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**CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y
EXTRANJEROS**

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Theme: Comics and vocabulary learning

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I, Mg Manuel Xavier Sulca Guale, holder of the I.D No. 1802447548, in my capacity as supervisor of the Research dissertation on the topic: “Comics and Vocabulary Learning” investigated by Mr. Isaac Josué Teneda Garcés with I.D No. 1805237904, confirm that this research report meets the technical, scientific and regulatory requirements, so the presentation of it is authorized to the corresponding organism in order to be submitted for evaluation by the Qualifying Commission appointed by the Directors Board.

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I declare this undergraduate dissertation entitled " Comics and Vocabulary Learning " is the result of the author's investigation and has reached the conclusions and recommendations described in the present study.

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DEDICATION

TO:

My mother, who has been my unconditional support at every stage of my life. For my family, who in one way or another have always been there for me. And for my pets Mara, Layla and Chespi. who have been my daily companions throughout my college journey.

Josué.

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For my beloved mother, for her infinite patience, unconditional support, and for the immense effort and sacrifice she has always made day after day to get us ahead.

For my family, who at every moment have been ready for me, being a fundamental support in my life.

For my teachers for the knowledge provided throughout my university career and especially to my tutor for all his help and guidance during this process.

For my pets, Mara, Layla and Chespi, whose company was enough to give me the support I needed to continue on this long road.

And for me, that with effort and dedication I have traveled this journey with ups and downs but I have given me the support and strength necessary to continue and achieve this goal.

Josué.

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THEME: “Comics and Vocabulary Learning”

AUTHOR: Isaac Josué Teneda Garcés

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ABSTRACT

The current research work conducted an analysis of students' perceptions in relation to the use of comics for vocabulary learning. The population of this study consisted of 63 participants (39 females and 24 males), who were part of a descriptive research. A survey was used as an instrument consisting of 17 items on a Likert scale and three open questions, one per section. The validity of the survey was confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (0.894), as well as expert validation. The results indicated that authentic auditory materials are the most popular and employed by students to extend their understanding of vocabulary in the language. However, in relation to comic book types and genres, students showed interest in the use of digital or web comics focused on the superhero genre. This interest is attributed to the growing presence of geek culture in our society, which is currently manifested in movies, television series and other media, having a notable influence on youth. Therefore, it is possible that in a short time, the use of comics will be established as an effective and innovative tool for the learning process of students. However, an important finding during the research indicated a lack of incentive for reading by students, this is due to the fact that the habit of reading is not present within our culture so it could be an obstacle for comics to take an immediate positioning. On the other hand, the memorization of words turned out to be the learning strategy most used by students when acquiring vocabulary, which shows a great inclination for cognitive strategies that allow following an individual mental process that improves the retention and learning of new words or expressions to enrich the lexicon of each of the students.

Keywords: Comics, types and genres of comics, vocabulary learning. learning strategies

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RESUMEN

El presente trabajo de investigación realizó un análisis de las percepciones de los estudiantes en relación con el uso de cómics para el aprendizaje de vocabulario. La población de este estudio estuvo formada por 63 participantes (39 mujeres y 24 hombres), que formaron parte de una investigación descriptiva. Se utilizó como instrumento una encuesta compuesta por 17 ítems en una escala de Likert y tres preguntas abiertas, una por sección. La validez de la encuesta fue confirmada por el coeficiente alfa de Cronbach (0,894), así como por la validación de expertos. Los resultados indicaron que los materiales audiovisuales auténticos son los más populares y empleados por los estudiantes para ampliar su comprensión del vocabulario de la lengua. Sin embargo, en relación con los tipos y géneros de cómic, los estudiantes mostraron interés por el uso de cómics digitales o web centrados en el género de superhéroes. Este interés se atribuye a la creciente presencia de la cultura geek en nuestra sociedad, que actualmente se manifiesta en películas, series de televisión y otros medios de comunicación, teniendo una notable influencia en la juventud. Por lo tanto, es posible que en poco tiempo, el uso del cómic se establezca como una herramienta eficaz e innovadora para el proceso de aprendizaje de los alumnos. Sin embargo un hallazgo importante durante la investigación indicó una falta de incentivo a la lectura por parte de los estudiantes, esto se debe a que el hábito de la lectura no está presente dentro de nuestra cultura por lo que podría ser un obstáculo para que los cómics tomen un posicionamiento inmediato. Por otro lado, la memorización de palabras resultó ser la estrategia de aprendizaje más utilizada por los estudiantes a la hora de adquirir vocabulario, lo que demuestra una gran inclinación por estrategias cognitivas que permitan seguir un proceso mental individual que mejora la retención y aprendizaje de nuevas palabras o expresiones para enriquecer el léxico de cada uno de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Cómics, estrategias de aprendizaje, tipos y géneros de cómics, aprendizaje de vocabulario.

CHAPTER I

1.1 Research background

Several sources were used throughout this study to support the research. The information was collected using academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scielo, ResearchGate, among others. The information collected deals with the use of comics in vocabulary learning.

The study carried out by Satriani et al. (2022) aimed to improve the students' vocabulary proficiency after they were taught vocabulary using comics an authentic material . In this study, the experimental design was used with a one-group using a pre test and post test design. The population of the study were students of the first semester of English instruction at IAI As'adiyah Sengkang in the academic year 2020/2021. The utilization of real resources significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery, according to the findings of this study.

In the research study by Rianti (2021) showed the improvement of vocabulary using comics and how to motivate the students to apply it in their English language. The present study was an experimental research, the data were collected using a test (test after first treatment and test after the second treatment), observation for collecting data on the students' motivation in improving vocabulary ability using series pictures. The subject consisted of 20 students of the third special class of SMA 1 in Rumbio jaya. The review reveals that teaching vocabulary using comic can improve students' vocabulary ability.

Leon (2019) conducted a research study to explore the effects of using comics for reading comprehension and vocabulary recognition. This was an experimental research, in which a pre- test and post test were used to collect data after a 6 session itinerary. The population of the study were 12 students of a pre-intermediate level in a public university. The results of the study confirm that comics can be a motivation for reluctant readers and an effective tool for literacy and language learning.

The study made by Syahrul et al. (2019) aimed to reveal the effect of use of comics books without text and direct learning on narrative writing skills. The type of research was an experimental study in the form of Randomized Control Group Only Design. The population in this study were fourth grade students of SDN Gugus V District X Koto Tanah Datar District, sampling was done by Simple Random Sampling technique. The results of the study showed that there was an effect of media use of comics without text and direct learning on narrative writing skills of the students.

The study of Ali (2019) answered the following research questions related to the various vocabulary discovery strategies used by Saudi university students to find meanings of unknown words. A group of 50 male students participated in this descriptive and analytic type of study. A questionnaire and a vocabulary test were used to collect data. The findings of the study revealed that in understanding a reading text, EFL Saudi students tend to figure out the meanings of unknown words, mainly by guessing word-meanings through different sub-strategies.

Yaacob et al. (2019) conducted a research study of vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) employed by a group of Saudi Arabian learners in an EFL (English as a foreign language) context, the research intends to explore how do students employ VLSs in their actual learning process. This study applied quantitative approach, and the questionnaire was conducted using 105 students. The results of this study revealed the percentage and frequency have further underscored this role and the significance of vocabulary learning in both students and teachers.

A research study carried out by Castillo and Quinonez (2022) tried to determine the impact of using digital comics to strengthen English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary knowledge during the COVID-19 pandemic. The approach was quasi-experimental with 262 public high school students from three of the four regions of Ecuador. They were divided into control and experimental groups. The participants of the experimental practiced EFL vocabulary using digital comics while the control group used supplementary resources and the textbook. The results showed that the experimental group obtained a significant improvement in the vocabulary acquisition.

