

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**Universidad de El Salvador**

*Hacia la libertad por la cultura*

**The Effect of Comic Strips Used as Class Material in Order to Enhance the  
Vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II Students from English Major with  
Emphasis in Teaching, Semester I 2017, Afternoon Shift at the Foreign  
Languages Department of the University of El Salvador**

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# INDEX

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION .....i

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....1

1. OBJECTIVES .....2

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM.....3

3. JUSTIFICATION .....3

4. DELIMITATION OF PROBLEM.....5

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....6

III. METHODOLOGY .....20

1. RESEARCH APPROACH .....20

2. TYPE OF STUDY .....20

3. RESEARCH DESIGN .....21

4. METHOD .....21

5. POPULATION AND SAMPLE .....22

6. RESEARCH TECHNIQUES .....22

7. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.....23

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.....24

1. TESTS.....24

2- INSTRUMENTATION .....28

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....52

1. CONCLUSIONS .....52

2. RECOMMENDATIONS.....54

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY .....56

VII. ANNEXES

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## INTRODUCTION

The topic of this research is: The effect of comic strips used as a class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

This project demonstrated how comic strips can be an effective material for English Teaching major students in order to reinforce their English language in the subject Readings and Conversation II, semester I, 2017.

There are many fun ways in which students will get foreign language vocabulary. “Memorizing new words is a huge part of learning a new language”, “Reading is an essential activity because it is the best way to be exposed to a rich and wide vocabulary”. And at the same time it is important to understand the context given since that “context helps us comprehend when a word is used in formal language or informal language” (Magoosh, 2014, 12 Fun Ways to Learn and Remember New English Vocabulary).

So this research starts considering comic strips as a class material that offers the students a great range of possibilities to enhance the vocabulary in the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language. Besides, it is presented as a proposal material to be used in literature classes. For this reason, it will carry out a mix method research.

The most appropriate instruments to explore this authentic printed material were checklist, note taking and closed - ended questionnaire. It was performed a mix method research since this kind of research method was so suitable in order to get information from the respondents of this study so it bore in mind the use of questionnaire or written interview making possible a better understanding of this research topic

It analyzed the results of the use of comic strips with Readings and Conversation II students since it allowed the researchers to give some suggestions and make some proposals about the use of comic strips as an authentic printed material.

On the other hand, the mix method research led to the staff member's research to carry out an analysis about ludic material that the teacher is using regarding to English Readings and Conversation II subject. Thanks to this kind of method it was possible to collect data to give some suggestions and proposals about the suitability of the material used with educational aims.

Briefly, the purpose of this study was to demonstrate the suitability of the already mentioned material as an educational tool in the course English Readings and Conversation II from English major in Teaching, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador, year 2017, that is why it was necessary to present a brief description of the material that the teachers use.

In *El Comic en la Clase de ELE: Una Propuesta Didáctico* P5, Marina Alonso Abal demonstrated the suitability of comics as a teaching tool, without limiting it to a concrete age, reflecting on their potential addressing different aspects presented in comic strips, such as: the affective factor, the ludic component, the humor, the creativity, the interculturality, and the characteristics of iconic verb language which common point is its importance at the time to contribute definitely to the foreign language acquisition.

## **I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

Why do researchers consider comic strips essential and functional for Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador?

### **SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS**

- 1- Why should teachers and students use narratives of comic strips in Readings and Conversation in English II to enhance their previous knowledge?
- 2- How is English language knowledge acquired through the comic strips?
- 3- What features or requirements must comic strips have to be considered as class material in a specific class?
- 4- When do teachers consider necessary and important to develop a topic or class with the use of comic strips as class material?

## **1. OBJECTIVES**

### **1.1 General Objective**

To determine the effect of the use of comic strips exposure in English learners' speaking skill among students from Reading and Conversation II semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

### **1.2 Specific Objectives**

1. To contribute to the increase of vocabulary and grammatical structures that students use by means of comic strips in the real context.
2. To motivate the English learning among classmates of reading and conversation II through exercises of comic strips activities.
3. To demonstrate that classes can be funny and interesting that students experiment with the use of comic strips.
4. To identify which comic strips should be used according to the context and learning level of the students in a given class.



## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM**

This research focused on a mix method research in which the researchers worked with Readings and Conversation II students from the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador semester I, 2017. Students carried out different activities related to comic strips that allowed them to enjoy the English activity using a different and authentic class material. Researchers consulted to in-charged professor if research team could work with the group of students using comic strips or if the professor himself did it in order to help the students to be aware of how important it to improve in that subject was.

## **3. JUSTIFICATION**

It was helpful to study this kind of writing textual genre since it enjoyed itself of great acceptance in all ages, from the little ones to the adults. Researchers would start working from a known material that students could be so interested in order to create a bond between the learner and the target language and on the other hand it helped them to do the homework assignments in a more creative and skillful way.

In a study, it was determined that “Comic strips have become an essential component of library collections for students and teenagers and have enormous potential for classroom use”. Another important study showed that “Comic strips provide an excellent way for student’s writers to communicate a story that has a beginning, middle, and end, also they are an excellent vehicle for teaching writing, as a story has to be pared down to its most basic elements” (Rachael Sawyer, Teaching punctuation, p.3 The Council Chronicle, Sept.05)

In the teaching and learning process of foreign languages such as English and French, there is a series of aspects existing in the comic strips that have gotten relevance. As the author Marina Alonso Abal said: “It can emphasize, among them: the affective factor, the ludic component, the humor, the creativity and the interculturality. All of them have in common their educational importance at the time of contributing to the foreign language acquisition”.

Truly, the main aim of this research was to point the importance out of the use of comic strips as an element of creative unwrapping that the students of English teaching major could develop regarding to Readings and Conversation II subject so the general use of the English language in its different contexts. Besides, this experiment provided the advantages associated to the use of iconic verb language at the time to assimilate the contents viewed in classes.

Likewise, in this study wrote down some recommendations so that researchers could convince professors and students in the Foreign Language Department that comic strips are a great value teaching material by means of note taking, checklist and closed-ended questionnaire from a teaching point of view.

The philologist Marina Alonso Abal stated that “Comic strips take a stand on three great communicative skills which are: skimming reading, scanning reading and intensive critical reading”. (El comic en La Clase de ELE: una propuesta didáctica, 2012, p 10, Paragraph. 5)

Barreiro Villanueva J.M mentioned that “The comics are used as authentic resource in the Spanish class” (p.8). When a student approaches to a comic, an intrinsic motivation guides him, especially if the comics fit his interests. Both the ludic feature presenting in the comic strips and the suggestive value of the images are of great importance for educators.

The teacher Rachael Sawyer Perkins agreed that she used comic strips to teach punctuation for dialogue, and seems them as “extremely visual way of getting across the concept of using quotation marks around narrative text spoken by individuals...” (NCTE, page 2, Rachael Sawyer Perkins)

According to Josh Elder's study, comic strips "impart meaning through the reader's active engagement with written language and juxtaposed sequential images. Readers must actively make meaning from the interplay of text and images, as well as by filling in the gaps between panels". (Reading with Pictures, 2014, page 2, Parr.4)

This research was used for promoting the development of students reading and communicative competence so that teachers can think about the usefulness of authentic printed material that could have an effect on students as a motivating source. In this case, comic strips just as we have cited them on several occasions turn up as a suitable material not only for its motivational potential but also for its cognitive view. The comic strips could be selected according to the grammar structure to be used, student's language level, and student's ages, etc.

#### **4. DELIMITATION OF PROBLEM**

This research was emphasized on the effect of using comic strips in order to enhance students' vocabulary in Readings and Conversation II course, semester I, 2017. For this reason, our research team asked for the participation of 32 students from that course. The research team decided to work with those students of Readings and Conversation II, because of these students were the ones that facilitate us to develop our comic strip activities. Since they had reading tasks which required their attention and interest. The Foreign Language Department was the place where the research took place and the investigation lasted approximately one year. The research team chose three instruments: closed – ended written questionnaire, note taking and check list.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“During the past two decades, a number of studies have introduced techniques for using comic strips in education and particularly in language classrooms”(Arslan, 1998; Wright and Sherman).

To emphasize the importance of reading we need to know the role that it performs in many different class activities. Students should be provided with enough ludic material in an attempt to have a productive, effective and receptive reading class. As **Steve Bowkett and Tony Hitchman** put it “Students are encouraged to think aloud and to share their ideas in whole and small group settings”. In other words, skills such as speaking and reading are integrated simultaneously throughout several activities that increase students desire to read.

Productive material can be defined as a communication starter resource because it facilitates verbal language among the students since comic strips’ thoughts are represented in balloons or when they are talking in speech bubbles. Besides comic strips promotes interaction among students given that comic strips involve critical and creative thinking, inference, problem solving and questioning, putting students in charge of making decisions comparing their ideas with other students to improve their speaking skills.

**Bowkett, Steve (2012)** Using Comic Art to improve speaking, reading and writing (London) Routledge States that “Using comic art is a valuable resource for classroom teachers and education majors who want to enhance their writing instruction”. Put another way comic strips are easier to understand than other sort of authentic reading material. This easy-to-follow resource to turn out to be challenging, fun and engaging because readers must actively make meaning from the interplay of texts and images, as well as by filling in the gaps between panels.

In fact as proposal speaking class activity teachers can take different comics strips and ask learners to reorder it letting them arrange it in proper order and describe the story.

Also, education majors will find that different comic strips heroes can be introduced letting learners speak or write on it, this can be very useful to introduce the topic and brain storm vocabulary. Why should education majors consider so effective comic strips? Because comics can be considered as a text structure for learning to read; this is possible thanks to the easy way that comic strips are elaborated since they represent a short time reading material.

Hence the illustrations in comics can also further a student's analysis of the literature and reinforce the power of words, this allows advanced students to visualize the story and the characters. While the text is often the heart of the story, it is reinforced and furthered through the illustrations. If teachers look for a proposal that increase the interest in reading, comics will be a powerful tool for teaching reading and literary analysis at any grade level.

**Nunan, David (1995)** Australia. In *Second Language teaching and learning* (p.251). **Broken Hill: Cengage ELT**. Remarks on "...receptive reading, which is the rapid, automatic reading that we do when we read narratives". On the other hand, reading between lines demand real comprehension because students do not quote word for word from the text. To have close reading, readers must make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with the text and other strategies to help them understand written text. To illustrate, reading comics is more than the material in hand. Comics can help readers to get the right visualization. By using comic strips, it is certain that it can motivate students to read and pay attention to the material since it would create pleasurable learning English.

What is reading? "We can analyze that Reading is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text" (Reading for Understanding: A Guide to improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms (pp.17-20) by Ruth Schoenbach et al. 1999 Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Company)

“Reading is not a passive, but rather than an active, and in fact an interactive, process has been recognized for some time in first or native language reading” (**Goodman et al.,1967**) as a result students need to practice good enough to have a better comprehension what they read, furthermore, they have to decode the writer’s main idea, that idea that sometimes can be difficult to understand, however, the decoding process can become less stressful and more attractive to the reader’s mind if we add a lot of ludic tools such as comic strips to students’ classes activities.

So, how do students learn a new foreign language? Considered as an important oral skill and reasonable, being capable to read the written language is critical. According to a 1970 article by **Eskey** “reading is the main reason why students learn the language” teachers have to encourage to students to be active readers by means of using different ludic strategies that get students’ attraction and motive to teachers move to different class atmosphere including those funny panels in the process of learning.

Effective reading in a second language is important. Professionals in second language education should be vitally concerned with approaches that can improve the reading skills of learners. Every student has a different perspective about reading subject and it depends on student’s particular interest. Although students’ purposes for reading is to obtain information and show curiosity about some topic, they need to have a good reading performance in which they can get the opportunity to study the finer points of the text and so learn more about how the language is used,

According to a recent article (**Patricia L. Carrell 1971**) affirms that “not only is the reader an active participant in the reading process, making predictions and processing information, but everything in the reader’s prior experience or background knowledge plays a significant role in the process”, that is students’ minds process a lot of information at the same time they are visualizing the text images, especially if those images are used for academic purposes. Reading enables students to get a message recognizing the written words. For this reason, students need an interactive model that contributes to enhance their vocabulary.

In the words of **Sharon F. Webster**, English department chairperson and literacy coach at Narragansett High School in Narragansett, Rhode Island. “Comics can engage students in the pre-reading stage and can serve as a connection through the reading and assessment stages” we have decided to study the effect that can produce the usage of comic strips in reading, given that this authentic material represents a very real challenging text not only to basic readers but also to advanced readers.

