

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND COMICS IN THE ESL/EFL
TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

A Monograph

Presented to

The Program of B.A. in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

School of Education

Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia

Colombia

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Licenciada en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

by

GLORIA INÉS REYES DÍAZ

December 2019

© Gloria Inés Reyes Díaz 2019

ABSTRACT

This monograph highlights the importance of English children's literature and comics in the L2/EFL teaching-learning process for children and young adults. Despite knowing the importance of these resources and that its absence in the classroom could be one of the main reasons the Colombian bilingual program proposed by the MEN (2019) is not reaching its goal, children's literature and comics have not been used in class optimally or at all. Many researchers agree that English children literature and comics are excellent tools to improve English proficiency not only on children but for young adults too. According to Mourão (2016), "Children are engaged in a transactional sense and using their linguistic repertoire as a bridge to English, especially when sharing picture books that show and tell different things" (p. 39). It is known that children could learn L2/EFL language with the same basic stages used in L1 that is imitating and reading books. On the other hand, according to Whiting (2016), "Comics are fun for both teachers and students, they foster positive motivation, lower students' affective filters, and allow for creativity with language and art" (p. 15). Therefore, it is possible to assume that the absence of children literature and comics in the process of learning a foreign language can delay and deter its course.

Keywords: children's literature, comics, young adults, children, bilingualism

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since I came back to this country my strength went apart; that for; I am grateful to my mother for her patience and my family, who have been there to take the pieces and help me out to go back to myself, without their support and encouragement, this venture would not have been possible. I own them my career, my stability, and future. Secondly, I would also like to acknowledge my gratitude to my advisor, Mrs. Liliana Moreno, who has been my support throughout all this project, her many advices have been invaluable to me. I would also like to express my appreciation to Mrs. Angie Pinto, who help me out unconditionally; a special thank you goes to Mr. Claes Bjork for his guidance, support, and friendship; to Mr. Tom Nolan for his help and feedback; furthermore, I will like to thank all my professors, from whom I gained all the knowledge I have. Last but not least, thank you to my cousin Yaneth and friends for their cheer and motivation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
Significance of the Study	2
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Objectives	6
General Objective	6
Specific Objectives	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
Children’s Literature.....	7
Comics	8
Theoretical background on Children’s Literature.....	9
Fairies and rhymes to teach EFL to youngsters and teens	9
Swedish elementary school teachers have the same problems other teachers around the world are facing.	15
Teachers being trained on how to use stories in their classroom.....	18
Beyond reading picture books	25
Learning English while having fun.....	32
Overcoming obstacles to learn English through stories.....	33
Taiwan, a mirror to Colombia’s background.....	35

Natural approach, communicative method, and storytelling strategy; the best way to learn English	47
Theoretical background on Comics	51
Bogotá bilingual and comics.....	51
Breaking up language barriers through comics	54
Creating comics and enhancing motivation in the English classroom	55
Reading and comprehension through comics	57
Taking baby steps to learn English through comics, a good way to go	59
Using technology and comics to teach English in Indonesia.....	61
Universities are also involved using comics to teach English	62
The language hidden in the sequential arts of comics	65
METHODOLOGY	68
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	70
Contributions.....	70
Content.....	71
Genres types.....	72
Methods and strategies.....	72
Cons	74
Avoid.....	74
CONCLUSION.....	79
REFERENCES	82
APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL OF EXERCISES WITH STORIES AND COMICS	89
Proposals with Stories.....	89

Proposal 1: Imagining your own story.....	89
Proposal 2: Translating short stories or fables.....	91
Proposal 3: Creating your own story through investigation	92
Proposal 4: Searching for native readers	93
Proposal 5: Just reading does not mean comprehension.....	94
Proposal 6: Subscribing to a teachers’ resources site	95
Proposals with Comics.....	97
Proposal 7: Writing beyond the comic stories	97
Proposal 8: Guessing through comics.....	98
Proposal 9: Strengthening verb tenses with comics.....	99
Proposal 10: Rapping with comics	99
APPENDIX B: SUGGESTED RESOURCES.....	101
Websites to check for Children’s literature	101
Creation of Comic Strips	101

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In Colombia as in many other countries, English has become the instructional language of communication that dominates the socio-cultural and business spheres; therefore, the MEN has established a bilingual program that should reach its goals by 2025. This aims have been postponed twice since its implementations, for the results according to Colombian “Pruebas Saber 11” (Knowledge National test) the lowest score was obtained in English, with an average of 50.75 (ICFES- 2017) and the International test results also show that the program is scoring very low in the world ranking (60 out of 88/low level) even though the levels improved a bit (1.87 points). (EF EPI 2018).

With that said, this study will focus its attention to create awareness and highlight the importance of children’s literature and comics in the teaching and learning process for children and young adults as well. Ongoing research in many countries like U.K., USA, Taiwan, France, Germany, Australia, Spain, Mexico, and Chile, to mention some, experts are evaluating and debating over the use of children literature and comics in the teaching and learning English process not only for primary but for young adults students as well (see Chang, 2007; Ghosn, 2002; Mourão, 2016; Tiemensma, 2009).

In Colombia, there are few studies carried out in this regard; among these, there are some empirical research done in Bogota, Bucaramanga, Medellin, and Pereira, (see Orozco Giraldo,

2013 and Porras González, 2010), where the use of English children literature was measured to validate the importance of its use (See chapter II). In the limited historical researches made in Colombia about English teaching, including curriculum, methods, and teaching material, which is the concern of this study, it is possible to observe that English textbooks have been adapted to the methods used according to that times; first in the 1850's to 1950's the books were adapted to the grammar-translation method (GTM), in the 60s the direct method (DM), in the 70s a mix of methods such as de direct method, audio-lingual method (ALM), in the 80s, to the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and reading approach; but no one has reached its goals (Bastidas, 2017); Nowadays, there are some textbooks that are including short stories, but not enough to reach the real aim reading through children's literature is for (See chapter II).

As for comics, there are few research projects on this matter, mostly the use of this resources through the use of ICTs for students who are getting the bachelor or master degree in languages from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and La Salle (See Tejedor, and Izquierdo, 2017), and Bernal Plazas y Sanchez, 2013), see Chapter II.

Significance of the Study

The National bilingual program in Colombia that started in 2004 and goes beyond 2019, now 2025, has the goal that each English student participate in the global community, thus, Colombia chose the MEN to guide and evaluate the process of English in the country. However, according to studies by the Republic Bank, only 6% of the university students have a decent English level, most students from 11 grade have a basic, and only a few students have a medium level (Sanchez Jabba, 2013). This matter should concern educational entities in Colombia if they want to reach the bilingualism program goals.

Said that, according to Colombian "Pruebas saber 11" (Knowledge National test) results,

the lowest score was obtained in English, with an average of 50.75 (ICFES- 2017); The International test results also show that the program is scoring very low in the world ranking (60 out of 88/low level) even though the levels improved a bit (1.87 points). (EF EPI 2018). That means that the scores had not reached the aim and the cognitive gap is very wide. On account of this, the purpose of this study is to highlight the importance and effectiveness of children's literature and comics in English as a foreign language teaching-learning process for kids and teens.

Unfortunately, the studies related to this topic in Colombia are very limited; most of them hold teachers' English level as the main problem. According to Sanchez Jabba (2013), "The low levels of bilingualism among students are explained, to a large extent, because most English teachers have not a broad command of the language" (p. 20). However, many researchers agree that this is not the only problem; the pedagogical and didactic resources are limited to photocopies given by teachers, the ICTs are not used properly or not used at all, and the motivation to learn English is almost zero (Moreno Marulanda, 2009).

That for, this study will give another look to the latest trend and studies on children's literature and comics that are taking place around the world, to weight their relevance and measure its pros and cons; that way, educators and directors will expand their knowledge and criterion to decide if they will include or not this resources in their curriculum. Studies that were done in many countries including USA, Chile, and Taiwan, to mention some, have shown that children's literature and comics can have a profound impact in the teaching and learning process, though, teachers should be aware of the students age, English level, relevance of the reading and complexity when choosing the material. According to Smallwood (1988), "It is recommended that literature have: age appropriate theme; simple language; limited use of metaphor and

unfamiliar experiences; use of rhyme; ambiguous plot; realistic but simple dialogue; potential for reading aloud; brevity; and good illustrations” (pp. 70-72). Even though she is talking about children literature for ages 9 to 14 years old, this statement applies to literature for early readers and older readers as well.

In addition, comics according to Ujiie and Krashen (as stated in Graham, 2011), asserts that reading comics does not inhibit other types of reading and that in fact facilitates heavier reading, which in time could lead to students becoming better readers. Thereupon, this study will present some of the latest investigations done across the globe about these two figures to be taking into consideration.

Statement of the Problem

The English results obtained in Colombia “Pruebas Saber 11” are not encouraging; indeed, the results are demotivating as students and teachers might be in their own element; motivation is one of the main features in the learning process due to its complexity; thereby, teachers are trying to find new ways to keep students motivated and willing to learn. When students feel ineffective, they tend to get distracted and stressed, along with it, teachers will feel stress as well; thus, the teaching process will get nowhere.

Trying to keep up with the new developments in the teaching field, this revision of information will show the reasons why many English teachers around the world are using children’s literature and comics in their classes to boost students’ enthusiasm. But this raises a concern: Are really children’s literature books and comics an unappreciated treasure to teach EFL to children and young adults or are they just overrate resources? Either way, this review is done in order to draw some conclusions, give another perspective on the topic, and provide some useful recommendations given by experts.

Are children's literature and comics gems? For centuries, knowledge has been passed through storytelling from generation to generation, later on, they were written down to preserve them from being lost in history. Literature per se did not exist centuries ago and no one knows how it was born exactly; Aesop's fables were the first known in antiquity. They were passed orally until Demetrius Phalareus wrote them down in the 4th century BC, and later on, by other writers into many languages (Thomas James 1881). Since printing, these fables, children's books, and comics have been used to teach both L1, L2, and foreign languages in many countries although many researchers debate on its relevance in the teaching-learning process.

According to Yu Chang (2007), "The use of literature designed primarily for first language speakers of English in teaching English to young learners may have a little positive impact on learning, particularly where it is selected and used inappropriately" (p. 2). However, she is just talking about literature for L1 learners; thus, this means that children's literature can be writing according to each country cultural and linguistic necessities, students and teachers needs and interest; that way, they can have a positive impact in learners.

On the other hand, she overlooks the importance of reading stories at home and at schools just for fun, and the motivations that can derive from that. Other researchers like Bland (2013), affirm that "High-quality children's literature can help students learn to map the world story by story, while successively acquiring competencies such as visual, literary, and intercultural literacy, concurrently with language acquisition" (p. 5).

Regarding comics, Eisner (1985), pinpoints that "The reading of a comic book is an act of both aesthetic perception and intellectual pursuit" (p. 8). Graham (2011), goes further and states that "Children enjoy reading comics, so it makes perfect sense to use such a resource to enhance English-Language learning" (p. 92).

Objectives

General Objective

To review in a systematic qualitatively gathering research method the recent studies done around the world on the use of children's literature and comics in the L2/EFL teaching-learning process, by determining their value and concerns in their use in the classroom.

Specific Objectives

To analyze the pros and cons of the use of children's literature and comics in the L2/EFL teaching-learning process weighing up their value from different perspectives to support a choice through a qualitative list.

To draw some conclusions on the topic that will help teachers with decision taking by comparing different researchers' perspectives.

To provide some useful recommendations on the monograph by gathering experts' studies, which will aid teachers consider the appropriate methods and strategies in the classroom.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

To have a deep understanding of the research, it is necessary to understand what children's literature and comics for scholars is. Experts' knowledge and opinions play a big role on the selection, design, and implementation not only of the curriculum but on modelling a class. That for, this review will provide some concepts about literature and comics proposed by academics that will show how controversial are not only the theories and perceptions on these resources, but on their use.