Theoretical framework

Independent variable and development

Supplementary materials

Spratt et al. (2011) defined supplementary materials are devoted to supplement and support the main course as well as to contribute to language learning when adapted to the needs of a specific class. In addition, Galán (2018) pointed out that Supplementary materials activate learning and help to retain information due to the fact that students' learning styles are taken into consideration and contribute in the process of learning.

Supplementary materials include charts, worksheets, flashcards, teacher's resources, web materials, etc., which are used by the teachers to have learners constructively and actively work during the class (Spratt et al., 2011).

On the other hand, Singh (2015) stated integrating the use of authentic materials with language skills can be highly useful in developing the communicative competence of learners, that they are able to express their ideas orally and in writing and also to understand what they hear from people and read in these materials.

According to Dodd (2015), supplementary materials help to motivate the learners by creating interests in the learning and encouraging them to use the language in the class. They empower learners to comprehend and absorb information from a provided text. Additionally, they serve as valuable tools for gaining insights into the people and culture of the target language society, aiding in the contextualization of the teaching, and learning environment. These tools streamline the teaching process, saving both time and effort while reducing the teacher's workload when presenting learning materials. Furthermore, they facilitate and maintain direct learner engagement with objects, places, things, and individuals, thus decreasing the reliance on the learner's native language during classroom activities.

As English teachers, the main aim we need to always have an aim to be successful teachers in our discipline. It is possible if we plan to use enough materials to support the teaching items (Karki, 2018).

Authentic materials

Authentic materials are used increasingly and rapidly in language teaching in recent years. Saadom (2014) argued authentic material is any kind of material taken from the real world and not specifically created for the purpose of language teaching. It can be text, visuals, or audio materials; it can be realia such as tickets, menus, maps, and timetables; or it can be objects such as products, equipment, components, or models. So also, Nurkholida (2018) pointed out an authentic material can come in all forms of interactions. It may be written text, audio recording so factual communications or video of conversations or dialogue, all containing content not intended to be used for language instruction.

Hartatik and Rahmah (2016) concluded that an authentic material is that any written and spoken language which the students hear, see, and use in their daily life; the language is not meant for educational purposes but still can be so beneficial in the teaching and learning language process.

Berardo (2006) indicated the main benefits of incorporating authentic materials into the classroom, thus, encompass the following: (1) Boosting student motivation: These materials have a positive impact on students' motivation levels, encouraging active engagement in the learning process. (2) Providing genuine cultural insights: Authentic materials offer a window into real-world culture, enriching students' understanding of the target language's cultural context. (3) Exposing students to real language: Learners are exposed to authentic, real-life language usage, enhancing their language proficiency and comprehension skills. (4) Aligning with students' specific needs: Authentic materials are more closely aligned with students' practical language needs, making the learning experience more relevant and meaningful. (5) Encouraging a creative teaching approach: Utilizing authentic materials supports a more creative and dynamic teaching approach, fostering a deeper connection between students and the content.

Furthermore, Baniabdelrahman (2006) proved that using authentic materials in teaching English to EFL learners is more effective than using non-authentic materials.

Types of authentic materials

According to Ianiro (2007), authentic materials were classified into auditory and printed or reading materials.

Authentic auditory materials

According to Ianiro (2007), authentic auditory materials can include TV programs, movies, phone messages, radio broadcasts, e-books, songs, videos, podcasts, etc. Begotti (2007) said that this type of material is audiovisual, allows not only the understanding of the communicative message through the oral text, but also makes use of nonverbal language. It also allows for greater comprehension due to the presence of paralinguistic elements such as intonation, speed of speech, etc. The author also pointed out that songs are generally the most used material in language classes, but they are often used only for fill gaps activities or to relax the students.

Authentic printed or reading materials like Newspaper articles, magazines, comic books, greeting cards, coupons, web sites, order forms, TV guides, food labels, calendars, report cards, street signs, etc

Authentic printed materials

Flores et al. (2020) defined authentic printed materials are all the written resources used in publications, documents, etc. They are always going to be found in magazines, books, workbooks, and more, also they can be described as papers that people can handle. Printed materials, consists of all written material, excluding non-print resources, which convey planned course information. Lingzhu and Yuanyuan (2010) classified the authentic materials in three main categories: authentic listening-viewing materials, authentic visual materials, and authentic printed materials.

Rafalovich (2014) argued that the use of genuine written materials in language classrooms has gained immense popularity among English teachers for second or foreign language learners worldwide. The integration of authentic printed materials into the classroom unquestionably enhances language acquisition. This is due to the fact that exposing students to genuine texts allows them to concentrate on linguistic nuances and grasp general principles independently.

According to Fai (2011), the choice of teaching materials in English language education has been a prominent topic in the field of education, as it pertains to a substantial portion, if not all, of English teachers. Consequently, English language educators should aim to select instructional materials that promote communicative competence, particularly those that improve real-life communication skills. Authentic printed materials offer chances for learners to engage with language as it is employed in genuine communication scenarios. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognize that the uncritical use of authentic materials may not yield the intended outcomes. Therefore, teachers must consider specific crucial factors before incorporating these materials into their classrooms.

In their study, Owiti et al. (2019) deduced that authentic printed materials offer several advantages. They are engaging and inspiring, introduce genuine language into the classroom, alleviate the tedium often associated with course books, enhance vocabulary, and expose students to current societal issues.

Comic books

McCloud (1993) established a definition for comics. The author proposed that comics are comprised of juxtaposed pictorial and other images, arranged in a deliberate sequence with the purpose of conveying information and/or eliciting an aesthetic reaction from the observer. Simply, comic books are stories told through pictures, often combined with words. Suwastomo (2016) provided a definition for comics, describing them as an art form that utilizes a series of static images arranged in a fixed sequence, often accompanied by written text. Furthermore, Suwastomo identified two prevalent forms of comics: comic strips, which typically appear in newspapers, and comic books, commonly referred to as "manga" when discussing Japanese comic books. Comic strips are serialized comics published within newspapers, while comic books encompass collections of stories featuring images and one or more titles and themes.

Comic is a multimedia medium. It is a single medium made up of two distinct media: still images and texts. By combining images and texts, comics bridge the gap between media we watch and media we read, and that images and texts in comics share narrative responsibility (Carry, 2004).

Poi (2018) highlighted that comics have visual media that provide a stimulation of the senses in students to process information through the scenarios and situation of the story. The media are mostly audiovisual but comics are maintained due to their benefits in various aspects and have advantages that are permanent and can be read anywhere and in any way, so students not only learn with the use of them in class but also on their own at home.

Comic books provide rich stories full of art and vocabulary that can help students in understanding vocabulary and grammar in context. Even more, they can inspire students to tell their own stories when comic book creation is integrated into the classroom as in-class activities or homework (Nur, 2020).

Williams (1995) provided a concise overview of the benefits of employing comics in language instruction. Cartoons possess a lasting visual element, distinct from movies. Characters engage in immediate interactions, fostering a sense of relatability (e.g., "you and me" rather than distant "him and her" narratives). These characters also incorporate various non-verbal aspects of communication, enhancing language learning.

Additionally, the language used in comics typically falls between conversational spoken English and formal written English, making it a valuable linguistic resource. Moreover, the language in comics often reflects a specific individual's idiolect, which results in a wealth of recurring word combinations suitable for various contexts.

Marsh (1978) shared the outcomes of his research and delineates "four primary purposes for which diverse comics proved to be beneficial: (1) enhancing vocabulary and expressions; (2) reinforcing grammar; (3) facilitating conversations and compositions; (4) imparting cultural insights, in addition to aiding in the improvement of pronunciation, intonation, and listening comprehension." Meanwhile, Carry (2004) proposed that comics can serve as a valuable tool for assisting students in honing their writing skills, particularly in the realm of story composition.

