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ednorman@poligran.edu.co
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VIRTUAL LEARNING ABOUT POSTGRADUATE THESIS: KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION IN ACTIVITIES WITH PEERS AND EXPERTS IN FORUMS

Alvarez, Guadalupe; Difabio de Anglat, Hilda

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VIRTUAL LEARNING ABOUT POSTGRADUATE THESIS: KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION IN ACTIVITIES WITH PEERS AND EXPERTS IN FORUMS

Formación virtual sobre tesis de posgrado: construcción del
conocimiento en actividades con pares y expertos en foros

Guadalupe Alvarez galvarez@ungs.edu.ar
Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Argentina, Argentina
Hilda Difabio de Anglat ganglat@gmail.com
Centro de Investigaciones Cuyo, Argentina, Argentina

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to analyze how to construct knowledge in the interventions that graduate students share in forums designed for group exchange of a virtual thesis-writing workshop. A descriptive and exploratory study is applied, being part of a larger action-research study. Eighty-one interventions are analyzed, taken from seven forums proposed in an edition of the virtual workshop that was conducted in 2016 with two teaching researchers and fourteen postgraduate students of human and social sciences from different Argentinian universities. Initially, interventions are analyzed and quantified according to the presence (or lack thereof) of dialogue (linkage) with previous contributions, as well as their type in terms of conceptual processing (reproductive, basic or elaborated interpretative, constructive); then, they are analyzed and quantified according to the type of discursive action detected in relation to the linkage. According to the analysis, a greater level of conceptual processing would be suggested in the interventions that dialogue with previous contributions of peers. In addition, this level would increase slightly during the development of the successive forums proposed in the workshop. On the other hand, several discursive actions have been detected in relation to linkages and, in relation to them, it would seem that a higher level of conceptual processing is reached in cases in which the interventions share the dimensions or aspects that being analyzed.

Virtual environment, interventions in forums, knowledge construction, conceptual processing, postgraduate thesis.

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Keywords: Virtual environment, interventions in forums, knowledge construction, conceptual processing, postgraduate thesis.

Resumen: El objetivo del artículo es analizar las formas de construcción del conocimiento en las intervenciones que alumnos de posgrado comparten en foros diseñados para el intercambio grupal en un taller virtual de escritura de tesis. Como metodología se realiza un estudio descriptivo y exploratorio cualitativo que se enmarca en una investigación-acción de mayor envergadura. Se analizan 81 intervenciones, extraídas de siete foros propuestos en una edición del taller virtual que se desarrolló en 2016 con dos investigadores docentes y catorce estudiantes de posgrado de distintas ciencias humanas y sociales de diferentes universidades argentinas. Inicialmente se cuantifican las intervenciones según la presencia (o no) de diálogo (encadenamiento) con aportes previos, así como su tipo en términos de procesamiento conceptual (reproductiva, interpretativa básica o elaborada, constructiva); luego, se analizan y

cuantifican en función del tipo de acción discursiva detectada en relación con el encadenamiento. De acuerdo con lo analizado, se sugeriría mayor nivel de procesamiento conceptual en las intervenciones que dialogan con aportes previos de los pares. Además, dicho nivel aumentaría levemente en el desarrollo de los sucesivos foros propuestos en el taller. Por otra parte, se han detectado diversas acciones discursivas en vinculación con los encadenamientos y, en relación con ellas, parecería que se alcanza un mayor nivel de procesamiento conceptual en los casos en que las intervenciones comparten las dimensiones o aspectos que se analizan.

Palabras clave: Entorno virtual, intervenciones en foros, construcción del conocimiento, procesamiento, conceptual, tesis de posgrado.

INTRODUCTION

Several research studies call for attention on the obstacles faced by postgraduate students in the production and presentation of their program's final project: the thesis (e.g., Espino Datsira, 2015; Lonka et al., 2014; Starke-Meyerring, 2011; Dowd, Thompson Jr., Schiff, & Reynolds, 2018; Gunawan & Aziza, 2017; Niswatin & Sanjaya, 2017; Samad & Adnan, 2018; Stappenbelt, 2017). It has been suggested that one of the main causes of this problem is that institutions fail to offer enough training about academic production (Aitchison and Lee, 2006; Caffarella and Barnett, 2000; Delyser, 2003; Kamler and Thomson, 2008; Maher et al., 2008; Wieth, Francis, & Christopher, 2019). In order to provide solutions to this issue, seminars and thesis-writing workshops have been developed mostly in face-to-face training, but also in the virtual modality to a lesser extent (Delgado-Coronado, 2019). Studies conducted on these experiences have shown that exchanges concerning a thesis, among peers, students or supervisors, represent a key contribution for its production and finalization (Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat, 2017a; Colombo 2013; Difabio de Anglat and Heredia, 2013; Ferguson, 2009; Kozar and Lum, 2013; Lassig et al. 2009; Maher et al., 2008).

