

**Using Comics to Improve English Learners' Reading Comprehension through Task-Based
Learning Approach at Centro de Lenguas y Culturas, Universidad del Valle**

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor's in Foreign

Languages in English and French

Universidad del Valle

2025

Dedication and Acknowledgments

First, we want to thank our parents for all the unconditional support they have given us throughout this stage, for believing in us, trusting in our abilities, and accompanying us in every decision we have made. Thanks to them, we are the people we are today.

We also want to thank God for all the blessings he has given us, including the opportunity to access higher education. Without his guidance and strength, this achievement would not have been possible.

We extend our gratitude to our advisor, Carmen Faustino, for her guidance, patience, and dedication throughout this stage. Her knowledge and support have been fundamental in shaping this work.

I, Julieth, dedicate this stage that concludes today to my family, whose love and support have been fundamental in this process.

I, José, dedicate this work to my parents, whose steady support and love have been my foundation. To my friends, for their encouragement and companionship throughout this journey.

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Abstract

Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) requires a creative and effective approach to reinforcing reading comprehension in EFL learners. Reading comprehension is challenging because it requires the ability to understand and interpret written text. One valuable approach is the use of comics, recognized for their ability to combine text and visuals, making language acquisition engaging and accessible. This study explored the role of comics in improving reading comprehension among English learners at a language institute through action research, involving interviews, surveys, and observations.

The findings revealed that integrating comics into language instruction significantly boosted students' reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and engagement. Additionally, comics fostered cultural awareness by allowing students to reflect on diverse narratives.

Keywords: EFL teaching, reading comprehension, comics in education, language acquisition, multimodal learning, vocabulary acquisition, student engagement, cultural awareness, action research, pedagogical strategies.

Chapter 1. Introduction

There is a growing interest in researching learning resources to foster students' reading comprehension in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Current learners live in a visual era in which most of the information is provided graphically in the modern digital age. Visual material is a potent tool for comprehension because it captures interest and increases retention. Hence, one way of fostering reading comprehension is through the use of comics, which have gained recognition in the educational field as learning resources that combine text and images to present information visually and attractively.

The use of comics as an educational resource can be used to engage students to create a positive effective setting for learning (Bolton-Gary, 2012). Besides, according to Artacho (2002), comics are a potent visual learning tool that connects with many areas of the educational process. They improve reading skills, expand vocabulary, foster expression, help readers retain complex words through visual associations, improve narrative comprehension, grab readers' attention, adapt to individual reading pace (unlike audiovisual media), and are excellent for language learning.

1.1 Comics in the development of English reading skills

Reading is a fundamental tool for improving reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary knowledge, grammar mastery and spelling accuracy. Research also indicates that reading is not only a pleasurable activity, but also stimulates cognitive development as stated by Krashen (2004) who affirms that:

Studies showing that reading enhances literacy development lead to what should be an uncontroversial conclusion: reading is good for you. The research, however, supports a stronger conclusion: reading is the only way, the only way, we become good readers, develop a good writing style, an adequate vocabulary, advanced grammatical competence, and the only way we become good spellers. (p.37)

In this sense, comic book reading can play a key role, as this same author points out that it is closely related to a greater willingness and enjoyment of reading in general. Furthermore, it is suggested that reading light materials, such as comics, can be a gateway to more complex reading, allowing readers to improve their language skills while developing a genuine interest in books. This statement is reinforced by this quote:

Hayes and Ahrens (1998) suggest that comics books can play an important role in helping readers progress to the level where they can read and understand demanding texts.

According to their findings, it is highly unlikely that much educated vocabulary comes from conversation or television. Hayes and Ahrens found that the frequency of less-common words in ordinary conversation, whether adult-to-child or adult-to-adult, was much lower than in even the “slightest” reading. (Krashen, 2004, p. 103)

Thus, Krashen (2004) argues that comics are an excellent tool to encourage reading.

These texts are linguistically appropriate, and the illustrations facilitate comprehension of the content. Moreover, research indicates that reading comics has no negative effects on language development or academic performance. In fact, comic book readers read at least as much as non-comic readers, and recent studies suggest that they tend to show a more positive attitude toward reading.

Therefore, to incorporate comics in the classroom, this research adopts Task-Based Learning (TBL) as the pedagogical framework. TBL is grounded in the idea that language acquisition is most effective when learners are engaged in authentic tasks that mirror real-world language use. This approach promotes active learning and reinforces language skills through communication and problem-solving. By integrating comics with TBL, this research offers a context-rich environment that emphasizes active reading, comprehension, and task completion.

Previous studies have investigated the effects of comics on the development of literacy, cognitive functions, and involvement in various educational contexts have been the subject of prior studies. These studies have demonstrated the benefits of comics on reading comprehension, visual literacy, and critical thinking.

In our national and local contexts, some studies have investigated how well comics can help with vocabulary growth and language learning. They have also looked at the use of comic books as an educational resource for encouraging creativity and communicative proficiency in language schools.

However, comics have been mostly used with advanced learners. Therefore, this study aims to explore A2-level students and examine how comics can serve as a tool for enhancing reading comprehension, while also promoting intercultural competence and multimodal literacy. The research will highlight the advantages of using comics with younger learners and explore

how task-based learning can provide a more structured approach to integrating comics into language acquisition.

1.2 Description of the Context

This research was initially conducted with tenth-grade students at a public school in Colombia. Through an interview with the teacher responsible for the group and a pretest administered to the students, it was identified that reading comprehension in English posed significant challenges. The students' reading skills were below the expected level for their grade. The teacher encouraged us to use comics, as he was utilizing this resource with his students, who even knew how to create comics online. As they were close to taking the ICFES state test, he emphasized the importance of strengthening their reading skills. The main objective of the study was to enhance students' reading abilities, enabling them to achieve a satisfactory level of comprehension, intending to improve their overall language proficiency and performance on the test.

Unfortunately, we were unable to proceed with the project as originally planned. Scheduling conflicts with the institution, class cancellations caused by cultural activities, and a FECODE teachers' strike collectively disrupted the implementation of the research. Subsequently, the project's focus shifted to a new context, specifically a group of students at the Centro de Lenguas y Culturas at the Universidad del Valle since one of us had been working there and the opportunity to apply our research came along. These students were enrolled in the *English for Teens III (Lower Intermediate)* program, which corresponds to the A2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

In line with the study's focus on reading comprehension, a preliminary survey revealed that students perceived their reading skills to be stronger than their listening, speaking, and writing abilities. When examining their reading experiences, it was found that most students did not read regularly and had not used comics in other courses either. Classroom observations further revealed that the majority of activities emphasized vocabulary building and speaking, particularly peer-to-peer interactions. Additionally, the tutor teacher stated that every teacher was free to design their activities. She mentioned that she occasionally created reading activities from articles or news, but had never used comics with them before. Reading comprehension activities

were notably absent. Thus, this presented a unique opportunity to explore the use of comics as a tool to enhance reading comprehension in this context.

The vision of the Centro de Lenguas y Culturas emphasizes fostering cultural, linguistic, and social capital through the implementation of foreign language training programs and cultural awareness initiatives. Therefore, as part of the initial survey, students were asked about their perceptions of cultural activities. The findings revealed that students associated cultural activities primarily with their everyday lives, regional celebrations and festivities. However, less than half of the students mentioned cultural activities related to Afro-descendant, indigenous, or Anglophone cultures.

Classroom observations also showed limited integration of cultural aspects beyond the content provided by the coursebook, such as videos. The absence of cultural diversity influenced the choice to incorporate culturally relevant content in the comics used for the intervention. The design of the comics took into account both the students' cultural context and the indicators outlined in the course program. This alignment ensured that the activities were cohesive with the teacher's curriculum and helped students feel that the material was relevant rather than disconnected or overly broad.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Reading comprehension continues to pose a significant challenge for many English language learners, particularly those at the lower-intermediate level. Despite its importance as a core language skill, students were not provided with sufficient opportunities to engage in reading activities. This lack of focus on reading comprehension contributed to limited exposure to reading practice, which hindered their overall language development.

Classroom activities primarily centered on vocabulary acquisition and speaking exercises, often conducted through peer-to-peer interactions. However, reading activities were either absent or minimal. Observations revealed that students did not regularly engage with reading tasks.

Although the students were enrolled in an institute where cultural awareness appears to be an integral component of the curriculum, the cultural element was not effectively implemented in either class activities or students' perceptions. Therefore, students were infrequently exposed to culturally relevant content in their learning materials or classroom discussions.

Additionally, students' lack of habitual reading outside the classroom, as revealed in surveys, further restricted their exposure to written English. This created a challenge in developing the necessary skills to succeed in reading comprehension tasks.

Addressing these issues is essential for improving students' language acquisition and meeting the institute's objectives.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Main Research Question

How does the inclusion of comics impact English language learners' reading comprehension skills and their cultural awareness?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions

1. What are the students' needs regarding reading skills?
2. What is the effect of comic-based reading comprehension activities using the Task-Based Language Teaching approach on English learners?
3. What are the students' perceptions of their reading skills and cultural awareness using comics?

1.5 Significance and contribution of the study

This study contributes significantly to the field of language teaching by exploring the use of comics to enhance reading comprehension in second-language learners. Our intervention views comics, which are often overlooked in lesson plans, as a novel approach to addressing the gap in reading comprehension activities, particularly for lower-intermediate English learners. By incorporating culturally relevant content, this research emphasizes the importance of connecting learning materials to students' personal experiences and sociocultural backgrounds, fostering cultural awareness and sensitivity. It also adds to the expanding body of research on multimedia tools in education, promoting the integration of visual literacy to enhance language skill development.

Additionally, the research provides valuable insights into students' perceptions of their language skills and their engagement with various learning activities. This approach aligns with the recommendations from earlier studies, including those by Reyes (2019) and Maldonado &

Pérez (2020), which emphasized the importance of tailoring materials to match student interests. In line with Méndez & Castañeda (2018), who advocated for moving beyond traditional worksheets to assess comprehension, this study included assessments like interactive games.

Ultimately, this research advances our understanding of how non-traditional resources can support language development, offering valuable insights for educators seeking to engage students and improve their reading comprehension skills in meaningful ways.

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis is organized into six chapters. Chapter one introduced the study's relevance, gaps, and contributions. Chapter two presents the empirical research on the use of comics to enhance reading comprehension skills within an educational setting, international, national, and local contexts. Chapter three provides an overview of the terms and theoretical considerations that will support our research. Chapter four will depict the research methodology, followed by Chapter five, in which the findings are presented and discussed in light of the literature. Chapter six provides the conclusions, implications, and limitations of our research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In this chapter, the relevant literature that informs and supports this research is reviewed. This review provides a foundation for understanding the theoretical and practical implications of the research while identifying areas that require further exploration.

2.1 Empirical Research on the Use of Comics to Enhance Reading Skills in SLA

Empirical research on the use of comics to improve English reading skills continues to be a relevant and growing field of study. Several studies such as those presented below have demonstrated that comics can be effective tools for strengthening reading comprehension, facilitating vocabulary acquisition, and increasing student motivation. Because they combine visual elements with accessible linguistic structures, comics offer an innovative approach to teaching English, especially in contexts where students face difficulties in reading and comprehending more traditional texts.

In addition, research conducted in Colombia and locally has highlighted the benefits of using comics in different pedagogical approaches, including the teaching of literature, science, and genre-based learning (Maldonado and Perez, 2020). These studies have shown that comics not only improve comprehension of complex narratives but also foster autonomy in language learning. In addition, methodologies such as CLIL (Palacios and Moreno, 2019) and genre-based pedagogy have shown that the integration of comics in the classroom can reinforce interdisciplinary learning, making English more accessible and meaningful for students.

2.1.1 Research on the Effectiveness of Comics in Reading Skills in the International Context

Sánchez (2016) explored the benefits and best practices of incorporating comic books into English language instruction. The study proposed a set of activities for English students that used comics as a resource and details suggested activities in a didactic proposal. The methodology of the study was an intervention where data collection instruments were surveys, interviews, and observations being mixed methods research. Consequently, findings show that comics can aid teachers when explaining difficult concepts, provide easy-to-follow examples of grammatical aspects, provide good stories for students to work on or base material for them to invent their own narratives, and serve as gateways to more complex literary texts. Conclusions

indicate that comics are an effective tool for teaching English as a second language but should be used alongside other materials. Finally, limitations identified in the study include a small sample size and limited generalizability due to cultural differences among participants. Also, researcher's recommendations are to carry out further research on the effectiveness of comic books in teaching English as a second language with larger sample sizes and diverse populations.

The study by Egelström (2019) explored the use of comic books as a teaching material for the English language. This qualitative study presents a literature review on the topic, analyzing previous research and theories related to using comic books in language teaching. The study then provides an analysis of exercises that were designed to incorporate comic books into English language lessons, comparing the results with the literature review. The study concludes that comic books can be a useful tool for teaching English language learners, as they provide relevant material and require students to use multiple cognitive abilities. Additionally, the study suggests that comic books can be used to teach grammar and vocabulary, as well as deepen students' understanding of how language works at a structural level. The study also notes that there are numerous ways to use comic books in teaching aspects of language from varied perspectives and that further research is needed in this area. Finally, the research provides some recommendations on how to incorporate comic books into English language lessons and highlights their potential benefits for language learners.

Wijaya et al., (2020) discussed the benefits and challenges of using comic strips in language teaching focused on research articles published in reputable international journals and accredited national journals from 2011 to 2020. The authors implemented a literature review model that involves four stages: planning, conducting, reporting, and evaluating the review process. They found that comic strips can promote students' vocabulary, improve their grammar competence, support their reading skills, and help those who lack writing skills. However, there are also concerns about challenges in implementing comic strips in language teaching, such as its relevance, the choices of topics, and how it cannot support spoken skills as much as reading and written skills, that's why researchers suggest that while comic strips can be a good medium for teaching language, teachers should also find strategies to overcome challenges. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into how comic strips can be used effectively in language teaching while acknowledging the potential difficulties that may arise.

Shustrova et al., (2017) examined the use of multimodal texts in teaching English as a second language and to demonstrate how linguistic methods can be applied to analyze creolized texts in classroom activities. The participants in the study are university English language learners who study theoretical subjects using multimodal texts as a teaching tool in Russia. Additionally, the methodology used in this study is a qualitative approach that aims to share the authors' experience on how various types of creolized texts can be a useful tool for teaching theoretical subjects. On the other hand, the data collection instruments used in the study are comic strips, cartoons, and other multimodal texts. The authors collected these texts from various sources such as newspapers, magazines, and online resources. In consequence, the findings of the study suggest that using multimodal texts in teaching English has several advantages over traditional teaching methods. Firstly, it helps students understand complex concepts better by providing visual aids that complement verbal explanations. Secondly, it makes learning more engaging and enjoyable for students. Moreover, using multimodal texts allows teachers to cater to different learning styles. In conclusion, the authors conclude that using multimodal texts in teaching English as a second language is essential. However, one limitation of the study is that it focuses only on the use of multimodal texts in teaching English as a second language, so the findings may not be applicable to other subjects or languages. Finally, the study does not provide a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of different types of multimodal texts.

Purnama et al., 2021 investigated the impact of using comic books, specifically the Snow White comic book, in teaching reading comprehension on students' vocabulary mastery. The study was conducted in an Islamic senior high school, MAN 2, with first-grade students. Two classes, 1 IPA-1 (experimental group) and 1 IPA-2 (control group), were selected as the sample, with 20 students in each class. Moreover, the study took place in Montasik village, Aceh Besar. The study utilized an experimental design, with one group being taught reading comprehension using the Snow White comic book (experimental group) and the other group not using comic books (control group). On the other hand, data collection Instruments were pre-test and post-test assessments, consisting of 20 questions that covered matching words with their meanings, matching words with their antonyms, and multiple-choice questions. Eventually, the study found a significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery between the group taught with comic books and the group taught without comic books. The experimental group, taught with comic books, achieved higher scores. In conclusion, based on the findings, the study concluded that

using comic books, such as the Snow White comic book, can be an effective alternative in improving students' vocabulary mastery in the teaching and learning process. Finally, The study suggests that using comics, specifically in reading comprehension, can be beneficial for improving students' vocabulary mastery. It recommends further exploration and implementation of comics in the teaching and learning process.

Overall, the previous research studies on the use of comic books and multimodal texts in language teaching share commonalities and exhibit some differences in terms of methods, participants, design, instruments, findings, and recommendations. All five studies focus on the utilization of comic books or multimodal texts as resources for language instruction. They highlight the benefits of incorporating these materials, such as aiding in the explanation of difficult concepts, providing examples of grammar, fostering creativity, promoting vocabulary development, improving reading skills, and engaging students in the learning process.

In terms of participants, they all involve groups of learners in different educational contexts. The participants include English language learners, university students, and high school students. The specific characteristics and demographics of the participants differ across the studies, some carried out in Indonesia, Russia, and Spain, among others. In addition to that, regarding research design, the studies employ various approaches. Some use intervention studies, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, while others use qualitative approaches such as literature reviews and an experimental design.

On the other hand, the instruments used for data collection also differ among the studies. Surveys, interviews, observations, pre-test and post-test assessments, and analysis of comic strips, cartoons, and multimodal texts are among the instruments employed. Although the specific findings of each study vary based on their research questions and methods, they generally support the effectiveness of using comic books or multimodal texts in language teaching. The findings emphasize the positive impact on vocabulary mastery, grammar competence, reading skills, understanding complex concepts, and student engagement in the learning process. As for recommendations, the researchers suggest further research to validate and generalize the findings. For example, Sanchez (2016) and Wijaya et al. (2020) recommend future studies with larger samples and diverse populations to explore the effectiveness of comics and comic strips in different language teaching contexts.

In general, the studies highlight the potential of comic books and multimodal texts as valuable tools for language instruction, while underscoring the need to continue research and consider specific challenges and recommendations when integrating these resources in the classroom.

2.1.2 Research on the Effectiveness of Comics in Reading Skills in the National Context

Reyes' (2019) investigated the importance of children's literature and comics in the teaching-learning process of English as a second and foreign language. The author implemented a research method of documentary case-studies. The data collected in this monograph was done in a systematic qualitative gathering. The study found that children's literature and comics can effectively motivate students and offer various opportunities for teaching and learning foreign languages. The absence of these resources in classrooms was attributed to teachers' limited knowledge of English literature, insufficient time for lesson preparation, low proficiency of both teachers and students in English, difficulty in sourcing appropriate resources, and cost constraints. While most of the research yielded positive results, some researchers expressed reservations about their use. For instance, Yu Chang argued that the majority of first-language materials are not suitable for teaching a foreign language because they do not incorporate children's own culture, their language may not be appropriate or relevant to certain countries' situations. The author, drawing from personal experiences as an English language learner and teacher, concludes that despite the challenges associated with limited resources and proficiency levels, it is important to use children's literature and comics as effective tools for teaching English.

Tabares (2017) obtained results in reading comprehension implementing four main reading strategies: glossary, bilingual dictionary, transparent words, and key words with 28 fifth-grade students in a public school in Pereira. This classroom project was framed under the Backward Design approach suggested by Richards (2013) and the implementation of the PPP methodology (presentation-practice production) proposed by Tomlinson (as cited by Richards, 2013). The practitioners guided the students through 10 English classes, using various activities and analyzing their work. The strategies had a positive impact on the students' comprehension skills and their ability to create comics. Overall, the project enhanced the students' reading abilities and rhetorical awareness. The author recommends prioritizing the design of materials

and activities for future projects based on the specific target population. Conducting a needs analysis, such as surveys or interviews, can provide valuable insights into students' interests, language proficiency, and other relevant factors. By tailoring the materials and activities to meet the identified needs, pre-service teachers can achieve the desired outcomes in terms of reading skill development.

Méndez and Castañeda (2018) conducted a research study aimed to assess the impact of using comics to improve reading comprehension among tenth-grade students. The study uses an experimental design; it involved a diagnostic test using a Shakespearean play, followed by five sessions using a comic book adaptation. Worksheets were provided to measure students' understanding after each reading. The data collected allowed for a comparison of reading comprehension levels before and after the implementation of the comic-based approach. They concluded that it undoubtedly benefited students' performance in English since they improved the vocabulary and the understanding of the narrative plots. The authors say reading comprehension cannot be measured at all just by a worksheet, students might find it monotonous and it could be another reason why students decrease their level. Therefore, they recommend finding new ways to measure reading from students' perspectives and through plenty of sessions.

Maldonado and Pérez (2020) conducted research aimed to address students' reading comprehension needs by using genre-based pedagogy (GBP) and manga texts in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. This study followed a qualitative research approach according to the action case study. They used online journals such as conversations with audios and texts, focus groups, semi-structured interviews in WhatsApp, production tasks through google forms and online observations done in the virtual classroom Zoom. The results indicated that teaching students about genres and engaging with manga helped them understand the story, read new manga independently, and answer genre-related questions. Additionally, the study found that some students felt more comfortable reading after being taught with GBP. They concluded that GBP is an approach that can be adapted to teach reading comprehension with mangas. The recommendation inferred is that there is a need to allocate more time for the study sessions in order to explore different categories of manga.

In summary, these national studies aim to explore the effectiveness and benefits of using literature, comics, or manga in the ESL/EFL teaching and learning process. They emphasize the role of these resources in motivating students, improving reading comprehension skills,

vocabulary development, and overall language proficiency. The predominant paradigms were qualitative research methods, such as documentary case studies, action case studies, and action research. They rely on data collection techniques like classroom observations, interviews, focus groups, and analysis of student work. However, Reyes (2019) employs a documentary case-study method, and Arcila Tabares and Chaves Mape (2017) a Backward Design approach suggested by Richards (2013).

Regarding the findings, Tabares and Chaves (2017) focused on reading strategies and their impact on comprehension skills and the ability to create comics, whereas Méndez and Castañeda (2018) specifically addressed the improvement of reading comprehension through comics. On the other hand, Maldonado Fernández & Pérez Fuentes (2020) explore the use of genre-based pedagogy and comics for reading comprehension, as well as the promotion of respect and holistic student development.

In terms of the recommendations provided by the researchers, they emphasize the importance of using children's literature, comics, and manga as effective tools in ESL/EFL teaching and learning. Also, they recognize the need for teacher professional development and expanding teachers' knowledge of English literature and appropriate resources. An important suggestion made by Méndez, Á, P. y Castañeda, B. A. (2018) is to explore alternative assessment methods beyond traditional worksheets. Similarly, Maldonado Fernández, D. F., & Pérez Fuentes (2020) suggests promoting a holistic education by incorporating cross-cutting themes and content from other curriculum areas.

2.1.3 Research on the Effectiveness of Comics in Reading Skills in the Local Context

Palacios y Moreno (2019) carried out research at the Universidad Libre, aimed to determine the extent to which a comic book, framed in the CLIL approach, contributed to strengthen the learning process of the learning process of science concepts in first year students. The research was framed within the principles of the qualitative approach and used action research. The instruments used were observations, interviews, field journal and questionnaires. They concluded that the effect of the implementation of the comic, under the CLIL principles, greatly strengthened the learning of the states and properties of matter, according to the activities based on the comic strip. They mentioned that being part of the research process was an opportunity to propose a possible solution to a real need of the school, delimited in the teaching

practice. In this way, the skills of a critical, analytical and, above all, proactive teacher were developed, and, above all, proactive teachers who are committed to the education of the country.

Méndez, Á, P. y Castañeda, B. A. (2018) conducted research where the main objective was to evaluate the impact of using comics to reinforce reading comprehension of tenth-grade students from Corazón de María Technical Industrial School. They selected a mixed-method approach and action research. They used journals, questionnaires and the technique of pre-testing and post-testing. They carried out a diagnostic test with a book called *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare with the objective of measuring the initial results with the ones obtained after the implementation which was made up of five sessions using as a tool “*Macbeth*” a comic book. They concluded that comics can be considered valuable educational tools, as they enable students to deduce and learn new vocabulary without relying heavily on dictionaries or frequent inquiries to teachers. Likewise, they make a significant contribution to narrative comprehension by allowing students to grasp the plot and important events more easily. This is primarily due to the straightforward sentence structure used in comics and the visual aids that provide a broader context to the story. The authors suggest that another possible research could take a smaller population of participants in order to measure the progression of reading comprehension in a more detailed way.

In short, two local studies conducted by Palacios & Moreno (2019) and Méndez et al. (2018) further explored the use of comics in language teaching within specific educational contexts. Both local studies followed a qualitative approach and incorporated action research elements, allowing researchers to actively participate in the teaching and learning process to assess the impact of comic book interventions. The participants in these studies were students from Universidad Libre and Corazón de María Technical Industrial School, with Palacios & Moreno (2019) focusing on first-year students and Méndez et al. (2018) targeting tenth-grade students.

The local studies employed various qualitative data collection instruments, such as observations, interviews, questionnaires, and pre-test/post-test assessments. These instruments allowed the researchers to gather information on the effectiveness of comic books in strengthening learning outcomes, specifically related to science concepts in Palacios & Moreno's study and reading comprehension in Méndez et al.'s research.

The findings of the local studies echoed the positive impact of using comic books in language teaching. Palacios & Moreno (2019) concluded that the implementation of comics greatly strengthened the learning of science concepts among students. Similarly, Méndez et al. (2018) found that comics contributed to vocabulary acquisition and narrative comprehension in reading comprehension tasks.

Despite these similarities, there were also differences between the local studies and international studies. The local studies solely utilized qualitative methods, whereas the international studies employed a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Additionally, the international studies included a broader range of participants, such as English language learners, university students, and high school students, while the local studies focused on specific grade levels and subjects within their respective educational institutions.