Types of comics

According to Eisner (2008), comics can be described as sequential visual art. Following Eisner's definition, comics serve as an overarching category encompassing

various forms of sequential art, such as comic books, comic strips, graphic novels, and cartoons.

Comic Books

Comic books typically consist of several dozen pages and feature sequential art, they can encompass a wide variety of individual scenes. Comic books are published on a regular basis.

Comic Strips

Comic strips are a traditional print form of comics found in newspapers, magazines, or books, they usually have few long panels, containing one or more rows. Horizontal rows help readers follow a chronological and narrative order.

Digital or Web Comics

Digital or web comics can include both comic strips and comic books, these comics are produced and distributed digitally but can also be published in electronic or printed formats. They are accessible on mobile devices. Siddhartha (2023) noted that digital comics are a fun way of learning for students and make the learning process enjoyable, providing benefits and motivators by being a new learning perspective.

Graphic Novels

Graphic novels are extended forms of comics that may comprise comic strips, comic books, digital comics, or web comics, or they can present entirely new stories, they combine words and images to tell a complete narrative, often presented in book format.

Cartoons

Cartoons are illustrated in a nonrealistic or semi-realistic style, each image in cartoons typically aims for satire, caricature, or humor. Ahmadi et al. (2018) mentioned that cartoons help foster students' engagement, enhancing their learning and help prolong attention, providing an increase in their communicative and linguistic abilities

Motion Comics

Motion comics are a form of animation that includes sound effects, voiceovers, and character movements, they maintain a layout similar to comic books.

Genres of Comics:

Rifkind et al. (2019) identified six common genres in comics: superhero comics, coming of age comics, historical comics, graphic biographies, horror comics, and science fiction comics.

Superhero comics feature iconic characters like Spider-Man, Batman, and Wonder Woman.

Manga represents an Asian style of graphic novels, with examples like Naruto and Death Note.

Graphic biographies are often autobiographical and may contain elements of drama or historical fiction.

Humor comics cover comedic or incident-driven series.

Historical comics explore various subjects, including science, politics, and biography.

Science fiction comics delve into unreal or magical storylines.

Horror comics create suspenseful stories with creepy illustrations.

Comics in language teaching

Sharma (2020) affirmed that comics can be used as an instructional medium to increase the learner's understanding of language use. The author also points out that these graphic novels have the necessary elements to hold students' attention, making learning easier and more interesting.

Comics increases reasonability, communicative skills (verbal non-verbal), practical skills and judgment abilities. These make comics a prodigious source to develop pragmatic intelligence (Sharma, 2020). This happens because it provides a natural narrative with information that students can use on a daily basis. In this way, making use of pragmatological language within comics will help and facilitate students in their

communication skills so that they can have and provide a much clearer transmission of ideas and thoughts. On the other hand, with respect to pragmatic intelligence, Withing (2019) indicated that comics can foster the acquisition of pragmatic intelligence within the language that is acquired when students discuss "appropriate" responses, accompanied by the development of higher-order thinking skills.

Willing (2019) detailed other advantages for students of implementing comics in the classroom, (1) Comics are fun, interesting, and motivating for students, (2) Provides opportunities to incorporate target language culture, (3) Authentic, real-world language, (4) Promotes communication using foreign language, (5) Promotes creativity, (6) Independence of thought, and (7) Diversity of opinion.

Benefits of using comics in language teaching

With the use of comics in the classroom, language instruction can provide a great improvement in fundamental language components and skills.

Benefits of using comics in vocabulary

Cabrera et al. (2018) stated that the study of vocabulary and grammar is an essential element when learning and teaching English as a foreign language, since it provides an improvement in the understanding of the language in any of its skills and demonstrates that making use of comics as an innovative and striking tool will be useful in the acquisition and increase of vocabulary. In a study conducted by Cimarnova (2015), indicated that reading helps the development of vocabulary, and that it is an essential tool in the communication process, as well as helps to understand the context of many situations in a real situation. Reading stories accompanied by images develops creativity and imagination in readers especially in children and adolescents.

According to Chaikovska (2018), comic-based activities offer an innovative and non-traditional way for grammar and vocabulary activities, they are a tool that will make the teaching and learning process a fun time as they are a very attractive and eye-catching visual aid for readers, and many topics to be taught can be adapted by making use of comics. And what is more important is to motivate students to learn new words

using comics of their choice, thus motivating their reading development. Budiman et al. (2018) highlighted that vocabulary is a necessary component when learning a new language, and with a good level of vocabulary, people can issue both oral expressions, as well as written in an easier way, within their study details that comic strips makes students interested in learning vocabulary, the relationship between images and dialogues make them know the meaning of new words.

Finally, Poai (2018) noted that comics can help memorize vocabulary, since they contain images as visual support and can be used to increase attention within the classroom and in turn motivate the completion of activities with enthusiasm and autonomy.

Benefits of using comics in grammar

Kılıçkaya and Krajka (2012) pointed out within their study on the use of comic strips and the learning of grammar and sentence writing, that this tool promotes motivation and creativity to perform and create their own stories, practical grammar activities can vary and introduce new grammatical structures and lexical items in different contexts, which leads to a better understanding and learning of grammar by making use of comics. Furthermore, Csabay (2006) stated that with the help of comic strips, grammatical competence can be improved, while new and different grammatical points are introduced and put into practice on the basis of logically structured stories so that the grammatical points reviewed and detailed within the story can be remembered and retained in the learners' minds.

Rakhmawati (2018) argued that grammar is one of the most important elements of language because it makes it possible for us to communicate, but at the same time it is also one of the aspects within language that is most difficult to teach, and she remarks that comics are an effective medium because they contain stories with a manageable context and demonstrate different grammatical points. Also the author details some advantages about the use of comics to teach grammar, the use of cartoons makes them a fun medium, which attracts students' attention and engagement and thus their language and communication skills can improve, the use of comics provides students with new opportunities and gives them a better learning ability.

Poai (2018) noticed that with comics as a medium in learning, it helps to overcome the difficulties that students have the learning process and helps them to have an understanding, by observing the images presented throughout the text, as they get to make the text much more understandable. The images apart from providing visual support also facilitate teaching and help students to retain and remember the structures and grammatical points reviewed, so that they can be used appropriately on future occasions.

Benefits of using comics in reading

Cimermanová (2015) demonstrated that young generations possess a difficulty in understanding texts due to the lack of reading habit, this is because in the digital age reading is different from those who use printed material, since they only look for the answer instead of scanning and delving into the text to reach the answer, but at the same time she emphasizes that the use of graphic novels makes that through images they can understand many idiomatic expressions that cause problems in their understanding without the use of images as a support. Students feel more confident in understanding and can deduce the meaning by perceiving the text and graphic details. Merc (2013) detailed the results of his study on the effects of comic strips on reading comprehension, alluding that visual support brings great benefits because it allows a better understanding through reading but in different contexts. Unlike those who do not make use of this tool, comic strips help students regardless of their proficiency level and text also providing them with better results within their reading comprehension.

Mahir et al. (2016) declared that the use of comics as support material can improve and develop better skills within reading, as well as motivating students to appreciate narrative texts that include images within them, creating a fun and relaxed environment within the learning process, as well as in the teaching process bringing a more creative side on the part of teachers.

Manik (2019) showed that the use of comics as a medium in teaching reading comprehension makes the teaching-learning process much more motivating, interesting but also enthusiastic and quite active in both students and teachers. By using

comics in learning English, students will have a better understanding of the texts, motivating their own self-imagination and increasing their learning knowledge of the language.