Children's Literature

Many studies talk about authentic or good literature, proper literature for L1 and L2, literature as the synonym of storytelling; children's literature including adolescents' literature, picture books, and so on. However, according to Chang (2007), "There is no simple, straightforward definition of children's literature that can be applied with equal validity at different times and in different contexts" (p. 8). Therefore, what is children's literature vs good or authentic literature according to researchers? Children's literature according to Ghosn (2002), "It is a fiction written for children to read for pleasure, rather than for didactic purposes" (p. 172). As for good or authentic literature, according to Ghosn (2002):

Authentic children's Literature should be used in the primary school EFL class; it should contain the following characteristics: First, it provides a motivating, meaningful content

for EFL, since children are naturally drawn to stories. Second, literature can contribute to language learning. It presents natural language, language at its finest, and can thus foster vocabulary development in context. Third, literature can promote academic literacy and thinking skills, and prepare children for English-medium instruction. Fourth, literature can function as a change agent: good literature deals with some aspects of the human condition, and can thus contribute to the emotional development of the child, and foster positive interpersonal and intercultural attitudes. (p. 173)

According to Galda, Liang, and Cullinan (2015), “Children’s literature are books that children and adolescents enjoy and have made their own” (p. 7). Although this definition was applied to L1 literature this is valid for any kind of literature; nevertheless, it is needed to take into account that some researchers pinpoint to the problem of using children’s literature designed for L1.

Yu Chang (2007) affirms that some readings commonly used in Taiwanese primary schools (designed primarily for speakers of English as a first language) was found to be culturally and linguistically inappropriate, the language being stilted and often, from the perspective of young learners in Asia, extremely complex, and the content being dated and often confusing. (p. ii)

Comics

Many researchers are investigating comics as a tool to enhance students’ motivation. According to Banks et al. (As stated by Clydesdale, 2007, p. 1), the challenges in teaching reading skills in a multicultural and multilingual way require an inclusive approach and comics are potentially a way to bridge the gap between multiple first languages/cultures and the target language.

According to Eisner (1985), Comics are sequential art, and explains the sequential art as a means of creative expression, a distinct discipline, an art and literary form that deals with the arrangement of pictures or images and words to narrate a story or dramatize an idea. (p. 5)

Whiting (2016) states that comics are a natural for the communicative language classroom. They promote negotiation and communication in the L2, practice in all four language domains, creativity and higher-level critical thinking skills, independence of thought, and diversity of opinion. Students of all ages and abilities find comics fun, interesting, and motivating, and for teachers, they offer opportunities to bring target-language culture and authentic language into the classroom. (p. 16)

Graphic novel is included into the comics field; some of its characteristics is that it contains 20 or more pages, while comics' strips consist of two to five panels; Saraceni (As cited by Tiemensma, 2009, p. 4), offers that comics have components such as panels, gutters, balloons, and captions. In general, graphic novels are books made up of comics, and both are stories told through sequential arts as means of creative expression (Eisner 1985).

Theoretical background on Children's Literature

This section will review some studies done in Colombia and around the world about the use of English children's literature and comics in the EFL teaching and learning field.

Fairies and rhymes to teach EFL to youngsters and teens

Bland, J. (2013) is a renowned and experienced teacher in English Language and Literature from the UK. She had lectured in Germany, UK, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Greece, Finland, and Japan (ResearchGate).

This investigation is based on studies languages teaching, narrative theories, second language acquisition, children's literature scholarship, reading research, visual and critical literacy, cultural studies, and pedagogical stylistics to support the selection of literature to be used by children and teenagers in the EFL classroom (Bland, 2013). In this study, the researcher includes fairy tales and nursery rhymes as oral literature. The aim of this project is to show the cultural influence and relevance of children's literature, including fairy tales and nursery rhymes as oral literature in the EFL classroom even though these resources had been ignored not only by primary and secondary school teachers but by scholars as well. As it is known by many researchers and the author herself, English had been introduced to children from an early age, possible from pre-school, likewise, high English reading level to EFL young adults to develop their critical thinking. According to the author, English as a subject will disappear, while Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) will be on the rise; this means that holistic approaches (students-centered and meaning-making transitional approaches) will be growing along with it. By holistic perspective, teachers need to take into account students as a whole, including their previous knowledge, cultural background, and their social, emotional, and physical differences as well.

Based on the opportunities students may have as skilled readers, the researcher advises on the importance of adopting the Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), according to Cummins (2008) "BICS refers to conversational fluency in a language while CALP refers to students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and writing modes, concepts, and ideas" (n. p.). Mrs. Bland also highlights that as at any age reading a second language is recommended, an Extension Reading program is needed, where equal and extent input in primary EFL classroom should be provided to the

minority of children who have not literacy skills due to their economic situation. According to the literature review, the author also reminds that reading supports motivation, autonomy, and language acquisition; based on this, she pinpoints on the importance of providing enough material, to be chosen by students according to their interest (topics and genres), age, and language proficiency. Unfortunately, these resources are limited or not seen at all in libraries or bookstores from many countries; where is presumable that the program (ER) won't be successful. Bland asserts that reading is as important in L1 as in L2 and that the natural approach to teach language should be exploited at early ages, without overestimating children's capacities. Regrettably, EFL teachers in many countries neither like to read in English nor they have proper knowledge of the wide range of English Literature. In the author's own words, "Communicative competences should not be seen as language acquisition only, but as a way to develop intercultural competence" (p. 7). Mike Fleming (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 7), asks whether literature should be separately taught and assessed or included in the teaching of language.

Regarding well-crafted vs poorly crafted texts and language and content, Nick Ellis (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 7) states that the knowledge underlying fluent use of language is not grammar in the sense of abstract rules or structure but a huge collection of memories of previously experienced utterances. This means that teachers shouldn't focus on teaching but on how students pour out their feelings and personality while reading. In narrative, well-written children's literature should contain high lexical density, authentic discourse, repetition, rhythm, melody, alliteration, visual support, and they should be linguistically appropriate for children. On the other hand, poorly crafted texts, have low lexical density, no repetition, unnatural, and dull language. About content, well-crafted children's literature, books should be done for

children with a content-based orientation and a hint of a challenge; this means they should be close to the zone of proximal development (ZPD), with rich language to open their perspectives and allow for creative responses; this means that books should emotive, have rhyme, and be easy to predict. On the contrary, poor children's books content takes for granted students' capabilities, limit children's creativity, and have stereotype forms. According to Bland, Graded readers remove important contextual details from the original, diminishing the background story and leaving out the possibility for interpretation.

Bland asserts that "When reading or listening to stories, children should be allowed to guess at meaning and to make informed predictions about what the writer/storyteller will say next. They should not be encouraged to expect to understand every single word, leading to risk avoiding rather than risk taking". (p. 8)

On the other hand, the researcher advises being careful with the communicative goals projected for young students in foreign language teaching for its limitations. Bland asserts that "Using children's and young adult literature as an open text in the EFL-literature classroom will greatly enhance the autonomy of the learner and pleasure in reading and understanding" (p. 12). The author also highlights the importance of multiple literacies for students who have a high English level, including oral literature, graphic narratives, and animated cartoons; according to "Kern (As cited by the author, p. 14), oral, visual, and audiovisuals offer learners new aesthetic experiences as well as content to interpret and critique. The author as many researchers cited in this study, agree on the importance of the digital world where students are immersed nowadays. All and all, the importance to promote reading in the classroom according to Kern (As cited and paraphrased by Bland, 2013 (p. 14) is to engage students in the thoughtful and creative act of making connections among grammar, discourse, and meaning; between language and content;

between language and culture; between another culture and their own; that for, the researcher advises on the inclusion of cultures from around the world. According to Bland “Culture” shows other people perspectives; on this matter, the author agrees with many researchers who assert that intercultural communicative competence has been named as a central goal of foreign language teaching. Though cultural and critical literacy should be introduced step by step, only to be used in its full until the last years of schooling.

In regards to visual stimulation, Bland agrees with other researchers on the fact that L2 students need to find pleasure and fluency in reading; that for, they need to be taught to create mental representations; that for, pictures books should be available to children and young adults (secondary students) as well; here she offers the importance of illustration from books with socio-cultural and environmental (including disasters) themes. Carney and Levin (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 16), states that research in the discipline of reading psychology has demonstrated the importance of images in contextualizing and visualizing the topic of the text, which lends students empowerment, autonomy in their predicting, and interpreting textual meaning. In this context, the author highlights the importance of comics and graphic novels in the EFL and the teachers training as readers, pictures interpretations, and on how to work with these multimodal texts. On linking pictures to texts, Mourão (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 22), asserts that from using book covers and titles, students develop on a cognitive level by predicting characters, plot, and settings and promoting critical and inferential thinking and interpretation skills. On this idea, the researcher extends the activities on plot development to the creation of new dialogues, through collaborative ideas and negotiation.

On this perspective, the researcher offers some books that could help EFL students to achieve language proficiency, literacy, and educational goals in the EFL-literature classroom.

The following ones are from the socio-culture field, “Shirley’s adventures” by John Burningham, (1977); “The monster ate Bernard up, every bit” by David McKee, (1980); “Amazing Grace” by Mary Hoffman and illustrated by Caroline Binch, (1991), and “The Day of Ahmed’s Secret” by Heide and Gilliland, (1990), illustrated by Ted Lewin; the next ones are from the environment field, “Owl Babies” by Waddell and Benson, (1992), “The Shepherd Boy by Lewis (1009), “We’re going on a Bear Hunt” by Rosen and Oxenbury, (1989), Zoo by Browne, (1992), and “The Stranger by Van Allsburg, (1986). These books according to the author are valuable and appealing; on her own words “They allow the learner to explore the thoughts and feelings elicited by the text” (p. 62). Masuhara (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 62), asserts that the emotive impact created by the text seems to leave a strong impression and to form a durable memory to aid recall. On the other hand, Bredella (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 62) emphasis on the significance of the experiences presented in the literary text for the learner’s personality is important because texts used in foreign language classrooms are often shallow.

On account of Graphic novels, Bland as many researchers includes this genre into the comics’ medium. The author states that this resource has the potential to teach literacy and not only to motivate L2 students but EFL as self-sufficient readers as well. McTaggart (As cited by Bland, 2013, p.76) asserts that, teachers use graphic novels because they enable the struggling reader, motivate the reluctant one, and challenge the high-level learner; the author also asserts that “Graphic novel fulfills young readers’ needs: to be challenged by literary texts, but not over-challenged linguistically, to have the opportunity to supply background knowledge and to practice top-down processing with an authentic multimode literary text” (p. 97). According to Bland, some of the elements teachers need to explain to EFL students are the role of speech that is usually in prose and thought balloons or bubbles; captions or boxes where the text is narrated

and narrative situations; visual viewpoint, or how we are viewing an image; panel, transition, gutter or gaps (images without text); motion lines (movement), sound words (onomatopoeias), typographic creativity, encapsulation, salience, cartoon style, and silhouette. Coraline, Burwitz-Melzer (As cited by Bland, 2013, p. 81) states that it may be useful to make students aware of these different tools and to discuss the elaborated “camera angles”, the rapid succession of similar panels to indicate action and the special design to indicate a parallel world. Some graphic novels are “Treasure Island” about pirates, by Robert Louis Stevenson, (1983), “Coraline” a story about horror, by Neil Gaiman (2002, 2008), and “The Wizard of Oz” by Frank Baum (1900).

Swedish elementary school teachers have the same problems other teachers around the world are facing.

