

English Teaching in Cyberculture: A Brief Analysis

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Abstract— *The present study aimed to comparatively analyze the potential of BBC Learning English and Memrise platforms, in inclusive English teaching. This is a qualitative-interpretative research based in exploratory approach which methodological-theoretical framework is anchored to the Bakhtinian dialogic language conception, to the second language acquisition theory to the Computer-Assisted Language Learning theory), to multiliteracies; and to the English use as a Lingua Franca. For the analysis, we have built a matrix based on the English language acquisition context. The analysis steps ran through the evaluation matrix building, the exploration and development of a comparative study of BBC learning and Memrise platforms on the defined parameters. To the parameters building, the linguistic, methodological, and accessibility aspects in the websites were considered. After analyzing BBC learning English and Memrise, it was identified that they do not encompass dialogical language acquisition and the concept of multiliteracies.*

Keywords— *Cyberculture, ICTs, Inclusive education, Multiliteracies, Second language acquisition.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary times, social networks have been consolidated as a space-time of discursive practices, changing the way people interact and connect with themselves in society. Being that, according to Paesani et al (2015), web technologies play a ubiquitous role in the contemporary world. As a result, in cyberculture, individuals from different parts of the world have a chance to interact with each other and embed their lives inside the web. By providing interaction, collaboration, the cyberspace also intervenes in society's collective thinking and, consequently, it stimulates group thinking, as people connect emotionally and culturally to the system (Lévy, 2010).

The increasing use of cyberspace, in addition to the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), have caused an impact on education that changed significantly the face-to-face education and disseminated the online education in what concerns English teaching. However, the diversity of online courses in social networks, and their constant adjustments to please their users are not synonyms of quality. Also, as there are no parameters to create language learning platforms, it is not possible to know whether they foster current methodologies of language teaching.

Stevenson and Liu (2010) advocate that, as most language teachers do not use language learning platforms in their language classes, they encounter difficulties on

identifying the potentiality of language learning platforms available in the web.

As a consequence, the lack of knowledge on how to use and incorporate language learning platforms as a supplemental tool usually leads teachers to replicate traditional teaching when they have the opportunity of relying on those digital resources (Paesani et al, 2015). Considering that some language learning platforms might not be designed according to current methodologies and some teachers neither comprehend how to use language learning platforms properly nor how to analyse them so that learners can supplement their foreign language learning in a meaningful way, this research presents an analysis of the potentiality of BBC Learning English and Memrise. Aiming at youngsters and adults, both language learning platforms are widely used and cost-free. In order for us to analyse BBC Learning English and Memrise, a matrix based on the English language acquisition context was built.

This study was conducted during the Master's Degree in Multiliteracies, Discourse and Production of Meaning by the Postgraduate Program in Language Studies held at the Federal University of Technology – Paraná. Given that the program was about Multimodality, this study is grounded in the Multiliteracies approach.

The basic level of English language - in both platforms - was studied and explored through an interpretive and exploratory methodology. After this, we outlined a

comparison of the results through previous analysis parameters.

II. SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: CONCEPTS AND INTERRELATIONS

Benveniste (1976) affirmed that language is an abstract representation of our reality. And to be comprehended by a group it is formed by distinct phonemes, which are psychological realities that make the speaker instinctively comprehends a statement.

In this concept, the word-meaning is formed by the minimum unit of the language, the sign, and the value of each of these occurs by their interlacement inside the linguistic system. Which is why Benveniste (1976) ensures that signs are distinct, so they can have a meaning inside the system. This meaning relates itself to the language in specific contexts of statement.

Yet, to the French linguist, the construction of meaning of the parts of a language is socially built, and its use provides form to reality. For this reason, for communication to happen, both interlocutors have to share the same language. By using the same linguistic system, people share such equal syntax in their statements as linguistic repertoire. Then, it is possible for speakers to communicate with each other using a variety of statements.

On the other hand, Bakhtin (2015) diverges from those Benveniste's ideas. In the dialogical approach, the Russian philosopher affirms that signs/statements are built from the speech of the other, as they orientate and embody themselves among the previously established. Resulting from an established interaction of the subjects, dialogism arises from the constant exchange and crossing of statements. Therefore, the dialogical concept relates to subjects' social positions that are organized through social-historical relations of a community.

According to Bakhtin (2015), speeches manifest themselves through statements that can be oral and written. As they constitute different discursive practices, these statements reflect the worldview and values of an individual, and have a purpose in the social environment. In this case, although the statements are individual, each social sphere (with their own language of use) requires particular groups of statements that are relatively stable.

