World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology
International Journal of Educational and Pedagogical Sciences
Vol:10, No:1, 2016

Ads on Social Issues: A Tool for Improving Critical Thinking Skills in a Foreign Language Classroom

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***Abstract*—**This paper is a qualitative research report. A group of students form a public university in a small town in Colombia participated in this study which aimed at describing to what extend the use of social ads, published on the internet, helped to develop their critical thinking skills. Students' productions, field notes, video recordings and direct observation were the instruments and techniques used by the researches in order to gather the data which was analyzed under the principles of grounded theory and triangulation. The implementation of social ads into the classroom evidenced a noticeable improvement in students' ability to interpret and argue social issues, as well as, their self-improvement in oral and written production in English, as a foreign language.

***Keywords*—**Ads, critical argumentation, critical thinking, social issues.

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

I. Introduction

TEACHING a language, as any other area, is the opportunity teachers have not only to face real learning students' problems in their classroom, but to propose solutions for them based on what they think may function. To be aware of education importance, of being disciplined or to take advantage of what teachers offer daily in their classes is very common in public schools in Boyacá Colombia. The diversity and high quantity of thesis or classroom projects attest those problems as well as the huge possible tools or strategies that may be used to overcome those problems.

The difficulty in the development of critical thinking skill is concerned by the situation stated previously. It was evident when a group of students answered to some questions without looking in deep the given information. Nowadays, it is common to see how students look for a life without any difficulty. It includes how they respond to their academic duties. Social media has tried to show different kinds of problems and for teenagers sometimes it does not have any importance. They usually live in the world of technology without looking beyond. Some adolescents do not realize about the real implications that some actions carried out by the human beings will have in a short or long term. The advertisements on social issues allow that not only the human being questions the behavior of the rest of the people but also about himself.

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This research report conducted with a group of eleventh graders, in a public school in Colombia show how the use of social ads posted on the internet contribute to develop their critical thinking skill as well as their speaking and writing in English as a foreign language. Field notes, workshops and students' artifacts were the instruments used to collect data which allowed answering the question stated at the beginning of the research. It was pretended to evidence to what extend the interpretation of ads on social issues helps in the improvement of critical thinking and speaking and writing abilities in English, as a foreign language.

II. Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

For the development of this classroom research the authors took into account the following theoretical constructs: concepts of critical thinking, critical argumentation, social issues, interpretative and argumentative competences and finally, teamwork.

1. Critical Thinking

Ennis stated that "Critical thinking is reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do" [1]. Bearing in mind what Ennis says, it is important to see how critical thinking is crucial for taking action in what is going on in our world based on people's actions. It refers to the way people behave in different situations, their way of life and their beliefs. In the case of the students, critical thinking is very important because when they are teenagers, they have to face many situations in which they have to face and decide about different aspects in their lives such friends, hobbies, likes, etc. Their lives depend on the sort of choices they do. That is why they have to be reflective and reasonable in order to make good and useful decisions. On the other hand, Paul and Elder defined critical thinking as "…the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it" [2]. When the students work with ads in social issues, they have the opportunity to analyze and evaluate those problems affecting their surrounded contexts. Additionally, they check their own behavior and seek for relations between what they are facing and living every day and what is displayed on the ads. After this, students see what they have to improve or change in their behavior. Over time, students are able to see and analyze not just how their own processes go on, but also their partners' ones. It can be possible because the students work in groups and they have time for listening, interpreting and proposing ideas as a team.

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

Critical thinking is a process in which people are able to interpret different situations and reflect by giving arguments and proposals, trying to look for creating new knowledge. A critical thinker must be able to take decisions and to have a clear view about what he/she wants for his/ her life. This fact is important in the sense that they won´t be students all their lives, they will become adults who will face real life situations and will decide what the best options to choose will be.