About recommendations, both local studies called for further research within their specific contexts. Palacios & Moreno (2019) suggested exploring the implementation of comics in other subjects, expanding the scope beyond science concepts. Méndez et al. (2018) proposed studying the progression of reading comprehension in a more detailed manner by conducting research with a smaller population of participants.

2.2 Concluding Remarks and Gaps to Fill

These studies showed significant benefits in terms of the use of comics, especially in improving reading comprehension by helping students to better understand narratives, facilitating the connection between text and images, favoring the learning of new words without relying too much on the dictionary, teaching grammar and language structure, and including different learning styles, since comics, as multimodal materials, allow visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners to benefit from the material.

On the other hand, these studies highlighted some limitations, such as the development of oral skills: although comics improve reading and writing, their impact on oral production is minor and requires complementary strategies; difficulty in finding appropriate materials: the selection of comics relevant to the students' level and learning context can be challenging; lack of teacher training: some studies indicate that teachers may not be familiar with the use of comics as an educational resource or may lack training to implement them effectively; cultural and contextual limitations: some comics may not reflect the reality or interests of students, which

may affect their effectiveness in different educational settings; difficulty in assessing reading comprehension: some assessment methods may not fully capture the benefits of comics in reading and textual analysis; in addition, it is important to explore more dynamic assessment strategies that go beyond traditional written tests. Therefore, empirical research in this field should continue, exploring new ways to take advantage of comics, not only in improving reading skills but in teaching English as a foreign language in general and optimizing their application in the classroom.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Task-based Language Teaching Approach

The role of tasks in language teaching and learning is a much-debated topic in second language acquisition (SLA) research. According to Ellis et al. (2020) the incorporation of tasks into language curricula originated with the communicative approach to language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s and 1980s. From this approach emerged task-based Language teaching (TBLT), influenced also by early research on second language acquisition (SLA). These studies questioned the structural method of teaching, which is based on dividing the language into separate elements and teaching them sequentially.

Building on this foundation, TBLT has become one of the most influential approaches within the communicative framework. Based on Hall (2011) the TBLT approach has its roots in Prabhu's (1987) Bangalore experimental project. This project focused on the content and meaning of classroom interactions, rather than on linguistic form or structures. Thus, this procedural approach focuses on the means of learning, using tasks as a means to generate and learn language.

To highlight a little more about the origin of this approach, Ellis and Shintani (2014) claim that “Task-based language teaching was developed as an alternative to traditional methods such as grammar translation, the Audiolingual Method or present–practice–produce (PPP)” (p.134). Therefore, this approach has gained increasing support from researchers in the field of language teaching, who have developed its theoretical and empirical basis in important works and it has also received significant support from teacher educators such as Prabhu (1987), Willis (1996) and Nunan (2004).

In fact, Richards (2006) also contrasts the implementation of the TBLT with other traditional pedagogical approaches, especially the case of the P-P-P teaching format, which is described as follows; **Presentation:** The new grammatical structure is presented by the teacher who explains the new structure and checks for learner comprehension. **Practice:** Learners practice using the new structure in a controlled context, through practice or substitution exercises. **Production:** Learners practice using the new structure in different contexts, often using their own content or information, in order to develop fluency with the new pattern. However, defenders of task-based instruction criticize this model on the grounds that it is neither effective nor aligned with current knowledge on second language acquisition. According to them, the P-P-P model does not promote fluency and meaningful grammatical development, as research shows that learning occurs primarily through meaningful interaction with the language, not through controlled practice. In the TBLT approach, the priority shifts to the use of tasks that promote interaction, allowing students to develop linguistic awareness and progress in their learning as a result of their participation in real communicative activities.

But then, what is TBLT?

Richards (2006) defines the task-based approach as a methodology that focuses on the use of specific activities designed to foster interactive classroom processes and promote language learning. Unlike traditional syllabus, which tend to focus on teaching grammar in isolation, this approach suggests that grammatical skills and other communicative competencies develop as a natural result of participation in interactive tasks. Although many classroom activities include tasks, the task-based approach is distinctive in that it considers these activities as the primary unit for planning both instruction and curriculum design.

On the other hand, Nunan (2004) mentions that from a pedagogical perspective, task-centered language teaching has reinforced several key principles and practices:

- A needs-based approach to content selection.
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learners' own personal experiences as important contributing elements of classroom learning.

- The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom (p. 1).

Based on this background, task-based language teaching was chosen for this study due to those significant principles that can greatly contribute to the achievement of the research objective, which is to strengthen English language learners' reading through meaningful tasks.

3.1.2 What is a Task?

The concept of “task” has several definitions provided by various authors, such as:

Breen (1989, as cited in Ellis, 2003) who defines a task as a structured plan designed to provide opportunities for learners to develop and refine their knowledge and skills in a new language through communication. Also, a task can range from a simple practice activity to a more elaborate plan requiring spontaneous meaning-focused communication.

Long (1985, as cited in Ellis, 2003) describes a task as any activity undertaken for personal or external purposes, whether done voluntarily or for a reward. Examples include common daily activities such as painting a fence, dressing a child, completing a form, shopping, making travel arrangements, or helping someone cross the street. Tasks also cover routine actions like booking a hotel, sorting letters, or finding directions. In essence, tasks represent the various actions people carry out in everyday life, at work, or during their free time, essentially what individuals would describe they do when asked, without needing to approach the concept from a linguistic perspective.

For Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985, as cited in Ellis, 2003), a task is an activity based on understanding language, such as mapping while listening. Tasks may not require language production, but include clear success criteria, adding practical purpose to communicative teaching.

According to Crookes (1986, as cited in Ellis, 2003), a task refers to a particular activity or assignment with a clear goal, undertaken within the context of an educational program, job responsibility, or research data gathering.

Prabhu (1987, as cited in Ellis, 2003) claims that a task as an activity where learners use provided information to reach a specific outcome through a thought process, while allowing teachers to guide and manage that process.

Skehan (1996, as cited in Ellis, 2003) defines a task as an activity where the focus is primarily on meaning, has a connection to real-world contexts, prioritizes successful completion, and is evaluated based on the outcomes achieved.

Lee (2000, as cited in Ellis, 2003) perceives a task as a classroom activity aimed at achieving an objective through participant interaction, structured sequencing, and a focus on exchanging meaning. It involves learners using the target language to understand, manipulate, or produce it while completing specific work plans.

From Nunan's (2004) perspective, a task is a classroom activity that requires students to comprehend, manipulate, produce, or interact in the target language, focusing on using their grammatical knowledge to communicate meaning. The priority is on conveying meaning, rather than focusing exclusively on form. In addition, a task should have a sense of completeness, functioning as a self-contained communicative act with a clear beginning, development and closure.

What these definitions have in common is that a "task" is a structured, purpose-directed activity designed to engage learners in meaningful communication and achieve specific outcomes. It is usually related to real-world contexts and requires learners to use the target language for comprehension, production, interaction or problem solving. Tasks give priority to conveying meaning over form and are usually self-contained. They involve cognitive engagement and can simulate everyday situations to make learning practical and relevant.

3.1.3 Types of Tasks in TBLT

According to Richards (2006) Many of the activities found in many English textbooks and teaching materials can be considered tasks according to the definitions seen above. Within the task-based approach it is useful to differentiate two types of tasks:

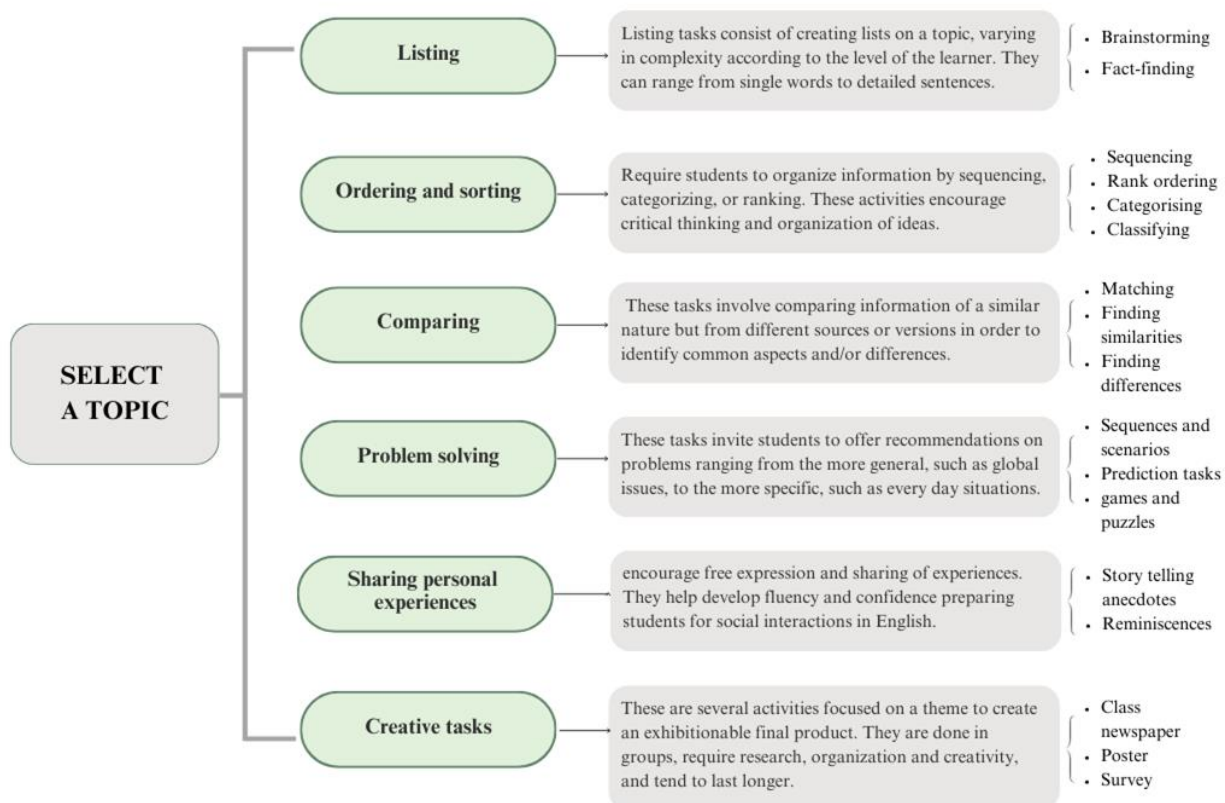
- **Pedagogical tasks** are classroom activities specifically designed to encourage the use of particular interaction strategies and specific language aspects such as skills, grammar, and vocabulary. For instance, a task where two learners identify differences between two similar images. This task is not typically encountered in real-life situations, but the interaction it fosters supports language learning by providing valuable input for development.

- **Real-world tasks** are tasks that simulate real-life language use and can be used to practice authentic communication situations.

With the above in mind, Willis and Willis (2007) propose that tasks can be organized in sequences within a specific topic, combining target tasks (that simulate real activities) and facilitating tasks (that help to perform them). They also classify the real-world tasks into six categories.

Figure 1

Types of Tasks in TBLT



Note. Summary of chapters 4, 5 and 6 on the Willis and Willis (2007) type of tasks.

For this research, both types of tasks are relevant for improving reading comprehension in adolescents. Pedagogical tasks allow students to practice reading strategies through structured activities such as identifying main ideas, inferring meaning and analyzing the relationship

between image and text in comics. These activities help develop reading skills in a controlled and guided environment.

Thus, real-world tasks connect reading comprehension to authentic situations, such as creating their own comics, writing reviews, or discussing comic-related experiences. These tasks motivate students by demonstrating the usefulness of learning in their daily lives and encourage greater interaction with the texts.

3.1.3.1 Task and Skill Practice. The task-based approach is a very suitable pedagogical strategy for improving reading comprehension in adolescent students through the use of comics. As Willis (1996) argues, the task-based approach to language teaching promotes the integration of language skills rather than treating them as separate competencies. Traditionally, language teaching has addressed listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills individually. However, this approach does not reflect how the skills are used in real situations, as they are rarely used in isolation. For example, conversation involves listening, observing, and planning what will be said, while writing requires reading, revising, and adjusting content.

Hence, we strongly believe that comics, by combining text and image, facilitate comprehension and stimulate inference, critical thinking and discussion, essential skills for the interpretation of texts. In addition, this approach favors active and participatory learning, where students interact with the content creatively through different tasks. By focusing on real and functional tasks, TBLT not only improves oral communication, but also strengthens reading comprehension, and language application in authentic contexts.

3.1.4. TBLT Frameworks

The task-based approach has been extensively studied by experts such as Willis (1996) and Ellis (2003, 2006) who highlight its effectiveness in language acquisition through meaningful use in communicative contexts. The TBLT model generally follows a structure proposed by several authors throughout history. This structure includes phases that provide opportunities for the SLA in authentic contexts.

3.1.4.1 Ellis' (2006) TBLT Model. The design of a task-based lesson requires attention to the different stages that make up the lesson, ensuring that the task is the central focus of learning.

These stages follow a chronological order within the lesson. The first is the “pre-task” phase, where teachers and students perform various preparatory activities before tackling the main task. Then, in the “during-task” phase, students carry out the task, with different support options from the teacher. Finally, the “post-task” phase focuses on the follow-up and consolidation of learning after the completion of the task.

In task-based teaching, the only essential phase is the “during-task” phase, since students must at least complete the main activity. However, the pre- and post-task phases, although optional, are critical to maximize the impact of the task on language development.

Figure 2

Ellis’ TBLT Stages

Phase	Examples of options
A. Pre-task	* Framing the activity (e. g. establishing the outcome of the task) * Planning time * Doing a similar task
B. During task	* Time pressure
C. Post-task	* Number of participants * Learner report * Consciousness-raising * Repeat task

From “The Methodology of Task-Based Teaching,” by R. Ellis, 2006, *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, 8(3), p.20

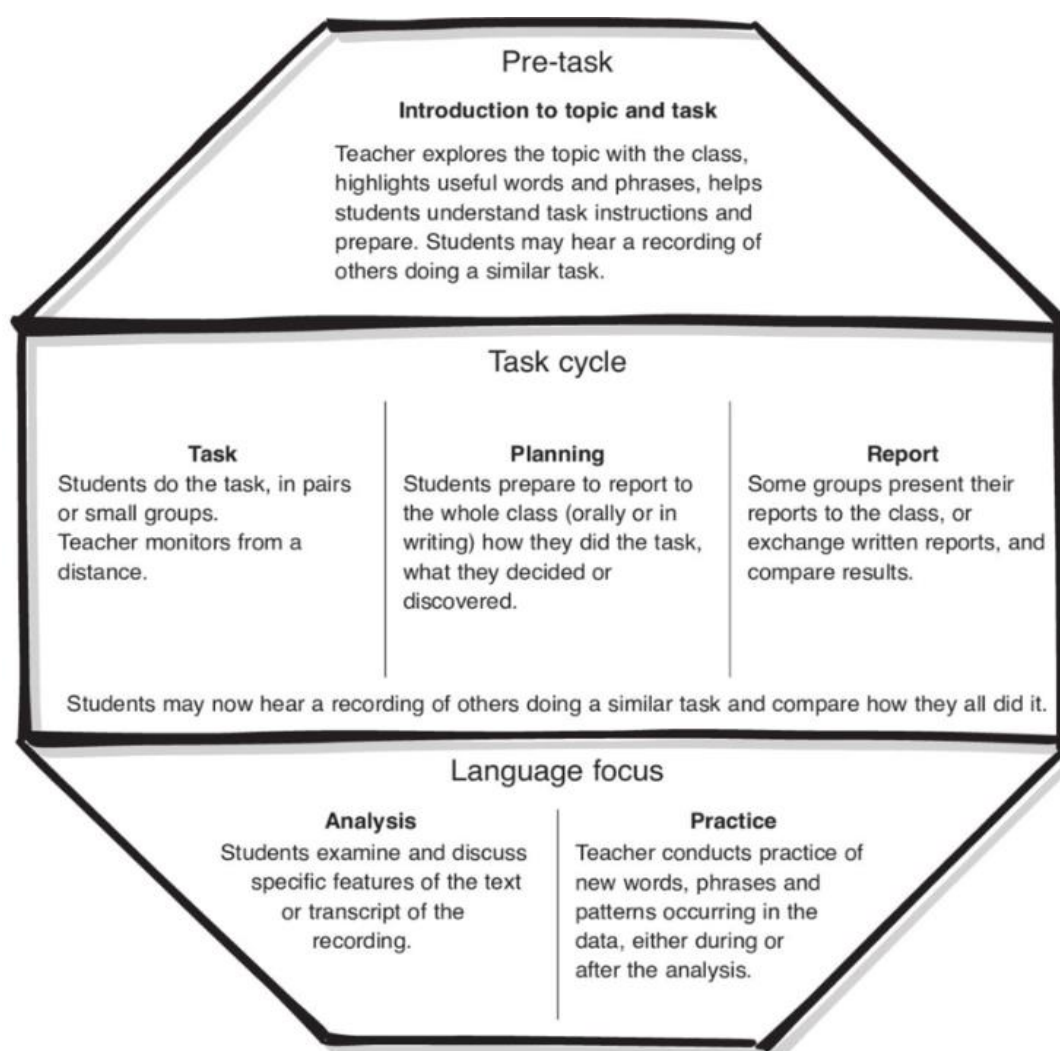
This model is popularly recognized in task-focused lesson design, however, Skehan (2022) criticizes the phases of the task-based approach for their inconsistent impact on language learning. He explains that in the Pre-task phase, although pre-planning improves fluency and complexity, its effect on accuracy is limited and may be lost if learners do not remember what has been prepared. In addition, this phase emphasizes the organization of ideas rather than linguistic development. On the other hand, in the While-task, planning allows for on-task adjustments, but students tend to prioritize completing the activity over accuracy. Feedback in this phase is key, but its effectiveness depends on the timing and method of application. And, in Post-task repetition of tasks can improve performance if implemented strategically. Skehan

suggests that explicit teaching should occur after the task, based on emerging language needs, to consolidate learning and balance meaning and form.

3.1.4.2 Willis' (1996) TBLT Model. Willis (1996) describes a more detailed sequence of activities, which makes it a useful and relevant sequence because it guides students through a structured process that enhances the use of the target language and meaningful learning. This is divided into three phases: Pre-task, Task cycle, and Language focus which allow students to develop language skills in context, helping them to improve their learning process.

Figure 3

Components of the TBLT Framework



Note. From A Framework for Task-Based Learning (Willis, 1996, p. 155).

This model follows a natural progression from the general to the specific, allowing students to develop their language skills in a contextualized manner by developing these phases.

The pre-task phase is usually the shortest and introduces the topic and the activity that students will be asked to perform. At this point, the teacher activates key vocabulary and expressions related to the topic, helping students become familiar with the content through games, interactive activities and so on.

The task cycle phase provides students with the opportunity to use the language they already know to carry out the activity. During this process, they receive support from the teacher to improve their language production while planning their reports on the task performed. Teacher feedback is provided at the planning stage and after the report, helping to consolidate learning. In this phase, three essential conditions for learning are met: exposure to the language, practical use, and motivation.

The language focus phase allows for a more detailed analysis of the linguistic structures used during the task. At this point, students have worked with the language in context and can focus on the specific forms that convey meaning. In this way, the study of grammar and other linguistic features becomes more relevant, as it builds on the learners' previous experience. This phase includes both language analysis and practice activities to explicitly reinforce learning.

In general terms, this model is highly beneficial for improving reading comprehension in adolescents, as it allows the comic book to be approached with different activities. For example, it allows students to become familiar with the content of the comic through predictions and vocabulary games, which activates their prior knowledge. Subsequently, they can interact with the comic through meaningful tasks such as collaborative reading, creating a story, or rewriting, which allows them to use the language in a practical way and develop communicative skills. Also, they can reflect on the linguistic structures of the comic, analyzing verb tenses such as the simple past and idiomatic expressions, which allows them to learn grammar inductively and apply it in new contexts. This approach facilitates active learning (learning by doing), improves reading comprehension, and increases students' motivation, enabling them to achieve a more lasting understanding of the language.

3.1.5 Student's and Teacher's Roles Involved in TBLT

In Task-Based Language Teaching the teacher's role is crucial and multifaceted, focusing on facilitating learning rather than simply delivering content. Meanwhile, the learner's role is dynamic and multifaceted, emphasizing active participation and engagement in the learning process. Richards and Rodgers, (2014) provide some key aspects of these roles.

3.1.5.1 Student's Roles:

- Risk-Taker: Learners are encouraged to take risks by creating and interpreting messages even when they lack full linguistic resources. This aspect of TBLT is crucial for developing language proficiency, as it pushes learners to use their existing knowledge creatively.
- Monitor of Language Use: While engaging in tasks, learners also act as monitors, paying attention to both the content of their messages and the form in which they are expressed. This dual focus helps them become more aware of language structures and usage.
- Independent Learner: Over time, learners gradually take on more responsibility for their own learning. Initially, they may rely on more experienced peers or teachers for support, but as they gain confidence and competence, they become more autonomous in their language use.

3.1.5.2 Teachers' Roles

- Motivator: Teachers motivate students to invest mental energy in task performance. They support learners' motivation throughout the various phases of a task-based activity, helping to maintain engagement and enthusiasm.
- Organizer of Activities: Teachers are responsible for efficiently organizing task-based activities. This includes providing clear instructions, preparing students for task performance, and guiding the formation of groups for collaborative tasks.
- Facilitator of Learning: Teachers create an environment that encourages students to engage in meaningful tasks. They facilitate interactions among learners and guide them in using the target language effectively.
- Monitor and Support: During task execution, teachers monitor students' interactions and language use, providing support as needed. They may offer assistance with language forms or strategies to help learners communicate more effectively.

- Task selector. The principal role of the teacher is to select, adapt, and/or create the tasks, organizing them into an instructional sequence that fits the needs, interests, and language ability levels of the students.

3.2 Reading Comprehension Definition

Snow (2002) defines reading comprehension as a dynamic process that involves both the extraction and construction of meaning through active engagement with written language. She emphasizes that this process is influenced by the interaction among three key elements: the reader, the text, and the purpose or activity of reading, all of which operate within a sociocultural context.

In the context of this research, Snow's definition is extended to incorporate the multimodal nature of comics, which combine textual and visual elements to convey meaning. Comics align closely with Snow's framework by offering a unique type of text that provides both linguistic input and visual cues, supporting readers in constructing meaning.

Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) emphasizes the significance of meaningful and comprehensible input in the process of second language acquisition. He states that language learners acquire more effectively when exposed to input that is slightly above their current level, referred to as $i+1$. Comics provide readers with the $i+1$ degree of challenge that Krashen recommends by combining text and visual components to help them comprehend complicated language in context.

Furthermore, comics often embed sociocultural contexts within their narratives, which enriches the learning experience by exposing learners to the cultural and social nuances of the language. This component in comics makes them an effective tool for promoting comprehension. According to Byram (1997), teaching foreign languages effectively requires taking cultural settings into account in addition to linguistic components. He states, "Communication is being presented as interaction among people of complex cultural and social identities" (p. 36). This suggests that studying a language involves more than just becoming proficient in vocabulary and syntax; it also entails comprehending the lifestyles that influence how people speak and write. As Byram argues, incorporating cultural knowledge into language instruction helps students interact with the "other" more effectively and communicate in more genuine, meaningful ways. Thus,

exposing students to the cultural nuances present in language through media like comics could improve their reading comprehension.

3.2.1 Reading Skills

Perfetti (1992) outlines several cognitive processes involved in reading comprehension, which can be grouped into the following broader categories:

- **Word Identification Skills:**

This category includes the ability to accurately decode words, linking orthographic (spelling) and phonological (sound) knowledge. The skill of identifying words, including nonwords (pseudowords), is crucial for word-level comprehension and serves as a foundation for further text understanding.

- **Lexical Processing Skills:**

- *Vocabulary Knowledge:* A larger vocabulary directly correlates with better comprehension ability.
- *Contextual Meaning Selection:* The ability to select the most appropriate meaning of a word based on context, which involves activating multiple meanings and suppressing irrelevant ones.

- **Syntactic and Structural Processing:**

This includes the ability to process sentence structures and parse complex syntax, such as relative clauses, and manage working memory to handle complex syntactic structures during reading.

- **Higher-Level Text Processing Skills:**

- *Coreference:* Mapping pronouns to their correct referents.
- *Inference Making:* Drawing conclusions from the text to fill in gaps or clarify implied information.
- *Comprehension Monitoring:* The ability to detect and correct misunderstandings or inconsistencies in understanding.
- *Use of Background Knowledge:* Integrating prior knowledge with new information in the text to enhance comprehension.

These categories represent different levels of reading processes, with foundational skills like word identification supporting more complex processes such as inference-making and comprehension monitoring (Perfetti, 1992).

3.3 How to Teach Reading?

According to Brown (2001), there are ten strategies for enhancing reading comprehension. For our purposes, we have selected five key strategies to implement.

- **Identify the purpose in reading**

Effective reading starts with understanding the purpose of the text. Clearly defining this purpose helps to focus attention on relevant information and filter out distractions. When teaching reading strategies, it is essential for students to identify their objectives before engaging with a text.

- **Skim the Text for Main Ideas**

Skimming consists of quickly scanning a text to understand its main idea and purpose, enabling readers to identify key topics and supporting ideas before engaging in a more detailed reading. To help students practice skimming, they can be given, for example, thirty seconds to review several pages, followed by a request for them to summarize what they have gathered.