Considering the interlocutors, Volóchinov (2017) states that, the main assignment of comprehension is not the recognition of a linguistic form, but the understanding that, in a given context, a statement has a certain meaning. In this case, for an individual to interact linguistically in a non-native context, the process of teaching second language needs to mobilize the distinction between signs and signals; as well as inserting the student in the

discursive flow of the target language. Thus, understanding the meaning of statements within a given enunciation context, the student begins to produce statements as well, which implies active and responsive interaction with the target language interlocutors.

It is understood that, influenced by internal and external factors, second language acquisition may occur inside the classroom, as well as outside it (Ellis, 2003). According to Ellis (2003), due to world knowledge and communicative strategies that the speakers acquired in their first language (L1), they use their native language to acquire the second language (L2). However, although it is certain that this is a significant factor in the L2 acquisition process, it is not possible to ensure a direct relationship between the two processes, in other words, L1 does not fully influence in L2 acquisition.

Ellis (2012) explains that in order to have a possible linguistic performance in L2, the mother tongue is mobilized by the student both consciously and unconsciously. However, how and when this language resource is used depends on factors related to the pragmatic aspects of L1 and L2. In this sense, besides the influence of L1 in the acquisition of L2 other factors should be taken into consideration, such as students' personality, motivation, acquisition style, aptitude (ease of acquisition of L2) and other individual factors about the students.

From this perspective, throughout the L2 acquisition process, students are able to participate in language transformations and actively use it accordingly to the possibilities offered to them by discursive practices. As a native speaker, students acquire L2 in a continuous way. An example of this is the considerable use of English worldwide. Since most speakers are not native, English as L2 speakers end up modifying the language more than the native speakers themselves (Becker, 2014).

Thus, from an ideological context in which a language is inserted, both L1 and L2 speakers acquire that language. For this reason, a possible strategy for qualifying L2 teaching is to offer the student an interlocutor. By engaging in real situations of communication, the student accesses the sign in its pure form, and consequently, has the opportunity to acquire L2 as s/he interacts with the target language (Leffa, 2016).

Regarding language teaching, one might say that the process of acquisition of second language (L2) is similar to the first language (L1) acquisition, as both require interaction with the target language to be acquired. Being that, dialogism also influences in the process of L1 and L2 acquisition.

However, although the dialogical and systematic aspect of language are being encompassed in this study, it was

also considered the structural aspects which are related to how L2 is acquired. For this reason, as well as Ellis (2003; 2012), in this paper it is conceived that L2 acquisition occurs due to the interference of syntactic, phonological, semantic and lexical aspects of L1. Therefore, the term second language acquisition is used to refer to both conscious and unconscious processes in which an L2 is acquired.

Regarding dialogical aspect of language, its practices need to be contextualized and have a communicative purpose that addresses to the language's function. Given that, in this study, the dialogical conception of language (Bakhtin, 2016) and the acquisition of L2 (Ellis, 2003; 2012) are both covered.

Despite the fact that the theory of acquisition of L1 and L2 has a structuralist basis, by arguing that linguistic interaction enables the speaker to acquire language, it opens to the idea that language is the result of the aforementioned. Then, it is constituted through discursive crossings and organized in social-historical relations of a community. In this case, interaction and dialogism contribute to the acquisition of L1 and L2, as produced statements are resulting from communication and constituted by intersubjective texts derived from the interaction of people.

In the constant search for qualification of the L2 acquisition process, different methodologies have been used in our work, so in the next section some retakes to direct our discussion of the contents will be made.

2.1 L2 Acquisition Process Through Information and Communication Technologies: Different Practices.

In the context of cyberculture, the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in L2 teaching is strongly linked to current approaches (Leffa, 2006). Over time radios, cassettes, and televisions have been used for educational purposes, but nowadays computers have been gaining their space in people's lives. According to Leffa (2006), this is due to the fact that computers are capable of performing different tasks at the same time, which includes learning a new language computer-mediated, or what it is referred to as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

Although CALL has been developing for the past sixty years, it is divided in three different phases: Behaviouristic CALL, Communicative CALL, and Integrative CALL, that is an incorporation of the previous (Warschauer, 1996).

The Behaviouristic CALL appeared at the beginning of the 1960's, in a project entitled Plato and appeared in North American universities. In the project, computers were used in computer laboratories and language teaching

was focused on a structural approach. Grammar teaching was following the behaviourist conception, which was concentrated on repetition and positive reinforcement.

In Warschauer (1996), to the first phase of CALL, the computer was a tutor and it was conceived as a vehicle for distribution of teaching materials to students. During this period, language experts used to believe that through repetition students would quickly acquire the L2. However, this kind of exercise was tiring for them, as they were only listening to drills, which would consist of words or sentences that would be modelled on the target language so that learners could repeat them during entire classes.

