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READING AND RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract. Reading and research at university have positioned themselves as two complex activities loaded with particular demands that deserve the expertise and academic training as they entail potentialities linked to the development of thought and the construction of knowledge. The essay presented attempts to review the demands and implications of reading and research in higher education understanding that recent conceptions propose the need to read critically as a tool at the service of inquiry processes as a diligent process responsible for generating approximations, explorations, descriptions, objective explanations that are valid and pertinent not only in its contribution to the progress and progressivity of science, but also in the capacity to respond to social needs as one of the tasks of every scientific community. For this reason, it is worth affirming that reading and research are constituted for the one that is formed at the higher level as two academic activities on which the processing of information, the production of new knowledge and the interpretation of reality circle as abilities mediated by reflective, analytical and reflexive thought modalities, responsible for granting rigor, objectivity and systematics as demands that entail their validity and recognition within the scientific field.

Keywords: reading, research, thinking, university education and knowledge production.

LEER E INVESTIGAR EN EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR

Resumen. Leer e investigar en la universidad se han posicionado como dos tareas complejas y cargadas de demandas particulares que ameritan de la experticia y de la formación necesaria, pues las mismas entrañan potencialidades vinculadas con el desarrollo del pensamiento y de la construcción de conocimiento. En atención a lo expuesto, con el ensayo que se presenta a continuación, se intenta realizar una revisión de las demandas e implicaciones que tienen el leer e investigar en educación superior, entendiendo que, las concepciones recientes proponen la necesidad de leer en modo crítico como una herramienta al servicio de procesos de indagación objetivos, válidos y pertinentes no solo en su aporte al avance y a la progresividad de la ciencia, sino a la capacidad para responder a las necesidades sociales como uno de los cometidos de toda comunidad científica. Por tal motivo, vale la afirmación de que la lectura y la investigación se constituyen para el que se forma en el nivel superior, dos actividades académicas sobre los que gira el procesamiento y la producción de nuevo conocimiento, mediante la participación del pensamiento reflexivo, analítico y reflexivo que le otorgue rigurosidad, objetividad y sistematicidad como exigencias pautadas para ser reconocido como válido en el ámbito científico.

Palabras clave: lectura, investigación, pensamiento, educación universitaria y producción de conocimiento.

Introduction

Critical reading, thinking and research from the educational point of view have represented exciting and indispensable activities for human development, since from them the consolidation of cognitive and social skills necessary to understand reality and to act has been consciously considered about it. In the words of Pérez (2004) represents acting in a responsible and autonomous way, which brings with it broad intellectual benefits such as “the appropriation of ideas and the development of new ways of thinking, of evaluating, as well as of knowing explanations and visions of the world” (p. 78), in an attempt, according to Freire (2004a), to “describe in depth the relationships that arise in their environment”(p.8).

For Peña (2007), reading and research represent complex academic activities that favor not only effective reflective and analytical processes related to meaningful learning, but also as “powerful and complex instruments endowed with the potential to develop thinking in its various modalities, facilitate mastery of the discourses of each discipline and the various ways in which scientific knowledge is constructed, produced and communicated” (p.2). This statement represents a deep commitment that allows the reader as a scientist “to become an independent and autonomous thinker capable of responsibly assuming the elaboration of their own voice on various topics” (Hawes, 2003; Kendall and McDougall, 2012; Zaganelli, 2011).

For this reason, the demands derived from passing through the university as a space for social transformation, includes within its tasks the formation of a citizen with the ability to build, rebuild and, therefore, account for reality as a scenario of action in which he is immersed. In other words, this diligent reader is expected to, as a student of social reality, make use of his conceptual-theoretical system and the methodological tools of his discipline to expose, describe, explain, interpret and transmit the findings, evidence, transformations and evolutionary processes as a demonstration of his ability to contextualize and make use of knowledge to characterize and formulate coherent assessments.

In this way, reading as a tool to enter specialized knowledge (Martín, 2020; Morales, 2017) empowers the university student to function in the dizzying and complex academic world (Morín, 2009) where the tumultuous represents a condition on which social problems, epistemic discussions and theoretical proposals fall against which it is necessary to proceed reflexively through the use of one's own thinking skills that cooperate with the establishment of interpretive connections and the use of criteria that favor in significant and far-reaching insights that allow for the generation of rational changes in reality.

Now, with this essay, an attempt is made to carry out a dissertation on two of the most important challenges faced, on the one hand, by the student at the university and, on the other hand, the role that the latter must assume as a space for the promotion and creation of necessary conditions for the formation of citizens (Casanny, 2006), among which stand out, the handling of criticality when making use of reading as a tool from which to achieve the empowerment of democratic values and academics that contribute to the transformation of the social scene of which he is part.

Critical reading and thinking in the University

Reading as an academic activity and a university demand has been conceived together with critical thinking as one of the most complex challenges faced by the reader in higher education, since the demands of this level demand the deployment and use of consolidated cognitive skills, which favor access to knowledge of each scientific discipline with which it has contact (Carlino, 2003). This demand then contains, among other aspects, the intellectual commitment of the reader to approach scientific knowledge with an analytical and critical attitude as the most opportune way to circumvent the abundant information to which he is exposed and to which in his attempt to handle the ideological overload makes it imminent to determine what underlies it, understanding that the deep management of information depends on entering and engaging his discursive community (Arnaud, 2002).