This study was done by **Englund, M. (2016)** through an internet survey placed on seven schools, to find out how teachers in Swedish elementary schools are teaching ESL through children’s literature and which is their attitude and/or believes about this topic. “These results are also connected and compared to previous international research” (p. 1). In accordance with the researcher, she wants to find out why some teachers avoid using this resource even though in their English syllabus, children’s literature is included as a support method. In Sweden, “English is taught as a second language (ESL), for the country citizens have daily contact with English, mostly through various media such as TV, radio, and the Internet” (p. 2). In Sweden, students start the primary school at seven which is mandatory; the preschool is optional.

The following are studies and their results that include the methods used to implement children’s literature. The first one was done by Biemiller and Boote on 112 students with ESL and EFL background from Toronto where pre and posttest were implemented; the results showed

that rereading aloud multiple times (three to four times) the same book to kindergartens and first graders (preschool), while explaining vocabulary meaning have significant vocabulary gain. On the other hand, the results were lower when using the same method with second graders; this suggested that older students get bored with repetition; thus, repetition should be avoided at this age. Lundberg in a study done in Sweden involving elementary school teachers agree with the repetition method; along with it, a teacher from this research goes further to said that filling in, imitating, and reading along or after the teacher are good strategies to be implemented (p. 3).

Greene-Brabham and Lynch-Brown' study done on 117 first graders and 129 third graders in EFL, where pre and posttest were performed to seek which method worked better. The methods used were the interactional reading, the performance reading, and the just-reading aloud; the two first ones were implemented with some scripted questions, but on the interactional reading a discussion time, before, during, and after the reading was implemented. The interactional reading results showed that all the strategies presented vocabulary gain, but the highest scores were gained by the interactional reading and the lowest by the just-reading style. Lundberg (As cited by Englund, 2016, p. 3) said that a book can be read first in Swedish and after that in the English language to encourage "Language guessing games". Narato Céron' study was placed on EFL students; the results showed that students were able to learn and memorize new words; at the same time, students developed critical thinking through the use of the books' pictures predicting scenarios or events; moreover, students' motivation was boosted using this kind of resources.

The following part of the research has to do with the teacher's attitudes toward using children's literature as a method; on the study done by Lundberg the results showed that many teachers are insecure when using English and have limited time to prepared English classes; thus,

they prefer to use the textbooks or workbooks provided for the courses which have predetermined words and phrases. Nevertheless, after the studies, some teacher observed that the time planning was worthy, for students showed more appreciation, happiness, and motivation in the class. In another research done by Hsiu-Chih in Taiwan, 10 ESL teachers were interviewed, they stated that although the used of children's literature motivate students and that with the help of its images, students can comprehend language better, "teachers need to be aware of the different interpretations students can have from the same picture" (p. 4).

Regarding methods, most teachers read aloud using strategies such as translation, repetition, and discussion about pictures, performing, and pupils asking questions when the teacher reads or the teacher asking the questions when reading. On the other hand, teachers said that they choose children's literature based on students' interest, according to work areas in other subjects and difficulty level, based on pictures that give details and complement the text, and sometimes based on the advice from librarians. As for the teachers' feelings about using this resource, most of them seem to feel at ease when reading aloud and speaking in English to their students; though, they said that it is difficult to find these resources at hand and some stories have not natural language; even though, teachers answered that they will like to learn more about the use of children's literature in the classroom. When talking about benefits, teachers said that students were more motivated to communicate and joyful, their vocabulary gain was better, not to mention that the pictures provided excellent support to the context. The cons about using children's literature according to their answers were about time, for it took a lot of time planning and finding the proper materials according to students' level; likewise, they stated that to find these resources was difficult. On the other hand, the lack to prioritize English by the language institutions in Sweden is a problem that should be taking into account.

Teachers being trained on how to use stories in their classrooms

Irma-Kaarina Ghosn (2013) is a children's books writer, professor, and holds a Ph.D. in applied linguistics; her research aim is to promote storybooks as a medium to help pre-service teachers of TESOL/TEFL and L1 who want to improve their teaching skills. According to Plato in his Republic (As cited by Ghosn, p. 3), stories are soul-forces for children, thus cautioning us to supervise the storytellers and to select their stories whenever they are fine and beautiful. She also asserts that "Rather than produce traditional, structurally organized course-books for the youngest learner groups, it would be wiser to use carefully selected children's literature as the foundation for the young learner syllabus" (p. 1). Hence, according to Ghosn, storybooks or children's literature used by her as synonyms are the best tool to motivate and help students to learn not only their first, but a second and third language, but being careful when selecting their content according to students' age and English level. Among the genre types, she includes "poetry, fairy tales, fiction, not fiction, myths and epics, nursery rhymes, fantasy, biographies, humor, and fables; leaving out the simplified, controlled-vocabulary stories and graded readers" (p. 5).

According to Ghosn, stories avail to children vicarious experiences with a much wider range of human relationships and emotions than what is possible through their own life experience. Achievement, love, jealousy, conquering of fear and overcoming adversity, hunger, poverty, and human suffering – even death and dying – can all be experienced through stories. (p. 7)

Botelho and Rudman, (As cited by Ghosn, p. 7), assert that international literature presents children with mirrors, windows, and doors: mirrors that enable them to reflect on their own experiences. The author also implies that through stories children will develop their

listening abilities while accepting others opinions; she also pinpoints on the importance of fantasy as a medium to promote creativity; likewise, she highlights that tales help students to understand, control, and link emotions to become tolerant individuals, who feel empathy towards others.

Regarding literature as an instructional medium, she emphasizes in content, which should provide challenges but measure to the students' age and level. The author explains that it is important to students to feel that they are achieving something through learning, according to her, "This is particularly important where children learn English as a subject but do not need it for their daily communication" (p. 11). Likewise, she asserts that "literature offers rich opportunities to foster children's critical and creative thinking while enhancing their language learning" (p. 11). Here the author makes a comparison among the language in children's literature with course-books language; it appears that course-books language is stiff, controlled, mechanic, and skill-based; that for, she considers that this language is used contrary on how the brain works. Genesee (As cited by Ghosn, p. 14) explains that the neural activity does not flow only from simple to complex, as 'higher-order brain centers that process complex, abstract information can activate and interact with lower order centers, as well as vice versa'. This means that children should be exposed to a higher level of languages to challenge and open their minds to new scenarios. Said that the author agrees with many researchers who observe that all verb tenses should be included in stories, starting from past, to present and future. Being past the main core; David Crystal (As cited by the author, p. 15), asserts that the absence of the past tense results also in unnatural and stiff language that often resembles more a sports commentary than natural language; likewise, Margaret Meek (As cited by the author, p. 19) stories teach children the verb tenses of the past and the future when they are intensely preoccupied with the present.

Another comparison she made on language is against real-life language, which is very different from the one found in textbooks; real-life language the author points out is fragmented and has “single words utterances” (p. 17). That is why the author highly recommends the use of children’s literature, which can help students comprehend the context with the illustrations help, while learning idioms and become familiar with metaphors, patterns, new vocabulary, and memorized them through repetition. On the other hand, the author advises being careful on simplified text, or stories that are a summary of classic stories because they limited access to natural language and students’ comprehension. Keeping up with comparisons, the author analyses course-books content and children’s socio-cultural conceptions; while kids have in their mind fantasy, the authors of these books center the topics around routines at home and school, culture from the USA and UK; according to the author “although these topics are useful to learners within the target language culture, may not be quite so meaningful to young learners elsewhere in the world” (p. 24). She also highlights that even though some course-books are including some short stories and songs in their content, most of them are chosen presumable good for all children, without realizing that, even food or clothing may be very different from one country to another’s reality; that for, children’s culture from their own country should be included. Ghosn pinpoints that many children’s may not have the word in their own language to convert in English to express what they really want to; she gave the example of pocket money given to children in the USA, but that in many countries do not make sense, for students’ haven’t had this experience (impoverished countries); whereas, this may cause discomfort on students who do not have that possibility.

What Ghosn finds more challenging while using course-books is that teacher are most the times focus on getting grammar structures or forms correctly, adding to this the wrong culture

included in textbooks, these both features can cause problems in communication because children won't be able to associate their knowledge with what is offered. According to the author "This results in de-motivating drill-like pseudo-communication as opposed to personally meaningful discourse most likely envisioned by the course book author" (p. 28). Here, she offers that when children's use storybooks even the cultural unfamiliar context "Provide opportunities for meaningful discourse" (p. 29). The author also asserts that there is a "Critical difference among textbooks cultural quality content vs stories' cultural quality content; by quality, she implies that "stories offer friendship, hopes, aspirations, achievement, fears, courage, and other issues of concern to children" (p. 29).

In this context the author states that language exercises require children to engage in artificial discourse about unfamiliar content and concepts, using new and unfamiliar language. In contrast, when talking about new and unfamiliar concepts encountered in a story, they can remain in their own persona and use their own inter-language. (p. 30)

All and all, Ghosn acknowledge that culture help students to develop empathy, to learn about cultural differences, but being careful how to use it in the classroom context. Culture can be used as a medium to motivate students and motivation is linked to short and long-term memorization; according to the author "Motivation, in turn, determines how much time and effort learners are willing to spend on given learning tasks" (p. 44). That for, any topic, including culture, should be individual and of situational interesting and relevant to students; by the situational interest the author means that the context should be based on "novelty, curiosity, and the saliency of the information" (p. 44). All these leads students to the emotional or affective process, which is as relevant as culture to develop memory skills; Gilbert (As cited by Ghosn, p. 46) asserts that we have to play to the emotional brain; then and only then, will we

open up the intellectual brain”. Here once more, storybooks are the bridge to L2 and EFL, for “it generates thoughts, opinions, and questions” (p. 46); according to the author, this should be enhanced with role-plays, posters, and other meaningful activities, such as re-reading stories.

On this matter, the author presents the outcomes from studies on children and young adults around the world using story-based lessons in Taiwan, Hungary, Turkey, Hong Kong, Lebanon, the USA, UK, China, Arabic countries, India, New Zealand, Singapore, Salomon Islands, Sri Lanka, and South Africa. The results showed that story-based lessons let students engage in class participation (motivation), use of different expressions, participated collaboratively, change of perception toward English learning, improved their reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills, it let to comprehension improvement, to negotiating interaction, develop literacy, discussions, awareness of grammar structures, and vocabulary gain. The strategies used were the use of silent and aloud reading, reading comprehension activities, pretend reading strategy, digital story-reading, writing tasks, literature circles and discussions leading by the teacher, shared reading with following activities, individual selection of stories, play roles and rewriting stories, and reading pictures activities. Teachers used between twenty to 250 books, among and the most recommended are the “*Velveteen Rabbit*” by Williams (1985), “*One Snowy Night*” by Nick Butterworth (n. d.), “*The Rabbit and the Turnip*” by Addison Wesley (1989), “*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*” by Eric Carle (2002), “*The Pirate Adventures*” by Hunt (1988), “*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*” by Dann Chose Roal Dahl (1988), and “*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*” by Viorst (1972).

To sum up the author's thoughts about children’s literature, she emphasizes that “Stories come in different themes, motif, and examples of real-life situations” (p. 18). According to Nummela Caine and Caine (As cited by Ghosn, p. 47), grammar and vocabulary should be taught

in the context of genuine whole-language experiences; in other words, through children's stories. On this statement, Ghosn said "I believe that if we use stories that trigger positive emotional responses, the chances are that children will feel more relaxed and, thus, more receptive to learning as the affective filter is lowered" (p. 49). Another point to highlight is that according to N. Ellis (As cited by the author, p. 50) language is partly learned in chunks rather than in single words, and sentences and phrases are not always formed word by words. That for, they emphasized that children do not need to understand each word used; they just need to understand the whole context, which is easier through stories with the help of images.

The author also highpoints that the gain of vocabulary through text-books is a challenge for kids because most times they are presented in single words and images, rather than in context as stories do; the textbooks neither show the different meanings a word has, less how they are used in different sentences (Collocations and metaphors, etc.). Likewise, implicit and explicit grammar could be learned from stories being aware that explicit grammar could be taught focusing on form without presenting the rule (Krashen, 2003). Nevertheless, Wes (As cited by the author, p. 94) suggest that implicit learning without attention to form may leave learners with fossilized errors even after years of exposure and achievement of acceptable communication; this is something to be taking into consideration.