In the 1980's, the Communicative phase of the CALL emerged due to the introduction on microcomputers and the communicative approach. During this period, the main focus was to build an intrinsic motivation on the student and to promote an interaction between student and computer. In this conception, grammar was applied in an implicit and spontaneous way, considering the context that students produced their statements, which reflected on a more flexible correction. Also, it focused on exclusive use of the target language in the classroom, aiming to create an immersive environment that did not focused only on the textbook.

According to Silva (2017), the authenticity present in the communicative approach has brought an issue to traditional methods on language teaching: didactic materials of previous – traditional – methods were considered artificial. However, the divergence in the definition of what is an authentic method has made the term and its purpose inaccurate, which minimized the importance of the authenticity of didactic materials. Consequently, although an authentic text comes from real situations of interaction, they are often elaborated from artificial discursive practices.

The communicative approach has showed an advance when compared to the behaviourist phase, but at the end of the 1980's there was a thought that these tools' potential was not being used correctly. Then, after the arrival of CD-ROM and Internet, the Integrative CALL arrived. In this phase, through multimedia, the four basic language skills were integrated into one activity. In other words, the cyberspace has offered students the opportunity to engage with authentic communities and people from all over the world.

Even though multimedia system was significant for teaching, three factors contributed to the difficulty of incorporating this resource in language teaching. The first factor was related to the lack of teachers prepare to use multimedia tools in classroom. The second difficult situation was the inaccessibility to the teaching software

because of their high costs. The third difficulty was due to the fact that computers at that time were not capable of diagnose mistakes of pronunciation, syntax and language use. Even though they were resulting from high investments, the online teaching programs were not created and developed by experts in education, so they were not able to present a good pedagogical approach (Warschauer, 1996).

Even though these pedagogical and computing issues have appeared in the 1990', they are still present in today's practices. The increasing use of these technologies have made teachers to find ways to implement these digital tools to their teaching methods in class. Then, training courses aiming to develop teacher's practices on new technologies have emerged. Consequently, in the course of time, there was a development of new teaching software, which has promoted better access to the platforms, such financially as pedagogically (in what concerns language teaching). However, these improvements do not extend to an inclusive classroom.

The obstacles caused by the use of multimedia system in the L2 teaching made their contribution to the third generation of CALL partial, then it was cyberculture that contributed to the real integration of CALL. However, although internet has appeared in the 1960', only in the 1990' it became popular for teaching objectives, especially on second language (L2) teaching. Thus, internet has rearranged the way students interact with each other, because now they could have unlimited access to other students from all over the world, as several different languages' speakers.

As mentioned previously, what allows language acquisition to be continued is its dialogical nature resulting from the interaction between subjects. Through this, both blind students and sighted have the opportunity to engage in different literacy practices.

Recently, influenced by the use of cyberspace, social and cultural practices, previously restricted only to physical environments, began to occur in digital environments as well. Thus, the way in which students acquire L2 has changed, especially in regards of English language acquisition, because it has become an important communicational tool in the world general communication.

In this new context of English language acquisition, influenced by the integrative CALL, the approach of multiliteracies is a differential, as it exposes students to a wide variety of texts that circulate in the network. For this reason, the multiliteracies approach empowers learners by engaging them in public, community, and economic life.

2.2 Language Teaching in the Perspectives of Multiliteracies

According to Duboc (2009), L2's teaching environment is a space-time to break with homogenized ideas that permeate society, because as lingua franca, English is very plural. To understand this question, it is important to remember that, a lingua franca is not defined by being superior to others, but by political and economic factors.

As advocated by Jenkins (2010), English is often used in different international discursive practices, including conferences, business meetings, etc. And in these contexts of use, there are more non-native speakers than native speakers. Then, because of the variety of people who speak English in these situations, changes and hybridizations occur in the language, which are the elements that identify the keys of a lingua franca.

In accordance with Canclini (2013), hybridizations are sociocultural processes that result from the combination of social structures or social practices from distinct sources. Hybridizations are not only result of globalization's communicational scope, but also the result of migration and exchange processes (Canclini, 2013). From this perspective, globalization has only intensified the process of hybridization of English language that has been occurring for a long time, giving a multicultural character to English. Since native speakers themselves are exposed to this reality in the same way as non-native speakers, English as a lingua franca applies to them as well. (Jenkins, 2010).

As Jordão (2009), Duboc (2014) believes it is important that L2 acquisition process considers the language function and its variety. Thus, the four language skills - listening, writing, speaking and reading - can be worked differently, as language teaching is based on fundamental language practices in contemporary and globalized society.

In this conception, pedagogy of the multiliteracies, postulated by the New London Group (2000), proposes that L2 acquisition process goes through different cultures and incorporates them. According to the group, this necessity is related not only to globalization, but also to the variety of texts circulating in ICTs. Consequently, ICTs help different languages and cultures to be disseminated, which results in plural and interrelated texts. This is due to the fact that globalized profile of contemporary times fragments society and further diversifies culture.