Maher et al. (2008) point out the benefits offered by a writing group implemented in the University of Australia, from the students' point of view. They highlight the importance of group interaction and identification of each student as a participant of the science community in terms of learning. On the other hand, this type of group allows writing to be more than individual and private practice and to be considered a public and shared process.

Likewise, Lassig et al. (2009) have shown that academic writing can be positively developed through a work model based on e-mail groups, face-to-face group sessions and individual writing. Thus, demonstrating that working group with peers represent an opportunity to develop a professional dialog on writing and many other dimensions.

Similarly, Ferguson (2009) explains the experience of a social sciences thesis-writing group. Working in groups of three to six students evinces that groups facilitate the development of basic skills to produce publications and theses. According to the author, students themselves recognize that the group benefits thesis writing, and encourages positive

attitudes in the writing process, i.e., reinforcement of motivation and increased confidence.

Also, Colombo (2013) shows that textual production of a thesis may improve when review dynamics exist in a group of around three students in different disciplines. These tasks imply reading the progress made and discussing it in face-to-face meetings.

In virtual training, Kozar and Lum (2013) mention the importance of virtual communication tools for the development of writing groups. Along this line, Difabio de Anglat and Heredia (2013) describe the results of a virtual workshop offered via Moodle platform with the aim of improving production of a chapter on a PhD thesis written by the student. According to the authors, in this experience, the workshop helped overcome an important problem faced by the postgraduate student: writing alone.

Complementing these observations, Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat (2017a) explain that work among peers makes in-depth analysis of a thesis metalinguistic reflection possible, to the extent that it enables students to become more aware of and to explicitly reflect on this process more than if they were alone (Camps, Guasch, Milian and Ribas, 2007). This degree of in-depth analysis implies a link between the analysis of macro-structural aspects with textual strategies and language resources at micro-structural levels.

All things considered, studies would evince that in function of a “horizontal” pedagogical scheme established with the work among peers (Boud y Lee, 2005), in some cases and with the guidance of teachers specialized in the area, the development of different dimensions would be possible (Zahrotun, Putri, & Nur Khusna, 2019), these include experiential, epistemological and textual dimensions that are part of writing a postgraduate thesis (Aitchison and Lee, 2006).

In the frameworks of said research, we propose to study the ways in which knowledge construction is displayed by students in contexts of shared activities (Zahrotun et al., 2019). We have sought to understand if the existence (or lack thereof) of exchange among students affects the ways in which knowledge is constructed.

METHODOLOGY

This article disseminates the results of a descriptive and exploratory study that is framed in a larger action-research study (Hernandez Sampieri et al., 2014). Said action-research study intends to offer possible solutions to problems concerning writing during postgraduate studies. After diagnosing theses’ textual production problems, work was done on the design, evaluations and adjustment of a didactic proposal oriented towards solving the aforementioned problems (Barrios Oviedo & Chaves Silva, 2018). It is a virtual workshop aimed at familiarizing students with the thesis as a specialized discursive genre. The workshop has been designed based on a grid of pedagogical, didactic and technological

hypotheses that have been presented in previous publications (Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat, 2016, 2017a, 2018).

For the purposes of this study, we have worked with the second edition of this workshop, which was conducted in 2016 with two teaching researchers and fourteen postgraduate students of human and social sciences from different Argentinian universities.

For the workshop's core activities, the analysis of paratextual elements and basic sections on a thesis has been proposed. This analysis alternates between individual and group work stages, each case implies reflecting on theses supplied by the faculty or students. This reflection is based on conceptual categories of communicative situation model, event model and textual model (Cubo de Severino, Lacon and Puiatti, 2011). The communicative situation model refers to the role of the participants in the discursive community and to their intentions, as well as to knowledge of the author by potential readers. The event model refers to the research in itself and to its stages, the object of the research and the extralinguistic reality of the thesis. The textual model involves textual strategies of the meaning to be communicated, both globally and locally, which is why it is intended to recognize the movements and steps between chapters of a thesis., as well as the language resources and strategies of each chapter and section.