Derrick (2008) ratified that the use of comics in the classroom motivates students to read and encourages them to explore more about graphic novels, books or any printed material of their choice. Graphic novels and comics have a different language than what can be found in a classroom text, involving students in a real context that makes them more relevant, thus comics give way to productive and relevant discussions in the classroom.

Benefits of using comics in writing

Comic strips are not only useful for improving vocabulary, grammar, and reading, but they also have a positive impact on writing, as there is an intrinsic connection between vocabulary, grammar, and reading with the ability to write. Suwastomo (2016) detailed in his study that apart from vocabulary, writing is also a skill that can be developed with the use of comics as it provides an improvement within content, organization, structure and mechanics when using comics as a learning medium. According to Mahir et al. (2016), the utilization of comics is claimed to enhance students' writing skills by encouraging the application of their higher order thinking capabilities and stimulating their innate creativity.

Yunus et al. (2011) highlighted that comics provide a scaffolding that gives students success in their writing process, many students seek to represent pictures when writing, they feel the need to support their linguistic ideas with text, something that comics can provide. Thresia (2017) pointed out that writing is one of the most intricate language skills, but comics play a significant role in facilitating its acquisition. They are simple to employ, and the visual aids offered by this educational resource assist students in structuring and refining their ideas in writing compositions. As a result, comics greatly enhance the development of writing skills.

According to Megawati and Anugerahwati (2012), The use of comics can enhance students' ability to write narrative texts, as it becomes a valuable tool that helps them structure their ideas and select more effectively the linguistic elements, they will

employ in their writing process. In addition, students' attitudes experience significant improvements with the incorporation of comics in the writing process, as they find this methodology highly beneficial and experience an increase in motivation and self-confidence.

Dependent variable and development

English language learning

Mitchell and Myles (2004) defined foreign language acquisition as the learning of any language other than the individual's mother tongue, irrespective of proficiency level, as long as the acquisition of this new language occurs after mastering their primary or native language. Moeller and Catalano (2015) stated that foreign language instruction and acquisition involve the education and mastery of a language different from one's native or mother tongue. They emphasize that second language learning takes place when the learner is immersed in an environment where the acquired language is actively used. When venturing into the process of learning a non-native language, it is common to interchangeably use the terms "second language" and "foreign language."

However, it is important to distinguish between these two terms, and an illustrative example can provide clarity. Consider "English as a Second Language" (ESL), where the learner is immersed in an English-speaking environment. In our scenario, we designate it as "English as a Foreign Language" (EFL) because, within the students' surroundings, "Spanish" remains the primary language or mother tongue.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2022), the English language holds a central role in our lives, acting as a crucial means of communication and serving as the primary medium for the study of various subjects globally. Moreover, English is significant for students as it contributes to their cognitive development, nurtures emotional intelligence, and improves their quality of life by opening doors to employment opportunities. Numerous studies have identified over 700 motivations for language study, with a common emphasis on personal benefits and the joy derived from acquiring a new language. Gallagher (2004) noted that motivations for learning a new language encompass a wide range of themes, such as citizenship, communication, economic factors, social considerations, political aspects,

democracy, diversity, employability, environmental sustainability, equal opportunities, globalization, identity, intercultural competence, the international dimension, key competencies, language awareness, mobility, multilingualism, personal and social development, and values.

Lexis

According to Spratt (2011), lexicon consists of individual words or word groups with precise meanings. In contrast, Nordquist (2019) defined lexicon in linguistics as the entirety of a language's vocabulary, or the compilation of words in a language.

Alexander and Dallachy (2020) highlighted that the extensive lexicon of a language denotes the wide array of words available to its speakers, and this underscores the potential significance of the lexicon as arguably the most essential element in the examination of any language.

Liceras (2009) delved into the significance of the lexicon, underscoring that it holds a central role in language. Furthermore, the acquisition of this component stands as a matter of paramount importance. In fact, it is only when individuals have a firm command of certain words that they can begin to draw generalizations about various word types. These generalizations, in turn, enable them to classify these words, such as categorizing them into words denoting people, places, or objects (nouns), words expressing actions or states (verbs), or words conveying attributes (adjectives). In essence, a foundational knowledge of words is indispensable for constructing syntactic categories, forming noun, verb, or adjective phrases, and establishing grammatical relationships, including those of subject and object.

Vocabulary acquisition

Adding new vocabulary is a crucial element in the process of language learning. As emphasized by Gonzalez and Schmitt (2017), grasping the meanings, uses, and pronunciations of words is essential. Proficiency in vocabulary enables individuals to use language both actively and passively. Moreover, their research underscores that people tend to absorb new words more effectively when they integrate them into their communication.

Erlandsson and Wallgreen (2017) highlighted the close connection between reading and the acquisition of vocabulary. This association functions both incidentally and intentionally, as readers must grasp the majority of words to comprehend the content they are reading fully. It is essential to acknowledge that prior knowledge is a prerequisite for acquiring new vocabulary; lacking this foundational understanding makes establishing new linguistic connections challenging..

Vocabulary learning

Vocabulary has been a focal point in the realm of language acquisition, especially when it comes to learning English as a foreign language. It can arguably be regarded as the most vital component for language learners, as all four language skills; reading, listening, speaking, and writing, heavily rely on a sound grasp of vocabulary. The term "vocabulary" refers to words and their meaning, according to Kamil and Heibert (2005). Thornbury (2002) also defined it as a collection of all the words in a specific language, each with a form that relates to a meaning.

Vocabulary represents the total number of words in a language and the words that are used to express ideas or thoughts, as mentioned by Hornby (1992). In addition, vocabulary is considered the foundation of language, as no language can exist without it. Before acquiring skills in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, students must learn the components of English, which include vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation.

The acquisition of a new language heavily relies on a solid grasp of vocabulary, which is essential for learners to gain a deep understanding of the language. Susanto (2017) emphasized the crucial nature of vocabulary mastery in a language, as it enables individuals to comprehend what native speakers of that language are attempting to convey. Nation (2005) pointed out that the acquisition of vocabulary items is integral to the development of various language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Nation also highlighted the connection between vocabulary and practical language use, where applying acquired knowledge in real-world situations facilitates authentic learning and leads to a substantial expansion of vocabulary as a language skill.

Furthermore, Alqahtani (2015) highlighted a significant aspect of vocabulary acquisition, stating that it is a personal endeavor, and a person's vocabulary growth depends solely on their own efforts and their interest in learning the language's vocabulary. This self-driven approach is key to enhancing one's proficiency and knowledge in this skill.

Types of vocabulary

Hatch and Brown (1995) categorized vocabulary into two distinct types, labeling them as receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary encompasses words or word groups that learners can comprehend when encountered within a context; it essentially represents an individual's understanding of word meanings. As described by Stuart (2008), receptive vocabulary pertains to the words that students can comprehend when reading but typically do not actively incorporate into their spoken or written language.

Nation (2001) provided a comprehensive set of recommendations for effectively utilizing receptive vocabulary, including the ability to identify the word when it is spoken, be familiar with the word in its written form, recognize the word while reading, comprehend the word's constituent parts and its meaning, understand the word's context within the situation where it is used, discern whether the word is employed in a positive or negative context and evaluate its appropriateness in a sentence and recognize common word combinations or collocations. These guidelines facilitate a more thorough grasp and application of receptive vocabulary in language use.

Conversely, Hatch and Brown (1995) defined productive vocabulary as words that students not only recognize and understand but can also pronounce correctly, enabling them to actively employ these words when speaking or writing. Stuart (2008) further characterized productive vocabulary as a dynamic process, where learners can actively utilize words to convey their thoughts to others, integrating them into their speech or writing as needed. This type of vocabulary empowers learners to express themselves effectively in spoken and written communication.