In response to these demands, critical thinking together with effective and systematic reading have been configured in ways of approaching the various scientific positions in an attempt to respond to the need to appropriate textual forms, intentions, of the purposes and conventions that each discipline has established (Carlino, 2003) so that the reader can enter the knowledge that is generated from them. Therefore, the imperative need to handle conceptual references such as the use of prior knowledge have become means of support for the significant processing of sources saturated with multiple inferences that the text presents (Corrado and Eizaguirre, 2003; Sánchez, De-Frutos and Vázquez, 2017) and those that the reader must face in order to cope with their academic training.

For this reason, critical reading has been understood as a social requirement of singular importance for the formation of democratic and autonomous citizens in the 21st century. Hence, the university as an ideal space for the development of such tasks (Peppino, 2006) has designed important strategies in an attempt to bring the student closer to knowledge with a critical disposition from which to approach the large and complex accumulations of information, to those that he must understand as inputs on which the construction of approaches and core elements that lead him to develop new insights about knowledge depends.

This attitude towards information and the world, then represents the assumption of a position with the authority to criticize, from which the reader is able to make judgments and reasoning about reality, as well as the phenomena that arise in his environment. This implies that his position vis-à-vis what happens in his environment ceases to be naive and becomes an attitude with a tendency to objection, capable of refuting any tax claim through in-depth dialogue from which reasoning is derived, which allows to meaningful communicative processes in which he invites a coherent, elaborate and pertinent debate on the knowledge of his discipline. In other words, it is a matter of consolidating skills to dialogue and communicate knowledge, necessary conditions on which persuading the other with ideas and reasons based on logical premises and endowed with solidity is based (Freire, 2002).

In this way, approaching the reading of academic texts constitutes a means to overcome the reductionist and narrow views from which scientific knowledge and reality have been seen, a condition that has hindered the development of critical competencies that help the reader in the process of constructing responses to what daily emerges from his interaction with information. This statement, from critical pedagogy, refers to the autonomous disposition to dialogue with the authors, understanding them as susceptible

to error in their assertions, which have been assumed by the criterion of authority that supports them as infallible (Morales, 2019).

This means that reading is an activity from which the subject not only constructs his own perception of reality, but is also capable of contrasting the various existing views on it, allowing, according to Sánchez (2004), the “elaboration of solid, critical knowledge connected to the reality in which we live in” (p.2). What has been said then defines that part of the benefits of academic reading are found in his potential to problematize, wondering and looking for explanations that satisfy his persistent concern to better understand what is happening in its immediate context.

In view of the above, reading is understood as a tool to enhance and develop the critical thinking of the student, who at the university level is expected to be able to articulate what he appreciates of reality with the ideas provided by the accumulated knowledge (Zemelman, 2005). This way of operating with information refers not only to his autonomy to actively participate in the construction of knowledge, but to his critical disposition to deepen the identification of those ideas that could answer his questions and interests as a researcher.

Leading the university reader to assume the active role of elaborating clear and proper approaches means constructively engaging them with the deep interpretation of knowledge, that is, transcending what is superficially seen by third parties until their judgments are consistent and sufficiently argued to be accepted as contributions relevant to the discipline to which he is joining (Carlino, 2002; Morales, 2018b; Reale, 2016). Paraphrasing Delmaestro and Balada (2012), reading, in addition to favoring the development of critical skills, also makes it possible for the student to define his identity as a diligent reader who is expected to be able to provide carefully thought-out assessments based on his interaction with the information, a process that alludes to the willingness to autonomously face epistemological problems and the discussions to which the tradition of his discipline has been dedicated.

In this sense, reading in the university is understood as a task that mainstream teaching and learning practices, by allowing a conscious approach to the contents taught at this level, for this reason, it is also understood as a means for humanistic training, responsible for training not only to act competently within the academic scene, by favoring interaction with a diversity of voices that are exposed in a varied literature, constituted by multiple underlying visions and ideological positions that involve ways of seeing knowledge and the world, but to attend to the needs of daily life that revolve around coexistence and tolerance as values of indisputable relevance today (Kendall and McDougall, 2012).

Faced with this characterization of what it implies to interact with complex information, reading in the university has been set as a task to promote the development of thought in its critical mode, considering this as an effective instrument to encourage the reader to question authority, the approaches made by third parties, their positions and theoretical trends, elements from which it is possible to consolidate critical competencies that contribute to the generation of new interpretations (Di Stefano and Pereira, 2004; Morales, 2018a).