## **Reading**

Reading is a great skill to be used both at school and throughout life. According to Anderson, **Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson**, “reading is an essential life skill. It is basic for child’s success in school and indeed; throughout life”. The lack of the ability to read well could be an obstacle for their goals to get a job but without it inevitably will be lost. Despite it is vital, reading is one of the most crucial areas in the education system. “The ever-increasing demand for high levels of literacy in our technological society makes this problem even more pressing” (**Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998**) students’ attitudes about reading also influence their ability to read. If the students want to get different kind of material the purpose is not to read but to know to analyze what we are reading and have to learn critically and analytically. The objective here is that when we read something, we hope to try to understand what the author’s intention is. When dealing with reading, we encounter two layer of reality; one that we can see and one that we cannot see. “Therefore, the purpose of reading is to make the invisible layer, the underlying meaning, visible and clear” (**Kóse, 2016**) **Teel** asserts that “the goal of all readers should be to understand what they read” (**2004, p. 92**)

For that reason, we can say that the ultimate of reading is comprehension. It teaches the reader to make sense of what the text is about. We must encourage in our student successful strategic method to improve comprehension. With this important strategic reading method can benefit students achieve not only their academic needs, but more importantly their life purposes in the area of readings skill. Reading strategies, techniques or methods is about to a planned or established way of reading. Therefore, the activities of

reading become an interesting strategy in the process of learning or acquiring a second language. Research by Richard Day among many others shows that we learn to read by reading. The more language students read the better readers they become. An integral part of this is learning new vocabulary. (<http://kierandonaghv.com>)

### **Reading strategies**

There are many strategies that teachers should take into account in order to have a better result in reading comprehension but we cannot deny that the lack of vocabulary affect negatively the learners but reading provides different method in which the students can improve that kind of problems because they increase and develop the reading abilities. “It is important to know the different strategic in order to achieve the better comprehension like predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferring, and summarizing are strategies shown by research to improve reading comprehension” (Block & Israel, 2005). “It is essential to teach the strategies by naming the strategy and how it can be used, modeling through the think aloud process, group practice, partner practice and independent use of the strategy” ( Duke & Pearson, 2005 ).

It is a reality that sometimes the readings materials given by the teacher are hard to understand. If the comprehension is not clear, the learners do not know what the authors want to say. Whereby, they need to find the key words that the authors have applied to get a good reader. “**Predicting** is one strategy for improving comprehension, which helps the reader, set a purpose for their reading”. “Research has shown that good readers use their experiences and knowledge to make prediction and formulate ideas as they read” (Block & Israel, 2005). “This strategy also allows for more students interaction, which increases students interest and improves their understanding of the text” (Oczkus, 2003). It is necessary to use this kind of tools like predicting in order to get a good understanding.

According to (Flower, 1990 p 6) argues that “the process of reading to write guides the way readers interact with a text, forcing them to manipulate and transform the information for their own needs”, the benefit of strategies in reading and conversation show that the students can have a better communication among them and others in the classroom and outside the classroom. There is another technique that helps in a good way the reading.



**Visualizing:** “another strategy that the good reader employ when comprehending a text is visualization” (Adler, 2001). It consists that it requires the reader to construct an images to memorize what is read. “Those images are stored in the reader’s memory as a representation of the reader’s interpretation of the text” (National Reading Panel, 2000)

In addition, we want to show another strategy that we can use in reading and conversation that is **Making Connection;** with this kind of tool the learners can activate their prior knowledge and connect the idea in the text in their own experiences. “Text-to-world connections could be done by comparing characters in a story to characters today or comparing the content of the text to the world today” (Teel, 2004). Providing all kind of tools to achieve the purpose is easier and funny to read any kind of reading. All these strategies give the students the opportunity to make the difference between them at the moment of applying in the reading comprehension.

We would like as the research team to encourage the use of **Inferring** technique too like another strategy. “It refers to reading between the lines. Therefore, students allowed to use their own knowledge along with information from the text to draw their own conclusion” (Serafine, 2004). “Through inferring student will be able to draw conclusions, make predictions, identify underlying themes, use information to create meaning from text, and use pictures to create meaning” (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Students can be given techniques to use illustrations, graphs, pictures, dates, related vocabulary and titles from the text to make inferences.

Reading is considered the most important and useful components for students. Reading strategies are fundamental for learners; even at the beginning they are enabling to comprehend any type of text, which after some time will make them have greater understanding. Studies show that reading is essential for learners and educators; they should know that reading help them in order to reach a successful learning as a foreign language. Without all kinds of strategies as students and as educators it could be more difficult to have a great reading. Therefore, it is vital to follow these methods to achieve a better understanding of the reading comprehension.

## **The essential use of the comic strips for EFL learners**

However, it is essential to know as educators and as students that exists another kind of resources that contribute so much to become excellent readers. It contains different uses and can be applied in any content making the learning more creative and interesting as a technique to teach and learn a foreign language to increase and improve their ability to read any kind of material since it can be used with any topic for that, the students enjoy learning using comic strips as a class material. “One authentic material that has been explored over the past few years is the comic strips or comic books” (see **Davis, 1990, for detailed bibliography**). Comic strips and graphic novels can be used in ESL and EFL classrooms to enhance students to become good readers. They can also form the basis of several classroom activities that will engage students and generate discussion.

## **Foreign Language Acquisition, Reading, and Comics**

**Nagy, Herman, and Anderson (1985)** argue that “picking up word meanings by reading is 10 times faster than intensive vocabulary instruction” (**Krashen, 1993, p. 15**). Reading can also have other skills, as “several studies confirm that those who read more in their second language also write better in that language” (**Salyer 1987; Janopoulos 1986; Kaplan and Palhinda 1981**), (**Krashen, 1993, p. 7**). Therefore, reading can and should play an important role in the second or foreign language classroom. “The most important factor in the development of reading skill is the amount of time a student actually spends reading”, (**Cummins, 2003, p. 20**). There are some ways that ESL/EFL teachers can make the amount of time their students read is by using comics and graphic novels, which can be important and useful in foreign language classrooms. In addition, the students not only can provide language learners with contextualized comprehensible input, they can

also engage the learner and lead him or her to explore and experiment more graphic novels or books, magazines, newspapers, and other reading materials.

### **Students Comic Strips Conversation**

The researchers on comics were published in the journal **School Library Monthly**, argued that "Any book can be good and any book can be bad, to some extent. It's up to the reader's personality and intellect. As a whole, comics are just another medium, another genre". Also, they were agreeing that "If reading is to lead to any meaningful knowledge or comprehension, readers must approach a text with an understanding of the relevant social, linguistic and cultural conventions" (**School Library Monthly**). And last one, they said "And if you really consider how the pictures and words work together to tell a story, you can make the case that comics are just as complex as any other kind of literature."(**School Library Monthly**).

In fact, "[...] comic strips [can be used] as a means to help students deal with 'the ambiguity, vagueness and downright sloppiness of spoken English' by introducing 'language learners to 'ellipsis, blends, no words, vague lexis, confirmation checks, contrastive stress, new topic signals, nonverbal language, motivation [and] routine/ritual phrases' (Cary, 2004, p. 33). These are aspects of reading language that English resources might not deal with or, if they do, only as an afterthought. Comics, on the other hand, put each of these into context and make them relevant to foreign language learners.

In this research the proposal topic about comic strips as a class material is to know how it can help to enhance the vocabulary of readings and conversation II students and demonstrate the positive effect of that material in the English performance of those students. Researcher students consider comic strips essential and functional because text and images work together in the comic story to make a better effectiveness in meaning.

## **Comic strips in literature**

After different research studies, Comics have already been considered “literature” because is one of the ways students or people can have information, as this author said: “Some comics possess some of the kinds of values that great literary works possess. For example, most great works of literature are similar to other great works of art in being creative, original, well-structured, and unified” *Comics as Literature?* by **Aaron Meskin** P.220, 2009.

In all activity students need some information to process knowledge. The literature given to the Readings and Conversation II students in the comic strips texts was the one that they had for developing the activities in the texts.

Those activities consisted that the information read in texts was essential to communicate them what they do. In that group of students those activities were for enhancing vocabulary and using the second language.

The information consisted on food idiomatic expressions in which it was intended the students used it to complete sentences, to create a new dialogue and express orally opinions or thoughts so that they read the information offered to them in the texts.

The research team’s intention was the students understand the readings or expressions given to them. When they comprehended the message, they could analyze it written and orally.

## **Readings in comics**

Literature improves reading skill, and comic strips do it efficiently according the objectives readers need to, as the author **Farida Arroyani** said in her thesis “Reading comics is more than the material in hand. Comics can help readers to get the right visualization. By using comic strips, it was hoped that it could motivate students to read and pay attention to the material. It would create pleasurable learning in English”.

## Conversation

The objective of Readings and Conversation II course is to develop fluent and critical readers able to reflect and discuss topics so that the comic strips activities target can give to those students specifically in enhancing vocabulary. The Languages are a form of communication among human being, and the reason of people who learn a second language is to communicate as they do it in their mother tongue, thus those learners as well as teachers use different material in order to learn it, in this case, the research team proposed the used of comic strips highlighting its advantages of a series of frames telling a story adapted to a variety of activities in an English class. And the author **Kenneth Rexroth** said in his book “**Literature**” that “Literature is a form of human expression”. Also, this author said that “The content of literature is as limitless as the desire of human beings to communicate with one another”.

### **Some advantages using comic strips for learning a new language are:**

1. Humor providing by the images which allows the readers be part of the story.  
Farida **Arroyani** refers that according **David Nunan** (1991:279): “The humorous characteristic provides relaxed the atmosphere and moreover, it is familiar to the students”.
2. Text accompanied by images is another way to analyze Literature, but also readers can change the story or part of that and having the opportunity to play or use in different forms with the information according with the teacher lesson plan, “With comic strip stories the students are challenged to practice speaking”. (**Farida Arroyani**. The effectiveness of teaching using comic strips to facilitate students reading comprehension skill on narrative text.
3. Effectiveness provided by images and the story text to readers for having a better processing of the information they want to comprehend: “Processing text and images together leads to better recall and transfer of learning. Neurological

experiments have shown that we process text and images in different areas of the brain: known as the Dual-Coding Theory of Cognition. These experiments also indicate that pairing an image with text leads to increased memory retention for both. With comics, students not only learn the material faster, they learn it better.” Comics in the Classroom: Why Comics? August 04, 2014 by **Michelle Manno** P1. The theoretical base above is supported by the next proven usefulness when the illustration bring in mind’s readers a comprehensible context: “The illustrations in comics can also further a student’s analysis of the literature and reinforce the power of words.”, besides “they can only increase a student’s confidence in their abilities, and may even prompt a further interest in reading.” (**Andrew Smith**, *Everything you need to know to start teaching with comics!*)

4. The characteristic of the story presenting illustrated scene by scene until complete the plot of comic strip is the advantage of how get effectively readers’ attention and why that characteristic make the activities look easy at first sight. That is the reason why research team was confident to prove the effectiveness of the use of comic strips in English classes already supported by other researchers. Those comic researches are of wide results depending of what had been wanted to investigate. In **Oller’s episode hypothesis**, the author argued that: “a text that has a story line and a logical structure is easier to remember and to recall. Comic strips provide the structure and stimulus to which students respond”
5. In spite of the illustrated story characteristic of comic strips, that material can be used as teachers may want in the English language classroom. Those uses are reflected in the lesson plan. The thing is that it is flexible and it can be applied without any problem to any age, level or group because the importance of using them is for the effect that its particular presentation cause in learners and from there its effectiveness as class material. In *El Comic en la Clase de ELE: Una Propuesta Didáctico* P5, **Marina Alonso Abal** demonstrated the suitability of comics as a teaching tool, without limiting it to a concrete age.

In a study done by Farida Arroyani, “it was concluded that the implementation of using comic strips as method in the teaching reading comprehension skill of narrative text was effective” (Farida Arroyani, The effectiveness of teaching using comic strips to facilitate students reading comprehension skill on narrative text.. 2010)

There are many reasons why using comic strips as method in the teaching reading comprehension skill can be totally useful. It is necessary to bear in mind that the subject English Readings and Conversation II involves highly complex cognitive processing operation because students need to be able to reflect and discuss a wide range of topics. For example: “How safe is our food?” “Genetically Modified Food”, topics that require critical thinking and Intensive reading analysis.

For this reason, teachers need to recognize the effectiveness of use visual content in the classroom. There are three reasons why are they considered effective; the first reason we have to consider is to use a different kind of technique such as comic strips making the lessons’ content more understandable. The second one is that teacher attracts the student’s attention to the picture-cartoons representing a variety of topics. On the top of that, the third is of using comic strips in English Readings and Conversation II. It is referring to the way that it facilitates language learning and encourages the students to use them.

