

**Improving Reading Comprehension and Critical Thinking Skills with Contextualized  
Graphic Novels**

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**Facultad de Humanidades**

**Licenciatura en Español e Inglés**

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**A thesis submitted as a requirement to obtain the degree of Arts in English and Spanish**

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## **Abstract**

EFL students face difficulties with reading comprehension due to different reasons that include a lack of motivation towards the reading material owing to its difficulty, authenticity, and content (Ullah & Fatema, 2013). In Colombia, public school students have access to reading material that exceeds their proficiency level and is not relatable. This leads to the insufficient development of reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. On the lookout for different ideas to address this concern, graphic novels stand out as meaningful material that could both boost the reading comprehension and critical thinking skills of students. Hence, this would engage them in reading, considering the relatability of the topics addressed. Graphic novels are considered a strong alternative to help students understand the gist of the story. This is because they include illustrations that compensate for the lack of knowledge in the target language. This pedagogical proposal aims at enhancing the aforementioned skills with the use of contextualized graphic novels.

**Keywords:** Contextualized graphic novels, reading comprehension, critical thinking, critical literacy

## CHAPTER I

### Contextualization and Problem Statement

Considering the circumstances surrounding the covid-19 pandemic, the following chapter shows a general but thorough description of the target population. Moreover, the problems identified, and the specific and general objectives are explained as well.

#### Characterization

Analyzing the population's context is vital to understand the problem evidenced entirely. The population this proposal aims to work with are tenth and eleventh graders from public schools located in Bogota, ranging from 15 to 18 years old. Thus, the following description considers several papers that have worked with a similar population within the same context (public schools). According to the 'Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo' BID (2012), the inequitable distribution of resources in public schools negatively affects its population. Therefore, students' learning process is highly affected by inadequate classroom conditions, limited access to well-endowed libraries, and total amount of English classes. In this regard, a study carried out by López et al. (2017) states that private schools in Bogotá, Colombia, offer students a better educational process than public schools because of their facilities. Likewise, Latorre (2016) analyzed the results of the 'Program for International Student Assessment' (PISA) in 2012 and concluded that private school students in Colombia showed better results than those who studied in public institutions due to their lack of resources and materials.

Understanding adolescents' cognitive and emotional development offers a deeper perception of the problem. The target population of this proposal ranges between 15 and 18 years old. According to McNeely and Blanchard (2009), teenagers go through many changes at this age. Regarding their cognitive development, this stage is essential for them as they develop the ability to think in abstract terms. Thus, they can question notions of absolute truth, consider the future, judge options, solve problems, and other abilities. Overall, three main attributes comprise adolescents' cognitive skills: the strengthening of their advanced reasoning skills, the development of abstract thinking skills, and the capacity of thinking about thinking, mostly known as meta-cognition. Similarly, their social and emotional development is enhanced in four critical areas: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and peer relationships. These aforementioned areas rely on teenagers' interaction with their environment and their relationships with the people around them.

In this context, students' indifference, or lack of interest toward the reading material may impact the improvement of their cognitive and emotional skills: this is their advanced reasoning skills and social awareness. Hence, the reading comprehension process will be impacted. Moyer (2011) stated that a higher level of comprehension cannot be validly measured without considering the constructs of interest, engagement, and motivation. All in all, considering the personal and social context of the students is essential as it allows to understand the issue being addressed.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The research problem is an essential part of a project. First, as it is the starting point, it allows the researcher to narrow the topic down to something reasonable to conduct a study on. Akhidime (2017) states it provides the basis for further elements of the research like the research

questions, objectives, and hypotheses development and testing, which will eventually lead to constitute the findings of the research objectives and its contributions to knowledge. Besides, it is focused on improving a condition or a difficulty spotted in a group of people; a knowledge gap that exists in scholarly literature that is to be filled; a theory that requires meaningful understanding, among other problems that could arise in a scholarly environment (Pardede, 2018). If well guided, a research problem could be the first step to provide a solution to a specific problem. Based on the aforementioned information, this section aims to give an overview of the problem, the literature that describes it, and some studies that have focused on this issue.

In this sense, the development of reading comprehension and critical thinking skills has represented a challenge for students in public high schools in Bogota for different reasons. According to Kasim and Raisha (2017), high-school students' reading comprehension problems can be divided into two main subdivisions: linguistic reading problems and non-linguistic problems. The linguistic reading problems include the semantic, lexical, and syntactical levels of the language. In contrast, the non-linguistic reading problems involve the students' background knowledge, cognitive development, strategies, interests, and goals (Kasim and Raisha, 2017). Also, teaching methods and the students' environment affect their learning process. Ganie et al. (2019) stated that teachers' way of teaching and methods for interpreting and comprehending texts are critical factors for students not to improve their reading comprehension skills. They stated, "teacher just read, led the student read and told them to finish some questions in the textbook" (Ganie et al., 2019, p. 691). Besides, Cornoldi and Oakhill (2001) mention aspects like memory capacity, exposure to printed-reading material, and knowledge in both the language and the structure of the narrative texts influence the students' success or failure in this respect. Evidently, reading comprehension problems can vary depending on different personal,

contextual, and teaching factors. As Molina (2018) stated, according to her experience in the field, reading is a difficult task for EFL high school students since they might lack the vocabulary to understand the ideas presented in the text, they are too long for them, or they do not have enough time to develop the activities related to them. Consequently, they could get frustrated, bored, or confused (Molina, 2018).

In regards to critical thinking skills, these have also represented a challenge for students due to different reasons. To begin with, Snyder and Snyder (2008) state traditional instructional methods give a lot of importance to facts rather than the actual thinking process. This means, memorization takes a higher place than critical thinking in the classroom. As well, they mention that “the current educational trend to standardize curricula and focus on test scores undermines instructors’ ability to address critical thinking in the classroom” (p. 92). Moreover, according to Indah and Kusuma (2016), there are some other factors that could affect the critical thinking process on students. For instance, the language proficiency level of the students. They stated that, the better the language skills of a student are, the more throughout their analysis would be since they would be able to express a deeper level of thought. However, considering the English level tenth and eleventh graders have, this could be a problem. Finally, Wu (2018) mentions other important factors to be considered, such as is the teacher’s personal critical thinking abilities and the English curriculum design in some schools. As educational traditions pay more attention to the indoctrination, accumulation and inheritance of knowledge, teachers normally don’t understand how important it is to develop this skill. Instead, they would rather focus on aspects like making students memorize and learn pieces of information without really thinking about that. When it comes to the curriculum, it still focuses on the training of input skills, lacks the analysis of

students' social needs, and neglects the cultivation of students' critical thinking ability. Because of these reasons, students don't consider developing their critical thinking skills as a priority.