- **Scan the Text for Specific Information**

Scanning is the process of quickly searching for specific pieces of information in a text. Exercises may involve finding names, dates, definitions, or supporting details. This technique allows for extracting targeted information without reading the entire text. It is essential in academic English and also valuable in vocational or general English when dealing with schedules, manuals, and forms.

- **Guess When You Are Not Certain**

Guessing is a vital strategy that helps readers navigate unfamiliar words, grammatical structures, and implied meanings. At its core, reading involves making educated guesses, which can enhance comprehension. It's important for students to learn how to make informed guesses rather than rely on random assumptions.

To improve their guessing skills, students should use strategies that fill gaps in understanding. Language-based clues, such as word analysis and textual structure, provide

insights into meaning, while nonlinguistic clues like context and prior knowledge are also crucial.

- **Distinguish Between Literal and Implied Meanings**

This task requires the use of advanced top-down processing skills. Since not all language can be understood by focusing solely on its literal or syntactic surface structure, readers face unique challenges. Implied meanings often need to be inferred from pragmatic information.

3.4 How to Assess Students' Reading Skills?

We opted to assess the participants' reading competence using comics following the two assessment models described by MacMillan (2016) which are: *focusing on the product of reading* and *focusing on the process of reading*. She argues that the first assessment model, the product of reading, focuses on the final understanding a reader reaches rather than the cognitive process behind it. Early research in this model used comprehension tests (e.g., question-based assessments) to measure understanding and compare results with different reading variables. A key goal was to classify comprehension levels by distinguishing lower-order skills (e.g., identifying explicit information) from higher-order skills (e.g., making inferences using prior knowledge). However, this approach has limitations such as the reading comprehension varies among readers because meaning is not simply extracted from a text but constructed through interaction, since “It can be challenging to objectively decide which interpretations are acceptable and which are not” (p. 115). This variation makes it difficult to establish objective assessment criteria, affecting fairness.

On the other hand, the second assessment model, process of reading, focuses on how readers construct meaning by actively interacting with a text. Unlike the product model, which emphasizes final comprehension outcomes, this model views reading as an interactive and dynamic process where readers combine textual information with their background knowledge, which can be described as a “psycholinguistic guessing game”, where readers form hypotheses about the text’s meaning. Researchers have used various methods to analyze this cognitive process, including:

- Miscue analysis: Examines reading mistakes when participants read aloud.
- Eye tracking: Monitors eye movements to identify focus areas in the text.
- Think-aloud protocols: Require readers to verbalize their thoughts while reading.

Both the product-oriented and process-oriented reading assessment models provide a comprehensive view of students' reading comprehension using comics. The product-based approach helps to measure the level of comprehension achieved through objective tasks such as reading workshops, distinguishing literal and inferential comprehension skills, which allows assessing how students interpret textual and visual information. On the other hand, the process-based approach allows to analyze how students construct meaning while reading, identifying strategies such as the use of images to infer information or meanings, the way they predict events based on the context, their strategies to decipher unknown words or expressions, the formulation of hypotheses or the connection with previous knowledge. By combining both models, it is possible to evaluate not only the final reading outcome, but also the cognitive process students follow to comprehend comics, which facilitates the identification of difficulties and the implementation of strategies to improve their reading performance.

3.5 Comic Book Definition

Various experts and scholars have provided definitions of comics over the years. According to Scott McCloud in *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (1993), comics are defined as “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to entertain.” McCloud's definition emphasizes the idea that comics are a medium that combines images and, often, text in a sequential format to communicate ideas or tell stories.

In the book, McCloud further elaborates on several key ideas regarding comics:

- **Sequential Art:** McCloud defines comics as a form of “sequential art,” where the order of images is key to understanding the story or information being communicated.
- **Visual and Textual Synergy:** Comics rely on both visual elements (images, symbols, etc.) and textual elements (dialogue, narration) that work together to create meaning. The relationship between these elements is what makes comics distinct from other art forms.
- **Language of Comics:** McCloud argues that comics have their own “language,” a unique way of using symbols, visuals, and text to communicate. He compares the combination of images and text to other forms of written language, but highlights that comics are a hybrid medium.

Some academics state that comics offer a fantastic platform for assisting students in mastering the diverse new forms of literacies. Newman, M., & Ogle, D. (2019). Students must actively engage with both the verbal content and the visual pictures to fully comprehend. This integration of verbal and visual elements is a fundamental aspect of visual literacy. Whiting (2016) states that comics cover the four language domains:

Comics can help students develop improved skills in each of the four language domains: reading—both silently and out loud, using small, comprehensible chunks; listening—to themselves, their classmates, and their teacher as they read and discuss a comic; speaking—reading the comic aloud, acting the story out, discussing and explaining what is logical or humorous, and why; and writing—creating their own comics, completing cloze activities, and finishing existing comics. (Whiting, 2016, p.14)

Comics are particularly effective in teaching colloquial language and appropriate language usage. They provide valuable avenues for exploring idiomatic expressions, informal speech patterns, and slang, while also immersing learners in the culture and vocabulary of the target language. Furthermore, comics actively support the implementation of effective communicative language teaching methods in the classroom. They foster the use of the target language through learner-centered activities, diverse group work and discussions, learner-driven exploration, and the minimization of language barriers.

3.6 Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness, as defined by Byram (2021), is encompassed within the framework of critical cultural awareness, or "*savoir s'engager*." This concept encompasses the capacity to critically evaluate, through a systematic reasoning process, the values inherent in one's own culture as well as those of others. It involves the identification and interpretation of both explicit and implicit values in various documents and events across different cultures. Furthermore, it requires making a thoughtful evaluative analysis of these documents and events based on a conscious reasoning process. This definition underscores the significance of critical reflection and the ability to engage with diverse cultural perspectives in a reasoned and analytical manner.

Will Baker (2011) enhances the definition of cultural awareness by describing it as a conscious understanding of the role that culture plays in language learning and communication, whether in one's native or a foreign language. The concept of cultural awareness is reflected and

applied in various teaching practices. Additionally, these conceptions emphasize the importance of learners recognizing the culturally rooted norms, beliefs, and behaviors of both their own culture and those of others. Ultimately, they share the common objective of fostering a deeper understanding of culture and language, which facilitates successful intercultural communication.

3.6.1 Advantages of cultural awareness in second language learning

The concept of cultural awareness, as discussed by Byram, offers several advantages directly related to second language acquisition:

- **Enhanced Communication:** Understanding cultural differences helps in communicating more effectively with people from diverse backgrounds, reducing misunderstandings and fostering clearer interactions.
- **Improved Relationships:** It promotes empathy and respect, leading to stronger and more meaningful relationships both personally and professionally.
- **Increased Adaptability:** Being culturally aware makes it easier to adapt to new environments and situations, which is particularly beneficial in globalized settings.
- **Broader Perspectives:** It encourages open-mindedness and curiosity, allowing individuals to appreciate and learn from different ways of life, enhancing personal growth and development.
- **Educational Benefits:** It enriches the learning experience by incorporating diverse viewpoints and fostering a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of subjects.

Tomalin and Stempleski's (1993) book, *Cultural Awareness*, offers teachers actionable advice and materials that facilitate the integration of cultural awareness into language teaching, along with materials and activities for teaching English as a second language. These activities pretend to develop three core qualities:

- Awareness of One's Own Culturally-Induced Behavior
- Awareness of the Culturally-Induced Behavior of Others
- Ability to Explain One's Own Cultural Standpoint

The book proposes a variety of activities, giving teachers practical guidance on how to help learners improve their cross-cultural communication skills. These activities include:

- **Critical incidents:** Students read critical incidents involving communication problems between people from different cultures and recommend solutions to the problems.

- **Analysis of advertisements and newspapers:** Students use advertisements and newspapers to deduce information about everyday life and values in the target culture.
- **Interviews and surveys:** Students interview native speakers to increase awareness of behaviors and social customs in the target culture.
- **Video analysis:** Students watch videos depicting cultural events and compare similarities and differences with their own culture.
- **Language and rhetoric activities:** Activities involving the use of language and rhetoric to compare and contrast different interpretations of political and cultural statements are included.

These activities are designed to foster intercultural understanding and the development of effective communication skills in a diverse cultural context, which is essential for effective communication in a second language. Therefore, the book underscores that acquiring a second language is not merely about mastering grammar and vocabulary, but also about understanding and adapting to the cultural contexts in which the language is used.

Chapter 4. Research Methodology

Action research is the most appropriate approach for this study since it allows us to address a specific problem in the classroom, which had already been identified in the original site of our pedagogical intervention, namely the difficulty in developing reading and writing skills in English in adolescent students, and which we later continued with the students of Centro de Lenguas y Culturas at Universidad del Valle who shared this same challenge. Therefore, this method allows us to reflect on our teaching practice while working directly with the students and involving them in the process. This creates a cycle of comic-based planning, implementation, observation and assessment of its effectiveness and reflection on the results. In addition to that, this method facilitates us to adjust strategies and activities according to the needs of the students and of course it also provides us with new knowledge and a better understanding of how to improve our pedagogical practices and solve meaningful problems in an educational setting. Thus, to examine the effectiveness of this approach with the use of comics to improve students' reading skills and enhance a deeper understanding of the content, it was necessary to implement a research methodology that provided mainly quantitative perspectives as well as descriptive quantitative data that would allow us to identify trends in students' reading comprehension performance.

The following chapter describes the research site and participants, research approach and research design in order to understand the context of the study, the research method and design which include the description of the data collection methods, procedures and analyses. This is followed by the validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

4.1 Research site and participants

The study was conducted at the Centro de Lenguas y Culturas, a division of the Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje at Universidad del Valle. This institution operates in two locations: Plaza 80, situated in the Capri neighborhood of Cali, and the university's main campus, where the observations and pedagogical intervention for this research took place. The participant sample was drawn from the Teens III course (A2 beginners), consisting of 26 students aged between 12 and 17 years.

4.1.1 Research Site

This investigation was carried out in Centro de Lenguas y Cultura (CLC) at Campus Meléndez, calle 13 #100-00, Universidad del Valle, Comuna 22 in Cali. The university offers its facilities for the development of classes in different faculties, in this case, the faculty of Ciencias Naturales y Exactas, building E20. This place has multiple classrooms which have the following spaces and resources in order to provide students with the appropriate conditions during the classes:

A cafeteria where students can have breakfast during break time, many green areas where to perform outdoor activities. The building has multiple restrooms which avoids congestion and agglomeration of students during the recess. Moreover, the technological component of the CLC is remarkable, All classrooms are equipped with computers, projectors, speakers and air conditioning. These facilities guarantee an environment conducive to the optimal development of classes, facilitating the integration of audiovisual resources and the comfort of students and teachers.

On the other hand, the Centro de Lenguas y Cultura follows the educational principles of the Bachelor Degree Program in Foreign Languages of the Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje. In this approach, the curriculum is seen as a reflection of the relationship between school, society and culture. According to this social constructivist perspective, knowledge is constructed through dialogue within the educational community. CLC views language teaching from a communicative and intercultural perspective. Therefore, this organization is committed to a curricular vision in which student activity and peer collaboration through communicative tasks and projects, discussion and reflection on culture allow language teaching and learning to become a dialogue between cultures, a process of collective construction.

Also, CLC adopts different approaches to foreign language teaching and learning. It mainly integrates elements of Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning and Intercultural Orientation.

Another important noteworthy feature is the type of assessment used. Centro de Lenguas y Culturas combines a formative and summative evaluation approach. Formative assessment is the process of dynamic and participatory evaluation that involves systematic feedback and allows for a critical appreciation of the learning process. This evaluation provides opportunities for both students and teachers to modify instructional or attitudinal aspects that can improve the learning

and teaching processes. Since it is necessary to certify levels of quality and achievement of language learning objectives in each CLC course, a summative assessment approach is also adopted. The purpose of summative assessment is to grade students according to the level of achievement they have reached with respect to particular content and communicative competencies for each level.

Figure 4

Centro de Lenguas y Culturas Assessment

	Evaluación Formativa	Evaluación Sumativa
Funciones Para qué...	Facilitar el aprendizaje Informar Al profesor Ritmo, problemas de aprendizaje... Posibles falencias en su proceso instruccional Al estudiante Corregir errores a tiempo, Cómo hay que estudiar, Qué es lo importante, Cuál es el nivel de exigencia	Calificar Certificar
Cuándo...	Con cierta frecuencia Cuando sea oportuno <i>Evaluación integrada en el aprendizaje</i>	Tiempos designados
Cómo...	Caben métodos sencillos, más informales y variados (prueba diagnóstica, autoevaluación, coevaluación, evaluación del profesor, encuesta) o métodos más formales (proyectos, quices, presentaciones o exámenes con seguimiento y retroalimentación)	Métodos habituales (examen de mitad de curso, examen final, proyectos)
Calificación	No siempre o con menor peso. Sí, pero con acompañamiento y retroalimentación.	Siempre

From Proyecto Educativo Institucional (Centro de Lenguas y Culturas, 2022, p. 34).

4.1.2 Participants

Our intervention was conducted with a group of students enrolled in the *English for Teens III (Lower Intermediate)* program, which corresponds to level A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This group consisted of 26 students, ranging in age from 12 to 17 years. Of the total participants, 9 were boys and 17 were girls.

Since the students were at an A1 level and working toward A2, they were in a transitional phase where developing reading skills was essential. At this stage, learners often face challenges

in comprehending longer texts, acquiring new vocabulary, and making inferences. Comics, with their integration of visual and textual elements, provide contextual support that could facilitate comprehension and enhance reading accessibility.

Additionally, the head teacher played an active role in the intervention, as she was present during the sessions. She was interviewed at the conclusion of the intervention and regularly provided feedback at the end of each class. She holds a degree from the Universidad del Valle and has over eight years of experience working in both public and private educational institutions. The teacher expressed enthusiasm about our participation in her classroom, particularly because we had studied at the same university from which she graduated. Likewise, we were pleased to contribute to the institution where we had developed our own academic and professional skills. Consent forms were also collected from both the teachers and student participants ([Appendices A & B](#)).

4.2 Research Approach

This research study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using comics through Task-Based Learning to enhance reading skills of an English group for teenagers. As mentioned previously, the approach used for this study is action research, since it focuses on specific and practical issues that are of direct interest to specific social groups or communities. It is carried out in natural contexts and employs, mainly, methods linked to qualitative research such as observation and recording of events and behaviors. This approach is essentially participatory, since it is developed with the active collaboration of the members of the community where the study is conducted (Burns 1999).

Continuing with this same idea, this study follows Burns' (1999) statement that action research stands out for its systematic approach to data collection and analysis and aligns with qualitative methodologies such as 'grounded theory', allowing interpretations to be based on data obtained directly from the real environment, such as classrooms, rather than depending purely on abstract theories. Moreover, this author mentions that one of the key advantages of action research is its flexibility, which allows it to adapt quickly to emerging political, social, and educational issues that affect teaching practice.

In addition, this approach employs triangulation in data collection, which involves using multiple sources to verify and contrast findings, thus increasing the reliability and validity of the

results. That is why it is worth mentioning that for this study of qualitative nature, qualitative and some quantitative data were used to provide a more complete understanding of the research problem and its results.

4.3 Research Design

According to Burns, action research addresses practical and theoretical issues relevant to education professionals, and its results can be shared and replicated in workshops, meetings, short publications, or even serve as the basis for other research studies. Unlike traditional research, in action research, the implementation of findings is an integral part of the process, ensuring that the results have a direct impact on educational practice which is the main purpose of this research; improving the reading skills of English language learners through a non-conventional reading format such as the use of local cultural and foreign comics in the classroom which can be more appealing and stimulating for students. The quantitative perspective of the study consists of test scores used to compare students' performance before and after the intervention. This comparison will help to identify students' development of reading skills and the effectiveness of comics.

Phases of the Research

Burns (1999) claims that action research should be seen as a flexible approach in which different groups of researchers, depending on their specific contexts, will need to determine and interpret which processes are most appropriate for their particular circumstances, where action research is understood as a series of interconnected experiences. Therefore, this study covers the following stages that are best suited to this particular context and which are proposed by Burns:

4.3.1 Diagnostic Stage

In this phase, information and data were collected that allowed us to clarify and have a better view of the problems presented in the classroom and whether they were aligned with the initial research questions. During this stage, a short period of time was invested in observing the dynamics of the group participants, students and the teacher in charge, and simultaneously recording these interactions in order to obtain a wider perspective of the situation. After the general observation time, it showed that:

- Students are sometimes distracted by their cell phones.
- A significant number of students use cell phones as a tool to translate written information to understand the content.
- Some students struggle to perform speaking tasks adequately.
- A large number of students like activities that promote competitiveness and teamwork.

Subsequently, this phase included the realization of a diagnostic reading test that helped to establish a baseline: to determine the students' initial level of reading comprehension prior to the pedagogical intervention. In addition, it facilitated the identification of strengths and weaknesses to create an effective action plan to target the research problem.

Furthermore, a survey was conducted to obtain some information about the students' reading tastes, their background and other aspects that ended up as input to identify the students' needs and expectations.

4.3.2 Planning Stage

This phase focuses on developing an appropriate action plan for data collection and gathering information on the results obtained. Within this plan, comics were reviewed, chosen and methodically created in order to propose relevant and meaningful activities and tasks for the objectives of the proposal. This material was designed based on the information obtained from the survey completed by the students and additionally the objectives of the curriculum corresponding to English for Teens III. From this, three didactic units were planned, each unit has as its main objective to develop improvements in the students' reading skills using comics.

4.3.3 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

This phase was carried out throughout the research where different methods of data collection were implemented marking a deeper exploration of the research topic.

Table 1*Data Collection Methods, Research Questions, and Data Analysis*

Research question	Data collection methods	Purpose	Data analysis
RQ1 What are the students' needs regarding reading skills?	• Observation class • Journals • Survey of characterization • Diagnostic test	• To understand how students interact with reading tasks. • identify specific needs related to reading comprehension. • Evaluate students' initial level of reading skills prior to any intervention.	• Content Analysis • Descriptive and inferential statistics • Coding and categorization
RQ2 What is the effect of comic-based reading comprehension activities using the Task-Based Language Teaching approach on English learners?	• Reading tasks • Observation during the intervention • Analytic scoring rubric • Final teacher interview	• To measure the impact of comics on students' ability to understand and process written texts through (TBLT). • Monitor how students interact with the comic-based activities, their level of engagement, motivation, and learning strategies. • Assess different aspects of student performance on tasks in detail. • To obtain an expert and reflective perspective on the overall impact of comics on student learning.	• Descriptive and inferential statistics • Content analysis • Triangulation: Correlate qualitative insights with quantitative results
RQ3 What are the students' perceptions of their reading skills and cultural awareness using comics?	• Perception questionnaire for students	• To know students' perceptions of the use of comics to foster reading comprehension.	• Observation class • Content analysis

Observation and Class and Journals. Creswell and Creswell (2018) claims that observation in a qualitative study requires the researcher to document observations on individuals' behaviors and activities at the research site through field notes. These notes can be recorded in an unstructured or semi-structured manner, incorporating specific questions of interest. Additionally, qualitative observers may assume different roles, ranging from nonparticipant to full participant in the setting.

At the beginning of the study, the visits allowed us to have an approach to the academic context in its natural state and report the behavior and actions of the participants, to detect tendencies, habits and interests of these, and also helped us to understand the factors or circumstances that affect the observed phenomena ([Appendix C](#)).

Survey. A survey design provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes and opinions within a population, or examines the relationships between variables in that population, through the analysis of a representative sample. This method of data collection allows researchers to address different questions about the group (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The survey applied to students provided a quantitative characterization of the group and was structured in seven sections: demographic information, gender, English language learning experiences, motivation to learn English, foreign language performance, reading experience and interculturality, and comics relationship. This survey contains both closed-ended questions with response options and open-ended questions where participants could express their opinion or personal experiences. ([Appendix D](#)).

Diagnostic Reading Comprehension Test. Diaz-Morales (2013) defines this process as a data collection tool used in research to obtain information about participants' prior knowledge or skills before the intervention or study program. It is used to establish a baseline of data prior to the implementation of an intervention and compare subsequent results to assess the impact of the program.

At this stage we conducted a diagnostic test that helped us to focus on more specific aspects related to the students' comprehension level of written texts accompanied by visual elements through a comic book. This comic strip is titled “The Bridge” which is a story included in the “Creepshow” comic book series. The Bridge appears in the third issue of this series, published by Image Comics and Skybound. Creepshow is a horror anthology known for its short stories that combine horror and humor. This material was taken from: [Read Comic Online website](#). The purpose of this test is to assess students' reading comprehension in three key areas: general and detailed information, expressions and vocabulary used in context, inferences and hypotheses. The pre-test includes 17 multiple-choice and open-ended argumentative questions. The data obtained helped us to better understand the nature of the situation and guided us on the steps to follow during the pedagogical intervention ([Appendix E](#)).

Analytic Scoring Rubric. According to Brookhart (2013), “rubrics have two major aspects: coherent sets of criteria and descriptions of levels of performance for these criteria” (p.

4). Therefore, in order to evaluate the students' reading comprehension level through reading tasks, it was necessary to create a rubric that defined the performance for each category or criteria (general and detailed comprehension, expressions and vocabulary usage in context and ability to make inferences and hypotheses). For this we established the following performance levels: very poor, poor, average, good and great. These performance levels had a different scoring scale for each reading comprehension task which depended on the type of activity, questions, comic, but always using the same criteria and performances ([see Appendix F](#)). Therefore, the type of rubric best suited to the type of tasks and to what we wanted to investigate was the analytical rubric which evaluates work based on individual criteria separately. It is particularly effective for classroom use because they allow students to understand which specific aspects of their work need improvement. This criterion-by-criterion approach enhances both instruction and formative assessment by providing clear feedback. Additionally, analytic rubrics are useful for summative assessments (grading), especially when the results will inform future instructional decisions, such as adjustments to lesson plans or follow-up activities.

Final Group Questionnaire with Students. For Dörnyei's (2007) In research, the term "questionnaire" is generally used to refer to two main types: interview guides or schedules and self-administered questionnaires in pencil-and-paper format. The items included in a questionnaire are not designed to have correct or incorrect answers, but rather to collect information from respondents in a non-evaluative way, without assessing their performance based on specific criteria. The perception questionnaire was conducted by the researchers themselves at the end of the study and consisted of 11 open-ended questions that attempted to find out what the participants thought, covering attitudes and opinions ([Appendix G](#)). This gave us some insight into the pedagogical strategies employed in the research that yielded important information with respect to:

- The evaluation of the effectiveness of the method, since it allowed us to measure how the students perceive the impact of the comics on their learning, providing feedback on the effectiveness of this pedagogical strategy.
- In addition, it allowed us to identify what worked for them, what they liked and what motivated them, which undoubtedly can guide future selections of more attractive and effective material for learning.

- Another important aspect was the analysis of cultural impact, the questions related to learning about other cultures and one's own culture allow us to evaluate how the comics contribute to intercultural understanding.
- Finally, the questionnaire measured students' self-perception of learning, whether they experienced a sense of improvement in specific skills such as reading and writing.

Teacher interview: perception about the proposal. In accordance with Creswell (2018) In qualitative interviews, the researcher interacts directly with the participants through face-to-face encounters or other ways, and they are characterized by the use of open-ended and unstructured questions, with the main objective of gathering the perspectives and opinions of the participants. Thus, the final teacher interview provided a global view of the impact of the use of comics in teaching English. This is because the teacher has a deep understanding of her students' learning processes and knows their strengths and weaknesses and can provide an appreciation of how this methodology influenced their reading and comprehension skills in English because she was an active observer and participant throughout the process. That is why we decided to interview her to get her perspectives on various aspects, such as the type of activities and comics implemented, the methodology employed, and the level of his students before and after the intervention. The interview was conducted in Spanish by a researcher at the end of the study on November 16th, 2024, for half an hour. The interview format consisted of only five questions ([Appendix H](#))

4.3.4 Analysis of data

In this segment of the research, data analysis and reflection were a continuous process, since detailed analysis drives reflection. Both activities were carried out jointly in four parts. A first analysis was conducted during the month of August with the data collected until that moment such as classroom observations and the characterization survey. The second analysis was based on the students' diagnostic test, which reinforced the need to address the problem and allowed us to identify in detail the type of difficulties of the students, which guided us in the design of the didactic sequence for the intervention. The third analysis was done through evaluation based on pre-established criteria in the tasks and activities to interpret the data in a consistent manner. The final analysis was made in November based on the teacher's interview

and all the data obtained so far contrasted with the students' perception questionnaire to reach a reflection on the impact of the whole set of actions and teaching strategies during the study. This also included observing changes in the behavior of the participants.

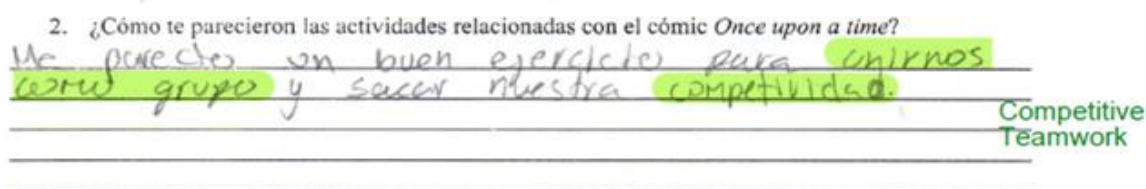
In order to obtain the categories of the formats, we followed a systematic methodology, as outlined by Creswell and Cresswell, to organize, code, and categorize the data into meaningful themes. The steps are described as follows.

