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Comic Strips as a Mean of Enhancing the Reading Comprehension of the Eighth-grade Students at Francisco José de Caldas in Cúcuta, Norte de Santander: An Action Research

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University of Pamplona

Faculty of Education

Bachelor Degree in Foreign Languages

Practicum Stage in Foreign Languages

Cúcuta

2021



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CHAPTER I: General Presentation of the project

General overview

The following project is broken down into seven main chapters which contain the following categories: The Institutional observation, Pedagogical and Research component, Outreach macro-project, Inter-institutional component, Reflective Approach of the Teaching Practicum process, and Design of the Pedagogical Material. In this sense, these ones are the main axis to the teaching practicum stage as pre-service teachers in the educational context. However, Foreign Languages students adopted virtual tools in order to carry out the practicum process owing to the pandemic of COVID-19, following the Ministry of Health and Education guidelines.

Firstly, the Pedagogical and research component, entails the current educational requirements mainly at public schools thereby it was necessary to carry out one-week institutional observation at a public High school Francisco José de Caldas in Cúcuta especially the eighth-grade students who showed low reading comprehension, this one hinders English student learning process. Reason why, the pre-service teacher will conduct an action research so as to identify the students' progress. Besides, the use of comic strips as a pedagogical tool is an appropriate strategy in the educational context to improve students' reading skills.

Secondly, the following component concerning the Outreach macro-project, this one is focused on Elementary schools due to they do not count with English teachers; therefore,



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the FL program seeks to provide the necessary support to elementary students, giving them basic elements in learning a foreign language. This project will be conducted in second grade students at Francisco José de Caldas primary school headquarters.

Thirdly, this chapter is related to the Inter-institutional component mainly focused on extracurricular and intra-institutional activities -i.e., teachers' meetings, school events, parent-teacher conferences, etc. These ones allow the pre-service teachers to have an overview of the educational context in order for them to be aware about administrative arrangements in public schools in Colombia.

Fourthly, this section is relevant so as to know the pre-service teacher reflections during this stage, allowing him to have an overall perspective of educational context through a weekly reflective narrative.

Finally, the last chapter is related to the material design during the teaching practicum process – i.e., lesson planning, worksheets, assessments, etc., which supported this stage and provided knowledge and expertise in the educational field.



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Introduction

Currently, learning a foreign language is increasingly necessary to meet the demands of a globalized society. In this regard, English allows people to have many advantages in Education, Business, communication, culture, and among others. That is why, numerous educational institutions included the English teaching within their curriculum and following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) parameters. Similarly, in Colombia the educational system seeks to implement policies that contribute in teaching English as a foreign language in public educational establishments and in so doing, the Ministry of Education Act N° 115 (1994) articles 20, 21 and 22 demands “*the acquisition of elements of conversation, reading, comprehension and the ability to express oneself in at least one foreign language*”. Since its enactment, the majority of public schools adopted the teaching of English as a foreign language. In this sense, EFL teachers encounter difficulties to foster learners’ interest in learning a second language (L2). It is indispensable to find educational tools that permit them to enhance teaching techniques, methods and strategies to solve learning problems. Bearing this in mind, the Foreign Language Program at the University of Pamplona is aware of this phenomenon, applying the teaching practicum stage that pre-service teachers face those educational challenges aforementioned, allowing them to acquire enough experience in the educational context.



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Moreover, throughout one-week institutional observation at Francisco José de Caldas High School in Cúcuta, North of Santander the pre-service teacher must gather enough information (administrative, pedagogical, and technological) to be analyzed in order to seek an appropriate strategy to solve the students' weaknesses. Likewise, this project will apply the Outreach macro-project which is focused on elementary school students who did not count with English teachers thereby the pre-service teacher puts into practice his knowledge as a social labor.

With that in mind, based upon asynchronous meetings on Google Meet with the eighth-grade students and during the institutional observation, the pre-service teacher discovered (1) reading comprehension is one of the most weaknesses during virtual classes; Therefore, the use of comic strips as a pedagogical tool is proposed with the aim of improving reading skills. (2) being a support to second-grade teachers in developing dynamic material (flash cards, workshops, videos, etc.) which will be attractive to the elementary school students.



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Justification

The teaching trainee stage is the keystone within integral knowledge in order for future teachers to obtain significant tools to cope with the current educational challenges (disinterest, learners' behavior toward learning English, Health guidelines to face the pandemic of COVID-19 proposed by the national government, low English knowledge, and among others). Similarly, Akyeampong & Lewin (2002) acknowledge teaching practicum as an essential component in the educational field that permits pre-service teachers to put into practice their knowledge and theories learned to school context. From this perspective, this project aims at developing the pedagogical skills and preparing novice teachers to their professional competencies.

Furthermore, during one-week observational process the main role of the pre-service teacher is to recognize the students' needs related to the curses assigned under the guidance and support of the English teacher supervisor, besides, he will be immersed in the extracurricular and inter-institutional activities, participating actively of them.

On the other hand, based on the institutional observation, the training teacher realized that one of the main problems throughout the students learning process is the low of reading skills probably by the lack of vocabulary. For that reason, this proposal will promote the use of comic strips to improve the reading comprehension on eighth-grade students at Francisco Jose de Caldas High School.



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Finally, to carry out the outreach macro-project, the pre-service teacher will be a significant support for elementary school teachers because they do not have enough knowledge in English language skills, thus, they seize the opportunity to create appropriate pedagogical material (virtual flash cards, English videos, and worksheets) that meets the children needs, mainly the second-grade students.



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Objectives

General objective:

- To enhance eighth-grade students reading comprehension implementing comic strips

Specific objectives:

- To implement comic strips as a pedagogical tool
- To support the English classes to second-grade students by implementing children's song.
- To participate in extra-curricular activities at Francisco José de Caldas high school.



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Conclusions

Concerning the pedagogical and research component, carrying out dynamic reading activities at High schools in Colombia provide students of necessary tools to enhance their reading skills, these activities are feasible to help them to face with reading comprehension problems, findings were relevant to point out that students have enhanced their reading comprehension by implementing comic strips in classroom activities.

On the other hand, working with Elementary school students is a significant experience to enhance the teaching practicum stage because children allowing future teachers to be much more dynamic and creative, making them to look for several teaching strategies that entail to develop engaging activities such as songs, videos, and games.

Finally, the inter-institutional events allowed me to know about the teachers' extra-curricular activities such as teachers' meetings, events, students' tutorials, etc. The latter was mainly relevant to me because that sort of activities permitted me to be aware about the students' needs, thereby it was necessary to seek pedagogical strategies that meet students' demands and solve their doubts.



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CHAPTER II: Institutional observation

Fieldwork preparation

Table 1. Fieldwork preparation.

Nombre de la institución educativa en que labora.	Francisco José de Caldas
Ciudad.	Cúcuta
Carácter de la institución.	Pública
Cursos a su cargo.	Octavo
¿Qué modalidad de trabajo ha venido implementado en sus cursos a raíz de la emergencia sanitaria generada por el COVID 19?	Modalidad virtual.
¿Qué plataformas educativas y/o de comunicación le sugiere o facilita su Institución?	Web Colegios, WhatsApp, Google Meet, Guías escritas, fotocopias y talleres
¿Qué plataformas educativas y/o de comunicación usted ha privilegiado en su actividad académica?	WhatsApp, Google Meet
Si usted hace uso de modalidad Sincrónica, seleccione una o más opciones de la siguiente lista.	Encuentros virtuales, Chats de WhatsApp
Si usted hace uso de modalidad Asincrónica, seleccione una o más opciones de las siguientes en lista. Si la opción que usted utiliza no se encuentra, puede agregarla en la opción denominado "otro".	Grupos de WhatsApp., Creación y distribución de guías.



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¿En su institución se ha escogido el uso de plataformas educativas?	Sí
Si su respuesta anterior es afirmativa, seleccione la o las opciones correspondientes. Si no encuentra la plataforma con la cuál trabaja, puede agregarla en la opción denominada "otro". De no ser así, por favor seleccione la opción "Ninguna".	Web Colegios.
En el caso de seleccionar la opción "asincrónica", le invitamos a describir la modalidad de trabajo que implementa con sus estudiantes. En caso de recurrir al trabajo asincrónico, puede responder "No se hace uso de esta opción".	Las guías son entregadas en la institución, los estudiantes tienen 15 días para desarrollarlas y enviarlas por webcolegios o correo electrónico paolasalazar87@gmail.com Por otra parte, por los grupos de WhatsApp se envía información sobre las clases, guías, se resuelven dudas y preguntas a los estudiantes, se envían links de apoyo para explicaciones o juegos.
¿Entre qué porcentaje ha sido difícil para Usted la utilización las TIC en sus clases durante esta emergencia sanitaria?	0%
De acuerdo a su experiencia, ¿qué porcentaje considera Usted que ha sido difícil para sus estudiantes la utilización las TIC de durante esta emergencia sanitaria?	Entre 25% y 50%

Terrain's information (Physical description of the Institution)

The educative institution Francisco José de Caldas is a medium-sized institution, located in the citadel of La Libertad in the city of Cúcuta, Norte de Santander. This technical college has three seats: the main and larger campus which offers both basic education and secondary education from grade 0 to the last grade of high school; San Pedro Claver and Santísima Trinidad's headquarters offer primary education from preschool to fifth and sixth grade. The main campus has a dining room service for the student



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community; it is comprised of computer rooms, a small library and recreational room, it also has two sports fields and a small square.

Design of the community immersion strategies.

Throughout the teaching practicum process, it was involved in the institutional meetings via Google Meet with the respective authorities, being that the first step in the academic duties as a pre-service teacher. Besides, I had close communication with the teacher supervisor which allows me to know the target population needs with the aim of designing strategies to face the community challenges.