This article studies the ways of knowledge construction displayed by students in contexts of shared activities. We have sought to understand if the existence (or lack thereof) of exchange among students affects the ways in which knowledge is constructed. For that purpose, we analyzed the different ways of conceptual processing generated by students in the interventions they contribute in forums designed for group interactions, paying attention to whether or not those interventions are related to previous interventions.

The following is a detail of the forums to which the analysis and analytical procedure were applied.

Interventions have been extracted from different forums:

Modules	Forums	Proposed Activities	
Module 1	Forum 1.1	Based on two academic texts – paper and academic article – students are requested to select a paratext and explain the type of information it provides in relation to each model.	
	Forum 1.2	Students are requested to compare the titles of texts, considering different dimensions such as sentence construction or vocabulary.	
Module 5 Students had to intervene in one of the forums and also comment at least one intervention by another student.	Forum 5.1	Based on a thesis' chapter of results by a student, they are requested to indicate the linguistic strategies typical of the introduction.	
	Forum 5.2	Based on a thesis' chapter of results by a student, they are requested to indicate a correct fragment of the development and explain the reason why.	
	Forum 5.3	Students are requested to share a fragment of the chapter's conclusions and indicate its function.	
Module 6 Students had to intervene in one of the forums and also comment at least one intervention by another student.	Forum 6.1	Work is done on the introduction of a conclusions chapter of a thesis by the teacher.	In each case, it is proposed to analyze a phrase, sentence or paragraph indicating the step of the movement that contributes to establishing the textual strategy applied.
	Forum 6.2	Work is done on the development of a conclusions chapter.	
	Forum 6.3	Work is done on the closure of a conclusions chapter.	

A total of eighty-one interventions were analyzed; the analysis procedure involved four stages.

First, it was determined whether (or not) the intervention was linked to previous contributions by peers, and if there was a dialog among them. Moreover, the type of intervention was analyzed in function of conceptual processing, determined and used in previous studies (Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat, 2017b) based on the proposal concerning ideas of knowledge/learning by Pozo and Scheuer (1999).. This classification comprises:

Direct or replicative intervention: includes theoretical concepts taken from the bibliography and/or references to analyzed textual copies but fail to recognize links between the theory and the textual segments.

Interpretative intervention: establishes analytical links between the concepts taken from the bibliography and the segments of textual copies proposed for the analysis. In this category, basic and elaborate interpretative are differentiated considering if links between concepts and text fragments are substantiated or not.

Constructive intervention: makes segments of the thesis problematic based on bibliography or completes or makes bibliography problematic from questions or new theoretical contributions.

Second, the types of interventions were calculated considering the presence (or lack thereof) of linkage with previous contributions by peers or teachers. In the quantitative plane, frequencies and percentages of each conceptual processing level in function of linkage (or lack thereof) of interventions were calculated; then said levels were assigned a value (from 0 –replicative- to 3 –constructive-) with the aim of applying the Mann–Whitney U test, fit to determine range differences samples that do not need to be random or have the same size. Lastly, linkage independence intended to inquire into (through Cramér's V) the verification of certain progress in students from Forum 1 to Forums 5 and 6 and in the level of conceptual processing.

Third, discursive actions taking place in cases of interventions linked with previous contributions were determined. To do so, different interventions were read and compared to verify similarities and differences, and to establish different discursive actions. The constant comparative method enabled to establish a categorization of discursive actions taking place in the interventions linked with previous contributions by peers or teachers. Also, an intervention of each type was selected considering its qualitative value, in order to exemplify the category it belongs to. These examples, in turn, were analyzed to show the discursive action in place. In these cases, participants' names were replaced to respect their identity.

Finally, the amount of linked interventions according to the type of discursive action was quantified.

RESULTS

Recognizing each intervention on the basis of its link (linkage) with previous contributions and the type of conceptual processing has produced the following results (cfr. Table 1):

Intervention	Base Idea	Frequency	Percentage
Unlinked	Replicative	8	19.5
	Basic interpretative	17	41.5
	Elaborate interpretative	13	32
	Constructive	3	7
	Total	41	100
Linked	Replicative	4	10
	Basic interpretative	11	27.5
	Elaborate interpretative	17	42.5
	Constructive	8	20
	Total	40	100

Table 1.
Frequency of type of intervention according to linkage
Source: compiled by the authors.