Cope et al (2015) define the concept of multiliteracies in two ways. The first definition results from social, cultural and gender issues, and concerns the multimodality of communications available in cyberspace, what gives the user access to various forms of texts. Through this new paradigm, traditional language teaching is no longer

sufficient, because with the new demand of modern times, students need to negotiate and understand the different patterns of meaning production coming from different contexts.

To the second definition, multiliteracies relate to the fact that writing and reading interact with elements of semiotic, sound, gestural, spatial and tactile, for example. In this perspective, ICTs are highlighted and mobilized in the classroom, because it is through them that multimodal texts can be worked on. Then, students can establish connections with today's media (Cope et al, 2015).

In this sense, New London Group (2000), Cope et al (2015) use the term “multiliteracies” to discern it from literacy. Multiliteracies are neither limited to linguistic representation nor to the pedagogy of multiliteracies. Instead, it is grounded in practices that change according to culture and context. For the group, the pedagogy of multimodality has a cognitive, cultural, and social aspect that establishes new forms of languages rewritten by language users connected to social networks. Such an approach benefits a reflective look in L2 teaching.

Both Cope et al (2015), declare that the reflexive approach is a junction of the didactic and progressive methodology. In the didactic approach, teachers are authoritarian, that is, they are considered transmitters of knowledge. Because of this, critics consider that in this approach students receive knowledge passively and therefore do not have the opportunity to express themselves critically.

This approach is focused on writing, using the textbook, working with the student's memory and logical thinking. (Cope et al, 2015). The progressive method, on the other hand, is characterized as an alternative for the replacement of the didactic model. Thus, these approaches emerge as moral and political act and pursue to reform traditional teaching in social interactionist approaches. Cope et al (2015) argue that although in recent years the expansion of social interactionism has been attributed to computer-mediated learning, it is often used in a didactic rather than progressive manner, as teachers use ICTs replacing the textbook and the blackboard.

According to the New London Group (2000), literacy pedagogy has traditionally been limited to teaching formal writing and reading. For researchers, this approach is restricted because it does not work with linguistic variations and different cultures, so this type of literacy only addresses issues considered standard in a community (Rojo, 2013).

Therefore, the New London Group (2000) argues that one is member of various identity spheres and different communities. Consequently, language teaching focused

only on standard language does not correspond to the multiplicity of discourses circulating in a globalized society. For the group, multiliteracies complement the existing literacy pedagogy.

Still for the New London Group (2000), in a scenario of language exchange and globalization, it is necessary that one understands the differences present in the various existing cultures and use multiliteracies to act as citizens. The group affirms that for this to happen effectively, being able to interact through a variety of language styles, including different ways of speaking English, is necessary.

In this sense, speakers can break barriers imposed by culture and engage in discursive practices that they have affinity. In this paradigm, learning about cultural hybridization, the social context of discourse production, and the regional and ethnic dialectics that permeate discursive communities, students have access to civic pluralism that, differently from monocultural and nationalist civic sense, values the different identities. In this conception, students would have the opportunity to develop the ability of critically reflect on complex systems of interaction (metacognitive and metalinguistics).

Through immersion, the reflective approach unites concept and practice, which means that, from a prior knowledge, new concepts and experiences are constructed. In other words, in this methodology there is a reciprocal connection between what students learn and what they experience in their reality. For this to be possible, the teacher needs to reflect on the different ways of teaching in the reflective approach. This means that, throughout the didactic planning process, it is necessary to reflect on which pedagogical approach is the most appropriate to its context and that will contribute most to the teaching-learning process. That is, students' learning determines the sequence of the classes.

By proposing this reflective approach to the multiliteracy pedagogy, the authors extend the concept of multiliteracies and turn it into a pedagogy of communication and knowledge representation for all areas. The process of knowledge is projected by the teacher, and there is no pattern or type of activity that is determined to be followed. Learning through projection suggests teachers to reflect about their students' knowledge process. According to Cope et al (2015), this process is formed by experience, conceptualization, analysis and application.

The process of experience is related to learning through immersion in reality. Conceptualization involves the development of concepts that may be abstracts, as well as generic. The process of analysis is configured in the examination of causes and effects, structures and functions of various elements. From this point, students are

motivated to reason in an explanatory or argumentative manner, interrelating content they are learning in a functionalist or critical manner. The last process relates to the application of the knowledge that has been learned (Cope et al, 2015).

Through working with multiliteracies, students can evolve in the thinking process postulated by Cope et al (2015), by experiencing, conceptualizing, analysing, and applying knowledge in the foreign language, students can interact with various forms and discourses, and play a plural civic role in the globalized community. Thus, they would interpret, translate and negotiate new meanings through English as lingua franca and thereby cross the boundaries imposed by different languages and cultures. As more and more people are connected through the web, cyberspace proves to be a strong place for teachers to bring their students closer to the discourse flow of the target language through practices of multiliteracy.