Step 1: Organize and prepare the data for analysis. The data for this study were systematically organized and prepared for analysis. This involved compiling the surveys, in-class observations and field notes. We transcribed the field notes and in-class observations into organized formats. Then, we scanned the final surveys from the students and the teacher.

Step 2. Read or look at all the data. As advised by Cresswell and Cresswell, this step involved an initial reading of the entire dataset. We reviewed all the data in order to get a general sense of it. This phase was crucial for identifying overarching patterns and themes, as well as reflecting on the tone of the data. Cresswell and Cresswell's recommendation to make initial notes during this phase was followed, with us jotting down general impressions in the margins of the transcripts and notes. These initial observations helped shape the broader themes that emerged in later stages.

Figure 5

Coding Process of Student Responses



Note. This figure illustrates the step-by-step coding process used to analyze student responses, including raw data, and initial codes.

Step 3. Start Coding All of the Data. The data was organized into codes that represented key concepts and categories. We employed a combination of in vivo terms—drawn directly from the participants' language—and broader categories that emerged from the analysis. Each segment of the data was labeled with these codes. For instance, when students shared their

perceptions of activities conducted with comics, they described them using words such as “Fun”, “Exciting”, “Entertaining”, “Dynamic”, “Funny” and “Interesting”. These terms were classified under the overarching category of “Engaging.”

Step 4: Representing the Description and Themes. After coding the data, Cresswell and Cresswell (2018) highlight the significance of going beyond mere categorization to develop rich descriptions and thematic insights. We utilized this approach to create a comprehensive narrative of the findings in the subsequent analysis. Each theme was accompanied by examples drawn from the student responses, and tables were constructed to effectively present the data. To collect data from the focused observations, we established 5 categories: vocabulary impact, cultural awareness impact, students’ attitudes, students’ native language usage and student’s interaction. We systematically categorized the information by assigning distinct colors to each category. Following this classification, we highlighted the relevant information to correspond with the designated colors. We provide an example of qualitative data collection from the focused observations in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Sample Qualitative Data Analysis

FOCUSED OBSERVATION 1						Color	Categories
Institución: Centro de lenguas y cultura Grado: Teens III Fecha: 21/09/2024 Hora: 8 AM Comic: LA CANDILEJA Número de estudiantes: 9 niños y 15 niñas							
Valoración grado de alcance del objetivo: 5= excelente 4 = bueno 3= regular 2= escaso 1= mínimo	Grado de alcance						Vocabulary Impact
							Cultural Awareness Impact
							Students' Attitudes
							Students' Native Language Usage
							Student's Interaction
Actividades de comprensión lectora y producción oral y/o escrita	5	4	3	2	1	OBSERVACIONES	
Las actividades promovieron la discusión oral entre pares y docente con el fin de comprender el contenido del texto.	X						
Las actividades promovieron el uso del léxico presentado en los materiales.	x					The students gave examples using the given vocabulary.	
Las actividades promovieron el uso de los aspectos gramaticales presentados en los materiales.	x					The students talked about what they did last weekend using the simple past structure.	
Las actividades promovieron la exploración y reflexión de los aspectos culturales presentes en los textos.		X				Some students reflected on the cultural aspects and identified similarities between the stories shared in class.	
Las actividades integraron el contexto de los estudiantes.	X					The students were able to participate from their contexts by sharing authentic and personal stories.	
El docente da herramientas a los estudiantes para avanzar en la lectura.	x					The teacher provided the students with examples to help them understand the meaning of an unknown word without translating it into Spanish.	

Additionally, additional data collected during the intervention focused on monitoring students' performance through three tasks based on different comics. These tasks assessed three reading skills or analytical components: general and detailed comprehension of the text, interpretation of expressions and vocabulary in context, and the ability to make inferences and hypotheses.

The analysis was conducted using a single evaluation rubric which was described previously, with established performance criteria: very poor, poor, average, good and excellent. However, the scoring scale varied depending on the comic, the type of questions and the nature of the activity, although always respecting the same evaluation rubric.

Thanks to this process, we obtained detailed data on the score in each of the skills evaluated, as well as the overall score of the tasks performed by the students as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Students' Tasks Results

Student code	READING TASK 1				READING TASK 2					READING TASK 3				
	Gen & det comp	Infer & hypoth	Total score 20/20	Final Grade	Gen & det comp	Vocab	Infer & hypoth	Total score 150/150	Final grade	Gen & det comp	Vocab	Infer & hypoth	Total score 30/30	Final Grade
01	6	3,3	12,6	3,5	54	22	6	82	3,1	2.5	0	6	8.5	2.1
02	9	6,6	15,6	4,1	--	--	--	--	--	7.5	5	10	22.5	4.0
03	9	10	20	50	80	28	30	138	4,7	7.5	10	6	22.5	4,0
04	8	10	18	4,6	80	28	30	138	4,7	7.5	0	6	13.5	2,8
05	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.5	5	7	19.5	3,6
06	10	6,6	16,6	4,3	60	16	14	90	3,4	7.5	5	6	18.5	3,4
07	5	3,3	8,3	2,6	60	16	14	90	3,4	2.5	5	10	17.5	3,3
08	10	10	20	5,0	52	20	12	84	3,2	5	5	6	16	3,1
09	3	3,3	6,6	2,3	60	16	14	90	3,4	--	--	--	--	--
010	9	6,6	15,6	4,1	80	28	30	138	4,7	7.5	0	10	17.5	3,3
011	9	10	19	4,8	80	28	30	138	4,7	7.5	0	6	13.5	2,8
012	--	--	--	--	76	18	30	124	4,3	7.5	5	10	22.5	4,0
013	8	8	16	4,2	76	18	30	124	4,3	7.5	0	10	17.5	3,3
014	10	10	20	5,0	60	16	14	90	3,4	7.5	10	6	23.5	4,1
015	8	6,6	14,6	3,9	60	16	14	90	3,4	7.5	5	6	18.5	3,4
016	9	10	19	4,8	52	20	12	84	3,2	7.5	5	10	22.5	4,0
017	7	8	15	4,0	76	18	30	124	4,3	10	5	10	25	4,3
018	10	10	20	5,0	52	20	12	84	3,2	5	5	10	20	3,6
019	10	10	20	5,0	54	22	6	82	3,1	5	0	10	15	3,0
020	10	3,3	13,3	3,6	54	22	6	82	3,1	7.5	5	10	22.5	4,0
021	9	10	19	4,8	76	18	30	124	4,3	--	--	--	--	--
022	10	6,6	16,6	4,3	76	18	30	124	4,3	7.5	0	7	14.5	2,9
023	9	6,6	15,6	4,1	80	28	30	138	4,7	7.5	5	10	22.5	4,0
024	8	3,3	11,3	3,2	54	22	6	82	3,1	7.5	0	10	17.5	3,3
025	9	10	19	4,8	52	20	12	84	3,2	7.5	10	10	27.5	4,7
026	10	10	20	5,0	52	20	12	84	3,2	7.5	10	6	23.5	4,1

4.3.5 Intervention stage

This phase was implemented by the researchers between September and November 2024 where the lesson design was aligned to the competencies established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2020) for A2 level and the objectives of the curriculum corresponding to English for Teens III ([see Appendix I](#)). Initially, they administered formal and non-formal assessments of students' reading skills as part of the process to monitor student performance, which was a useful way to monitor progress. The class planning included oral, written, and reading comprehension tasks. The reading tasks were evaluated according to a set of criteria based on reading competencies. The intervention schedule was in the morning from 8:00

to 10:00 a.m. on Saturdays with an average of two and a half hours per session with the presence of the head teacher. The units were divided into two sessions without interruption and following continuity with activities framed in the task-based learning approach, working on collaborative learning to encourage discussion and reflection on the comics. For this purpose, tools such as video-beam, board, markers, photocopies, printed and digital images, among others, were used.

Table 2

Summary of Comics, Session Length, and Frequency

FIRST UNIT			
COMIC 1	La Candileja	session 1	2 hr 30 min
		session 2	2 hr 30 min
SECOND UNIT			
COMIC 2	Once Upon a Time in Africa	session 3	2 hr 30 min
		session 4	2 hr 30 min
THIRD UNIT			
COMIC 3	Huakar Goddess	session 5	2 hr
		session 6	2 hr

4.3.5.1 TBLT Lesson Design. The implementation of the lesson plans based on task-based learning approach to enhance reading comprehension skills in English required the design and planning of the stages proposed by Ellis (2006) and Willis (1996) explained previously in the framework. The units were designed in the following way:

Unit one is based on the comic book *La Candileja*, which was inspired by a local legend of the same name. The story follows a grandmother who was punished for spoiling her beloved granddaughter. This comic was created by us, the researchers, using the artificial intelligence platform [Create Comics with AI!](#) The first cycle involved a pre-task designed to introduce students to the topic and key vocabulary, including family members and verbs. During this cycle, students played a guessing game: Guess the verb and its past form based on clues given by their peers. Next, students worked in groups to solve riddles about family members and possessive

adjectives. This activity served as an engaging introduction to the vocabulary they would use in the following tasks.

In the second cycle, the participants reflected on their most beloved relatives and introduced them to their classmates and teachers. Taking turns, they exchanged information. Then, they did a guided reading of the comic, in which they reviewed vocabulary and key expressions. From the reading, students completed a reading comprehension task that included open-ended and closed-ended questions about the events in the comic and how they occurred, as well as personal reflection questions that showed their understanding of the lecture. Finally, In the post-task cycle, students conducted an interview with their grandmother. In case they did not have a grandmother, they could interview their grandfather or another elderly relative. To do so, they had to bring a picture of the interviewed relative and present it in class. Finally, they wrote the sequence of events narrated in the interview and read it aloud in front of their classmates.

In the second unit, we used the comic book *Once Upon a Time in Africa* written by Zidrou and illustrated by Raphaël Beuchot. This is the first volume of the African trilogy which is available for free on websites such as [Read Comic Online](#).. This comic was modified and shortened by 50 pages, and explicit content was omitted in order to make it suitable for pedagogical use. This comic was chosen for its strong cultural theme and message which is about an African country where the dictatorship has banned all forms of cultural expression such as storytelling and the storyteller called Once-Upon-A-Time is back, ready to start performing his puppet shows as a form of rebellion.

During the pre-task cycle, students played charades in groups to familiarize themselves with key vocabulary from the comic. Then, they looked at the title and cover to predict the content and genre of the story. In the task cycle, the teacher introduced the comic book and led a group reading, pausing to clarify vocabulary and encourage discussion with questions about the story and its themes. Afterwards, the students participated in a reading comprehension task through a game, 'Jeopardy' to assess their reading performance. In addition, in pairs, they carried out a writing activity where they described characters, scenarios and the most important events of the comic book, as well as creating an alternative ending that they then presented in class. And they did a review of the comic as a discussion.

To conclude the unit, for the post-task cycle, students had to research unusual rules from different countries and create a comic book narrating their origin and meaning using simple past

tense, concluding with a class presentation of the comic. Unfortunately, this task could not be carried out due to parents' meetings and other final project activities of the group for the CLC language festival, which left no time for this task.

The sequence of the third unit was developed based on the comic book *Huakar Goddess* which was also created from a local legend about the Goddess Huakar who is recognized as the protector of the indigenous people of Valle del Cauca, who gave them protection in battles and needs.

The lesson begins with a pre-task where students watch a video about the Chinese zodiac to learn animal-related vocabulary. They then identify their zodiac sign and discuss its description. The teacher introduces the cultural significance of animals by providing an example from Guacarí and encouraging students to think of symbolic animals in their own culture.

In the task cycle, students are introduced to a comic book, including its author and plot. A group reading follows, with students taking turns reading aloud. The teacher asks reflective questions and explains unfamiliar expressions, guiding students in creating glossaries. After finishing the comic, students analyze Huakar Goddess's leadership qualities using adjectives from the zodiac and complete a reading comprehension workshop. To end, during the post-task cycle, students work in small groups to solve a fictional community problem. They brainstorm solutions, linking them to previously discussed leadership qualities, and present their ideas to the class, justifying their choices ([See Appendix J for details](#)).

4.4 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two crucial concepts in research studies that ensure credibility and accuracy of the results.

4.4.1 Validity

According to Babbie (2016), validity in research refers to the ability of a research or study to accurately measure or evaluate what it intends to measure or evaluate. In the context of the research that seeks to examine the effectiveness of comic books in reinforcing English reading skills in English learners. Validity involves making sure that the data collection and analysis instruments used actually measure what it is proposed to measure. These types of validity were considered:

Face Validity. Face validity refers to whether a measure appears to assess the intended concept. The reading comprehension activities in this study directly evaluate students' understanding of comics after reading them.

Construct Validity. Construct validity refers to how well a measure aligns with theoretical expectations. In this study, the theoretical expectation was that students exposed to comics would demonstrate enhanced comprehension skills.

Triangulation. To enhance validity, Babbie (2016) recommends using triangulation, which involves employing multiple methods, data sources, or perspectives to verify results. This approach helps mitigate biases and ensures comprehensive coverage of the research topic. In this study, triangulation was implemented through the combination of surveys, interviews, and content analysis to cross-validate findings

Content Validity. Content validity measures how well a tool represents the complete range of a concept's meanings. The activities done in this study included a range of questions covering vocabulary recognition, plot understanding, inferencing, and text engagement to provide a comprehensive evaluation of reading skills. The activities were evaluated by our literacy expert advisor to ensure alignment with established reading proficiency frameworks.

4.4.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of a measurement instrument, ensuring that results remain the same when applied under similar conditions (Babbie, 2016). In the context of this study, reliability was assessed to confirm that the reading comprehension test and student surveys produced consistent and replicable results when evaluating the impact of comics on reading skills. Several approaches were used to ensure the reliability of the research instruments.

Reliability of Research Workers Inter-rater reliability was another key aspect of this research. Since qualitative data such as student responses and interpretations of the comics were analyzed, the researchers independently coded the data to ensure consistency. Any discrepancies in coding were discussed and resolved through consensus. This process minimized the risk of subjective bias and enhanced the overall reliability of the qualitative findings.

4.5 Ethical considerations

During the implementation of this research involving underage English learner participants, it is crucial to consider several ethical factors to ensure the respect, protection, and well-being of the participants. Additionally, conducting measurements in research must be done ethically to prevent bias and misrepresentation of results. Some of these considerations include:

4.5.1 Informed Consent and Confidentiality

Prior to data collection, students and their guardians were informed about the purpose and nature of the study. Informed consent was obtained to ensure voluntary participation. Additionally, measures were taken to protect student identities. Data were anonymized, and responses were handled with confidentiality to respect participants' privacy.

4.5.2 Fair and Unbiased Measurement

A key ethical concern in research is the potential for measurement bias. The reading comprehension workshops and questionnaires were designed to be neutral, avoiding any wording or structure that could unduly influence student responses.

4.5.3 Avoiding Misrepresentation of Findings

Ethical research practice also requires that findings are accurately reported. In this study, the results were analyzed transparently, and any limitations were acknowledged. By presenting results honestly, the study maintains its integrity and contributes meaningfully to the academic discourse on using comics in education.

Chapter 5. Findings

In this chapter, we present the key findings of our research. We begin by addressing our four research questions, followed by a discussion of additional noteworthy findings that emerged from our intervention.

We gathered information from the initial survey, in-class observations, focused observations, the head teacher's questionnaire and. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the intervention affected the targeted skills and the students' perceptions, ultimately aiming to answer our main question: How does the inclusion of comics influence English language learners' reading comprehension skills and cultural awareness?

5.1 RQ1 What Are the Students' Needs Regarding Reading Skills?

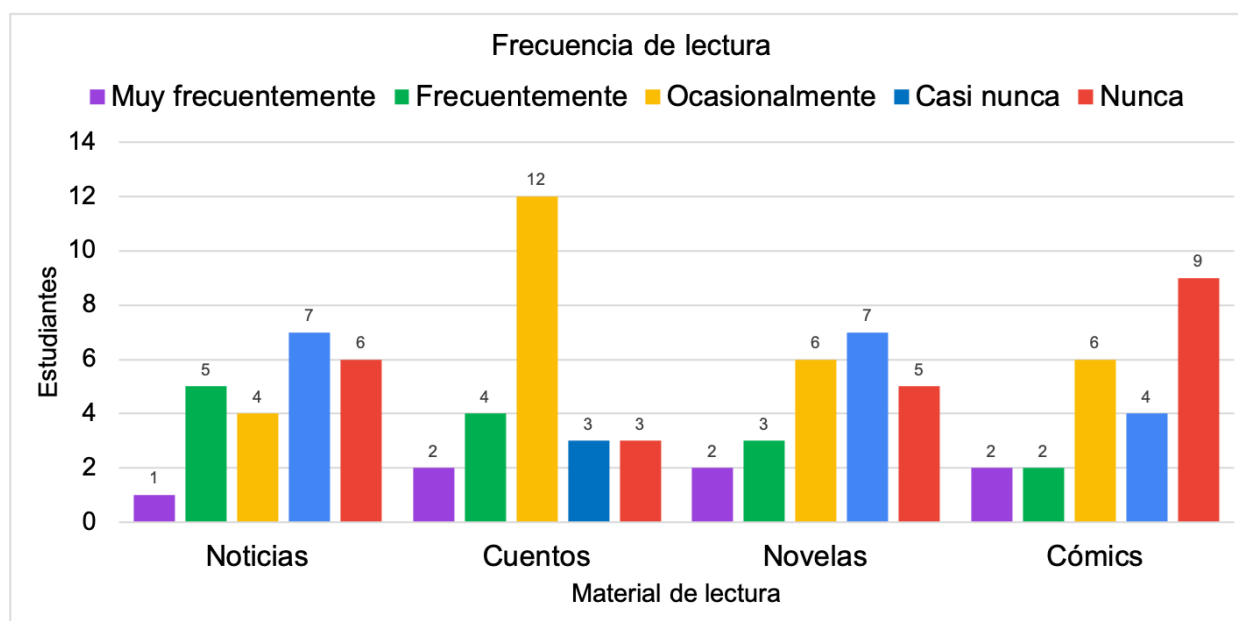
To answer this research question, we collected data from an initial survey about students' frequent reading activities, class observations and a diagnostic reading test. We identified some specific needs such as: loss exposure to reading English materials, students' lack of engagement with reading materials, challenges in vocabulary usage and interpretation and overall text comprehension.

5.1.1 *Low exposure to reading materials in English*

In one of the questions from the initial survey the students took, they were asked about the frequency with which they read some texts. The results indicated that the students' reading frequency tends to be low.

Figure 8

Students' Reading Frequency

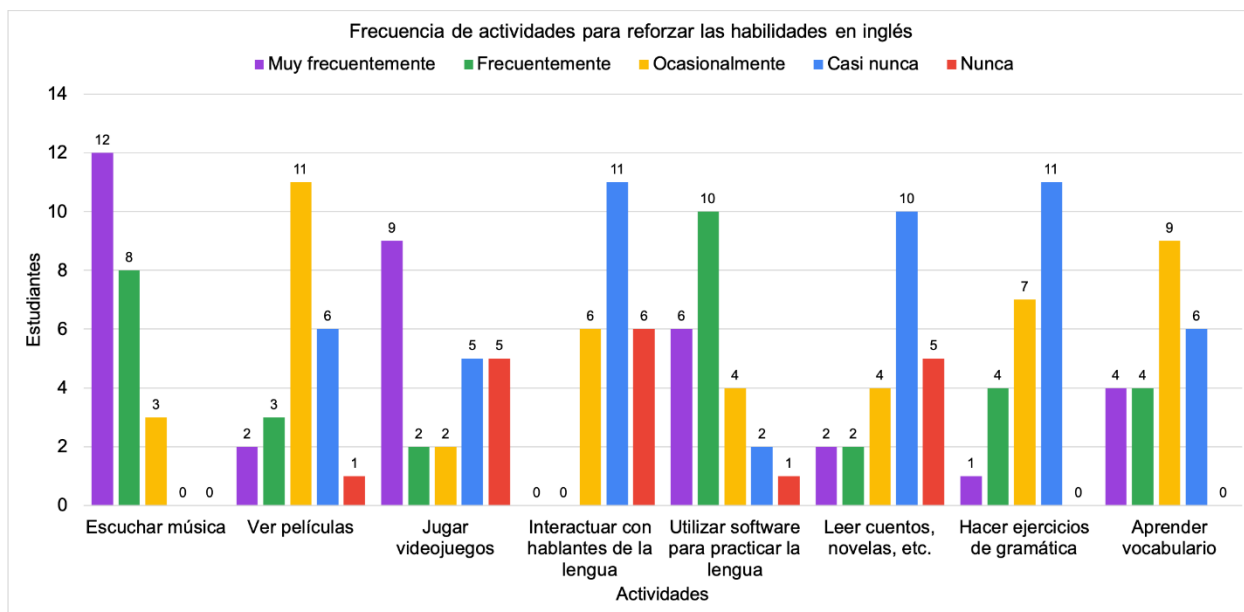


Note. The categories *Muy frecuentemente* and *Frecuentemente* were merged as well as the categories *Casi nunca* and *Nunca* for interpretation.

The results indicated *Novels* have a moderate balance, with 21.7% reading them frequently, 30.4% occasionally, and 34.8% rarely or never reading them. *Short stories* have the highest occasional readership (52.2%), suggesting they appeal to a broader range of students who engage with them sometimes. *Comics* and *News* have the highest percentage of students who rarely or never read them (56.5%), making them the least preferred reading material among the surveyed students. Even though some students read these materials frequently (22.8%), a significant portion engage with them only occasionally (31.5%), and an even larger percentage (43.5%) rarely or never read them. These results suggest that students lack regular exposure to diverse reading materials in English, which may hinder their vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and overall language proficiency.

5.1.2 Students' Lack of Engagement with Reading Materials

From the same initial survey, the students were asked about the frequency with which they do some activities to reinforce English learning. The data revealed a significant gap in students' engagement with reading activities

Figure 9*English Reinforcement Activities Frequency*

The data revealed that students engage most frequently in *listening to music* (86.96%) and *using language-learning software* (69.57%), while *watching movies* (21.74%) and *playing video games* (47.83%) show moderate engagement. However, reading-related activities are significantly less common, 17.39% regularly *read stories or novels*, while 65.22% do so rarely or never. Similarly, *learning vocabulary* (34.78%) and *doing grammar exercises* (21.74%) see limited engagement. The least practiced activity is interacting with speakers of the language, with 73.91% rarely or never doing so.

The findings indicate that students are more likely to engage in activities perceived as entertaining or easily accessible, such as listening to music and using language practice apps. In contrast, they are less inclined to participate in activities requiring greater effort or structured engagement, such as reading and interacting with speakers. This disparity reveals a significant gap in language development, particularly concerning reading comprehension. Snow's framework highlights the importance of the sociocultural context of reading, suggesting that reading materials should resonate with students' interests and experiences to promote active engagement. However, the lack of active engagement with reading materials—whether for pleasure, vocabulary enrichment, or grammar exercises—might create a disconnection between the texts and the meaningful interactions needed to enhance comprehension. This disengagement

inhibits students from interacting with texts in ways that would improve their language processing skills and meaning construction.

Additionally, the previous results were reinforced by the class observations that revealed that most class activities focus on speaking and listening rather than reading showing students need to incorporate reading activities. These were the types of class activities found:

- “The teacher shows an image and instructs students to describe the physical appearance of the person depicted.” (Class observation 1, September 7, 2024)
- “The teacher asks students to pair up and explains the next activity: one student receives a card with a character, while the other is given paper and a pencil. The first student describes the character, and the second draws it based on the description.” (Class observation 1, September 14, 2024)
- “The teacher shows students a video and instructs them to write down vocabulary words as quickly as possible while watching.” (Class observation 1, September 21, 2024)

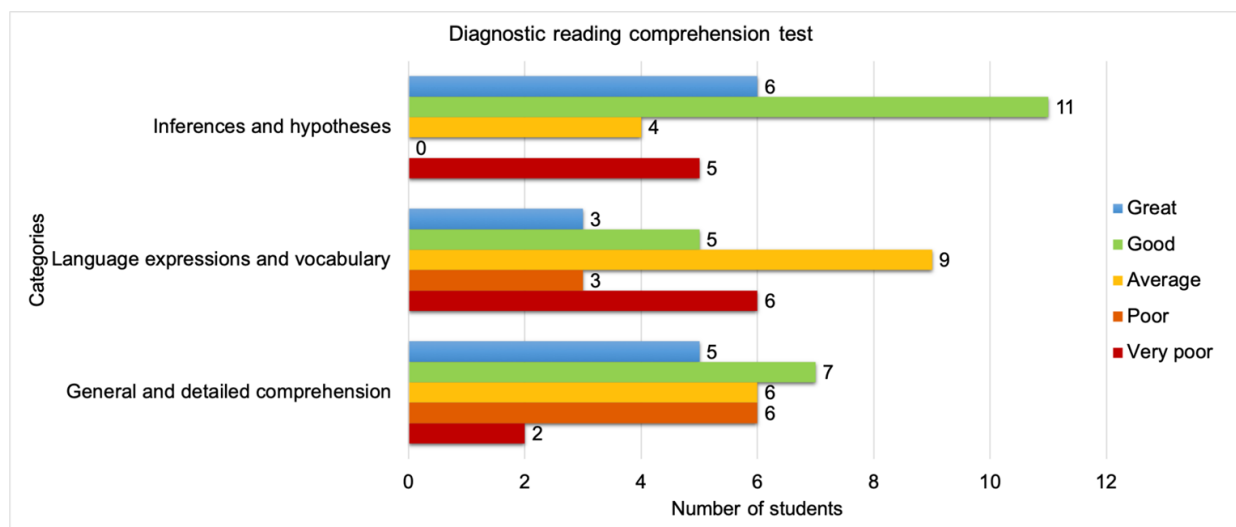
Activities such as describing images, drawing based on descriptions, and quickly writing down vocabulary while watching videos focus on oral skills and listening comprehension. These observations highlight a lack of reading-focused tasks, indicating that students may not be exposed to adequate reading materials in English during class time.