Some studies have been developed around English reading comprehension within EFL setting to gain a deeper understanding of this problem. Nationally speaking, Rodríguez (2012) conducted research at Domingo Faustino Sarmiento school, in which 34 boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 8 years old participated. The problem Rodríguez spotted is that, although their reading comprehension was not that bad among the students, they lacked vocabulary and motivation to read, which eventually led to problems when understanding printed texts in English. Moreover, Castaño (2016) developed a study at San José de Castilla school. The participants of this study were 32 students from fifth grade. He found out they usually got distracted when reading EFL material and highlighted that the use of the workbook could be a negative factor for students' perception of reading. Finally, Moreno (2020) implemented her research with 33 fifth EFL learners at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. All of them were girls between 9 and 11 years old with social strata between 1 and 3. Here, she identified different problems: lack of vocabulary, lack of lexical repertoire, and lack of contextualized material.

Now, considering international research developed on the reading comprehension difficulties, the study conducted by Jennings et al. (2014) aimed to improve the reading comprehension of twenty-four fifth grade students (13 male, 11 female, 22 Caucasian, 1 Hispanic, 1 African American) in an elementary school in the Midwest of the United States. They stated the world inundates students with messages from different semiotic resources, and that interactions now are multimodal and complex. In this order of ideas, they provided students with a wide range of reading formats in the classroom that belonged to the exact text to find out which one was the most meaningful when engaging deeply with it. They found out that

traditional books are not the best way for students to be interested in reading. Instead, "reading of graphic novels stimulated more student discussion using the structure of thinking skills and greater story comprehension" (Jennings et al., 2014, p. 271). Besides, a study conducted by Dara (2019) aimed to identify reading comprehension problems in Cambodian high school students. In this research, 223 students (excluding the 12th graders) and 6 English teachers at two high schools in the Kep province participated (Dara, 2019). By making a questionnaire for them, he found the main problems related to reading comprehension were the lack of knowledge of the language and motivation. Finally, according to the findings Soemantri (2011) obtained from an interview with some high-school students, the main problems they had related to the EFL reading skills were vocabulary, lack of understanding, and regression when reading because they did not get the main idea of the text. These studies confirm reading comprehension is a problematic situation that is evidenced in the studies previously mentioned.

Overall, the lack of students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills within the EFL setting is the main issue identified in this proposal. Some aspects that lead to this issue are the lack of appropriate material or the students' disinterest in the class itself. The Colombian government has created different projects aimed to improve the proficiency level of the students. However, there is still work to do if a considerable change in their reading comprehension levels wants to be perceived.

## **Rationale**

Different studies in the EFL teaching area have approached graphic novels, reading comprehension, and critical thinking. Reading comprehension has been taught using different materials such as traditional textbooks, images, newspaper articles, magazines, and graphic novels. In this sense, graphic novels have been proven to improve the students' reading

comprehension skills as they have illustrations; they shorten the time a person spends decoding and deciphering the meaning of the text and allow students to address the problems that are present in their culture (Falter, 2018, p. 145). Bearing this in mind, this proposal aims to create contextualized graphic novels that not only improve students' reading comprehension skills but also enhance critical thinking skills. Moreover, considering the studies carried out by Castaño (2016), one of the biggest problems inside the EFL classroom is that students tend not to be interested in reading English material due to their lack of vocabulary and texts' relatability. By designing graphic novels focused on the students' local context, this proposal will diminish students' lack of interest in reading in English and enhance the relatability to the texts, which will lead to their thorough analysis.

Besides, reading comprehension is a skill that is improved by EFL teachers considering three stages: the pre-reading, the while-reading, and the post-reading stages. These aim at helping the students understand a text by performing certain activities that will help them recall information about the topic of the text and understand the ideas presented in it. Nevertheless, this pedagogical proposal not only takes into consideration these stages to analyze the text, but also the critical literacy approach framework. In this order of ideas, written and spoken activities will also take place in the lesson plans designed for the graphic novels in order for the students to be able to discuss the problematics presented there. As a result, students will have the possibility to analyze the contextualized graphic novels in-depth by using the aforementioned stages. Besides, as the problems the texts deal with are present within their communities, students will have the possibility to dig deeper into these issues and look for possible solutions that could be applied to them. In this way, they will improve both their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills by analyzing the texts and their contexts.

All in all, different studies have considered the use of graphic novels in the EFL context to improve students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. However, the use of contextualized graphic novels to improve these skills is an area that has not been explored enough to discuss the advantages and disadvantages it could bring to the EFL classroom. For this reason, this proposal aims to create contextualized graphic novels that help public high school teachers enhance students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills through the critical literacy approach.

### **General objective**

- To improve reading comprehension and critical thinking skills in high school students from public institutions with the creation and implementation of contextualized graphic novels through the critical literacy approach

### **Specific objective**

- To design a pedagogical and didactic innovation proposal that enhances the development of reading comprehension and critical thinking skills using contextualized graphic novels and the critical literacy approach.
- To design contextualized graphic novels and lesson plans around them using the critical literacy approach.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter contains the literature review and the theoretical framework that support this proposal.

#### Literature review

Owing to the need to support the value of contextualized graphic novels in the EFL classroom to improve reading comprehension and critical thinking skills, this part of the document presents the review and discussion of both national and international research that paint a clear picture regarding the use of graphic novels in the EFL classroom to improve the aforementioned skills.

Mohd (2017) carried out research with participants from 2 different schools, thirty students per school. The main objective of this investigation was to examine the impact of graphic novels and text-only novels on EFL learners' reading comprehension. The author found graphic novels are one of the materials that might motivate EFL readers to read and follow the storyline. The author concluded that graphic novels could lead students toward understanding the story. Moreover, Walker (2013) conducted a study to determine if graphic novels can improve students' traditional and new literacy skills. The problem she found was that the literacy needs of today's learners are different from those of the past. Due to technology and other aspects, teenagers are being bombarded with visual stimuli from the T.V. programs they watch, the video games they play, and other visual media.