This approach mobilizes work with different social practices that aims to citizen development, cultural and social inclusion. In inclusive education, these practices have the potential to promote equity among students.

Regarding the activities applied for the development of students' language skills, Weininger (2008) states that teachers play an important role in the path of building language and cultural skills necessary for understanding the target language. Then, teachers need to select appropriate resources to conquer this objective, and to have the conscience that it is not their function to take the answers of the questions they raise, but to generate reflection, questioning, construction and even deconstruction in the classroom (BOHN, 2008).

Therefore, it is the teacher's role to organize, plan and coordinate the learning process of the students and, finally, to evaluate the development of this process. (Volpi, 2008). From this perspective, the teaching practice becomes more complex and needs to be conducted from a critical point of view.

Cyberculture has brought changes that influenced on teachers' liberty to deal with teaching platforms, as well as it has improved the sense of responsibility of students. This is due to the fact that teachers, through online teaching platforms, involve students in the use context of a target-language, what promotes autonomy to the student, in addition to multiliteracies practices that are not limited to the classroom. In this situation, both teacher and student are co-learners in the process of acquisition of L2. Considering this, the use of ICTs is relevant in this study, as it is through them that students acquire language in classroom, in positive and critical manners, complementing their studies in the cyberculture context (Weininger, 2008).

By providing multimodal content, social networks make room for teachers to work more dynamically and interestingly, and additionally engage their students in real situations of English language practices. Furthermore, through social networking, teachers expose their students to non-linear, authentic, multisemiotic, and multidimensional resources that are modern and richer than traditional classroom materials. Through them, the way in which students acquire L2 may be appropriate according to their pace and style, which makes inclusive teaching possible.

The multimodality of the platforms is due to the various discursive genres they contain, that is, they work with the multiliteracies (Rojo, 2013). In this way, the set of language modalities present in online English courses are put together with other signs and language modalities. According to Rojo (2013), the multiliteracy character of online learning platforms was so significant that it extrapolated the digital world and became part of printed texts.

Virtual teaching environments that work with multiliteracies are based on visual representation of knowledge. The software is configured to allow multiple representation formats to be used simultaneously. Although the representations are not simultaneous, there is a facility to move from one representation to another (Neto; Thadei, 2013).

In this section, the Multiliteracies approach and the impact of cyberculture on L2 acquisition were explored. In the next section, the analysis course will be presented.

III. MAINTENANCE AND PROGRESS: BRIEF ANALYSIS

The methodology of a research is a practice that is aligned with real world activities, and it links thought and action (Minayo, 2001). Aiming to find a solution to solve humanity issues, a research interferes in the world through observation and reflection (Chizzotti, 2006).

Therefore, in the research focuses on analysing the potentiality of the BBC Learning English and Memrise, both online teaching platforms, in what concerns teaching the basic level of English language. To perform this analysis, three parameters were elaborated: Language Practices, Mobilization of Multiliteracy Practices and the Potential of the platform's adequacy for teaching English, as presented in the following table:

Table 1: Parameters of analysis

<p>Language Practices:</p>	<p>To examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) If the platform addresses predominantly with activities related to the construction of language competences focusing on listening, speaking and reading skills; b) If the online course works with language as a system; c) If the platform considers different discursive genres and their social function; d) if the activities in the platform are elaborated through a dialogical approach.
<p>Mobilization of Multiliteracy Practices</p>	<p>To analyse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) If the platform develops its activities considering a social interactionist approach, applying them in specific contexts, being multimodal and encompassing the diversity of identities; b) if the themes explored contemplate the cultural diversity of the learners.
<p>Potential of the platform's adequacy for teaching English</p>	<p>To analyse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the platforms' main objective; b) if its pedagogical proposal is social interactionist; c) if its content is relevant to the process of L2 acquisition; d) if the activities promote autonomy to the students stimulating their independency; e) if the teaching process occurs in a collaborative manner and enables students to interact with the L2; f) if the activities proposed by the platform can help the students to appropriate discursive practices that occur in the target language and its production contexts

It is important to point out that those guidelines were created not only with the purpose of analysing BBC Learning English and Memrise, but also to be used as tool for language teachers comprehend the potentiality of language learning platforms they might use or are using to supplement their classes. For the sake of this research, only the basic level was analysed. Nevertheless, the parameters created can be applied in any level offered by a given language learning website. Due to time and bureaucratic constraints, it was not possible to gather the insights of English students who actually have used BBC Learning English and Memrise, as well as teachers' perceptions of these learning platforms' effectiveness.