Bloom's taxonomy shows clearly the skills people must develop in order to be critical thinkers [3]. There are different levels going from the simplest skills to the most complex ones. The most basic level is knowledge which implies people to recall and remember things they already know. It is basically related to previous knowledge, including dates, images, specific information and so on. Comprehension is connecting with understanding and interpreting facts in general. In the classrooms it is evident when students are able to interpret and give their own ideas. Another important level is application which is focused on giving solutions to problems stated in the class. Analysis is basically how people separate a whole into different pieces, but is aware of their inner relationship. For this particular case, students make comparisons between the social add shown and what they live and see. They also can look for causes and consequences after exhaustive analysis. Synthesis indicates that people should give alternatives of solutions to a problem. As students don not have the capacity to solve problems in a definitive way, because of the economic investment many of them need, they just may propose campaigns by designing the videos and the posters showing alternatives to a specific issue. The last level is evaluation which has as aim that people present and defend their opinions using criteria. All of these levels are correlated with all the skills students may develop during critical thinking process.

2. Critical Argumentation

Walton points out that critical argumentation has three goals which are identifying, analyzing and evaluating [4]. When a person gives arguments, gives reasons too. In order to be successful, it is necessary to give valid and several reasons to support what were stated.

With critical argumentation, students give reasonable opinions and arguments about what they think, related to ads on social issues. This classroom research shows different workshops that propose as an objective to improve critical thinking and for getting it, it is necessary to allow the students to develop critical augmentation. In that way, students will have the opportunity to identify and to analyze different advertisements in a critical way, consequently, they may plan possible solutions to any problem.

3. Advertisement

According to Gardner, "Advertising is the means of mass selling that has grown up parallel with and has been made necessary to mass production" [5]. Taking in to account the previous concept, it is necessary to see that this mass production is part of consumerism where many people is part of, so in this way it has an impact on people's mind. However, advertisements could be used as a tool to educate people. This study emphasizes in how ads can help people to wide their knowledge about various topics helping them to change bad habits for improving their lives. Furthermore, humankind can contribute doing something to change what it is not working in the society. This classroom research was looking for promoting critical thoughts about human being actions which might impair other people and the world.

4. Social Issues

De la Fuente, J. defines a social problem as a condition of outrage towards a group of people, which may have different psychological effects [6]. This type of problem can be solved if a group of people has an agreement. The aim for students was to analyze critically the problematic situation showed in ads and propose solutions for a short and long term. Furthermore, Blumer, H. explains social problems as a result of collective procedures rather than established and instituted social plans with fundamental structure [7]. This means that social problems come from a series of attitudes and behaviors done by human beings and others trying to imitate them. This is pertinent to mention because, students noticed that social issues are a result of tendencies that people create and that they are not mandatory to follow. Moreover, the practice of these social issues could bring negative consequences. When students are aware about the negative consequences that social issues bring, they may be more reflective and interested in proposing solutions.

5. Interpretation

Kirkpatrick states that **"**Interpretation functions between two extremes. One extreme is indicated by the text and by the composer's supposed intentions, in other words, by the work itself. The other extreme is indicated by the contribution, often necessary and desirable, of the interpreter and by the liberties that he is entitled to take. One of the extremes can be regarded as fixed and obligatory, as a firmly established point of departure; the other extreme can be regarded as created by the infinitely variable possibilities of interpretation and by the play of choice and fantasy around the structure that the composer has given us." [8]. One important aspect of interpreting something is that the interpreter always tries to be as objective as he can. The idea of this pedagogical research is to show different ads which the students have to analyze and after say what they think about them.

6. Argumentation

This study focused on giving students the chance to present arguments by reflecting. "Argumentation is a verbal, social and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of propositions justifying or refuting the proposition expressed in the standpoint" [9]. Students had the opportunity to talk about the problems they live with every day and by exposing their ideas, they must look for arguments to state them and provide possible solutions clearly.

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

7. Teamwork

According to Harmer, teamwork "…promotes learning autonomy by allowing students to make their own decisions in group without being told what to do by the teacher" [10]. When students are working in teams, they have the opportunity to present their ideas and evaluate their partners' ones. This is a clear chance for the students to show their autonomy; to make decisions and to propose, as a team, some solutions to a problem identified. Other authors stated that "Teamwork refers to those instances where individuals interact or coordinate behavior in order to achieve tasks that are important to the team´s goals (i.e., behavioral, attitudinal and cognitive responses coordinated with fellow team members)" [11]. For instance, teamwork in this research is very important for the students because through the different activities, they had the opportunity of sharing their ideas, opinions and points of view. Besides, teamwork was a very useful tool for students when they had to join their thoughts and solve the different tasks assigned by the researchers.