For this reason, teachers have to come up with new strategies related to literacy for them to be able to analyze these 'new' ways of communication. The population was made up of 14

students from eighth grade at the Central Texas middle school. The findings of this research were that graphic novels were motivating for them and easier to understand. Besides, they helped the students develop traditional and new literacy skills. Therefore, these two pieces of research contribute to this proposal by showing graphic novels' value in understanding the story. In this way, students can improve their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills.

Also, to support the use of graphic novels to develop reading comprehension skills, Fernandez (2020) chose thirty respondents from grade 7 Anthurium students of Lamao Nation High School in S.Y. The research's problem is students' poor reading comprehension skills due to different aspects. The general objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of graphic novels in improving the reading comprehension processes in EFL students. The results showed that the group exposed to the graphic novel improved their reading comprehension skills compared to the other group.

Sabbah et al. (2013) conducted a study on sixty fifth-grade Malaysian students studying at a daily school in Bukit Mertajam. Although no clear problem is stated throughout the research, the main objective of this paper is to evaluate if the use of graphic novels enhanced both verbal and visual students' reading comprehension more than the traditional ones. The results showed that graphic novels helped out visual learners comprehend complex texts when using graphic novels. Understanding the general context of the story and some details was better with the use of this material.

Brenna (2013) carried out research with twenty-one fourth-grade students in a rural classroom at Cloverdale School. The main objective of this qualitative exploratory case study was to identify particular points of connection between reading comprehension strategies and graphic novels and identify in what ways graphic novels support students' development as readers. For

this, each class, the teacher would introduce a new reading strategy applied with a graphic novel they were going to read. The teacher would use observational techniques and questionnaires to evaluate students' progress concerning their reading comprehension level. Findings revealed that, although students were not interested in graphic novels at the beginning of the research, little by little, they started to be interested in them, to the point that self-selecting these texts from the box where all books were, was a common practice among them.

Basol and Sarigul (2012) carried out research at Selcuk University from Turkey. The study aims at assessing the quality of graphic adaptations of classic novels and identify whether these graphic adaptations may be useful for improving the reading comprehension processes of students more than the classic versions. Findings show that, although there were no significant differences between the control and experimental groups, the use of graphic novels could be effective if teachers use the appropriate teaching techniques with this material.

Aldahash and Altalhab (2020) conducted the study in a group of eighth graders attending an intermediate public school in Saudi Arabia. The researchers found that Saudi EFL learners often struggle when reading in English and encounter obstacles that prevent them from improving their reading skills. The results showed the group that read the graphic novels improved their reading comprehension due to their images.

Chavarro (2017) chose 32 fifth-grade students in the San José de Castilla school to conduct his research. He found children were not engaged with reading and they preferred doing something different during the reading activities. For this reason, the research was focused on describing the impact of using picture storybooks for improving students' reading comprehension. The findings showed the reading comprehension processes of students improved thanks to the use of picture

storybooks, mainly because they motivated students to read and to know more about the books they were reading.

Fahim and Sa'ee pour (2011) conducted a study in which 30 students in an English institute located in Karaj, Iran, participated. They wanted to find out if teaching critical thinking skills to them had a significant difference in improving the learners' reading comprehension processes. The findings showed that both the control and experimental groups' score did not show any significant difference regarding the result. However, they consider this happened due to different circumstances. Regardless of these situations, the researchers consider the small difference they found between the two groups suggests there is the crucial importance of critical thinking in the reading comprehension of the group they worked with.

Finally, Cook (2014) conducted a study to investigate the effects of graphic novels on the reading comprehension processes of 207 high school students in the EFL classroom. The findings showed that the use of graphic novels highly benefited students. By the end of the research, the interviews showed that students had a good perception of graphic novels.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### ***Reading Comprehension***

Nowadays, teenagers consider just reading is enough to understand the ideas presented in a text. However, reading fluency and reading comprehension are opposite ends of the same spectrum. Reading fluency is the ability to decode words accurately. People do this every day: they read the news, books, articles, and even the instructions to make meals. However, according to Namjoo and Marzban (2013), reading comprehension is a complex task that requires the

reader's knowledge of the English language to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate abilities.

Considering this, we can establish a clear distinction between these two concepts. This text will focus on reading comprehension and the strategies that can be implemented.

First of all, depending on the author, different perspectives and definitions of reading comprehension will be found. McKee defines reading comprehension as the ability to understand a text, analyze the information, and interpret correctly what the writer is stating (McKee, 2012). Moreover, Budiharso (2014) states that this process involves the active interaction between reader and writer. The text provides the reader with clues to construct meaning, which is derived from the transaction created between them. Finally, Moore et al. (2016) consider many definitions regarding this topic. Still, the middle point of all these definitions consists of students being active readers that process the information they read to form a mental image, summarize the information, and draw conclusions about it. Summing up, reading comprehension is a skill students must work on, as it will allow them to analyze information in a more detailed way. Moreover, this is the conception the study will have about reading comprehension. Students will have to take advantage of the text and the images presented in the graphic novels to infer an accurate meaning from them.

According to Bojovic (2010), adopting various reading skills during pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading moments is necessary in EFL classrooms for successful interaction with authentic English material. Gulchekhra (2016) defines these terms as follows. First, the pre-reading stage aims to prepare the students for the while-reading stage. Here, the teacher familiarizes students with the topic of the text with different activities. After that, in the while-reading stage, the teacher will develop activities that engage students to perceive the text differently to achieve the lesson's objectives. Finally, the post-reading stage is all about

practicing the knowledge acquired while reading the text. The teacher could integrate other English skills and aspects of the foreign culture and vocabulary from the text. Alyousef (2005) states that asking questions that arouse students' interest and discussing or using photographs are practical pre-reading techniques for introducing a new text. As for the while-reading processes, he considers both the bottom-up and top-down strategies are helpful in this stage. Finally, matching exercises, cut-up sentences, and comprehension questions are strategies he proposes for developing the post-reading stage. These stages are going to be considered in this proposal for the first part of the lesson plan, as this will allow students to analyze and understand what the stories are about. In this way, the following stages of the lesson plans will be addressed in a more accurate way.