Nation (2001) outlined several key competencies associated with receptive vocabulary. In addition to recognizing and pronouncing words correctly, these

competencies include the ability to construct words using their parts of speech appropriately, express and communicate the meaning of the word effectively, use the word in various contextual situations, generate synonyms and antonyms for the word, employ the word accurately within a sentence, make informed decisions regarding the word's usage based on the level of formality required.

Vocabulary learning strategies

According to Susanto (2017), strategies are characterized as communicative processes that students commonly utilize for learning and practicing language usage. However, by employing learning strategies, learners can attain academic objectives in their language acquisition. These learning strategies encompass a variety of actions, plans, or tactics that each learner customizes to enhance their understanding, memory, and application of information in the process of acquiring vocabulary.

O'Malley and Chamot (1986) identified three distinct types of strategies: meta cognitive, cognitive, and social/affective. These categories depend on the level or type of processing involved in the information processing model of learning.

Meta Cognitive Strategies

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1986), metacognitive strategies represent advanced skills that empower learners to oversee, supervise, and autonomously direct their language learning process. These strategies encompass various components, including anticipatory organizing, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, delayed production, and self-assessment. In simpler terms, metacognitive strategies involve the management and control that learners exert over their own learning. Sapparbaeva (2019) pointed out that these strategies are aimed at regulating the learning process and involve activities such as planning, prioritization, goal setting, and self-management.

Selective attention is one of these metacognitive strategies. It involves students focusing their attention on repeated and frequently used words that are easier to remember. Students selectively direct their attention to specific words or types of word knowledge, often influenced by the teaching methods employed by their instructors. Many teachers tend to highlight a set of important words and provide explanations for each of them. However, this approach can lead to a lack of autonomy in students'

learning. Consequently, many students restrict their vocabulary learning to textbooks, with only a few venturing into the use of newspapers or magazines, and even fewer using word cards for memorization. This reliance on vocabulary books is often a result of the teaching methods they have been exposed to.

Cognitive Strategies

In contrast, O'Malley and Chamot (1986) characterized cognitive strategies as the mental processes that learners employ during the language learning process to acquire, categorize, retain, and apply learned information. These strategies involve active engagement with incoming information and contribute to a more effective understanding of the learning process. (3) Examples of these strategies include repetition, resourcing, directed physical response, translation, grouping, note-taking, educational recombination, imagery, auditory representation, keyword transfer, and guessing. Rahmat (2021) centered around learners attempting to grasp learning content at their individual levels. Cognitive strategies employed by learners in acquiring a foreign language encompass rehearsal, organization, elaboration, and critical thinking.

Saparbaeva (2019) emphasized that cognitive strategies involve the specific steps or actions learners employ to engage with learning materials. Some of these cognitive strategies have a direct impact on language learning, including activities like clarification/verification, guessing/inductive inference, deductive reasoning, practice, memorization, (4) and monitoring progress.

Social/Affective Strategies

As outlined by O'Malley and Chamot (1986), social strategies encompass the methods through which students engage with others during the learning process. These can include actions like seeking help from teachers or classmates and seeking clarification when doubts arise. As stated by Saparbaeva (2019), social strategies are the techniques and activities through which learners immerse themselves to showcase and apply their linguistic knowledge. These strategies indirectly support the acquisition of the target language by providing learners with opportunities for practical application and interaction within the language learning context. Fakhruddin (2022) mentioned that within social strategies, interaction with native speakers for better vocabulary acquisition is important, but is often limited due to the fear that English

language learners have of immersing themselves in a real environment, but which undoubtedly brings great benefits for increasing communication skills.

On the other hand, affective strategies revolve around managing and controlling the emotions and thoughts, both positive and negative, that may arise in the learning process. These emotions and thoughts can either serve as motivators or act as sources of stagnation and demotivation for students. Some specific affective strategies, such as self-talk and self-encouragement, play a crucial role in providing students with a heightened sense of confidence and self-assurance as they navigate the learning journey.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 General objective

To describe the learners' perspectives about the use of comics in order to learn vocabulary.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

1. To identify the types of authentic materials that are most popular among students.
2. To analyze the genres and types of comics that learners read the most.
3. To explore the kinds of strategies that EFL learners use to improve vocabulary.

1.2.3 Fulfillment of objectives

The study objectives were successfully completed through a survey data collection based on three research questions.

Immersing students in the use of comics brings with it an openness to new tools for student learning. This implied a knowledge about the different types of authentic materials and their knowledge, through the survey it was possible to identify which authentic material is the most popular and used by students.

On the other hand, within the types and genres of comics, the survey allowed to investigate and perform an analysis, where one of the great discoveries within the study was that students prefer digital comics and focused on the genre of superheroes.

Finally, knowing the vocabulary learning strategies used by the students was of vital importance, in order to know the different processes that each one of them approaches during their learning and which of them is more beneficial to them. The survey consisted of three open-ended questions where students could be free to provide their opinions and preferences based on the authentic materials they would use, the types of comics and genres they prefer, and the vocabulary learning strategies most used by students.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Materials

To conduct the research, technological and human resources were necessary, the use of cell phones or computers to complete the survey and google forms was used as a digital platform to collect the information and identify students' perceptions and opinions about the use of comics to improve their vocabulary learning and this data was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software.

2.1.1 Instruments

The instrument used to carry out this research was a survey, confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (0.894) and expert validation, which was applied to a population of 63 students to analyze their perspective on the use of comics and vocabulary learning. The survey consisted of three sections based on the research questions: What types of authentic materials that the students use the most, What genres and types of comics do students read the most, What kinds of strategies do the learners use to improve vocabulary? To evaluate each section a Likert scale was used having as options 5. always, 4. often, 3. sometimes, 2. rarely, and 1. The first section answered the type of authentic materials that students use most to increase their English knowledge, consisting of 5 questions on a Likert scale and 1 open-ended question, the second section answered the type and genre of comics that students prefer to read, this section consisted of 6 questions on a Likert scale and 1 open-ended question, and the third section focused on the type of vocabulary strategy that students used in their learning process, containing 6 questions on a Likert scale and 1 open-ended question. Thus, giving a total of 20 items, 17 questions on a Likert scale and 3 open questions one in each section.

According to Avedian (2014), the survey is an tool that collects information from a large sample that reflects the attitudes, opinions, beliefs of the population that often

cannot be observed in a direct way. Also, the answers to the questions usually show the way of thinking and acting of the respondents that they have in reality.

2.1.2 Population

The study was applied to third and fourth semester students of the Universidad Técnica de Ambato. The total amount of participants was 63 (39 females and 24 males). According to the purpose of this study, students who had a good base in the language, had a good level of reading comprehension and an intermediate level of vocabulary were part of this research work, and, finally, students who were comfortable with the use of technological resources.

Table 1

Population

Population	Participants	Percentage
Male	29	46,1%
Female	34	53,9%
Total	63	100%

Note: Surveyed students.

2.1.3 Ethical Considerations

The consent of students was necessary for this descriptive investigation. The data obtained in the survey was treated with strict confidentiality. Horstkötter and Wert (2020) argued that ethical considerations are essential to ensure the integrity and validity of studies. Researchers must ensure that their projects have scientific or societal value and are scientifically valid, pay attention to vulnerable participants, reduce risks and increase benefits as much as possible, ensure that protocols are independently reviewed, and that participants are adequately informed and give free and voluntary consent.

2.1.4 Procedure

This research was carried out under a very meticulous process, information was collected from a large number of bibliographic sources, making a deep study of such information that supports each data with reliable evidence, about comics and their use

in vocabulary learning. In the categorization of variables, within the independent variable that is the comics, this is composed by: supplementary materials, authentic materials and authentic printed materials, on the other hand in the dependent variable which is vocabulary learning this consisted of the following categories such as English language learning, Lexis and vocabulary acquisition .These categories were indispensable for the survey, since the questions were made with information based on the theoretical framework and on the basis of the research questions, thus the survey was obtained with three sections in relation to each one of the research questions and there were a total of 20 questions, 17 of which were examined under a Likert scale and 3 open questions corresponding to each section, in order to examine and achieve the objective set out in this research. Once the survey was developed, it was essential to submit it for review by experts in the field. These specialists contributed their knowledge to validate the relevance and accuracy of the questions, ensuring that the survey met the necessary standards of quality and objectivity.