III. Method

Context and Participants

This study was conducted under the principles of action research, which attempts to solve problems and improve professional practices in the classrooms. According to Parson and Brown, this kind of research involves systematic observations and data collection which can be used by the practitioner-researcher in reflection, decision-making and the development of more effective classroom [12]. In this way, the purpose was to use advertisement on social issues to enhance critical thinking in the students. In addition, students may straighten writing and speaking skills at the same time. In order to carry out this classroom research, it was necessary to take into account the different steps of this type of research. To achieve this aim, there was a selection of topics to work on them, collection of the data, organization and finally, the analysis of it for taking the proper actions. Furthermore, it was necessary the implementation of different workshops which helped to promote critical thinking in the students through the interpretation and argumentation on social ads without forgetting the proposition of possible solutions

This study took place in a public Catholic school in a small town in, Boyaca Colombia. It has four branches located in different parts of the town. The school was created in 1994.It receives about 1400 students per year and promotes values for the integrity of the students. As a mission, it states the objective of forming leaders with social awareness, which is the reason researches chose as a strategy the ads on social issues. In the vision, the school is looking for the institutional excellence that allows the students to do a social change by using the meaningful leaning they get in it.

The principles of the institution are based on four dimensions: spiritual, social, working and academic all of them for facing the real life. It also offers spaces for the construction of individual life project in order to get a better view about what they want to study in the future. It counts with specialized teachers and appropriate installations, reasonable educational cost in order to offer education in elementary, middle and high school with an emphasis on natural sciences and arts.

Twelve students aged between 16 and 17 were the selected participants of this research. These students were not used to have a teacher who spoke to them all the class in English, so the researchers could identify that the English level of each student was different. For some of them, the instruction in English was easy and for some difficult. Most of the students have low and medium social level. The majority of them live with their parents and they used as mean of transport bicycle, bus or just they walked from their houses to the school.

Data Collection Instruments

During the progress of this research, it was necessary to use the following instruments and techniques: direct observation, workshops, videos and field notes. The use of the mentioned instruments helped to gather the information in order to solve the main question of this study.

1. Direct Observation

Dornyei establishes that "observation is fundamentally different from questioning because it provides direct information rather than self-report accounts, and thus it is one of the three basic data sources for empirical research (with testing being the third)" [13]. In this study, the observation was so useful because it allowed us to gather general and specific information from the students´ performance in the classroom. This information also showed us the real aspects to take into account when supporting the results of this study. Thanks to this, we could evidence the students´ progress during the whole process.

2. Workshops

There were 6 workshops, which were focused on reading images and words in the advertisement posted on the internet, for asking students to propose solutions to some of the different problems which are affecting our society.

Richards defines a workshop as "… an intensive, short-term learning activity that is designed to provide an opportunity to acquire specific knowledge and skills" [14]. The workshops let the students to analyze and learn about the different social issues. Besides the main purpose of workshops is that students use the information they get to give opinions that conduct to possible solutions of problems in a real life situation.

3. Videos

Students made a video as part of the last workshop. Through it, they showed their creations, after having analyzed social ads. Based on Harmer, "when students use video cameras themselves they are giving the potential to create something memorable and enjoyable" [10]. One of the advantages of video is that students do not just hear language, but they use it too. The videos made by the students´ were so important because they showed us their effort in order to do a good performance in front of the camera, showing not just the

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

improvement of their ability speaking in English, but their understanding and analysis of a social issue.

4. Field Notes

According to Parent and Veillard, field notes are a useful tool to gather information about events presented in the classroom [15]. The field notes taken in the class are very useful to recognize the students´ points of view, including the questions answered in oral way. The notes also helped the researchers to present the most relevant aspects about students´ behavior during the workshops development. The field notes were base to have more complete information about the students´ process from the beginning to the end of the study.