Perceptions of pandemic COVID-19

In terms of biosafety measures, the educational institution Francisco José de Caldas took into account preventive measures against the spread of the COVID-19 virus; In this way, new pedagogical resources were adopted to face this problem.

Document Analysis

School's Institutional Educational Project (IEP)

The Institutional Educational project is based on a comprehensive conception of the human person, their dignity, their rights and their duties, training each student to act as an honest, productive citizen aware of their personal and social reality and lead processes that allow to live and coexist with a good quality of life, contributing to the Local, Regional, National and Latin American process.



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Based on the provisions of the 1991 National Constitution and especially what is ordered by it in its article 67, Education in Colombia is established as a Social, Economic and Cultural right that must be normalized, applied and abided by. Hence, as from Ministerial Directive Number 016/1996 and in the New General Education Law No. 115, Article 73 and 87 and in its Regulatory Decree 1860/94 Article 17. The IEP Institutional Educational Project, appears as a first-rate tool hand to redefine the north that education should have in a particular community.

Institutional Principles

1. Educate for love, respect for oneself, the other, the difference and life from responsibility, tolerance and peace.
2. Educate for honesty, service and high self-esteem.
3. Educate for continuation in higher education or enter the productive world developing a job competence.
4. Education in the Christian faith and in respect and tolerance for other cults or religious beliefs.
5. A scientific education stimulating science technology and the development of creativity.
6. Appropriation and conservation of cultural, civic and national values.
7. Conservation and improvement of the environment.
8. Teach to learn to learn.



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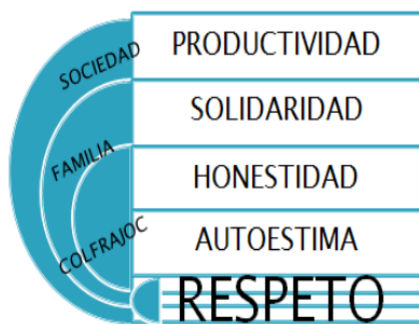


9. Train for active participation in the political, economic and social life of the country
10. Train for democracy and respect for multiculturalism.
11. Train for the development of basic, civic, labor and scientific competencies.
12. Promote the conservation and defense of life and its environment.

Institutional values

The E.I Francisco José de Caldas supports its institutional values in the life and work of our hero Francisco José de Caldas. Having as a core value the respect between the different members of the educational community and projecting them towards the family and society.

Figure 1. Institutional values



Institutional organization chart

Figure 2. Institutional organization chart



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Updated article of the Coexistence Manual.

Joint Circular number 11 with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of March 9, 2020 with recommendations for prevention, management and control of acute respiratory infection by the new coronavirus in the educational environment. From this perspective, the institution's coexistence handbook contains the rules, duties, regulations, and values that must be maintained and respected while being part of the Caldista family. This coexistence manual contains the main chapters the following:

Chapter I: nature, purpose, definition and principles: the Caldista community assumes the principles of: human dignity, democratic participation, freedom, dialogue, critical analysis, care and preservation of the environment.

Chapter II. legal framework: this chapter contains bullying and school assault: school assault can be: physical, verbal, gesture, relational, and electronic media assault.

Chapter III. Institutional Horizon

Article 11. Institutional Values. The Francisco José de Caldas Educational Institution supports its institutional values in the life and work of our hero Francisco José de Caldas. Having as a core value the respect between the different members of the Educational Community and projecting them towards the family and society, it will internalize the values of respect. In the CALDISTA Community, respect means accepting



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personal differences and allowing their integral development, giving each of the members of the community a friendly and tolerant treatment.

Mission

The E.I Francisco José de Caldas School of the City of Cúcuta, offers a quality educational service to children, youth, adolescents and adults, through an innovative pedagogical proposal whose two fundamental pillars are continuous improvement and social responsibility.

Vision

In the year 2021, we will be recognized as one of the five best Educational Institutions at the regional level for the training of upright students and critical thinking, with social transformation and progress of all the people who make it up.

Institutional symbols

The Francisco José de Caldas School has 3 representative symbols:



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Shield

Figure 3. *Institutional shield.*



- It has a triangular shape and is an icon of Trinidad; Triune God first. For this reason, one of the three venues is called Santísima Trinidad

The flag

Figure 4. *Institutional flag.*



- In its three colors: white, green, yellow, it makes an allegory to the three

The institutional pet (Mascot)

Figure 5. *Institutional mascot.*



- The eagle: eruption of dignity, freedom and fascination. Majestic bird connected with the sun, storm, warrior impetus, the triumph of the spirit over inert materiality.



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The institutional anthem

Figure 6. *Institutional anthem.*



- In addition, the educational institution also has a hymn, which was written and sung by teacher Gloria Tereza Arenas de Luna.

Ministry of National Education guidelines adopted toward the health emergency

The ministry also issued some circulars clarifying the following guidelines:
 Regulations of the Ministry of National Education (MNE) in the face of the health emergency.

Bearing in mind, the health problem that has been present for a year worldwide, MNE established certain resolutions in order to prevent the lethal COVID-19 from being easily present in the lives of students. The ministry also issued some circulars clarifying some guidelines where pedagogical planning and academic work at home are oriented as a measure to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), as well as for the



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management of teaching staff, teaching directors and administrative staff of the sector education.

In addition, the Ministry of National Education (2020) issued circular No. 20 of March 16, 2020 addressed to governors, mayors and secretaries of education to adopt the corresponding measures against the modification of the academic calendars of preschool, basic and secondary education for the present to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Thence, a Circular 19 of March 14 was issued, which provides guidance for the Secretariats of Education on the recommendations to mitigate the spread of the virus in educational establishments and offers alternatives for the structuring of strategies to support learning and planning of the provision of educational service.



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Schedule

The following chart below shows the supervisor's schedule who is in charge of four English courses of eighth grade.

Table 2. Teacher's supervisor chart

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30 – 8:30	Inglés 802		Inglés 803	Inglés 806	Emprendimiento 806
8:30 – 9:30	Inglés 804				
9:30 – 10:30		Inglés 801		Inglés 807	Inglés 805
1:00 – 3:00					



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Institutional schedule and programming (Francisco José de Caldas High school, 2021)

The following Chart addresses the institutional activities from January to June.

Table 3. Institutional schedule and programming.

FECHA	PERI	ACTIVIDAD	RESPONSABLE
ENERO			
12	1	Inicio Actividades de Desarrollo Institucional (1, 2 y 3)	Rectoría
12	1	Encuentro con Coordinadores. Saludo Bienvenida. Eucaristía. Actividad Lúdica y de Ambientación.	Rectoría-Coordinadores-Calidad
20	1	Elección Jefes de Area. Revisión y Ajuste de Comités y Proyectos Elaboración de POA por Area	Coordinación Jefes de Area
21	1	Elaboración de POA por Area y Proyectos. Elaboración de Cronograma. Organización Día E	Jefes de Area – Líderes de Proyectos Coordinadores Grupo Calidad-Tutora PTA
FEBRERO			
1	1	Inicio Año Escolar 2021, Periodo1. Encuentro con Titulares. Organización de diagnóstico de conexión y listas. Entrega Plan de Acción Diagnóstico a Coordinadores (vía mail o wsp a estudiantes)	Titulares Titulares Docentes Coordinadores Docentes
MARZO			
5	1	Entrega Plan de Acción Lapso 2 a Coordinadores	Docentes
19	1	Entrega Plan de Acción Lapso 3 a Coordinadores	Docentes
22 marzo al 9 abril	1	Lapso 3	Coordinación
23	1	Entrega de Guías a Coordinación- Rectoría (4, 5, 6 y 7)	Docentes
marzo al 2 abril	1	Entrega de guías a estudiantes-acudientes (4, 5, 6 y 7)	Rectoría-Administrativos
ABRIL			
6 al 9 abril	1	Entrega de guías a estudiantes-acudientes (4, 5, 6 y 7)	Rectoría-Administrativos
9	1	Entrega Plan de Acción Lapso 4 y Nivelación a Coordinadores	Docentes
12-23		Lapso 4	Coordinación



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23		Izada de Bandera. Batalla de Cúcuta, Día de la Mujer y San José, Día del Idioma Entrega Plan de Acción Lapso 5 a Coordinadores	Docentes encargados Docentes
26 abril-7 mayo		Lapso 5	Coordinadores
MAYO			
7		Entrega de Preinformes Académicos Apertura Plataforma (7:00 pm) Entrega Plan de Acción Lapso 6 a Coordinadores	Docentes
14		DÍA DEL MAESTRO	SEM- Rectoría
10-21		Lapso 6	Coordinadores
21		Entrega Plan de Acción Lapso 7 y Actualización y Recuperación a Coordinadores	Docentes
24 mayo-junio 4		Lapso 7	Coordinadores
JUNIO			
15-16		Comisiones de Evaluación Primer Periodo	Coordinadores
11		Izada de Bandera (Día del Maestro, Día del Trabajo y Fundación de la Ciudad de Cúcuta)	Docentes según Sede-Jornada
17		Cierre de plataforma (10:00 pm)	Coordinadores
18		Entrega de Informes Académicos Primer Periodo Finalización Primer Periodo Apertura Plataforma (7:00 pm)	Coordinadores-Titulares SEM Coordinadores
19		Inicio Vacaciones Estudiantiles	

Pedagogical section

Methodology of English teachers

This section addresses the Francisco José de Caldas high school methodology which had to adapt it to the current situation due to the COVID-19 pandemics. Therefore, the use of digital platforms is necessary to carry out the teaching-learning process. One-hour virtual class is performed through Google Meet where teachers guide their students, using slides,



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gamification platforms, the guide book activities, videos, among others. Thence, the following materials are the main tool to fulfil the institutional requirements.