5.1.3 Challenges in Vocabulary Interpretation and General and Detailed Comprehension

The diagnostic test to assess students' comprehension of written texts with visual elements, using a comic strip titled *The Bridge* from the Creepshow series, also helped to analyze their performance. The test focused on students' ability to extract general and detailed information, understand vocabulary in context, and make inferences. As a result, the diagnostic displayed two significant challenges in vocabulary usage and overall text comprehension as is depicted in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Results of the Diagnostic Reading Test by Categories



The results from the diagnostic test showed varying levels of performance across the three assessed categories that we simplified into: good, regular and deficient.

In the category of *inferences and hypotheses*, the majority of students, 65.4%, achieved good results, suggesting that they have a good ability to analyze and create accurate conclusions from messages and images in a text, this being the category with the best results and a strong area for the group in general. A small group, 15.4%, reached a regular level, showing that they can make some inferences and formulate correct hypotheses, although with errors that reflect a limited interpretation. In contrast to the previous results, 19.2% of teenagers presented difficulties in this area, which needed to be reinforced, as they were not able to make inferences or formulate assumptions based on the text, images or context.

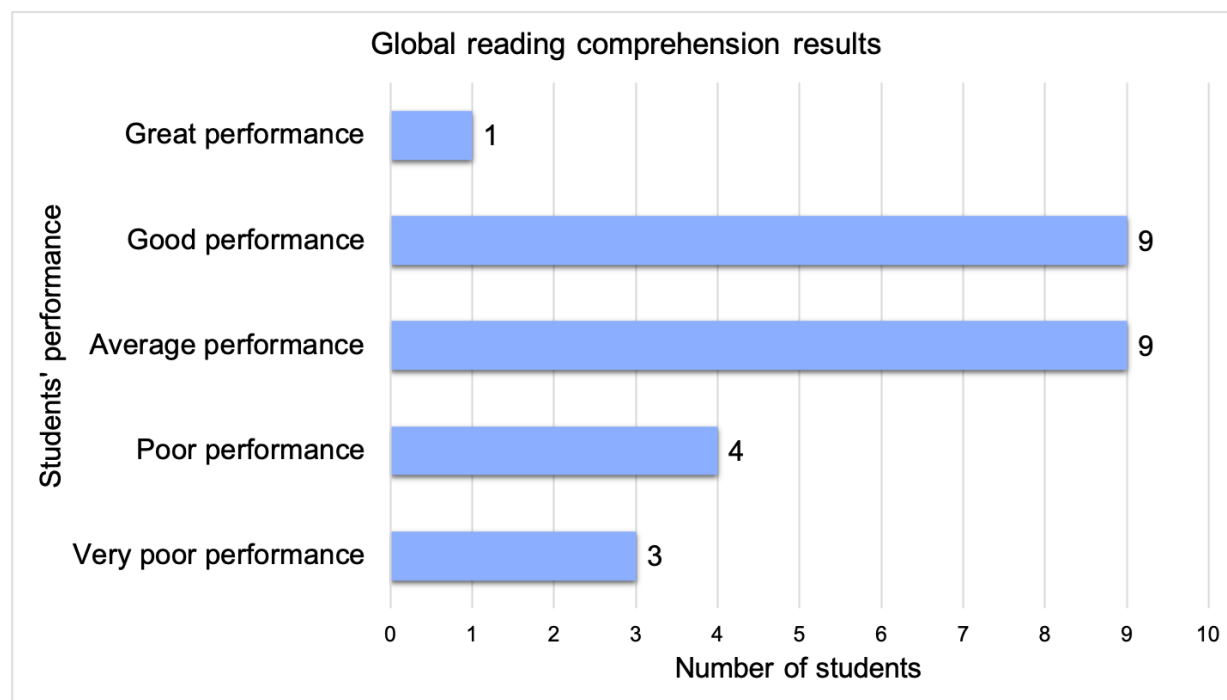
For the next category of *linguistic expressions and vocabulary in context*, the results reflect greater difficulty for the students compared to the previous one. A relevant number of them, equivalent to 34.6%, placed at a deficient level indicating that their knowledge in this area was limited and required more work through readings and activities that reinforce the acquisition and use of vocabulary and linguistic expressions. The same percentage of students 34.6% obtained a regular performance, demonstrating the ability to interpret some expressions and vocabulary, although lack of knowledge of others slightly affected their comprehension. Lastly, a lesser group, with 30.8%, reached a high level, managing to interpret most or all of the expressions and vocabulary from the images, dialogues or context.

Finally, within the category of *general and detailed comprehension*, it was revealed that an important group of students, 46.2%, obtained high levels of performance, which indicates that almost half of the group had a clear and coherent comprehension of the text. On the other hand, 23% of those tested showed a regular comprehension of the comic, which indicates that they had a partial comprehension, making several errors of interpretation. However, another 30.8% of them obtained very deficient levels, indicating that they have problems in processing and interpreting general and specific information, showing a completely incorrect or incomplete interpretation of the text.

Now, if we consider the global score of students' reading comprehension, it demonstrates that they had a good performance in general terms as shown in the figure.

Figure 11

Global Reading Comprehension Results



The overall performance of the students is divided into three major groups. 43.48% of the students demonstrated a high level of comprehension of the material, showing strong reading comprehension skills. On the other hand, 39.13% of the students obtained a regular performance, suggesting the need for reinforcement to reach higher levels of proficiency. However, 30.43% of

the students struggled with key aspects of the test, indicating significant difficulties in understanding and processing the content.

Additionally, a crucial finding emerged during the review of the test: 95% of students faced challenges in accurately conveying their ideas in writing, particularly in structuring sentences with correct verb tenses (notably the simple past), using connectors, and applying appropriate vocabulary. Common issues included spelling errors, lack of coherence, and difficulty in expressing their understanding either in writing or in some cases are unable to do it.

To sum up, although most students demonstrated an adequate performance in reading comprehension, a significant portion still requires targeted support, since the diagnostic test revealed that while students showed strength in making inferences, many showed weaknesses with interpreting linguistic expressions in context and processing both general and specific details from the text. These findings emphasized the necessity for structured interventions that not only enhance reading comprehension but also reinforce vocabulary development and written texts through targeted reading strategies, more exposure to diverse reading resources in class, and guided writing practice.

5.2 RQ2 What Is the Effect of Comic-based Reading Comprehension Activities Using Task-Based Language Teaching Approach on English Learners?

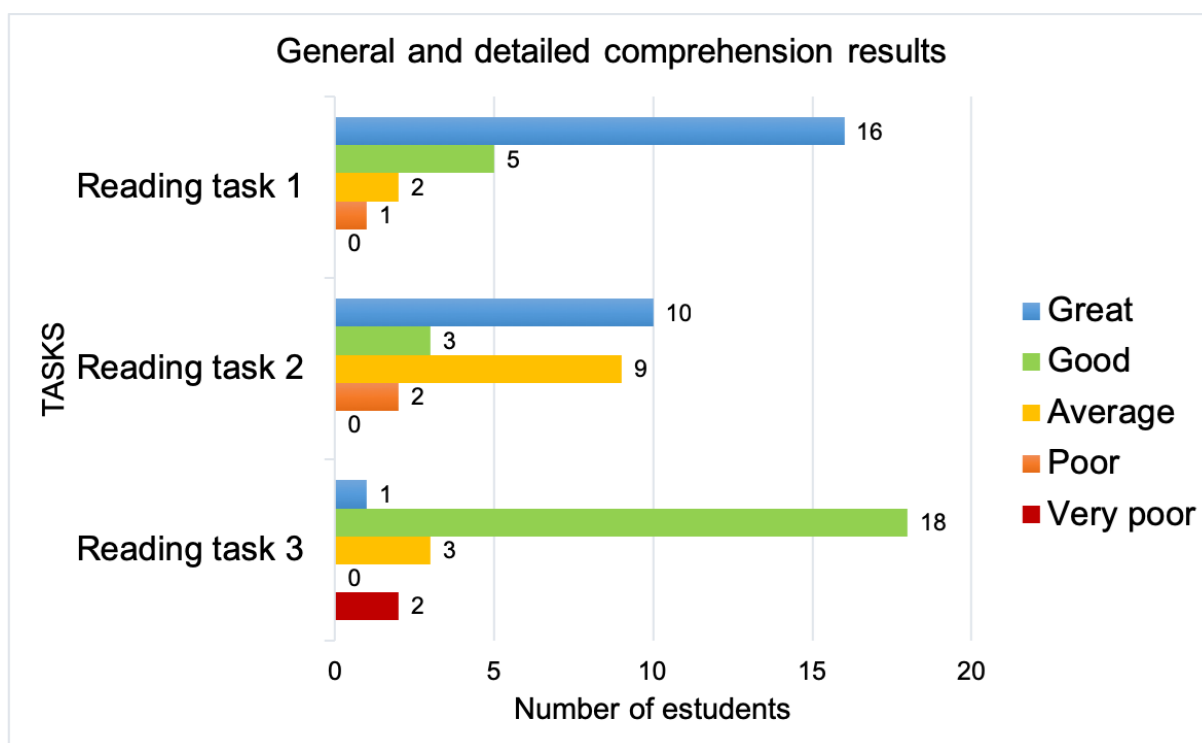
To provide an answer to this question, we proceeded to gather key data that would determine the impact of the comics on the reading proficiency of the sample. For this purpose, we used the results obtained from the reading tasks during the interventions and the interview with the head teacher of the course. During the assessment and evaluation of these, we found that the comics had a positive effect on the reading comprehension level of the students, helping to reinforce those weaknesses they showed in the initial diagnosis, as well as the teacher's positive evaluation of the pedagogical intervention, and the improvement in other skills such as writing, which was also benefited from this proposal. An important aspect to emphasize is the fact that during the collection of this data, we counted with the participation of 23 students in each reading task due to the non-attendance of some students to the course.

5.2.1 Effect of Tasks on Students' Overall Reading Performance

General and Detailed Reading Comprehension. The findings in this category indicate that most students obtained in general terms a high level of comprehension performance which was steady throughout the tasks.

Figure 12

General and Detailed Reading Comprehension Results



In the first task, 87.5% of the participants achieved a *great or good* performance, demonstrating a solid ability to identify key information and understand the plot of the text. However, in the second task, this percentage decreased to 54%, thanks to the fact that the difficulty level of the comic book increased slightly which may have influenced their interpretation. Finally, in the third task, performance improved again, with 79% of students performing at a good level.

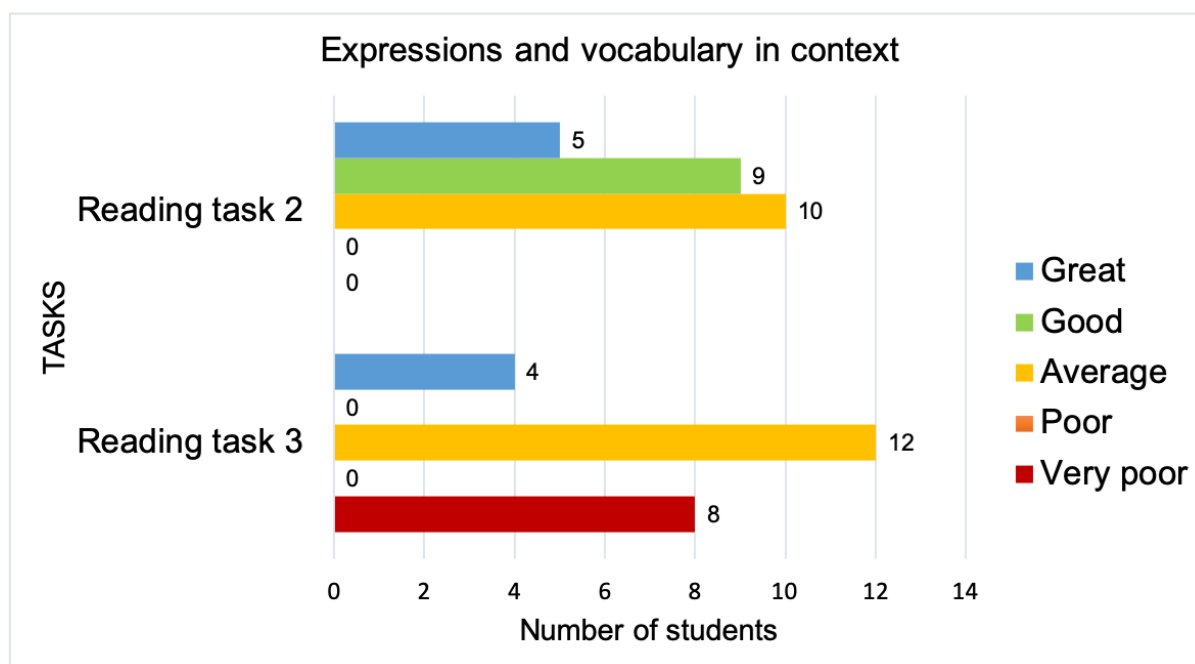
It was also evident that the *good* and *great* performance level had the highest presence in the results of the three tasks; a large proportion of students fell into this category. On the other hand, the poor performance levels were the least frequent, appearing only in the third task and

affecting only two students. This indicates that the vast majority of students managed to understand the content of the comics at some level.

Expressions and vocabulary in context. Subsequently, the findings of this category correspond only to the reading tasks two and three, since the first task did not include this category. The trend in this category shows that the students' comprehension performance is generally positive, however, there is still a lack of understanding of the vocabulary.

Figure 13

Expressions and Vocabulary in Context Results



As a result, in the second reading task, most of the readers obtained a *great* and *good* performance, indicating that almost 60% of the group managed an adequate comprehension of the vocabulary and expressions put in context. On the other hand, 41% showed an *average* performance, reflecting some difficulties in interpreting the language presented. However, no student registered at the *poor* or *very poor* levels, indicating that all of them achieved at least basic comprehension. This aligns with observations that “*The vocabulary would be worked on in the discussions and in the reading of the comic book.*” (Focused observation 2, September 5,

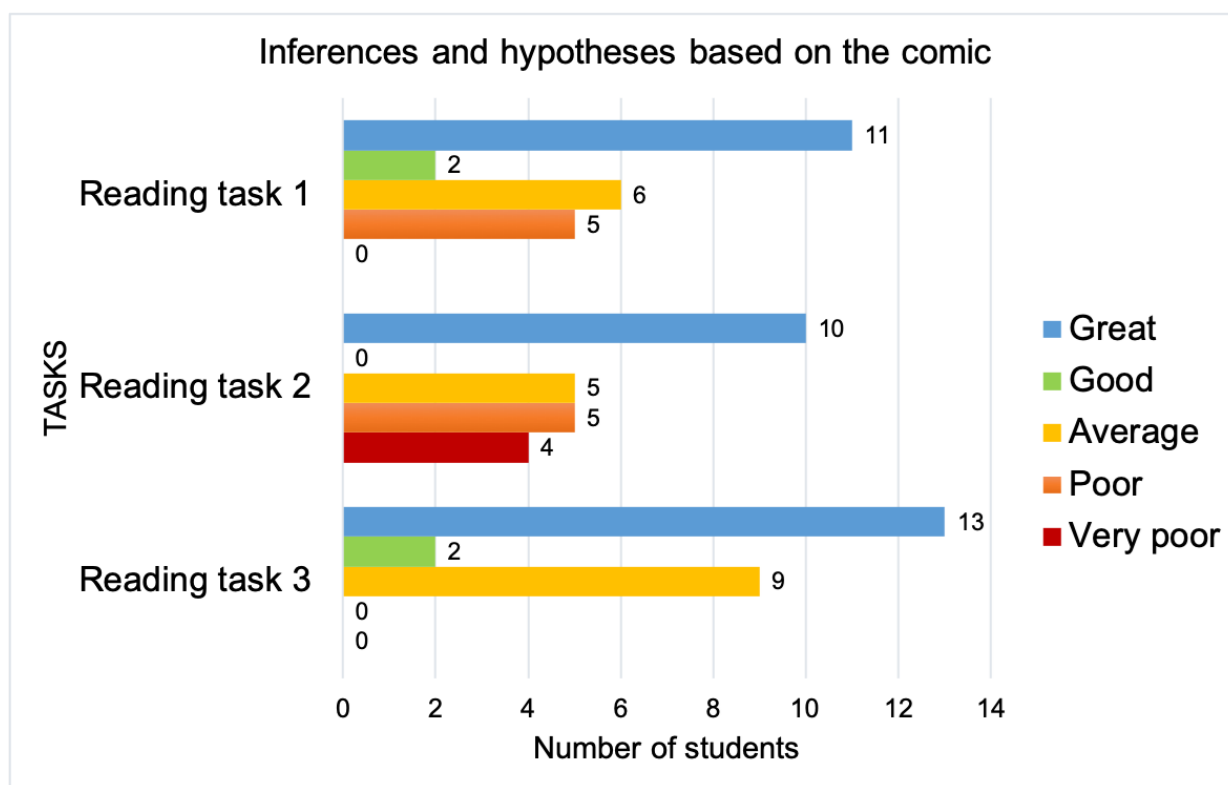
2024), showing direct connection between vocabulary reinforcement and reading comprehension performance.

In the third task, the results show a decline in overall performance. Only 17% of the students reached a *great*, while the highest percentage, 50%, was at an *average* rate. Additionally, 33% of the class had a *very poor* performance, in contrast to the second task with no students at this level. The presence of 33% in *very poor* performance indicates that this category remains difficult for the students and requires further strengthening of vocabulary inference strategies and the use of contextual clues.

Inferences and Hypotheses Category. The results of the tasks within this category show a positive trend in students' performance with a general improvement and a decrease in the lowest performances, especially poor performances. This is described in Figure 14.

Figure 14

Inferences and Hypotheses Based on the Comic Results



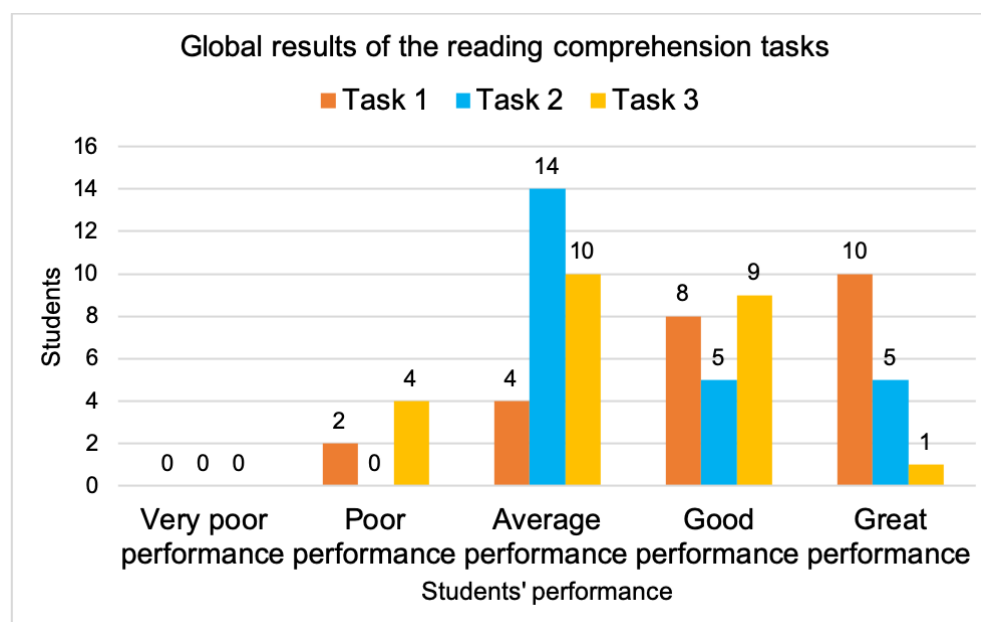
It is clear that in the first task, 45.8% of the students achieved a *great* performance, while in the third task, this percentage increased to 54.2% which reflects an improvement in the students' ability to make accurate inferences and grounded hypotheses, demonstrating a deep and accurate understanding of the text and of the information implicit in dialogues or images. On the other hand, stability is observed in students whose *average* performance remained relatively constant, with 25% in the first task, 20.8% in the second task, and 37.5% in the third task. Another important fact is the reduction of low performance, which decreased notably, dropping from 37% in the second task to 0% in the last task, indicating a significant achievement in this area.

In general, *great* performance was the best feature in the three tasks, since the highest percentage of students obtained this level in each of them, being the third task the one with the best results, 54.2% of the students.

Students' Global Performance with Reading Comprehension Tasks. The analysis of the overall results obtained in the three reading tasks reveals significant trends in students' performance and their progress in reading comprehension through the use of comics as is depicted below.

Figure 15

Students' Global Performance with Reading Comprehension Tasks Results



As shown in Figure 15, in the first task, the results show a high level of performance in the majority of the students. 75% of the class obtained a *good* and *great* performance, while only 8% showed difficulties by obtaining a poor performance.

In the second task, a change in the distribution of performance was observed. Although no student performed *very poorly* or *poorly*, the majority, 58%, obtained a regular level. The number of students in the good and excellent levels decreased compared to the first task, 42% in total.

In the last task, the results reflect a more equal distribution among performance levels. While the number of students with *poor* performance increased to 17%, progress was also evident in the good performance category, with 38%, suggesting that students improved in certain reading comprehension skills, albeit with some persistent difficulties.

The overall trend in the results of the three tasks shows a pattern of decreasing high performance (*good* and *great*) and increasing average performance. This suggests that, while the comics facilitated reading comprehension initially, as the tasks became more demanding, some students found it a bit difficult to maintain high performance. However, the fact that there were no *very poor* performances on any of the tasks suggests that comics remain an effective tool for preventing students from facing extreme comprehension barriers.

Also, these findings align with the teacher's perception of the impact of comics to reinforce students' reading skills performance, she explicitly stated that students demonstrated significant improvement in their reading abilities: "*Considero que es una didáctica interesante, puesto que es llamativo para los estudiantes, los diálogos cortos, las imágenes coloridas, las historias cautivadoras, generan en ellos un aprendizaje a través de una forma divertida y fácil.*" (Head teacher, Interview, November 23, 2024). This statement suggests that she considered the intervention as an interesting teaching method because it captured students' attention. She thinks the short dialogues, colorful illustrations, and engaging stories provide them with a fun and effective way to learn. This reflects the positive feedback from students, who found the comics engaging, interactive, and fun.

5.3. RQ3 What Are the Students' Perceptions of their Reading Skills and Cultural Awareness Using Comics?

To answer this question, we divided the results into two topics, students' perceptions of their reading skills and students' perceptions of their cultural awareness, and also we included the teacher's perception about the intervention and its impact on student's skills.

5.3.1 Students' Perceptions of their Reading Skills Using Comics

The students' perceptions of their reading skills using comics were examined through various aspects: their perceptions regarding language skills, their overall experience with comics, and their perception of specific activities done with comics. We gathered the data from the questionnaire and the results were organized into multiple categories that illustrate how the use of comics contributed to their English skills' improvement.

Students' Perceptions of their Language Skills. Table 3 presents the data compiled from the final questionnaire, specifically focusing on question 10, in which students indicated whether their language skills improved significantly, slightly, or not at all.

Table 3

Students' Perceptions of their English Skills Improvement

Skill	A lot	A bit	Nothing
Reading	15	8	0
Writing	4	19	0
Speaking	13	10	0
Vocabulary and expressions	11	12	0
Grammar	9	14	0

Note. The table presents students' feedback on their perceived improvement in different language skills after the intervention. The responses are categorized into three levels: *A lot*, *a bit* and *nothing*.

Table 3 shows that reading and speaking were particularly highlighted as the skills that improved a lot, with 15 and 13 mentions respectively. In terms of *vocabulary and expressions*, 11 students felt they had made significant progress, while 12 students noted a slight improvement. Students reported a modest improvement in their *writing* and *grammar* skills, with

19 and 14 students feeling a bit confident respectively. However, looking at some writing exercises of the students, we can see that they were able to use the required structures and vocabulary.