IV. Pedagogical Design

Six workshops were applied, one per week; looking for answering the research question focused on knowing to what extent the interpretation and argumentation of ads on social issues help the improvement of critical thinking. The workshops were designed by the researchers based on social ads posted on the internet.

To start, the researches chose the ads from vast amount, all of them related to students' context. All of the workshops were correlated and aimed to work on Bloom's Taxonomy. They were in a specific order because the purpose was that the students had the opportunity to interact, to interpret, to analyze and to give their point of views about what they were identifying and analyzing. At the end, students had the opportunity to create a poster and a video showing different aspects related to problems, solutions, awareness and critical thinking.

The researchers always looked for linking the workshops with the topics studied in class. The objective was to keep the students' attention and to put in practice what they learnt. All the workshops followed the same structure: pre-task, task and post-task. In order to create the task, the researchers took into account some advises presented in an investigation done by the Kentucky Department of Education in which some important features for developing a task are presented. The first thing the researches did, was to set goals in order to be sure that the students learn what they need to learn, the instructions were stated in a clear manner, so the student develop the task properly. When all the tasks were completed, the researchers reviewed them and made changes to adjust and make everything coherent.

Data Analysis and Findings

This section shows the process the researchers did in order to analyze the information gathered by using the instruments explained previously. At the same time, the main findings are explained. The categories and subcategories are explained in detail.

In order to analyze the data grounded theory was implemented. Strauss and Corbin state that this is an approach that is implemented through categorization and codification of the data collected, this is in order to create new theories [16]. Besides and in order to corroborate the results of the study, triangulation of data was done

After gathering and analyzing all the information, the data was coded. The first technique which was used, was direct observation in which the main problem was identified. By analyzing all the instruments and techniques it was evident that the students not only showed their imagination but also they showed their point of view, giving and supporting ideas. They also clearly show their English skills development, even though they still made some mistakes, their English production improved markedly.

It is very important to point out that before applying the workshops the researchers decided to make groups in order to see how collaborative work could help in the development of critical thinking skills and English skills. Which had amazing outcomes, there were different leaders in each group and each member or the group tried to give their best to complete the tasks. The idea was that each member of the group cooperated with ideas, suggestions. Teamwork also allowed them to develop a sense of responsibility within the group.

The following codes were used in the data analysis in order to exemplify the samples: (SA = Student Artifacts; FN = Field Notes; VI: videos). In addition, it was necessary to use different abbreviations to refer to the participants of the study: G1, G2, G3 and G4. Thus, the categories and subcategories that emerged from the data analysis are:

TABLE I
Categories and Subcategories

Main Question		
To what extend does interpretation and argumentation of ads on social issues help the improvement of critical thinking of a public school in Paipa,Colombia?		
Sub Questions	**Categories**	**Sub Categories**
To what extent do the social ads contribute to enhance the interpretative and argumentative competence?	Developing interpretative and argumentative competence	Images as an initial aid to interpret social ads.
		Giving points of view, by reflecting, acting and proposing real solutions.
How can the implementation of ads on social issues promote students´ critical understanding of their context?	Social ads, the opportunity to show what we are living and thinking about.	Bullying
		Social problems
In what way do ads on social issues contribute not just to reflect about, but also to propose solutions?	The school and town, the places to start taking actions.	Let's show how to do it. Let´s take action.

The categories, subcategories and findings of the present research are the following. However, it is very important to clarify that excerpts are displayed as students produced them, that is the reason why some grammar or spelling mistakes are present.

1. Developing Interpretative and Argumentative Competence

This category allowed the researches to answer to a first sub question, which was: To what extend do the social ads contribute to enhance the interpretative and argumentative competence? In this part, the students showed excellent results

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

about interpretation and argumentations giving their own ideas and worrying for doing the things in a right way.

In the following subcategories, the analysis and findings in the development of interpretative and argumentative competence, by reviewing students' artifacts are explained. It also shows a clear way of how the students started to develop critical thinking skills.