Pedagogical resources

- Guide books WAY TO GO Series
- ENGLISH PLEASE Series
- BUNNY PRETTY series.
- Videos, virtual applications, audios, songs, dictionaries, websites, Institutional Platform, Learning workshops, didactical games.

Guiding textbook of Ministry

Figure 7. Book Way to go, eighth grade.



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Syllabus

The following syllabus corresponds to the eighth-grade English curricular standard that is broken down into two main periods.

Figure 8. Eighth-grade syllabus.

ESTÁNDAR CURRICULAR GRADO OCTAVO			
<p>ESTANDAR GENERAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Además de lo que logré en el nivel anterior, en este nivel. Leo y comprendo textos narrativos y descriptivos o narraciones y descripciones de diferentes fuentes sobre temas que me son familiares, y comprendo textos argumentativos cortos y sencillos. - Cuando me hablan sobre lo que hago en la escuela o en mi tiempo libre, comprendo las ideas generales si el lenguaje es claro. Participo en conversaciones en las que expreso opiniones e intercambio información sobre temas personales o de mi vida diaria. - Hago presentaciones breves para describir, narrar, justificar y explicar brevemente hechos y procesos, también mis sueños, esperanzas y ambiciones. - Mi pronunciación es clara pero aún cometo errores y tengo acento extranjero. - Escribo textos expositivos sobre temas de mi entorno y mis intereses, con una ortografía y puntuación aceptables. <p>En mis redacciones uso el vocabulario y la gramática que conozco con cierta precisión, pero cuando trato temas que no conozco o expreso ideas complejas, cometo errores.</p>			
PERIODO	NUCLEO TEMÁTICO/ UNIDAD PROBLEMÁTICA	EJES CONCEPTUALES.	COMPETENCIA
	<p>PLANET EARTH AND HEALTH ISSUES</p>	<p>Environment Environmental impact Human actions Negative things for the environment Environmental impact Human actions Eco-values Expressing opinion Grammar Would (not) like to ... Adjective and preposition combinations Verbs followed by gerunds Past simple Wh- questions Making suggestions Giving explanations Collocations to express opinion Giving reasons</p> <p>MÓDULO 2</p> <p>Unit 1: What is an Eating Disorder? Unit 2: Healthy Food Choices Unit 3: Body and Mind Connection Vocabulary Eating disorders Health problems and remedies Food Cooking methods Nutrients Body parts Describing emotions Grammar Frequency adverbs</p>	<p>Lectura. Reconozco el propósito de una descripción de textos narrativos de mediana extensión.</p> <p>Competencia Ambiental: Tomo decisiones sobre alimentación y práctica de ejercicio que favorezcan mi salud</p> <p>Competencia ciudadana: Contribuir a preservar y mejorar el ambiente haciendo uso adecuado de los recursos naturales y los creados por el hombre</p> <p>Competencia laboral: Contribuir a preservar y mejorar el ambiente haciendo uso adecuado de los recursos naturales y los creados por el hombre.</p>



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		First conditional Present simple questions Wh- questions Imperative Zero conditional Making suggestions Past simple questions	
SEGUNDO	A GOOD CITIZEN AND WISE CONSUMPTION	MÓDULO 1 Unit 1: Solving Problems with Others Unit 2: What is a Model Citizen? Unit 3: Making Peace Through Words and Actions Vocabulary Positive and negative adjectives to describe personal qualities Vocabulary to describe minority culture Verbs related to verbal abuse Verbs related to helping others Expressions to make requests Expressions to apologize Adjectives describing positive characteristics Adjectives with prefixes describing negative characteristics Nouns with suffixes (values) Unit 1: Sensible shopping Unit 2: Controlling Expenses Unit 3: Extreme Consumption Vocabulary Positive adverbs Negative adverbs Positive adjectives Gift items Justifying a point of view Giving a contrasting opinion Vocabulary related to shopping habits, vacations and travelling Vocabulary related to shopping practices, vacations and trips Vocabulary related to information and communication technology devices: smartphone, laptop, download, etc.	Lectura Comprendo la información implícita en textos escritos en tiempo pasado Habla Hago presentaciones cortas y ensayadas sobre un tema de mi interés. Escritura Produzco un tema sencillo con la función de narrar un tema personal Escucha Sigo instrucciones dadas en clase para realizar actividades propuestas en clase. Competencia ambiental: Conozco la aplicación de las restricciones del uso o consumo de sustancias tóxicas, alucinógenas, corrosivas (ácidos), gases químicos, pica-pica, drogas, licor, explosivos, ruidos estridentes y todo lo que atente contra el bienestar de la persona y de los seres vivos en general. Competencia ciudadana: Reconozco los problemas que surgen del uso y disposición de las distintas clases de recursos de mi entorno cercano (mi casa, mi barrio, mi colegio). Competencia Laboral: Contribuyo a preservar y mejorar el ambiente haciendo uso adecuado de los recursos a mi disposición.

Methodology

Learning Accompaniment Modalities

As main tutoring tool, teachers utilize digital platforms based on social networking especially WhatsApp. Many of tutorials taking into account the corresponding topic of the week. This social media is the most used for students and their parents because it has been easier to contact them in order to follow their learning process in addition to keep their parents informed about the learners' academic performance.

Workshops and material design

In terms of pedagogical material, the English teachers base many of their activities and explanations on the guide book (Way to go) whose content must not exceed to two



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pages. Each workshop is weekly designed and applied. Teachers assign these activities through the platform “*Web colegios*” and the students must deliver them using WhatsApp or the platform aforementioned.

Ministry of National Education guidelines

They are the epistemological, pedagogical and curricular orientations that the MEN define with the support of the academic educational community to support the process of foundation and planning of the mandatory and fundamental areas defined by the General Law of Education in its article 23.

In the process of elaboration of the Institutional Education Projects and their corresponding study plans by cycles, levels and areas, the curricular guidelines constitute references that support and guide this work together with the contributions that the institutions and their teachers have acquired through of their experience, training and research.

Courses

The following courses will be part of the teaching practicum process, four courses were assigned: 8.03, 8.05, 8.06, and 8.07. Each one of them is composed of 36 students.

Technological section

Connectivity

In terms of technological tools, the Francisco José de Caldas features the platform *Web colegios* in addition to Google Meet, WhatsApp, and email.



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The use of platforms and access

As stated above, teachers carry out their classes through Google Meet, performing one hour of synchronous class which teacher and students accomplish with assigned topics during the week. As an asynchronous way teachers and students use the social network WhatsApp, having a close communication among parents, students, and teachers. Finally, *Web colegios* is the institutional platform to assign and receive activities during the week.

Types of virtual encounters and duration

At Francisco José de Caldas high school, the encounter modalities were straightly established. (1) Students and teachers perform one-hour virtual class through Google Meet. (2) As synchronous ways, students must accomplish two-hour tutorial process where teachers follow the students' academic process.

Description of digital tools

- (1) Google Meet: is used by the teacher as a pedagogical tool in order to carry out the classes synchronously.
- (2) WhatsApp: this social media is used in order to have a learning accompaniment for students; by this means, the teacher sends and receives the students' work.
- (3) Webcolegios: the teacher uses this platform to keep track of students' academic achievement.

Population



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The following chart illustrates data gathered through the institutional observation process so as to know accurate aspects of target population as follows: Course, quantity of students, gender, age, and language level skills.

Table 4. population's information

Course	Students	Gender		Age	Language level
		F	M		
8.03	36	23	13	13-15	A1(A2)
8.05	36	17	19	13-15	A1(A2)
8.06	36	17	18	13-15	A1(A2)
8.07	35	17	18	13-15	A1(A2)

Institutional personnel

The school authorities are based on the board and it is divided into the following institutional charges.

Table 5. School authorities

INSTITUTIONAL CHARGES	NAMES
Principal	Sandra Patricia Figueredo Sarmiento
Coordinators	Luis Alexander Arias Azula Ramírez Suárez
	Ramiro Alfonso Becerra
Teachers' representatives	Diana Paola Salazar



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	Giovanny Alexander Veloza Castillo
	Adriana María Peña Bolívar
	Astrid Abaunza
	Alexander Ayala
Student representative	Eva Zarina Quintero
Parent's representative	Roquelina García



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CHAPTER III: Pedagogical and research component

Comic Strips as a Mean of Enhancing the Reading Comprehension of the Eighth- Grade Students at Francisco José de Caldas in Cúcuta, Norte de Santander: An Action Research

Introduction

Reading comprehension implies to decode meaning through printed digital or non-digital words. Likewise, some experts define reading as a process to construct meaning from text or interpreting the information which requires the reader to make inferences of it (Sweet & Snow, 2003; Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In this regard, the reading comprehension entails a method to take information from texts in order to give meaning to the words, thereby the reader interacts with the text and background knowledge. However, many students have reading comprehension problems Vogel (1998) cited in (Chen & Chen 2015; Grabe, 1991; Birch, 2002; Alyousef, 2006; Rahman, 2004; Fitriani, 2014) mainly caused by a lack of reading habits. Furthermore, this is a common issue in EFL teaching-learning process since learners do not have enough vocabulary and linguistic knowledge -i.e., syntax, pragmatics, etc. (Kasim & Raisha, 2017).

With that in mind, it is indispensable to find reading strategies to develop reading skills; For instance, the use of comic books which are literary media visually attractive and easy-to-understand content provider of illustrations, facilitating comprehension of



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information because readers can infer the meaning of the story through pictures, providing them easier understanding and improving their reading skills to comprehend texts with higher levels of difficulty. Thus, Comics have gained popularity in society owing to their easy access and their usage as a means of entertainment.

