse, and discrimination. Also, it gives a clear explanation answering the questions why and how those types of discourses occur.

There are some principal concepts that take part in critical discourse analysis and are important to comprehend them. Gee and Handford (2013) explain how the different types of discourse work with CDA. Discourse is based on a) the meaning as the main element of society; b) the language is connected with a social field; and c) how the world is viewed depending on social construction or social perspective. After discourse has been explained, semiosis is a word commonly used to talk about the social process and it is label into three stages of social reality: the first is the social structure that is related to social practice that referred to social fields such as, organizations and institutions and the final stage is the social event connected to social practice to develop the construction of identities.

Furthermore, Gee and Handford (2013) state that there are three categories of discourse analysis. Genres are the way people interact with others. It could be through news, television, radio, and the internet because the purpose of this category is the communication among people. The next one is discourses and it depends on social groups whose purpose is to develop physical, mental, or social identity. The last one is the style people set what they do in their lives, for instance; a president or a worker in an institution, academy, and others. That's why they develop a different discourse depending on their educational level.

According to Rafiah (2018) critical discourse analysis has been studied by some important researchers. The first one is van Dijk, whose investigation was based on elements that make possible the social cognition linking the text with discourse markers and also the social context. He stated four roles to accomplish to critically comprehend a text: 1) mental model, 2) macrostructure; 3) superstructure; 4) microstructure.

The second author is Ruth Wodka that called CDA as a theory that focuses on details, system and transparency in a social context. She also includes the study

of sociolinguistics because people analyze and describe a discourse considering both how people use the language and how the language is structured.

The last theory is related to Fairclough's study, critical discourse analysis includes texts, speeches, videos and talks. The last investigation was called *Critical Language Study* in 1989, he talked about this approach as an analysis and theoretical framework and he wants people to be conscious about the relation that society and the use of language have. To make it possible, Norman Fairclough analyzes CDA into three parts that he called 'three dimensional framework.'

The first Fairclough's critical model is textual practice, it focuses on grammar and vocabulary because those are important features in order to understand and analyze the text. Text is subdivided into three characteristics: date, contextual clue and intertextuality. Those have different functions. For instance, dates is about the recognition of specific dates, months, years, and adverbs of frequency, the next one is the identification of cohesive markers, substitution and pronouns, and the last one is about cohesion and coherence and conjunctions.

The second dimension is called discourse practice that is related with the text analysis and interpretation of the material read or watched, such as videos and articles, academic papers, etc. In this part, readers must be conscious about what the writer wants to transmit to others or what was understood to give comments and opinions.

Lastly, the third dimension is social practice that consists of taking the material and the analysis and critics that people give. There are three aspects that involve the social one: economic, political and cultural in which it requires people to be social influence by explaining their ideological and power position.

There are some principles of critical discourse analysis that their users have noticed and according to (Fairclough, 1995, as cited in Rafiah, 2018). For instance:

- Language represents people in a social environment.
- Texts and speeches have a message in which people interpret differently depending on their opinions.
- Discourse could vary because of the cultural, social, and power differences.
- Speakers and writers control listeners and readers by their discourse and they could include them, but also exclude some group of people.
- Critical discourse analysis not only consists of interpretation, but also explanation and here is the social interaction involved.

Abosalem (2016) states that critical thinking is related to Bloom's Taxonomy because of some reasons. Bloom set two different skills the first one is the lower-order skill that involves three actions that are, remember, understand and apply. It means that students learn using passive activities, such as reading or listening without doing final activities or activities that involve real life situations in order to be sure that they have understood the class.

On the other hand, the purpose of high-order thinking skills is to train students that can analyze, evaluate, and create information. In other words, they become active learners. Moreover, teachers become a guide for students to give them ideas, so that they are encouraged to be imaginative, to think and to build their knowledge on their own. Another advantage of high-order thinking skill is that English language learners become come communicative, learn how to solve problems and be decision-making.

CHAPTER II

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research level

Quantitative and qualitative

According to Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, Sorensen, and Razavieh (2010) in educational research, the quantitative method data helps to determine in numeric scale the results to clarify questions or hypotheses. Meanwhile, qualitative data helps to analyze the information collected based on people's behavior, discussions and surveys.

This research used the quantitative method because it tested and studied the number of participants and the scores that they got at the beginning and at the end of the application of the methodology using a specific rubric that evaluates the tree aspects of critical discourse analysis.

On the other hand, the qualitative method analyzed participants' behavior before, during and after the application of four corners learning strategy and critical discourse analysis. Thus, this method studied the population selected throughout discussions and surveys.

Bibliographic

Mdarbi, Afifi, Hilal, and Zahir (2020) defines the bibliographic research as an aid in the educational field because students tend to review previous investigations in order to do more papers, academic investigations, etc. Furthermore, people know what and how investigations have changed with the years and in this way to get an investigative background. For this reason, four corners learning strategy and CDA needed the use of bibliography because it is also held with other author's arguments and research to get some characteristics about the topic, such as definitions, examples about the independent variable, and the dependent variable.

Field research

This investigation was a field research because Aziz (2017) claims that it consists of analyzing, studying, observing, and manipulating a variable in a natural setting. Additionally, the author explains that by using this research, the investigator presences the variation that population and sample have during a study research. For this reason, the participants were students from the fifth semester from Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros from Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Quasi experimental

Quasi experimental has some characteristics that differ from an experimental one. Thompson and Panacek (2006) enlist some of them. For example, the population studied in the research is not randomly chosen. However, despite of validity is not as exact as in the case of an experimental research, it presents an easy and flexible design. Another advantage is that the variables and population can be controlled according to the researcher's needs. Finally, the

investigator can easily follow the process of the group study applying a pre-test and a post-test.

This investigation was a quasi experimental research because the population was not randomly divided into two groups: the experimental and the control. Both had different tasks to perform in order to know if four corners learning strategy was effective on critical discourse analysis.

2.2 Population and sample

The populations considered for this investigation are students from fifth semester from Universidad Técnica de Ambato. They were 30 students mixed among 11 men and 19 women, aged from 19 to 24 years old. However, they were divided into two groups.

Table 1: Population

Groups	Number of students	Percentage
Control group	15	50%
Experimental group	15	50%
Total	30	100%

Author: Acaro, L (2020)

Source: Technical University of Ambato

2.3 Materials

Newspaper

The newspaper that was considered for this research was from NBC news because it had a lot of informative and educational articles about controversial

topics that were necessary for this study. There were some news articles related to different topics about society, ideology and power analysis. The following articles were used during the process.

- *'Effort to bar LGTB discrimination moves ahead in Michigan'* by *The Associated Press*. (Pre-test and post-test)
- *A black woman says she was racially harassed for years. Police acted only after her story went viral* By *Danielle Dreilinger* by *Janelle Griffith* (treatment session 1)
- *'We're just beginning to understand the extend of Covid-19 Nightmare'* by *Anne Helen Petersen* (treatment session 2)
- *As weed becomes legal in more states, the danger of potent cannabis are being ignored* by *Kevin P. Hill* (treatment session 3)

Another resource that was used during this treatment was the platform called 'Zoom' because students were working in the virtual modality using online documents from Google Drive.

2.4 Procedure

2.4.1 Pre-test

The objective of CDA test was to know the students' critical skills, so that both the experimental and control groups took a one-hour pre-test (See Appendix A) that consisted of reading and analyzing a newspaper article about a controversial issue. This test had three parts and it was scored based on a rubric that evaluated the critical discourse analysis elaborated by Danesh, Aghagolzadeh and Maftoon, (2019). At last, this test was applied in Zoom platform and also using online documents in Google Drive.

2.4.2 Implementation

Control group

This group of undergraduate EFL learners did not work with neither the four corners learning strategy nor the critical discourse analysis, so that they received the subject that belonged to their normal class schedule.

Experimental group

This group had the experience to work in groups using a collaborative strategy. They received 3 sessions and each one was given in one hour class for 2 days during 2 weeks in order to prove the effectiveness of four corners learning strategy and critical discourse analysis. During each class they reviewed: (1) the explanation of textual practice through a racial issue; (2) the explanation about discursive practice through a feminism topic; (3) the application of four corners learning strategy in the social practice by using another controversial topic.