2. Images as an Initial Aid to Interpret Social Ads

In this subcategory, the students had the opportunity to see and analyze different images in which they showed a high understanding of what they were doing during the process. The following images were worked in the workshops; in addition, some of the ideas presented by the students are listed, which evidence that this also allowed them to become more aware about what they were interpreting and after this; they gave ideas about what they understood from each image and problem, giving arguments to support their ideas.



Fig. 1 First image analyzed in class

Students´ Titles:

- **G-1** "forbidden to sleep on the road"
- **G-2** "if you close your eyes what?"
- **G-3** "Don't take the last nap in the car.

Students´ Interpretation:

- **G-1 "**A message of alert for the people, who drive for a long time and not avoid the dangerous of dream**"**
- **G-2 "**In the image we could interpret that if a drive with sleep it could have serious consequences how kill to you own family. "Be alert"**"**
- **G-3 "**Is an image from a don´t drive sleepy campaign, it shows a half-close eye with a car and two people, that make you think about the risks of driving with sleepiness and the damage you could cause"



Fig. 2 Second image analyzed in class

Students´ Titles:

- **G-1** "your garbage is my dinner"
- **G-2** "street fight"
- **G-3 "**our garbage their food".

Students´ Interpretation

- **G-1** "Some homeless are people with a lot of capabilities but without opportunities in our society"
- **G-2** "The picture tell us the homeless has struggle all the days to survive"
- **G-3 "**Is a garbage cube showed as a food dish that is what the homeless have to face with everyday, digging in the garbage just to find something to calm their hungry".



Fig. 3 Third image analyzed in class

Students´ Titles:

- **G-1** "Is better to wear the safety belt than the funeral suit"
- **G-2** "Belt of life"
- **G-3** "Wear a safety belt is a very important thing, if you appreciate your life, you must buckle it up every time…"

Students´ Interpretation:

- **G-1** "The message is if you don´t buckle up you die so you should pay attention for this advertisement"
- **G-2** "The belt is very important when you are driving THE BELT PROTECTS YOUR LIFE"
- **G-3** "Wear the safety belt is a very important thing, if you appreciate your life you must buckle it up every time. Lose your life just for no wear a simple belt would be terrible"

Another important activity was done in workshop number 5. Students had the opportunity of analyzing an advertisement and to know its parts. After, they had to look at other

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

advertisements in order to identify their parts such as the headline, image, call to action and organization. With this activity, the students showed understanding about advertising, and they could appreciate the different components of an ad and its intention.

At the beginning, it was hard to interpret the images because students did not realize what the social ads were about, after some doubts were clarified, they had a clear view of what they wanted. In the samples mentioned above, it is evident how students took time for analyzing and interpreting the images given. They came out with successful titles in each one. They also use their imagination proposing innovating ideas. Images like those, allowed the students to interact with authors purposes. Furthermore, Scott states: "Visual elements must be capable of representing concepts, abstractions, actions, metaphors, and modifiers, such they can be used in the invention of a complex argument" [17]. For instance, in the previous tasks, the students had to talk about the images they were seeing. It was a surprise that they did not just talk about the images, but they also identified problems, giving ideas about them.

3. Giving Points of View, by Reflecting, Acting and Proposing Real Solutions

In this subcategory the students show different ways of reflecting about human being actions, including theirs.

It is important to mention that in the activities worked in the workshops, the students showed that they interpret and argued about social issues and they could give critical arguments to propose solutions when supporting their ideas. For this, Carson states: "thinking is more important in solving problems than knowledge and that it is possible to teach thinking in situations where little or no knowledge of the problem is needed" [18]. According to this, it is evidence that when students proposed solutions to the social issues, they had to reflect, and think, especially when analyzing the advertisement. In the following excerpts is evidenced the students´ points of view.