Before implementing the survey in the main population, a pilot survey was conducted with a small group of participants. This approach allowed us to identify potential problems with the questions or the format of the survey, as well as to assess the clarity and effectiveness of the questions in practice. The data obtained from the pilot survey were evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient in the SPSS Statistics program, yielding a coefficient of 0.894, indicating a solid foundation and credibility of the survey.

The survey was validated and applied to the main population, composed in this case of third and fourth semester students. The survey topics were addressed with the participants, providing them with guidance on each one. During this phase, data collection was conducted by applying the survey to the students, ensuring that it was ethical and respectful.

The analysis of results was completed using the SPSS Statistics program for the tabulation of responses, calculation of statistics and interpretation of the data obtained. The three open-ended questions, which provided a broader perspective from the students, were also analyzed. This analysis of results allowed obtaining relevant conclusions and recommendations about the topic studied, providing a deeper

understanding of the students' preferences and interests in relation to the use of comics and their vocabulary learning.

2.2 Methods

Research approach

2.2.1 Mixed approach

Mixed method research is defined as the implementation of both methods into a single one (quantitative and qualitative research). Moreover, mixed method has some benefits, especially it can offer a complete understanding of the investigation (Leech, 2007). What is also important in mixed method is to establish a rigorous method that will be used for the data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, discussion, and validation. Qualitative research is used to understand how people experience the world. While there are many approaches to qualitative research, they tend to be flexible and focus on retaining rich meaning when interpreting data. Qualitative research aims to answer the “how” and “what” questions of a phenomenon (Green & Thorogood 2014). Qualitative research often uses language as its data, be it written or oral, although it may use photos, videos, or other types of behavioral recordings. The qualitative data are often collected via an interview, a focus group (structured group discussion), or via observation.

Type of Research

2.2.2 Descriptive Level

Manjunatha (2019) defined descriptive research as a research method that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. This methodology focuses more on the “what” of the research subject rather than the “why” of the research subject. This study has a descriptive level to fully understand the problem. It aims to clarify the application of the comic in the teaching of the English language and vocabulary learning.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What types of authentic materials are most popular among students?

2. What genres and types of comics do learners read the most?
3. What kinds of strategies do EFL learners use to improve vocabulary?

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analysis and discussion of the results

This chapter indicated the data analyzed according to the research questions proposed on the basis of the specific and general objectives presented in the survey applied. These data were collected and processed through SPSS Statistics to obtain the mean of each item and the tabulation of responses.

Research questions

1. What types of authentic materials are most popular among students?
2. What genres and types of comics do learners read the most?
3. What kinds of strategies do EFL learners use to improve vocabulary?

Table 2

Types of authentic materials

Item	Mean
I use authentic auditory materials to increase my English knowledge.	4,14
When I listen to an audio, I can understand the message of the speakers.	3,79
I learn vocabulary when listening to music.	4,35
I use authentic printed materials to develop my vocabulary.	3,33
I use magazines, comic books, and newspapers to engage in a real language use.	3.24

Note: The scale used to derive the measures were: 1. Never, 2. Rarely, 3. Occasionally, 4. Frequently, 5. Always.

Analysis and interpretation

Research Question: What types of authentic materials are most popular among students?

The results of the research indicated that the music is the authentic material most popular among the students with a mean of 4,35. Music turns out to be a good option for them when learning vocabulary. It is followed in preference by podcasts, movies, e-books and any other auditory material in general, with a mean score of 4,14. These are the materials preferred by the students at the moment to increase their English knowledge as opposed to authentic printed materials, which obtained a lower mean of 3,24. Within this category newspapers, magazines, comics, among others are included, but these materials are not mostly used by students when faced with real situations of language use.

After analyzing the results obtained, it can be concluded that the students have a great interest in using authentic auditory materials to develop their skills and improve their knowledge of the language, specifically music because it is a more attractive option for learning vocabulary and that it can be more entertaining to make use of this material. On the other hand, few students choose authentic printed materials such as magazines, newspapers or comics, and this has to do with the fact that young people do not have a reading habit, and neglect the benefits of using authentic printed materials in several fundamental skills for a good use of the language.

Table 3

Types and Genres of comics

Item	Mean
I read different stories that have sequence and pictures to learn vocabulary in English. (Comics)	3,60
I like to read stories that I can find in newspapers and magazines which are presented in horizontal rows and they help readers to follow a chronological order. (Comic strips)	3,14
I prefer to read stories in digital or web formats comics and they are accessible on mobile devices. (Digital or web comic)	3,68
I like to read stories that combine words and images to tell a complete narrative. (Graphic novels)	3,62

I like to read different types of cartoons because they have realistic style and, images. 3,54
(Cartoons)

I like to read stories that are about superheroes comics like Spider-Man, Batman, etc. 3,46

Note: The scale used to derive the measures were: 1. Never, 2. Rarely, 3. Occasionally, 4. Frequently, 5. Always.

Analysis and interpretation

Research Question: What genres and types of comics do learners read the most?

In the survey results, it was observed that students show an inclination for digital or web comics, as these types of comics are readily available on your mobile devices. In this sense, a mean of 3,68 was obtained, indicating a high level of preference. In addition, it was highlighted that the superhero genre is positioned as one of the favorites to the students, with a mean score of 3,26. On the other hand, comic strips were identified as the least relevant type of comic for the students, since these stories and the format presented in this option are not entirely to the students' liking, which is reflected in the low mean obtained of 3,14.

Based on the findings of the study, there is a high level of student interest in web or digital comics. This choice can be attributed to the current technological context, where immediate digital accessibility predominates, especially among young people. The superhero genre is gaining relevance within the interests of younger people, this due to the great boom and positioning they are having in movies, television series among others, being the superhero comics the ones that are gaining strength due to the current environment in which we are surrounded by this culture. However, within the type of comics, comic strips turn out to be the least important, this can be attributed to the fact that students do not usually read newspapers or magazines, where this type of comic is commonly found, which makes it less attractive to them.

Table 4

Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Item	Mean
When I learn vocabulary, I control what I want to learn. (Meta cognitive strategies)	3,71
At the moment of learning vocabulary, I set my learning objectives. (Meta cognitive strategies)	3,73

In vocabulary learning, I retain different information in different ways, for example translating or taking notes. (Cognitive Strategies)	3,84
When I learn vocabulary, I memorize the words and their meaning. (Cognitive Strategies)	3,90
I learn vocabulary much faster by working with my classmates. (Social Strategies)	3,33
I self-motivated to learn more vocabulary all the time .(Affective Strategies)	3,75

Note: The scale used to derive the measures were: 1. Never, 2. Rarely, 3. Occasionally, 4. Frequently, 5. Always.

Analysis and interpretation

Research Question: What kinds of strategies do EFL learners use to improve vocabulary?

The study found that students indicate a preference for cognitive strategies when learning vocabulary, specifically making use of memorization which is one of the strategies within this type, where students maintain a higher retention of information, thus obtaining a mean of 3,90. This was followed by the use of metacognitive strategies, with means of 3,71 and 3,73 suggesting that students prefer to have control over their learning process, setting personalized goals when studying vocabulary. On the contrary, obtaining a low mean of 3,33. It was evidenced that social strategies are not so effective according to the students' perspective, since they indicate that working with peers does not facilitate vocabulary learning.