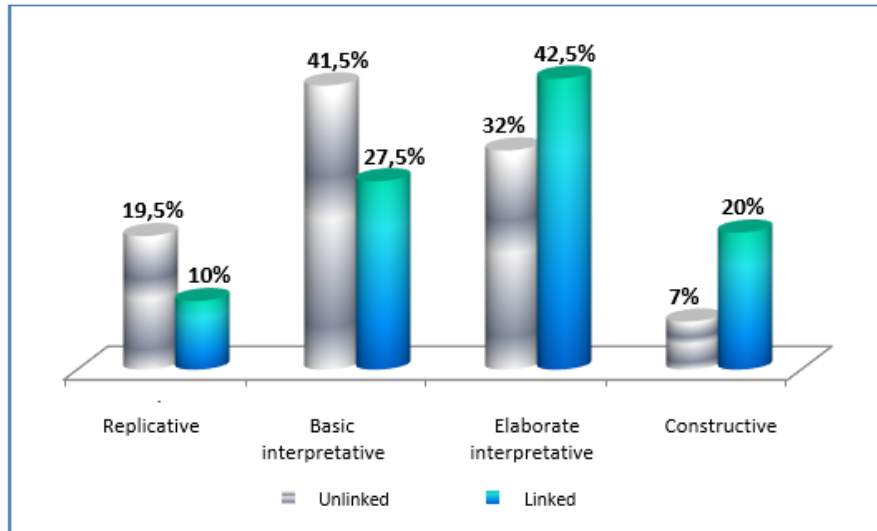
As Table 1 illustrates, cases of linked interventions, i.e., those associated to previous contributions, show a larger amount of elaborate and constructive interventions compared to unlinked interventions.

Assigning a value to each intervention (from 0 –replicative- to 3 –constructive-), the Mann–Whitney U test results are as follows (cfr. Table 2):

Intervention	N	Average Range	Sum of Ranges
Unlinked	41	35.41	1452.00
Linked	40	46.73	1869.00
Total	81		

Table 2.
Ranges of conceptual processing level according to linkage
Source: SPSS 22.0.

The difference between the average ranges for unlinked and linked interventions has statistical significance (Mann–Whitney U test = 591; $p = 0.023$). In this regard, the following graph indicates the progression towards better development as the percentage of lower level interventions goes down –replicative and basic interpretative– and the corresponding progression increases for those of higher level –elaborate interpretative and constructive–:



Graph 1.
Percentages of conceptual processing levels according to linkage
Source: compiled by the authors.

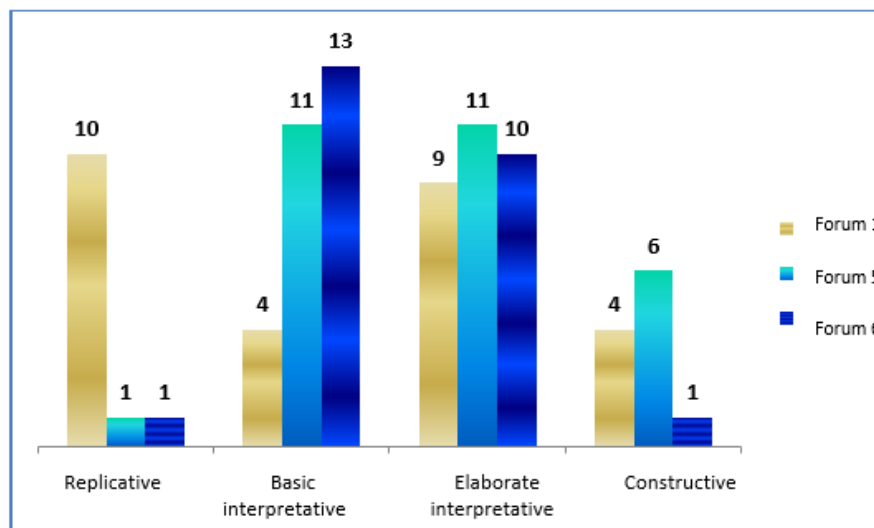
Provisionally (given the size of the corpus), an association between linkage and interventions with higher level of conceptual processing could be suggested.

As illustrated in Table 3, the type of intervention present in forums was also analyzed.