In conclusion, reading comprehension is an essential skill students need to develop for different reasons. Reading fluency is not the same as reading comprehension. To comprehend, they need to analyze information presented in any text they read. This ability will provide them with a critical position concerning the texts they decide to read and analyze.

### ***Critical Thinking***

Critical thinking is an essential skill that people have to develop throughout their life. Critical thinking has different advantages for people: the ability to recognize issues within their context, identify, analyze the root cause of a problem, and propose solutions to them. This text will discuss the definition of critical thinking, the steps it follows, how reflection is involved in this process, and its effects on reading comprehension.

Aloqaili (2011) states that, according to the literature available, there is no clear consensus regarding the definition of critical thinking; however, some specific authors offer

clarity regarding this. For instance, Juniardi (2018) states that critical thinking is not just thinking critically and analytically; it is about thinking rationally and objectively. The person has to have an open mind and sight, a healthy skepticism, free-thinking, etc. Moreover, Schafersman (1991) considers critical thinking means correct thinking in the pursuit of relevant and reliable knowledge from various foundations such as evidence, methods, criteria, context, conceptualization, and relevant sources of information (Setyowati et al. 2018). All in all, critical thinking is a skill people have to develop to become more analytical.

Critical thinking involves a series of steps people have to follow to apply it to their context successfully. Accordingly, the University of Leeds (n/d), as cited by Changwong et al. (2018, p. 41), outlines the critical steps in thinking critically. These steps include describing, reflecting, analyzing, critiquing, reasoning, and evaluating different aspects of a topic. Besides, Aloqaili (2011) proposes other steps: focusing on a question, analyzing arguments, asking and answering questions of clarification and challenge, judging the credibility of a source, deducing and judging deductions inferring explanatory conclusions and hypotheses, and identifying assumptions. Each of these steps has its sub-abilities. Finally, Heard. J et. al (2020) developed its critical thinking skill framework, in which there are three core elements, divided into three sub-elements each. The first element is knowledge construction, in which aspects like identifying gaps in knowledge, discriminating among information, and identifying patterns and connections processes occur. The second element is evaluating reasoning. There, one can see how people apply logic, identify assumptions and motivations, and justify arguments. Finally, the third element is decision-making; people identify different decision-making criteria, evaluate opinions, and test and monitor implementations. Summing up, critical thinking has to go through

a series of steps, which are necessary for us to have a critical point of view and to make accurate decisions in our daily lives.

Finally, critical thinking has a significant impact on the way reading comprehension is perceived. Juniardi (2018) states students' critical thinking improves how a person sees things, looking for information or arguments to support their point of view, and making decisions regarding the information they have acquired. Besides, Vaseghi et. al (2012) evaluated the influence critical thinking has on reading comprehension and concluded it is an important skill that could be applied to both the educational field students are immersed in and their daily life.

All in all, we can see critical thinking plays a vital role in improving the reading comprehension processes of EFL learners both in their daily lives and in the educational field they are in. It is important not to blend reading comprehension and critical thinking into one. Critical thinking is not reading since it implies people need to go beyond the literal comprehension of words. Reflecting upon a problem, analyzing it, and considering different perspectives is what will allow people to think critically.

### ***Graphic Novels***

Many sources and materials have been used in schools to support the reading comprehension process of EFL students around the globe. The most well-known example is the traditional printed material. Teachers commonly use novels, tales, and books to foster students' reading skills. Other examples could be magazines, which are a compilation of articles and images about diverse topics; newspapers, which are the principal source of information related to what happens day by day; encyclopedias, known for having lots of information about varied topics; and finally, books, which virtually cover a wide variety of topics, and, in some cases, get

the attention of the students the most. However, the mere use of printed material in the EFL classroom bears some disadvantages, such as lack of motivation or interest on the students' behalf. For that reason, graphic novels stand out as a valid option to foster EFL students' reading comprehension skills due to their adaptability to this context and their appealing design. The definition, the composition, and the advantages graphic novels have compared to traditional printed material are points that will be discussed as follows.

Graphic novels are defined by the comic-book writer Will Eisner as sequential art and a method of expression (Eisner, 1985). Also, according to Penguin Random House Australia (2017), a graphic novel uses the interplay of written material and illustrations in a comic-strip format to narrate a story. Images and graphic illustrations evoke the story more precisely in the reader's mind. Graphic novels' themes are broad, which is why students feel attracted to them. As Griffith states: "One of the reasons graphic novels are so appealing to many readers is the wide variety of appealing content: classic literature, manga, science fiction, historical fiction, problem novels, and every other genre existing in literature" (Griffith, 2010).

Graphic novels' composition is different from the traditional printed material. First, according to Griffith (2010), this could be divided into three sub-groups: format, illustrations, and content. Graphic novel formats include elements like font, font size, word placement and appearance, and arrangement of the art frames on the page. Formats' primary function is to allow the reader to follow and understand the development of the story. Second, both the text and the illustrations used are equally important as the illustrations complement details that may go unnoticed by the reader. Besides, the illustrations may help the reader create inferences about the story and understand vocabulary from the text. Finally, the fiction and non-fiction contents of the graphic novel are all the literary elements expected from fictional and non-fictional books.

Besides, Penguin Random House (2017) shows graphic novels have other components, such as the graphic weight, caption, speech, thought bubbles, special effect sounds, and close-up, among others. Altogether, combining these elements will lead to the correct development of the story, showing the actions, characterization, tone, and mood of both the characters and the story itself.