On the other hand, comics, regarded as suitable authentic material; it is a useful tool for teaching because they allow students to develop their critical thinking, enhance their vocabulary, and increase their motivation for reading. Besides, Paré & Soto-Pallares (2017) stated, *“the comic book is an ideal choice for this educational stage since it allows the realization of reading comprehension and creative expression activities while fostering motivation for reading in children.”* Therefore, the implementation of comics as a pedagogical tool enriching the reading skills of learners and their versatility in didactic applications in the foreign language classroom.



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Statement of the problem

Considering the results gathered throughout one-week institutional observation at San Francisco José de Caldas, it was evidenced that the eighth-grade students require to enhance reading skills since they showed difficulties in understanding short texts, likely caused by the lack of enough vocabulary necessary to associate and analyze written information and consequently, they experienced loss of meaning and comprehension of words. According to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) especially the overall reading comprehension section, states that A2-level students “*Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language*”. In this sense, the use of comic strips is an appropriate pedagogical strategy to solve and improve reading skills because picture-based content allows English language students to associate images with text, building meaning and comprehension of the written information. Similarly, Garcia (2013) illustrated many advantages of using comics as a didactic resource in the English classroom - i.e., promote the capacity of imagination, produce reading habits, they are authentic material not manipulated or adapted, deal with current issues, and facilitate reading comprehension.

Following all aspects aforementioned, the teaching practicum stage serves to partially cover the eight-grade students needs whom the pre-service teacher will apply the implementation of comic strips in order for the target population improve reading skills in addition to conducting an action research project.



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To conduct this project, the following questions guide this study.

Grand-tour question

- How does the implementation of comic strips contribute to the eight-grade students' reading skills enhancement?

Sub-questions

- How could the implementation of comic strips in workshops and class performance influence in students' learning process?
- In which way comic strips foster reading habits to the eight-grade students?



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Justification

Considering the English teaching process in public school in Colombia, teachers have been looking for strategies, techniques, and methods which meet the students' needs specially to teach a foreign language, following international parameters. In this regard, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) illustrates languages skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) required in every level (-i.e., A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2). Nonetheless, the national government has not obtained expected results, in this way, the Ministry of National Education seeks to face the challenges that have been currently presented; for example, the COVID-19 pandemic, creating alternatives such as virtual classes or school alternation programs which can partially mitigate this phenomenon.

On the other hand, the eighth-grade students of the Francisco José de Caldas educational institution present reading comprehension problems since the methodology of the classes focuses on the development of worksheets and activities based on the guide book *Way to go* and do not put more emphasis on readings. Reason why, it is necessary to work on this competence since it is fundamental for the adequate learning of a foreign language.



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Objectives

General objective

- To enhance the eighth-grade students' reading comprehension by implementing comic strips.

Specific objectives

- To implement comic strips in workshops and performing classes.
- To foster reading habits by implementing comic strips.



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Theoretical framework

Regarding this section, it is indispensable to know theories and definitions related to reading skills which will lead this project. In this regard, the following theories will be part of this study: Reading skills, reading comprehension, schema theory (linguistic component), and comic strips (language resource).

Linguistic component

Reading skills

Reading skills comprise a complex cognitive process as it requires the interpretation and analysis of information. According to William (1984) reading leads to the process of understanding what has been written. Likewise, Kendou et al (2015) illustrate in their study that reading ability is an indispensable linguistic tool to understand written texts in order to give students a reflective and interpretive approach.

Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension leads to the use of cognitive, theoretical and linguistic bases (orthographic, phonological and semantic) that provide the reader with the necessary tools to interpret the meaning of words. From this perspective, many authors define reading comprehension with a connection of ideas between previous knowledge and the interpretive capacity of the reader (Kendeou, Rapp, &



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van den Broek, 2004; Kendeou, Smith, & O'Brien, 2013; Kendeou & van den Broek, 2007; Kintsch, 1998; Lorch & van denBroek, 1997; Snow, 2002; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993; van denBroek & Kremer, 1999).

Schema

schema theory, is defined as the process of interaction between previous knowledge and reading activities, allowing the reader to have a semantic reference which is essential to decipher the information in a text. In this regard, Smith (1994:14) cited in Pardede (2010) states: “*extensive representations of more general patterns or regularities that occur in our experience*”. In this connection, prior knowledge is the keystone to have a mental image what the reader is interpreting.

Language resource

Comic strips

According to Kunzle (2017), comic strips are “*series of adjacent drawn images, usually arranged horizontally, that are designed to be read as a narrative or a chronological sequence. The story is usually original in this form. Words may be introduced within or near each image, or they may be dispensed with altogether. If words functionally dominate the image, it then becomes merely illustration to a text.* With that in mind, this study adopts the use of comic strips as a pedagogical tool, considered by several



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studies as an authentic material (cited in the introductory part) that perfectly fits with reading activities so as to enhance students' reading comprehension.

Literature review

Concerning this section, Creswell (2012. p, 102), referred to literature review as a written summary that put in evidence the state of the information (past and present) on the topic under study. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to mention that: (1) this section will be structured and guided by the study-by-study literature review model (Creswell, 2012) so as to provide a detailed summary of each study grouped under a broad theme or category; (2) as far as this study is concerned, many investigations have been carried out to figure out the use of comics in English teaching classrooms. Along these lines the following literature review is broken down into two main categories: (1) Comics as a pedagogical tool in EFL/ESL classrooms; (2) Comics to face challenging literacy approaches.

Comics as a pedagogical tool in EFL/ESL classrooms

The first category relies on the application of comic books in reading activities. Dawnelle et al (2020) conducted a quantitative study in order to apply two cognitive theories (bottom-up and top-down) which the researchers analyze the effects of the use of comics on the reading comprehension activities in 80 students from the University of Michigan. The results showed that the influence of comics on reading comprehension



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improve global understanding of the text, the researchers noted that the group of participants whom did not have interaction with comics in reading activities caused negative results.

Similarly, Cimermanová (2014) conducted a study to experienced and non-experienced readers. The researcher observed highly variable results since there were certain linguistic barriers that affected the reading process; Therefore, the researcher divided this process into 4 main strategies (intralanguage principles, phonetic association, guessing strategies, and lexical inferencing strategies) in order to better analyze the results. Finally, the study concluded that the association of images with the text helped to better understand the reading context.

Finally, Novitasari (2020) shows in her results that the use of comics strips in EFL and ESL classes are a tool that improves the teaching process of a foreign language, since the comic book is not a pedagogical tool itself, but it helps to increase students' motivation to learn, in this way the researcher recommends adopting comics in EFL/ESL classrooms.

Comics to face challenging literacy approaches

On the other hand, Ashley (2020) illustrates in her study the controversy that exists between the texts implemented in the curriculum and comic books, indicating in the results that the use of comics as pedagogical material is very limited, unlike literary books;



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Therefore, this issue affects the students' motivation for reading since they do not catch their attention. The researcher recommends including comic books in the institutional curriculum in order to motivate students to read. Likewise, Basol & Sarigul (2012) conducted an experimental study that carry out at a Turkish university with the aim of observing the effects of graphic novels in improving reading comprehension skills of EFL students. They pointed out that the use of graphic novels showed better results in reading tests since the EFL students showed better understanding in a questionnaire applied for that study; However, the researchers recommend not generalizing with this approach since the context of each student is divergent.

According to the above, all the studies mentioned before support the hypothesis that the use of comics as a pedagogical tool in EFL/ESL classes is an appropriate strategy to improve students' reading comprehension skills because of easy-understanding content based on images and balloons, in so doing they catch students' attention for reading.

Methodology

In terms of research methodology, this study comprises two main components as follows: Pedagogical and research component.



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Pedagogical methodology

Considering the current challenges that teachers face, (low interest of learning, students' behavior, the COVID-19 pandemics, etc.) it is necessary for future teachers to look for strategies, techniques or methods that allow them to partially solve these phenomena. For this reason, this study will adopt a dynamic methodology which captures the attention of students in order to improve their language skills. In this sense, after learning about the educational problems of eighth-grade students, the pre-service adopts the use of comic strips to enhance reading comprehension.

According to the above, the class procedure will be adapted with the implementation of reading activities through the use of comic strips, replacing those provided by the guide book "way to go" in this way, making students feel more motivated and interested in. creativity and significant learning can be evidenced through the implementation of comic strips and the association of images and text makes information processing easier.

Description of Activities Conducted

Concerning the activities, during six-week teaching practicum process the pre-service teacher developed 3 lapses (3, 4, and 5) which contain grammar topics and activities established. In this regard, each lapse is developed each two weeks. The first one to work on grammar and workshop activities and the second one to give the students a review of the



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lapse, explaining the instructions of the worksheet. With that in mind, the first week the pre-service teacher worked on Lapse 3 which comprises of two main topics: Simple past tense and WH questions ([Appendix 1](#)). The former, most of the students partially understood rules and the usage of it because this grammar topic just worked with one auxiliar (did), making easier the development of exercises. The latter, was feasible for them since the explanation of WH questions was simple and clear, considering the function of each one of them. Furthermore, the pre-service teacher started to conduct the research proposal (see table 2), illustrating a comic strip by which the students read it and did a gamification questionnaire in order to know the participants' knowledge about the reading activity.