Figure 16

Students' Writing Activities for Unit 1

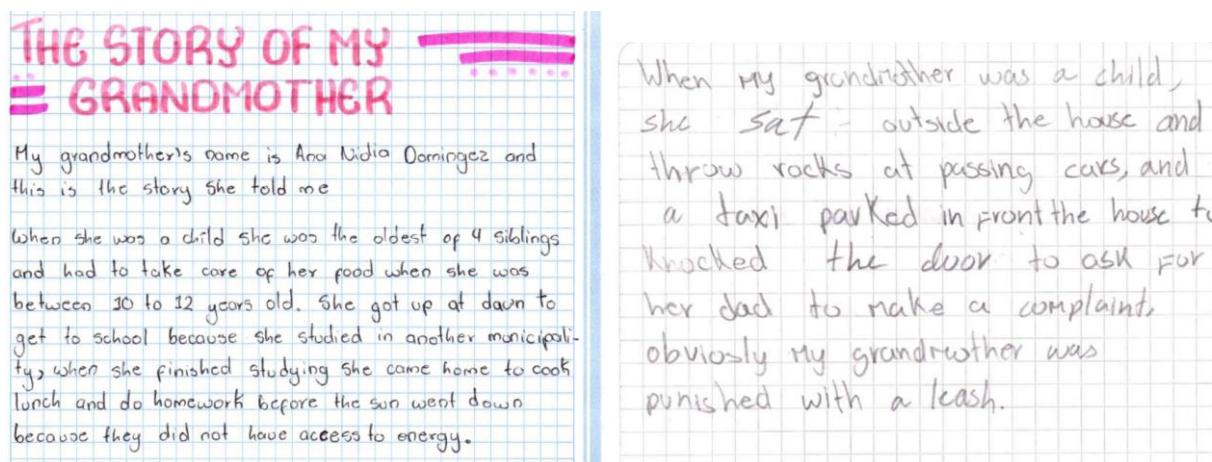


Figure 17 illustrates that students effectively employed the simple past tense as intended. This reflects their understanding of the material. Even when they worked in groups, they demonstrated consistency in their use of grammatical structures and vocabulary.

Figure 17

Students' Group Writing Activity for Unit 2

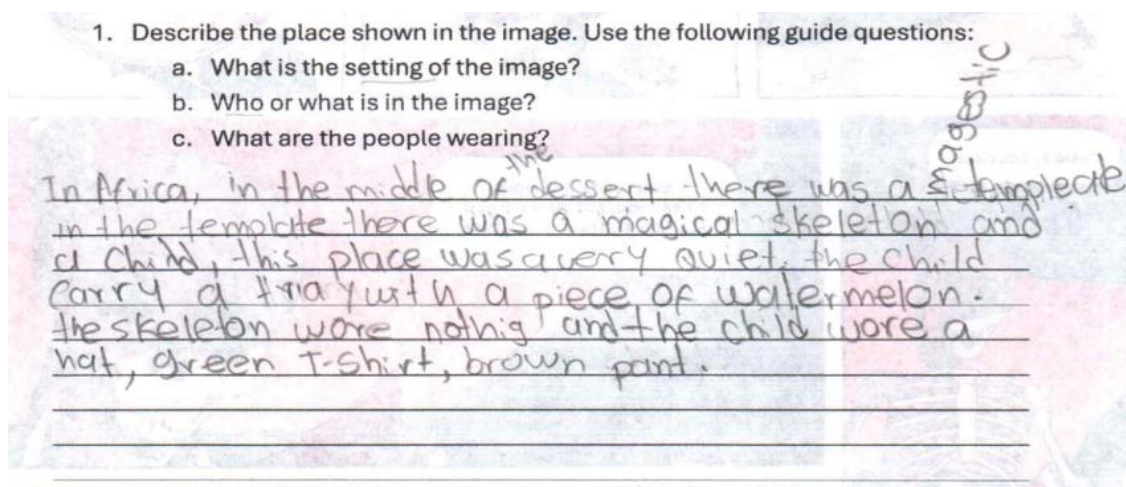


Figure 17 shows that students successfully incorporated the presented vocabulary, including adjectives such as “majestic,” “quiet,” and “magical” in Unit 2 of the didactic sequence. Additionally, they effectively employed the simple past tense as required.

The writing samples demonstrate their ability to construct coherent sentences and logically organize their ideas, despite the occasional grammar or spelling errors that may have occurred.

Furthermore, the intervention positively impacted the students' perceptions of their skills, as everyone acknowledged an improvement, which is evidenced by the examples provided and the teacher's perceptions as she rated the students' reading improvement as *a lot*, reinforcing the idea that the intervention had a meaningful impact.

Students' Perceptions of their Experience Reading Comics. To further explore the students' perceptions regarding their reading skills, they were asked to describe their experience reading comics in question 9 of the questionnaire. We categorized the students' answers into codes and later into broad categories as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Perceptions of the experience of reading comics in English skills

Description	Number of answers
Improvement-Oriented	8
Vocabulary Builder	7
Engaging	7
Comprehensible	6
Educational	3
Positive	3
Different	3
Participatory	1
Challenging	1

In terms of its educational impact, the use of comics was recognized as an *Improvement-Oriented* tool for English comprehension. Eight students specifically noted that these comics and their activities contributed to their improvement, while seven highlighted that it worked as a *Vocabulary Builder* since it helped them understand words better and expand their vocabulary.

Figure 18

Student Response to Question 9 on the Questionnaire – Student A

9. ¿Cómo describirías tu experiencia de leer cómics en inglés? ¿Te ayudó a mejorar tu comprensión del idioma o tu interés por aprender inglés?

yo diria que fue una muy buena oportunidad para practicar y expandir mi vocabulario además de leer mas fluido y entender un poco mas el inglés

Figure 18 shows an example of a student's perception highlighting that reading comics helped them improve their vocabulary, reading skills and language comprehension.

Focusing on the students' attitudes, seven students perceived the experience as *Engaging*, reflecting that they enjoyed the process, and it illustrates that reading comics in English was not a tedious task, but an appealing experience that sparked interest and enjoyment. In addition, six students noted that they were *Comprehensible*. The category *Educational* received 3 mentions. This category means that the activities contributed to students learning English or reinforce what they have learned.

Figure 19

Student Response to Question 9 on the Questionnaire – Student B

9. ¿Cómo describirías tu experiencia de leer cómics en inglés? ¿Te ayudó a mejorar tu comprensión del idioma o tu interés por aprender inglés?

fue muy divertida y me ayudó mucho a reforzar y entender lo que he aprendido en las clases.

For example, Figure 19 shows that a student was able to reinforce what they had learned in class. Three students found the experience *Positive*, and three students found it *Different*,

meaning that the students recognized comics as a different resource to learn English. One student perceived that the comics were *Participatory*, meaning a way to participate.

Figure 20

Student Response to Question 9 on the Questionnaire – Student C

9. ¿Cómo describirías tu experiencia de leer cómics en inglés? ¿Te ayudó a mejorar tu comprensión del idioma o tu interés por aprender inglés?

Muy divertida, participativa y productiva.
 Si, me atrajeron mas a leer en
 inglés, gracias a ellos mejoré un poco mi
 vocabulario y pronunciación

Figure 20 shows that the student's perceptions towards comics were participatory as well as fun and productive. The student even mentioned that besides improving their vocabulary and pronunciation, they felt attracted to reading in English thanks to the comics. However, a student noted some initial difficulties, perceiving the experience as *Challenging*.

Figure 21

Student Response to Question 9 on the Questionnaire – Student D

9. ¿Cómo describirías tu experiencia de leer cómics en inglés? ¿Te ayudó a mejorar tu comprensión del idioma o tu interés por aprender inglés?

En el inicio un poco difícil pero después
 fue normal, ya que de todo se aprende

Figure 21 suggests that the student did not feel completely comfortable from the beginning, although the student later perceived the experience as normal after recognizing that each experience was a learning process.

5.3.1.3. Students' Perceptions of Class Activities Using Comics

We gathered data from the questionnaire and analyzed the responses through a systematic coding process. The resulting categories were categorized as opinions, and we tabulated the

frequency of their appearance in the students' responses. These frequencies were subsequently organized according to the specific comic in which the students referenced them.

Table 5

Students' Perceptions of Class Activities with the Comics La Candileja, Once Upon a Time in Africa, and Huakar Goddess

Opinion	<i>La Candileja</i>	<i>Once upon a Time in Africa</i>	<i>Huakar Goddess</i>	Total Answers
Engaging	19	19	19	57
Well-received	9	8	9	26
Collaborative Experience	3	8	1	12
Cultural and Personal Exploration	4	3	2	9
Creative and Innovative	6	0	3	9
Insightful	3	3	0	6
Challenging	1	5	0	6
Reflective	3	2	0	5

Note: The table shows the number of students who included the opinions listed in their answers.

Table 5 mainly revealed positive opinions, reinforcing the students' perceptions of the reading experience with comics.

The *Engaging* category has the highest number of appearances, 57 in total. This suggests that the students perceived the activities as highly attractive and entertaining in general, regardless of the comic.

Figure 22

Student Response to Question 1 on the Questionnaire – Student A

1. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *La Candileja*?

Me pareció entretenido el comic y las actividades fueron muy dinámicas y divertidas además cuando trajeron historias muchas fueron chistosas e interesantes. Hizo que el grupo se divirtiera un poco.

For instance, Figure 22 illustrates that a student found the “Grandma's Storytelling” activity engaging because they had fun listening to their classmates' stories, considering the activity interesting and dynamic. This activity was conducted using the comic *La Candileja*.

The *Well-received*” category also stands out, with a total of 26 mentions. This category included the codes “highly liked,” “very liked,” “loved,” “good,” and “very good,” reflecting a strong positive reception from the students. The comic *Once Upon a Time in Africa* received significant responses in the category of *Collaborative Experience* (8 mentions out of 12), suggesting that these activities promoted collaboration and interaction among students.

Figure 23

Student Response to Question 2 on the Questionnaire – Student A

2. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *Once upon a time*?

Me parecieron un buen ejercicio para unirnos como grupo y sacar nuestra competitividad.

Figure 23 illustrates how a student perceived the activities as helping the group come together and encourage competitiveness.

The *Cultural and Personal Exploration* category received a total of 9 mentions, with responses distributed among the three comics (*La Candileja* – 4, *Once Upon a Time in Africa* – 3, *Huakar Goddess* – 2). This suggests that some students connected with the comics on a deeper level, either by relating to the cultural elements depicted or by reflecting on their personal experiences through the stories.

Figure 24

Student Response to Question 1 on the Questionnaire – Student B

1. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *La Candileja*?

El primer comic me Parecio interesante
saber historias de otros lados o
recordarme los momentos que pasaba con
mi abuela (cuando me contaban historias)
y me sirvió para la actividad que hicimos.

For example, Figure 24 shows that a student was able to remember their grandmother's stories and perceived interest in learning about other's stories too.

The activities done with the comic *La Candileja* were considered the most creative and innovative of the three (6 mentions out of 9). This can be attributed to the fact that *La Candileja* was the first comic book they worked on. This initial impact on some students could be explained by the change in format, as it was different from the traditional materials regularly used by the head teacher. This contrast may have generated a novel impression by introducing a visually attractive resource into the learning process as observed in class. “*When the students received the printed comic, they were curious and leafed it immediately. Most of them looked fascinated when we handed it to them.*” (Focused observation 1, September 21, 2024). The students' reactions to the comic may explain why they found it innovative and creative.

The *Insightful* category received a total of 6 mentions, equally distributed between *La Candileja* (3) and *Once Upon a Time in Africa* (3), while *Huakar Goddess* did not receive any responses in this category. This category collected the codes “vocabulary acquisition”, “fostering vocabulary”, “pronunciation improvement”, and “comprehensible”, which means that the perception of the students regarding this category was linked to their ability to enhance language skills, particularly in terms of vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation.

Figure 25

Student Response to Question 1 on the Questionnaire – Student C

1. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *La Candileja*?

Me parecieron muy divertidas, siento que aprendí más palabras
en inglés de las que ya sabía, también me pareció muy
entretenido:

For example, Figure 25 shows that a student perceived that they acquired new vocabulary. The category *Challenging* (6 mentions in total) means that the students were required to make an effort in order to do the activity.

The *Reflective* category received a total of 5 mentions. This category means that the students were able to see beyond the story and think about the comic and reflect on the background of it.

Figure 26

Student Response to Question 2 on the Questionnaire – Student B

2. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *Once upon a time*?

Fueron divertidas ya que nos pusieron a reflexionar un poco sobre el y ver más allá de lo superficial, ver su trasfondo, comprenderlo.

For instance, Figure 26 shows that a student was able to reflect on the background of the comic *Once Upon a Time in Africa* to fully understand it.

Students positively perceived class activities and the head teacher noted that these activities helped students effectively recognize, read, and understand the comics. “*Fueron actividades muy dinámicas que permitieron a los estudiantes reconocer, leer y entender el cómic. Además, ayudaron a mejorar su comprensión del tema trabajado.*” (Head Teacher, Interview, November 23, 2024). This suggests that the integration of visual and textual elements in comics enhanced students' ability to decode and interpret written information. Furthermore, the teacher noted that comics played a significant role in reinforcing the topics discussed in class, suggesting that students not only engaged with the material but also developed a deeper comprehension of its content. We wanted to determine the activity that students liked the most. To accomplish this, we collected data from question five of the questionnaire.

Table 6

Perceptions of the Most Liked Activities and Reasons for Liking Them

Activity	Number of answers	Reasons
Charades	7	Fun (1) Teamwork (1) Active (1)
Jeopardy	7	Challenging (2) Competitive (1)
Grandma's storytelling	6	Appreciation for pedagogy (1) Generations integration (1) Exploring family stories (3)
Reading together	1	-
Chinese zodiac sign identification	3	Interesting (1)

Note. This table presents the activities identified by students, the number of students who liked each activity, their reasons, and the frequency of responses.

Charades (Activity from Unit 2 and Jeopardy (Activity from Unit 2) were the preferred activities, with 7 mentions each. Charades stands for its *Fun* nature (1 mention), its *Active* nature (1 mention), and its emphasis on *Teamwork* (1). Jeopardy stands for being *Challenging* (2 mentions) and *Competitive* (1 mention). These preferences reflect students' enthusiasm for group dynamics that effectively combine fun and challenge.

In contrast, *Grandma's storytelling* (Activity from Unit 1) received 6 votes and stood out for its cultural and emotional significance, as it fosters *Generations integration* (1 mention), *Exploring family stories* (3 mentions). The reason *Appreciation for pedagogy* (1 mention) suggests that the student not only enjoyed the activity itself but also valued how it was presented.

However, *Reading together* was not a remarkable activity, as it only received one mention and neither was *Chinese zodiac sign identification* (Activity from Unit 3) as it received 3 mentions, but this one was perceived as *Interesting* (1 mention).

The majority of students responded positively to the activities, particularly in relation to improving their reading skills., reflecting a generally favorable perception of the activities. The students found the activities to be engaging, well-received, and effective in promoting collaboration, personal exploration, and vocabulary development. Furthermore, some activities led to deeper reflections, indicating that the comics encouraged students to think critically and connect with the content meaningfully. These results highlight the students' clear preference for activities that are dynamic, interactive, and promote teamwork.

5.3.2. Students' Perceptions of their Cultural Awareness

To see students' perceptions of their cultural awareness we gathered data through the questionnaire. We examined aspects such as preferences about comics, perceptions of cultural outreach, and perceptions of cultural learning.

5.3.2.1. Students' Preferred Comics. We asked students to mention their favorite comic and explain why they liked it in question 4 of the questionnaire. Table 5 compiles the information.

Table 7

Preferences and Reasons for the Comics Once Upon a Time in Africa, La Candileja, and Huakar Goddess

Comic	Number of answers	Reasons mentioned
<i>Huakar Goddess</i>	17	Interesting (5), Focus on deities (2), Focus on nature (1), Local stories (1), Colombia representation (1), Fun (1), Feminine power (1), Cute (1) Comprehensible (1)
<i>Once upon a time in Africa</i>	9	Interesting (4), Different characters (1) Different stories and scenarios (1), Its message (1), Fun (2), Much vocabulary (1)
<i>La Candileja</i>	4	Interesting (2), Comprehensible (1), Fun (1)
None	1	Not interesting (1)

Note. The table presents students' preferences for the comics used in class, along with their reasons and the frequency of those reasons.

Table 7 shows that *Huakar Goddess* is the most popular comic with 17 mentions, perceived as focusing on cultural themes such as *Focus on deities*, *Nature*, and the *Representation of Colombia*, which makes it especially interesting for the student. Two students mentioned feeling identified with the story due to the presence of *Local stories* and *Colombia*

representation; from this, it can be observed that the comics resonated with the readers by integrating aspects of their identity and environment. Another relevant aspect mentioned by one of the students is how *Huakar Goddess* highlights *Feminine power*.

Figure 27

Student Response to Question 4 on the Questionnaire – Student A

4. ¿Cuál de los tres cómics te gustó más? ¿Por qué?

Once upon a time: hacían cosas que de verdad pasan por allí y he extensa
 con mucho vocabulario nuevo por aprender
 Huakar: me gusta porque también le dio poder femenino a la
 chica y el estilo como de indígenas

Figure 27 shows that the student highlighted the representation of a woman as a goddess and savior, an approach that breaks with traditional stereotypes by giving prominence to a strong female character, capable of leading and protecting. This detail opens the door to using comics as a tool to address social issues such as female empowerment.

The comic *Once Upon a Time in Africa* is also well appreciated for its diversity of stories and scenarios, standing out for its interest and fun.

Figure 28

Student Response to Question 5 on the Questionnaire – Student A

5. ¿Qué actividad te gustó más? ¿Por qué?

la de once upon a time jeopardy por que soy muy competitivo
 y gané entonces me pareció muy buena

Figure 28 shows that a student found appealing combining different stories and characters within the same comic.

The comic *La Candileja*, while receiving positive comments about being *Comprehensible* (1 mention) and *Fun* (1 mention), has less impact compared to the other two comics. Only one person expressed that none of the comics was interesting to them, which highlights that, in general, the comics were well received, but with a clear preference for those with culturally relevant and varied content. As mentioned in the comic *Once Upon a Time in Africa*, it had *Different characters, Stories and scenarios* (1 mention each).

5.3.2.2 Students' Perceptions of Cultural Outreach. Students' perceptions of engaging with local culture and personal contexts revealed several key insights into their approach to cultural exploration. To further explore the cultural nuances perceived by the students, Table 6 compiles this information by two topics, gathering the data from questions 7 and 8 from the questionnaire.

Table 8

Perceptions of Cultural Outreach

Topic	Answers	Number of answers	Reasons mentioned
Exploring local culture and personal context	No	2	Limited exploration (1) Can't share beliefs (1) Interesting perspectives (1)
	Yes	20	Exploring own context (1) Local stories (7) Understanding of symbols (1) Exploring cultures (2) Recognizing cultural symbols (1) Exploring family stories (3) Understanding local culture (2) Understanding culture (2) Recognizing myths and oral tradition (1) Different perspectives (2) Local myths (1) Exploring regional cultures (1)
Changes in perceptions of other cultures	No	8	Different stories (1) Awareness creation (1) Same perspective as before (1) Only respecting cultures (2) Resistance to cultural learning
	Yes	14	Fostering Curiosity (7) Learning (2) Surprising (1) Interesting (1) Exploring cultures (1) Cultural

differences (2) Unexpected
outcome (1)

Note. The table presents students' perceptions of cultural outreach, divided into two topics: Exploring local culture and personal context, and Changes in perceptions of other cultures, along with the number of positive and negative responses, their reasons, and their frequency.

- **Exploring Local Culture and Personal Context**

Two students felt that it limited their ability to explore local culture and personal context and cited reasons such as a *Limited exploration* (1 mention) and *Can't share beliefs* (1 mention). It appears that they have not yet been encouraged to make connections between cultural experiences and their own lives, which may hinder their ability to fully appreciate and engage with cultural elements.

On the contrary, 20 students said comics allowed them to explore local culture and personal context and mentioned some reasons. The most frequently mentioned aspect is *Local stories* (7), suggesting that comics effectively introduce students to narratives rooted in their own cultural backgrounds.

Figure 29

Student Response to Question 7 on the Questionnaire – Student A

7. ¿La lectura de los cómics (La Candileja y Huakar) te permitió explorar la cultura local y tu propio contexto o realidad? ¿Por qué?

Me ayudó a conocer de la cultura o cosas que no sabía del valle del Cauca, sobre la historia de la Candileja y Huakar de su Diosa y la moneda.

Figure 29 shows that the student learned local stories and recognized them as part of their culture.

The responses under the topic *Exploring local culture and personal context* revealed a strong engagement with cultural exploration and personal connections. Additionally, *Exploring family stories* (3) highlights a personal dimension, indicating that the comics encouraged students to reflect on their own familial histories and traditions. Responses like *Understanding local culture* (2), *Understanding culture* (2), and *Recognizing cultural symbols* (1) suggest that

students seem to recognize that knowing the regional context is key to fully appreciating local culture and personal identity.

Figure 30

Student Response to Question 7 on the Questionnaire – Student B

7. ¿La lectura de los cómics (La Candileja y Huakar) te permitió explorar la cultura local y tu propio contexto o realidad? ¿Por qué?

en Parte si Por que el huakar
es de Colombia y la candileja es
como todas las abuelas me enseñan
de que si uno no hace caso le va
a parecer en monstro

For example, figure 30 shows that the student linked Candileja's legend to grandmothers' behaviors, such as scaring their grandchildren to ensure obedience.

Furthermore, *Recognizing myths and Oral tradition* (1) and *Local myths* (1) imply that the comics played a role in preserving and transmitting traditional narratives, reinforcing the importance of storytelling in cultural identity. By *Exploring family stories* (3 mentions) we acknowledge that family stories can help students connect personally to their culture, reflecting their own family's role in the larger community. We think that encouraging students to collect and share their family stories might help them connect more personally to the regional context, enhancing their sense of belonging and cultural identity.

Figure 31

Student Response to Question 7 on the Questionnaire – Student C

7. ¿La lectura de los cómics (La Candileja y Huakar) te permitió explorar la cultura local y tu propio contexto o realidad? ¿Por qué?

me permitio explorar mucho ya que candileja
me permitio expresarme sobre las historias de
mi abuela y huakar me enseñan muchas
cosas que no sabia como el origen del arbol
de la moneda de 500

For example, Figure 16 shows that a student was able to express their grandmother's story in English. The presence of *Different perspectives* (2), *Exploring regional cultures* (1),

Exploring own context (1) and *Exploring cultures* (2) indicate that students broadened their understanding beyond their immediate surroundings, recognizing cultural diversity within their region, which suggests a reflective process where students connected their personal experiences with broader cultural themes.

- **Changes in Perceptions of Other Cultures**

Regarding changes in perceptions of other cultures, eight students indicated that they did not experience any shifts. Among the reasons provided were *Same perspective as before* (1 mention) and *Only respecting cultures* (2 mentions). These responses suggest that many students already possessed a foundational understanding or respect for cultural differences before reading the comics. As a result, they may not have encountered significant changes in their perceptions, having already been exposed to the cultures represented in the comics we examined. However, it is intriguing to note that 3 students mentioned they respect other cultures. While respect is a commendable starting point, further research is needed to explore the extent to which this respect reflects a deeper understanding or meaningful engagement with those cultures.

There were 14 students who indicated that the experience influenced their perceptions of other cultures. Their feedback offers valuable insights into how the intervention promoted cultural awareness. The category *Fostering curiosity* (7) suggests that the comics sparked an interest in learning about cultures beyond the students' own, encouraging them to explore new perspectives. This aligns with responses such as *Exploring cultures* (1) and *Cultural differences* (2), which indicate that students became more aware of the diversity that exists among cultures.

The categories *Learning* (2) and *Surprising* (1) indicate that the students gained knowledge or had their perspectives shifted because of reading comics. Learning represents a general acquisition of knowledge, while surprising reflects unexpected insights into other cultures. For these students, this experience may have been their first encounter with the existence of diverse cultures.

Figure 32

Student Response to Question 8 on the Questionnaire – Student A

8. ¿Han cambiado tus percepciones sobre otras culturas después de haber leído estos cómics?

Mis percepciones cambiaron porque las tenía en otro contexto muy diferente y al leer estos comic pude ver un poco que no es como lo pensaba

For example, Figure 32 illustrates how a student changed his perceptions of culture after reading the comics, as they did not expect them to be what they turned out to be. Moreover, *Interesting* (1) highlights that the students found the experience engaging.

5.3.2.2 Students' Perceptions of Cultural Learning. To understand what the students learned about culture, we asked them to write about their experiences regarding culture based on question 6 of the questionnaire.

Table 9

Perceptions of Cultural Learnings

Learnings	Number of answers
Cultural Identity	18
Cultural Awareness	9
Mythological and Legendary Knowledge	8

Note. The table presents the broad categories after coding students' answers to question 6 from the questionnaire.

The responses reflecting students' cultural learnings from the comics highlight three major areas: Cultural Awareness, Cultural Identity, and Mythological and Legendary Knowledge.

- *Cultural Identity* (18), indicates that comics significantly contributed to students' ability to recognize, connect with, and reflect on their cultural backgrounds. This suggests that the narratives within the comics resonated deeply with students' personal experiences and heritage, thereby reinforcing their sense of belonging and appreciation for their traditions. A key aspect of this cultural awareness involves the recognition of symbols, as students

began to identify and comprehend elements that were previously unfamiliar to them, such as “El Samán de Guacarí” a rain tree depicted on the 500 pesos coin, and “El gato del río,” an iconic artwork created by painter and sculptor Hernando Tejada, which he generously donated to the city of Cali. This artwork was introduced into class discussions by a student during one of the intervention sessions. (Focused observation, October 26, 2024). We regard these insights as significant in enhancing students' understanding of comics. As noted by the experienced teacher, “*las actividades ayudaban a aclarar conceptos, expresiones, llevándolos a tener una mejor comprensión del tema.*” which means that the activities helped to clarify concepts, expressions, leading them to have a better understanding of the subject.