Session 1

This session was focused on the textual practice that helped to understand what date, contextual clues, and intertextuality are. This first part analyzed the grammar and vocabulary of a racial issue topic to comprehend it better. There were some tasks that students performed to master the textual practice. For example, a brief explanation was given about the characteristics of each item already mentioned and how to recognize it. Also, students worked with a worksheet (See Appendix B) in order to enlist and classify vocabulary they got from each newspaper. It included some exercises; such as, matching vocabulary exercise, complete dates and facts exercise, and identifying cohesion and coherence through the difference between cohesive markers and conjunction.

Session 2

After that, the second session was about the understanding of the text analysis and the text intention. It was necessary the use of some exercises (see appendix C) such as, writing an outline to summarize the main points and details of the article in order to understand what it was about, exercises that involved interpretation of some parts of the reading and also questions related to the author's and article's message that were answered freely according to the opinions of each group. This activity was developed in 45 minutes organizing students in 5 groups of 3 participants.

Session 3

Finally, the third part of this process was centered on social practice whose goal was the development of critical thinking and decision-making skills applying the four corners learning strategy. There were some characteristics that students took into account during this session. For example, students classified common phrases used in discussions in a chart after watching a video. Moreover, students worked in groups, but they chose their partners depending on their beliefs. After that, they were asked some questions according to the article they read, so that learners brainstormed and prepared some ideas for their answers using information taken from the article to give a critical analysis.

2.4.3 Post-test

Both control and experimental group took the post-treatment recycling the same newspaper article topic used in the pre-treatment (see appendix A) that lasted 45 minutes to 1 hour. They had to recognize words that helped to understand the text, they interpreted some small paragraphs, and the message that the article transmitted, and students organized by themselves according to their opinions and used arguments presented in the newspaper text. The final

score was based on the critical discourse analysis rubric by to identify the results of the control and experimental groups.

2.5 Information collection and instruments

Table 2: Method of data collection

Questions	Explanation
What?	To accomplish the objectives of this research.
What population?	Students from 5 th semester from PINE.
What aspects?	Four corners learning strategy and critical discourse analysis.
Who?	The author of the research
When?	Academic period 2020-2021
Where?	At Technical University of Ambato
How?	Test
How often?	Pre test and post test (2 times)
With what?	Questionnaire

Author: Acaro, L (2020)
Source: Data collection

In order to reach the goals of this research, a pre and post test were applied to improve student's critical thinking and decision-making. The test consisted of three parts: the textual practice that had three subcategories and each one was worth 1 point; the discursive practice had two questions and each one was worth 1 point; the social practice had three questions as well, the first and second questions were over 1.5 points and the third questions was over 2 points because it was the most valuable task to be develop that was discussion. The pre and post test were scored in based on the rubric that evaluated the critical

model and it scored over 10. It means that each grade had a category that was needed to recollect data.

Table 3: Plan collection

Grades	Category
10	Excellent
9-8	Very good
7-6	Average
5-4	Poor
3-0	Insufficient

Source: Data plan collection
Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Moreover, another way to collect data was throughout a survey to get information in a qualitative form. It had some questions related to collaborative activities, and the experience working with social and controversial newspaper articles.

2.6 Information processing plan

Finally, the SPSS software was used to process the data collected. It was an easy and flexible program that offered statistical analysis to compare the data collected in the pre and post test. It used the ranges from excellent to insufficient because it was necessary to see whether students had improvements or not. Finally, the student's interest in controversial topics as educational purpose was measure applying a survey which involved 5 ranges: always, usually, often, sometimes, never.

2.7 Resources

Human resources

- The group of people to be studied is students from Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros from Universidad Técnica de Ambato.
- Researcher
- Tutor researcher
- Reviewers

Institutional resources

- Universidad Técnica de Ambato
- Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación
- Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros
- Online library

Materials

Some materials will be necessary, such as:

- Computer,
- Microphone,
- Camera,
- Videos
- Pictures,
- Cards.

Economy resources

This research will not need too much economy resources because of the virtual modality, but some money will be spent for:

- Internet connection

CHAPTER III

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.3 Analysis and discussions

The aim of this chapter is to show and compare the results of the critical discourse analysis test and a survey that were applied to students of 5th semester of Technical University of Ambato, in order to analyze, whether four corners learning strategy improves the critical discourse analysis. Finally, tables and graphics were considered important to give readers a better understanding of the analysis and interpretation of each result.

3.3.1 Student's survey analysis

This survey consisted on 6 questions to know the students' opinions about how frequently they use controversial topics and do tasks cooperatively inside classroom.

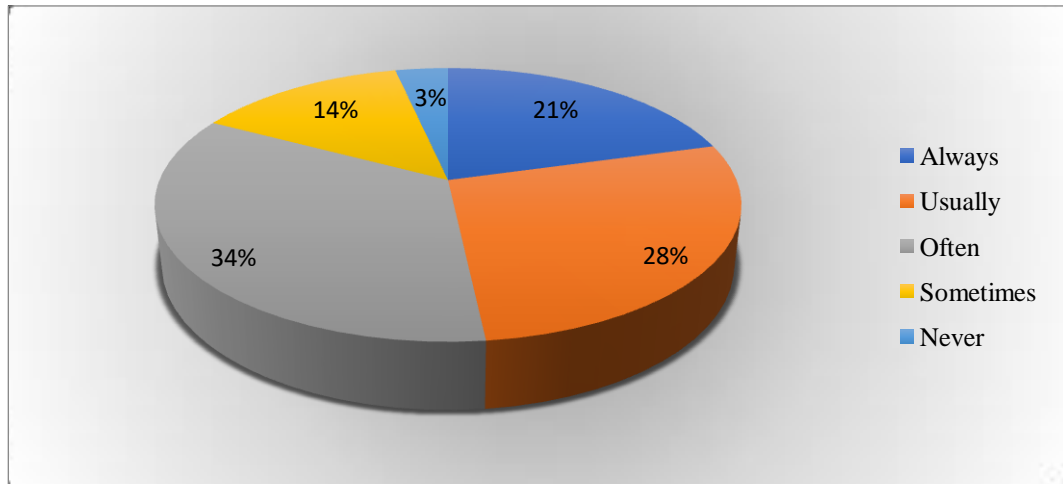
Question 1: How often do you feel comfortable talking about controversial topics?

Table 4. Talking about controversial topics

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Always	6	20,70%
Usually	8	27,60%
Often	10	34,50%
Sometimes	4	13,80%
Never	1	3,40%
Total	29	100%

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 1. Talking about controversial topics

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Analysis and interpretation

Talking about controversial topics inside classroom, 29 students had different opinions about it. Six students that represent the 20,7% said that they always feel comfortable using those kind of topics; meanwhile 8 students or the 28% of the class said that they usually like to use them as a learning material. Moreover, 10 students or 34% agree that they often feel comfortable using controversial such as, feminism, and racism. Also, 4 students that represent the 14% said that they sometimes preferred to use those topics in class, and only 1 student never showing that it is not good to use these topics in class. Once the first question was analyzed, it can be comprehend that most students agree to use controversial topics inside classroom as an important element in their learning process because they learn to develop their critical thinking throughout real content.