However, teachers are highly encouraged to use these parameters in their classes and even adapt them if necessary. Considering that the target population of a language learning platform might vary according to its content, the guidelines created are focused on general linguistics and multimodality aspects that can be evaluated either in any stage of learning or at any age range.

BBC Learning English website is focused on teaching English to teens and adults, and it is a segment of "BBC world service", which began in 1932 in the United Kingdom and it is considered the largest broadcaster in the world. Currently, it is responsible for broadcasting, in over 30 languages, through radio and television, news, lectures and discussions on various topics. In addition, the broadcaster also offers informational content through different digital media.

At the basic level of BBC Learning English, "English My Way", there are 14 units divided into three parts. The first part involves a problem that a particular character is facing; the second part concerns the solution of that problem, and the last part is devoted to revising new vocabulary. The first two parts always have the same structure that is introduced by a text on the same theme of the unit, followed by a video that contextualizes the topic to be addressed (Fig. 1).

After that, there is a short video and then the platform proposes some group discussions, and finally, the student

must answer a quiz about that video. Although the sublevels are made up of stories, they are not

interconnected along the level.

Activity 2 School – Part 1

Samina and Ayesha are at the school gates

Samina meets another mother at the school gates, but at first it goes wrong.

Discuss these questions with your group:

- How can they have a better conversation?
- What should they say in English?
- Why is Samina so shy?

• Watch the video and complete the activity

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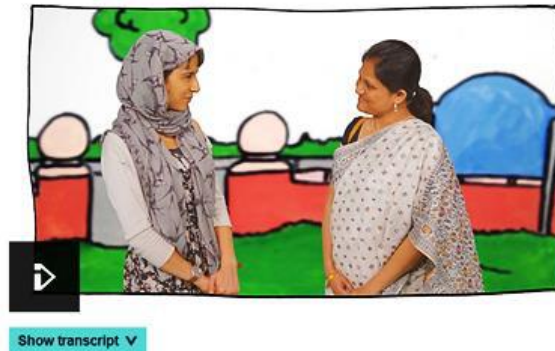


Fig. 1: Screenshot of video content: Samina and Ayesha at the school gate. (BBC, 2019)

Memrise is a language teaching platform founded in 2010 and, as BBC Learning English, aims to teach teens and adults. It currently has over 40 million users and is available in 189 countries. According to Gredge (2012), the award-winning platform was created by the memory master Ed Cooke and the neuroscientist Greg Detre, with the goal of making language learning more fun and exercising the learner's memory. To do so, exercises in Memrise contain flashcards and short videos.

According to the platform's website, Memrise is guided by three principles: to offer quality and interactive content; to utilize advanced features, and to be fun. (Memrise, 2019).

Each level contains the following attributes: Learning New Words, Classic Review, Speed Review, Difficult Words, Listening Skills, and Learn with Locals, that will be presented respectively.

Learning New Words is the first level and contains activities that involve learning new words and expressions. It works with multiple choice exercises, sentence building, writing tests, and listening exercises. Each vocabulary is conducted for four to six times in the subsections. Thus, in Fig. 2, the student's goal is to make the seed, that appears in the upper right corner of the screen, to flourish. When it flourishes, it means that the given word or phrase is stored in the student's long-term memory.

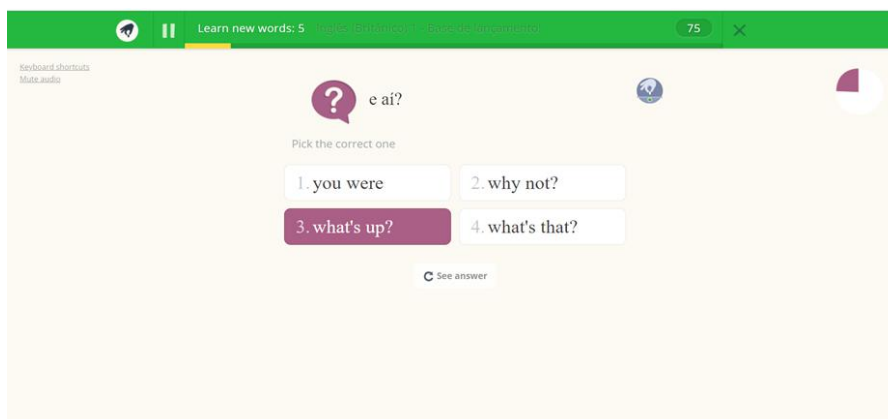


Fig. 2: Learning New Words activity. (MEMRISE, 2019).

In classic review, the vocabulary that was previously learned is revised. According to the platform, the purpose of this exercise is to reinforce new content in the student's long-term memory. This module contains the same exercises as the Learning New Words section. And its purpose is to make the flower that fades as time goes on to flourish again. When the student misses a question, the exercise is repeated and the platform shows the correct answer, so the student has the opportunity to answer the question one more time.