- *Cultural Awareness* (9) indicates that students not only engaged with their own culture but also developed an understanding of different cultural perspectives. Their responses highlight recognizing Guacarí and Cali’s culture as well as African culture. The findings highlight the transformative potential of comics in fostering cultural awareness and enhancing both comprehension skills and second language learning. Through the intervention, students demonstrated a heightened understanding of their own cultural heritage and a deeper appreciation for other cultures, aligning with key concepts outlined by Byram (2021), Baker (2011), and Tomalin and Stempleski (1993).
- *Mythological and Legendary Knowledge* (8) highlights that comics effectively convey folklore, myths, and legends, allowing students to gain insights into historical and cultural narratives. Responses show that comics bridge the gap between traditional stories and modern learning, making cultural history more engaging and accessible.

In conclusion, students demonstrated a notably positive perception of cultural awareness following their engagement with the comics. The comics fostered a deeper connection to local culture, encouraged students to reflect on their own cultural identities, and broadened their understanding of diverse cultures.

Additionally, we gathered information regarding suggestions for future work with comics, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Students’ Suggestions for Improving the Proposal

Suggestion	Number of answers
None	9
Comic creation	3
Make students participate more	1
Using foreign comics	1
Keep using comics	1
Not using long comics	1
Using Colombian comics	1
More interactive and entertaining comics	1
Long interactive activities	1
Deepening the meaning of comics	1
Using audio comics	1
Reading outdoors	1
Including social issues and politics	1
Using cognitive activities	1

Note. The suggestions were derived from coded responses to Question 11 of the questionnaire.

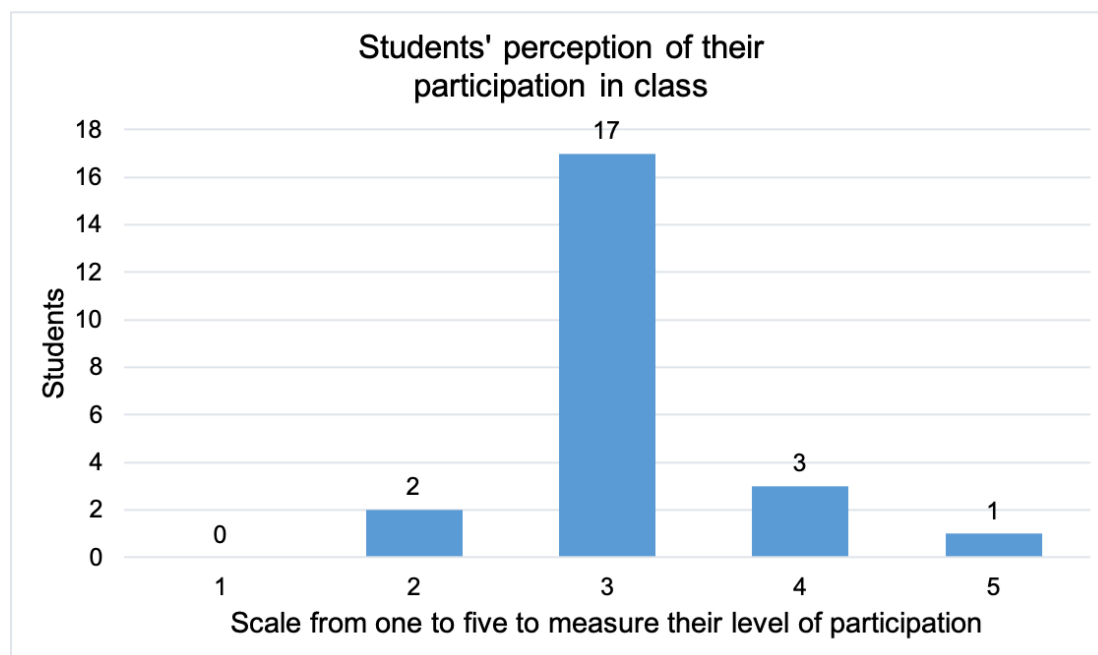
Nine students do not consider it necessary to make changes to the project, which reflects a generally positive perception. However, some suggestions highlight opportunities for improvement, *Comic creation* (1 mention), which would encourage more active and creative participation, and the use of more varied comics, whether Colombian (1 mention), international (1 mention) or with more entertaining elements (1 mention). The possibility of extending or deepening activities such as charades and Jeopardy was also mentioned (1 mention), as well as working in more depth on the topics covered in the comics (1 mention). Using cognitive activities (1 mention) might refer to utilizing tasks that necessitate greater effort or a more complex level of understanding. Exploring social issues and politics (1 mention) could also be valuable, as it captured interest and presents an opportunity for meaningful discussion. Two suggestions that stood out are using comics with audio (1 mention) since it opens an opportunity to conduct research on the benefits of integrating image, text, and audio in reading comprehension and learning. The other is *Reading outdoors* (1 mention), which could be explored to determine the extent to which it provides a stimulating learning environment. These

ideas indicate an interest in diversifying content and making activities more stimulating and relevant both culturally and pedagogically.

In addition to the research questions, we discovered valuable insights regarding participation that could be used for future research.

Figure 33

Students' Perceptions of their Participation in Class



Students' perception of participation in the English class varies mainly between levels 2 and 4, with a significant concentration at 3, indicating that most consider their involvement as moderate. These data show that, although the majority is at an intermediate level of participation, there are both very active and less involved students, which could indicate the need to adjust strategies to encourage more uniform participation in the class.

The reasons reveal that the main barrier to student participation in English class is insecurity and shyness, this is supported by comments in the survey like “*No me tengo confianza*” (I don’t feel confident), “*Porque me da pena*” (Because it makes me feel embarrassed). It is followed by linguistic difficulties such as unfamiliarity with vocabulary or pronunciation. Comments like “*Porque a veces no se algunas palabras o no sé cómo se pronuncian*” (Because sometimes I don't know some words or I don't know how to pronounce

them.), “*Ay cosas que no se decir ni explicar en inglés*” (There are things I cannot say or explain in English.).

Some students also show lack of interest or minimal participation out of self-will, “*Muchas veces no participo por voluntad propia.*” (Many times, I do not participate of my own free will.), “*Por que casi no me gusta*” (Because I almost don't like it).

To improve participation, it is key to foster a safe environment that reinforces confidence, provides activities that motivate interest, and offers additional linguistic support.

5.4 Interpretation and Discussion

This section examines critical findings regarding the effectiveness of comics in language acquisition, the enhancement of student engagement, and the promotion of cultural awareness.

5.4.1 Comics as an Effective Tool for Language Acquisition

The students' positive perceptions of improved comprehension skills underscore the effectiveness of comics in supporting language acquisition. Comics combine multimodal input and communicative strategies, creating an engaging and meaningful learning environment that is both educational and enjoyable. The multimodal nature of comics, integrating both verbal and visual components, actively engages students in constructing meaning, as suggested by Newman and Ogle (2019).

Furthermore, students reported improvements in their vocabulary and expressions, aligning with Whiting (2016), who supports the notion that comics serve as a valuable platform for teaching colloquial language, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances. These elements significantly enhance students' vocabulary and contextual understanding. Research by Méndez & Castañeda (2018) and Purnama et al. (2021) further confirms that comics play a significant role in vocabulary acquisition, which was also observed in our study, as students indicated they acquired new vocabulary through contextual cues presented in comics.

The results of this study indicate that students' reading comprehension improved significantly when exposed to a task-based learning (TBL) approach, aligning with the principles outlined by Richards (2006) and Nunan (2004). This improvement can be attributed to the way interactive, needs-based tasks facilitated engagement with texts, encouraged authentic communication, and promoted deeper processing of language.

Additionally, the study found that students' reading comprehension significantly improved when exposed to a task-based learning (TBL) approach, aligning with the principles outlined by Richards (2006) and Nunan (2004). This improvement can be attributed to interactive, needs-based tasks that facilitated deeper engagement with texts, encouraged authentic communication, and promoted comprehensive language processing.

According to Richards (2006), the task-based approach shifts the focus from isolated grammar instruction to communicative tasks that naturally develop linguistic competence. In this study, students actively engaged with texts, processing meaning more effectively through comparison, analysis, and discussion, which reinforced their comprehension skills meaningfully. Similarly, Nunan (2004) highlights that needs-based content selection and authentic texts are crucial for successful language acquisition. Real-world reading materials provided students with rich linguistic exposure, helping them recognize textual structures, contextual vocabulary, and authentic language use.

Furthermore, Nunan's (2004) principle of interaction played a crucial role in comprehension development. Through discussion and reflection, students negotiated meaning, clarified doubts, and applied reading strategies such as skimming and scanning. These activities not only enhanced comprehension but also fostered autonomy in learning as students became more aware of effective reading strategies. Ellis' (2006) TBLT model reinforces this structured approach, emphasizing the importance of pre-task and post-task activities in preparing students and consolidating their learning.

The students were able to apply basic grammatical structures and vocabulary demonstrating control over common grammatical structures, including simple past and adjectives. They also wrote personal texts creating short paragraphs expressing their views on comic themes, demonstrating their ability to write informal messages and descriptions effectively. These findings align with previous research that highlights the role of TBL in fostering writing skills. Willis (1996) argues that task-based instruction provides learners with opportunities to develop fluency and accuracy in written expression by engaging them in tasks that require problem-solving, creativity, and meaningful language production. Additionally, Skehan (1998) emphasizes that language development is more effective when students are required to use language in real communication rather than through rote memorization of grammatical rules. These findings reinforce the idea that comics, when integrated into a task-

based learning framework, serve as an effective tool for improving reading and writing skills, as they facilitate structured language practice, support vocabulary acquisition, and encourage interaction with meaningful texts.

5.4.2. Enhancing Student Engagement and Motivation

Several studies, including those by Reyes (2019), Maldonado & Pérez (2020), and Purnama et al. (2021), have highlighted the effectiveness of comics in enhancing student engagement and motivation. Our findings support this perspective, as students reported that interactive activities were engaging, significantly boosting their enthusiasm for learning English. They faced challenges that encouraged them to put in the necessary effort. Furthermore, the visual elements of comics, as highlighted by Shustrova et al. (2017) and Palacios & Moreno (2019), aid students in grasping complex concepts and improving overall comprehension.

Additionally, Reyes (2019) and Purnama et al. (2021) recommended using comics to make learning more enjoyable. Our research demonstrated that incorporating comic-based activities increased students' enthusiasm for learning English. This supports the notion that students benefit from interactive, engaging materials that connect with their interests.

5.4.3. Comics and Cultural Awareness

The integration of culturally relevant comics allowed students to reflect on their heritage and engage with diverse cultural elements. Byram's (2021) concept of critical cultural awareness emphasizes the ability to critically evaluate cultural values and perspectives through systematic reasoning. This framework was reflected in students' experiences with comics such as *Huakar Goddess* and *La Candileja*, which facilitated reflection on local cultural symbols like El Samán de Guacarí and El Gato del Río. These discussions encouraged students to explore local identity, traditions, and the implicit values embedded within these cultural elements.

Similarly, Will Baker's (2011) definition of cultural awareness as a conscious understanding of cultural norms and values was evident in students' responses. The intervention sparked curiosity about both local and international cultures, as students engaged with topics like the Chinese zodiac and African cultural elements. Baker emphasizes that cultural awareness fosters open-mindedness and adaptability, and our study demonstrates how comics can bridge

cultural gaps, encouraging students to broaden their perspectives and engage with cultures different from their own.

This indicates that employing comics as a pedagogical tool can effectively enhance cultural awareness, making the learning experience more engaging, relevant, and meaningful. Future research could investigate additional ways to utilize comics to deepen cultural understanding and personal connections, especially in areas rich in cultural histories and diverse communities.

Chapter 6. Conclusions

6.1. Main Results

This study demonstrated that comics are effective tools for enhancing language acquisition, reading comprehension, and student engagement. The findings showed that students significantly improved their vocabulary and comprehension skills through exposure to multimodal inputs, reinforcing previous research that highlights the benefits of combining visual and textual elements in learning. The integration of task-based learning (TBL) strategies enabled students to participate in meaningful interactions, promoting the development of both receptive and productive language skills. Furthermore, comics played a vital role in fostering cultural awareness, as students explored local and international cultural narratives, thereby strengthening their intercultural competence. These results underscore the potential of comics not only as instructional resources but also as a means to create an engaging and culturally relevant learning environment.

6.2. Implications for Language Teaching

The study highlights the importance of integrating comics into language instruction to boost engagement and comprehension. Educators can employ comics to demonstrate authentic language use, introduce colloquial expressions, and facilitate contextual vocabulary acquisition. By incorporating Task-Based Learning (TBL) strategies, teachers can create activities such as discussions, creative writing assignments, and problem-solving exercises that encourage active language practice. Furthermore, comics offer opportunities to enhance critical thinking by prompting students to analyze narrative structures, character development, and cultural themes. To maximize their effectiveness, educators should consider exploring digital comics and interactive storytelling formats to cater to diverse learning preferences. Additionally, fostering students' engagement with comics outside the classroom can further support autonomous learning and contribute to long-term language retention.

6.3. Limitations

Although the study yielded positive results, several limitations hindered the full implementation of the intervention. Adjustments were required to align the activities with the

existing course program, as the head teacher enforced strict adherence to the established curriculum. Furthermore, time constraints limited the number of activities that could be conducted, as the teacher had to allocate class time to prepare students for a language festival organized by the Centro de Lenguas y Culturas.

The study involved a group of 26 students, which presented challenges in maintaining consistent participation. Some students were frequently absent, while others arrived late during the intervention, which affected their engagement with the activities. This inconsistency may have impacted the extent to which certain students benefitted from the use of comics. Furthermore, due to the relatively small sample size, the findings cannot be generalized to a broader population.

Another significant challenge was the scarcity of locally relevant comics. Finding materials that explored local cultures proved to be difficult, leading to the development of original comics tailored to the students' context. While this approach ensured cultural relevance, it required additional time and effort to create suitable content. Future research could focus on the creation of culturally inclusive comic resources and examine their effects on student engagement and comprehension.

6.4. Further research

Future studies with larger and more diverse groups of learners would help determine the wider applicability of these results. Additionally, future research could explore the long-term effects of utilizing comics in language learning, especially concerning vocabulary retention, writing complexity, and overall language proficiency over extended periods. Besides, studies could investigate how various comic genres or levels of linguistic difficulty impact comprehension and engagement. Another area for exploration is the effectiveness of digital comics and interactive storytelling tools compared to traditional printed comics.

Beyond language acquisition, future research could delve into how comics impact other cognitive and communicative abilities, including critical thinking, inferencing skills, and creativity in language production. Furthermore, comics may enhance students' capacity to interpret multimodal texts, foster visual literacy, and facilitate more nuanced intercultural discussions. Exploring these dimensions would yield a more comprehensive understanding of how comics serve as a multidimensional educational tool across various skill sets and disciplines.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Consent Form for the Teacher



Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con énfasis en Inglés y Francés

Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje

Facultad de Humanidades

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PROFESOR

Yo _____ profesor del Centro de Lenguas y Culturas de la Universidad del Valle, identificado con la c. c. número _____ declaro que he sido informado e invitado a participar en la investigación denominada “Using Comics to Improve English Learners’ Reading Comprehension through Task-Based Learning approach”, el cual es un proyecto de investigación que realizan los estudiantes Ingrid Julieth Guanga y José David Prado como requisito para la obtención del título de Licenciado en Lenguas Extranjeras (Inglés - Francés) de la Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje de la Universidad del Valle.

Comprendo que el estudio busca analizar el impacto de los cómics en la comprensión lectora en inglés y que mi participación consiste en permitir el acceso a las clases y brindar sugerencias metodológicas. Se me ha informado que los datos serán tratados de manera confidencial y que la identidad de los participantes será protegida.

Se me ha informado que los datos registrados serán tratados de manera confidencial y que la identidad de los participantes será protegida bajo el principio del anonimato. Esto implica que ni en el análisis ni en la publicación de los resultados se revelará información que permita identificar a los participantes.

Reconozco que mi participación es voluntaria, sin compensación económica, y que puedo retirarme en cualquier momento sin consecuencias.

Con lo anterior, acepto voluntariamente participar en esta investigación y he recibido una copia del presente documento.

Nombre participante: _____

Firma participante: _____

Fecha: _____

Si tiene alguna pregunta durante cualquier etapa del estudio puede comunicarse con Ingrid Julieth Guanga o José David Prado, Estudiantes e investigadores de la Licenciatura en Lenguas extranjeras inglés-francés, jose.david.prado@correounivalle.edu.co / ingrid.guanga@correounivalle.edu.co o con la directora de trabajo de grado, la profesora Carmen Faustino, carmen.faustino@correounivalle.edu.co

Appendix B. Consent Form for Students



Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con énfasis en Inglés y Francés

Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje

Facultad de Humanidades

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ESTUDIANTES

Estimado/a padre, madre o tutor/a,

Nosotros, Ingrid Julieth Guanga y José David Prado, estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras (Inglés - Francés) de la Universidad del Valle, estamos realizando una investigación sobre el uso de cómics para mejorar la comprensión lectora en inglés. El objetivo es analizar cómo los cómics pueden ayudar a los estudiantes a desarrollar sus habilidades de lectura de manera más efectiva.

Su hijo/a está invitado/a a participar en esta investigación, que se llevará a cabo durante las clases de inglés. Su participación consistirá en actividades de lectura con cómics y en responder preguntas sobre su experiencia y comprensión. Estas actividades estarán integradas al desarrollo regular de la clase y no supondrán una carga adicional.

Toda la información recopilada será tratada con estricta confidencialidad. Los datos serán analizados de manera grupal y no se publicará ninguna información que identifique a los participantes. La participación es voluntaria y no afectará la calificación ni el desempeño académico del estudiante. En cualquier momento, usted o su hijo/a pueden decidir retirarse del estudio sin consecuencias negativas.

Si está de acuerdo con la participación de su hijo/a en esta investigación, por favor firme el consentimiento a continuación

Nombre del estudiante: _____

Nombre del padre, madre o tutor/a: _____

Firma del padre, madre o tutor/a: _____

Fecha: ____ / ____ / ____

Si tiene alguna pregunta durante cualquier etapa del estudio puede comunicarse con Ingrid Julieth Guanga o José David Prado, Estudiantes e investigadores de la Licenciatura en Lenguas extranjeras inglés-francés, jose.david.prado@correounivalle.edu.co / ingrid.guanga@correounivalle.edu.co o con la directora de trabajo de grado, la profesora Carmen Faustino, carmen.faustino@correounivalle.edu.co

Appendix C. Class Observations

CLASS OBSERVATION 1	
Institution: Centro de Lenguas Course: Teens III Date: 7/09/2024 Time: 8 AM	
• Students are seated in separate rows. • The teacher initiates the session by eliciting prior knowledge from students about the previous lesson. • The teacher prompts students to choose between starting with a bingo activity or presenting their homework (in which students describe a famous person without naming them, and peers attempt to identify the individual). They prefer to start with the homework presentation. • The teacher briefly reviews images and famous individuals but does not pose follow-up questions to deepen engagement. • A student comes to the front of the class to deliver their presentation. • Most of the students engage in the activity trying to guess the famous person. • The teacher engages students by asking them to pick a number to pick the next student from the attendance list. • The teacher interrupts during the student's presentation to provide corrective feedback. • The teacher offers grammatical suggestions after students complete their presentations. • All students read during the presentation. • Students tend to remain silent while their peers participate. • Students are permitted to speak in Spanish, or the teacher does not explicitly prohibit it. • Some students use their phones during the teacher's explanation. • The activity is prolonged, exceeding one hour, during which students continue presenting. Gradually, other students begin to display signs of disengagement. • Some students struggle to use the verb "be" to describe people's appearance and professions. • Pronunciation issues are evident, as several descriptions are unclear. The teacher occasionally displays facial expressions of incomprehension. • Students fail to elaborate further when descriptions are unclear.	
• The teacher instructs students to place their phones on her desk due to distractions and to prevent the use of translators. • The teacher provides feedback on the previous activity, highlighting common grammar mistakes and pronunciation errors. • The teacher displays slides containing vocabulary and categories for describing people, but the slides are too small to read clearly. • The teacher shows an image and instructs students to describe the physical appearance of the person depicted. • The teacher calls on students to write sentences on the board describing the person in the image.	

- The teacher then provides an example of a description for the same image.
- Students interact by asking clarification questions such as “How do you say...?”
- The teacher asks students to pair up and explains the next activity: one student receives a card with a character, while the other is given paper and a pencil. The first student describes the character, and the second draws it based on the description.
- The teacher circulates the classroom, ensuring all students are engaged in the activity.
- Students work on the book “The Zones,” completing various activities related to vocabulary for physical descriptions. The teacher uses an interactive version of the book while students use physical copies.
- Following this, students watch a video twice: first without subtitles and then with subtitles.
- After completing the book-related activities, the teacher organizes a bingo game. Students use pre-made bingo cards containing shapes and sentences. The teacher announces the shapes to be covered, and students mark their cards accordingly.

CLASS OBSERVATION 2

Institution: Centro de Lenguas

Course: Teens III

Date: 14/09/2024

Time: 8 AM

- The teacher introduces the vocabulary to students by asking guiding questions, such as: “What do you wear on weekends?” and “How do you choose your clothes?”
- The teacher shows students a video and instructs them to write down vocabulary words as quickly as possible while watching.
- The teacher does not check if all students wrote down the vocabulary from the video. Some of them were not even writing at all, while others were engaged in watching the video and repeating the words softly.
- The teacher presents the vocabulary using slides and interacts with students, providing examples such as, “She is wearing a red dress.” The images do not represent a specific culture.
- The teacher asks students to identify the verb tense used in the examples provided.
- The teacher briefly explains the grammar related to the topic to introduce it.
- The teacher assigns a writing activity in which students create sentences using simple tenses. She walks around the classroom, clarifying doubts and ensuring all students are engaged.
- After writing additional examples on the board, the teacher instructs students to access the platform and complete related exercises.
- Students did not interact with each other during this activity.

CLASS OBSERVATION 3

Institution: Centro de Lenguas

Course: Teens III

Date: 21/09/2024

Time: 8 AM

- The teacher asks students to create a conversation between a seller and a customer. Students write the conversation and then present it to the class.
- Students seemed engaged while working in pairs or groups to write the conversations.
- Some students struggled to come up with natural dialogue.
- A pair of students misunderstood the instructions and described each other's appearance.
- The teacher provides the students with some sentences as examples.
- The teacher asks students to wear the outfit she had asked to bring as homework and describe it in pairs. The students were excited to wear the clothes.
- After describing their outfits, most students were eager to continue the conversation. They asked their partners questions about their favorite colors and the stores where they usually buy clothes, despite making mistakes and approaching the teacher for help with vocabulary.
- The teacher gives general feedback at the end of the activity.
- The students reacted positively to the feedback.
- During the break, the teacher was asked about the reading activities she typically incorporates into her classes. She mentioned that instructors have the freedom to design various activities as long as they align with the objectives of the course program. She noted that she occasionally uses articles or news items that she believes will be interesting to her students, based on her criteria.

Appendix D. Initial Survey

ENCUESTA DE CARACTERIZACIÓN

* Indica que la pregunta es obligatoria

INFORMACIÓN DEMOGRÁFICA

1. 1. Edad: *

2. 2. Comuna o barrio: *

3. 3. Se identifica como una persona: *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Indígena *Salta a la pregunta 5*
- ☐ Afrodescendiente *Salta a la pregunta 5*
- ☐ Mestiza *Salta a la pregunta 5*
- ☐ Campesina *Salta a la pregunta 5*
- ☐ Blanca *Salta a la pregunta 5*
- ☐ Ninguna *Salta a la pregunta 5*
- ☐ Otra, ¿cuál? _____ *Salta a la pregunta 4*

3. Se identifica como una persona:

4. 3.1. Otra, ¿cuál? _____

EXPERIENCIAS CON EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS

5. 4. ¿Ha tomado cursos de inglés fuera de esta institución?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

6. 4.1. ¿Dónde?

7. 4.2. ¿Cuánto tiempo?

8. 5. ¿Ha vivido en un país de habla inglesa? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

9. 5.1 ¿Dónde?

10. 5.2. ¿Cuánto tiempo?

MOTIVACIÓN HACIA EL INGLÉS

11. 6. Por favor, indique en la siguiente escala en qué grado le gusta aprender inglés. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demasiado				

12. 6.1. ¿Por qué?

13. 7. ¿En qué medida el inglés puede aportar en los siguientes aspectos de su vida? ★

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

	Muy Poco	Poco	Regular	Mucho	Demasiado
Interactuar con hablantes del inglés dentro o fuera del país	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continuar con mi formación académica dentro o fuera del país	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acceder a mejores ofertas laborales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hacer actividades de entretenimiento (música, cine, lectura, videojuegos)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Descubrir y explorar otras culturas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. 7.1. Otra ¿cuál?

DESEMPEÑO EN LA LENGUA EXTRANJERA

15. 8. Califique su desempeño en las diferentes habilidades en inglés. *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

	Malo	Regular	Bueno	Sobresaliente	Excelente
Leer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escribir	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escuchar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hablar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gramática	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pronunciación	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vocabulario	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. 9. ¿Cómo percibe su participación en la clase de inglés? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Muy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Muy alta

17. 9.1. ¿Por qué?

18. 10. ¿Con qué frecuencia hace las siguientes actividades para reforzar el aprendizaje del inglés? *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Nunca	Casi nunca	Ocasionalmente	Frecuentemente	Muy frecuentemente
Escuchar música	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ver películas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jugar videojuegos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interactuar con hablantes de la lengua	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Utilizar software para practicar la lengua (Duolingo, Hot potatoes, Cake)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leer cuentos, novelas, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hacer ejercicios de gramática	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aprender vocabulario	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. 11. Califique cada uno de los siguientes aspectos, indicando el grado de dificultad * que estos presentan para usted en diferentes actividades comunicativas en inglés.