Now, as part of the academic demands of the university context, the reader as a critical and reflective subject is expected to deploy mental operations that cooperate with the management of theoretical elements and with the integration of information, activities that are possible through open and flexible discussion in which the reader manages to confront contents, sources and theoretical positions, activities of thought, which due to

their relevance allow the generation of innovative insights about knowledge (Carlino, 2003; Di Stefano and Pereira, 2004), understanding the historical moment and social context in which the theoretical contribution under review is generated and, on whose management the assumption of a systemic position will depend that allows him to make use of the various dimensions that are directly and indirectly linked to the subject under study (Pérez, 2004).

All this implies that the university reader in use of his critical thinking requires the internalization and management of central contents, understanding these as historical and cultural constructions of disciplinary knowledge that need to be assumed as units of meaning, which they entail in themselves implicit ideas with different positions on specific contexts and moments, which facilitate deep understanding, but also favor significant learning processes, the use of reasoning, the management of academic knowledge and the appropriation of specific ideas from which it is possible understanding and deciphering their environment and the phenomena that arise in them (Campanario and Moya, 1999; Corrado and Eizaguirre, 2003; Konrr, 2010).

With respect to these approaches, reading in higher education therefore requires a critical attitude, but also the ability to elaborate conjectures and reviews about the ideological tendencies of the authors of compulsory consultation, as a strategy to approach their appreciations, ways of seeing and to read the world, while still paying attention to the social, cultural and ideological burden that hides behind their statements. This element seen from the criticality represents a factor of capital importance to understand the conventions that underlie their statements, the scientific perspectives that permeate their ideas and the own or third-party positions that they use to transmit their knowledge and what they think. of the changes that emerge from their own context (Eco, 1992).

Consequently, the appropriation and management of a lecture characterized by complexity, controversy, multiple and diverse scientific voices have been attributed to disciplinary dissertations whose contents underlie important positions that must be considered as the way of understanding the organization of ideas as part of the production of knowledge. This seen from the tasks of reading today, implies developing a critical reflection that allows the university reader to distinguish causal relationships within the lecture, points of encounter and differentiation, but also the construction of his own perception and new knowledge about what he reads (Campanario and Moya, 1999; Di Stefano and Pereira, 2004).

For this reason, critical reading represents a powerful tool for the transformation of thought and an ally for academic training, since within its benefits is the possibility of generating novel interpretations with a tendency to social transformation and the development of actions that transcend critical discourse to become responses that contribute to the order and organization of the social (Cardinale, 2007). This implicitly refers to the need to appropriate of a lecture with a tendency towards praxis and the recursive assessment of reality, that is, that can be led towards the creation of more just and democratic conditions that are committed to the common good (Cassany, 2006) and as Pérez (2004) puts it, by “the construction of citizenship and democracy” (p.77).

All this from the educational point of view, allows us to affirm that reading should be seen as a practice of social empowerment and emancipation (Freire, 2002) that favors the development of cognitive and social skills that increase the levels of comprehension of the changing dynamics in which the social is immersed and, on which the construction of reality depends on, making use of conceptual and theoretical references that position

him as a reflective subject, whose intellectual potential allows him to resignify social relations, through cognitive operations that help him to object, refute and use his own voice to confront radical or fallacious positions seen as truths.

In this way, reading within the disciplines represents one of the ways to enter the understanding of scientific plots, in a critical disposition to perceive and closely understand the production of knowledge (Morales, 2017; Serrano, 2008), the result of social interactions, communicative relationships and the dynamics that configure social work (Cabrera and Caruman, 2019; Freire, 1994; Ocampo and López, 2020). These assertions suggest the ideal of a citizen with the capacity, according to Freire (2002), to "elaborate the world" (p.13). In view of this, it can be affirmed that this citizen is expected to have the potential to construct the world in an analytical way by deploying skills of higher thinking that allow him to problematize as an indispensable part of his scientific attitude towards his reality, for what which requires the management of a recurring dialogue, a strategy that must be seen as a fundamental part of the processes of construction and transformation of the world.

For this reason, reading in the university should be seen as a process in which it is tried to bring the student closer to knowledge, understanding this condition as a need converged by the participation of the thought that the cognitive instruments propitiate him to learn to reflect on knowledge and to build their own ideas by questioning given approaches, from which to give consistency to his thinking (Carlino, 2005). This indicates that reading, in addition to promoting the development of new ideas, also offers the reader the authority to delve into the information, since the skills involved in it promote going after underlying ideological approaches and on implicit ideas to which the subject as a responsible agent must display his diligent sense to understand the way in which knowledge is elaborated from each discursive community.

From the sociocultural perspective, the above is indicative of the potential that reading entails, since within its qualities the epistemic function is specified that, using criticality, allows the reader to build and give meaning to reality, in a recurring search and diligent reasons, explanations and valid arguments that cooperate with the understanding of social and scientific dynamics, areas that, due to their relevance, affect him and condition the establishment of relationships, links and connections as average mental operations on which the elaboration of new appraisals endowed with scientific rigor.