The conclusions of the study indicate a clear preference for cognitive strategies, in which students show that, through various individual mental processes that vary according to each student, they can reach their goals and achieve more optimal learning. These strategies include not only memorization, but also repetition, note-taking, and guessing, among others. Several students find it relevant to be themselves in charge of their own learning process based on their needs, the use of metacognitive strategies that allow them to carry out this process. Although teachers often encourage students to work together and help each other, this strategy turned out to be the least preferred, as students perceive that the process of acquiring vocabulary is more effectively managed independently, considering the different individual preferences that could hinder joint collaboration.

Table 5*Open-ended questions*

Question 1	Answer	Total
What other type of materials do you use the most to increase your English knowledge?. (E.g; catalogs, movie advertisements, etc)	Movies	30
	Movie advertisements	11
	Comics	9
	Music	7
	Catalogs	6
	Total	63
Question 2	Answer	Total
What other genres and types of comics do you prefer to read to learn vocabulary? (E.g; cartoons, comic strips, manga, science-fiction, etc).	Cartoons	26
	Manga	17
	Science fiction	8
	Comic books	8
	Comic strips	4
	Total	63
Question 3	Answer	Total
What other types of vocabulary learning strategy do you prefer? (E.g; peer assessment, deduction, guessing, etc).	Deduction	29
	Guessing	23
	Peer assessment	11
	Total	63

Note: Qualitative findings derived from open-ended questions.

Analysis and interpretation

In the first open-ended question, “What other type of materials do you use the most to increase your English knowledge?” The results indicated that students mainly use authentic auditory materials, especially movies. A large number of students mentioned that through movies they can recognize expressions that are not commonly used in the classroom, which gives them a more realistic experience of the language. Additionally, they like to choose movies of their choice, which allows them to voluntarily immerse themselves in a genre of movies that they like. Another aspect related to movies that interests students is reading movie advertisements, as this provides them with information about movies of interest to them and can unconsciously increase their

vocabulary. Finally, a small group of students mentioned the use of catalogs to improve their knowledge of the language, as they find new words that enrich their vocabulary. In general, students prefer authentic auditory materials rather than authentic print materials.

The second open-ended questions, “What other genres and types of comics do you prefer to read to learn vocabulary?” The results of the research showed that students have a preference for cartoons as a different way of learning vocabulary. These consist of short representations of a single text box, where media characters appear accompanied by phrases or dialogues with satire or sarcasm. This is interesting to students and does not become a tedious reading process. A good number of students indicated that they would use manga as a genre of comic for their vocabulary learning. This could be due to the importance that geek culture is gaining in society, with movies and series based on superheroes and anime, which logically arouses students' interest and can provide them with benefits through manga reading. As for comic strips, they turned out to be the least relevant to students in their vocabulary learning. This could be because comic strips are sequences of stories that often do not complete the story as a whole but are a collection of strips about different characters found in newspapers or magazines. This lack of focus means that students do not adopt them as helpful teaching material. Finally, in relation to comic book genres, several students highlighted science fiction as an important foundation. This is because this genre offers an infinity of stories and allows the readers' imagination to fly impressively, which makes it a genre of great importance for students.

The third and last open question is the following “What other types of vocabulary learning strategy do you prefer?” it is observed that students prefer to use deduction to understand the meaning of a word during their vocabulary learning. This technique is part of cognitive strategies, where students use their skills to achieve a goal, in this case, recognizing the meaning of words through deduction. They can rely on an image or a phrase that gives them clues to arrive at the exact meaning. On the other hand, students do not consider paired assessment effective as a learning strategy. This could be because, among peers, accurate assessment cannot always be provided, as they often do not have the knowledge to provide good feedback or implement methods that

allow them to enrich their vocabulary effectively. Therefore, students do not consider this strategy as useful in their learning process.

Discussion

The research questions presented above seek to know the students' point of view about the use of comics and their benefit when learning vocabulary.

Question 1: What types of authentic materials are most popular among students?

After analyzing the students' responses, it is observed that authentic auditory materials are the most preferred by them, as opposed to printed materials. This could suggest a disinterest in reading on the part of the students. According to Ianiro (2007), authentic auditory materials include television programs, podcasts, movies, among others, and music is especially the most popular authentic material among students, according to the research results. Begotti (2007) pointed out that authentic auditory materials allow understanding the message conveyed not only textually, but also through nonverbal language, such as intonation or the speed of the participants' speech. For this reason, students give preference to this type of authentic materials.

Furthermore, the survey results also indicated that students lack incentive to read, which explains why authentic printed materials are not among their favorites. However, contrary to their belief, these materials can provide them with numerous benefits. Owiti et al. (2019) suggested that authentic printed materials can be engaging and inspiring, immersing readers in real language rather than a traditional textbook, and helping them improve their vocabulary. Regarding comics as authentic printed materials, Nur (2020) noted that they provide art-rich stories and can help students understand vocabulary in context. Carry (2004) highlighted that comics help hone writing and other skills in students, such as story composition.

It would be advisable for teachers to introduce comics as a learning tool to provide students with more options and means for their learning, moving away from traditional and conventional methods. Poai (2018) also indicated that comics have permanent advantages even with the audio-visual influence and that is why they are maintained until today due to their benefits and easy acquisition for students.

Question 2: What genres and types of comics do learners read the most?

Following the analysis, it is evident that students prefer digital comics and cartoons in their vocabulary learning. According to Eisner (2008), cartoons are a category of illustrated comics with a non-realistic or semi-realistic style, accompanied by dialogues that include humor or satire, which is attractive to students. Many times, seeing only long text takes away their motivation for reading, but with short text boxes and eye-catching messages, comics with cartoons become favorites for students. Ahmadi et al. (2018) emphasized that drawings promote students' learning, prolonging their attention and increasing their communicative abilities within English language learning. On the other hand, Eisner (2008) mentioned that digital or web comics are those that are in electronic formats and are accessible from mobile devices. These comics are the most preferred by students, since they are immersed in the technological era and find it convenient to have access to comics on their cell phones. Siddhartha (2023) mentioned that digital comics provide a new way of learning through these materials and provide benefits and motivation for students within the classroom. This type of comics is one of the most attractive nowadays and is gaining relevance in society based on its many advantages for learning English language.

In terms of comic book genres, the most important for students are superheroes, and manga. According to Rifkind (2019), superhero comics feature stories of well-known characters such as Spider-Man or Batman. As for manga, it refers to graphic novels with an Asian style. These genres are preferred by students due to the growth of geek culture and the presence of movies and series based on superheroes and anime characters.

In brief, students exhibit a preference for incorporating digital comics and cartoons into their vocabulary learning. The accessibility of digital comics on mobile devices is particularly convenient for students navigating the technological era. Among the various comic book genres, superheroes and manga hold the highest significance for them.

Question 3: What kinds of strategies do EFL learners use to improve vocabulary?

The results of the research indicated that one of the strategies preferred by students for vocabulary learning is memorization of words, which belongs to the group of cognitive strategies. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1986), cognitive strategies

are mental processes used to acquire, retain, and apply learned information, which enables more effective learning for students. The memorization strategy allows students to follow several mental steps to retain the correct meaning of a word, using different clues that may be useful for each individual student. This helps them remember the acquired knowledge. Rahmat (2021) pointed out that through cognitive strategies students can understand the learning content based on their level, which allows students to make use of their own tools for the acquisition of new learning and achieve accomplishments based on their strengths and the method that best suits their abilities.