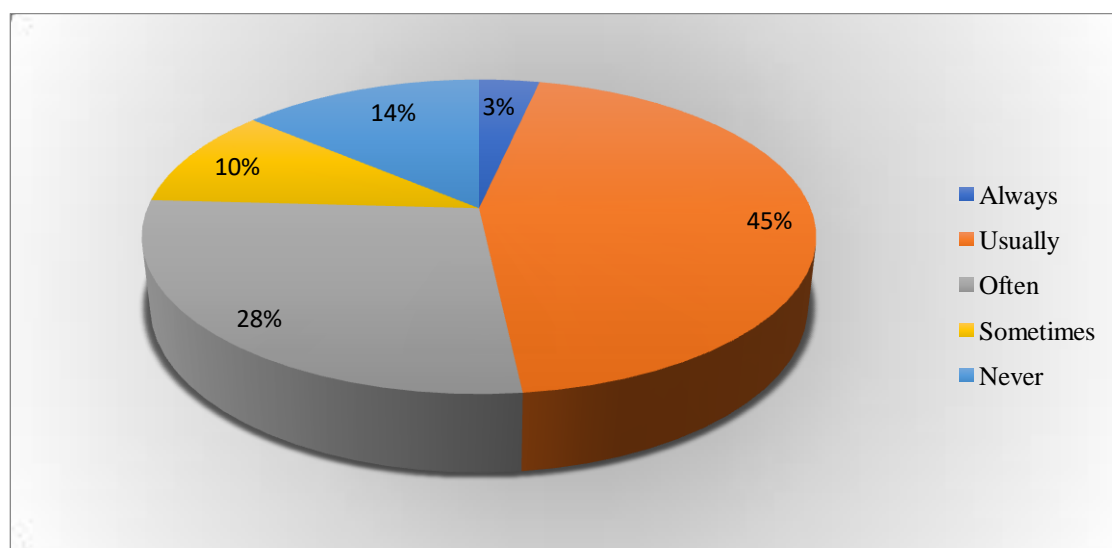
Question 2: How often do you use authentic materials, such as newspapers articles for discussion tasks?

Table 5. Using authentic materials

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Always	1	3%
Usually	13	45%
Often	8	28%
Sometimes	3	10%
Never	4	14%
Total	29	100%

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 2. Using authentic materials

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Analysis and interpretation

The second question was about the use of authentic materials in order to develop discussion tasks. So that, 1 student or the 3,4% voted that this material was always used in class. Furthermore, 13 students that represent the 44,8% explained that they usually use newspapers and some videos to do some

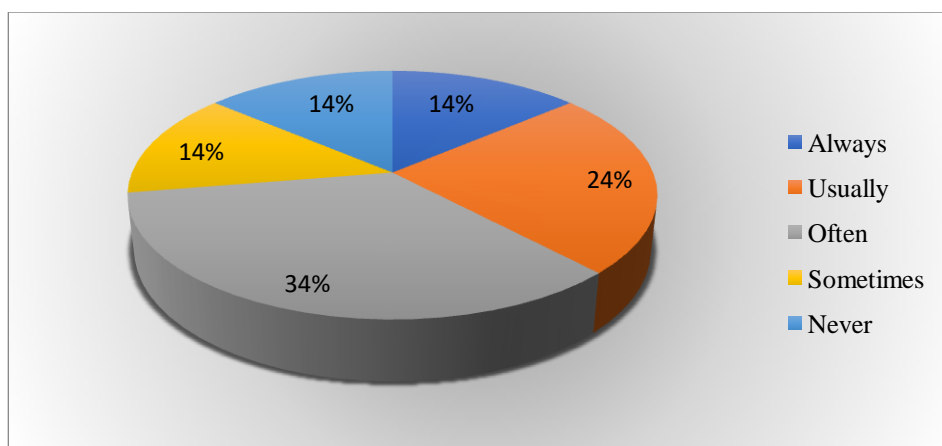
activities such as discussions or debates. Also, 8 students who belonged to the 28% said that they often work with those materials in order to make debates. Moreover, 3 students voted that they sometimes employ newspaper articles for discussion tasks and 4 students said that they never use this kind of materials in class. Finally, the answers of the 29 students showed that the majority were familiar with the management of authentic materials such as articles in order to make discussions and give their opinions about what they have read.

Question 3: How often does your teacher use controversial topics for oral activities?

Table 6. Using controversial topics for oral activities

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Always	4	14%
Usually	7	24%
Often	10	34%
Sometimes	4	14%
Never	4	14%
Total	29	100%

Source: Students' survey
Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 3. Using controversial topics for oral activities.

Source: Students' survey
Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Analysis and interpretation

In the next question about the use of controversial topics for oral activities, 4 students who represent the 14% of the class said that they always use controversial topics in speaking tasks. Moreover, other 7 students who got the 24% claimed that they usually talk about topics such as, racism, and other taboo topics in their learning environment. Next, 10 students who belonged to the 34% stated that they often use those kind of topics in speaking activities. Then, 4 students got 14%, they said that they sometimes use social topics to discuss about. Finally, the last 4 students who represent the 14% agree that they never talk about issue topics inside the classroom. As a conclusion, according to the students who completed the survey, they said that controversial topics are often used in oral activities, but some others think that it is important the use of this kind of topics as part of their learning because it has some benefits such as, the development of the critical thinking and decision-making skills.

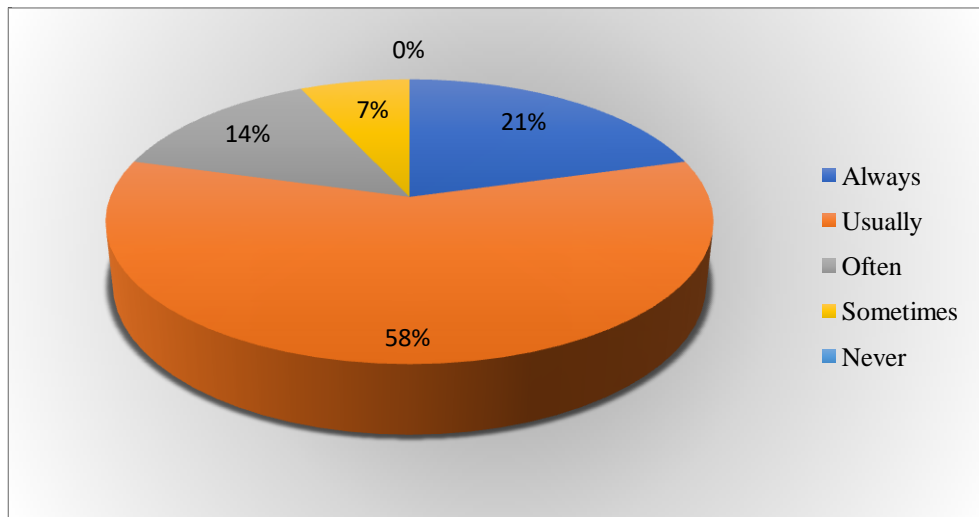
Question 4: How often do you do tasks in groups?

Table 7. Doing tasks in groups

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Always	6	21%
Usually	17	58%
Often	4	14%
Sometimes	2	7%
Never	0	0%
Total	29	100%

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 4. Doing tasks in groups

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Analysis and interpretation

The fourth question was about how often student do group work activities and 6 students who represent the 21% voted that they always do tasks in groups as part of their learning. After that, 17 students that belonged to the 58% said that they usually work with their classmates. Then, 4 students who are the 14% of the class said that teachers often give some activities to them in order to work cooperatively. Next, only 2 students who are the 7% of the class claimed that they sometimes work in groups. However, no one said that they never do tasks in groups. Once these results were analyzed, it concluded that all students have worked cooperatively and it brings some advantages for the EFL learning because human beings are naturally learners with the help of others and it gave some benefits to the development of this research.

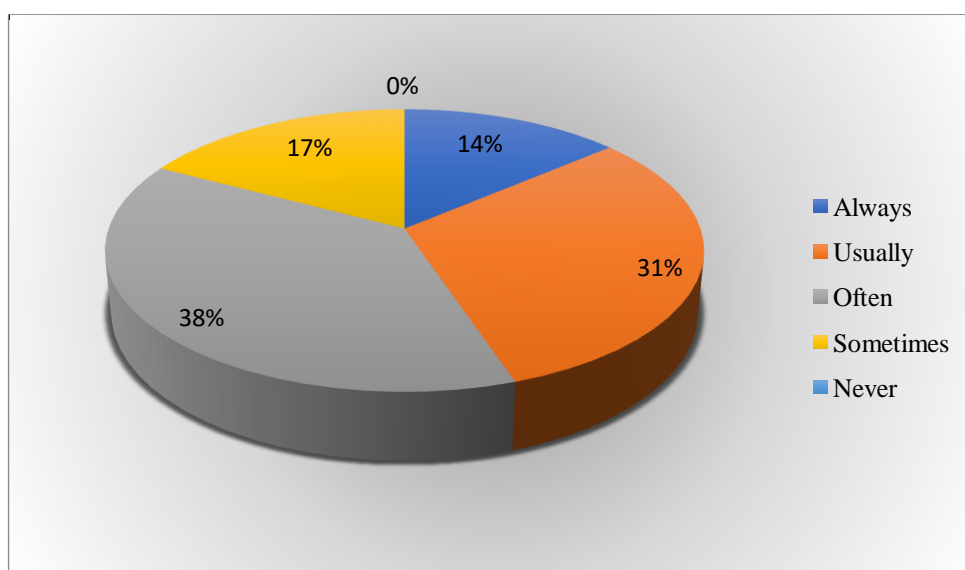
Question 5: How often do you work cooperatively in oral activities?