G-1 *"the mayor part of the time we don't think in all the things that are wrong, that we do wrong, that the others do and are wrong, that's why we just live without be aware of how destructive are our actions, sometimes we know of those problem, but as we think constantly "I am fine, why to be worried about that "our culture and our ideologies are based in a selfish think. It's necessary to make it stop, all the humanity needs to know what's wrong and which're the consequences…"*

This sample exposed a reflection about what we are living in this society. This shows different supporting ideas in which this group criticized the way people normally think and live in the society. Giving arguments and some ideas to change the way we usually act in a blind society. This kind of question related with something students have watched, helping them to think about it and propose some actions

G-2 *"In general all the implications of human actions will cause our own death. In the future our next generation won't have a heath society and all people will want to kill among them. If they want to be alive"*

From the samples presented above, the researchers could analyze that students were looking for some ideas connected to their lives. Students were clearly aware about what is happening in the society. They talked about unconsciousness, which means that they were reflecting about some issues that are affecting our world.

G-1 "*We can think about the needs of others, in our planet, in our future in give her the world our knowledge and our help. We have crazy ideas and made them true, considering that every crazy idea brings something positive for the planet"*

4. Social Ads, the Opportunity to Show What We Are Living and Thinking About

This category is focused on all the efforts showed by the students. They used their previous knowledge and the experiences in their real lives to identify and a problem and give possible solutions to it. Twenty five out of fifty students chose bullying as the main problem presented in the school, the other part of the students chose different social problems which are going to mention in the following sub categories.

5. Description of the School Problem and the Solution

Benites and Justicia define bullying as "the intentionality of causing harm without prior provocation, incidence and duration of the bullying situation, power asymmetry between victim and aggressor, as well as the direct or indirect nature (verbal, physical or relational) of the behaviors exhibited" [19]. According to this statement, students gave their points of view about bullying, taking into account that bullying is a social issue, and they could identify it in the classroom. It was possible after solving the workshops and after doing a reflection about its causes and consequences; in the following excerpts, the researchers could notice the students´ thoughts about it.

G-4 *"Bullying is a major problem in schools and is given by the violence generated by certain students over others, affecting them psychologically. The solution is teaching tolerance and respect between young"*

G-3 "*Problem the bulling involves discrimination and psychological abuse of a person. The solution lead by example and encourage that all are equal, with equal rights and deserve respect"*

The previous samples demonstrated that most of the students know what bullying is, some of them had experienced it and want it to end. These samples show that when students have experienced something or they have been in contact with something, their use of English in context improve.

6. Social Problems

G-3 "*Problem: When here present some behavior problems with students the head of the school take the easy way and they expel the students.*

Solution: to offer some phycology helps for the students. We think that the school should offer a true help to they have the opportunity to solve their personal

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

problems. We considered a terrible mistake that the school only expel those students to the society where they could become in dangerous people."

G-2 "*In the school the discrimination for the color of skin is very common because the most of the students don't accept the differences and want that all the people be equal. The solution is learning the different form of think and don't see their color of skin or their appearance".*

The previous samples show some ideas about what students identified in the schools. They talk about discrimination and injustice. Besides that, it is important to highlight that although students had some language mistakes, they did their best in order to communicate their opinions and thoughts.

7. The School and Town the Places to Start Taking Actions

This is clear way to show, how students become more aware about the social problems presented in the school and in the society. They had the chance to show their abilities to find and propose an innovate way of touching people's hearts. This category allowed to answer the third question and it is also included the main aspect to answer the main question, this is a clear example to see how far the students got in the development of critical thinking skills. The following subcategories present the way students identified, analyzed and proposed solutions to different kind of problems, starting with posters and ending with priceless videos.

8. Let's Show How to Do It

Ţurloiu and Stefánsdóttir state "Posters are highly effective in developing learner autonomy in the classroom... Posters are hanged all over the classroom as a support for learners to organize their work or to revise grammatical rules" [20]. This was evidenced in this this subcategory, because it is very important to mention that the main goal of this activity was to design an ad, about a problem chosen by the students and present it as a poster. In order to create the ad, students identified the parts of it and then they designed the idea with all the components: image, title, call to action and organization.



Fig. 4 Poster designed by students –against animal abuse

The previous sample showed the expression that this group had against the use of animals for vanity and to be fashionable. They took this as a whole showing clearly a point of view. They also try to convince with the sentence, call to action, the images were well chosen and there poster is shown as a whole. Everything was clearly designed by them. They also took into account the first part of the workshop, which was about the parts of an ad.