Forums		Base Idea				Total
		Replicative	Basic interpretative	Elaborate interpretative	Constructive	
1	Fr.	10	4	9	4	27
	%	83.3%	14.3%	30.0%	36.4%	33.3%
5	Fr.	1	11	11	6	29
	%	8.3%	39.3%	36.7%	54.5%	35.8%
6	Fr.	1	13	10	1	25
	%	8.3%	46.4%	33.3%	9.1%	30.9%
Total	Fr.	12	28	30	11	81

Table 3.
Frequency of types of intervention in forums
Source: SPSS 22.0.

Differences observed have has statistical significance (Cramér's $V = 0.367$; $p = 0.01$). Its graphic representation is as follows:



Graph 2.

Frequency of types of intervention in forums according to base idea

Source: compiled by the authors.

Clearly, the most important progress is corroborated with the decreased percentage in replicative interventions and in the increased percentage in basic interpretative.

Prior analysis has also allowed identifying that linkages are not always developed based on the same type of discursive actions. In fact, different types of discursive actions are presented based on which students link their own contribution to that of others. Consequently, after differentiating the linked interventions and the unlinked interventions, and quantifying them as per the type of conceptual processing, types of discursive actions happening in relation to linked interventions have been established, in other words, actions developed by students in linking their own contribution to previous interventions. As explained in the methodological section, this analysis comprised consecutive reading of interventions in order to establish the type of actions taking place and of clustering interventions per type. So, using the constant comparative method, a categorization of actions by students in relation to linkages has been outlined. The following are the different categories accompanied by representative examples of each.

1) Referring to a peer's analysis, in some cases considering it of positive value, to then analyze another dimension of a text that has been worked on or by someone else. This is one of the most frequent actions when associating an intervention with others. Participations that show this action mostly include replicative interactions and basic interpretative (Example 1) and to a lesser extent, elaborate interpretative (Example 2).

Example 1 (taken from Forum 6.3)

Hi everybody... I concur with a lot of what Lorena expressed... In mi case, I found a paragraph with movement 2 "evaluate the niche's occupation" with step 1; it picks up the main results at a general level. Logical connectors, textual organizers and precision markers, e.g., in that regard... were observed. The fragment begins: 'On

the other hand, those teachers who have introduced hypertexts.... In that regard, the incorporation of technologies in heavily loaded subjects.... In my opinion, I would have added the optional movements, such as establishing new niches, considering practical applications and implementations, suggesting future research and justifying its need or importance.

In Example 1, taken from Forum 1 Module 6, the student starts by agreeing with a peer's previous analysis. In the next paragraph, the student expresses his/her own analysis, which is evident in the use of the self-reference phrase "In my case". This analysis is independent from the contributions of the initial student. The interpretation is basic interpretative to the extent that it outlines conceptual categories provided for the analysis (e.g., the name of the movement "evaluate the niche's occupation and are associated to the text's fragments, but without presenting arguments to justify those associations).

In Example 2 the student also agrees with the previous contribution, which is described as "interesting" and proceeds to develop an own analysis of a text that had not been addressed in-depth. This analysis not just associates elements of the text with conceptual categories (for instance, paratexts) extracted from the bibliography and the seminar's materials, but it also explains the reasons for these actions.

Example 2 (taken from Forum 1.2)

Good afternoon to you all! I am just joining this exchange. After reading your interesting analyses, I will try to contribute something else to the second text, since it has been addressed the least.

Looking at this article's paratexts, the first that comes to mind in connection with the communicative situation model is that it is a specialized article, an academic paper which has been validated by a scientific journal; it is not for the general public but it is "by neuropsychologists for neuropsychologists" (or alike), so to speak.

The title displays several theoretical concepts of specific fields.

I was thinking, making some progress in the reading, that the information provided could be of interest for educators, for instance, but I wonder if the writing style (textual model) causes a distance that is not inviting in terms of reading it. Back to the previous point, the way in which it is written refers to the recipients defined in the communicative situation.

Along the text the author/PhD clearly explains the methodological steps, tools of the research, and categories defined in the fieldwork, this is appreciated in terms of the event model.

Regards!!

1) Referencing a peer's analysis, in general agreeing and taking one or more aspects of it and going deeper or complementing it. This type of discursive action is more frequently seen in elaborate interpretative interventions, as in Example 3.