Table 8: Working cooperatively in oral activities.

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Always	4	14%
Usually	9	31%
Often	11	38%
Sometimes	5	17%
Never	0	0%
Total	29	100%

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 5. Working cooperatively in oral activities

Source: Students' survey

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Analysis and results

According to the results gotten in the survey, there are different opinions about working cooperatively in oral activities. So that, 4 students who represent 14% agree that they always do activities in groups in which speaking activities are involved. Moreover, 9 participants who represent the 31% claimed that they usually perform oral activities in groups. Furthermore, 11 students who belonged to the 38% said that they often learn throughout speaking skills working in teams. After that, 5 students represent the 17% of the class affirmed

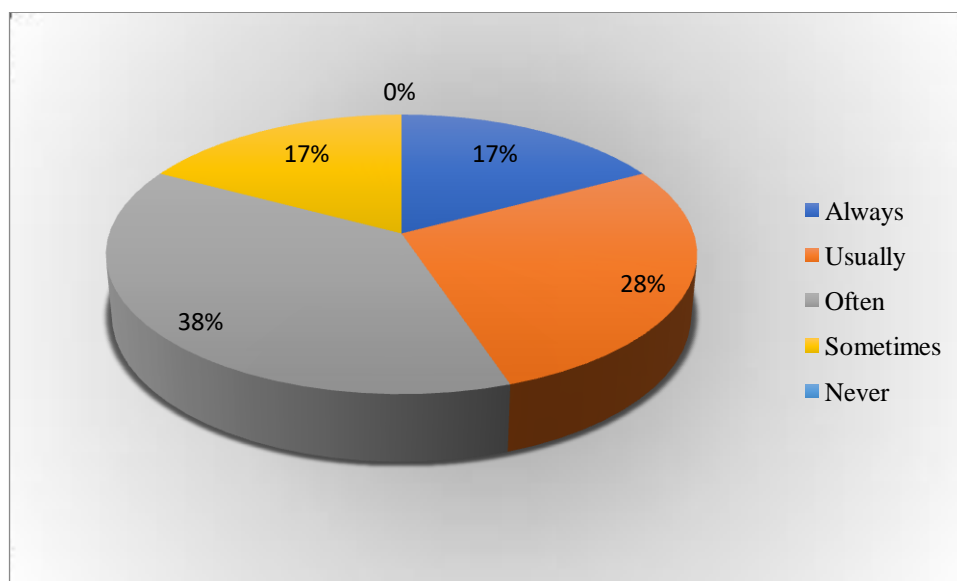
that they sometimes work in groups in discussions or debates. Finally, there are not students who declared that they never worked with their classmates in speaking tasks. As a conclusion, all the participants have had the experience working cooperatively with their classmates in a variety of oral tasks. It means that they have some knowledge about doing activities in groups and how to interact with others.

Question 6: How often do you use discussions as an oral activity?

Table 9: Using discussions in oral activities.

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Always	5	17,20%
Usually	8	27,60%
Often	11	37,90%
Sometimes	5	17,20%
Never	0	0,00%
Total	29	100%

Source: Students' survey
Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 6: Using discussions in oral activities.

Source: Students' survey
Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Analysis and results

Discussions are one of the most important oral activities for the EFL learning. For this reason, in the last question of the survey, 5 students who are the 17% said that they always have discussion activities in the class. Furthermore, 8 learners represent the 28% of the class and they stated that they usually have debates or discussions to develop their speaking skills. Moreover, 11 people who belonged to 38% claimed that they often use discussions in their English learning process. Also, 5 participants are the 17% who said that they sometimes have debates in oral activities, but there is no one who voted never as an option for this question. As a conclusion, all students said that they have worked on discussions and debates inside the classroom, so that it is helpful for the development to develop some English skills.

3.3.2 CDA test analysis and interpretation

The descriptive study concluded with the comparison of total results of the pre-test and post-tests of the experimental and control groups. It took into account that the maximum score of the critical discourse analysis test was 10.

In the pre-test, the experimental group had a mean of 5,21 and a median of 5,25 whose confidence interval ranged from 4.88 to 5.54. The minimum score achieved was 4.25 while the maximum was 6,50. There was an asymmetry in the experimental group results of 0.400 in which most of the students achieved scores below the average.

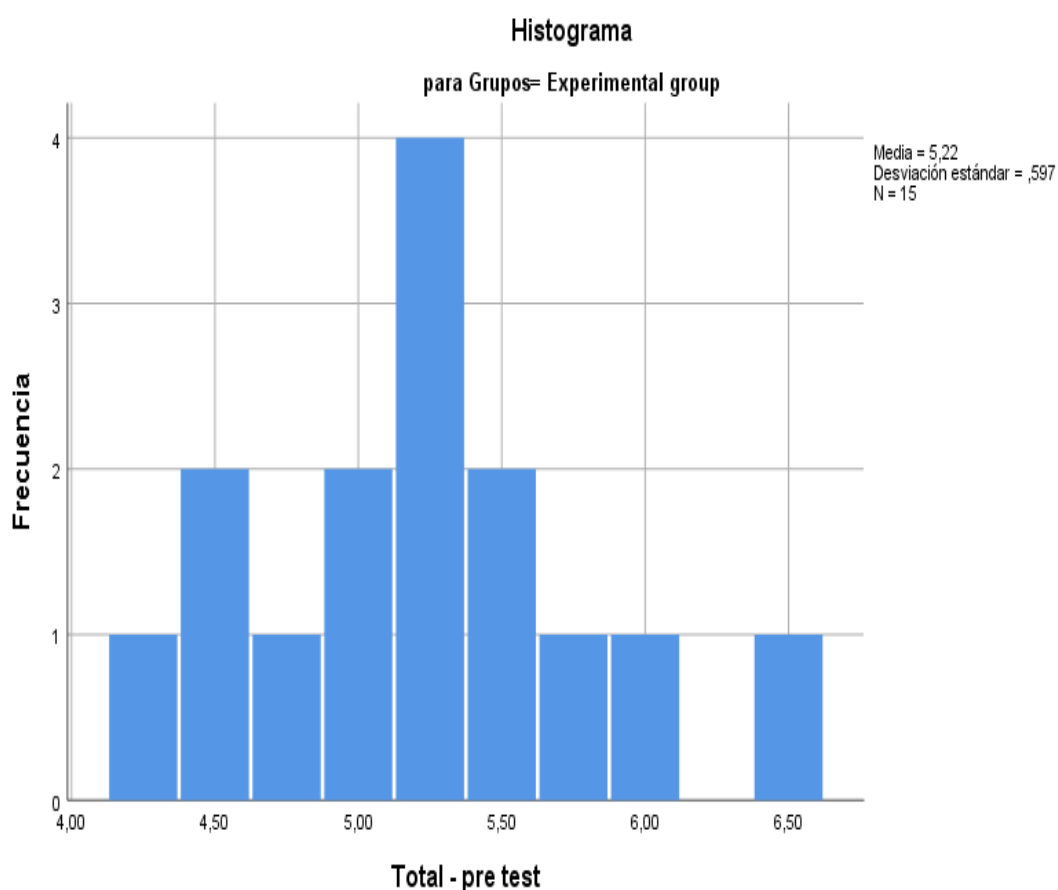
On the other hand, the control group, in the pre-test, obtained a mean of 5,293 and a median of 15,125 getting a confidence interval from 4.818 to 5.768. The minimum score achieved was 4.25; while the maximum was 6.75. Also, there was an asymmetry in the control group of 0.699 concluding that the majority of students got lower punctuations than the group average.