Therefore, reading in higher education means preparing the student for autonomous learning and the appropriation of knowledge (Agredo and Burbano, 2012), fundamental conditions on which the responsibility to face reality falls from a reflective position and endowed with reasoning, cognitive activities that favor a comprehensive assessment of what is happening, in an attempt to detect logical reasons and coherent explanations. This position from critical thinking is nothing more than an active procedure of deep review of the world from which the necessary inputs are derived to resignify and offer answers to the changes and transformations that emerge as a result of the dynamism in which he is immersed. It consists, then, following Freire (2004b), in "analyzing a certain object of study in its entirety but at the same time in its particular connections as the way to establish and determine the causal relationships between phenomena" (p.8).

In this way, it is possible to affirm that reading finds in critical thinking, the opportune instrument to detect the consistency of the reasoning that emerges from social events and infer underlying relationships, but also to test his own mental representations.

This speaks of his autonomy as a thinking subject, who in his intellectual behavior is not only capable of questioning what is happening in his environment, but of submitting his appraisals to evaluation and self-reflection in order to reconstruct knowledge, giving him greater truthfulness and credibility (Acuña and López, 2017; Freire, 2002; Morales, 2019).

This attitude from the academic point of view represents one of the reading tasks, which tries that the reader as an active agent manages to participate competitively within the great accumulations of information that are produced in the university and that demand, among other things, the interaction with the scientific statements of each discipline, to rigorously identify conjectures, data and ideas as inputs from which to develop his own opinions and approaches that allow him to participate within his discipline.

In response to this, López (2013), in an approach to what reading academically implies, claims that it is an intellectual process in which a series of cognitive abilities are involved that cooperate so that the reader can “identify arguments and assumptions, recognize important relationships, make correct inferences, evaluate evidence and authority, and draw conclusions” (p.3). This exhibition speaks of a critical attitude that values information in a deep and thorough way in its quest to recognize what is true, useful and relevant in the contents with which it interacts (Kurland, 2003; Peppino, 2006).

What is stated in the words of Santelices (2001) is nothing more than approaching knowledge with a reflective and analytical disposition that allows the reader “to be able to discover problems, contradictions, limitations and arguments that support or refute certain ideas or approaches and decide rationally what to do or believe” (p.1). This sensitivity to approach knowledge is the result of an inferential thought capable of unraveling ideas that could be behind each textual sequence and that require an evaluative attitude that enters until identifying the message and ideologies left by the author (Gil and Flores, 2011).

Faced with this commitment, it is expected that the reader of the university system will have their cognitive skills that will lead him, according to Piette (1998), to be able to “ask questions, judge definitions, distinguish and identify disciplinary problems, make judgments, determine reliability of the information, judge the credibility of the sources, identify the implicit assumptions and make generalizations and build his own conclusions” (p.25). All this from the critical pedagogy responds to a critical and rigorous attitude that favors testing the premises that support the theoretical assumptions assumed as irrefutable (Freire, 2002).

Hence, it is attributed that the role of the reader within the disciplinary field is closely linked to the responsibility of understanding the conventions and ways in which the information in his field of knowledge is presented, for which recognition is necessary as stated by Gil and Flores (2011) of core aspects and "explicit approaches, the identification of logical sequences, the extraction and conclusions, as elements from which to fix a position" (p.111). From the above it can be derived that reading in the university requires not only the management of mental abilities and operations, but also the acquisition of a series of academic practices and agreements that contribute to the identification of the multiple ways in which culture is expressed written (Torres, 2006).

Faced with such demands, Hawes (2003) proposes that academic reading has different objectives that lead the subject not only to guarantee his participation and entry into specialized knowledge, but also to “the elaboration of good ideas that integrate different interdisciplinary views and perspectives as aspects to adopt an own position,

which due to its relevance can be communicated with clarity, coherence and adherence to logical criteria as expressions associated with thought” (p.39-40).

From this turns out the need to appeal to the critical conscience capable of entering knowledge in a deep way, for which the use of a flexible understanding that enables the words of Martín and Barrientos (2009) is essential):

“understanding the organization of knowledge, the theoretical elements on which it supports and the epistemological framework in which it is inscribed, in order to later be able to demolish those fallacious paradigms and ideas and to erect other solid and supported points of view on scientific verification” (p. 3).

These assertions, from reflective learning theories, represent, according to Daros (2009), seeing reading as a tool for the deep management of postures, disagreements and points of agreement, as well as “the problems that each discipline addresses, to later elaborate hypotheses and issue opinions supported as the result of an exercise thought out in a reflective, methodical and analytical way, skills involved in any scientific process that tries to offer explanations about reality” (p.12).

For its part, critical pedagogy has put forward a series of reasons that position reading as an instrument whose formative commitment involves, among other things, developing criteria to set a position and promote acute thinking that allows the reader, as proposed by Cardinale (2007) the "intervening, resisting and producing counter-hegemonic actions and discourses with transformative effects that transcend mere discourse and criticism to creative responses capable of generating significant changes" (p.1).

This, from the latest trends in reading in the university, refers to the use of criticality as a tool that facilitates the generation of new reasoning and judgments (Jurado; 2008) as operations that can be associated with the epistemic potential that facilitates the production of new knowledge as a result of the assessment of its reality. This characterization of reading as a socio-cognitive process involves the idea of a reader as with the disposition to identify problems, systemic relationships and links between situations as fundamental conditions to build alternatives and support mechanisms that lead to effective decision-making processes and resolution of social conflicts (Galaburri, Lonchi and Greco, 2009).