Example 3 (taken from Forum 6.2)

Hi everybody! Regarding the fragment of the text cited by Silvia as step 2 (identifying limitations of the study conducted) I consider that, in effect, some limitation or delimitation can be observed, especially in terms of the theoretical aspect, as observed in the initial sentence: [...] I believe this sentence shows how participants' discourse was categorized, in that regard, it can be inferred that said

categorization was done based on a particular theoretical section. Beyond the first part of the fragment, I can't explicitly visualize other typical elements of this step throughout it (such as the possibilities and difficulties of the adopted theoretical-methodological perspectives, which aspects of the problem, the topic or the subject have not been inquired into and why, or suggestions of new aspects of the research). However, ahead in other paragraphs of the section, some suggestions for new research may be identified, which in some way also refer to the study's limitations. [...]

Example 4 (taken from Forum 6.1)

Hello everyone! I had some doubts regarding the steps in the text chosen by Maria Elena for the analysis of movement 1, your analysis was extremely helpful for me clarify them. In terms of Gisela's question about if some other step takes place in the example, I believe step 2 does not take place (highlighting the relevance of the problem or topic of research) and that step 4 does take place (mentioning the most relevant aspects of the methodological design that allowed achieving the main results). This step is seen in the paragraph that begins "the selected theoretical framework...", which begins with a reference to the selected theoretical framework, and also focuses on the implemented textual analysis levels and the modifications to each level's parameters. Also, there is a reference to the methodological aspect as a nod to Greimas, showing the conceptual and methodological affinity with the other implemented model, Ciapuscio's. Regards

In Example 4, after referring to the analysis by a classmate, the student develops the answer to a question issued by the teacher. In this answer, the student shows the steps that would apply to the fragment and offers justifications for the analysis.

4) Positively valuing a peer's opinion and/or mentioning the fundamental aspects, as in Example 5, where the student expresses agreement with a colleague's analysis and immediately after mentions each of the concepts worked on and positively rates the analysis.

Example 5 (taken from Forum 1.1)

Dear classmates: I was out of town for a few days, so I dared to break the ice briefly before I left. I agree with the previous detailed analysis by Lorena. I believe it describes well the social relationships and communicative roles of the communicative situation model and the verbalization strategies used in the document to which the textual analysis refers to. Regards

Good afternoon! As I recently mentioned in Forum 2, I apologize for being late. As with Activity 2, I have tried to summarize and systematize the task in a table to organize and present the results of the analysis conducted. I have not been able to participate as much as I wanted to in the Forum's exchanges, mostly due to lack of time and also because I am not used to this work dynamic, I expect to do better in the upcoming classes... We are still in the class of Module 2 Best regards

6) Briefly answering to a teacher's observations to someone's analysis. In Example 7, this action take place based on a series of items that allow the student to give an account of different aspects referred in previous interventions, basically about observations to a student's work.

Example 7 (taken from Forum 6.2)

Thank you very much Gisela and Mara for your replies; I also think that the dialogs in this Forum have been enriching; I have many takeaways. 1) I did not notice, it did not cross my mind, I forgot... that the conclusions chapter of the thesis was subject to the analysis of the other movements...

I did not log to the other Forums! Which is a shame because I was very “focused” on the third one! Thank you Gisela for your input in this regard. The tree blocked the forest, sort of. While I write this, I wonder if Moodle allows printing and systematizing what has been done in the course. 2) I type: “lexicometry analysis”!! 3) The example referring to Martin Fierro to illustrate the difficulty of replacing the concept of time was particularly good! 4) I am left thinking about... more polished rhetorical organization, strategies with cyclical configurations, steps “embedded” in others... Thank you! And regards to everybody, see you in the next Module.

7) Asking questions to the students about the selected thesis and its analysis. This action is seen in only one intervention (Example 8) in which a student shows concern for the thesis shared by one of the peers.

Example 8 (taken from Forum 5.2)

Dear Armando: I wanted to ask you if in the development of the chapter the author synthesizes the main contributions with the main and secondary variables. Does he/she graphically exemplify the results of the two types of variables, showing its relations? Regards

8) Proposing matters unconnected to the analysis. As shown in Example 9, it is an action of contact apart from the analysis that is added after the intervention, which has not been included herein.

Example 9 (taken from Forum 5.2)

Good night everybody, after reading the first message of the Forum by Cecilia, my imagination is going wild thinking I would really like to be in Villa la Angostura drinking hot chocolate with raspberry sweets... but the night here in Mendoza is not bad at all, it is a humid and fresh day that announces the arrival of fall.

Regards!