On the other hand, the Lapse 4 consisted in two main grammar topics: Adverbs of frequency and Simple present tense ([Appendix 2](#)). Those topics were challenging for the students because they did not identify appropriately personal pronouns (singular and plural) which are essential to conjugate verbs, using two main auxiliars (do and does); Therefore, it was necessary to explain how personal pronouns work in English; -e.g., Maria and her friend, dogs, my father and I, etc. These ones were confused by the third person of singular, resulting in wrong conjugations of sentences. Moreover, a second reading activity was conducted (see table 6). This one, the teacher asked some orally questions related to pictures that the comic strip contained in order to provide the students of a global idea of the story, then they responded a questionnaire through Kahoot.



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On the one hand, lapse 5 was related to the present perfect tense ([Appendix 3](#)). This grammar topic was hard to the students because they did not know verbs in past participle form; therefore, they presented difficulties when did the worksheet exercises. Moreover, regarding the reading activity through a comic strip; orally questions were asked and some students participated in reading some comic balloons with the teacher. This activity was assessed through a gamification platform (Quizziz). Although their participation was low, they obtained good results in the questionnaire. On the other hand, the lapse 5 was partially completed because national strike, it took around 50 days. When the cessation of activities had finished, it was necessary to make a review of the present perfect tense ([Appendix 4](#)), but sort of negative attitudes was perceived during class performance in the week, showing a lack of interest and low participation.

Table 6. Class activities

Week	Date	Activity
First	March 23rd	Lapse 3: Simple past tense and WH questions
Second	April 6th	Holy week
Third	April 14th	Lapse 4: Adverbs of frequency and Simple present tense.



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Fourth	April 21st	Review of class activities
Fifth	April 26th	Lapse 5: Present Perfect tense.
Tenth	June 6th	Review of Lapse 5.

Research methodology

Data collection is an essential procedure when conducting a research project, in which the researchers need to establish the instruments with which they will gather the data, but depending on the type of information they pretend to collect (qualitative or quantitative) and how they plan to obtain it.

Moreover, it is conceived as critical when conducting scientific studies allowing researchers to gather significant data through specific instruments that meet the type of research (Abawi, 2014). Along these lines, this study will implement three different strategies of data collection (workshops, field notes, and reflective journal) so as to accomplish the main purpose of it. (See table 7)

Research Approach

Concerning this section, this study requires to follow a method that meets this process; For instance, a qualitative approach which is described as a holistic one involves



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discovery, and as a development model that is conducted in a natural setting allowing the study to know a level of detail from high participation in real experiences; qualitative research is an approach to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem, which involves emerging questions, procedures and data collected in the participant's environment; The analysis of data that is constructed inductively from details to general topics and the researcher who interprets the meaning data (Creswell, 2014). Similarly, Fernández and Díaz (2002) stated that the main interest of a qualitative research is to generate information through a sample that consists of obtaining certain data provided by a specific number of participants so as to not generalize, but to find an answer, that is, a qualitative investigation seeks to: to identify emerging phenomena during the investigation; to provide a deeper understanding of the object of study. to know the profound nature of reality, to detect the relationships and their dynamic structure.

Research design

With regards to the research design, this study adopts an action research due to it allows to collect information based on teaching activities in order to provide first-hand data to the teacher researcher. In this sense, Kemmis & McTaggart (1988, p. 5) cited in Gogus (2012) states that an action research as a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice



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of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out.

Setting

This action research will take place during the first semester of the year 2021 at the Educational Institution Francisco José de Caldas high school, located in the citadel of La Libertad, in the city of Cúcuta, Norte de Santander, Colombia.

Population

Regarding the population that will be part of this pedagogical component, this study will be focusing on students of eighth-grade, course 805 as the research sample, since in this course was observed a high influence of the phenomenon under study.

Ethical considerations

This section is considered the most substantial element of a research study owing to it follows some relevant aspects to be taken into consideration; for instance, Bryman and Bell (2007) illustrates the following: (1) full consent should be obtained from the participants prior to the study; (2) the protection of the privacy of research participants has to be ensured; (3) anonymity of individuals participating in the research has to be ensured. In this sense, all these aspects aforementioned will be conducted during the research process.



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Chronogram of activities

Table 7. Chronogram of activities.

Week	Date	Activity
First	March 23rd	Calvin and Hobbes. Chapter 11-26
Second	April 6th	Holy week
Third	April 14th	Calvin and Hobbes. Chapter 12-1
Fourth	April 21st	Review of class activities
Fifth	April 28th	Calvin and Hobbes. Chapter 1-12
Tenth	June 6th	Calvin and Hobbes. Chapter 1-13/14

Methods of data collection

A research instrument is what can be used to gather data to answer research questions and also to respond to the main objective of a research (Kok, 2013).

Nonetheless, it is important to mention that with the purpose of carrying out a research, an adequate choice of a scientific method is required, that is, the instruments will assist the researcher in executing his study; in fact, the instruments are perceived as resources or procedures that will allow the investigator to approach the facts to obtain more detailed information about their object matter, (Ruiz, 2012). Along these lines, this proposal



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will implement three different strategies of data collection (workshops, field notes, and reflective journal) so as to accomplish the main purpose of it.

Workshops (gamification)

workshops are considered an unobtrusive instrument to collect data because it is gathered without altering or distracting the research context. In this sense, in the educational context documents are related to classroom activities; -i.e., worksheets, video recordings, assessment, texts, critiques, reviews, and among others. (Spencer, Porath, Thiele, & Jobe, n.d.). Thus, this instrument is appropriate to action research since it permits to know the participants performance in classroom. Reason why, this study will adopt this method of data collection through gamification activities in order to gather first-hand results.

Field notes

In terms of data collection instruments, field notes entail a specific group of individuals so as to know and understand the phenomenon under study. This instrument diverges in appliance – i.e., written notes, reports, pamphlets, videos, and audio recordings. Reason why, this research will be using field notes to know and analyze the class procedure.

Reflective Journal

According to the University of Warwick (2015), a reflective journal is a description of a work in progress, but more essentially an opportunity to reflect about the learning



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experience, allowing the academic reading to be used in relevant ways to inform, support, or shape all reflections; being this, an analysis of key or "critical" moments from an independent study, whether positive or negative and what was learned from them. The reflective journal was part of this research project due to the fact that through this instrument researchers will be able to analyze in a critical way all the gathered information provided by participants which will be also portrayed in an aware and efficient manner. The data collection provides researchers the required results in order to better understand the answer to this research proposal. With this in mind, the researcher will apply one reflective journal through a digital blog or social media that provides the participants information about their learning process.

Data Gathering Process

Once established the methodological approach, designed the data collection instruments, selected the participants, this research project enters to new stage which is “data gathering”. But before, the way in which the researcher achieved this stage must be described.

Design of Instruments

At first, it was conceived to implement three different instruments for giving way the data gathering process, but given to the health emergency caused by the pandemic (covid-19) and its impact on the educational field, some considerations were taken. The researcher



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decided conduct 4 activities throughout 3 sequences (- i.e., one activity per Lapse and one extra). That is to say that three of four activities were conducted during classes and the last one was applied during the national strike. Therefore, Workshops, field notes, and reflective journals were designed and created.

Workshops (gamification)

Four workshops were created and conducted, considering the three stages of reading - pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stage - (Campos,2020). The first activity was conducted during the Lapse 3, implementing the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes, chapter 11-26 ([Appendix 5](#)). The second activity was applied in the Lapse 4, considering the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes, chapter 12-1 ([Appendix 6](#)). Third activity was conducted during Lapse 5, based on the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes, chapter 1-12 ([Appendix 7](#)). Finally, the last activity was applied during the strike via WhatsApp, thereby, the participants worked on the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes 1-13/14 ([Appendix 8](#)).

Field Notes

This instrument was designed and conducted four times through a *word* document which the researcher wrote about the participants' results during the three stages of reading ([Appendix 9](#)).

Reflective Journal



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When designing the reflective journal ([Appendix 10](#)) the Google tool “Blogger” was used. The researcher created this one with the aim of adding his reflections about the participants’ process throughout this study. Thus, one reflective journal was created.

Data Analysis Process

Data analysis in qualitative research is assumed to be a process of systematically searching and arranging the information gathered through unstructured text-based data such as: interview transcriptions, dairies reflections, observation notes, etc. (Wong, 2008) that the researcher compiles in order to increase the understanding of the phenomenon. Furthermore, this data analysis process involves coding or categorizing the data. Basically, it helps when making sense of huge amounts of data by reducing the volume of raw information, followed by identifying significant patterns, and finally drawing meaning from data and subsequently building a logical chain of evidence (Patton, 2002).

Data Preparation

In order to carry out the data analysis process, it is important to establish the way in which the researcher is going to do it. First, it is needed a data preparation process before implementing the type of analysis. In this sense, the researcher will enter into a first step “preliminary data analysis” which is to find out, as far as possible, whether the data collection was done as per the pre-set standards and without any bias.



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Data Validation

The data validation is going to be done through “triangulation”; a technique used in qualitative research which involves cross-checking multiple data sources of information and collection procedures to ensure that the data gathered need to be validated so as to avoid uncertainties, consistencies, and potential biases (Hassem, 2020). In addition to validity, is linked to two aspects “true and certain”; Thereby, the former refers to a real situation accurately reflected and the latter is related to the results that are not proved. Similarly, Patton (2002) stated that the purpose of triangulation is to corroborate the information obtained throughout the inquiring process, since the researchers can find some inconsistencies that likely hinder their outcomes.

Thus, this research study will be adopting the triangulation technique in order to validate the data gathered across the investigation procedures with the aim of achieving the veracity of the information provided by the participants through the applied instruments.

Data Editing

Once the data is validated, we will start a “data editing process”. This step is focused on deleting errors throughout the application of the instruments such as: redundancy, poles, etc.; errors that impede fluency in speech. The idea with this step is to make the data meaningful and readable. Here, we conduct basic data checks and edit the



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raw data in order to identify and clear out any data points that may hamper the accuracy of the results.