To this active procedure assumed by the reader, the critical perspective has taken for granted that reading is conceived as a process that encourages the development of social, communicative and discursive skills that favor deep interaction with the information presented in specialized texts, since that contributes to the exercise of argumentation and counter-argumentation, the use of reflection, establishing comparisons, identifying modular aspects and analyzing positions, which cooperate with going beyond what is explicitly offered in the texts, in a provision focused according to Arenas (2009) towards “generating a true dialogue between thought and knowledge, the result of which is to assume critical positions regarding what is read and what is written, so that all this continues the process of feedback, recreation and transformation of knowledge” (p.2).

All this from the epistemic conception of reading has profound educational implications that are limited to the activation of previous or world knowledge, such as the information that the reader uses to establish associations and connections with the new knowledge, generating as a result the construction of knowledge endowed with relevance

and pertinence, as conditions from which it is possible to understand reality responsibly, participate with greater academic sensitivity and a sense of social belonging (Arenas, 2009; Cabrera and Caruman, 2019; Fons, 2006).

In this sense, reading in the university, in addition to representing the entrance door to scientific knowledge, also constitutes a tool at the service of the deep appropriation of ideas and concepts from which it is possible to operate to develop innovative ideas and build new scientific contributions such as expressions that show the mastery of abilities and skills to understand the accumulated knowledge (Zemelman, 2005; Morales, 2016) and, based on this, make significant contributions and as a demonstration of their competitiveness to participate in the practices of their discipline and research processes through which to offer rigorous reasoning and assessments with the potential to address both global and context-specific problems.

In this way, it is inevitable to refer to reading from two positions, on the one hand, as the means that allows the student not only to resignify the world and, on the other, as an instrument whose repertoire favors coherent action among whose objectives are: his willingness to transcendently modify the scope of action; develop systematic actions as part of the treatment of social problems in an attempt to provide alternative solutions; integrating various theoretical positions as strategies to correctly and effectively address situations in which uncertainty is the common denominator and raise creative processes capable of overcoming the vicissitudes and obstacles derived from the multiplicity of factors that, when correlated, allow a comprehensive approach to their dynamics and performance.

These reasons, paraphrasing Morales (2017), imply the critical behavior of a reader whose careful sense allows him to reach deep levels of understanding given by his ability to unravel underlying meanings and approaches, resolve controversies and sustain his own actions. In addition to this, his attitude towards knowledge, in addition to allowing him wide levels of deepening, also constitutes a coherent way of handling knowledge in an authentic and true way, avoiding, with this, the ambiguous, obscure and confusing aspects that could make it impossible to assume a correct position when supporting or questioning the intention of the authors.

Therefore, reading in the university requires an objective attitude and an open position capable of apprehending the information derived from scientific research processes that, despite being attached to critical, verifiable and logical criteria, must be subjected to rigorous evaluations. What in the words of Freire (2002) would be “the assumption of a critical stance given to the search for solid reasoning, in a disposition given to permanent questioning and reflective evaluation as necessary skills to verify the veracity of knowledge” (p.27).

In summary, managing in a competitive way in the complex and diverse theoretical frameworks that are produced today requires a high commitment not only on the part of the person who teaches, but also of the person who, in the place of the apprentice, has the responsibility to analyze, criticize, problematize and offer alternatives to the great issues that continue to be discussed within his discipline. The above, in addition to constituting an academic commitment that seeks educational improvement, is also assumed as a premise on which the need to train citizens capable of becoming true defenders of their ideas and positions is based, a condition that invites to promote the use of critical thinking as an instrument to elaborate opinions and own arguments that reveal their voice as a reflective subject.

Reading and research in the University

Part of the tasks of higher education in the 21st century are framed in guiding the subject towards the development of academic competencies that allow him to move within countless and diverse accumulations of scientific information. Therefore, exercises such as reading and research have become vertices of educational programs that seek, among other things, to promote autonomous processes of approach and appropriation of knowledge, combining the understanding of reality in the light of theoretical postulates with the eagerness to offer reasons that justify how and in what way social life works (Peña, 2014; Zemelman, 2005).

For this reason, research as a process inherent to university education involves critical thinking skills such as critical reading competencies (Acuña and López, 2017) through which the information with which one interacts is analyzed, valued and reconstructed. Getting the student to operate in this way with the contents of his area implies committing him to the examination and in-depth review of the ideas and approaches proposed from various disciplines, to which he must resort to build valid, credible and rigorous statements that refer to relevant formulations for the advancement of science.

It is, according to Peña (2014), that:

the student transcends what is taught and explicit, to individually enter into inquiry processes in which he makes use of reason and thought to establish connections and links between theory and experience, a process from which new scientific positions are derived. (p. 80).