In a study made by **Farida Arroyani** previously mentioned showed that “student’s reading comprehension which sample was 59.8% after getting treatment was improved. In the treatment students were given comic strips and text relates to the comic strips. With this media, barriers and hindrances such as less interest and less focus can be solved” (**Farida Arroyani**, The effectiveness of teaching using comic strips to facilitate students reading comprehension skill on narrative text .2010)

It is essential to point out that reading is not something that every individual learns to do given that students need to make inference and interpret the meaning of texts. Reading process needs to be more attractive to reader’s mind and less decoding form.

The first thing to be considered is there exist a practical way for students to grasp the meanings of the words without mistakes. That is to say “comic strips” Comic strips that

incorporate text with visual representations offer teachers a great tool for helping students develop their visual skills and to catch the attention of the readers.

What is more reading with comic strips can result more interested, more enjoyable and less stressful since they allow students to create something unique and show their understanding of what they read. In the same way, reading teachers need to adopt different strategies to fix to students' needs so that students in English Readings and Conversation II can read efficiently. Student's ability is determined by using reading techniques to reconstruct meaning.

**David Nunan** remarks on "the average length of English words, good readers would only be able to process around 60 words per minute. However, we also know that the average reader can read between 250 and 350 words per minute", (Second language teaching and learning, 1999, P. 252.). Equally important is the average of reading comprehension skill level which is taught by comic strip.

A further point is if students read text only, they look uninterested and less challenged as the result it could not increase student's reading comprehension skill in English Readings and Conversation II. Students could not enjoy in reading because it seems like facing unrecognized word and strange passage.

**David Nunan** agrees that "Pedagogical tasks might include reordering a set of scrambled sentences for a coherent paragraph, underlining the topic sentence in a text, comparing the ordering of information in a newspaper article about an incident with that in a radio report of the same incident" (Second language Teaching and Learning, 1999, P.266)

It is true to bear in mind that pedagogical tasks might include also idiomatic expressions in a comic strip in order to enhance the English language vocabulary of students, in like manner, students can imagine and create the dialogue between the characters that are presented in a comic strip to enhance their English language vocabulary. This is a good pedagogical task proposal because it allows to students to innovate their reading's techniques.



**David Nunan** (1999) states that “As it is comparatively rare to find courses’ dealing exclusively with reading, the final step in the design process is to link reading and other language skills. If we take the topic of health, for example, we might interact in the followings ways when dealing with a matter of health” (illness, injury, or a general check up) (Second language teaching and learning. P. 267)

It is essential to remember that studying and learning a second language such as English requires spending time training the appropriate skill, in this case reading, if we put in practice the use of comic strips in the English class, we will be able to give students opportunities to go beyond the texts, evaluating and critiquing what they read.

In conclusion, reading process include to deal with a variety of topics that can be difficult to learn for students, but with the appropriate method English Readings and Conversation can become an easy cognitive processing operation.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

#### **1. RESEARCH APPROACH**

The approach that the researchers used is based on the mix method research. Researchers demonstrated through mix method research how comic strips could influence students' reading and conversation among them.

The research team implemented comic strip activities using reading strategies for students' arguments in the sample class. The students observed the drawings and organized the text on scrambled comic strips, placed connectors in pair or small groups in a single class. Those comic strips were authentic material.

It was pretended to observe and to prove how comic strips were useful not only to enhance the use of the vocabulary, language structures, collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, etc. but also to help improve the reading and conversation skills of the students.

#### **2. TYPE OF STUDY**

The team work used it a descriptive research to study the effect of using comic strips in reading and conversation's students. Researchers were passive observers to gather qualitative and quantitative data of the whole class to be interpreted and analyzed. Researchers examined the written and visual data gathered through observation using the already mentioned instruments.

### **3. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The methodology was a descriptive design because research team wanted to observe, analyze and explain the results of the useful of comic strips in students' reading and conversation skills. Also those arguments were based on research thesis done by theirs owners and other important information.

The instruments were chosen by the research team gathered the information to determine how useful comic strips can be to improve the English, and to have knowledge in advance about more vocabulary, better use of language structures, collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, etc. in reading and conversation skills.

The use of checklist, note taking were applied at the moment when visiting the classroom, close-ended questionnaire was given to the sample group every during the semester I 2017, in the afternoon shift. All this information provided the research team to make a deep approach about the study, and it permitted to analyze different variables of the influence of comic strips in those students

### **4. METHOD**

#### **Mix method**

The research team agreed to employ the mix method because it allowed them to observe the behavior of the students and analyze their participation using comic strip as a didactic material. Put in another way, as a challenging to face something new to improve the English language.

## **5. POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

### **POPULATION**

The population that researchers determined to use comic strips as authentic class material was Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, morning and afternoon shifts at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

### **SAMPLE**

The population was relatively large, consisting of an overage of 80 students, so it was concluded that the sample consisted of a group of 40 students, coming from Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

The process of results was based on final general conclusions of the observation, the descriptive analysis of the checklist, note taking in the class observed, and closed-ended questionnaire data and comic strips used in the group of students.

## **6. RESEARCH TECHNIQUES**

The research techniques focused on the applying of the English language in comic strips to the students' management on Readings and Conversation. Comic strips were useful to observe the students' performance. Also it could help them to improve their English more specifically in reading and speaking skills.

## **7. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

Instruments were structured based on dependent variables to prove the impressions of the using of comic strips in Readings and Conversation II students in order to gather qualitative and quantitative data for analyzing and achieving the general and specific objectives.

The research team had determined to use the next instruments:

- Observation check list
- Note Taking (Written description of general notes obtained in the moment of work area)
- Close-ended questionnaire (See annexes)

## **IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **1. TESTS**

The research team elaborated the pretest and posttest with the only intention to achieve the research objectives. The pretest was worked by twenty students, and the posttest by thirty-two students. (See annex)

Each test had five evaluating aspects to measure the students' competences. They followed the test directions in order to complete the task, then in this way they were evaluated in excellent, good, average, need improvement and unsatisfactory criteria and they could achieve up to one to ten grade.

#### **1.1 PRETEST RESULTS**

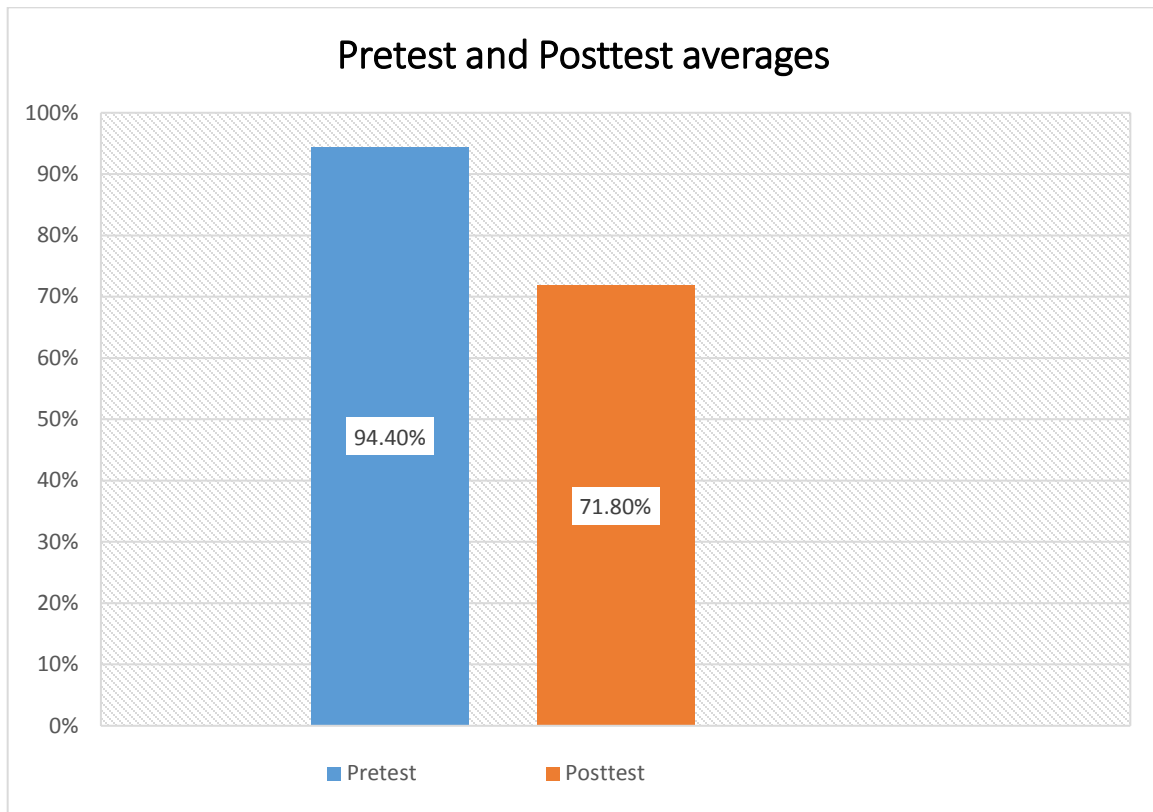
The pretest's students reactions in English Readings and Conversation II course.

The pretest was well accepted among students of Readings and Conversations group II. First, some exercises were given to students which were completed successfully. Second, a comic strip was included so that they could fill up speech bubbles with the information provided. Finally, research team gathered all information given by students who stated that exercises were funny and well understandable. The pretest was concluded successfully, counting with all students acceptance, thus the final average pretest was graded in 9.44 and 94.40%. (See annex)

## 1.2 POSTTEST RESULTS

The posttest was concluded successfully, almost counting with all students acceptance like the pretest, thus the final average posttest was graded in 7.18 and 71.8%.

In summary, it can be seen that all the students managed the five aspects to evaluate in the development in general. This means that they followed and completed effectively the different comic activities there.



The bar chart was about the pretest and posttest results. The chart is divided into two bars. It was taken from English Readings and Conversation II students' afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department.

The pretest result was higher in comparison with the posttest. The students considered that comic strips are a source to reinforce the learning process of second language in this case English. It is important to realize that in the posttest the number of percentage decreases by 22.60% because that day the students were taking the midterm exam of the Readings and Conversation II subject, on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Nevertheless, they were a little tired for the exam; they were willing to cooperate towards the comic strip activity.

So we can say that in a rate from 0% to 100% pretest result was 94.40% while the posttest result was 71.80%. It was really surprising that the difference between them was 22.60%. This shows a decrease in the average rate. Despite the aforementioned limitation, it was observed the effectiveness of that class material because most of the students completed the activity based on the context introduced in the comic strip story and information given to them as starting point that helped them to get ideas from their own and to work in the activity.

Finally, all the students in the pretest and the posttest average 8.31, and 83.1% mean that they managed the five aspects to evaluate in the development of both tests. This means that the students completed effectively the different comic activities.

With the average obtained in the previous table is shown a high effectiveness for the use of comic strip to complete the activity process, since it almost achieved the higher average. Also, it demonstrated the students could experience fun for using that different and interesting class material adapted to their context and learning level. In that case, advanced students in order to contribute to enhance vocabulary and grammatical structures in the tests. It is also important to mention that all the students returned the test completed. Apart from it, they could reinforce all the skills because that educational tool allow the interrelationship of the skills, not just readings and conversation, but also to be used in levels and contexts, topics or specific activities.



## PRETEST AND POSTTEST CRITERIA SCALE

<b>VALIDITY:</b> Affirms what it measures.
<b>Acceptable:</b> Up to 2
<b>Good:</b> Between 4 – 6
<b>Excellent:</b> Above 8

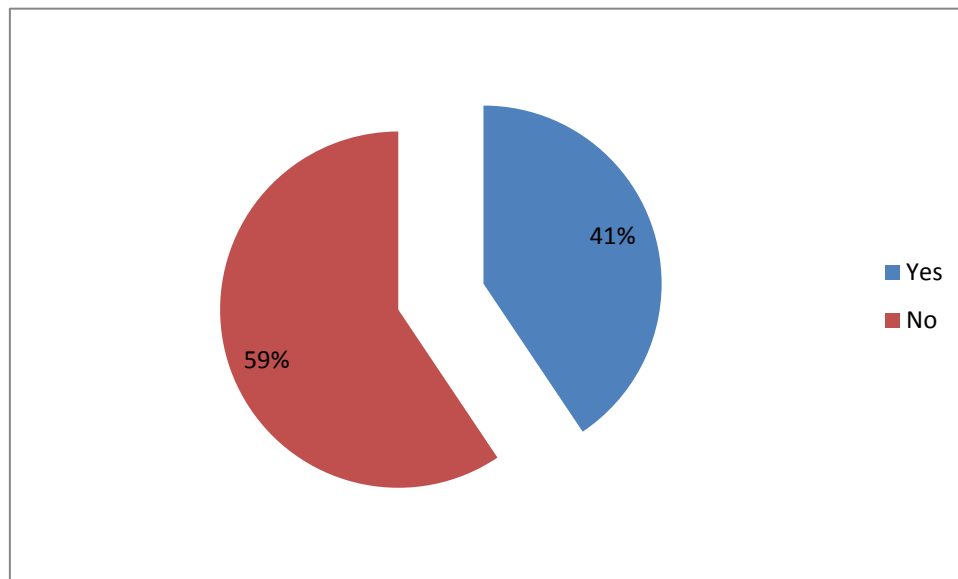
**UTILITY:** Application of the instrument in real life.