Data Coding

This is one of the most important steps in data preparation. It refers to grouping and assigning values to responses from the instruments. Besides, after having fixed and organized the information obtained, the researchers will transform the collected data through codes in order to make the phenomenon observable to be easily analyzed. Thus, in order to achieve this step and continue with the data analysis process, it is necessary to talk about the method that will be using during this final research stage.

Method of Data Analysis

At this section, data is meaningful, readable and need to be coded and analyzed. Therefore, I will be using the inductive analysis method (Hatch, 2002) which consists of searching for patterns of meaning of data, considering to make general statements about phenomena under study. Similarly, (Potter, 1996, p. 151) being cited in Hatch (2002) stated that inductive analysis is related to an examination of particulars within data so as to look for patterns through observations, arguing those ones and finally obtaining the status of general explanatory statements. Hatch highlights that the inductive approach provides a



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wider perspective and adaptable to other qualitative research approaches than data-based theory which is focus on systematic data collection and analysis.

In this sense, so as to accomplish this process, the researcher will be following the steps below.

Read the data and identify frames of analysis

The object of identifying frames of analysis is not to do the analysis but to put rough parameters on how you will start looking closely at the data. As initial readings of the data are done, asking yourself how you will frame your beginning analysis is important. This early decision will shape the analyses that follow. It is possible that initial frames will prove unworkable or ill-suited to the data; that will become apparent as you proceed through the following steps. If your frames of analysis do not work, they will not work for a reason, and that should lead you to identifying frames that better suit your purposes. The next step involves the most inductive thinking in this form of analysis, and confining these processes with too much structure may limit what is discovered in the data. So, frames of analysis are conceptual categories that help researchers look at data and make it possible to move to the next step of creating domains.

Create domains based on semantic relationships discovered within frames of analysis



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The object of this step is to develop a set of categories of meaning or domains that reflects relationships represented in the data. Creating domains is the key inductive element in this model; the data are read searching for particulars that can be put into categories because of their relation to other particulars. The process described here gives researchers a systematic way to develop domains by exploring relationships among particulars within frames of analysis.

Identify salient domains, assign them a code and put others aside

Once salient domains are identified, it will save time if you create some kind of code to help you keep track of your domains. It is easier to set up such codes using an outline format. Assign them a Roman numeral to each domain and a capital letter to each included term. That allows the researcher to have a handy record of my domains to that point and to be able to add included terms as they are discovered. So, for the example being used here, the domain “Ways to hold students accountable” would be identified with “I,” and IA would be “In-school suspension,” IB “Time out,” and so on. At this point, you would just mark these codes directly on the domain sheets, although you may find it useful to create a list that includes all your domains and included terms in the form of an outline.

Reread data, refining salient domains and keeping a record of where relationships are found in the data



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The data will be read and reread no matter what the analysis model used. Here, you will be reading the data with specific domains in mind. The idea is to be confident that the data support the existence of the domain and that all of the important included terms within a domain have been identified. Once salient domains have been selected, the process is to pick one or two and read all of the data, searching for examples of where the relationships that make up the domain are found in the data. Most will have been discovered during domain analysis, but, often, other included terms will be discovered during this careful reading.

When the elements of the domain (- i.e., included terms, semantic relationships, and cover terms) are found in the data, it is a good idea to make a record of where they are located both in the data and on the domain sheets. The process of searching and coding within salient domains will lead you to look more closely at your data and give you a better sense of the richness and importance of the domains you are finding. As this process proceeds, it is important to be open to discovering new domains or discovering that existing domains need modification. It will not be unusual throughout inductive analysis for you to find that you need to return to earlier steps in the model.

Decide if your domains are supported by the data and search data for examples that do not fit with or run counter to the relationships in your domains



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This step involves examining the quality of the data that have been included in constructing your domains. The search for counterevidence is vital to any qualitative study. In order for domains to be reported, researchers must have taken the time to read all of the data in a systematic effort to uncover data that disconfirm the domains discovered. This approach emphasizes the interplay of inductive and deductive processing in data analysis and provides a general model of forming rough initial definitions and categories inductively, then modifying or discarding hypotheses as dissonant cases are examined.

Complete an analysis within domains

This step is about looking within the domains identified for complexity, richness, and depth; The next step provides ways to search for themes by looking across domains for the same qualities. Both these steps treat the products of the analysis so far as data. The object is to study the data that have been organized into domains in ways that allow the discovery of new links, new relationships, new domains. In the first case, we will be looking inward, and in the other, out. In both cases, we must be ready (and willing) to go back to the data upon which the original domains were constructed.

Search for themes across domains

After looking inward at previously identified domains, the next step is to step back from individual domains and look for connections among them. This step might be



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characterized as a search for themes (Ely et al., 1991; Seidman, 1998; Spradley, 1979, 1980). Here we are looking across the data for broad elements that bring the pieces together. We are studying our domains to see what connections can be found among them. We are searching for patterns that repeat in the data and for patterns that show linkages among different parts of data. We are reading our data in ways that parallel how students of literature are trained to search novels for underlying themes about human existence that authors are addressing in their work (Ely et al., 1991). We are looking for relationships among the relationships we have outlined in our domain analysis.

Create a master outline expressing relationships within and among domains

A master outline does not mean analysis is complete, but it signals the researcher that something of meaning has come from the mass of data, hours of mindwork, and tons of energy associated with most qualitative projects. It organizes the work to this point and provides tangible evidence that all of the effort actually leads somewhere. Just as important, it provides a ready-made option for organizing the writing of the final report. Even if final versions of research findings turn out to be organized in ways different than the master outline, the relationships evident in the outline will have a major influence on how findings are reported.

Select data excerpts to support the elements of your outline



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As a final check on the analysis done so far and as further preparation for writing, data need to be read yet again to search for examples that can be used in the text of the findings to support the elements that make up the outline. As with typological analysis and the models to follow, including data excerpts to support findings is essential in qualitative reports. Identifying potential quotes in the data is important to getting ready to write, but it is also a good final check to see if sufficient data are evident to give you confidence in making your final report.

Data Coding Process

Lately, and as stated earlier, I have been working on the data preparation process which permits having the information organized, meaningful, and readable. To do so, I considered three important steps before applying the inductive analysis method (Hatch, 2002). First, I adopted the triangulation technique in order to validate the data gathered across the research process. Secondly, I started a “data editing process” with which I focused on deleting errors throughout the application of the instruments such as: redundancy, poles, etc. Finally, and once we read the data, I established some codes or categories assigning values to responses from the instruments.

Furthermore, after having fixed and organized the information obtained, I classify the collected data through codes in order to make the phenomenon observable to be easily



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analyzed, taking into consideration the inductive analysis ([Appendix 11](#)). Three codes were established.

Comics enhancing reading skills

This code is essential and the most important one due to it allowed me to accomplish partially the main objective and accordingly the literature review of this study, I decided to create this code since it addresses the results obtained in Dawnelle et al (2020) study, where the researchers illustrated the effects on reading comprehension activities by using comics, pointing out that those ones were relevant in teaching a foreign language.

Comics influencing English learning process

On the other hand, not only this code is relevant to identify reading comprehension enhancements, but it also can show the influence in students' learning process because they provide students of vocabulary and grammar tools; For instance, data obtained showed me that students were directly and indirectly influenced by implementing comic strips in reading activities.

Comics fostering reading habits

Finally, this last category is relevant to show in which way the use of comic strips in reading activities engage students to read. Thus, Ashley (2020) in her study recommended



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to adopt the implementation of comic books as pedagogic material; Therefore, the researcher showed in her results that comic books highly influence on students' motivation to read because they provide more attractive content than literary books.

Findings

Once the data has been organized and analyzed, the findings of this action research must be provided. But, before getting started, it must be clarified that the analyzed data came from a total of 4 workshops (one per lapse) applied to eighth-grade students at a public High School in Colombia, 4 field notes were conducted based on reading activities during class, and a total of 1 online reflection journal. For the analysis of the information, I first opted for a type of analysis that suits the needs of the project and that is why I decided to use Hatch's (2002) inductive analysis method which consists of searching for patterns of meaning of data, considering to make general statements about phenomena under study. At this glance this study shows the following findings.

The role of comic strips in reading comprehension

In terms of reading comprehension that is the main purpose of this study, data were analyzed and divided into three main categories - i.e., Main idea (MI), Vocabulary (Vo), and Context (Cx). These ones are the axis of this section and the phenomenon under study since reading comprehension requires to understand the context and central ideas of texts in



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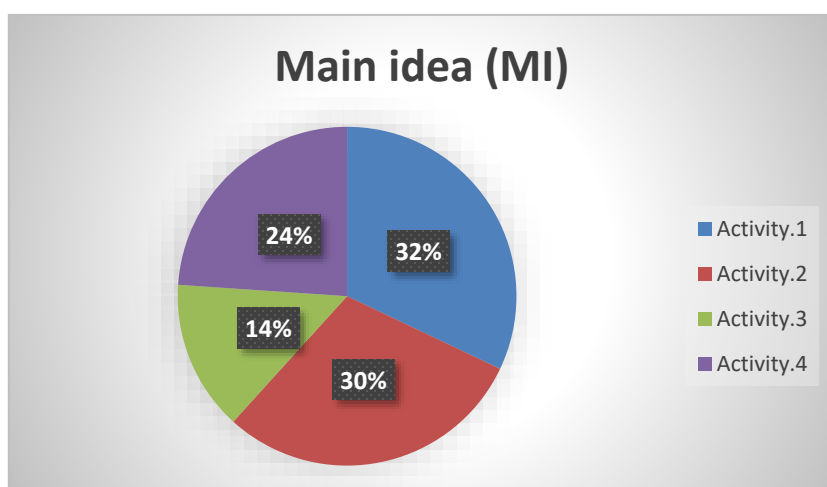


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addition to learn lexicon. In this sense, in the (MI) category, it is observable that the first activity conducted, most of the participants achieved high results in accuracy ([Appendix 12](#)) that means that the implementation of comic strips in reading activities significantly enhanced reading comprehension since they interpreted the information through images allowing them to understand the central idea of the text.