Keeping up with the importance of children's literature, the author asserts that children can write grammatically better when they are used to read these resources. According to Kretzschmar (As cited by Ghosn, p. 98) grammar through children's literature can be taught through the PACE model, given a grammar start point and reinforcing it through activities; letting students build their own grammar understanding that can be reinforced by the teacher. Going further, the author alleged that teachers are not teaching students to write in the whole

sense, they just know how to write sentences, without being able to link them; but the story-based method can be the missing tool to teach students to do so with the pictures as a stimulus subject.

The following are the steps of a method the author offers to teachers to implement story-based programs in their classrooms. First students should be prepared for the story, they need to look for the cover, title, and skin for information to recall previous knowledge; here, illustration and objects from the front page should be used as tools to introduce new vocabulary. In this stage students should be allowed to use their mother language to propose, that way, the teacher can validate their contribution; though, the teacher should do it or transfer the information into the target language (English) to encourage students to use the target language. Teachers also need to ask questions to help students to recall the information they have stored in their long-term memory. Students could make predictions in this state, this is a good strategy to engage students in their listening process. The next stage is what she calls “In the Story World”, as in the first phase, student will offer their contribution base on the illustrations, but this time, the learning will occur through the dialogic approach, this means that students will gather and share their input or different points of view of the plot through dialogue. The third step is reflecting on the story through the use of open-ending questions; and finally, retelling the story, as the author puts it, mapping the story; that means, students should identify the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

To end this research, the author advises on the use of other subjects such as science, social studies, and math to enhance the English learning process, being careful to see that what teachers are using are facts not fiction in these cases. This topic can be found through children’s literature. In math, she offers titles such as “How big is a Foot?” by Miller (1991), “Anno’s

Mysterious Multiplying Jar” and “Anno’s Magic Seeds” by Anno and Anno (1983, 1995 respectively), and the “Remainder of One” by Pinczes (1995). In Sciences, books like “The Tiny Seed” by Carle (1987), “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”, “The Ugly Duckling, and “The Very Busy Spider” by the same author, “Fish is Fish” by Lionni (1995), and “Stellaluna” by Cannon (1993) . For social studies “The Day of Ahmad’s Secret” by Florence Parry Heide (1990), “Make a Wish, Molly” by Cohen (1994), “Watch the Stars Como Out” by Levinson (1985), and “Just Plain Fancy” by Polacco (1990), among many others.

Beyond reading picture books

According to Mourão (2016), a researcher and professor at Universidade Nova - Lisbon, this study should be taken into account for teachers who want to introduce children’s literature in the EFL classroom. The researcher wants teachers to go beyond the use of vocabulary and specific topics as learning strategy from using picture books and storytelling to the comprehension of the text meaning, including expressions and concepts through discussions and critical thinking; in that way, students will be able to generate a true response in English.

In the author’s book analysis, she advises for books that do not give the whole description of the subjects that way students can work actively in the construction of the story. “Wolves” by Gravett (2006), is a book she recommends, for there are illustration gaps that according to Bland (As cited by Mourão, p. 28) challenges young learners to search for, and in the classroom negotiate for, understanding and meaning; and according to Halliwell (As cited by Mourão, p. 28) they are realistic opportunities for interaction and talk, instinctive in children at this age. Another book she advises on is *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, what do you see?* By Marin Jr. and Carle (1995), this time not for its illustrations but according to her, “for its peritextual features that provide visual information and supports retelling the picture book, as they are strips of

coloured tissue paper depicting the sequence of the animals as they appear in the story” (p. 29). On this regard, the researcher does not recommend the illustration because the author explicitly paints the animals with the color proposed, but the author is not taking into account that the color and animal is presented or offered on the page before, giving kids the opportunity to evoke the color and animal image proposed, which is also important in the EFL learning process for concept retention.

For primary learners, the author advises on “The Gruffalo” by Donaldson and Scheffler (1999); according to her “The endpapers can be used as prompts for discussion” (p. 29). In these books, the endpaper has a forest depicted, plus the title has the main character portrayed as well, and that is how the story begins according to her, this help students to make connections and predictions; that for, peritextual features should be exploited by teachers; these tools can empower students’ curiosity and imagination. Keeping up with illustrations, Mourão asserts that pictures should be considered by teachers; based on Sipe’s five response categories (As cited in p. 32) she offers some activities; though, she pinpoints that students may use L1 and the teacher should rephrase in L2.

The first one is the analytical response on narrative meaning, students can make their own predictions based on children’s books’ illustrations; here, they can describe plots within the picture book presentations, and make inferences about the characters. On illustrations, they can identify, label, and describe illustrations. On the words, they can repeat words and phrases or chanting if it is appropriated; on the other hand, they can recognize words, punctuation marks, and speech bubbles. On the book as a subject, teachers can talk about the peritextual features. On the linguistic codes, students could make connections between L1 and L2 (translating, correcting peers, recognizing word sound, etc.).

The second one is the Intertextual Response, here, students make connections with other texts, films, videos, T.V. programs, and chant in their L1 world. The third one is the personal response, where their personality (feelings) and experiences are the core; here students can give opinions on the topic. The fourth one is the transparent response, where students live and experience the story; the responses are emotional and physical, there is an interaction with the characters, and students likely will request the story to be repeated. The last one is the performative response where students used the text or pictures for personal enjoyment; according to Mourão, students used to entertain their peers with a funny comment or joke; a response, teachers should embrace instead of scolding for it.

On ‘responses’ Mourão offers a study done in Portugal among pre-primary and primary EFL students. The results showed that teachers prefer the analytical response for the use of text fragments where they can focus on. According to Linse (As cited by Mourão, p. 36) the focus in EFL class is invariably on picking up the language chunks within the picture book. Nevertheless, the researcher pinpoints on the fact that even though teachers prefer this response, the other ones will take place at the same time. For this study, the author used two books to make her case; the first one was ‘I’m the best!’ by Lucy Cousins (2010); the book is meant to be for small children in an EFL context; this book is about a dog and his four best friends, a donkey, a ladybird, a mole, and a Goose. The aim of this picture book was to involve students’ emotionally, seeking all kind of responses; for example, the dog says all the time, ‘I am the best’, a remark that students can chant; the dog also declares that he is the best swimmer when compared to the donkey or bigger when compared to the ladybird, and so on; at the end, his friends make him realize that the goose is the best swimmer, that the donkey is the biggest, that the ladybird can fly, and that the mole can dig deeper than anyone else; that for, the dog cries

when he realized his limitations; on all these situations, students responded in different ways, including feeling empathy for the animals who cannot do things properly, like the goose that is not able to dig a hole, or even when the dog cries. How children did not have the English proficiency to communicate all their feelings, they were allowed to do so in L1 but using nouns, adjectives, or small sentences in English. The other book was “No!” by Marta Altés (2011); it is an ironic picture book where the words represent what the dog understands and the pictures, the dog’s owner’s believes or thoughts. This book is for 8 to 9 years-old EFL students who have a better English knowledge background; how the title of the books is “No!” many students and even the dog thought that this was his name; at the end, the dog and the students learned that his name was Spike, this was a visual experience to it; on the other hand, the word “no” appears every time the dog is going to do something wrong, which in his mind was correct, like eating the owner’s food, for what the dog said to be tasting it to see if it was good; or when he chewed a book; this produce according to the author a lot of transparent, analytical, and so on responses.

Regarding culture, another important figure in the EFL classroom, the researcher advises on the picture book “Silly Billy” by Browne (2006); this is a book about a boy who worries; his grandma gave him some worry dolls (*muñeca quitapena*) to cope with this problem; the worry dolls are originated in Guatemala (Mayan indigenes), they are made from wool, textile leftovers, cotton or clay for their faces or matches as a whole, and come in a small basket or alone; they supposed to be placed under the pillow to take the worries away. This kind of stories are part of tradition; that for, it is important for teachers to be aware of other countries cultures; according to Mourão, “This brings different cultures to the children through English, as well as simultaneously enabling them to talk about their own worries and concerns in life” (p. 30). Another book is “Yo! Yes?” this book brings values from African-American culture; this is a

book recommended for older children, for it is about friendships and its implications.

According to Mourão (2016), overall, picture books are not just authentic text because of the words they contain, for they enable language use through the learners' interpretation of the pictures, words, and design, as these elements come together to produce a visual-verbal narrative which is disregarded when there is a focus on the words only. (p. 30).

Regarding approaches, readers and their role connected to the text, Karolides & Rosenblatt (As cited by Mourão, p. 31), advice on a transactional approach, highlighting the reciprocal importance of both the reader and the text. According to Mourão, "The result is a third text, which emerges from the reader's personal reactions and experiences in relation to the original" (p. 31). Another approach is proposed by Wolfgang Iser (As cited by Mourão, p. 31), it is the communication that begins when the readers start to fill up gaps left between pictures and words. The last one is proposed by Stanley Fish (As cited by Mourão, p. 31) here proposes the creation of 'interpretative communities' influenced by the socio-constructivist theories of Vygotsky, where readers and books reciprocate to each other (Rosenblatt approach). According to Stanley Fish (As cited by Mourão, p. 31) the interpretative community is responsible 'both for the shape of the reader's activities and for the texts those activities produce. Based on these three approaches, the author pinpoints on the importance of letting students create their own interpretations individually or collaboratively through discussion and personal experiences.

In the end, like many researchers, Mourão advises teachers "To select picture books at the more complex end of the picture-word dynamic, so that learners are challenged to think and fill the gaps between the pictures and the words" (p. 39). She goes further to say that "Children's response should be taken seriously" (p. 39). For her, this is more relevant when the picture book goes close to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) - Vygotsky, (1896–1934).

Transferring L1 strategies into EFL. Does it work?

This research was done by Orozco Giraldo, C. (2013) in two stages; the first one in a Colombian public school in Santa Rosa de Cabal, Risaralda as a pedagogical study for L1-reading and writing using short stories from Rafael Pombo, Keiko Kasza, Charles Perrault, and the Grimm Brothers, and the second one in Pereira, as an L2 immersion program from a private school. The aim of this study was to find out if the strategies and discourses used in the first stage, reading in L1, have the same results when transfer with some changes into the same processes in L2. In other words, the researcher is trying to find a way to orient the conventional reading and writing process in both the L1 and L2 language, seeking for the same results; at the same time, she is looking to give new hopes and credibility to the Colombian bilingualism. In this regard, she emphasizes and clarifies that the study is done on L2 and not on EFL.

For the first stage, the study took three years, were kids from first grade were oriented toward the conventional process of writing and reading (L1) starting from the significance approach; the educator used strategies such as facial expression, use of customs and realia, open-ended questions to motivate creativity, imagination, and critical thinking and from there, help kids to make connections with reality and paraphrase what they just understood; then, the tutor has to write down on the board what they were saying to contextualize and empower kids emotionally and cognitively. At this point, she emphasizes to avoid fragmenting the information given to children for it is a detriment on their learning. Then, students were asked to draw a scene from the story, to write about it, or to make up a new story, or write a letter to a personage from the story. The results from this first phase were positive for the kids were able to pass from the conventional to the significance reading and writing process without any problem. There

was no rupture between phantasy and the academic reality, importantly, the kids were happy, and more fluently when reading.