## 2- INSTRUMENTATION

### 2.1 WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE'S SCORE SUMMARY

Sample: 32 students

1. Do you use comic strips to learn English?



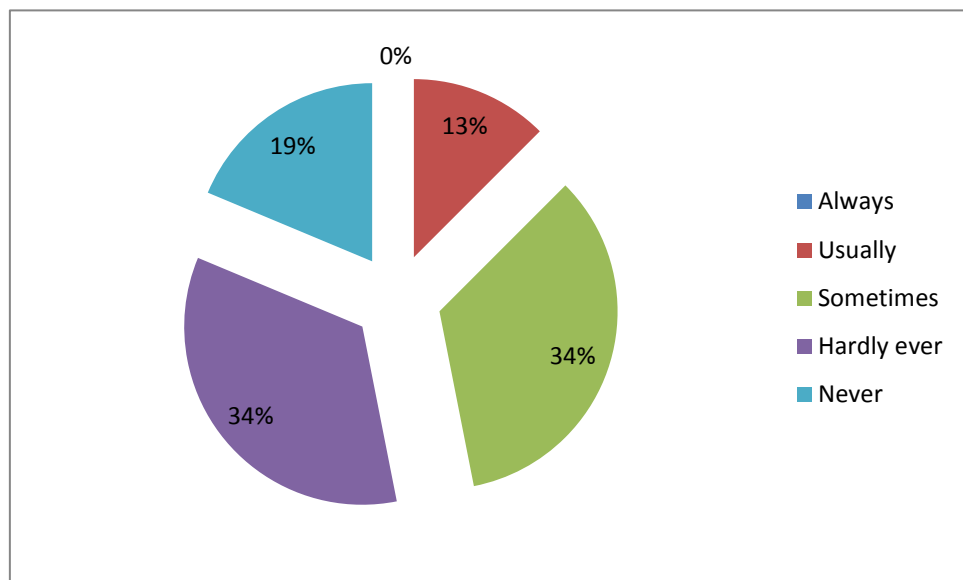
#### Analysis

This question showed us that the use of comic strips as a great tool to teach and learn English is not implemented, whereby, 41% of the students answered **yes** and 59% of them answered **no**.

#### Interpretation

It could be pointed out that the teachers could decide whether or not they could use comic strips as resources to teach their classes. Research team considered that comic strips could be a great source to teach and learn English. Moreover, comic strips could help students to assimilate the English structure studied in classes and it should be considered as an interesting strategy to teach and learn English language to be used in educational processes, especially readings and conversation.

2. How often are the comic strips used in class?



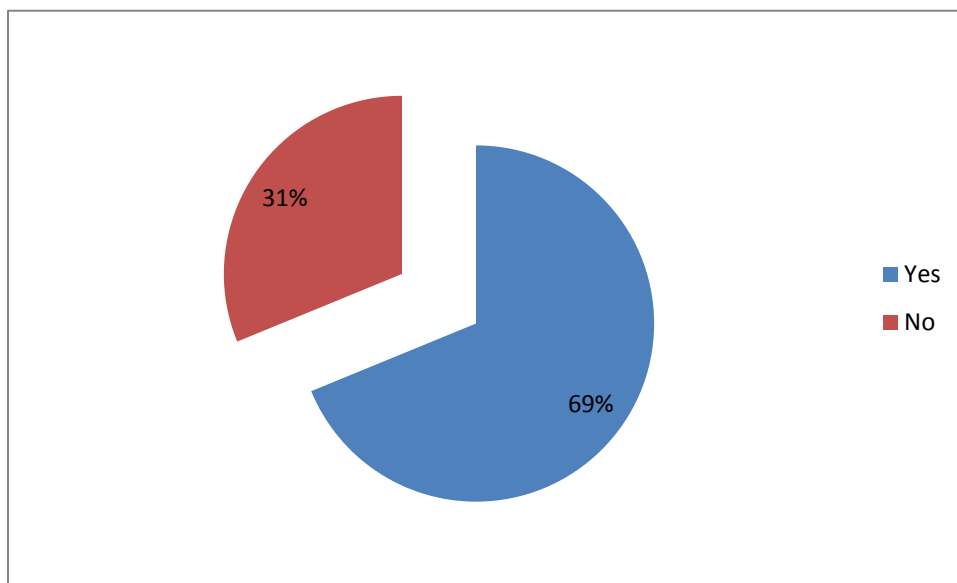
### Analysis

In this question, students were asked how often comic strips are used in class. The 13% of the participants indicated that comic strips are **always** used during class. On the other hand, only 19% stated that comic strips are **usually** used in class. 34% of the participants commented that comic strips are **sometimes** used as class material by teachers. Surprisingly, another 34% of the participants answered that comic strips are **hardly ever** used in class and they would like that this type of material could be used more frequently in class.

### Interpretation

The researcher team noticed that comic strips are overlooked as a resource to teach English as second language. The students confirmed with their answers the necessity to include more comic strips as class material as tool to empower their learning process.

3. Do you consider that comic strips can be used as communication starter?



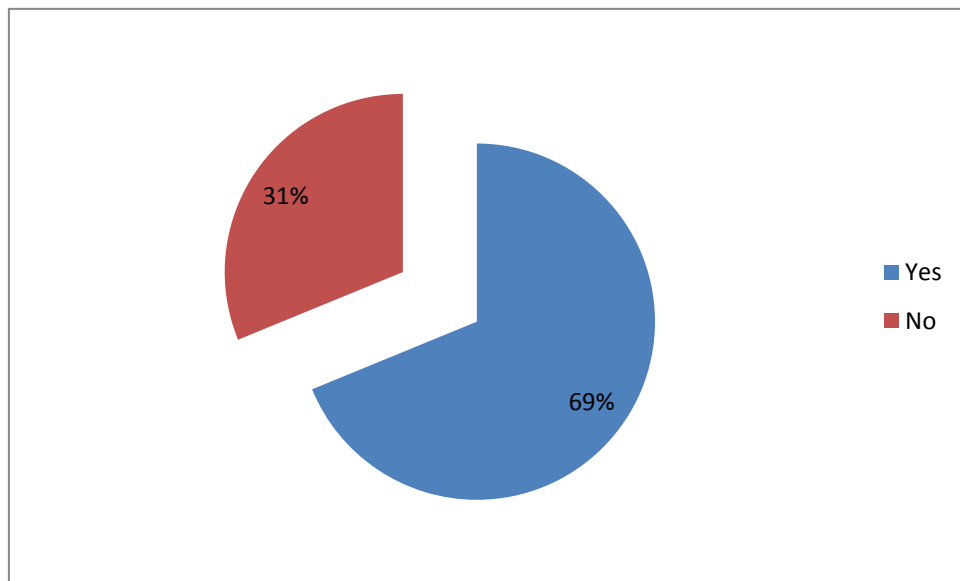
### **Analysis**

According to results gotten from this question, 69% of the students considered that comic strips are excellent tools to start a conversation. In fact, through comic strips students can find common ground to start and hold a conversation with their classmates. Thus, their speaking proficiency will be favorable stimulated. On the other hand, only 31% of the participants disagreed that comic strips cannot be effectively used for communication starter. Rarely to talk about other topics to start a conversation among their classmates.

### **Interpretation**

As shown in the results, the students considered that the use of comic strips as communication starter helped them to communicate new ideas, improve their knowledge and increase their vocabulary. Strengthening the habit of the use of comic strips in English learning processes should enhance vocabulary, reading and conversation skills.

4. Would you like your teachers to add more comic strips material in their lessons?



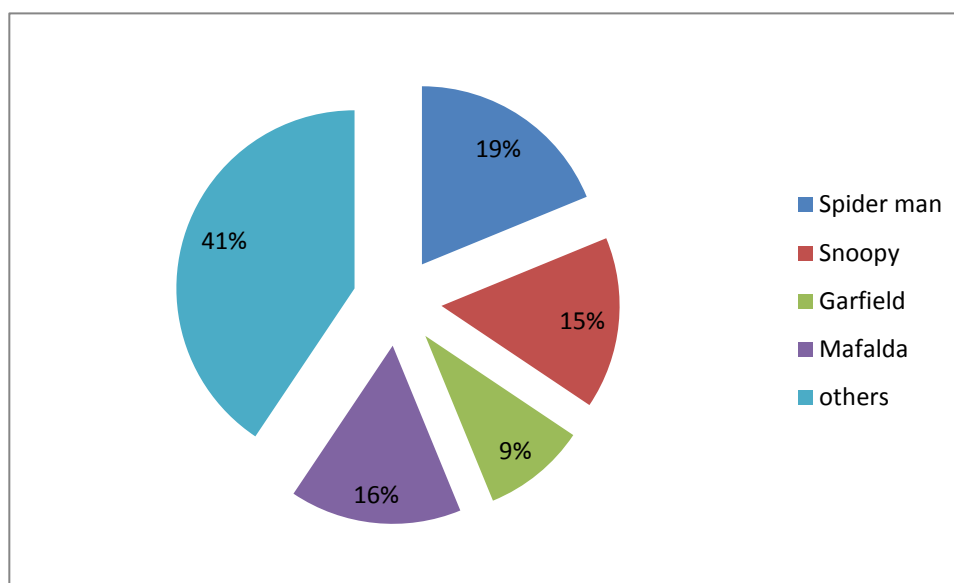
### **Analysis**

According to results gotten, the majority of the participants, 69%, affirmatively answered when they were asked if they would like their teachers to include more comic strips material in their class. The research team feels satisfied with the fact that students are opened to adopt comic strips as class material. However, 31% of students considered comic strips in class should be avoided since they do not consider it is an element that will help to enhance their learning process of English.

### **Interpretation**

According to the results, a large segment of the students agreed that their teachers should invest more time in including more activities that involved towards the usage of comic strips in order to stimulate effectively the learning process of the students. Referring to most of the students that teachers could find out in comic strip as class material a not common way to teach English classes to improve the learning of the students in order to help their performance and confidence in themselves.

5. What is your favorite comic strip?



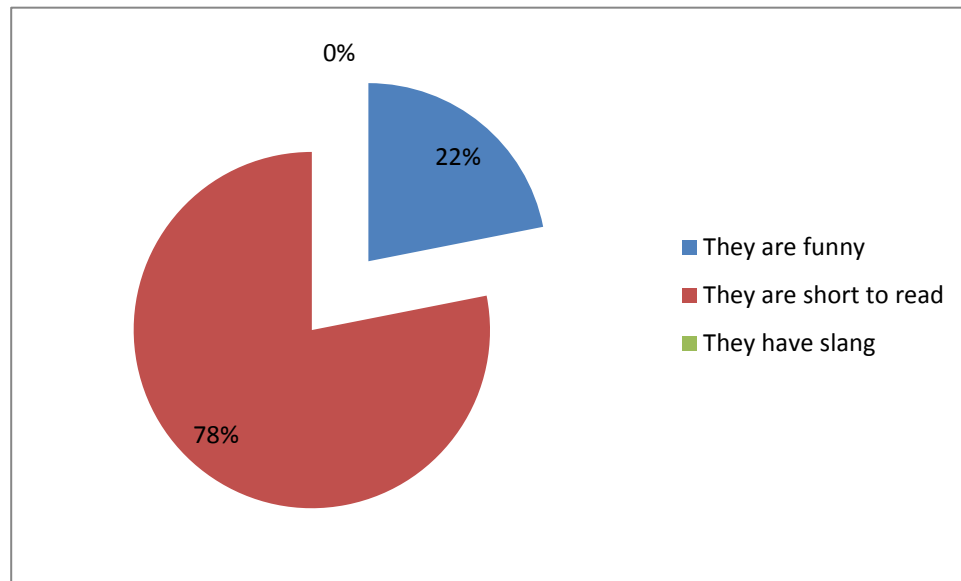
### Analysis

In this item, participants were asked who their favorite comic strips character was. They were given 5 options from which the 19% of participants selected **Spider man** as their favorite comic strip character. While, 15% answered that favorite comic strip was **Snoopy** and the other 9% of the participants chose **Garfield** as their preferred character. On the other hand, **Mafalda** got 16% of the participants' choice. Finally, **other** comic strip characters got the 41% of the participants' preference, which it is a hint that comic strips do not limit to few characters.