After establishing the conceptual categories, the total interventions have been quantified, as well as the types of interventions associated to each discursive action.

FUNDAMENTAL DISCURSIVE ACTION BY THE STUDENT IN RELATION TO LINKAGE	AMOUNT OF INTERVENTIONS*				
	A	B	C	D	TOTAL
. Referring to a peer's analysis, in some cases considering it of positive value, to then analyze another dimension of a text that has been worked on or by someone else.	2	6	4	2	14
. Referencing a peer's analysis, in general agreeing and taking one or more aspects of it and going deeper or complementing it.		1	7	4	12
. Answering teacher's questions related to the contribution of another colleague.	1	1	4	1	7
. Positively valuing a peer's opinion and/or mentioning the fundamental aspects.	1	1			2
. Systematizing what has been previously done by the group of peers.			1	1	2
. Briefly answering to a teacher's observations to someone's analysis.		1			1
. Asking questions to the students about the selected thesis and its analysis.		1			1
. Proposing matters unconnected to the analysis. It is an action of contact apart from the analysis that is added after the intervention, which has not been included herein.			1		1
	4	11	17	8	40

Table 4.

Frequency of interventions as per fundamental discursive action by the student in relation to linkage

Source: compiled by the authors.

*A=replicative intervention; B=basic interpretative, C=elaborate interpretative y D= constructive

Results presented in Table 4 show that the three first actions happen more frequently in the Forums, while the rest only take place in one or two interventions. In that regard, if a didactic analysis were to be used to evaluate the importance of diversifying the actions, it would seem necessary to explicit them with own instructions as to involve the students in that development.

On the other hand and as per the observed values, there would be greater likelihood to attain higher levels of conceptual processing in cases in which successive interventions share dimensions or aspects being analyzed, be it because the analysis by a peer is resumed and delved into or because it answers the teacher's question about a previous analysis. For that reason, it would seem necessary to develop exchanges regarding

one same dimension, seeing as this type of interaction would allow larger complexity of the analyses.

DISCUSSION

In this study we have analyzed the ways in which knowledge construction is displayed by students in Forums designed for joint activities in a virtual workshop aimed at reflecting on postgraduate theses. It was determined whether (or not) interventions among students have an impact on ways of knowledge building about theses (Flores-Lueg, Mena-Bastias, Arteaga-Gonzalez, Navarrete-Troncoso, & Gajardo-Rodriguez, 2018).

To do so, we have analyzed and quantified the interventions according to presence (or lack thereof) of dialogue (linkage) with previous contributions, as well as their type in terms of conceptual processing (reproductive, basic or elaborated interpretative, constructive). This has suggested that cases in which the interventions dialog with previous contribution by peers attain a higher level of conceptual processing. Also, said level would slightly increase the development of successive Forums proposed in the workshop. These findings are aligned with studies that have shown that exchanges regarding theses (between peers, or students and supervisors) would allow fulfilling the development of different dimensions, which include epistemological and textual (Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat, 2017; Colombo 2013; Difabio de Anglat and Heredia, 2013; Ferguson, 2009; Kozar and Lum, 2013; Lassig et al. 2009; Maher et al., 2008).

On the other hand, interventions have been analyzed and quantified in terms of the type of discursive action detected in relation to linkage. According to the corpus, different classes of discursive actions have been established, it would seem that a higher level of conceptual processing is attained in cases in which interventions share dimensions or aspects being analyzed, be it because the analysis by a peer is resumed and delved into or because it answers the teacher's question about a previous analysis. Thus, as per the analysis, teachers would have at least two non-exclusive alternatives to drive higher complexity of the analyses: proposing instructions that encourage interactions involving common axes, or also, participating in concrete interactions to steer the analyses. From this point of view, we are able to complete the observations by Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat (2017a), who have suggested that peer work makes it possible have an in-depth metalinguistic reflection of the postgraduate thesis, since the process shared in the Forums is more explicit than that taking place with the student alone.

As closure, it must be highlighted that due to the size of the corpus, the proposed conclusions are provisional and need to be resumed by a study with a more extensive sample of interventions. It would also be interesting to take into account, the profile of students producing the interventions, as done in prior studies (Alvarez and Difabio de Anglat, 2017b).

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1. The term movement –*move*- “captures the communicative purpose of a textual segment at a more general level; the step more deliberately explains the rhetorical means of the movement. A movement may be done in a single rhetorical step or through the combination of several steps” (Jara Solar, 2013, p. 77).