Compared to the traditional-printed material, graphic novels offer a variety of advantages to EFL students. Cimermanová (2014) states graphic novels are suitable for all levels and ages, as they are a good source for developing imagination and vocabulary building and encourage students' critical thinking. Besides, according to Short and Reeves (2009), graphic novels improve students' learning with visual representations and concepts. This material reaches out to particular learning styles more effectively than printed material. Also, they increase students' attention, increase interaction, and provide a rich conversation in the classroom. Also, Basol and Sarigul (2012) found that using graphic novels, along with appropriate strategies, activities used through "gradual release of responsibility" and pre, while and post-reading activities allowed students to improve their results regarding reading comprehension. Finally, Gownley (2014) emphasizes the benefits that the use of graphic novels brings to EFL students, such as motivation, the ability to attract reluctant readers, and the help illustrations give to a better understanding of the text. Summing up, graphic novels offer a wide range of advantages that benefit EFL learners more than the printed material commonly used.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Pedagogical Proposal**

#### **Vision of Language**

This proposal understands language as a vehicle through which students will achieve the primary goal of the class: to reflect and propose different solutions to specific problems that can be perceived within their society. This idea is addressed by Cipagauta, who stated, "teaching literacy can no longer go around language topics or the texts for the sake of them" (Cipagauta, 2018). This means language is not the central aspect to be achieved (p. 139). Consequently, activities are not directly focused on improving the students' language skills, but they will use their verbal and written skills to comprehend the problems illustrated in graphic novels and understand and deliver their viewpoints critically. Thus, this will lead them to view society's problems differently and offer possible solutions to them within their communities. This is a result of two types of reflection: a self-reflection process, and a group reflection process. First, in the self-reflection process, students analyze personal experiences, allowing them to recognize the way power relations are established within society. Second, the group reflection process focuses on students' perceptions and the fact that they all are equally important and aim to look for alternative solutions to solve problematic issues in the community. All in all, in both scenarios, language is the vehicle that allows students to express their thoughts and raise their voices to question and challenge pre-set beliefs.

## **Vision of Learning**

The main objective of this proposal is to improve the reading comprehension and critical thinking skills of students by using contextualized graphic novels. Hence, the critical literacy approach is meant to be used to achieve this goal. This means that learning is seen from the aforementioned approach, where it is a collaborative process where students improve their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills by critically analyzing the contextualized graphic novels along with the teacher. Therefore, they will reflect on multiple and contradictory perspectives that compose their society to actively seek out contradictions and identify alternative solutions to these problems (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004, p. 61). Moreover, this process is deeply related to all students' experiences and points of view towards the topic being discussed. The teacher guides students' thoughts and ideas into a reflexive practice that aims to examine competing narratives in their communities. In that sense, learning occurs when students share their thoughts, examine how society is built from different perspectives, and propose solutions to those problems.

## **Vision of Teaching**

### ***Teachers' Role***

In this proposal, the teacher is perceived as a guide rather than the only one with classroom knowledge. Still, the teacher has to train himself and understand how to perceive his world from a critical stance before trying to help students to think and reflect critically. This idea can be sustained by McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004), who stated that "the teacher's role in helping students to become critically aware actually begins with a personal understanding of and engagement in critical literacy" (p. 55). Once the teacher has achieved this critical perspective

towards society's problems, he can lead to meaningful reflection and awareness through dialog and discussion. Besides, the teacher needs to consider that the class's reality constantly changes and evolves. For this reason, when evaluating the activities he does in the classroom, he should think in open feedback, where he highlights the strengths and weaknesses of his students' contributions and values their interest in the proposed activities by asking constant questions aimed to arouse students' reflections. As a result, students will feel people are interested in hearing what they have to say, and they will feel their opinions and perceptions are valued.

### ***Student's role***

The role of the student is constantly active and reflective. The teacher guides them in analyzing and examining different texts to understand a problem from different perspectives. Besides, students are encouraged not to work independently but as a group. This implies, they take the role of social beings who bring their personal experiences and knowledge to the classroom through discussions and reflective thinking about the texts presented. In other words, as stated by McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004), "students reading from a critical stance raise questions about whose voices are represented, whose voices are missing, and who gains and who loses by the reading of a text" (p.53). This way, they can analyze and identify common beliefs and start disrupting practices that affect their community. Once they do it, they have to work together to develop an alternative solution that tackles the problem they are discussing.

## CHAPTER IV

### Material Design and Pedagogical Instruction

This chapter contains a description of the pedagogical proposal and foresees the intervention plan of three cycles with the corresponding descriptions and website design. Furthermore, this chapter includes a detailed explanation of the selection of the topics for the graphic novels.

#### Description of the proposal

To provide a possible solution to the problem stated in chapter I, this pedagogical and didactic proposal aims to improve reading comprehension and critical thinking skills in high school students from public institutions with the creation and implementation of contextualized graphic novels using the critical literacy approach. Lewison et al. (2002) proposed a framework that teachers can use to guide themselves when using this methodology. It is divided into four different stages: *disrupting the commonplace*, *interrogating multiple viewpoints*, *focusing on sociopolitical issues*, and *taking action on social justice*. However, McLaughlin and DeVogd mention critical literacy does not always work the same. No technique that promotes critical literacy can be exported to another setting without adapting it to that context. Hence, as the lesson plans are to be applied in an EFL classroom with public high school students, their language proficiency needs to be considered. They may have communication barriers that prevent them from the full expression of accurate ideas. To mitigate the impact this will have in the class, the framework was rearranged to be composed of three stages, instead of four: *disrupting the commonplace*, *interrogating multiple viewpoints*, and *taking action and social*

*justice*. By doing this, students will only work on conveying ideas related to their immediate context and not others related to more general and complex scenarios, such as the economic, political, cultural, and social domains.

In that regard, this proposal is composed of three cycles: *Myself*, *My Family*, and *My School*. These cycles address different situations students face or witness in their daily life so that they can become more aware of them and help their community to recognize and address the problems. Each cycle is composed of two lesson plans that go around the topics chosen for the graphic novels. Therefore, the first cycle, *Myself*, is composed of Child Labor and Drugs. The second one, *My Family*, is composed of Disruptive Families and Overprotective parents. The third cycle, *My School*, is composed of Bullying and Low-Academic Performance. Thus, each lesson plan takes 6 hours to complete.

Table 1 displays all the cycles and sessions explained in detail. There, the name of the cycles, lesson plans, descriptions of the activities, and resources are displayed. Each lesson plan is developed based on the critical literacy approach, which divides the lesson into 3 stages of 2 hours each: *disrupting the commonplace*, *interrogating multiple viewpoints*, and *taking action and social justice*. During the first stage, students start recalling information about the topic by reviewing new vocabulary, watching videos, or doing different warm-up activities built around the graphic novel. Then, students read and start analyzing the graphic novel by using a set of questions. During the second stage, students start reflecting on multiple/contradictory perspectives. They need to consider their partners' experiences as well as their own. For this stage, activities that help students construct knowledge as a group are used the most: debates, critical questions, and writing exercises, among others. Finally, in the third stage students start engaging in action and reflection upon their world to transform it. Here, they start looking for

different alternatives to propose solutions to the situations depicted in the graphic novel and share their thoughts with the school's community.