Table 10: Experimental and control group pre-test

Statistics		Group	
		Experimental	Control
Half		5.2167	5.2929
95% confidence interval for the mean	Lower limit	4.8863	4.8182
	Upper limit	5.5471	5.7675
Median		5.2500	5,1250
Minimum		4.25	4.25
Maximum		6.50	6.75
Rank		2.25	2.50
Asymmetry		0.400	0.699

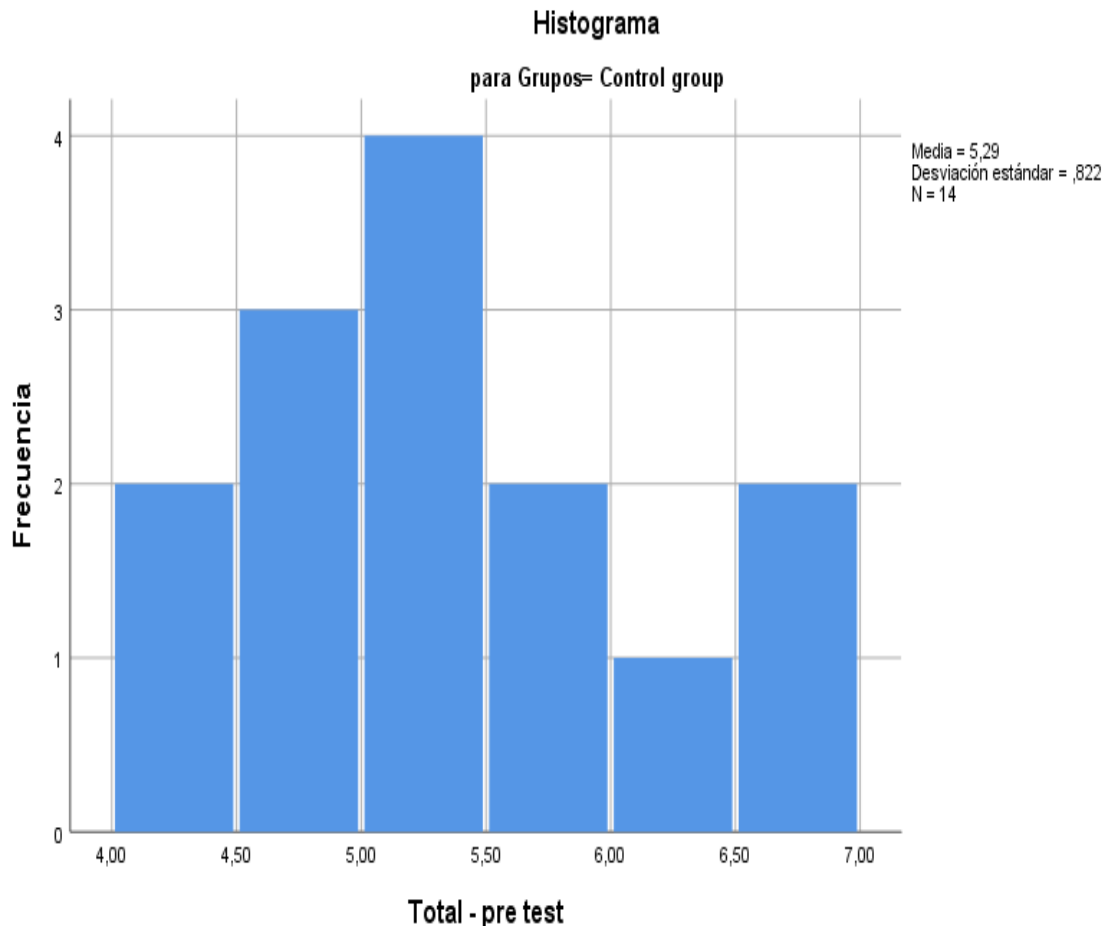
Source: SPSS 25 software

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)



Graphic 7. Experimental group- pre-test

Source: SPSS 25 Software



Graphic 8. Control group- pre-test
Source: SPSS 25 Software

The results for the experimental group, in the post-test, were higher than those gotten in the pre-test because the students had a mean of 8.38 and a median of 8,50. This group had a confidence interval from 8.057 to 8.70 with a minimum score of 7,50 and a maximum of 9.25. It concludes that the distribution of the data was symmetric.

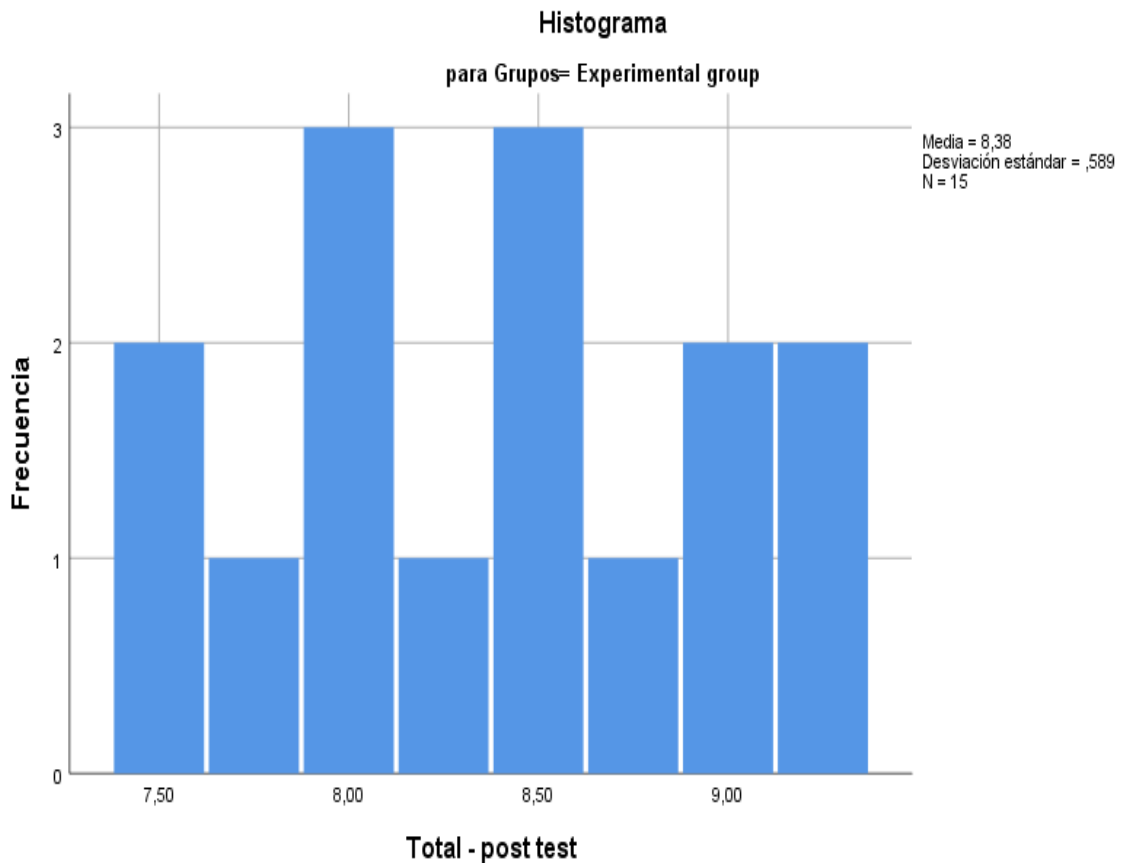
On the other hand, the results of the control group in the post-test got similar scores as in the pre-test. Thus, students obtained an average of 5.64 and median of 5.62. The confidence interval ranged from 5,26 to 6,02 getting a minimum score of 0.45 and a maximum of 6,50. Finally, the asymmetry was negative - 0.18 showing that the majority of students achieved scores above the average.