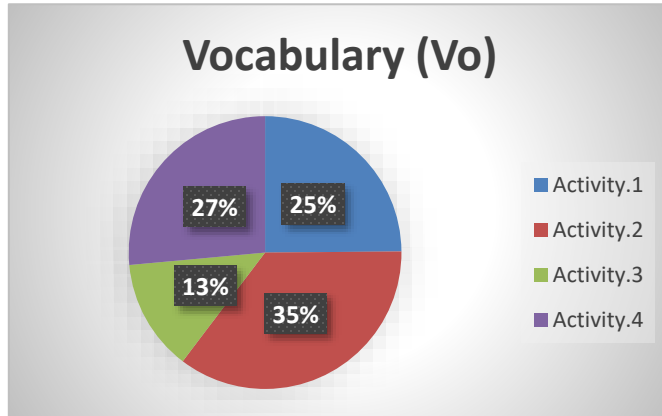
Figure 9. Main idea analysis



On the other hand, regarding the lexical content during reading activities, (Vo) most of the participants partially identified unknown words presented in the comic strip number 2 ([Appendix 13](#)) they interpreted that vocabulary because participants analyzed the characters' expressions and actions during the story. – e.g., “steer, doomed, stuffed tiger, squealer.

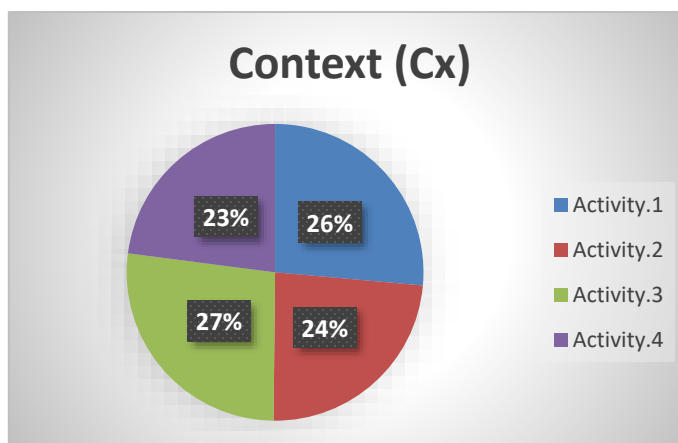


Figure 10. Vocabulary analysis



Lastly, with regards to the global idea of texts, (Cx) data showed that participants reached high results mainly in the activity 3 ([Appendix 14](#)) since the accuracy of it determines that comic strips can develop the comprehension in context, that is to say, students can identify the general idea of comic books.

Figure 11. Context analysis



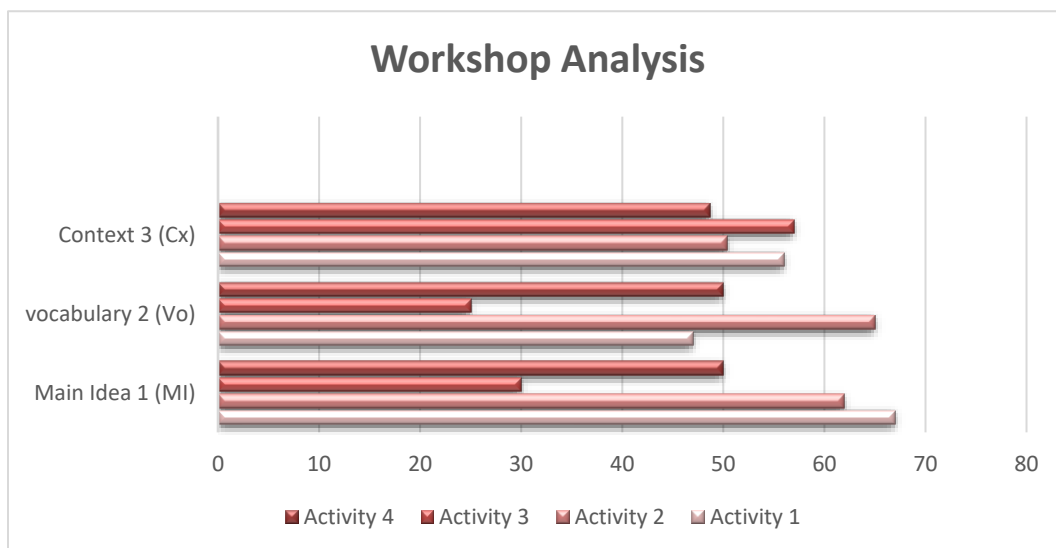


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Generally speaking, all the aspects aforementioned respond the main research question and accomplishing the main purpose of this study. Thus, the last activity ([Appendix 15](#)) serves as example of the participants' reading comprehension enhancement due to the fact that the activity number 4 illustrated good results of the three main categories of this finding.

Figure 12. workshop Analysis



The role of comic strips in English learning process

Concerning learning process of a foreign language, this finding addresses that terminology in an overall way (- i.e., Grammar, vocabulary, etc.) because learning is a broad branch in pedagogy and it requires many educational strategies to accomplish it.



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Moreover, it is worth highlighting that comic books are considered as authentic material since they show the use of the target language in a real context. In this perspective, data gathered through this category showed that some of the participants were influenced in terms of vocabulary (stated at the former finding) because many of unknown words were interpreted through images and synonyms provided in the questionnaires. Furthermore, some grammar tips were reflected in the reading activities; e.g., past and present simple. Thus, some of the participants could identify the real use of some grammar rules because they were the topics worked throughout classes, making much more feasible to comprehend the reading activities ([Appendix 16](#)).

All in all, this finding demonstrated the importance of implementing comic strips in teaching a foreign language owing to they provide grammar and vocabulary inductively, meeting the students' needs and making more and more dynamic the teaching process.

The role of comic strips in reading habits

The role of this finding is to identify in which way comic strips engage students to read, but it was possible to observe that the eighth-grade students showed slight interest in some reading activities; for instance, some potential factors such as poor students' attitude towards learning English (this will be served as a recommendation as future studies), virtual modality, and a lack of time in conducting activities might have caused no conclusive



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results in this finding. Notwithstanding, those ones did not affect the main target of this study.

Conclusions

Considering the research findings, it is corroborated that reading comprehension is a relevant language competence within learning a foreign language whose development is low in high school students; Therefore, it was indispensable to look for pedagogical strategies that could face this phenomenon. Besides, this study discovered that student during reading activities showed some problems in reading skills; For instance, they did not identify the central idea of texts, they presented difficulties in the lexical content, and the lack of overall idea in reading. Reason why, the implementation of comic strips was considered since they allow students to cope with the challenges mentioned before, in so doing, Garcia (2013) illustrated many advantages of using comics as a didactic resource in the English classroom - i.e., promote the capacity of imagination, produce reading habits, they are authentic material not manipulated or adapted, deal with current issues, and facilitate reading comprehension.

With that in mind, this study concludes that students enhanced reading comprehension during activities conducted throughout classes. Data were relevant to illustrate that most of the participants understood main ideas of the story, vocabulary and also, they could identify the overall idea presented in comic strips. These aspects serve as support to respond the



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grand-tour question and to accomplish the purpose of this action research. However, one of the specific objectives was vaguely reached because to foster reading habits in the students was challenging, despite the fact that they observed that comic strips were more attractive than usual reading texts. Therefore, it is recommendable to conduct much more dynamic activities by the implementation of comic books so as to encourage students to adopt reading habits and accordingly, they can improve the learning of a foreign language.

Recommendations

Although this study was focused mainly in enhancing reading comprehension, it was observable that the majority of the participants showed a lack of interest in learning English, in which their attitude towards that language was particularly worrying; Thus, that hypothesis is based on class observations along the teaching practicum process and accordingly the third finding of this study, making the assumption that some of the students showed a low participation in class, a low commitment to the development activities and tasks established, and low motivation in classroom. These aspects mentioned are causing several problems in their learning and academic performance. Therefore, I strongly recommend to consider this phenomenon for further research studies in order to identify the possible factors and find solutions that could cope with this issue – e.g., an adapted pedagogy to create innovative teaching strategies, more attractive pedagogical material, game-based activities, etc.



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CHAPTER IV: Outreach macro-project component

Supporting the English Teaching Language to second-grade students at The Francisco José de Caldas Elementary School in Cúcuta by Implementing Children's songs

Introduction

The ideals of adapting Colombians to learning a foreign language has been one of the goals of the national government through programs implemented by the Ministry of Education such as "*Colombia Bilingüe*" which seeks to educate children and adolescents in this country in linguistic and cultural knowledge of a foreign language in this case English. This program has been implemented in the whole country and has integrated the work by the Education secretary, the public and private universities, and the language institutes, however, findings got until the moment have not been promising given that most of the educational institutions of the country have not been impacted, especially English. (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2016).

Regarding elementary school, the National Government pretends to expand the coverage of the English teaching to children, due to the fact that several times, most of these educational establishments do not have an English teacher who guides the teaching-learning processes. (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006).