On the other hand, social strategies, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1986), allow students to interact with others during their learning process, either to ask for help or clarification from teachers or peers. According to Sapparbaeva (2019), social strategies help learners demonstrate and apply their language skills together with other learners, which helps them immerse themselves in real language practice and enrich their knowledge. Fakhrudin (2022) emphasized that interaction with native teachers is also part of the social strategies when increasing vocabulary and developing communication skills and is of supreme help as they are immersed in a real language environment and provides great benefits but is often frustrated due to the fear of language learners to engage in a foreign language environment. However, the survey results indicate that peer assessment, which is a social strategy, is not preferred by students, as they do not consider it relevant or beneficial for acquiring vocabulary or another knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Based on the data collected in the research, students have a preference for using authentic auditory materials as tools in their learning process. According to the results, a considerable number of students indicated that they use films specifically to expand their knowledge of the language. These audiovisual materials offer learners the opportunity to understand messages not only through words, but also through sounds and expressions present in these materials. This can be a more comprehensible medium for learners. On the other hand, a small group of students indicated that they prefer to use catalogs and comics as support to increase their English proficiency. These are authentic print materials and, like listening materials, provide a variety of benefits to fundamental language skills such as grammar, writing, reading, and, of course, vocabulary learning. However, for some students, this option may be less appealing because reading is not an ingrained practice in our culture. Over time, reading is gaining importance and becoming a point of interest for students, not only as a distraction, but also as an enriching source of benefits for language learning.

Regarding the use of comics and their different types, according to the survey results, students prefer cartoons. This type of comics offers a quick read with realistic or semi-realistic illustrations accompanied by text or phrases that use humor or sarcasm, which is attractive to students because of their style and because they are not long texts that require a lot of attention. In addition, students can benefit from discovering new words or expressions, which contributes to increasing their lexicon. As for preferred genres, science fiction stands out for the freedom it offers to tell stories and encourage imagination. Superheroes and manga are on the rise due to the growth

of geek culture in today's society, appealing to both youngsters and adults. These genres can be fun and motivating options to improve knowledge of English or other languages.

In vocabulary learning, students mainly apply cognitive strategies, In this case deduction being the most used according to the survey data. This strategy involves the use of images, texts or phrases that provide clues to arrive at meaning through deduction. Cognitive strategies allow students to employ their mental capacities to achieve learning, and although the steps may vary, the fundamental strategy is the same, facilitating more effective retention and comprehension. In addition, metacognitive strategies offer benefits by allowing students to apply their abilities to focus and detail their own approaches based on their interests and abilities. Social and affective strategies, although not the most prominent, favor development by allowing more effective interaction among students, benefiting from the accompaniment of people in their own environment. Although these last two strategies are not the most relevant, teachers could incorporate them so that students recognize their usefulness in the learning process.

4.2 Recommendations

Educators must incorporate authentic materials, whether audio or print, both inside and outside the classroom, providing students with diverse tools that break away from the traditional methodologies that have been common over the years. Familiarity with convention can be tedious for students, but the introduction of new resources generates interest and motivation to learn a language in an innovative way. Increasing the use of authentic print materials in various categories would be beneficial as it would also encourage the habit of reading, offering countless opportunities and advantages for every learner.

Comics are presented as an attractive option for use in the classroom, given their appeal and the diversity of types and genres available. The idea is that students choose this type of material according to their preferences and interests, allowing them to develop a deep and immersive reading experience while improving their language learning skills.

Teachers should diversify teaching strategies, incorporating social strategies that facilitate students to function in their environment, allowing them to use the language and their knowledge in collaboration with their peers. These kinds of strategies should be implemented in the classroom to achieve deeper learning and foster a positive classroom environment.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Commitment letter

ANEXO 3 FORMATO DE LA CARTA DE COMPROMISO.

CARTA DE COMPROMISO

Ambato, 31 de Agosto de 2023

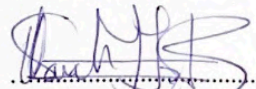
Doctor
Marcelo Nuñez
Presidente
Unidad de titulación
Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación

Yo, Sarah Jacqueline Iza Pazmiño, en mi calidad de Coordinadora de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato, me permito poner en su conocimiento la aceptación y respaldo para el desarrollo del Trabajo de Titulación bajo el Tema: "COMICS AND VOCABULARY LEARNING" propuesto por el/la estudiante Teneda Garcés Isaac Josué, portador/a de la Cédula de Ciudadanía 180523790-4, estudiante de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

A nombre de la Institución a la cual represento, me comprometo a apoyar en el desarrollo del proyecto.

Particular que comunico a usted para los fines pertinentes.

Atentamente.



Lcda Sarah Jacqueline Iza Pazmiño Mg.
Coordinadora
05017411960
0984060528
Sj.iza@uta.edu.ec



Annex 2: Cronbach's Alfa validation

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alfa	N of items
,894	17

Note: Reliability statistics with Cronbach's Alfa of 17 questions with Likert scale.

Annex 3: Survey

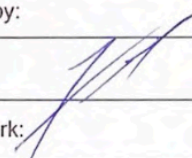
Survey available upon request

Annex 4: Expert validation

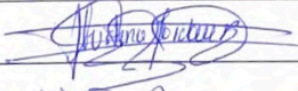
A. CHECKLIST VALIDATION

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations	
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what it stated in the objectives/research questions			
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
1						✓						
2						✓						
3						✓						
4						✓						
5						✓						
6						✓						
7						✓						
8						✓						
9						✓						
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11						✓						
12						✓						
13						✓						
14						✓						
15						✓						
16						✓						
17						✓						
18						✓						
19						✓						
20						✓						
General Aspects										Yes	No	*****
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to answer the questionnaire												
The items allow to accomplish the objective of the research.												
The items are distributed in a logical and sequential way												
The number of items is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the items to be included.												
APPLICABLE					NOT APPLICABLE							
Validated by: <i>Edgar Encalada T.</i>					ID: <i>0501824171</i>			Date: <i>14/Nov/2023</i>				
Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>					Email: <i>edgar.encalada71@gmail.com</i>							
Place of work: <i>UTA-FCHE-PINE</i>					Academic degree: <i>Magister</i>							
Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. <i>Revista Ciencias de la Educación</i> . 19. 228 - 247												

A. CHECKLIST VALIDATION

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations	
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what it stated in the objectives/research questions			
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
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20												
General Aspects										Yes	No	*****
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to answer the questionnaire												
The items allow to accomplish the objective of the research.												
The items are distributed in a logical and sequential way												
The number of items is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the items to be included.												
APPLICABLE					NOT APPLICABLE							
Validated by:					ID: 1802447548					Date:		
Signature: 					Email: manvelxskag@uta.edu.ec							
Place of work:					Academic degree: Magister							
<p>Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. <i>Revista Ciencias de la Educación</i>. 19. 228 - 247</p>												

A. CHECKLIST VALIDATION

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations	
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what it stated in the objectives/research questions			
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
1	/		/			/	/		/			
2	/		/			/	/		/			
3	/		/			/	/		/			
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18	/		/			/	/		/			
19	/		/			/	/		/			
20	/		/			/	/		/			
General Aspects										Yes	No	*****
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to answer the questionnaire										/		
The items allow to accomplish the objective of the research.										/		
The items are distributed in a logical and sequential way										/		
The number of items is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the items to be included.										/		
APPLICABLE					NOT APPLICABLE							
Validated by: Mg. Cristina Jordán Buevans					ID: 1804010500			Date: 14/11/2023				
Signature: 					Email: cristinodjordamb@gmail.com							
Place of work: U.T.A					Academic degree; Master							
<p>Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. <i>Revista Ciencias de la Educación</i>. 19. 228 - 247</p>												

Annex 5: Urkund report

FINAL RESEARCH WORK

ORIGINALITY REPORT

0%

SIMILARITY INDEX

0%

INTERNET SOURCES

0%

PUBLICATIONS

%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

Exclude quotes On

Exclude bibliography Off

Exclude matches < 10%