The second stage she states that the second language was used with communicative ends and not as knowledge (p. 193). It took five years (2007-2011), with kids from pre-garden, garden, transition, and first grade; the natural method was used to allow students to acquired vocabulary and oral competencies, along with the same strategies used to teach writing and reading in L1. However, at this stage, Children's literature and games were used to develop the L2 orality first. It was also recommended the individual and collaborative work. Another important factor that played a big role was the teacher's English fluency, proficiency, patience, flexibility, tolerance, affectivity, perseverance, consistency, and pedagogical knowledge (p. 196). Orozco Giraldo states that "It is important to talk 100% in English during the whole class; this is a difficult task, nevertheless, she explains, kids are always eager to learn and to accept new challenges" (p. 196). She also recommends using cognates. "The cognates give students clues, help them to make sense on where they are, to enhance their vocabulary, and to find new ways to communicate" (p. 197). The stress-free environment, their happiness, the prompting, and mediation were also important in this process, along with the family members help on homework and to use positive ways to talk about the English language.

In the process both, storytelling and close questions were used (yes/no questions) first; then, open/close questions, where the answer was part of the question; at the end, open questions with a higher difficult level. Orozco Giraldo, explains that "At this stage the oral language enriching, development, and strengthening must be without exception the primary objective" (p. 199). The results showed that the students started the bilingualism program with the present continuous tense, then, the pass, and future until they used them at the same time. The students

were able to communicate in English with natural and fluency without supervision. The conclusion is that the teaching time is decisive; the language should be used with communicative ends, the English class should be oriented toward the students' happiness, creativity, motivation, and enjoyment. The L1 and L2 shouldn't be taught fragmented (Orozco Giraldo, p. 203).

Learning English while having fun

Porras González (2010) in her research project done in Bucaramanga-Santander used children stories and stories created by her and other student-teachers, the aim was to find a way to facilitate English teaching in public schools where teachers didn't have the English proficiency and the pedagogy needed to teach. The stories were done taking into account students' interest and likes to teach EFL to students from first to third grade in a public school. The natural approach was used in this research, where the input hypothesis was the base to develop the receptive skills on the students; according to Porras González, the amount, quality, comprehensibility, and quantity of information given to children will help them to get accustomed with the target language that is going to be learned while the stories will provide the repetitive input, and the reading will allow students to connect oral language with what it represents. These stories were used to be read aloud (storytelling), according to Porras Gonzalez (2010), "The results in all courses presented similarities such as the children's motivation when the stories were told or read, increased participation in the different activities, comprehension of the stories, and acquisition of new vocabulary" (n. p.). Other results showed that children's literature was a good resource to teaching English in context, while enhancing children's critical thinking and improving learning abilities.

Porras González suggests also strategies such as a pre-reading to learn vocabulary, according to her, this activity should be implemented with the help of games, puzzle, and songs,

etc.; teachers need to use also facial and body expressions, and knowing the students likes and interest to ensure that the right material is chosen. Other factors such as making a connection between the reading material with students' own experiences, the use costumes and realia, posters, and other materials are important to boost students' interest and motivation as well.

Overcoming obstacles to learn English through stories

This study by Rass and Holzman (2010) took place in primary school (sixth graders) in an Arab town in Israel in a primary school; where the methods to teach were traditional, the resources scarce, and the teachers didn't have the English background needed, but are in training programs or in the middle of their careers. What is relevant in this study is the peculiarity and challenges students have to face while learning EFL, for Arabic kids have to learn modern Arabic, Hebrew, and English. English is introduced in third grade as a spoken form only; in fourth grade the reading and writing skills are introduced but according to Rass and Holzman (2010), "Due to the peculiarities of each of these three languages (Arabic, Hebrew, and English), decoding very often does not result in accurate reading of the word" (p. 64). Nevertheless, the study on using Children's literature was carried out based on the positive outcomes other researchers have confirmed; for example, Shrestha (as cited by Rass and Holzman 2010, p. 64) asserts that stories are a wonderful vehicle in order to provide a natural linguistic environment in an unnatural one such as a classroom; MacGowan-Gilhooly (as cited by Rass and Holzman 2010, p.65), reported that a literature-based program for teaching EFL in a N.Y. college, where students from elementary and college level were taught was very successful and students were able to enhance their proficiency in a significant way.

According to Rass and Holzman (2010), "The purpose of the study is to examine the appropriateness of integrating authentic children's literature (including cartoons) in foreign

language classrooms in terms of students' attitudes and interaction in Arab elementary schools in Israel" (p. 65).

On the word of Rass and Holzman (2010), "Reading in the classroom represents a departure from their usual textbooks activities" (p. 67). Said that, they assert that "Children's literature could be part of the Arab classroom instruction of EFL" (p. 67). They also implied that "The results suggest that the use of this strategy is very positive and should be carefully considered by EFL teachers, EFL trainees, and teacher educators" (p. 64). "The use of poetry, song, rhymes, riddles, jokes, and other authentic text is a must" (p. 68). The two researchers also pinpointed on the importance of parents' involvement and the libraries should have these resources on their shelves.

In accordance with the new Arabic curriculum, teachers have to practice, prepare material (lesson plans), and learn themselves through children's literature in their training program; as part of their evaluation, they have to practice-teaching with authentic stories in elementary and junior high students. In this study, the student-teachers were observed and have to answer a questionnaire; in general, teachers think that using children's literature is an excellent method that needs to be integrated with others; half of the responders said that they enjoyed teaching through stories; most students teachers were eager to copy them, including the activities done during the program to be used in the future. One trainee said that she likes that students were focused on her during the reading; that for, she thinks that the experience and text were remembered for a long time. Another said that students were quiet while reading; that for, she can have more control of the class; when she arrived at the class, students asked to read more stories as well. Another student teacher mentioned that students learn spontaneously without being aware of that. Not all the answers were positive; one trainee said that the success of the

activity depends on the story and the class, that on occasions works and others do not; she mentions that the experience was difficult for her for the stories were writing for L1, not for L2/EFL; not to mention the time consuming when preparing the class materials and activities.

Regarding students' attitude toward the use of stories, the results showed that around 75% of the students seem to enjoy the activities done through children' literature; among them, the use of visual aids, storytelling, reading stories, and songs. Almost 65% of students understood the stories when reading; even though, they only use English in the classroom. According to Rass and Holzman (2010), "The interest and motivation that the story creates make up for the deficit in language" (p. 67).

Concerning the obstacles, the result showed that one of the main problems is that they have to buy by themselves the books they use, for the institute don't have them, neither provide them. This is one of the main problems many teachers have to face in many countries; to make things worse, this kind of resources are very expensive and difficult, if not impossible to find.

Taiwan, a mirror to Colombia's background

This research by Yu Chang (2007) does a critical review on the popularity, real meaning, and kind of Children's literature used in Taiwan to teach English. In her own words, Yu Chang said "My fear was that children's literature in English, if selected and used in inappropriate ways, might have little effect or might even become a source of boredom and frustration for children" (p. 2). On this matter, as a teacher, she founded out that while using children's literature, although students enjoyed the activities, they were not able to comprehend and use the language properly. Although, some children stories were included in the students' textbooks and specific material was designed including communicative aspects to reach the objectives throughout a systematic and progressive approach, the results were not encouraging,

children were not learning! That for, her investigation went deeper on the use of children's literature in the English teaching process to young learners (6 to 12 years old). One concern she had was about the use of L1 English children's literature to teach L2 in public schools where the hours were limited to one hour a week for the early learners; another concern was that neither teachers knew the real meaning of children's literature, nor there was a general consensus on what is children's literature for researchers.

For the purpose of this study and after a critical review on many children's literature definitions, Yu Chang (2007) defines children's literature as a written text exhibiting any genre/s and text-type, with or without accompanying images, that focuses on the lives, experiences and interests of children in any particular society and that is written to entertain, and sometimes also to inform and instruct, through the creative and imaginative shaping of experience in a way that widens children's linguistic and/or mental and emotional horizons. (p. 13)

Something that was also taken into account in this research was that according to Yu Chang (2007) "for many researchers the children's literature used in L2 is primarily and exclusively literature that was written with first language speakers in mind" (p. 24). Thereupon she advises teachers to consider what kind of children's literature could be used when selecting them.

According to Yu Chang (2007), "Definitions of children's literature can be assigned to three broad categories (intended audience; purpose; style/quality), the second of which includes three sub-categories (entertainment; entertainment and information; empathy)" (p. 9). Regarding Intended audience, the following definitions are cited by Yu Chang (2007, p. 10); here she made a critical review on the pros and cons of the definitions.

Weinreich & Bartlett (2000), “The child must ... be regarded as a necessary condition which the author consciously or unconsciously relates to in the creative process” (p. 127).

The next definition is a summary on Yu Chang own paraphrase (p. 10); McDowell (1973) and Hunt (1996), in the definition on children’s literature both made allusion to the audience; thus, they emphasize on for who is writing and who will read it. The problem here is that McDowell (1973, p.17) gives value to the texts depending on the circumstances of use; on this matter Yu Chang affirms that “This definition excludes books that are read by, but not primarily intended for, children” (p. 10). Another definition that she finds challenging is the one given by Lesnik-Oberstein (1996, p.17), for him, children’s literature falls into a category of books writing for children, but the word “books” according to Yu Chang “excludes the material that is not produced in book format – electronic form- but include books written for adults and adapted for children” (p. 10).

Regarding Purpose function (The following definitions are cited by Yu Chang (p. 11 – 14). Here the emphasis is made on entertainment, information, and empathy; the first definition by Hollindale (1997, p 30), children’s literature is “a body of texts with certain common features of imaginative interest, that of being read by a child”, here I conserve the quotation marks used by the author. This definition falls into narrative fiction and is writing mostly for the readers’ enjoyment. In the following definitions, Yu Chang has some concerns for they exclude many features such as “basal readers” these books are books used to teach reading skills and grammar (vocabulary and sentence structures) and all books that are not narrative fiction. Ghosn (2002, p. 172), “Fiction written for children to read for pleasure, rather than for didactic purposes”. Not only she excludes basal readers (books like “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”) but the word “didactic” definition according to Yu Chang is unclear. On the contrary the definition given by

Galda and Cullinan (2002, p. 7) includes fiction and non-fiction literature; “Literature for Children and adolescents entertains and ...informs”, that “[it] enables young people to explore and understand their world”; here I conserve the quotation marks used by the author. When talking about empathy, Yu Chang includes the definition given by Huck, Helper, Hickman & Kiefer, 1997, p. 5), Children’s literature is “The imaginative shaping of life and thought into forms and structures of language”. See “The Upstairs Room” by Johanna Reiss (1987). Into this definition, books are written base on children’s experiences where students can enhance and compare it with their own experiences.

In regards to style and quality, the author emphasizes on the risks of definitions not being clear, such as authors’ style, language, elements, forms, etc.; Lukens (as cited by Yu Chang, 2007, p. 13), refers to children’s literature as “a significant truth expressed in appropriate elements and memorable language”, the ideas were “expressed in poetic form, [and] the truths of them and character [being] explored through the elements of fiction, and the style of the artist”. Here I respected the quotation marks used by the author.

Regarding text-types Yu Chang asserts that “many academic researchers used the word ‘genre’ to refer to socially constructed categories that describe written and oral texts such as novels, short stories, poems, lectures, and academic articles, for his study these are described as text-types” (p. 14). The importance of this aspect is that many researchers only include narrative fiction excluding other literary genres that can have an impact on the teaching and learning field such as non-fiction, or vice versa. Thereupon, Yu Chang advice teachers to be aware of these issues, in her own words “Teachers need to understand the organizational and linguistic characteristics of different genres and text-types in making selections and deciding on appropriate methodologies” (p. 15).