Apart from the creation of the material, the place where the contextualized graphic novels and the material created for the lesson plans will be uploaded has been considered either. The main idea is for students to easily access the content whenever it is required. Because of this, Google Sites will be the place where everything will be stored. It is a tool people can use to create and design web pages. It has been chosen because of its easy way to navigate through the web pages and the way information can be arranged there. Moreover, since schools are back to normal now, Google Sites allows the teacher to use the website in both synchronous and asynchronous periods. If for any reason one student cannot attend the class, either at school or at the virtual meeting, they will have the possibility to review the class they missed and work on the activities prepared for that session. If needed, the teacher can provide the student with further assistance. The link to the Google Sites website can be found in Table I. Nevertheless, Google Sites will not be the only place where information will be uploaded. In order for students to share information with their school's community, the social media network Instagram will be used. Whether it is the school's Instagram account or students must create one from scratch, this is the place where they will be able to interact with others and share the conclusions they arrive at once the sessions are completed.

**Table 1: Pedagogical Intervention**

Google Sites Link	<a href="https://sites.google.com/view/contextualizedgraphicnovels/menu">https://sites.google.com/view/contextualizedgraphicnovels/menu</a>					
Cycle	Lesson	Day	Stages	Activities' Description	Pedagogical Resources (virtual)	Pedagogical Resources (face-to-face)
<u>1. Myself</u>	Child labor	Day 1	<b>Disrupting Common Places. (2 hours)</b>	A Kahoot will be used to introduce the topic. There, students will see different images, and they will have to identify if the child/children are playing or working. After this, the graphic novel will be read. Since the end of the story is unfinished, students will brainstorm ideas in order to give an end to it. Lastly, it will be analyzed with the questions prepared.	The Kahoot, the graphic novel, and the questions can be found on the Google Site website.	The teacher will take advantage of a laptop to do the Kahoot. The graphic novel can be downloaded so that it can be shown offline, and questions can be copy pasted to a Word document.

		<p><b>Day 2</b></p>	<p><b>Interrogating Multiple Viewpoints. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>Students will use a checklist to identify common patterns regarding child labor. For this, they will analyze first the graphic novel's story. Second, they will watch a short video where they will see three different stories. Finally, they will have to brainstorm ideas regarding the way child labor is perceived in their community and use the checklist to analyze if what happened in the stories happens in their community.</p>	<p>The graphic novel is on the Google Sites. The video will be linked to the Google Sites website. The brainstorming will be done through the chat.</p>	<p>The graphic novel and the videos can be downloaded. Ideas will be brainstormed on the board.</p>
		<p><b>Day 3</b></p>	<p><b>Taking a Stand and Promoting Social Justice. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>Students will create polls on Instagram to ask their partners what they know about child labor. Afterward, students will share the answers and say if their perception is true or false, and why. Finally, they will share their</p>	<p>The Instagram account will be used to do this activity.</p>	<p>The Instagram account will be used to do this activity.</p>

				point of view and possible solutions to the problem.		
	<b>Drugs</b>	<b>Day 4</b>	<b>Disrupting Common Places. (2 hours)</b>	The topic will be introduced by presenting a Kahoot test where they will learn about different myths related to the topic. After this, the graphic novel will be read. Lastly, it will be analyzed with the questions prepared.	The Kahoot, the graphic novel, and the questions can be found on the Google Site website.	The teacher will take advantage of a laptop to do the Kahoot. The graphic novel can be downloaded so that it can be shown offline.
		<b>Day 5</b>	<b>Interrogating Multiple Viewpoints. (2 hours)</b>	Students will start the class by brainstorming what they know about drugs. Questions to engage them in participating can be found on the Google Sites. Then, students will find 3 drugs, and context regarding the story of a person who is struggling with	The questions and the stories will be located in the Google Sites website.	The teacher will get the information from the Google Sites and copy paste it into a Word document. Therefore, he will have it

				<p>them. They will perform a theatrical play where they explain the story. Once it is over, all students will start brainstorming how this drug is present in their environment and propose different solutions that could help the main character of the story.</p>		<p>handy without the need of Internet.</p>
		<p><b>Day 6</b></p>	<p><b>Taking a Stand and Promoting Social Justice. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>As homework, students will create a poll on Instagram using Instagram to show other students myths and truths about drugs. Then, Ss' will have to create a consciousness-raising campaign where they help other students become aware of these problems and offer solutions to overcome them. Students will be shown examples of a consciousness-raising campaign to have a concrete idea on how they work.</p>	<p>The ideas related to consciousness-raising campaigns can be found on the Google Sites website. Depending on the campaigns students will create, they can use different tools.</p>	<p>Cardboards, markers, images, etc. will be used in order to create their own campaign in their school.</p>

				<p>However, there are no specific parameters regarding the way students can create them. Once they start sharing it with their community, they need to keep track of everything so that it can be uploaded to Instagram. This is so that more people can see the results of it. Then, they will share their opinion to close the activity.</p>		
<p><u>2. My family</u></p>	<p><b>Disruptive Families</b></p>	<p><b>Day 7</b></p>	<p><b>Disrupting Common Places. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>To start, students will be shown different images. The purpose of the activity is for them to brainstorm ideas, saying what is happening there and what they can see. After this, the graphic novel will be read. Lastly, it will be analyzed with the questions prepared.</p>	<p>Images used to brainstorm will be found on Google Sites.</p>	<p>The teacher can download the images so that they can be presented offline in the classroom, in case there's no internet connection.</p>