Furthermore, the University of Pamplona in Colombia, as a public institution, pretends to educate pre-service teachers belonging to Bachelor's Degree in Foreign



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Languages English and French which has approached to the reality in the elementary schools of Cucuta regarding the National bilingual policy; many institutions in this city do not have English teacher to contribute to the education of the elementary school context.

Bearing this in mind, the present project aims to raise awareness the pre-service teachers about the educational reality of the English teaching process in elementary schools in addition to be a support in teaching English activities, creating appropriate pedagogical material (virtual flash cards, English videos, and worksheets) that meets the children needs, mainly the 2nd grade students. The implementation of children's songs will be taken into account during class activities as a drilling activity so as to teach vocabulary.



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Justification

Learning and acquisition of a foreign language allow facing the actual needs that today's world demands. That is why, the above process is necessary to implement it and work it from the first steps in the educational children life; They have the essential foundations which allow them to continue this process in the secondary, intermediate and higher education, and in this way, to get more trained people on this area. According to the Ministry of Education (2006), is indispensable to ensure the children's education, considering the national guidelines to elementary, basic, and high school establishments in Colombia.

The purpose of this project is to raise awareness about the teaching of English in elementary schools in the city of Cúcuta, contributing to basic training in a foreign language that is necessary and essential at these levels. Reason why, it is carried out as part of the component of outreach to the community of comprehensive practice developed by the students in the last semester of the Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages at the University of Pamplona, as a way to contribute to the strengthening of the teaching of English in the elementary school context.

The main objective of this outreach project is to make future teachers aware of the reality faced by primary school students in Colombia; therefore, the Francisco José de Caldas educational institution in the city of Cúcuta will be the setting where this project



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will take place. In this sense, the pre-service teacher will be the support for elementary teachers in the second-grade course by using children's songs as a mean of teaching vocabulary.

Objectives

General objective

- To support the English classes to second-grade students by implementing children's song.

Specific objectives

- To guide the second-grade students in English activities.
- To teach vocabulary through English children's songs.



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Methodology

Regarding this section, classes will be held according to the topics established in the elementary school activities. The following methodological process will be based on the table of activities below which will be divided by weekly activities

Chronogram of activities

Table 8. Elementary school chronogram of activities

<i>Activities</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Vocabulary classroom commands</i>			X						
<i>Numbers 1-20</i>				X					
<i>Body parts</i>					X				
<i>Family members</i>						X			
<i>Review (lapse 1-8)</i>									X



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Conclusions

All in all, to work with Elementary school students is a significant experience to enhance the teaching practicum process because children allowing future teachers to be much more dynamic and creative, making them to look for several teaching strategies that entail to develop engaging activities such as songs, videos, and games. Furthermore, along this stage, it was possible to corroborate that elementary school students learn vocabulary through English children's songs, fulfilling one the objectives of this component.



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CHAPTER V: Inter-institutional component

Introduction

The University of Pamplona, especially the foreign languages degree, carries out the comprehensive practice program in order to train future teachers with optimal capacities in the educational context; For instance, the country's educational institutions have a series of activities (curricular and extra-curricular) that allow having integral training of teachers.

Taking into account the above, a sub-project was included "Inter-institutional component" in the teaching practice process in order to provide the different approaches that are presented in the educational context. In this sense, the pre-service teachers will participate in the extracurricular activities of the corresponding educational institution.

Broadly speaking, the preservice teacher will actively participate in the extracurricular programming (English song festival, Growing up together, language day, etc.) at Francisco José de Caldas Educational Institution in the city of Cúcuta.



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Justification

The importance of extracurricular activities stems from the idea of improving the quality of education through play and art, providing attractive spaces for students in Colombia. Furthermore, the University of Pamplona takes into account these aspects mentioned above, that is why the students of the Bachelor's Degree in English and French during the teaching practicum process, will be active participants in the inter-institutional activities of the educational institutions of the country.

With this in mind, the pre-service teacher will have knowledge of the Francisco José de Caldas activities since they will be an active participant in extracurricular events such as meetings, and important dates held in the educational institution. From this perspective, the following ones will be taken into account: Growing up together, English song festival, language day, and Reading is my superpower.



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Objectives

General objective

- To participate in extra-curricular activities at Francisco José de Caldas high school.

Specific objectives

- To attend to English teachers' meetings
- To train the English teachers in the use of digital platforms



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Methodology

In this section, the pre-service teacher will participate in some extra-curricular activities so as to learn about the educational context. In this regard, the following table will illustrate step by step this process.

Extracurricular activities

With regards to this component, the pre-service teacher has participated in some extracurricular events -i.e., Growing up together, tutorials with students, and English teachers' meetings (see table 9). Those ones developed during four weeks of teaching practicum process.

With that in mind, "Growing up together" ([Appendix 17](#)) was the first meeting where English teachers' shared their knowledge rely upon the use of educational platforms; Thus, a group of 3 pre-service teachers illustrated how to use a gamification platform "Quizizz" that they explained some tips of it in order to train teachers in using of that type of pedagogical tool which can be applied in classroom activities as assessments.

On the other hand, along this teaching practicum stage, it was possible to observed that students were presenting some difficulties in their learning process; Therefore, tutorials meetings ([Appendix 18](#)) were carried out due to eighth-grade students showed some grammatical problems during development of classes; Thus, the pre-service teacher decided to support those students, explaining grammar topics and responding their questions related



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to the development of workshops. In this sense, it was indispensable to establish two tutorial groups; one for students from 8.01 to 8.04 (Tuesday 4-5 pm) and another one for students from 8.05 to 8.07 (Thursday 4-5 pm).

Finally, one English teachers' meeting was carried out ([Appendix 19](#)). This one was established so as to decide the English Song Festival parameters, sharing opinions about students' participation of that event; For instance, teachers and pre-service teachers opined about participants' costume, performance, etc. Besides, they decided to postpone the presentation of the event until May 7th since some participants remained to deliver their video performance to the teachers.

Inter-institutional chronogram activities

Table 9. Inter-institutional chronogram activities

DATE	ACTIVITY
APRIL 14 TH	Growing up together
APRIL 20 TH	Tutorials eighth grade group 1
APRIL 22 ND	Tutorials eighth grade group 2
APRIL 27 TH	Tutorials eighth grade group 1
APRIL 29 TH	English teachers' meeting
JUNE 15 TH	Tutorials eighth grade students



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Conclusions

Considering the above, the inter-institutional events allowed me to know about the teachers' extra-curricular activities such as teachers' meetings, events, students' tutorials, etc. The latter was mainly relevant to me because that sort of activities permitted me to be aware about the students' needs, thereby it was necessary to seek pedagogical strategies that meet students' demands and solve their doubts.



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Chapter VI: Reflective Approach of the Teaching Practicum Process

Throughout six-week teaching practicum process, the pre-service teacher observed some problems related to grammar and participation in classes; many students have not participated actively whether they have doubts, resulting in mistakes during workshops activities and assessments, in so doing, I decided to look different pedagogical strategies so as to encourage students to change their attitude toward English classes, pointing out that their participation is relevant to improve their learning process, solving their doubts and concerns accordingly. Moreover, the elementary school students showed high involvement during classes, making their learning process faster because they are always asking questions about vocabulary and class activities.

On the other hand, some activities during the teaching practicum process have been hampered owing to the internet connection; for instance, live gamification questionnaires and sharing online videos are hardly carried out in order not to alter connectivity in virtual meetings. Therefore, I have been adopting different strategies to solve these aspects aforementioned; -i.e., assigning outline questionnaires, and links of videos related to the grammar topic during classes.



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Conclusions

In overall terms, the reflective process was fundamental to implement this proposal, since it works as a transformative tool to guide the pre-service teacher to improve his pedagogical performance, considering if the students have successfully comprehended the activities or if they present difficulties. At this regard, the pre-service developed his critical thinking by analyzing each aspect related to his practicum stage with the purpose of enhancing the methodologies and procedures carried out when teaching English as a foreign language.



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Chapter VII: Design of Pedagogical Material

Table 10. *Design of pedagogical material*

Sort of material designed	Topics	Brief description of topics	Objectives of material designed
Work sheet: Lapse 8 (Appendix 20)	Apologizing expressions; Giving advice: should/shouldn't; positive and negative qualities; children's duties and rights: have to	The work sheet is broken down into 4 parts (Pre-text, Connection with knowledge, Knowledge Assessment, and practice). Pre-text is related to reading excerpts that contain the target topic which is Should / Shouldn't. Connection with knowledge refers to links that supports the grammatical content and the explanation of it. Knowledge assessment concerning the activities to develop. Finally, practice is related to activities that students can practice such as games.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about giving advice (should/shouldn't) • To learn apologizing expressions • To learn positive and negative qualities • To learn children's duties
Work sheet: Lapse 9 (Appendix 21)	Present Perfect	Reading part 9 contains the main topic of this work sheet. Regarding the topic, it comprises of links and explanation of present perfect tense. Lastly, the final part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about present perfect tenses



		consists in listening and writing activities.	
Work sheet: Lapse 10 (Appendix 22)	Suffixes and prefixes; Simple future	The reading section contains an email, the explanatory part of future tense is based on 2 links and one chart, regarding the activities, this work sheet has two tables (suffixes and prefixes and vocabulary of values to solve problems). Finally, to practice, there are two games to practice future tenses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about simple future tense • To learn suffixes and prefixes
Work sheet: Lapse 11 (Appendix 23)	Adverbs of manner	Firstly, the reading activity is related to adverbs of manner and it contains two open-questions. Concerning connection with knowledge, there are three links and one chart explaining of the use of adverbs of manner. Finally, this worksheet contains a writing activity about how to spend money during life as a way of reflection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about adverbs of manner





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