Table 11: Experimental and control group post-test

Statistics	Group	
	Experimental	Control
Half	8.3833	5.6429
95% confidence interval for the mean	Lower limit	5.2601
	Upper limit	6.0257
Median	8.5000	5.6250
Minimum	7.50	4.50
Maximum	9.25	6.50
Rank	1.75	2.00
Asymmetry	0.009	-0.180

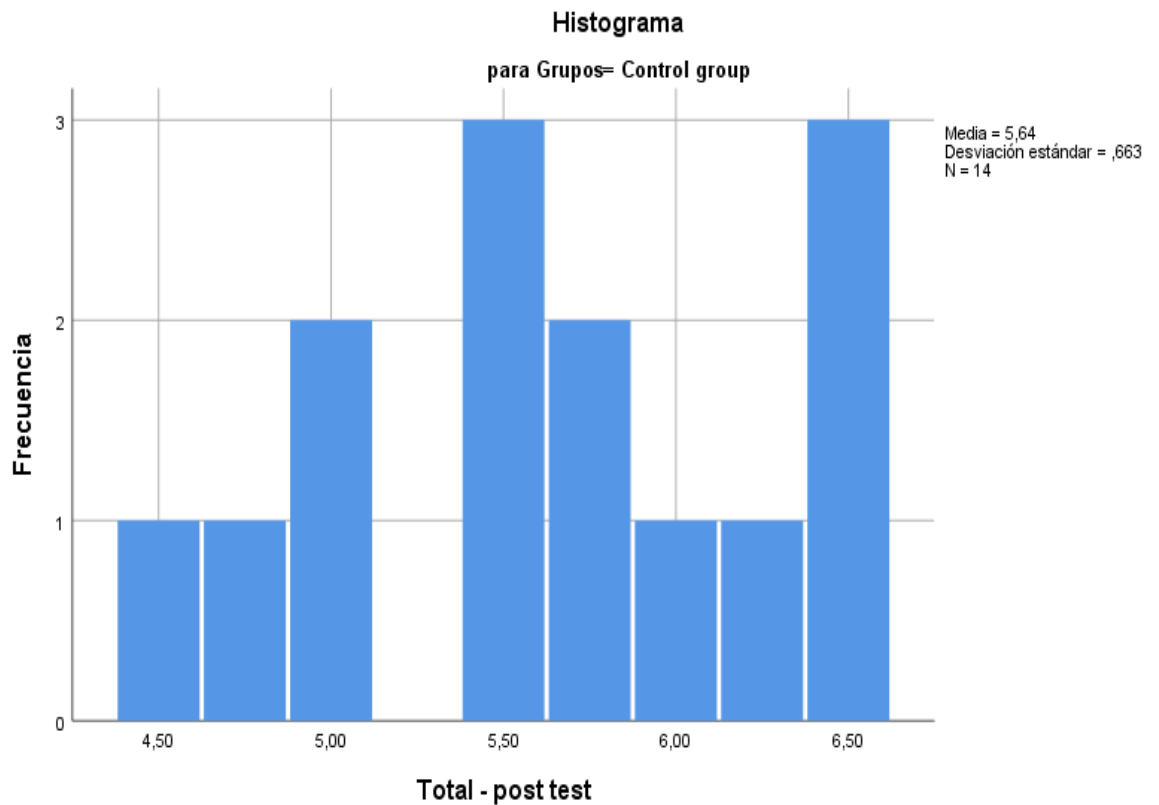
Source: SPSS 25 software

Author: Acaro Lisbeth (2020)



Graphic 9. Experimental group - post-test

Source: SPSS 25 Software



Graphic 10. Control group - post-test
Source: SPSS 25 Software

3.4 Validation of hypothesis

The implementation of four corners learning strategy to improve the critical discourse was analyzed by applying the quasi-experimental method. It means that, the data collected of the experimental and control groups in the means (or medians) of the pre-test and post-test in each group (related samples) were analyzed to accept or discard the following hypothesis proposed:

Null hypothesis (H0)

Four corners learning strategy does not improve the critical discourse analysis level.

Alternative hypothesis (H1)

Four corners learning strategy improves the critical discourse analysis level.

3.4.1 Statistical method

In order to determine the use of "parametric" or "non-parametric" tests for the validation of the research hypothesis, the following characteristics were analyzed:

1. The data collected was quantitative.
2. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used for this investigation due to population. For this reason, the statistical software SPSS 25 was used.

Moreover, the following criteria was considered in the analysis of the test:

$$H_0: P_{valor} > 0,05 = Normal$$

$$H_1: P_{valor} \leq 0,05 = Not normal$$

Table 12: Shapiro-Wilk test

Study group		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	g	S.I. G.
Date - pre test	Experimental group	0.815	fifteen	0.006
	Control group	0.796	14	0.005
Contextual clue - pre test	Experimental group	0.845	fifteen	0.015
	Control group	0.801	14	0.005
Intertextuality - pre test	Experimental group	0.603	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.576	14	0.000
Text analysis - pre test	Experimental group	0.734	fifteen	0.001
	Control group	0.616	14	0.000
Text intention - pre test	Experimental group	0.823	fifteen	0.007
	Control group	0.816	14	0.008
Ideology - pre test	Experimental group	0.735	fifteen	0.001
	Control group	0.806	14	0.006

Background knowledge - pre test	Experimental group	0.765	fifteen	0.001
	Control group	0.804	14	0.006
Power - pre test	Experimental group	0.801	fifteen	0.004
	Control group	0.771	14	0.002
Total - pre test	Experimental group	0.969	fifteen	0.836
	Control group	0.916	14	0.193
Date - post test	Experimental group	0.603	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.713	14	0.001
Contextual clue - post test	Experimental group	0.630	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.576	14	0.000
Intertextuality - post test	Experimental group	0.561	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.616	14	0.000
Text analysis - post test	Experimental group	0.643	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.731	14	0.001
Text intention - post test	Experimental group	0.806	fifteen	0.004
	Control group	0.771	14	0.002
Ideology - post test	Experimental group	0.643	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.806	14	0.006
Background knowledge - post test	Experimental group	0.643	fifteen	0.000
	Control group	0.737	14	0.001
Power - post test	Experimental group	0.806	fifteen	0.004
	Control group	0.713	14	0.001
Total - post test	Experimental group	0.939	fifteen	0.371
	Control group	0.935	14	0.355

Source: SPSS 25 software

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Shapiro-Wilk test determined the existence of normality in the final scores of the pre and post test for both, the experimental group and the control group. Therefore, parametric statistics were applied to analyze both groups. In this case, the t-Student test was applied to compare the independent samples and the related samples.

Independent samples

The following criteria was considered important for the comparison of the independent samples. After that, the hypotheses were clarified by using the SPSS 25 software.

H0: The mean (or median) of the experimental group is equal to the mean (or median) of the control group.

$$H_0: \bar{X}_1 = \bar{X}_2$$

H1: The mean (or median) of the control group is different to the mean (or median) of the study group.

$$H_1: \bar{X}_1 \neq \bar{X}_2$$

Getting a significance level of 5%, the following decision rules were proposed:

$$H_0: P_{valor} > 0,05$$

$$H_1: P_{valor} \leq 0,05$$

Table 13. Comparison of independent samples of the critical discourse analysis

		Levene's test of equality of variances		T test for equality of means		
		F	S.I.G.	t	gl	Sig. (Bilateral)
Pre test	Equal variances are assumed	1,696	0.204	-0.287	27	0.776
	Equal variances are not assumed			-0.284	23,623	0.779
Post test	Equal variances are assumed	0.132	0.719	11,785	27	0.000
	Equal variances are not assumed			11,735	26,072	0.000

Source: SPSS 25 software

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

Moreover, the test value of the pre-test was equal to 0.77. It was more than the significance level of 5% (0.05). It means that, the null hypothesis was accepted because the median of the experimental group was equal to the median of the control group in all the evaluation criteria before the application of four corners learning strategy.