### Interpretation

It was noticeable that the research team was concerned to raise the interest in implementing the use of comic strips as an effective and innovating technique to teach and learn English inside the classrooms with the advantage of the illustrated presentation besides the text in bubbles.

6. Why do you like comics?



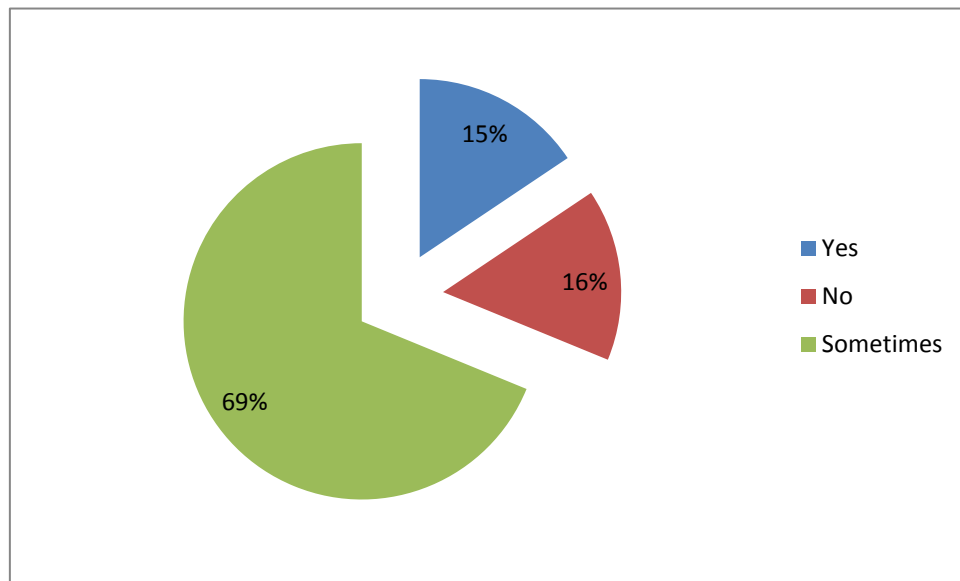
**Analysis**

As it is shown in this chart, participants were asked to select the reason why they like comic strips, having the next options: they are funny, they are short to read and they are slangs. The 78% of the participants said that the reason why they like comic strips is because **they are short to read**. Whereas, 22% of the participants declared that they like comic strips because **they are funny to read**.

**Interpretation**

As shown with this data obtained, those students thought that this material was funny, but more than that it got their attention quickly because it had shorter stories to read. These comic strip characteristics were helpful to be used as educational tools. According to the results, comic strips were very attractive to students because they could read it without taking too long which it was an excellent alternative in case they had a busy schedule and students could find easier the English learning.

### 7. Is a comic strip easy to use for you?



### Analysis

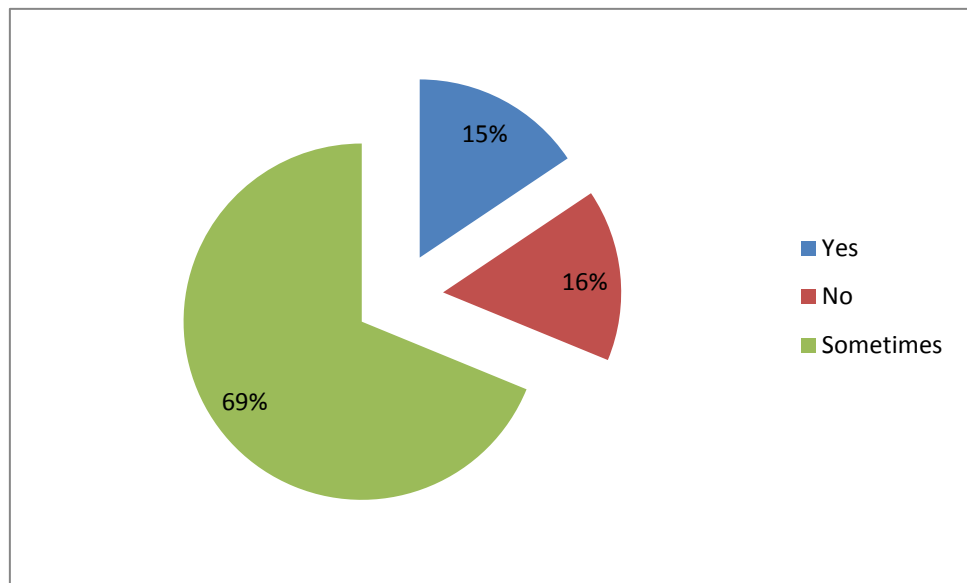
As this chart shows, the option **yes** was selected by 15% of the participants, they put in agreement that comic strips were easy to understand and use. Whereas, option **no** was chosen by the 16% participants, considering comic strips as difficult material to use. Surprisingly, 69% of the participants answered that comic strips material are **sometimes** difficult to use this may be because for the lack of interaction that students have with the comic strip materials.

### Interpretation

According to the results, students should get more familiar with the use of the comic strips. So, research team considered if that more the students had access to comic strips material, more they would get familiar to use them. That is why comic strips materials should be more frequently included in the class lessons. Research team considered the students should face more to comic strips activities and to take advantages of the known benefits.



8. Do you feel you learn better when using comic strips?



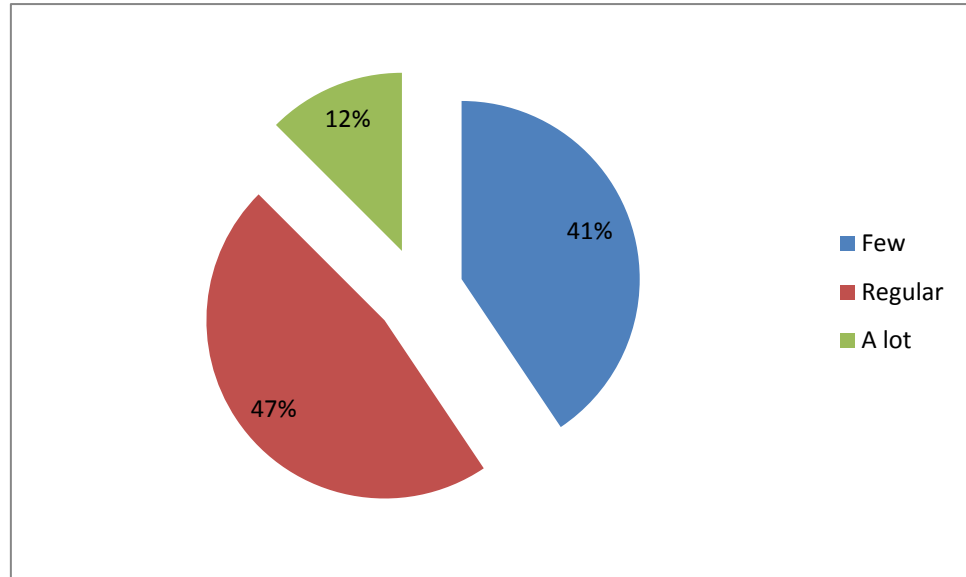
### **Analysis**

The results obtained in this item showed that 15% of the students considered that they would learn better if they had contact with comic strip materials. Unlike, the other 16% of students answered that they do not learn better when they study using comic strips. On the other hand, 69% of the students stated that sometimes the assimilation of the English class becomes better when comic strip materials are provided.

### **Interpretation**

According to the results, the students do not always use comic strips to learn English. However, sometimes they acquire better the English structures studied in class. Comic strips are an interesting tool to make English comprehension. Research team strongly believed that comic strips are an excellent tool to acquire English skills and improve the students' English proficiency and for that the research team is sure the students could enhance better the English language with the constant use of comic strips.

9. Do your classmates have the same interest as you?



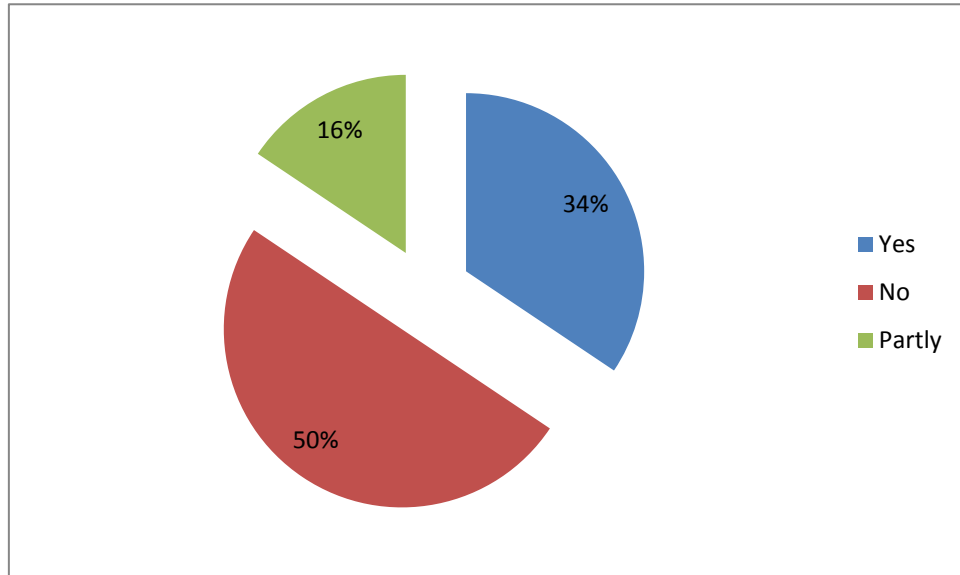
### Analysis

According to the results to this particular item, 41% of the students selected the option **few**. On the other hand, **regular** was selected by 47% of the students. Whereas, the option **a lot** was chosen by 12% of the students.

### Interpretation

According to the results gathered, the research team found out that interest in comic strips varies from student to student,

10. From the material given during the intervention, have you already completed your comic strip task in class?



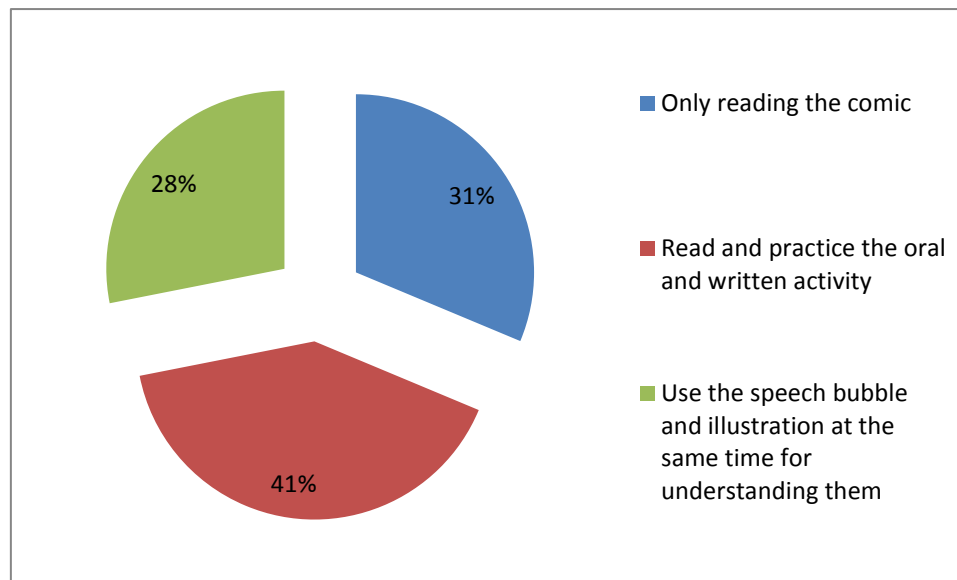
### **Analysis**

Students' questionnaire results revealed that the total of students surveyed by our research team 34.4% of students answered **yes**, however 50% of students answered **no**, and 15.6% of students answered **partly**.

### **Interpretation**

The completion of the comic strip tasks presented different factors such as lack of cooperation, and comprehension among students that led to an incomplete development of the activity by most of students. Even though, when comic strips were presented as a narrative text.

11. In what way do you consider you learn vocabulary and language structures better in the comic strip used as an activity?