Paraphrasing Pozuelos and Travé (2005), it is a procedure that consists of transcending from the mere search for information to a critical, objectionable, restless and reflective attitude that allows reading to become a process from which relevant approaches to the world, its problems and epistemological discussions emerge.

In this same line of thought, Bautista (2005) proposes that research and reading are closely related, inasmuch as they represent activities that include learning and obtaining new findings within their objectives, but also “generating significant experiences through the exploration of particular problems, promote the critical construction of new knowledge and establish relationships between theoretical knowledge and daily life ”(p.52). The foregoing coincides with the proposals of Hawes (2003) who states that reading gives the researcher the ability to “see relationships between ideas and use them to build their own voice to discuss various issues” (p.41).

At the same time, the postulates of Sánchez (2004) show that critical reading contributes to scientific research the “identification of those ideas, approaches and references from which to evaluate and interpret reality, thereby contributing to the production of diverse and innovative scientific knowledge” (p.7). From this, the interdependence between scientific research and reading is inferred, since the latter depends on the detection of those aspects that could distort the generation of knowledge and, as a consequence, allow the realization of adjustments and corrections that cooperate with the validation of new knowledge.

From the perspective of Restrepo (2003), the research implicitly requires rigorous reading processes that contribute to:

familiarize and initiate students in activities and knowledge production practices, with the way in which knowledge is organized and with the

procedures necessary to solve problems and offer relevant solutions that promote discovery and creativity. (p.197).

En palabras de Andrade (2007), esta competencia lectora refiere a “la apropiación, interpretación, imaginación y re-creación de ideas como un modo de producción de nuevo conocimiento” (p.233).

In the words of Andrade (2007), this reading competence refers to “the appropriation, interpretation, imagination and recreation of ideas as a mode of production of new knowledge” (p.233).

In support of this approach, Sánchez (2004) states that scientific research uses reflective reading to “carry out precise interpretations, descriptions and analysis from a critical position that favors the formulation of problems rationally and through the support of conceptual models which generate the necessary references for the construction of new scientific positions” (p.8). In this line of thought, Andrade (2007) characterizes reading as the process responsible for “developing capacities and abilities to understand, comprehend, reflect, analyze, criticize and recreate implicit information, on which the elaboration of concepts that re-meanings allow us to interpret the relationships that continually emerge from reality” (p.234).

On the other hand, positions derived from research as a formative activity, propose that it merits critical reading in order to start up significant cognitive processes such as: deep inquiry processes, the identification of causal relationships, the search for similar or analogous situations, the choice of relevant, pertinent and updated literature that contributes to the organization and analysis of the information (Cardinale, 2007; Morales, 2017; Restrepo, 2003).

In this sense, Fernández (2011) shows that in every process of scientific inquiry underlies the elaboration of accurate and analytical readings that offer “the opportunity to fully address problems and situations in a comprehensive manner, by involving important cognitive skills such as reflection and the search for alternatives that allow us to obtain theoretical references from which to validate the findings ”(p.1). For Freire (2004b), scientific research requires the participation of critical skills and analysis processes typical of reading that help with the permanent and recurrent questioning of reality through the use of theoretical references that, in turn, lead to assume "an impartial, objective and secure attitude towards the facts and events" (p.16).

Now, paraphrasing Blaxter, Hughes and Tigth (2002) it is possible to infer that the researcher in his scientific role must assume reading as a tool through which: to contrast ideas and theoretical perspectives; review the disciplinary pronouncements that have cooperated with the advancement of the object of study and that allow broadening its vision; it favors the selection of precise and necessary arguments to build new theoretical frameworks; elaborating critical pronouncements whose epistemological foundation finds a place within academic communities and, finally, reading allows the researcher to explore and venture into fields of knowledge that are scarcely studied and whose relevance determines the significant generation of new studies.

In this way, it can be affirmed that reading and research implicitly involve the use of criticality as a cognitive ability that allows monitoring the transformations and temporal variations that knowledge experiences (Arnaux, 2002; Camilli and Römer, 2017) and that determine, according to Corrado and Eizaguirre (2003), the "process of selective and systematic search as elementary aspects on which the construction of

meanings, data processing and socialization of findings derived from research processes falls" (p.8).

For Velez and Dávila (1984), researching in university education requires the management of cognitive operations and processes derived from academic reading, which cooperate the researcher with “analyzing and subjecting to a critical examination the information with which they have contact, in an attempt to make modifications, adjustments and adaptations, as well as to discard or legitimize existing and new knowledge through deep reflection” (p.1). This, in the words of Serna and Díaz (2014), is nothing more than “the identification and location of explicit and implicit statements from which it is possible for the researcher to make conceptual approaches and build interdisciplinary bridges that allow him to interpret, analyze, predict, buy and associate in a more comprehensive way” (p.171).

In addition to this, the aforementioned authors propose that reading is a social and cognitive process that provides the researcher with the critical sense and authority to “generate a constant reflection on the social facts that appear in reality, to determine their authenticity and to be able to take a position in front of them and achieve high levels of understanding of reality” (p.172). In support of this position, Ulloa, Crispín and López (2014) state that "reading constitutes the means for research processes to guide the rigorous processing and analysis of information that will then be shown as a contribution to the advancement of science" (p.1).