When the learner has already acquired at least three words, he or she can use the Speed Review exercise, which is a review in which the student must quickly choose the answers to each question. The student has approximately

10 seconds to answer each one of them. If the time runs out or the student misses some answer, he loses lives. That way, he has only three chances to make a mistake. After 15 correct answers, the learner can reclaim the lost points, or in this case, lives. The faster the student is the more points he gets.

In Difficult Words section, the words that student has showed more difficulty with are revised again. It is important to notice that this section is only available to users who have had difficulty doing the previous sections. So, the maximum number of covered words per section is 20. Students have the option to remove the marked words by the platform.

Table 2: Comparison between BBC Learning English e Memrise.

Quadro Comparativo das Plataformas			
		BBC	Memrise
Language Practices	a) If the platform addresses predominantly with activities related to the construction of language competences focusing on listening, speaking and reading skills;	Partially	Partially
	b) If the online course works with language as a system;	Partially	No
	c) If the platform considers different discursive genres and their social function;	Partially	No
	d) if the activities in the platform are elaborated through a dialogical approach	No	No
	a) the activities in the platform are elaborated through a dialogical approach.	No	No
Mobilization of Multiliteracy Practices	a) If the platform develops its activities considering a social interactionist approach, applying them in specific contexts, being multimodal and encompassing the diversity of identities;	Partially	No
	b) If the themes explored contemplate the cultural diversity of the learners.	Partially	No
Potential of the platform's adequacy for teaching English	a) the platforms' main objective;	Communicative	Behavioristic /Grammar-Translation
	b) if its pedagogical proposal is social interactionist;	Partially	No
	c) if its content is relevant to the process of L2 acquisition;	Partially	No
	d) if the activities promote autonomy to the students stimulating their independency;	No	No

Listening Skills section involves listening exercises only. As it tests the student's comprehension of vocabularies, the exercises involve sentence building and multiple choice activities.

Learn with Locals section is a module in which students watch videos made by English language native speakers. In recordings, speakers repeat a particular word that was previously taught to the student. After this, the learner is

expected to select the correct answer or type in what was spoken.

Students have the possibility to set daily goals for exercises resolution. The higher the goal, the higher the score the user earns. As all activities are scored, the platform displays the ranking of its users.

Opening possibilities for collaborative work, students and teachers can create groups and share their knowledge. The free version of the Memrise platform can be used on both computer and mobile, and it works with more than 16 languages.

Given that we will make a comparative analysis of the BBC and Memrise platforms, we have set the parameters and results of our analysis in the table 2.

Differently from Memrise (Table 2), BBC contextualizes its units, promotes the partial study of language as a system, and explores some discursive genres. However, both BBC Learning English and Memrise do not contemplate language through a dialogical approach, as the contents in the courses were designed artificially and without spontaneity. To illustrate, at BBC level 1, with School as theme of activity, Samina (unit character) cannot develop a conversation in English, but in the second section of the unit, she produces complex sentences, as “Would you like to come to our house for a cup of tea?”. In this situation, although it does not emphasize a specific grammatical point, the platform only creates dialogues ready to show a possible conversation between two immigrant mothers.

Considering the second parameter on the mobilization of multiliteracy practices, it was concluded that BBC's focus is partially multimodal, while Memrise's is not multimodal at all, because even containing themes for its activities, its content is not presented from a context of enunciation.

BBC works with different discursive genres, such as job interviews and food recipes; then, it contemplates better assumptions of the multiliteracies, although it focusses on school genres that do not represent reality. In unit 2, for example, in the video talking about health issues, the character Ayesha cannot comprehend the secretary she is having a conversation with. However, suddenly, in the next video, Ayesha comprehends the secretary and even interacts with her, saying: “Hello. I need to make an appointment. / Sorry. I'm busy then. Can I have an appointment on Wednesday?”.

Besides those situations, both platforms do not stimulate students to develop their critical thoughts by providing authentic and updated materials, since they do not consider the dialogical and systematic aspects of the language, as the necessity of authentic didactic materials for L2

acquisition. But, in opposition to Memrise, BBC conducts - partially - its activities through reflexive and social-interactionist aspects. Equally partial is BBC's access to diversity of identities, as it excludes cultural aspects of people with disabilities.

In relation to potential of adequacy (Table 2), in general terms, both platforms have different focus, but none of them met the highest expectations in what concerns English teaching. Specially, Memrise, that is instructionalist and do not promotes students' critical reflection. In this sense, both platforms do not translate to an appropriate digital environment that stimulates students' autonomy for using L2, because the activities do not contemplate language use.