The test value (bilateral sig.) Of the post test is equal to 0.00 which is less than the significance level of 5% (0.05). That is why, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that the groups reach a different level in the analysis of critical discourse after the application of four corners learning strategy.

Analysis of the results of the comparison of independent samples

The results obtained with the hypothesis tests showed that the study groups had an equal level of critical discourse analysis, until the application of four corner learning strategy.

When observing the arithmetic means, it is evident that the experimental group reached an average of 8,38, while the control group obtained 5,64. It showed a significant improvement in the level of critical discourse analysis applying the four corner learning strategy.

Comparison of dependent samples

The criterion for the comparison of related samples is established by the following statistical hypotheses:

H0: The pre-test mean (or median) is equal to the post-test mean (or median).

$$H_0: \bar{X}_{pre\ test} = \bar{X}_{post\ test}$$

H1: The pre-test mean (or median) is different from the post-test mean (or median).

$$H_1: \bar{X}_{pre\ test} \neq \bar{X}_{post\ test}$$

It has a significance level of 5%, and the next statement was considered in the dependent samples table.

$$H_0: P_{valor} > 0,05$$

$$H_1: P_{valor} \leq 0,05$$

The results of the hypothesis tests applied for the comparison of dependent samples, with the SPSS 25 software, are presented below:

Table 14: Comparison of dependent samples

	Criterion	Group	
		Contro l	Experimenta l
Sig. Asymptoti c	Date	0.015	0.317
	Contextual clue	0.008	0.317
	Intertextualit y	0.001	0.564
	Text analysis	0.001	0.317
	Text intention	0.006	0.083
	Ideology	0.000	1,000
	Background knowledge	0.002	0.336
	Power	0.001	0.180
	Total	0.000	0.004

Source: SPSS 25 software

Author: Acaro, L (2020)

The test value of the experimental group is less than the significance level of 5% (0.05) in all comparisons. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected with the experimental group.

The test value of the control group had punctuations more than the 5% (0.05) level of significance in all comparisons, except the total. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, only in the total evaluation of the critical discourse analysis. It means that, the pre-test mean is equal to the post-test mean in the total assessment of the critical discourse analysis.

CHAPTER IV

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.3 Conclusions

- Four corners was an effective learning strategy because of the benefits that it brings to students from 5th semester 'B' from PINE program of the Technical University of Ambato. For example, dynamic and cooperative activities that they performed in order to increase their critical discourse analysis level. After the results were studied, the experimental group had great improvements in the post test, the overall grades increased from 5.21 to 8.38. Meanwhile, the total assessment of the control group did not have significant grades from 5.29 to 5.64. For this reason, there are a lot of evidence that prove that four corner learning strategy provides better results in CDA than conventional teaching methods.
- After analyzing the critical discourse analysis tests of the control group and experimental group, good results were gotten in favor of the application of four corners learning strategy. It showed that, most students got higher grades in CDA test after four corners learning strategy was applied. It means that, students were able to develop decision-making and critical thinking skills in comparison to traditional teaching methods or strategies.
- Social practice was one of the most important elements of the critical discourse analysis stages because students had to share their ideas with their partners. This is the reason they used four corners as a cooperative strategy, they worked on discussions in order to analyze opinions, arguments and reasons through the corners: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. It helped students to get more opinions, and information in which they learnt from and were prepared for discussions. Also, students develop their critical discourse analysis because social practice made students to learn from others' point of view.

- The best characteristic of CDA is the use of controversial topics or social topics because students of 5th semester had the opportunity to think about it and give their opinions. Thus, a survey was applied to students in order to know if they use this kind of topics inside classroom or if it interests them as part of a class lesson. It concluded that it was necessary the implementation of controversial topics by using authentic materials, such as videos and newspaper articles for the development of the critical discourse analysis. Finally, students put more enthusiasm during the sessions while they were reading newspaper with topics of interest in comparison to the use of traditional materials.

4.4 Recommendations

- This academic thesis strongly recommends the use of four corners learning strategy in the critical discourse analysis due to the advantages that students get using this strategy. For example, students developed their decision-making and critical thinking skills because they had to analyze a reading material and get conclusions in which they had to share with others. Using criticism is good not only inside classroom, but also in a real life environment because they learn how to express themselves in an appropriate way and how to be heard.
- Moreover, it is recommended to apply more cooperative activities for the development of the English language learning because students get more knowledge when they work in groups. It means that they learn from their partners. Four corners is considered a worthy cooperative strategy to apply in class, due to students learn how to interact with others and they also learn how to manage discussions.
- Finally, it is necessary to talk about controversial topics as educative material because newspaper articles and some videos contains relevant information that everybody must know, such as poverty, racism, politics, and others. However, it is recommended to take care with certain topics that are difficult to take into account in the lesson depending to the students' age, level, and type of education that they receive from home. For this reason, it is better if the lesson is adapted to learners' comfort.

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ANNEXES

Appendix A

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

Name: _____

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- Read the following article carefully:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/effort-bar-lgbtq-discrimination-moves-ahead-michigan-n1243347>

- Read and understand the questions carefully.
- Don't let spaces in blanks.
- Once you finish part 1 and part 2, please upload the document in here:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ePEyz45ZOYdH0d4PUwmON1V1LCN58JKH?usp=sharing>

PART 1 - TEXTUAL PRACTICE

1. Read the article and complete the following chart with some grammar characteristics that are in the article.
 - a. Write the dates found out in the text and include a description.

DATE	DESCRIPTION

- b. Use your own words to write the meaning.

WORD	MEANING
Lawmarkers	
Barred	
Endorse	

c. Classify intertextuality in both categories.

COHESIVE MARKERS	CONJUNCTIONS

PART 2 - DISCURSIVE PRACTICE

2. Text analysis-Brainstorming the newspaper article in order to summarize it, be sure to include main ideas and details

Topic: _____

Main idea 1: _____

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Detail 3: _____

Main idea 2: _____

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Detail 3: _____

3. Author's intention- Answer the following question about the text.

a. What is the intention of the author with the previous newspaper article?

b. What does the text want to transmit to readers?

PART 3 - SOCIAL PRACTICE

- 4. This is a discussion activity in which you should give you personal opinion and defend it with strong arguments. These are the following question in order to discuss.**
 - a.** Is there a lot of discrimination against LGBT community because of religion beliefs?
 - b.** Do you agree that people should get a job depending on their sexual orientation?
 - c.** Is discrimination a reality because of their sexual orientation in Ecuador?

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS RUBRIC					
Name:		Date:		Topic:	
Criteria		Quality			
		Excellent to very good	Good to average	Fair to poor	Very poor
Punctuation		(1)	(0.75)	(0.50)	(0.25)
Textual practice	Date	Full detailed use of dates and used of adverbs of time.	Good use of dates but lack of information that support it.	Some use of dates but without details.	There is not use of dates.
	Contextual clues	Complete understanding of substitution, vocabulary, pronouns.	Adequate use of, substitution, pronouns, etc.	Poor understanding of substitution and pronouns	There is not understanding of vocabulary based on text
	Intertextuality	Full recognition of cohesion and coherence, full use of conjunctions.	Acceptable use of cohesion and coherence.	Inadequate recognition of cohesion and coherence	Few recognition of connectors, conjunctions, etc.
Discursive practice	Text analysis	Complete recognition of main ideas and details that support them	Good recognition of main ideas, but there are some missed.	Find main ideas, but there are not details that support them.	There are few ideas recognized.
	Text intention	Intelligent analysis about the text's intention and message supported with clear arguments.	Appropriate analysis of message and intention, but the support ideas are not very clear.	Recognition of the text's intention with poor support ideas	The message and intention are not completely clear.
Punctuation		(1.50)	(1)	(0.50)	(0.25)
Social practice	Ideology	Full and intelligent use of sentences and phrases to show beliefs and ideas.	Adequate uses of phrases, but there are some missed.	Poor use of arguments to show beliefs.	There are not complete sentences or phrases to express beliefs.
	Background knowledge	Total use of phrases and expressions to justify arguments or ideas.	Some use of phrases and expressions to justify arguments.	Little use of phrases and expressions to justify arguments.	There are not sentences that justify arguments or ideas.
	Punctuation	(2)	(1.50)	(1)	(0.50)
	Power	Give complete details that show social and ideological position.	Relative ideas about groups' beliefs.	Limited arguments that show the social and ideological power.	There is not a social or ideological position.
Total					
Comments:					