In this regard, critical pedagogy proposes that reading as a learning tool enables the construction of hypotheses, the elaboration of inferences and the analytical interaction with the information, cognitive abilities that due to their implications cooperate not only with the taking of position in front of scientific knowledge, but also with the creation of conditions for the production of knowledge, an elementary requirement that from an academic point of view opens the gap to enter the production of knowledge generated in scientific communities in a timely manner (Carlino, 2003; Lema, Rodríguez, Barranquero, 2016; Morales, 2017).

For Cassany (2006), critical reading makes significant contributions to research, since it indicates to the reader the scientific positions that underlie the theories and epistemological positions that permeate knowledge, suggesting that “what is behind the lines is ideology, point of view, intention and argumentation used by the author to support his idea” (p.52). This appreciation is also shared by Serna and Díaz (2014) who affirm that reading makes it possible to “unravel hidden or implicit meanings and take a position in front of them, skills that allow the researcher to define the theoretical field on which he will try to analyze the reality object of study”(p.173).

Therefore, reading is an academic process on which it depends that the researcher transcends simple opinions to the construction from a position supported by reasons and arguments, elaborated ideas and recurring questions, which, converted into systematic reflections, allow the reader to problematize, identify causal relationships and possible elements that, because they represent important findings, favor the assumption and exploration of new possibilities that redefine the world and that provide enriching perspectives based on accumulated knowledge (Castejón, González, & Cuetos, 2019; Schere, 2020; Zemelman, 2005) to open new gaps in the production of knowledge in barely explored subjects.

For Oliveras and Sanmartí (2009), reading as a generator of critical thinking and vice versa, appeals to the exercise of mental operations that make it possible for research to develop innovative formulations and “formulate hypotheses, appreciate a problem

from alternative points of view, consider new questions and possible solutions, evaluate the credibility of the sources, identify core and focal aspects, as well as plan strategies to deepen explanatory and more elaborate levels” (p.234).

In this way, reading as an inherent tool in any inquiry process, which in the words of Torino (2008) allows the student to “explore and effectively function in university life, through the use of deduction and inference as mental operations that favor the identification and discrimination of real research problems” (p.2). In this same line of thought, Fons (2006) states that “reading from its epistemic function counts within its implications, the possibility of contributing reflections and favoring rigorous deepening capable of going beyond what others have examined, opening with this new horizons for research” (p.3).

In this sense, it is possible to affirm that any research process requires exhaustive reviews and academic reading practices as means from which to collect the theoretical and conceptual references necessary to face the understanding of reality, through the confrontation of various voices given from multiple disciplines, whose contribution is capable of enriching the construction of analytical, interpretive and explanatory relationships as elements that must coexist in problematization as an underlying cognitive ability in all scientific inquiry.

For this, the critical perspectives of research as a logical and rigorous activity, have proposed that reading allows the researcher to integrate accumulated knowledge, detect divergences and similarities in a recurrent confrontation process that allows, according to Trujillo (2003) “the selection and reflective and analytical processing of the existing theoretical corpus to later carry out constructions of new knowledge”(p.4). The pronouncements derived from critical reading have shown that the research uses this tool to achieve processes of verification and continuous confrontation between what is contributed by various authors and disciplines and, the use of them as references to interpret reality as a cognitive ability necessary to make significant elaborations with a high level of relevance (Guzmán, 2018; Martín, 2013; Morales, 2017; Ocampo and López, 2019).

In this same position, the defenders of critical thinking as an instrument implicitly involved in academic reading, have argued according to Agredo and Burbano (2012) that research constitutes an intellectual process that “to carry out deeply reflective reasoning requires the use of one's own abilities of thought that allow you to integrate and define relationships between scientific positions and make use of self-criticism to achieve relevant results that resignify the world” (p.7). What has been said from educational theory has a unique value, by helping with the construction of knowledge and the elaboration of approximations as close as possible to what happens in reality, in which reasons and explanatory links of the origin, dynamics and dependence of certain social processes (Fernández, 2011; Freire, 2002; Valencia and Jaramillo, 2015).

In this search for causal relationships and deep explanations, the reading from its epistemic function, has proposed that its strategies guide the researcher towards the realization of historical accounts, in which important findings are identified that, when carefully and critically reviewed, result in the construction, reconstruction and reformulation of ideas and theoretical approaches to reality, which aims to propose alternatives that integrate from a holistic view the development of new courses of action in an attempt to achieve higher levels of understanding.

For their part, Acuña and López (2017), argue that the mental operations involved in reading account for their relevance and contributions to scientific research, by

involving important cognitive activities that facilitate, among other things, “critical understanding, assessment of diverse points of view on the object of study, its implications and consequences, the analysis and processing of data, the construction of new concepts and the generation of pertinent inferences and interpretations” (p.11).