Through this research, it was observed that both BBC Learning English and Memrise were only partially met the parameters of analysis. Even though Memrise has an instructionalist approach for teaching, it allows students to share messages with each other through the platform; while BBC does not promote the same opportunity for interaction.

In BBC's unit 2, in the second section, for example, the group discussion activity asks for students to interact in group by sharing their previous experience on making doctor appointments, but the platform does not offer the tools to create a group through itself. Then, students do not have contact with the language in use, especially in an authentic aspect. This situation contradicts with the collaborative practices that occur in the cyberspace, because at the same time BBC stimulates students reflection on different problem solving situations, it does not promote an interlocutor to learners. In the same way, about the collaborative aspect, Memrise focus on language as a structure and does not show to the student its function or even a context of use.

As pointed by Cope et al (2015), contrary to what Leffa (2006) postulates, the use of ICTs is not always linked to updated teaching approaches, as constantly computers are used in a non-progressist didactic manner. Although digital teaching platforms are contemporary and are, theoretically, part of the Integrative CALL, BBC Learning English and Memrise's English courses correspond to Communicative CALL and Behaviourist CALL, respectively.

Therefore, repetition exercises that have already been identified as exhausting (WARSCHAUER, 1996), continue to be applied on Memrise platform, even when its pedagogical proposal considers itself as authentic and innovating on English teaching. Meanwhile, BBC Learning English tries to maintain a communicative approach on language teaching, but it fails on what concerns discursive authenticity.

As a result, even though both platforms crave to work with language considering its dialogical and systematic aspects, they end up producing activities with statements that do not correspond to the language in use. Consequently, students do not have access to the social function of language, besides the discursive genres and their real situations of use. In accordance with Jordão (2009) e Duboc (2014), it is necessary that students have contact with language variety, in addition to its function. In contemporary society, L2 teaching is supported by practices of interaction.

Considering that Bakhtin (2016) affirms that it is the interaction between individuals what gives the dialogical aspect of a language. Also, in the process of acquisition, such in L1 as in L2, people need to have contact with real discursive manifestations in the target-language, that is, without authenticity English acquisition becomes more difficult.

As previously presented, issues among digital L2 courses exist since Behaviourist CALL period (WARSCHAUER, 1996), and are still present on computer-mediated second language teaching. Moreover, Warschauer (1996) concludes that although teaching online platforms are results of high financial investments, they are not projected by people with educational and teaching expertise, that is the case of Memrise. The fact that are no specific parameters to elaborate such platforms creates obstacles for teachers to actually use these tools for L2 teaching.

Even though Memrise is more behaviouristic, instructionalist, it promotes the learning of English by means of gamification which means that, the website provides a set of game-like activities to solve problems regarding the structure of English language. Being that, students would be able to engage in motivating assignments.

Although BBC Learning English, does not provide activities that promote collaboration, and do not encompass language fully as a system, it covers English as lingua Franca and it attempts to contextualise the English Language by creating some scenarios.

Considering teachers' work, as confirmed by Cope et al (2015), these professionals need to reflect on which pedagogical approach is more appropriate to the classroom context. Thus, during their work, it is necessary that teachers offer a reflexive, inclusive, and authentic teaching, through practices based on multiliteracies. For this reason, BBC Learning English as Memrise are insufficient to teachers' pedagogical practice.

Given that, if teachers were to use these platforms as supplemental tool, they could come up with more authentic

activities in the class so that students would still have access to a contextualised content. In other words, teachers could expose their learners to materials produced primarily by native or non-native speakers of English. In this sense, these resources could be converted into any type of activity proposed by the teacher. Being that, instead of relying exclusively on language learning platforms, teachers could also expose their students to students to other types of sources provided online.

IV. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this study, it was analysed the potentiality of BBC Learning English and Memrise, online teaching platforms, in what concerns second language teaching (L2), English as L2 was taken into consideration.

Even though ICTs and English as a second language approaches are in constant progression, this analysis brought evidences that the same progression does not appear on some materials for teaching English as L2. Through selected parameters related to language practices, mobilization of multiliteracy practices, and potentiality of adequacy, the comparison between the two award winning platforms has evidenced the platforms proposals. Both BBC Learning English and Memrise focus on decontextualized repetitions, without exploring, indeed, language in use. From this perspective, the probability of a teacher find a cost-free platform, that has the potential for inclusive English teaching is low.

Therefore, this research reinforced the importance of teachers to be trained and updated about current teaching methodologies and the potential of language learning websites. By being knowledgeable about these matters, second language teachers might understand how they can incorporate ICTs in their teaching practices. Besides, this research also shone a light on the fact that, language learning platforms should also be developed with the aid of teachers who have had a continuing formation regarding second language acquisition and Sociointeracionism.

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