Fig. 5 Poster designed by a group of students –against bullying

Everything was handmade, which is very important to highlight. It is demonstrated that students really put effort on doing this task, as a result of the motivation presented in the development of this workshop. This is a problem that is affecting most of the schools nowadays. They expressed that this is something that people should stop doing. They also invited people to change that before they experience the same from others.



Fig. 6 Poster designed by a group of students-against bullfight

These students showed a rejection of animal abuse, but what they really want to show is a problem that is happening in our country which is bullfight. There are many organizations and people against this kind of practices. There are many bulls killed ruthlessly and it needs to be stopped.

The previous samples demonstrated that the students used their imagination and creativity for showing a problem by designing their own ads related with their context and proposing some solutions to the rest of the class and people living in the town. "Creativity involves discovering and solving problems. Innovate approaches are used to accurately evaluate short comings and actions are taking to remedy those weaknesses [21]"

Students were very active putting all their efforts for presenting their posters, even though they still make some mistakes, they actually improved their speaking. Some of the students surprised me with the posters and ideas presented… students pasted all he posters in different spots in the school, so the rest of the whole school could see them and take a minute to read it and think about it… Field notes October 15

Open Science Index, Educational and Pedagogical Sciences Vol:10, No:1, 2016 publications.waset.org/10003529/pdf

It was a good experience for students. They were really nervous at the beginning but then, through the presentation of the posters they became more confident. They wanted to explain the reasons why their partners should pay attention to the problem they were supporting. They also wanted to show it to the whole school, because they finally understood how powerful and ad could be. It is also evident how they throughout this process of learning how to make an ad they were able to come out with an original idea created by all the knowledge they had. According to Sternberg, "The mental processes, strategies, and representations people use to solve problems, make decisions, and learn new concepts" [22]

9. Let´s Take Action

This subcategory refers to how the students showed their imagination, creativity and the development of the last level, showing higher thinking skills by designing and presenting a video in which the main purposes of it was to show a social problem and the consequences it has in our society. In order to make the videos the researchers presented a sample of a video in order to contextualize what they need to achieve. The students had the freedom to choose the problem and the way they would present it. This was part of the last workshop, students showed a great interest in what they had done. They identified a problem in the school and in the town. In order to show them the best way to create a video we decided to show a video that promotes awareness. They were very touched and expressed that the video was great and they also felt kind of guilty for their behavior sometimes. Starting from this, in one of the tasks they had to design and present a video as a way to boost awareness in the society and they came out with different ideas as the following video. It is clear that they through this workshop improved not only their capabilities in different aspects including technology, social awareness but also they did it in the speaking skills. Field notes October 2.

The previous excerpt demonstrated that students already were into the level of making decisions and taking actions. They had the opportunity to choose freely the social problem they wanted to talk about.

V. Conclusions

Ads on social issues helped to enhance critical thinking abilities, giving the students the opportunities to identify and to propose solutions to problems. During the development of workshops students had the opportunity to use and develop different thinking skills including questioning, comprehending, analyzing recommending. All of them were developed in each task they carried out.

Interpretation and argumentation took an important role in the development of the research. During all the process it was necessary to interpret ads and then the students should give arguments about the ideas they were proposing.

The workshops improved students' writing and speaking skills by giving them the opportunity to choose what they wanted to talk about. Despite they still presented some problems in writing and speaking, they were more confident developing those skills.

Students' social awareness was strengthened by the interpretation and argumentation of ads on social issues. They had the opportunity to be touched by all the problems our society is facing today, for most of them it was chocking to realize how bad the situation is and they also were determined to take actions in their daily lives. At the same time, they wanted other people to be conscious and change bad behaviors, all of this for having a better society where to live.

Involving students in different situations related with social issues allow them to be more interested in the class, the motivation they have was a lot better than before. For this reason, the researchers think it is necessary to apply strategies in which the main tool used is ads on social issues.

Ads on social issues is a useful tool which helps to improve different English skills putting students in real situation and for this the learning is used to be more significant since they have the opportunity to share their thoughts about situations in which they are involved taking in to account the context they have grown.

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