Likewise, illustration has a big impact on children; that for, Yu Chang recommends teachers to seek for children's preferences, what they think about pictures, and how they can be used as teaching material to enhance visual reading; teachers should also take advantage of technology. According to her "The interaction between text and pictures in picture books can provide children with an opportunity to develop visual-reading competence" (p. 17). Doonan (as cited by Yu Chang, p. 16), notes that the reader scans the picture first, then reads the text, then returns to the picture to reinterpret in the light of the words; Huck et al. (as cited by Yu Chang, p. 17), states that the pictures in picture story books must help to tell the story, showing the action and expressions of the characters, the changing settings, and the development of the plot. Said that Yu Chang advises to be cautious on "post-modern" picture books, for the incongruity between text and illustration can create frustration and a sense of inadequacy, and a barrier to language learning. That for, she recommends teachers in Taiwan to be realistic and careful about illustration when selecting children's literature. Arizpe (as cited by Yu Chang, p. 18) observes that it is important to bring cultural differences into the pictures as well as potential discontinuities in home and school literacy practices when trying to understand [responses] to...images. Here I respected the punctuation marks used by the author.

On account of language features and taking into account that most children's books are writing for L1, teachers should take advantage of the variety of children's literature and their functions; they need to choose books where the language (vocabulary) is not restricted but been careful on students' age and proficiency. Weinreich and Barlett (as cited by Yu Chang, p. 23), note that children's literature is determined by expectations of the child's competences, notions of what a child is and of what is good for a child.

On the subject of teachers' beliefs about literature, Yu Chang said that they believe children's literature is important in the development of language skills; thus, they are using these resources in class even though they are written for L1 students; she also clarifies here that children's literature is been used in private schools where teachers are native speakers and that public schools teachers neither have a clear view on what is children's literature despite the fact that they believe in their importance, nor they have idea on how to select and use them.

Another important characteristic to the researcher is the linguistic differences between literature that is intended primarily for L1 students and literature that is intended primarily for L2 children.

According to Yu Chang (2007), Even though many researchers assert and argue that Literature-based instruction can have a positive impact on the language and literacy of primary school children, including those from language minority backgrounds, have very little to say that is sufficiently specific to provide teacher of young learners with guidance on the selection and appropriate use of children's literature in second and/or foreign language context. (p. 24)

Taking into consideration this statement, Yu Chang rescues some assertions that in some way have value to consider when choosing literature for second language use. The first one and according to her is an assertion made by Xu (2003) that implies that through English literature students could learn sentence structure for it provides predictable linguistic patterns and repetition. She also emphasizes on some researchers who advocate for the selection of text according to its linguistic features; not leaving out Krashen's statement (1983) (as cited and paraphrased by Yu Chang, p. 25) where he states that there is little difference between natural language acquisition and the learning of an additional language for a few hours each week in a

classroom context. After a long critical review on how L1 is acquired, she concluded that all researchers agree on the benefits of literature-based instruction and activities (reading aloud, silently, storytelling, and so on) for children; but she argues that there is no specific evidence, neither have they talked about the selection of material and approaches and methodologies to use. On the other hand, many researchers believe that literature-based instruction and basal-driven instructions for L2/EFL primary school students have great value (They emphasize on authentic literature); but Yu Chang argues that they are forgetting the EFL context; likewise, she implies that many researchers are not taking into account the teachers' English background, neither the fact that children's literature for L1 includes structures, differences between writing an spoken language, and vocabulary, nor that early learners do not have the English level needed for this kind of activities (questioning); these facts according to her create a barrier to understanding (frustration). Nevertheless, she rescues the value of motivation, the challenge (meaningful context), and the literacy students can gain from the narrative, which is supported by many researchers.

On account of "Good" children's literature there is not an agreement on that; for example, Stewig (as cited and paraphrased by Yu Chang, p. 29), asserts that the most important factor in evaluating children's literature is the responses of children themselves (internal evaluation) and the characterization, dialogue, setting, plot, conflict, resolution, theme, and style (external evaluation), but Yu Chang pinpoints that Stewig is living out illustration and other criteria for evaluation. According to Yu Chang, this criterion is supported by other researchers such a Hillel and Mappin (1995), but at the same time, she highlights another no so explicit terms that are not evaluated by them (concepts of beauty, cohesion, and harmony, intellectual dexterity, etc.). On the other hand, Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (as cited by Yu Chang, p. 30-

31), included in the evaluation criteria aspect such as fictional, visual and non-fictional elements; on this account Yu Chang indicates that they fail on given good and enough support on how to use or evaluate these aspects; she declares that “they just give information on that”, likewise many are “vague on the purposes and concept of illustration” (p. 37-38).

To sum up, she highlights on the fact that there is not a real consensus on what is or not proper children’s literature to teach L2/EFL, but she pinpoints on the importance of award-winning books; thus, she advises to be careful when chosen them. She also recommends to consider methodologies, general and specific aims, and outcomes (to learn about structures, tenses, vocabulary, etc.); to be clear on the intended audience (age, interests, students’ English level, realistic texts, cultural background, time, and class size, etc.). These statements are supported by many researchers such as Smallwood (1988), Brown (2004), and Shih (2005). (See p. 41 - 45)

According to Yu Chang (2007), another important consideration is the fact that children’s literature designed primarily for native speakers of a particular age may not be both linguistically and cognitively appropriate for language learners of the same age, that is, literature that is cognitively appropriate may not be linguistically appropriate and literature that is linguistically appropriate may not be cognitively appropriate. (p. 39)

These are other “Principles of Selection” according to Norton, 1999; Smallwood, 1988; Johnson, 2003; (As cited by Yu Chang, p. 39-41):

- Books with rich, clear and dramatic illustrations (appropriate to age)
- Simple, repetitive, and controlled language and sentence patterns
- Limited on metaphorical language and familiar experiences.
- Rhythm as a memorization tool.

- Predictable plot and dialogue as realistic as possible.
- Good for reading aloud
- Short on length.
- Cognitive and fun books, songs with a rhythmic beat.
- Books related products (CD, audiocassettes, etc.)

Another feature analyzed in this study was the common grounds between samples of texts used in textbooks designed for young learners of English in Taiwan vs good children's literature. According to Yu Chang (2007), "the textbooks used in Taiwan are locally produced" (p. 122). In accordance with the statements presented by many researchers seen above, she asserts that the criterion used to elaborate these textbooks in Taiwan falls into what is considered children's literature (both fiction and non-fiction which includes text-types and genres).

For the purpose of this part of the research, three textbooks were analyzed to see if the text included were appropriate and could be considered literature. Yu Chang asserts that texts should contribute to the teaching and learning objectives, that for, they were analyzed on language content, grading, organization, relevance, balance of skills appropriation, appropriate range and balance of genres, realism of the dialogues, if languages patterns were presented, were there illustration of new vocabulary? Were they focus on children's lives and experiences? Do they have imaginative interest and encourage empathy?

What she found out was that the texts from the first textbook analyzed emphasize on language basic, that they were appropriated with the curriculum, age and level, but the interaction was artificial because the children's experiences were not included; the meaningful context and communication interaction were leaving out, and few task and activities were included; their focus was on listening and speaking, but reading and writing were not explicit in

it; the illustrations were neither related to the context, nor clear to understand the text introduced; there was no balance between genres and text-types. The second textbook results showed that the texts had many structures that can be difficult to students, for example, the use of “to” as part of the infinitive form and “to” as part of a directional preposition. The text analyzed has very small dialogues with some illustrations, songs (without an overall theme), and sentences that do not reach the status of real communication; according to her, they “Lack coherence and cohesion, for they are artificial and stilted” (p. 156). In other words, the textbooks are lacking short stories that can be considered good literature to teach and engage students in the process.

The third book was more helpful for it contains language in context, but the book is oriented mainly toward the listening and writing skills, leaving out the speaking and reading skills; the textbook also leaves out activities that include real communication. According to her the dialogues included have “inappropriate and meaningless language in context, only indications of partially learned idioms” (p. 172). All and all, she states that “The text consists mainly of artificial dialogue snippets that have no genuine communicative purpose or imaginative interest and little to offer in terms of relevance to the lives of the learners” (p. 175).

On the other hand, guider readers are used in Taiwan as supplementary materials; most of these books are written for L1 readers nor for L2/EFL; according to Yu Chang “This leads to problems in terms of language content and cultural assumptions” (p. 176). On the first hand, she explains, that these books were writing years ago and some of which were translated and summarized from traditional stories, the books content have stereotype gender (a car for a boy, a doll for a girl), not even accepted nowadays to native speakers. The illustrations were not clear and appropriate and didn’t offer support to the meaning of the text; the books were written for kids in the 60s no for the 21st -century who are into technology not into fantasy; the texts were

not appropriate in many ways. For instance, in *Hansel and Gretel*, one of the books analyzed, according to Yu Chang “The text has no relevance to the lives of 21st century Taiwanese children and is full of what is likely to appear to be gratuitous cruelty” (p. 202). Other problems founded are related to grammatical spots that were not appropriated for the children’s grade and age; some vocabulary was no longer in use and some uncommon nouns were not familiar to them. Even though Yu Chang considers that these kinds of books are sold in Taiwan for economic gain, these books can be used and reading for motivational purposes at home and even at schools. In accordance with what was exposed above, teachers should take into account students’ tendencies and ethical boundaries too.

Another results (mostly from assumptions) showed that students enjoy the stories, but she implied that it happens because the same thing was taught in the Mandarin Curriculum; that students were able to complete and answer sentences with pictures as references (She said that it may be that all or almost all children were simple associating the picture with an English word). She highlights here that the teachers were native speakers and that their ability, enthusiasm and teacher’s personality was a big plus in the apparent success of the classes. She also pinpointed that the method applied was likely used for L1 students, she doesn’t go deeper in explaining which will be the best scenario for this case. Other results are that the contexts were too complex, that they have inappropriate grammar structure for students’ age and cultural background, limited use of vocabulary, and the illustrations were not useful in most cases; however, she rescued “*The Foot Book*” by Dr. Seuss; according to her “With some reservation, this text is an ideal example of how we can learn from popular children’s literature in designing textual materials for young learners of English as an additional language” (p. 251). This due to the simplicity in which the book was written, the rhyme used, and the illustration been part of the

context. All and all she suggests that most L1 children's literature is not appropriated to teach English; thus she advise teachers to be cautious when choosing children's literature to be used in the classroom.

Another aspect that is relevant to the aim of this monograph and that should be taking into account in our settings are that most teachers described their English teaching objectives while using children's literature as "To motivate students to love English and to improve students' English proficiency" (p. 73). A second aspect that Yu Chang highlights is that, "Recommending that teachers of English in Taiwan use children's literature is one thing; ensuring that they have the skills necessary to select and use it effectively is another thing" (p. 80). Thus, to give an answer to this question Yu Chang observed 43 lessons from kindergarten to primary school, taught by 5 different teachers, in 5 different settings and institutions. During Yu Chang observations the Taiwanese curriculum guidelines were taking into account; the results showed that in kindergarten teachers were using children's literature properly and effectively; though, she emphasized that the teachers were native speakers and the students were in a semi-immersion process, for various hours every day. On the contrary, teachers from cram and public schools were doing the best with the scarce resources available; a few hours a week, not proper training, lack of experiences providing clear objectives. On the other hand, children's literature was used only on time in one of the primary school classes. This is a mirror from many teachers' situation, adding that most, if not all primary teachers from many countries public schools have neither English degree nor teaching English experience.

To sum, according to Yu Chang, when choosing children's literature and creating teaching material, teachers should include if not all, at least some of the features researchers agree to be appropriated to teach L2/EFL in the teaching and learning process; among these are

the imagination through memorable characters, cultural and humor elements appropriate to children's age and English level, taking into account students experiences, surroundings, and needs. As for linguistic and grammar spots, language structure should be clear, this should include repeatable patterns, rhyme, predictable and new vocabulary; the dialogue included should be simple, realistic, it should be from different genres and types of text; the illustration should support the text, be clear and uncluttered, interesting, dynamic and attractive; they should avoid gender representations, this goes to the text as well. In general children's books should be used to support grammar and didactic purposes; in other words, they shouldn't be as textbooks proposed by the curriculum, which are stiff and have only didactics purposes (Yu Chang, 2007).