Source: Adapted from 'Turning Quantitative: An Analytic Scale to Do Critical Discourse Analysis'

Authors: Danesh, Aghagolzadeh and Maftoon, (2019)

Appendix B

WORKSHEET

SESSION 1

TOPIC: TEXTUAL PRACTICE

INSTRUCTIONS:

- **Work individually**
- **Read the article carefully**
URL: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/black-woman-says-she-was-racially-harassed-years-police-acted-n1244220>
- **Don't leave spaces in blank.**

PART 1 - DATE

1. **Complete the following chart with dates or adverbs of frequency that appear in the newspaper article with their respective fact.**

Date	Information

PART 2 - CONTEXTUAL CLUE

2. **Read the following words and match with the correct meaning in order to recognize important vocabulary in context to understand the article better.**

Vocabulary	Meaning
(1) Harass	____ Prejudicial, something that damage physically or mentally.

(2) Allegation	____ A person who defends other people in a legal situation.
(3) Reckoning	____ Aggressive acts against some people.
(4) Attorney	____ To count in number things.
(5) Harmful	____ Claims about illegal actions that someone did.

3. Complete the space in blanks with the substitution words that are in the chart.

Covenant	spokeswoman	misdemeanors
Prosecutor	wrongdoing	

- a. Minor illegal acts _____
- b. A woman who spreads information everywhere. _____
- c. A person who conducts cases in the criminal court. _____
- d. Bad actions such as, breaking laws and endanger community. _____
- e. A legal contract in which people have an agreement together.

PART 3 – INTERTEXTUALITY

4. Classify the cohesive markers and conjunctions that you found in the article in the following chart.

Cohesive markers	Conjunctions

Appendix C

WORKSHEET

SESSION 2

TOPIC: DISCOURSIIVE PRACTICE

Names: _____

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- Get in groups of 3 students.
- Read and complete each question.
- Don't leave spaces in blank.

PART 1 - TEXT ANALYSIS

1. Identify the main ideas in the following short paragraphs.

<https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/5720cc4b2454a5023b300bdf>

2. Identify the supporting details in the following paragraphs

<https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/5f586cb7f7b3ea001b1b0367>

3. Read the article and write an outline using at least three main ideas with three supporting details.

URL article: <https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/we-re-just-beginning-understand-extent-covid-19-s-feminist-n1243401>

Topic: _____

Main idea 1: _____

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Detail 3: _____

Main idea 2: _____

Detail 1: _____
Detail 2: _____
Detail 3: _____

Main idea 3: _____

Detail 1: _____
Detail 2: _____
Detail 3: _____

4. Analyze and interpret the following statements according to the article.

When asked to describe her family situation, Erin first responded with: "Pretty traditional," adding, "More traditional than planned."

Petersen, A.H. (2020) We're just beginning to understand the extent of Covid-19's feminist nightmare. [Screenshot] MSNBC.

a. What does Erin mean with the words in quotes?

Before the pandemic, women in the United States still made only 82.3 cents for every dollar men made. Even with the wage gap decreasing, it's still a significant gap – and when a household is faced with needing a full-time caregiver, it's the person who makes less (usually the woman) who quits her job. In Covid-19 times, it makes

Petersen, A.H. (2020) We're just beginning to understand the extent of Covid-19's feminist nightmare. [Screenshot] MSNBC.

b. Why do women quit their job instead of men according to this passage?

twisted sense: She was probably doing most of the home-school supervision anyway, even if her husband thought otherwise. She likely also carried the majority of the "mental load" – that is, the never-ending list of tasks that need to be completed for the family to function. In most of these cases, a woman isn't actually quitting work. She's just quitting the one of her jobs for which she was paid.

Petersen, A.H. (2020) We're just beginning to understand the extent of Covid-19's feminist nightmare. [Screenshot] MSNBC.

c. Why did the author call 'mental load' to the list of tasks to do in home?

d. How do you interpret the last line of the paragraph?

PART 2 - AUTHOR'S INTENTION

5. Answer the following questions in based on the author's and text's intention.

e. What is the intention of the author with the previous newspaper article?

f. What does the text want to transmit to readers?

Appendix D

WORKSHEET

SESSION 3

TOPIC: SOCIAL PRACTICE

Names: _____

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- Work in groups of three people.
 - Read and complete each question.
 - Don't leave spaces in blank.
1. Look at the video 'Phrases for expressing an opinion' and then classify each phrase that you listened to in the video in the category that belongs to.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I517e6oW-GM>

Expressing opinions	Ask other people's opinions
Expressing agreement	Expressing disagreement
Expressing interruption	

2. **This is a discussion activity in which you should give you personal opinion and defend it with strong arguments. It is scored based on the parameters of the social practice of the critical discourse analysis rubric.**

2.1. **Read the article and answer the following questions**

URL article: <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/weed-becomes-legal-more-states-dangers-potent-cannabis-are-being-ncna1056446>

- a. What is the intention of the author with the previous newspaper article?

- b. What does the text want to transmit to readers?

2.2 **Answer the following questions in order to have a discussion.**

Instructions:

- **Give your own point of view, but try to support it based on the newspaper.**
 - **Use phrases to express your opinions.**
- c. Could people that consume cannabis have health risks?
- d. Do you agree to use cannabis for medical purposes?
- e. Do you agree marijuana is a ‘safe drug’?
- f. Do people become addict o drugs because of weed consumption?
- g. Should the consumption of marijuana for pleasure be legal in Ecuador?

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS

TOPIC: FOUR CORNERS LEARNING STRATEGY AND CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Objective: To measure students' interests using controversial topics in four corners learning strategy and the critical discourse analysis from English students of PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato, Tungurahua – Ecuador.

SURVEY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mark with an (X) the punctuation that you believe for each question considering that 5 is the maximum point and 1 the lowest one.

QUESTIONS	CRITERIA				
	5 (Always)	4 (Usually)	3 (Often)	2 (Sometimes)	1 (Never)
1. How often do you feel comfortable talking about controversial topics?					
2. How often do you use authentic materials, such as newspapers articles for discussion tasks?					
3. How often does your teacher use controversial topics for oral activities?					

4. How often do you do tasks in groups?					
5. How often do you work cooperatively in oral activities?					
6. How often do you use discussions as an oral activity?					

Author: Acaro, L. (2020)

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS

EXPERT JUDGMENT EVIDENCE

I, Cristina Jordán Buenaño with, I.D. No. 1804010500, certify that I conducted the expert judgment on this instrument designed by Lisbeth Carolina Acaro Ibijes, with I.D. No. 171899085-4 for the Final Degree Project entitled “FOUR CORNERS LEARNING STRATEGY AND THE CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS” since it is a fundamental requirement to qualify for the Bachelor’s Degree in Educational Sciences; Mention: English, at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Ecuador, November 10th, 2020.

Sincerely,



Firmado electrónicamente por:
**CRISTINA DEL
ROCIO JORDAN
BUENANO**

Mg. Cristina Jordán Buenaño

I.D. 1804010500

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS

EXPERT JUDGMENT EVIDENCE

I, Manuel Xavier Sulca Guale with, I.D. No. 1802447548, certify that I conducted the expert judgment on this instrument designed by Lisbeth Carolina Acaro Ibijes, with I.D. No. 171899085-4 for the Final Degree Project entitled “FOUR CORNERS LEARNING STRATEGY AND THE CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS” since it is a fundamental requirement to qualify for the Bachelor’s Degree in Educational Sciences; Mention: English, at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Ecuador, November 10th, 2020.

Sincerely,



Firmado electrónicamente por:
**MANUEL XAVIER
SULCA GUALE**









Mg. Manuel Xavier Sulca Guale

I.D. 1802447548

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