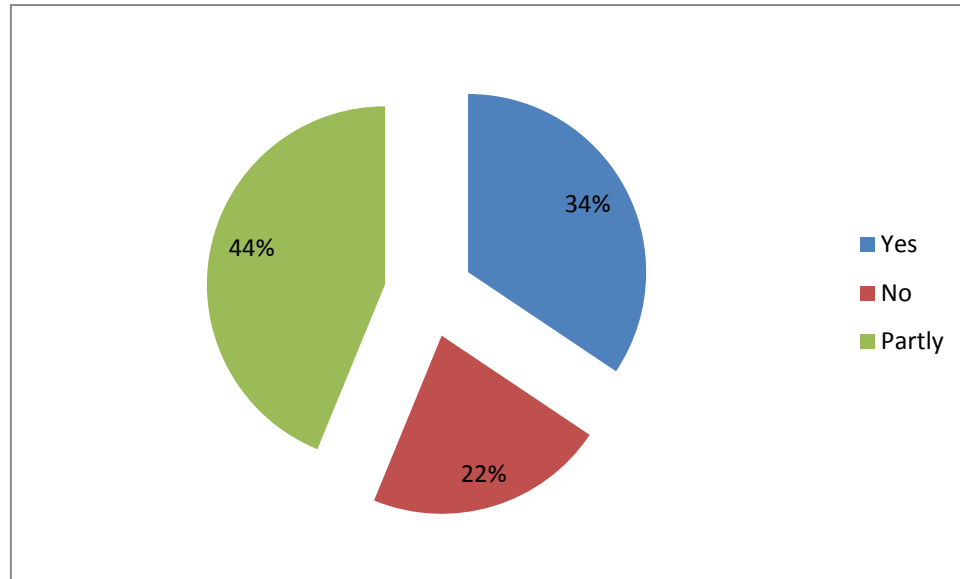
### Analysis

The students' reactions were represented in the following percentages: 31.3% of students answered **only reading the comic**, 40.6% of the students answered **read and practice the oral and written activity**, and 28.1% of the students answered **use the speech bubble and illustration at the same time for understanding them**.

### Interpretation

According to the results gathered from this investigation, the researchers proved that students learnt vocabulary and language structures better using comic strips as an oral and written activity since teachers used them to enhance students' previous knowledge.

12. Are comic strips an excellent and useful educational tool for teachers and students in the teaching and learning process of English language?



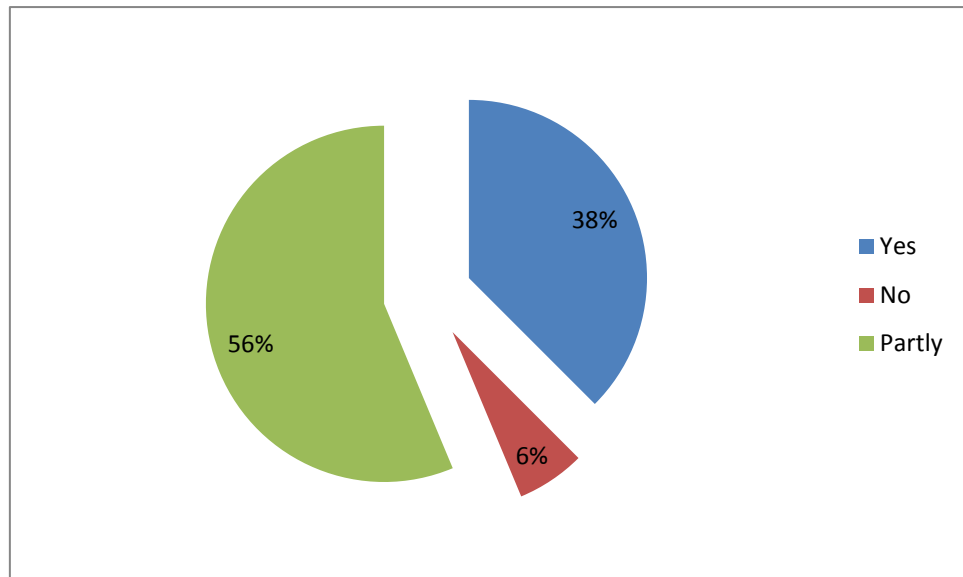
### **Analysis**

Our research team has evaluated different answers during the analysis of data, therefore 34.4% of participants answered **yes**, but 21.9% participants answered **no**, and 43.8% of participants answered **partly**.

### **Interpretation**

As result of the data analysis, it was equally important for students to recognize that comic strips are an excellent and useful educational tool for them in the learning process of English language due to the fact that they have become a very useful tool to acquire more language knowledge. In this ways the students enjoyed their class activity more.

13. Is the story line and logical structure of comic strip text easier to remember and recall knowledge better?



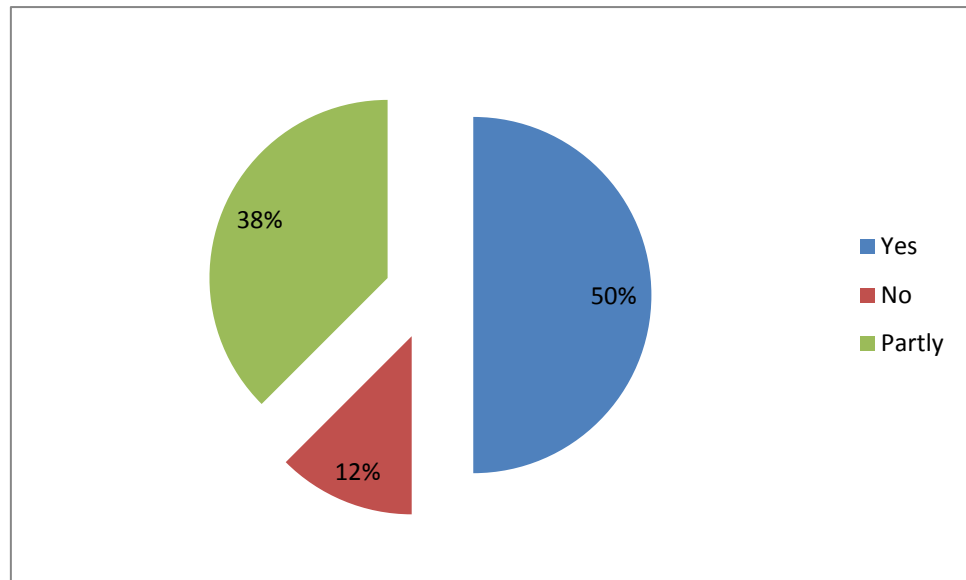
### **Analysis**

Students' responses to the question showed different perspectives of participants now that 37.5% students answered **yes**. On the other hand, 6.3% students answered **no**, and 56.3% students answered **partly**.

### **Interpretation**

As shown by the data, the story line and logical structure of comic strips were partly easy to remember and recall knowledge. Only 37.5% of students considered easier to remember and recall knowledge better. This could be seen as a barrier to use narratives of comic strips in Readings and Conversation English II.

14. Do you consider comic strips a suitability authentic material for teaching without addressing limited as age, level, context and other?



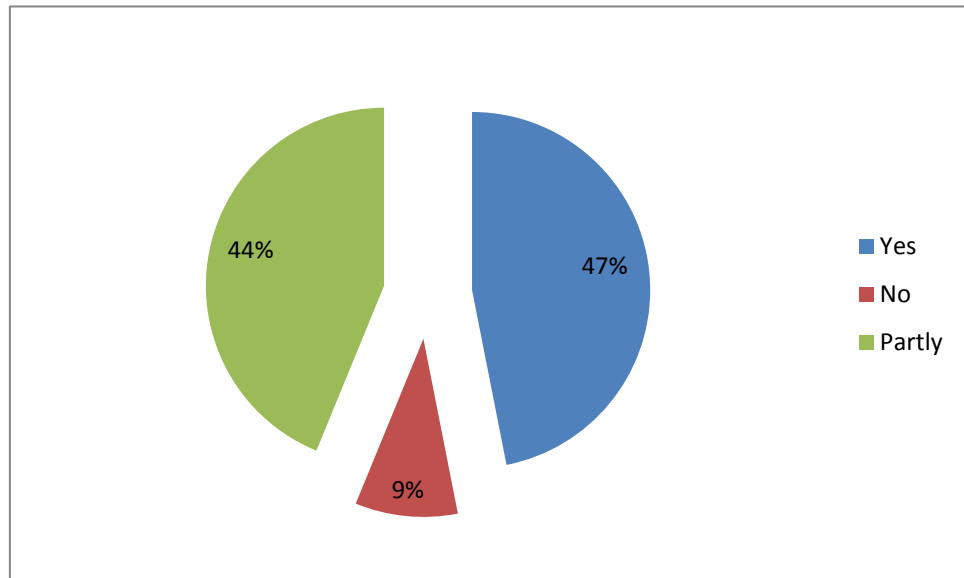
### Analysis

It was identified by the research team that 50.0% of students answered **yes**, though 12.5% of students answered **no**, and 37.5% of students answered **partly**.

### Interpretation

As shown by the graph, there was a strong tendency on the student's part to admit that comic strips were suitability authentic material for teaching without addressing limited as age, level, context and others, this could be considered as a great opportunity for teachers because they could implement comic strips in a specific class.

15. Can comic strip activities be used to have more effect on the development of readings and speaking skills?



### **Analysis**

Our research team wanted to emphasize that the total of students surveyed 46.9% of students answered **yes**. Nonetheless 9.3% of students answered **no**, and 43.8% of students answered **partly**.

### **Interpretation**

It was curious that students said that comic strip activities could be used to have a positive effect on the development of reading and speaking skills. The use of comic strips is not a common class material, but teachers could make use of them to enhance students' previous knowledge.



16. Did you have a better comprehension and performance of the foreign language using speech bubbles and characters as the information is presented twice?



### **Analysis**

Research team wanted to point out that more than half of students considered their comprehension and performance **partly** enhanced. On the other hand, a few students answered no, and some others answered yes.

### **Interpretation**

Most of the students thought that their English Language comprehension and performance improved by means of speech bubbles.

## 2.2 Check list

### UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



#### COMIC STRIP ACTIVITY OBSERVATION

#### CHECK LIST

**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Objective:** To determine the positive effect of the use of comic strips exposure in English learners' speaking skill among students from Reading and Conversation II semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Direction:** Check the criteria based on the students' experiences of Readings and Conversation II subject.

Research teachers: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	CRITERIA	DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT		
		YES	NO	PARTLY
1	Was the activity funny and interesting?	+		
2	Was the comic strip activity used according to the context and learning level of the students?	+		
3	Did the students enhance their previous knowledge?	+		
4	Did the comic strip have a story line and a logical structure to remember and to recall?	+		
5	Did the students have more than one or two practice activities in a single comic strip?	+		

6	Did the comic activities develop, promote, and enhance reading and conversation among other skills?	+		
7	Did the students have conversations among them and the research team related to the information in the text and illustration of the comic strip?	+		
8	Did the students understand the English language given on the comic strips?	+		
9	Did the students share or communicate the ideas based on the comic strip?	+		
10	Did learners appear interested in the topic being discussed?	+		
11	Was the students groups' participation ok?	+		
12	Did the activities given in the text contribute to improve the vocabulary using comic strips as class material to develop the topic?	+		
13	In that case of those students specifically, were completed texts received by the research team in less time to do it than usual as a regular reading in prose?			+
14	Did the students respond to comments and questions of the conversation?	+		

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHECK LIST

Research students had analyzed the 14 questions of the check list based on degree achievements: yes, not and partly.

### **Question:**

1. Was the activity funny and interesting?

The research team decided the option YES because it was observed the students were working in the comic: they read the directions and three of them asked for clarifying some related with the text in order to present it completely. That meant they understood it and worked following their ideas or own information.

2. Was the comic strip activity used according to the context and learning level of the students?

Yes, it was. The students could have the opportunity to put into practice comic strip activities about “Safe food” of unit three seen before in their classes thus they could related the information from the text with those classes. In the same manner, comic strip activities can be adapted to any level. The directions given in the text to the advance students’ level were understandable for using and reinforcing the learned language of that unit three “Safe food”.

3. Did the students enhance their previous knowledge?

Yes, they did. They studied the unit three “Safe food”. Then, they had a better understanding and focus about the context whenever they want to use it from their own.

4. Did the comic strips have a story line and a logical structure to remember and to recall?

Yes, they did. Such characteristics of comic strips are the story line and logical structure in it which help people or students to remember and to recall details of the comic story. The Readings and Conversation II students' comic strip in their text had those characteristics too. The objective was to have those students enhance the English vocabulary in order to reinforce reading and conversation practicing food idiomatic expressions. The students could developed the process of the original idea given from the beginning to the end in the text.

5. Did the students have more than one or two practice activities in a single comic strip?

Yes, they did. They had reading comprehension exercises of the illustration and text given using comic strips. They completed the conversation in the bubbles of the comics. They wrote and shared personal perspectives, opinions about food idiomatic expressions.

6. Did the comic activities develop, promote, and enhance reading and conversation among other skills?

Yes, they did. Students read and interpreted the comic story and added information about idiomatic expressions about food. Students spoke and listened about it as "free talk", and they wrote their ideas when they were filling the speech bubbles.