Natural approach, communicative method, and storytelling strategy; the best way to learn English

This study was done by Zulaica Isasti (2013), a student from "Universidad de la Rioja-Spain", taking into account theories supported by scholars; as all the researchers, she highlights the importance of the English language as lingua franca and the boom to teach and learn English. The aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate the importance of the stories in the English learning process in primary schools, using the natural approach focused on communication.

According to Zulaica Isasti, through stories children have the opportunity to learn about different cultures; they help students to develop social, reception, and production skills, and cognitive, emotional, and affective capacities; this will also help students to relate information with their own experiences. This significant learning, according to Ausubel (As cited by Zulaica Isasti, p. 6) occurs when the kid relates the new with the old information, readjusting and rebuilding both. On the other hand, Zulaica Isasti mentions some scholars who agree that

the values that must sustain that teaching a foreign language should be on how we use it and not the theoretical knowledge we have of it. That for, she implies that what is important about the use of stories is what students can learn from the context -authentic language- not from how much vocabulary they know or the grammar spots funded in them. For her, the communicative competencies should be the pillar of primary school teaching, that way students will feel competent and productive, doing something they like with the language they are learning.

I highlight the similarities founded in both, Spanish and Colombian context when teaching EFL for the English language is not part of students' daily lives; that for, both, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play a huge role in the process. The main aim in Spain when teaching English is to make students aware of other languages and the importance of learning them with communicative ends. According to Zulaica Isasti, "Teachers can use stories to connect with students and learn from their behavior and reactions" (p. 16). This is important from the human context, for students need guidance, understanding, patience, and trust. This statement is also valid when talking about selecting material, according to the researchers "Teachers need to take into account students' characteristics not only in the cognitive but emotional part" (p. 16).

Like many researchers, Zulaica Isasti agrees that when teaching through stories it is important to include new vocabulary related to their environment and that it can be transferred into actions (body language), likewise, the use of realia to support context. Another fact that she highpoints, it is the important of repetition, for young students need to memorize and clarify some concepts; the repetition not only occurs when students reread a story but when the author uses phrases and words recurrently. On the other hand, teachers need to exploit students' curiosity to involve them in the story using fantasy mixed with reality (their own experiences); that way, they will have the opportunity to learn in a meaningful way. At the same time,

teachers should integrate context with grammar spots without emphasizing in this last one. She also put emphasis on the importance of having a comprehensible input with a good and attractive argument, where rhythm, rhyme, intonation, and onomatopoeias are included. She also argues that stories with moral and ethical means are the best to teach; in other words, she is talking about fables.

The objectives in Spain teaching English context are to integrate listening with oral comprehension and socio-cultural contents; that for, Zulaica Isasti asserts that it is important to select the story based on the student's likes, linguistic knowledge, and reading competence in their L1 language. She advises on the use of stories that have humor and nice illustrations such as "The Tortoises' Picnic", "The horse that played Cricket", "The Two Elephants", "The Pied Piper of Hamelin", and "The Dog that Talked" among others that include fairy tales and fiction. In her own words, "Stories motivate, they are fun and challenging; they help students to create personal and social connections, engage, develop self-confidence, and positive attitudes toward learning and reading" (p. 23). Regarding methodologies, she advises on the use of the Global methodologies, which are based on the text per se. Here the text is read and analyzed as a whole first (significance), followed by the teaching of the small linguistic units in it. These methodologies should integrate motivational strategies such as brainstorming to evaluate previous knowledge, guessing activities, participation while reading by sharing emotions and eliciting and answering questions from both parties, collaborative activities where students can build new knowledge, draw and coloring, and role play.

This research includes some information on a European project named "The multilingualism Project" that has been implemented in the Basque Country and Navarra; this project is based on the use of stories to teach English and other languages seeking a linguistic

immersion with that language at an early age (4 to 16-year-old students). The objective of this plan is that at the end of the students' secondary school, they should be able to comprehend, produce, read, and write English in a way that they can communicate in a natural way and use it in other elective classes without harm other language knowledge. This project is based on projects; that for the stories need to have realistic language and scenarios according to the theme; the stories are enhanced with the use of draws, worksheets, theater, use of mimic, slow reading, body language, interaction, reconstruction of the story, collaborative work, writing exercises (filling up gaps), and role plays. The parents' involvement is required in the process and a conscious and well-planning class by teachers as well; during the process, each project is linked to other learning areas where students put a hand on work creating and building new knowledge and making real the projects proposed. An example given by the researcher is that if students are reading a story about witches, students need to produce a kind of concoctions and if it is about cooking, students will prepare a dish, etc.; it should be reminded that the classes are taught in English all the time.

According to the project, "The stories are designed to be flexible in their use, to encourage students' participation, for they need to play a role in it" (p. 39). On the other hand, the stories are upgraded and adapted to the virtual society, for interactive material is done to enhance the stories projects. It is worth emphasizing the importance of teachers' English mastering and teaching competences, who need to continue their training. Another important issue that needs to be highlighted is that the communication aspect prevails on the form, without neglecting this last one. For the project, mistakes are part of the learning process that cannot be avoided either be considered as an obstacle. This project is a mirror from the "Artigal Method" a project proposed by the professor Artigal for primary school. For Artigal when referring to

stories (As cited and paraphrased by Zulaica Isasti, p. 41) it is not so much about content but about how much emotional content is there to transmit, adding the importance on the direct dialogue styles which contain short and simple sentences, it explains emotions in a warm and familiar manner. In this project the parents are involved as well, for students are asked to read, perform being the protagonists, and practice at home what they have learned in class.

According to Zulaica Isasti “It is considered that languages are not learned first and used after; they are used; hence, students learn” (p. 420). According to the investigation and the positive results threw by the Artigal Method, the ongoing project in the Basque Country and Navarra, and the investigation supported by scholars’ theories; using stories (Children’s literature) is a valid tool to teach English taking the above considerations.

Theoretical background on Comics

Bogotá bilingüe and comics

This study done by Bernal Plazas and Sánchez (2013) took place at the Jose Manuel Restrepo School in Bogotá, over one year and a half of research done by two students from the Universidad de la Salle-Bogotá. This school is part of the government’s program Bogotá Bilingüe; its goal was to measure the implications of reading comics among fourth-grade students who have problems with reading while motivating them to learn English. During the program activities based on comics were implemented along with diagnostic exams (Cambridge mover exam), self-evaluations, interviews, proformas, which are diary to record information, and finally surveys. The authors opted to use comic strips for this study based on observations done before the research which showed how students’ participation was higher when using pictures and posters, they were also influenced by the researchers (Grasmics, 2007; Wolk, 2007; Bowkett and Hitchman, 2012, and Frey and Fisher, 2008) who agree that using comics, students can

improve their reading abilities. To emphasize on this matter Gazzete (As cited by Bernal Plazas and Sánchez, p. 19) declares that we see kids reading comics books, buying comic books, and they seem totally engrossed. Then, why not use them as tools to motivate students?

The problems observed by the researchers before using comics were that the school neither have an English guide book, nor the teacher use collaborative work strategies; adding to this, the English time class was only two hours per week, teachers and students have low English proficiency and the teachers did not know the standards and strategies to teach English; thus, they used L1 very often, which researchers founded to be a back step on the learning process.

The researchers took into account the objectives' class and applied the approaches, methods, and strategies stated in the school's curriculum, such as CLIL, Content-Based Instruction, and Communication and cultural strategies emphasizing on reading- comprehension and keeping in mind the students' low reading proficiency. Students worked with comics focusing on the vocabulary and reading comprehension; applying strategies such as questioning and rewriting the comic. The comics were created in the website "Make beliefs – commix", according to the topics provided by the class teacher and were implemented with more activities provided by the researchers (crosswords and matching exercises).

The implementation of this project has six stages, starting from monitoring the students' aims, providing examples, demonstrating, and checking for the meaning of new concepts, and linking them with the ones students already knew. They also used the steps provided by Reigeluth (1999) based on Perkins (n. d.) structure, to design their instructions, which involves giving clear instructions to students, providing practice exercises and explaining new vocabulary, giving feedback, promoting and maintaining the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and evaluating results.

While using the comics, in the first section, students worked individually and collaboratively, drawing and reading the comic; questions were asked to check comprehension and filling up exercises took place as well, at this point, students compared their answers and homework was given. During the second section, students work alone or in a group doing matching exercises and rewriting the comic to be shared with the whole class (same topic from the first stage), while teachers followed the same steps from the first section. In the third activity, the same topic was used but implemented with a new one; this time, students provided information about both topics while the teacher follows the same steps used in the first and second stage. At this time, students created their comic strips (Characters and text), playing guessing with their peers. During the following steps, 5 and 6, students created their comics with the topics given, following the same process applied before; always emphasizing in reading comprehension.

In the end, students took an exam where they reflected on the use of comics; after comparing both results, from this and the diagnostic exam, the results showed that students were able to improve their lexicon, pronunciation, and motivation; though, the comprehension skill did not show important progress. According to the researches, students' improvement was low for reasons such as the test English level did not match the students' level, students did not want to repeat the same kind of exam, the time given to answer the test was less, and students were ready to leave on vacation; at this point, students gave back their exams incomplete. Regarding the survey about comics, the majority of the students were happy using the first comic; students said that they were able to retain and remember vocabulary, however, the researchers pinpoint that this topic was seen before. About comprehension, the results were not accurate, for the class teacher explained the content in Spanish. Regarding students willing to keep reading comics,

their answer was very positive (see the graph in results). The problems highlighted by the researchers were that the topics used to implement the comics strategies were already seen by students and the activities were repetitive as well; this factors low students expectations and enthusiasm; to complicate matters, the students' attitude and behavior, the home teacher interruptions and control over the class waned the results.

Breaking up language barriers through comics

Even though this research by Clydesdale (2007) placed in Canada was done thinking of L2, I included it because I found it relevant to EFL as well. The study aim was to provide a view of how comics could help students from many cultures to break the gap between their languages and English. According to Clydesdale (2007), “The background of each student cannot be addressed multilingually either by resources, time or practicality; in such circumstances, comics can serve to bring learners together and aid them on a visual level” (p. 2). That for, she offers some functions suggested by Liu (p. 2) on why comics should be chosen to teach English. The first one is for its organization where visuals help with unity between the picture and the text; the following ones will be for its interpretation, transformation, and decoration; however, she also affirms that comics are more than visual, they offer linguistic and cultural integration. Culture, in this case, can help also with social literacy; that for, comics can be used as assigned task or just for pleasure reading.

Talking in general about comics, Clydesdale also asserts that for a L2 learner, there is an instant appeal here: instead of feeling alienated and distant from the character by struggling with the language, the L2 student gets to effortlessly inhabit the characters, putting the learner at ease with the material. (p. 4)

On the other hand, Burmark (As cited by Clydesdale, p. 5) states that the comics' visuals

help to bring meaning to the constant, confusing dialogue of the real world. They are talking about colloquialism and linguistic oddities; these oddities are the words that are difficult to translate or that do not have an equivalent in the target language. In comics, languages, according to Williams (As cited by Clydesdale, p. 5) is generally of one register – the informal, normal, everyday speech between friends and acquaintances -, plus, they have many different levels of language including native speech patterns such as word blends, onomatopoeias, intonation, sounds, and vague lexicon, among others. According to the author, the ample lexicon, directed toward native speakers can be revised and read many times to get the meaning. Regarding orthography, comics can be used to teach spelling; here the author affirms that comics' language can be difficult in terms of grammar, meaning linked to the context, and that is up to teachers to set the levels for their students.