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Muy difícil	Difícil	Regular	Fácil	Muy fácil
Usar el vocabulario de los temas vistos en clase	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escribir oraciones completas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pronunciar correctamente las palabras o frases	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Comprender las preguntas y respuestas de la profesora y los compañeros	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXPERIENCIA CON LA LECTURA E INTERCULTURALIDAD

20. 12. Marque cuáles de los siguientes relatos tradicionales ha escuchado. *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- ☐ El duende
- ☐ La llorona
- ☐ La pata sola
- ☐ La muelona
- ☐ La diosa Huakar
- ☐ No he escuchado de ninguno

21. 12.1. Otro, ¿cuál?

22. 13. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes temáticas se presentan en las actividades realizadas en clase de inglés?



Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- ☐ Su vida cotidiana
- ☐ Costumbres de su ciudad o región
- ☐ Festividades de su ciudad o región
- ☐ Creencias de su comunidad
- ☐ Expresiones artísticas y culturales de comunidades afrodescendientes (platos típicos, cultura musical, creencias...)
- ☐ Expresiones artísticas y culturales de comunidades indígenas (platos típicos, cultura musical, creencias...)
- ☐ Expresiones artísticas y culturales de comunidades anglófonas (platos típicos, cultura musical, creencias...)
- ☐ Ninguna

23. 13.1. Otro ¿Cuál?

24. 14. ¿Con qué frecuencia lee cada uno de los siguientes textos? *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

	Nunca	Casi nunca	Ocasionalmente	Frecuentemente	Muy frecuentemente
Novelas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cómics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cuentos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Noticias	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

25. 14.1. Otro ¿Cuál?

SOBRE CÓMICS

26. 15. ¿Has leído cómics en alguno de los cursos de inglés que has tomado? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

☐ Sí *Salta a la pregunta 27*

☐ No *Salta a la pregunta 28*

15. ¿Has leído cómics en alguno de los cursos de inglés que has tomado?

27. ¿En cuál curso?

SOBRE CÓMICS

28. 16. Si has leído cómics, ¿cuáles son tus cómics favoritos? (Puedes mencionar personajes o títulos específicos)

29. 17. ¿Tienes acceso a dispositivos electrónicos para leer cómics digitales? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

30. 18. ¿Qué opinas del formato del cómic? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Es fácil de leer
☐ Es más o menos fácil de leer
☐ Es difícil de leer

31. 18.1. Explica brevemente tu respuesta:

Appendix E. Diagnostic Reading Comprehension Test

READING DIAGNOSTIC TEST
Start of the activities
The teacher welcomes the students and asks them to stand around the chairs, which are in a circle and contain a smaller number of students. Example: if there are 26 students, the chairs will be 23 in the first round. In the second round, the chairs will be 20, in the third round the chairs will be 17 and so on. The teacher explains to the students that they will play “musical chairs” game which consists of dancing or walking around the chairs to the rhythm of the music. When the music stops, they must quickly sit down. The students who remain standing must answer a question randomly with a roulette wheel. The questions are: 1. Name three things you cannot do in front of your parents. 2. Name two things you cannot do in public. 3. Name two unbreakable rules in your home. 4. Name three things you must do when you visit a new place for the first time, e.g., a country, a city, a tourist spot. 5. Name two ridiculous, weird or unnecessary rules at school. 6. Name the rule you hate the most at home and why.
Development of activities
The teacher gives each of the students the printed comic book, The Bridge, and asks them to read the title and look at the cover and based on this, make a prediction about the theme of the comic book. After that, ask them to individually read the comic book in silence for a maximum of 15-20 minutes. For this activity none of the teachers should interfere in the reading process such as providing vocabulary meaning, content meaning or images. After the reading, the teacher gives the students the reading diagnostic test that seeks to measure the level of comprehension of the students in general and their performance in reading skills.

Exploring comics

Name: _____
Date: _____

1. What is the comic about

- A. The story is about a group of best friends who are enjoying their vacations.
B. The comic strip is about a paradise island that hides some mysteries.
C. The comic is about a girl who follows the rules of behavior in tourist places.

2. Who is the main character

- A. Rox B. Jasmine C. Dan D. Alexis

3. Where did the events happen?

- A. This story took place on the main character's private island.
B. This story happened on an exotic island located in the northeastern Indian Ocean
C. The events took place in an exotic country whose name is unknown.

4. The phrase "I'm dying to take selfies and sexy reels" refers to:

- A. You don't like taking pictures of yourself, but you have to do it for your followers.
B. You really want to take nice pictures of yourself to post on social media.
C. You hate taking pictures and making reels for social media.
D. Taking pictures is not the most important part of the trip, it's about enjoying and exploring the place.

5. the message 'Watch where you're going, because you may never come back once you cross' is:

- A. An invitation to stay on the island.
B. A suggestion for visiting many different places

- C. A warning to be careful about the places you go.
D. A rule, you must stay on the island once you cross.

6. Read the following extract and replace the underlined word with another with the same meaning.

"Do not go too far, it's full moon tonight and we must head back before six-- and don't forget, you must wear a sarong or pants when we arrive at the temple"

- A. Be late
B. Not to return
C. Hurry
D. Return

7. The phrase in the same passage 'Don't go too far' and 'don't forget' is

- A. An order
B. A suggestion
C. A kind invitation
D. A piece of advice

8. Read what Alexis said below. 'Gig' means:

"THIS GIG IS SUPER IMPORTANT TO ME"

- A. Her job is very important to her
B. That trip is very important to her
C. Vacation is very important to her
D. The temple is very important to her

9. What do you think Alexis' job was?

I think _____
because _____

10. What did the guide try to tell the guys? Make a hypothesis. (Pay attention to his expression.



I believe _____

11. Make your own speech balloon for this panel





12. What happened to Alex in the temple?

- A. She got trapped in one of the trees.
- B. She became a monster that eats plants.
- C. She turned into a creepy creature.
- D. She became a goddess of nature.

13. What was the main reason Alex obtained that punishment?

- A. She wanted to respect the rules of dress and behavior to enter the temple.
- B. She disrespected the old man outside the temple.
- C. She didn't want to pay the entrance ticket to the custodian of the temple
- D. She didn't want to respect the rules of dress and behavior to enter the temple.

14. What do you think about what happened to Alex? Do you think she got what she deserved? Why?

15. How would you describe the attitude of Alex's friends?

- A. They were very cruel because they did not tell her of the dangers of entering the temple
- B. They were good friends because they warned her about what she had to do to enter the temple.
- C. They were not good partners because they left her alone and did not look for her.

16. Why is it important to follow the rules and respect the beliefs or traditions of other communities?

- A. Respecting the rules and traditions of other communities promotes harmony, cultural diversity, and mutual respect in society.
- B. Respecting the rules and traditions of other communities is a sign of weakness and submission.
- C. It can lead to the loss of one's own cultural identity.

17. What can you infer from this panel?



Closure

To finish, the students have to orally share in class the last time they broke a rule in their house, school, neighborhood, the university... and explain what happened later using these questions:

- What rule did you break?
- Did someone see what happened?
- Did someone discover what you did?
- Did you receive any punishment?
-

NOTE: Students have 6 minutes to think about it and give their comments in class.

Appendix F. Rubric

GRADING RUBRIC FOR READING TASKS					
CRITERIA ASSESSMENT	VERY POOR ()	POOR ()	AVERAGE ()	GOOD ()	GREAT ()
General and detailed text comprehension	Does not understand the main idea of the text, cannot identify key information or specific details. Shows a completely incorrect or incomplete interpretation of the text.	Has many difficulties in identifying the main idea, with significant confusion. Identifies some details, but makes many errors that affect comprehension.	Partially understands the main idea and recognizes most of the key details, although there are some errors or inaccurate interpretations.	Adequately understands the main idea and identifies correctly almost all the key details with a few minor mistakes.	Fully understands the main idea, without errors or mix-ups, and identifies all the specific information in the comic book clearly and without errors.
Expressions and Vocabulary in Context	Does not understand or infer the meaning of expressions and vocabulary within the context of the text.	Shows significant difficulty interpreting vocabulary in context, which affects overall comprehension.	Interprets expressions and vocabulary adequately, although with errors that slightly affect comprehension.	Understands most expressions and vocabulary in context, with some minor errors. Interprets meaning based on dialogue or images.	Fully comprehends expressions and vocabulary in context, understanding even complex terms without difficulty.
Inference and hypothesis skills	Is not able to make inferences or formulate hypotheses based on text, images, or context.	Makes incorrect or unsubstantiated inferences, demonstrating little understanding of implicit or even explicit information	Make some inferences and formulate correct hypotheses, but with errors that show partial understanding.	Makes inferences and formulates appropriate hypotheses, although there may be minor misunderstandings.	Make accurate inferences and formulate informed hypotheses, demonstrating a deep and accurate understanding of text, images, situations and implicit information.
TOTAL SCORE					

Appendix G. Students' Questionnaire

 Universidad del Valle	Universidad del Valle Facultad de Humanidades Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje Cuestionario de percepciones sobre la implementación de actividades a partir de cómics
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CUESTIONARIO ENTREVISTA GRUPAL CON LOS ESTUDIANTES

1. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *La Candileja*?

2. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *Once Upon a Time in Africa*?

3. ¿Cómo te parecieron las actividades relacionadas con el cómic *Huakar Goddess*?

4. ¿Cuál de los tres cómics te gustó más? ¿Por qué?

5. ¿Qué actividad te gustó más? ¿Por qué?

6. ¿Qué aprendiste acerca de otras culturas en los cómics leídos? ¿Hay algún aspecto cultural que desconocías y que ahora entiendes mejor?

7. ¿La lectura de los cómics (*La Candileja* y *Huakar Goddess*) te permitió explorar la cultura local y tu propio contexto o realidad? ¿Por qué?

8. ¿Han cambiado tus percepciones sobre otras culturas después de haber leído estos cómics?

9. ¿Cómo describirías tu experiencia de leer cómics en inglés? ¿Te ayudó a mejorar tu comprensión del idioma o tu interés por aprender inglés?

10. ¿En qué medida consideras que mejoró tu nivel de inglés al final de este proyecto en las siguientes habilidades?

	Mucho	Un poco	Nada
Leer			
Escribir			
Hablar			
Vocabulario y expresiones			
Gramática			

11. ¿Qué sugerencias podrías darnos para mejorar el desarrollo de esta propuesta?

Appendix H. Teacher Interview

	Universidad del Valle Facultad de Humanidades Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje Cuestionario de percepciones sobre la implementación de actividades a partir de cómics
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ENTREVISTA FINAL DOCENTE TITULAR DEL CURSO

1. ¿Qué concepto tiene sobre el uso de cómics en la enseñanza del inglés?

2. ¿Cuál es su percepción del desarrollo de las actividades a partir de los cómics?

3. ¿Considera usted que sus estudiantes mejoraron su nivel de inglés? ¿En qué medida?

	Mucho	Un poco	Nada
Leer			
Escribir			
Hablar			
Vocabulario y expresiones			
Gramática			

4. ¿Considera usted que los estudiantes pudieron explorar diferentes culturas a través de los cómics?

5. ¿Qué sugerencias podrían darnos para mejorar el desarrollo de la unidad?

Appendix I. Course Program

English for Teens III (Lower intermediate)

English Language Program for Teens

Unit	Communicative Competence				
	Pragmatic (Functions)	Linguistic C.			Sociolinguistic C.
		Grammar	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	
1 What do you like to do? Hour 1- 8	Reporting about one's favorite hobbies. Telling friends about hobbies and interests. Talking about how often one does an activity. Expressing time and frequency in routines. Transferring information from a written text to a diagram or chart.	Wh- questions What When Do you like....? Adverbs of time and frequency How often...? Once, twice, three times a week.	Hobbies Interests Favorite activities Days of the week Telling time Idiom: "Once bitten, twice shy" Phrasal verbs with <i>take</i>	Reduction of "to" "Th" sound: differences between pronouncing father and clothes.	Understanding English Spoken Structures to refuse offers (e.g. I'm good) Reflecting on people's attitudes about the impact of technology in some societies around the world (e.g. gap between adults and teens, teachers and students).
2 What does she look like? Hour 9-15	Asking about and describing physical appearance	Wh- questions. What... look like? Simple present tense Third person She has long hair. He has brown eyes Does / Do for questions	Adjectives Short, long, straight, curly hair. Green, brown eyes. Medium height. Idiom: "I couldn't keep a straight face"	Consonant blends: bl, br, gl, gr.	Reflecting about possible stereotypes people build about Colombians based on first impressions. Reflecting about punctuality and unpunctuality in Colombia compared to other cultures Understanding the tone and register of polite expressions regarding

					punctuality (you're late! I'm on my way). Using formal and informal greetings to start writing an e-mail.
3 When did you buy that shirt? Hour 16 to 24	Identifying different types of clothing. Talking about shopping. Talking about actions that happened in the past. Describing a type of fashion or favorite styles.	Simple past tense Regular/irregular verbs Time expressions: recently, last weekend, last year, just, two days ago	Clothes Accessories Idiom: "Put yourself in his shoes"	Consonant blends with "s": sm, sn, sw, sk, sl, st "ed" endings	Understanding different kinds of art expression (Yarn Bomb!) Discussing about art expressions in Colombia: graffiti and its social impact. Is this a form of art in other countries?
24 to 26	MID TERM TEST (2 HOURS): One hour for the written part, one hour for the oral part, the class can be divided in two so half of the students work on the written part while the others do the oral part. CONSTRUCTIVE ASSESSMENT (1 HOUR): Feedback about the exam to be given on the next class.				
4 What's the coldest place on Earth? Hour 27 to 34	Describing places around the world. Describing extremes. Recognizing important information in a given text. Describing what someone did and when they did it. Reporting important information from a famous person. Understanding key information in a text.	Simple Past Tense Regular/Irregular verbs Did for questions Superlatives The most The ----est Use of the comma	- Adjectives (opposites) - Places - Idiom: To "go to extremes"	Sentence stress	Discussing and reflecting about the importance of the Amazon Rain Forest in Human being's lives and what are some negative and positive attitudes towards it.
5 Are parrots smarter	Making comparisons. Identifying different ways in which animals can help humans. Describing pictures using given vocabulary.	Comparatives - -er than... - More---- than.	Animals (pets) Adjectives (likeable, obedient, rare, naughty,	Reduction: than Final sounds in comparatives and superlatives.	Identifying attitudes and beliefs towards animals that our culture considers as pets and other cultures take as food.

Appendix J. Didactic Sequence

 Universidad del Valle	PROYECTO DE INTERVENCIÓN DE TRABAJO DE GRADO “Using Comics to Improve EFL Tenth Graders’ Reading Comprehension”		
	SECUENCIA DIDÁCTICA		
	INSTITUCIÓN Centro de Lenguas y Cultura	CURSO Teens III (lower intermediate)	CARÁCTER Centro de idiomas
ÁREA: Humanidades		ASIGNATURA: Lengua extranjera inglés	
AUTORES: Julieth Guanga y Jose David Prado			
NIVEL DE LENGUA DE LOS ESTUDIANTES: (MCER) A2			
Intensidad horaria semanal: dos horas y media	N.º de sesiones programadas: 6	Fecha de Inicio: 14/ septiembre/2024	Fecha de finalización: 02/noviembre/2025

UNIT 1			
Tema	1st comic: <i>La Candileja</i>		
Función comunicativa	- Narrating stories about family members. - Describing people’s personalities.		
Vocabulario	- Family members - Personality adjectives		
Gramática	- Simple past - Possessive ‘S’		
Componente sociolingüístico	- Cultural awareness and sensitivity towards someone else’s stories.		
Start of activities			
Pre-task First, the teacher will welcome the students and will show them some GIFs representing a verb (take, do, watch, play, wait, visit, stay, educate, transform, chase). The students are supposed to guess the verb. Once they do it, the teacher			Time 25 min
			Materials Guess the verb

will write the verb on the board and will ask students to say its past form. The teacher will pronounce the verbs, making sure that the students notice the difference between their base and past forms.

After that, the students will play a Guess Who Game in which the teacher shows questions related to family members (e.g., "Who is the brother of my mother?") to introduce family members' vocabulary.

Instructions:

The class is divided into two groups. One member of each group will sit in front of the class with a marker in their hands. When the teacher shows them the slide with the question, they have to write the answer on the board. If the student does not know the answer, their team can help them by telling them the answer, but they have to write it.

[Guess the family member](#)

Development of activities

Task cycle

The teacher asks the students to think about their favorite so loved family members (vocabulary is below) and share in class information about them.

- Choose 3 family members you know well (or knew well).
- Write their name and age. If they've passed away, you can write "P".
- Then take turns describing these family members to a classmate/your teacher.

a parent / a sibling / husband/wife / a child / a pet
a grandparent / a grandchild / an aunt/uncle / a cousin
a niece/nephew / a friend you consider to be family / an in-law

FAMILY MEMBER	NAME	AGE
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____

Later, they need to mention in class why they are their favorite family members.

After that activity, the teacher will present a PPT to explain the usage of the simple past tense. The students will complete some exercises. After that, the teacher will explain to the students the comic elements, for example, the type of text balloons and scenes.

30
min

[PPT](#)

Later, the teacher will ask the students to read the comic's title <i>La Candileja</i>. Before reading, the teacher will ask them: - Do you know the legend of <i>La Candileja</i>? - Have you heard about it before? - What do you think the story will be about? Once the students discuss the previous questions, the teacher presents the comic book providing general information such as who the author is, where the comic book is from, and what the plot is. Then the teacher gives each student the comic which is also projected on the screen with the objective of doing a group reading. The teacher begins the reading and some students then follow it aloud. While reading the comic, the teacher takes the opportunity to ask questions from different pages, such as: - Is your grandmother like the girl's grandma? - Do you stay at your grandma's house? During the lecture, the teacher also explains some unfamiliar expressions and asks the students to create their glossaries and discuss them in class. The teacher will ask the students to highlight or underline the verbs that are in the simple past tense. Once the students have finished, they do a reading workshop to check their comprehension.		Comic Workshop
Closure		
Focus language cycle To end the unit, the teacher shows a picture of him with his grandparent and tells the students an anecdote about a situation they lived together when he was a child. He starts the anecdote by describing the place, the family members who were present that day, the emotions they felt and the events that happened. Later, the teacher asks the students to interview a grandparent about an important anecdote from their life. They have to bring a picture of their grandmother (or another family member if unavailable). Finally, in class, the students will write the sequence of events based on the interview and will read it out loud in front of the class.	65 min	

UNIT 2															
Tema	2nd comic: <i>Once Upon a Time in Africa</i>														
Función comunicativa	- Inventing dialogues using comic strips to create a scene or a short story to share in class. - Making hypotheses of characters' actions and motivations. - Discuss the message, intention, and development of the events presented in the comic in class.														
Vocabulario	- Slangs - Informal language - Past form of regular and irregular verbs														
Gramática	- Use of the simple past to narrate a story.														
Componente sociolingüístico	- Understanding and following rules as a social way to respect other communities and their traditions or beliefs.														
Start of activities		Time	Materials												
Pre-task The teacher will welcome the students and will ask them to split the classroom in three groups to play charades using keywords related to the comic <i>Once Upon a Time in Africa</i> Key words: <table><tr><td>AFRICA</td><td>PUPPETEER</td><td>SHERIFF/POLICE OFFICER</td></tr><tr><td>PUNISHMENT</td><td>STORYTELLER</td><td>COURAGE</td></tr><tr><td>OPPRESSION</td><td>STORY</td><td>TRADITION</td></tr><tr><td>NATURE</td><td>CULTURE</td><td>PROHIBITION</td></tr></table> Once students have formed groups, each one will have four opportunities to play and guess the key word the teacher will project on the screen. Instructions: one student from each group will stand up in front of the class and will receive information from their classmates, but they can't say the key word. If the student guesses the word in one minute, he/she will get a point for their team. The group who accumulates the most points, will win the game. Then, the teacher asks the students to read the comic's title <i>Once Upon a Time in</i>		AFRICA	PUPPETEER	SHERIFF/POLICE OFFICER	PUNISHMENT	STORYTELLER	COURAGE	OPPRESSION	STORY	TRADITION	NATURE	CULTURE	PROHIBITION	25 min	Charades images
AFRICA	PUPPETEER	SHERIFF/POLICE OFFICER													
PUNISHMENT	STORYTELLER	COURAGE													
OPPRESSION	STORY	TRADITION													
NATURE	CULTURE	PROHIBITION													

<table><tr><th>Category 1</th><th>Group 1</th><th>Group 2</th><th>Group 3</th><th>Group 4</th><th>Group 5</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>200</td><td>0</td><td>200</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>0</td><td>400</td><td>400</td><td>0</td><td>400</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>600</td><td>0</td><td>600</td><td>600</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> Important: When playing the game, students should think as a group and discuss which answer is the best one. The maximum time to answer is one minute, i.e. if students do not come up with an answer, they will not get any score. After finishing the game and socializing the answers, in pairs the students complete a writing activity based on the comic book. They must describe some scenarios, situations and characters from the comic based on a list of adjectives that allow them to make that description. In addition to that, they must create an alternative ending for the story. This activity is supervised by the teacher who provides instruction and suggestions. After completing the activity, they must present it in class and show point three (the alternative ending of the comic). Later, students will make an oral review (more like a discussion) taking into account these guide questions: a. Did you find the comic <i>Once Upon a Time in Africa</i> interesting? b. What do you think about the events? Are they sad or not? c. Would you recommend other people read this comic? d. Do you think you learn new things after reading it? Give examples.	Category 1	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Q1	200	0	200	0	0	Q2	0	400	400	0	400	Q3	600	0	600	600	0							1hr min	Writing task Vocabulary
Category 1	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5																											
Q1	200	0	200	0	0																											
Q2	0	400	400	0	400																											
Q3	600	0	600	600	0																											
Closure																																
Focus language cycle To end the unit, students watch a video (from minute 1:00 to minute 5:30) about the strangest prohibitions or rules in different countries. After watching it, the teacher asks the students which rule was the most shocking for them. Then, the teacher explains to the students the final task (home development) that they should do in pairs or a maximum of three students. This consists of	15 min 20 min	Weird laws around the world																														

researching some of the most unusual or rare cultural prohibitions or rules of different countries according to their preferences and investigating the reason and origin of these prohibitions. Example: “Take Off Your Shoes Indoors. Tourists visiting Japan need to be aware that wearing shoes inside certain places is something you should never do in Japan.”

To do so, they can read the following article and get an idea: [These Normal Things Are Prohibited Around The World And We Are Shocked!](#)

As soon as the students have done their research and reading, they must create a comic book using the simple past to explain the history/origin and meaning of this tradition. They have to show their product and explain it in class (short presentation - maximum 5 minutes per group).

NOTE: for this activity, it is not mandatory to draw by hand, students can use images or photographs, however, they must take into account the elements of the comic: panels, dialogue ball, thought ball, captions. They can also create their drawings or comics on platforms such as Canva, [Canva](#), [Pixton](#), [Comic Maker](#).

Examples:



Comic presentation: Students present the comic next class (time for presentations: 1hr)

Comic's Evaluation Rubric

UNIT 3			
Tema	3rd comic: <i>Huakar Goddess</i>		
Función comunicativa	- Expressing opinions. - Describing people's personalities - Solving problems.		
Vocabulario	- Animals - Personality adjectives		
Gramática	- The simple past tense.		
Componente sociolingüístico	- The students will learn about the Chinese zodiac and its cultural significance. - The students will discuss local cultural references.		
Start of activities		Time	Materials
Pre-task			
First, the teacher will welcome the students and will show them a video about the Chinese zodiac signs to familiarize them with animal vocabulary. (Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig).		10 min	Video Slides Slides
Then, the teacher will ask students to identify their Chinese zodiac in the slides presented and discuss whether they agree with their sign's description.			
After that, the teacher will contextualize the cultural aspect by discussing how animals represent people in different cultures. The teacher will provide the students with an example introducing the town Guacarí and its name's meaning ("White Heron Lagoon"), prompting students to think of important animals or symbols in their own cultures.		15 min	
Development of activities			
Task cycle			
Once the students are contextualized, the teacher presents the comic book providing general information such as who the author is, where the comic book is from, and what the plot is. Then the teacher gives each student the comic which is also projected on the screen with the objective of doing a group reading. The teacher begins the reading and some students then follow it aloud. While reading the comic, the teacher takes the opportunity to ask questions from different pages, such as:		40 min	Workshop Comic

- Do you also have a favorite tree or a place in nature that is special to you? Which one? - Have you ever heard of a sacred or special place in your town? What makes it important? - During the lecture, the teacher also explains some unfamiliar expressions and asks the students to create their glossaries and discuss them in class. Once the students have finished, they discuss <i>Huakar Goddess's</i> leadership qualities using adjectives from the zodiac signs. Then, the students will do a workshop to check their reading comprehension.		
Closure		
Focus language cycle To end the unit, the teacher will ask the students to split into small groups of 3 or 4 students. Then, the teacher will provide each group with a fictional community problem (e.g., vandalism in a park). The students are supposed to brainstorm solutions to the assigned issue. The groups organize their ideas, linking them to qualities discussed earlier (e.g., diligent, confident, responsible). Finally, the groups present their solutions to the class, justifying their choices and describing the qualities the leader should have.	55 min	