		<b>Day 8</b>	<b>Interrogating Multiple Viewpoints. (2 hours)</b>	<p>In groups, students will find different stories describing a situation happening in a particular family. Once each story is read, they will need to brainstorm ideas about the situation, i.e. who's affected? Who's affecting the person? What is the main problem, and how can it be solved? etc. Then, in groups, they will need to write a short newspaper article where they state their opinion, using examples of their daily life to defend their opinion. The teacher will give them an example so that they know how to do it.</p>	<p>The stories to be analyzed will be found on the Google Sites.</p>	<p>The stories to be analyzed will be found on the Google Sites.</p>
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		<p><b>Day 9</b></p>	<p><b>Taking a Stand and Promoting Social Justice. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>To begin with, students will look for and share information related to the topic in different Instagram stories. For instance, what aspects create disruptive families, types of disruptive families, different factors that cause families to behave in such a way, and consequences for the family members. Then, students will invite others in their community to a reflect n' sketch competition, where students will have to draw what their perception of disruptive families is. Once the competition is finished, students will upload their own drawings, explaining what they think about the topic and what they all could do to solve this issue in our community.</p>	<p>Padlet will be used to gather all of the ideas so that they can be shared. Instagram will be used to share the final conclusions with their community.</p>	<p>Cardboards can be used to store all of the ideas that will be shared by the Ss'. Instagram will be used to share the final conclusions with their community.</p>

<b>Overprotective parents</b>	<b>Day 10</b>	<b>Disrupting Common Places. (2 hours)</b>	A Kahoot with different images related to the topic will be shown so that students can infer what the topic is. After this, the graphic novels will be read. Since this story has two parts, more time will be required. Lastly, they will be analyzed with the questions prepared.	The Kahoot and the questions to analyze the graphic novels can be found on the Google Sites.	The teacher will take advantage of a laptop to do the Kahoot. The graphic novel can be downloaded so that it can be shown offline.
	<b>Day 11</b>	<b>Interrogating Multiple Viewpoints. (2 hours)</b>	Students will watch a compilation of tik-toks where teenagers show how parents overprotect them. Once they have watched it, they will do a reel recreating the same idea with situations that happen in their environment.	The video can be found on Google Sites. Instagram will be used to record their own videos.	The teacher will download the video so that it can be played offline. Instagram will be used to record their own videos.



		<p><b>Day 12</b></p>	<p><b>Taking a Stand and Promoting Social Justice. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>The reels created in the previous stage will be shared with the community. This is to start talking about the topic with them. Then, Instagram will be used to gather more ideas about the topic. The school community will give their opinion on specific situations that could happen in regard to this topic. For example, what do you think of a mom who doesn't let his son go out with his friends to play football? Do you agree or disagree, and why?. The results of each question will be shared, and lastly, students will create conclusions around the information gathered, and possible solutions to deal with this problem in a better way.</p>	<p>Instagram will be used to share the information and the reels with the school's community.</p>	<p>Instagram will be used to share the information and the reels with the school's community.</p>
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<b><u>3. My School</u></b>	<b>Bullying</b>	<b>Day 13</b>	<b>Disrupting Common Places. (2 hours)</b>	A Kahoot will be used in order to introduce the topic. The idea is for students to identify different myths around it. After, the graphic novel will be read. Since this story has two parts, more time will be required. Lastly, it will be analyzed with the questions prepared.	The Kahoot, the graphic novel, and the questions can be found on Google Site.	The teacher will take advantage of a laptop to do the Kahoot. The graphic novel can be downloaded so that it can be shown offline, and questions can be copy pasted to a Word document.
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		<p><b>Day 14</b></p>	<p><b>Interrogating Multiple Viewpoints. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>A video will be presented to students so they can see how bullying works. Then, they will share their personal experiences on the topic. As there are different ways in which bullying is perceived, they will play bullying thermometer. In this game, different bullying methods will be presented. Students, with the help of the teacher, will define each one of them and place them from the "coolest" (least harmful) to the hottest (most harmful).</p>	<p>The video and the expressions for the bullying thermometer activity can be found on Google Sites.</p>	<p>The video will be downloaded and presented to the class in a laptop. The words and expressions can be written on the board.</p>
		<p><b>Day 15</b></p>	<p><b>Taking a Stand and Promoting Social Justice. (2 hours)</b></p>	<p>Students will create a "did you know that" activity where they will show different facts about</p>	<p>Instagram will be used to share questions and</p>	<p>Instagram will be used to share the questions and the mation</p>

				bullying to the community. Once it's completed, students will start sharing their point of view with their community and tell them the consequences bullying has by creating a paragraph that will be posted on the feed. Finally, when the answers of the poll are obtained, these will be shared on the Instagram account to show people how much they know about the topic and guide them if necessary.	the information with the school's community.	with the school's community.
	<b>Low-academic Performance</b>	<b>Day 16</b>	<b>Disrupting Common Places. (2 hours)</b>	To start the class, students will play true or false with a set of questions related to the topic.	The questions and the stories will be located on Google Sites.	The questions can be copy pasted to a Word document. The graphic

				The group that gets more points by the end of the activity will be the winner. After, the graphic novel will be read. Lastly, it will be analyzed with the questions prepared.		novel can be downloaded so that it is shown offline.
		<b>Day 17</b>	<b>Interrogating Multiple Viewpoints. (2 hours)</b>	The class will start with an explanation of the topic, and then a debate will be created. The classroom will be divided into three parts: agree, neutral, and disagree. The teacher will present different statements and students will have to go to the station that represents their opinion. Once everyone has taken a position, they will have to defend it.	The statements for the debate are located on Google Sites.	The statements can be copy pasted to a Word document.
		<b>Day 18</b>	<b>Taking a Stand and Promoting</b>	Polls on Instagram will be posted to know what the community thinks about Academic	Instagram will be used to create the polls	Instagram will be used to create the polls and

			<b>Social Justice. (2 hours)</b>	Performance. Questions will be created by students to get this information. Then, considering these answers, students will record themselves, sharing with the community different strategies that could be used in order to help them do better at school.	and record the videos to share the information with the school's community.	record the videos to share the information with the school's community.
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### ***Graphic Novels' Topics selection***

The graphic novels address 6 topics that surround the student's life: bullying, low-academic performance, overprotective families, disruptive families, drugs, and child labor. These different situations could arise in the life of students while they are in school, with their family, or with their friends. By discussing these topics and developing the different activities in the lesson plans, students may become aware of what causes those situations to happen and the consequences they bring. Thus, becoming aware of those problems and proposing solutions to them.