7. Did the students have conversations among them and the researcher team referring to the information from the text illustration of the comic strip?

Yes, they did. The students interacted among them to complete the activity. That is to say, they were asked to participate in reading their own text creativity.

8. Did the students understand the English language given on the comic strips?

Yes, they did. Because the text was understandable and it was applied to their suitable English level and successfully finished without any problem. Only three students asked for clarifying from a close partner or a research team member about what he or she needed to know to continue in a specific exercise in the text.

9. Did the students share or communicate the ideas based on the comic strip?

Yes, they did. They could convey some of their ideas among them but that all in written form because the instructions they read were clear. Then, they could complete the text from one activity to another.

10. Did learners appear interested in the topic being discussed?

Yes, they did. The students demonstrated interest in the content and for the English class material used. Despite, they were not accustomed to use that kind of material in an English class, they were motivated, and the content was developed. This was observed in the worksheet they returned it completed.

11. Was the students' group participation ok?

Yes, it was. The students were working to complete the activity in the worksheet. They wrote ideas of their own based on the topic, and they created the comic strip dialogue of the characters. Also their English level allowing them confidence at the moment they expressed their ideas.

12. Did the activities given in the text contribute to improve the use of comic strips as class material to develop the topic?

Of course, the activities were very representative to the students who took advantages of that material to enhance their vocabulary emphasizing idiomatic expressions about “Safe food” Unit three which was studied by those students in regular classes. They could review that unit studied.

13. In that case specifically of those students, were completed texts received by the researcher team in less time than usual as a regular reading in prose?

Partly. Because some students worked harder than other ones. That was because those students had their mid-term before they had the comic strip activity. Nevertheless, all of them completed the text writing the amount of text they wanted to write. Besides, the comic strip activity was adapted to their English level. Most of the students took about only twenty minutes to develop the comic strip activity; it means that it was enough time to do it.

14. Did the students respond to comments and questions of the conversation?

Yes, they did. They expressed thoughts about the two statements and to all the questions given in the students’ worksheet. The students could answer all those questions without any problem and expressed their thoughts to those statements in the text.

## 2.3 Note taking

### UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.-

**Objective:** To determine the positive effect of the use of comic strips exposure in English learners' speaking skill among students from Reading and Conversation II semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Direction:** Write the best results based on the students' experiences of Readings and Conversation II subject.

Professor: \_\_\_\_\_ Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### COMIC STRIP ACTIVITY OBSERVATION

#### NOTE TAKING

It is concerning to comic strip activities in the classroom.

In order to implement the use of comic strips applied to Readings and Conversation II course, the research team prepared a comic strip activity in which the students performed activities using idiomatic expressions about food. In that activity, the research team showed the importance that comic strips have as an English class material at the moment to learn and practice the English language. These kinds of activities could help the students to enhance the English language. Also, that could be more of the existing information about comic strips which motivate the teachers to teach in a creative way using them as an interesting and successful educational tool.



The directions were presented in the posttest students' worksheet, the students easily followed to develop the comic strip activity. The research team observed that in the activity.

First, they read the statement as information given in the worksheet which introduced the context of the comic. That information permitted them to complete the exercises, and the students could answer some questions about the context raised from the text. After that, the students answered three questions more as free information of their own, but always maintaining the comic strip's context. All was based on the introductory statement given at the beginning of the worksheet which maintained the sequence of the main idea until the end of their work.

The last activity consisted in filling the final speech bubble according to the students' creativity. The humorous sense they felt in that moment allowed them to fill it in a fun way.

The students practiced the English language skills and more reading in the test, and as it was mentioned before, they understood clearly the directions to follow and work in the worksheet. As a result the students of Readings and Conversation II course had no problem to fill the speech bubbles using idiomatic expressions about food. This was important because comic strips could be presented by the research team as an extra class material that students would use for learning by their own.

It is important to mention that the students carried out their comic strip activity. They read and analyzed the given text in the worksheet in a detailed way for having possible answers and give his or her opinion, thought or comment, and for writing the dialogue in comic strip bubbles. Their reactions were positive and there was no doubt that students can read easily using comic strips.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. CONCLUSIONS

The present study investigated the effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador. For this reason; three **instruments** were elaborated to obtain the data required from the sample to analyze carefully the information provided by teachers and their students. First of all, a **questionnaire** was structured in order to gather specific information from the students who were using a new class material course. Questions referring to the positive effect of the use of the comic strips exposure in English learner's speaking skill were presented to students. One **checklist** was used to observe one group selected, where the research team could directly be in contact with the exposure of the activities and the material used. In addition, one **note taking** sheet was elaborated to determine students' behavior and the positive effect of comic strips in Readings and Conversation II.

The questionnaire was elaborated with the purpose to reach the objectives and to answer the main and subsidiary questions. At the same time, to achieve the expected results. The usefulness of the questionnaire helped the research team to clarify and answer before information mentioned and to promote the use of comic strips as English class material.

The check list allowed the research team to observe the students' attitude towards the use of comic strip as English resources. The questions were elaborated with the intention to know their reactions. That information helped the research team to suggest recommendations to teachers and students about the use of comic strips in English classes.

The note-taking allowed to research team to assess the information taken in the questionnaire and the check-list in order to express freely the general context of the observed environment of the comic strip activities.

Therefore, the instrumentation obtained manifests the evidence that they have been very useful. Taking all these instruments, research team could have proved that comic strips can be showed as a future proposal for teachers and students.

This study led the research team to check the effectiveness of the use of the comic strips in order to enhance students' vocabulary and other skills. It must be clear that the use of comic strips at any context or levels could be used a source for teachers and students which enable a confidence environment that allow a better communication among students and teachers.

It is fundamental to set the conclusions that research group learned from this project about how different strategies and techniques of using comic strips as a class material that can help students to develop skills to acquire vocabulary to be able to comprehend from context, and that motivate them to start a conversation.

To summarize, the research group concluded that comic strips material is important to contribute to develop English skills of the students during the learning process in English activities.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

After carrying out this project, the research team feels satisfied about the fact that most students agreed that comic strips are useful class material for reading and conversation. However, it can be used for other subjects or skills. So, it is suggested that this topic could still be investigated deeply in the future.

Therefore, the following suggestions are for both students and teachers of the Foreign Language Department:

For students:

1. Enjoy spending less time in comic strip readings while doing a comic strip activity or learning a foreign language according to the class objectives or topic the English teacher has. It would be helpful for the students to use comic strips in order to enhance English vocabulary correctly and fluently.
2. The students should take into account the importance of using comic strips in several useful English activities in order to have a better participation in educational contexts and recall English vocabulary, structures and have efficient performance.
3. Students should experiment this alternative as a technique such as comic strips which help them in the English learning process.
4. According to research results, students should benefit from the use of the comic strip material that teachers provide not only for becoming good readers but also for adapting them appropriately to develop reading and speaking skills. At the same time, teachers should share with them comic strip material in the English class in order to acquire the learning process in an interesting context that text and images provided when read.

For teachers:

1. Teachers should keep in mind that the use of comic strips in English readings and conversation is important to motivate and develop creativity. In addition, to evoke the effectiveness of images and they can use this type of information that the students can have at the same time when they are using them in the English class.
2. There should be more materials referring to comic strips for the Foreign Languages Department students so that they can become a didactic and authentic resource.
3. Teachers could design projects in order to help students to create their own authentic comic strips to use in classes for learning purposes.
4. It is essential for teachers to remember the use of comic strips as a technique to motivate the students to have a good reading comprehension. At the same time, students participate and practice the English skills to acquire knowledge in Readings and Conversation II courses. Comic strips led to the students to reach fluency in reading and conversation. For this reason, teachers should be given the opportunity to work with that material in teaching.

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## VII. ANNEXES

### WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Objective:** To determine the positive effect of the use of the comic strips exposure in English learners' speaking skill among students from Reading and Conversation II semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Direction:** Check the best answer based on your own experience as students of Readings and Conversation II students.

#### FILTER QUESTION

1. Do you use comic strips to learn English?  
Yes  No
2. How often are the comic strips used in class?  
Always  Usually  Sometimes  Hardly ever  Never
3. Do you consider that comic strips can be used as communication starter?  
Yes  No
4. Would you like your teachers to add more comic strips material in their lessons?  
Yes  No
5. What is your favorite comic strip?  
Spider man  Snoopy  Mafalda  Garfield  Others
6. Why do you like comics?  
They are funny  They are short to read  They have slang
7. Is a comic strip easy to use for you?  
Yes  No
8. Do you feel you learn better when using comic strips?  
Yes  No  Sometimes

9. Do your classmates have the same interest as you?  
Few  Regular  A lot
10. From the material given during the intervention, have you already completed your comic strip task in class?  
Yes  No  Partly
11. In what way do you consider you learn vocabulary and language structures better in the comic strip use as an activity?  
Only reading the comic  Read and practice the oral and written activity   
Use the bubble speech and illustration at the same time for understanding them
12. Are comic strips an excellent and useful educational tool for teachers and students in the teaching and learning process of English language?  
Yes  No  Partly
13. Is the story line and logical structure of comic strip text easier to remember and recall knowledge better?  
Yes  No  Partly
14. Do you consider comic strips a suitability authentic material for teaching without addressing limited as age, level, context and other?  
Yes  No  Partly
15. Can comic strip activities be used to have more effect on the development of readings and speaking skills?  
Yes  No  Partly
16. Did you have a better comprehension and performance of the foreign language using speech bubbles and characters as the information is presented twice?  
Yes  No  Partly

## OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

### UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

#### COMIC STRIP ACTIVITY OBSERVATION

#### CHECK LIST

**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Objective:** To determine the positive effect of the use of comic strips exposure in English learners' speaking skill among students from Reading and Conversation II semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

**Direction:** Check the criteria based on the students' experiences of Readings and Conversation II subject.

Research teachers: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	CRITERIA	DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT		
		YES	NO	PARTLY
1	Was the activity funny and interesting?			
2	Was the comic strip activity used according to the context and learning level of the students?			
3	Did the students enhance their previous knowledge?			
4	Did the comic strip have a story line and a logical structure to remember and to recall?			
5	Did the students have more than one or two practice activities in a single comic strip?			

6	Did the comic activities develop, promote, and enhance reading and conversation among other skills?			
7	Did the students have conversations among them and the research team related to the information in the text and illustration of the comic strip?			
8	Did the students understand the English language given on the comic strips?			
9	Did the students share or communicate the ideas based on the comic strip?			
10	Did learners appear interested in the topic being discussed?			
11	Was the students groups' participation ok?			
12	Did the activities given in the text contribute to improve the vocabulary using comic strips as class material to develop the topic?			
13	In that case of those students specifically, were completed texts received by the research team in less time to do it than usual as a regular reading in prose?			
14	Did the students respond to comments and questions of the conversation?			



## PRE TEST 1

### UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

LET'S HAVE A COMIC ACTIVITY

PRE TEST

A FUNNY STORY

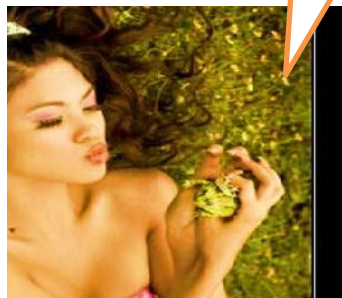
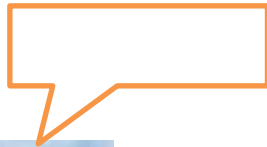
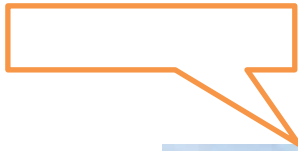
DATE. \_\_\_\_\_

OBJECTIVE: To enhance the English language vocabulary using a comic strip.

Read the funny story. After this, take ideas from reading to create the speech bubbles of the comic conversation.

A woman was playing golf when she hit the ball into the woods. She went to look for it and found a frog in a trap. The frog asked her if she could release him from the trap. The frog told her that he would grant her three wishes, so the woman freed the frog. Then the frog admitted that there was something he hadn't told her. He explained that she could have three wishes, but whatever she wished for, her husband would have ten times more. The woman replied that that was fine. The woman said that for her first wish she wanted to be the most beautiful woman in the world. The frog warned her that her husband would be the most handsome man in the world and all of the women would chase him. The woman insisted that that was fine, because she would be the most beautiful woman in the world, and he would only have eyes for her. The woman said that for her second wish she wanted to be the richest woman in the world. The frog warned her that her husband would be ten times richer than her. The woman insisted that she didn't mind. The frog then asked her what she wanted her third wish to be. The woman replied that she wanted to have a mild heart attack.