In view of the above, Ennis (1987) has proposed reasons that justify the importance of reading for research, among which stands out “focus on the question, analyze arguments, pose and respond to clarification and/or challenge questions, judge the credibility of the sources, observe and judge observations, deduction, induction, value judgments, define terms, identify assumptions, decision and interaction with others” (p.12). What has been proposed agrees with the ideas of Alarcón and Fernández (2009) who state that reading as a basic tool in higher education, gives room to academic practices such as “the offering of criticisms from which to take a position in the face of knowledge, deepen and expand the vision through the integration of knowledge from other disciplines” (p.4).

This vision is also shared by Martín (2011) for whom reading not only provides valuable information to the researcher, but also contributes with “going beyond the simple accumulation of data, until the creation of new relationships, associations and management of conceptual approaches through critical processes where the participation of reflective thought is capable of producing new ideas” (p.4). This, in the light of the reading within the disciplines, represents an indispensable condition to transcend towards the elaboration of solid positions and based on rigorous, critical and systematic reasoning, as elements that permeate the academic discourse and, which in turn represent characteristics that must be present in all knowledge produced under the demands of science (Carlino, 2003; Gómez, Francisco, Moreno, 2016; Morales, 2017; Oliveras and Sanmartí, 2009).

In this sense, it is possible to reiterate these approaches by claiming that reading favors the researcher to establish a deep dialogue with the knowledge derived from various sources, allowing him to ask and cross-examine the information in a recurrent and systematic search for answers and reasons in which there is the scientific concern to identify significant elements, for which the deployment of mental operations that make possible, according to Fons (2006), “the search for links and interrelations between scientific positions, the formulation of hypotheses, expectations construction and the use of inferences” (p.6).

For Sanmartí (2011), reading constitutes a process prior to any research process, because it makes it possible for the subject to “have a theoretical framework that enables them to connect what is new they are investigating with what is already known, giving rise to the generation of new knowledge and scientific knowledge, to intervene in their environment and make informed and responsible decisions” (p.2). Paraphrasing Bruner (1997) and Freire (2002), the university must articulate reading with all areas of knowledge, in order to train competent citizens, capable of seeking meeting points and differentiation between theoretical perspectives from which they generate their own body of knowledge about what is happening in the world.

In summary, it is possible to affirm that in every research process the management of skills related to reading underlies, because as an intellectual and academic process the latter provides the epistemic potential to develop reflections, reasoning and critical contributions, which are understood as deep approaches, allow the researcher to construct significant contributions, scientific arguments and transformations in the accumulated knowledge (Zemelman; 2005; Morales, 2016) as necessary inputs to redefine reality

(Bruner, 1996) and to offer intervention actions that seek human development in all its dimensions (Caride, Caballo and Gradaille, 2018; Daros, 2009).

Final Thoughts

As it was appreciated, reading and research as requirements of all educational levels, represent especially for higher education two of the essential processes to which the student must appeal to reflectively and critically address the information presented in the specialized texts. Therefore, the demands of university education propose, according to Peña (2007), the management of "strategies and conventions necessary to address the density and complexity of academic texts with sufficient analytical depth at the time of making bibliographic consultations from various sources, as a condition that makes it capable of supporting any inquiry process" (p.3).

In view of the above, reading and research constitute intellectual processes that are interrelated, intertwined and feed into each other, because both have, among their tasks, the search for reasons that justify the existence and veracity of the approaches offered by third parties and, to be assumed as true, they require deep reviews and evaluations that make possible the elaboration of meaningful reflections, as well as new and pertinent interpretations that account for the relationships raised in social reality.

In this way, it is possible to affirm that cognitive abilities such as the identification of true reasoning, the integration of information, the detection of fallacious arguments, the construction of ideas and the handling of epistemological controversies, as they are operations inherent to academic reading, constitute contributions of indisputable relevance for scientific research, by enabling the choice of the theoretical and conceptual references necessary to problematize and offer other ways of explaining the dynamic and changing character of the world; this in the words of Andrade (2007) allows "discovering, imagining, finding possible worlds and new knowledge that encourage recreation" (p.234).

Consequently, and following the postulates of Hawes (2003), reading constitutes for any research process, the means to "interpret, analyze and question the different justifications, interpretations and contributions derived from other scientific positions, of which, integrated, they favor the approach progressive and systematic to reality in order to offer explanations and timely solutions to problems" (p.6). This indicates that the search, deep treatment and processing of information constitute competences linked to reading and that due to their implications they cooperate in a transcendental way in the processes of apprehension of the world, of the phenomena that arise in it and of which construction of new knowledge will depend (Bautista, 2012; Morales, 2017; Zemelman, 2005).

Finally, it can be deduced that the approach and the production of knowledge merit the participation of processes of critical reading and inquiry as intellectual operations that facilitate the integration of isolated knowledge, the connection between scientific positions and the association of ideas as indispensable conditions for elaborate innovative contributions that allow the subject to participate in the work of discursive communities effectively. In addition to this and bringing up the position of Peña (2008), reading and research constitute processes that, due to the potential they entail, favor in higher education "the development of the spirit of inquiry, independent thinking and the promotion of communicative skills necessary to produce quality scientific knowledge" (p.1).

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