The first cycle is based on the graphic novels about Child Labor and Drugs. Regarding Child Labor, the DANE revealed that during the last part of 2020, 523.000 children from 2 to 17 years old were active workers. 69.1% were men, and 30.9% were women. Child labor is a problem that affects low-income families. This happens because children are being overexploited or due to a cultural aspect of their community. Nevertheless, the most common scenario is that, when children and teenagers realize their parents do not earn enough money to cover expenses, they see themselves in the need of looking for a job to support themselves economically. In Colombia, it is common to see children selling candies and juggling on the street, or even being sexually abused to get an economic benefit from them. If this situation is not discussed at schools, most likely this will become something natural for them once they see it reflected outside the school. Concerning Drugs, according to the Observatorio de Drogas de Colombia, drugs like alcohol and marihuana are common among teenagers at school (ODC, 2017, p. 2). In addition, these are not the only drugs teenagers are exposed to. Owing to the reasons aforementioned, Drugs have been chosen as a topic to be discussed in these graphic novels.

The second cycle, *My family*, is composed of the topics of *Overprotective Parents* and *Disruptive Families*. Initially, parents' overprotectiveness can develop children's and teenagers' incapability to socialize with other people, solve problems efficiently without help, and emotional dependency on other people, among others. According to Paredes et al. (2021), if parents overprotect their children, they are prevented from interacting with their environment. Put simply, teenagers won't be able to live the experiences people their age live and it will lead to the aforementioned problems. Taking this scenario into account, the creation and implementation of graphic novels will help students recognize the problem and be able to speak when necessary, in order to prevent further consequences to their lives. Regarding Disruptive Families, families in Colombia are currently formed in different ways. According to Mera (2015), in Colombia, 55% of children live with adults that are not their parents, 11% live without their parents, and 84% of newborn babies only have their mother. If children do not have a stable family, this could lead to different problems in their early stages of life. It is necessary for students to notice how these situations present themselves and know the things they can do when helping solve this issue.

The third cycle, *My School*, is composed of the topics *Bullying* and *Low-Academic Performance*. Firstly, *Bullying* is included in the graphic novels since it is a problem students must cope with daily at school. Physical bullying, verbal bullying, and even cyberbullying are different problems students have to cope with daily at school. According to Miglino (2018) in Colombia's official statistics about bullying, there were 2.981 complex situations in which children were involved in this type of situation. The main cities in which this problem took place were Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. Besides, Alfonso (2017) showed that, based on a survey, 7,6% of students in Colombia constantly suffer from different ways of bullying in their daily life. By

portraying bullying, and the different consequences it could carry for them, students could be more aware of this problem and be more empathetic the next time they find a person in this situation. As for the topic Low-Academic Performance topic, this is another important topic to be discussed with the students. According to El Herald, Colombia got one of the lowest scores regarding the academic performance of teenagers, according to the PISA's report. Compared to other countries, Colombia is ranked in a lower position in comparison to Chile and Mexico. Besides, according to Lopez et. al. (2015), there are several reasons why this phenomenon could affect a student. For instance, the way the student's family is structured, parents that work all day, parents' disinterest, teachers' way of teaching, the way the student's process is being followed-up, the relationship they have with their partners, etc. Discussing the different situations that could provoke this problem, will create awareness in the students regarding the consequences this could bring to their life.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusions and Implications

The following chapter is aimed at envisioning how the process regarding the creation of the material took place. Similarly, some pedagogical considerations and suggestions are shown as well.

#### Conclusions

Although graphic novels have been somewhat used to work on EFL environments, a new frontier was drawn with this proposal since their contextualization and the use of topics that are close to the students' environment were considered. The graphic novels are commonly used by children for entertainment in their leisure time; however, beyond their common usage, these could have a significant value to improve the reading comprehension and critical thinking skills of teenagers. The graphic novels presented in this proposal have been created from scratch instead of chosen, which granted the possibility to consider different aspects of them such as the vocabulary used, the length of the stories, the main topics, and the illustrations. By doing this, students are expected to be more motivated to read material in English and be able to understand it, in contrast to the traditional materials used in English classes, which are not contextualized to their environment and not adapted to their level.

Material creation required a lot of time to be executed properly. The process of creating the stories for the graphic novels, arranging them into a virtual tool, choosing the different illustrations that would be there, as well as designing and drawing them were crucial factors of the proposal that ended up taking longer than expected. In fact, there were 2 graphic novels that

couldn't be completed: The second part of Bullying and Overprotective Parents. This is because, apart from designing the graphic novels, the design of the activities and the website where these would be uploaded also required time to be worked on.

## **Considerations**

Considering the Covid pandemic made the application of this proposal impossible, this chapter shows some considerations that teachers can take into account when using the graphic novels and website designed. Initially, it is essential to consider students' proficiency level as completing the 3 stages proposed in the lesson plans requires students to understand the graphic novels and communicate their points of view. This aspect was considered in the creation of the graphic novels. Because of that, the vocabulary used was simple and direct. Nevertheless, they include words and expressions in bold which students and the teacher can click on and find out the definition. There is a possibility students are not able to fully express their ideas due to the problems mentioned in chapter II. If this is the scenario, the teacher might consider using different techniques to maintain an English-only environment. Still, when that's not an option, students may rely on their native language.

Moreover, the environment is an essential aspect to be considered. In this sense, both virtual and face-to-face classes are good options for the development of this proposal. Regarding the virtual environment, the teacher needs to make sure students have access to the Internet. Also, it is essential the teacher initially gets students familiarized with the platform chosen to upload the material: Google Sites. Concerning face-to-face classes, the teachers need to be aware of the fact not all schools count on the internet to display the material created without a problem. For this reason, it is suggested that they previously review the material for the class and

download the activities, videos, and graphic novels that will be used for the session, so that activities are done without any sort of setbacks. Lastly, since Instagram is a platform both students and teachers will use to develop the last stage of the lesson plans in virtual and face-to-face environments, it is important to consider if the school has an Instagram account or if the teacher needs to open one to ensure students can express their thoughts and share them with the community. Naturally, the account is going to be monitored by the teacher to ensure that the activities and the information shared with the other students are developed as expected.

### **Suggestions for further research**

During the creation of the stories for the graphic novels, there were many topics that were left behind because of the number of stories that would have to be created if they were not narrowed to only 6. Children in the southern part of the city go through different problems that couldn't be included here. For instance, unwilling pregnancy, depression, sexual orientation, and so forth. For this reason, a suggestion to researchers who want to apply this proposal is to consider the needs of the population they want to work with. In this sense, students will be able to find real value in the content of the proposal. Hence, they will be motivated towards reading and participating in class.

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