## PRE TEST RUBRIC 1

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

**RUBRIC OF PRE TEST**

Group: 03

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**OBJECTIVE:** To enhance the English language vocabulary using a comic strip.

Title of work: A funny story

Research teachers: Elisa Argueta, Isidro Martínez and Milagro Ramos.

	ASPECTS TO EVALUATE	CRITERIA					Score
	Group comic activity	Excellent	Good	Average	Need improvement	Unsatisfactory	
1	Ideas to fill the speech bubbles are faithfully taken from the story	5	4	3	2	1	
2	The comic strip has a logical beginning and an end in the story.	5	4	3	2	1	
3	Students express speech with accuracy, clarity and coherence.	5	4	3	2	1	
4	The student made suitable binomial use of the idiomatic expressions.	5	4	3	2	1	
5	The student expresses his / her statement in an advanced English language.	5	4	3	2	1	
	Total						



## PRE TEST 2

**UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

READINGS AND CONVERSATION II SEMESTER I, 2017

GROUP: 03

PROFESSOR: Lic, Ricardo Cabrera

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

RESEARCH TEACHERS: Elisa Argueta, Isidro Martfines and Milagro Ramos

UNIT 3: LIVING LONGER

TIME: 2 weeks (8 hours)

OBJECTIVE: Use of idiomatic expressions in a comic strip in order to enhance the English language vocabulary.

TOPIC: Use of idiomatic expressions

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTIONS: Replace the underlined phrases in the sentences (1 – 5) with a suitable binomial from the box. Write a statement using one or more than one idiomatic expressions. You can use different ones from the box.

<p>PHRASE: <b>in black and white</b> in a written or printed form PHRASE: <b>here and there</b> in or to several different places PHRASE: <b>by / in leaps and bounds</b> use for saying that something improves quickly or increases a lot PHRASE: <b>(every) now and then / again</b> sometimes but not regularly or often PHRASE: <b>pick and choose something</b> to choose the things you prefer, rather than simply accepting what you are given</p>
--

- 1) His English is coming along very quickly.

---

---

- 2) There aren't many sandwiches left, so you won't be able to make a careful selection of what you want.

---

---

---

- 3) It's all there in written form.

---

---

---

4) Her clothes were lying scattered in several different places on the floor.

---

---

---

5) We see each other sometimes, but not often.

---

---

---

#### LET'S HAVE A COMIC ACTIVITY

**OBJECTIVE:** Use of idiomatic expressions in a comic strip in order to enhance the English language vocabulary.

Assume the role of the other person and fill the empty bubble.



## PRE TEST RUBRIC 2

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

Research teachers: Elisa Argueta, Isidro Martínez and Milagro Ramos. Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Group: 03

Objective: Use of idiomatic expressions in a comic strip in order to enhance the English language vocabula

	ASPECTS TO EVALUATE	CRITERIA					Score
	Group comic activity	Excellent	Good	Average	Need improvement	Unsatisfactory	
1	Ideas to fill the speech bubbles are faithfully taken from the story.	5	4	3	2	1	
2	The comic strip has a logical beginning and an end in the story.	5	4	3	2	1	
3	Students express speech with accuracy, clarity and coherence.	5	4	3	2	1	
4	The student made suitable binomial use of the idiomatic expressions.	5	4	3	2	1	
5	The student expresses his / her statement in an advanced English language.	5	4	3	2	1	
Total							

## POSTTEST

UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

READINGS AND CONVERSATION II SEMESTER I, 2017

PROFESSOR: Lic, Ricardo Cabrera

RESEARCH TEACHERS: Elisa Argueta, Isidro Martínez and Milagro Ramos

UNIT 3: LIVING LONGER

TIME: 2weeks (8 hours)

TOPIC: Food idioms in comics

OBJECTIVE: To measure the comprehension using idiomatic expressions in a comic strip related to unit 3 as a review.

### STUDENT WORKSHEET

GROUP: 03

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTIONS: Create the speech bubbles using food idioms to complete the comic. Work in small groups.

1. Listen and mention some examples of food idioms that have a different meaning than the literal, example: "Apple of my eyes" that means: A favorite.

2. Introduce yourselves to the comic activity. Read the statement: "Lying to make someone feel good: Often we stretch the truth to make someone feel good. For example; your boyfriend cooks dinner for you, but it tastes terrible".

Choose some of the examples of food idioms to fill in the empty speech bubbles and also use your creative speech to complete de dialogue:

- **Apple of his eye - A favorite**
- **As easy as apple pie - Something simple**
- **As hungry as a bear - Very hungry**
- **Cook up a storm - Cook a large quantity**
- **Cream of the crop - The best**
- **Eat high on the hog - Eat fine food**
- **Life is a bowl of cherries - Life is good**
- **Melt in one's mouth - Delicious**



1- Read your created writing to the class.

2- Answer the questions orally and then in written way.

a) Who pretend to make the meal look ok?

---

b) Who pretend to make the meal tasted ok?

---

c) Describe the woman's attitude toward her boyfriend's meal and attentions?

---

d) What do you think if only the woman is eating the meal?

---

e) Do you think the man is going to eat his meal?

---

f) What could happen if she eats the entire meal?

---

g) Do you think she could eat the boyfriend's meal again?

---

h) How do you think she can remedy this kind of boyfriend surprises and not wait for one anymore?

---

---

3- Ask the students for more extra information. The students will listen to the classmates' ideas in order to acquire new knowledge.

a) Do you ever give excuses that are not really true? When and why?

---

b) Do you know any other reasons people tell white lies?

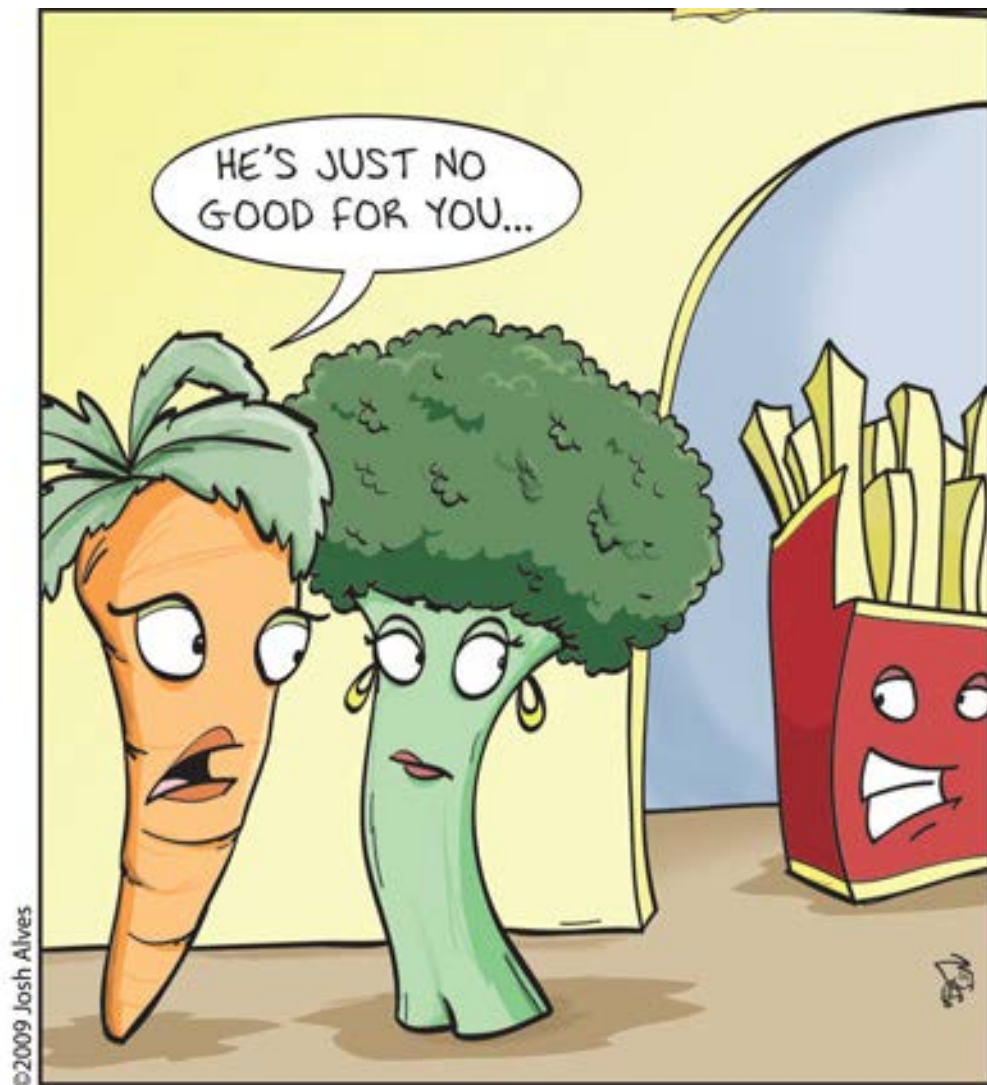
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c) What is your opinion about the statement "Telling white lies isn't really all bad? Most of the time people do it because they want to protect a friendship."

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4- Complete the missing text of the comic using their own creativity in small group.  
Then, they should share it orally.



## POST TEST RUBRIC

UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR  
 SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
 FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT  
 READINGS AND CONVERSATION II SEMESTER I, 2017 GROUP: 03  
 PROFESSOR: Lic, Ricardo Cabrera DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 UNIT 3: LIVING LONGER TIME: 2weeks (8 hours)  
 TOPIC: Food idioms in comics  
 RESEARCH TEACHERS: Elisa Argueta, Isidro Martínez and Milagro Ramos

**OBJECTIVE:** Create the speech bubbles using food idioms to complete the comic.

**Topic:** The effect of comic strips used as class material in order to enhance the vocabulary of Readings and Conversation II students from English Major with emphasis in Teaching, semester I 2017, afternoon shift at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

Group students' names: \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: 03

Title of work: Food idioms in comics

Research teachers: Elisa Argueta, Isidro Martínez and Milagro Ramos.

	ASPECTS TO EVALUATE	CRITERIA					Score
		Excellent	Good	Average	Need improvement	Unsatisfactory	
1	The speech bubbles text created is related with the context of the comic.	5	4	3	2	1	
2	The conversation created is appropriately adjusted with the attitude of the characters.	5	4	3	2	1	
3	The students create an advance writing to accompany the images.	5	4	3	2	1	
4	The students respond to comments and questions in the conversation.	5	4	3	2	1	
5	The students offer an advice, share one's experience and expressing one's thoughts.	5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Total</b>							

## PRE TEST RESULTS 1 AND 2

ASPECTS TO EVALUATE Comic activity		CRITERIA				
		Excellent	Good	Average	Need improvement	Unsatisfactory
		100%				
<u>1</u>	Ideas to fill the speech bubbles are faithfully taken from the story.	5 (15 students)	4 (4 students)	3 (1 student)	2	1
2	The comic strip has a logical beginning and an end in the story.	5 (17 students)	4 (3 student)	3	2	1
3	Students express speech with accuracy, clarity and coherence.	5 (17 students)	4 (2 student)	3 (1 student)	2	1
4	The student made suitable binomial use of the idiomatic expressions.	5 (19 students)	4 (1 student)	3	2	1
5	The student expresses his / her statement in an advanced English language.	5 (17 students)	4 (3 students)	3	2	1



## POST TEST RESULTS

	<b>ASPECTS TO EVALUATE Comic activity</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>				
		Excellent	Good	Average	Need improvement	Unsatisfactory
		100%				
1	The speech bubbles text created is related with the context of the comic.	5 (30 students)	4 (2 students)	3	2	1
2	The conversation created is appropriately adjusted with the attitude of the characters.	5 (24 students)	4 (8 students)	3	2	1
3	The students create an advance writing to accompany the images.	5 (14 students)	4 (11 students)	3 (7 students)	2	1
4	The students respond to comments and questions in the conversation.	5 (18 students)	4 (14 students)	3	2	1
5	The students offer an advice, share one's experience and expressing one's thoughts.	5 (17 students)	4 (12 students)	3 (2 students)	2 (1 students)	1

## **RESOURCES**

### **A. HUMAN RESOURCES**

Graduation process coordinator: MsD. Mauricio Salvador Contreras Cárcamo who thoroughly revises and approves the project's profile and finish grading the final work.

Advisor: Ephigenia Diana Marengo López who will be tutoring the research students throughout the development of this research study.

Staff member's research

Teacher from English Readings and Conversation II, at the same time the students of that course.

### **B. MATERIAL RESOURCES**

Computer  
Internet  
Printed tools and information  
Photocopies  
Pamphlets  
Research books from the library  
English Books and documents on line  
Classrooms  
Comic strips  
Camera  
Stationery  
Projector  
Videos

### **C. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**