Clydesdale as an English teacher, a France language learner, and especially as a researcher highlight and emphasizes on the effectiveness of the comics; even though, teachers may have to explain jokes or phrases students may not know. For her, as a student, comics were a motivational tool; as a teacher, she uses comics with empty bubbles to ask students to make their own strips, then she showed the real version and compared it with the others; some stories were very funny but what was more important was that the students enjoy it. According to Krashen (As cited by Clydesdale, p. 10), comics are a vital part of an overall effort to encourage reading in public school students.

Creating comics and enhancing motivation in the English classroom

Steven Graham's (2011) abstract starts with the following sentence, "Children enjoy reading comics, so it makes perfect sense to use such a resource to enhance English-language learning" (p. 92). For him as for many other researchers, comics are a good tool to teach English

for it provides new venues to reinforce the old traditional teaching strategies that students found boring, for they are based on drilling and memorization.

This project aim is to create a series of comics based on Thailand's primary education curriculum requirements, on the application www.makebeliefscomix.com. Mr. Graham asserts that "Students need communicative materials that can be administered in the classroom in a learner-centered way" (p. 92). Thailand teacher as in many other countries have neither the pedagogical knowledge to teach in a student-centered method, nor have the English fluency and proficiency required among other factors that detriment the process. That for, comics are used, for it has dialogue and visual components, two factors that boost students' motivation and help with vocabulary acquisition. The first stage of this project was to prepare communicative activities that were added to the regular classes taught at primary school, this stage was named "Smooth Transition". This venture was not only directed toward the teaching per se but to train teachers to use audio CDs of dialogues from the book they were using (O Net / N Net testing books) and flashcards. In the "Smooth Transition" teachers were observed and videoed on DVDs provided for this section. During the reflection stage, the project grew step by step adding more data and activities. On the second stage, the dialogue was added for voice recognition in the software program <http://www.teachingmachine.com/> (SpeaKIT Voice Recognition); the aim was to help students to practice reading and pronunciation. The final step was to create according to Graham "Gap-fill comics based on the dialogues used in the Smooth Transition phase used for the DVDs and the SpeaKIT Voice Recognition program; with this programs, teachers were able to select characters and create cartoons comics with speech bubbles (p. 95). In this stage cartoons should be filled with one word from a list provided; collaborative work and feedback from the teacher were implemented on this activity.

At the end, students were able to practice writing, reading, listening, and speaking abilities; the L1 was used as a strategy but it has been cut little by little and by the production time, L1 was reduced a lot. Ibarra Hidalgo (As cited in Graham 2011, p. 96) asserts that L1 is a free and useful resource at their disposal (teachers and students), resulting in students understanding what they have to learn and how they have to learn. The preliminary result on gap-fill comics were positive and showed students enjoying completing the comic activities (p. 97); students were also able to reproduce it in a paper (writing) the text from the strips (DVD) and understand the grammar spots in them. Van den Branden, (As cited by Graham 2011, p. 97) asserts that “By completing gap-fill comics students are stimulated to recycle what they have learned as they use the English Language for a specific goal. Laufer (As cited by Graham 2011, p. 97) states that by using a focus-on-form component of vocabulary instruction, word learning and retention are increased. Mr. Grahams hopes to keep investigating on activities done around comics such as word order exercises, students’ own dialogues, and evaluation. On the other hand, he advises for innovation if Thailand wants to improve English language skills; this can be a recommendation many other countries shouldn’t take for granted, for teachers need new strategies to engage students on improving their proficiency.

Reading and comprehension through comics

Evan Jones (2010), in his experience as a high school and university teacher had faced the same problems many teachers had faced while teaching English, the students’ lack of motivation and insecurities. In an extensive reading (ER) program at the university, the researcher proposed comic books as reading- material, giving students the possibility to choose the comic genre and level suitable to them. The aim was to improve students’ attitude towards reading, for many of them considered the given reading material boring and difficult to read,

requiring from them the constant use of dictionaries that according to Jones, “Dictionaries and glossaries are of benefit to the second language learners; however, their use can be an impediment to the enjoyment of reading because of the split attention effect that its usage induces” (p. 230). Regarding comics, Takase (As cited by Jones, p. 229), found that the extension reading format of starting with a simple text and progressing to more difficult text increases learner’s motivation by building their confidence to read in a FL. On the other hand, the researcher stated that “On a psycholinguistic level, research into learning has shown that multi-modal instruction and the use of contextual visual cues such as those found in comic book stories can be beneficial in regard to comprehension and schema formation” (p. 229). Jones emphasizes on the visual element as it enhances the text’s coherence, gives concrete information, helps with memorization, and its illustration are linked to the content.

In this study, 25 women students between 19 to 20 years old with a false beginner or beginner English level in their compulsory English course, were asked to answer a pre and post-questionnaire in Japanese to measure participants’ attitude toward reading in L1 and L2 language, to rate the necessity of reading in English, and to share their thoughts on the ER program; in the second questionnaire was included a question about the use of comics as teaching material. According to Jones students were asked to read three starter level comic books and then progressed to higher levels at their own discretion; then they met once a week for a 20-30 minute in-class group discussion to share and relate events from their readings; next, students read fragments and made a summary of the reading, including their thoughts about the text (an example of the exercise was included to guide students). The results on the pre-survey showed the used of comics in the ER program was positive; that 32% of the participants neither like reading in Japanese nor in English, and that 44% of students have a positive attitude toward

reading, at the same time 96% said that it was necessary to read in English because Japan is changing its ideas toward globalization and acceptance of new cultures. The results on the post-questionnaire surprisingly went down; students who were positive toward reading in English felt from 68% to 64%; students who enjoy reading in English felt from 28% to 16%, and their attitude toward reading felt from 44% to 40%. According to the author discussion, it could be due either to the fact that students were not exposed to comics before and that this study took only six months or that the process used in the ER program was not appropriated for their low English level; another possibility was the limited resources they had available. Even though, students indicated that comics were very motivated and easy to comprehend thanks to their illustrations; that for, they enjoyed reading comics more than regular texts; though, the ER program didn't improve students' attitude toward reading.

Taking baby steps to learn English through comics, a good way to go

In this research by Ma'arif dan Ashlihah (2018), 25 students from the fifth grade of an elementary school of SDN Dapur Kejambon Jombang (Indonesia) were observed to find out if they were able to master vocabulary in EFL through the use of comic strips and comic books or "manga" for Japanese comic books. In Indonesia, students find English learning to be a difficult task; that for, teachers are trying to find new strategies to encourage students to learn it; even more when English is starting to be introduced in early ages where it is more difficult to keep students motivated and engage in activities. What students find difficult is that they don't have enough vocabulary to communicate; Smith (As cited by Ma'arif dan Ashlihah 2018, p. 94), states that vocabulary is a basis of a language. For the researcher, the lack of vocabulary is one of the main issues students have to express their ideas, leading to frustration and demotivation.

During the process of the study, the researcher acted as the teacher; the class planner, the students' observer, and the person who provided the reflection ends from a two cycles' program (eight meetings). The results from cycle one where the students' participation was evaluated was done in three sections; the first one, an activity was introduced without images; the students were not willing to work; later on, the comics were introduced; the activity involved an observation period and a predicting time, where students were asked to guess what the text was about, but students were reluctant to participate (63.5%); according to the research it was possible due to their vocabulary limitation and shyness to speak (p. 97). In the second section, 65.5% of students participated actively, while in the third section 67.92% did it, this shows a slow but good improvement while implementing the use of comics in the classroom. Beforehand, a pre-test was done to check students' vocabulary mastery where they have obtained a score of 59.5, while in the final test, students have gotten a score of 65.57. The subjective evaluation showed an improvement of vocabulary mastery but not enough to reach the study's standards or criteria to pass that should be at least 65%.

For the second cycle, some changes were made to help students with their motivation such as the use of more interesting comics and some leading questions. The results in these three sections showed an escalating and significant improvement regarding students' participation. On the evaluation regarding vocabulary mastery, 72% of the students obtained a score equal to or greater than 65%. According to the results obtained by the researcher Ma'arif dan Ashlihah (2018), "The use of comic strip as teaching media provided beneficial contribution both in improving the students' involvement during the teaching and learning process and the student's score in their vocabulary mastery" (p. 99).

Using technology and comics to teach English in Indonesia

This study by Widayanti, Anni & Muntaha, Muntaha (2018) aim was set to “Find out if using Islamic Web Comics is effective in teaching English especially reading comprehension at Islamic secondary school in the Indonesian context” (p. 75). Their concern was about the low levels shown by students in reading skill regardless on the many strategies and methods used to overcome this matter. One of the major problems they exposed is that students think reading has no meaning and is boring; thus, they took advantage of the positive perception students have on technology not only through internet but television as well and the tools it is offering nowadays and proposed to create comics adapted to teach English reading comprehension, seeking to use teachers’ innovation and creativity skills as well. Duggan (as cited in Widayanti & Muntaha 2018) states that Web Comics are comics and cartoons published on the World Wide Web for everyone to view and comics as a unique gateway medium to explore visual narrative.

This study proposed to use animated videos made in PowToon application vs Web Comics made in Pixton application to evaluate their effectiveness, both with the same content. They selected two groups with whom they used the Cooperative learning with Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) techniques to promote interaction, motivation, fluency, and comfort among students. One group was assigned as the experimental (Web Comics) and the other one as the control class (PowToon video). The results showed that both have almost the same level of proficiency in a pretest applied before action. According to Widayanti & Muntaha (2018), the results showed “On the posttest, both groups have made meaningful progress during treatment but on the comparison, the experimental group was more successful on the study” (p. 86). Based on this assertion, the use of Web Comics is an ideal tool to teach English reading comprehension.

Universities are also involved using comics to teach English

This research project was led by Tejedor and Izquierdo (2017), students who were graduating from modern languages at the Javeriana University; the study was seeking how to help students from the elementary level at the same university who were having problems reading and writing in English. That for, students-researchers were looking to help and motivate students through the use of comics based on the parameters proposed by the MEN (2006) where students should get familiarized with the English language through simple, illustrated stories, and its context in primary school, and more complex literary and academic texts in high school. According to Olivares (As cited and paraphrased by Tejedor and Izquierdo, p. 7) the right appropriation of the transversal processes of reading and writing exercise the brain, which makes possible to enhance language acquisition, cultural development and psycho-affective growth that help students develop socio-affective aspects, likewise with their academic aspects. According to the MEN also, students need to hold a B1 to enter the university, but this is not the case in Colombia, for not all the institutions have the same parameters.

Tejedor and Izquierdo stated that the Pontificia University uses many resources to teach English, but they were not enough, thus, in their experience as students themselves decided to propose comics as tool to enhance the process of learning in a more pleasant way. To support their claim, they posted 16 interviews to students from the same career who answered questions related to their reading and writing difficulties, and their perception of comics. Most students' answers showed that many students had read text imposed and others because they were motivated to learn English; for Tejedor and Izquierdo what was more relevant was the fact that most of the students said to have problems with reading comprehension in that language. Regarding comics, students answered to be interested in comics, mostly "Manga" because the

Japanese culture was interesting to them; on the other hand, they perceive that the classes will be more dynamic with realistic context. Some students showed no interest in comics, for they have not been in contact with this kind of resources. 85% of these students agreed on the implementation of comics for their innovation and were willing to work with them; they expected that this resource could help with their reading and writing skills. Something that they uncovered was that many students claimed not to know how to write in English because it was not required before; the other ones said to have some experiences writing but both groups showed the same problems, poor lexical and grammar structures use.

To backing their investigation, Tejedor and Izquierdo included other studies done in Colombia and around the world; the first one was done for Camargo (2015), at the “Colegio Nacional Nicolas Esguerra-Bogota, night shift”, 25 students from 16 to 41 years-age participated in this study. The aim was to promote descriptive writing in English. The results showed that comics improved the descriptive writing skills and comprehension of some grammatical structures in context; however, lexical and orthographic problems were not resolved. The second study was done by Rengifo and Marulanda (2007) at the “Colegio Enrique Millan Rubio del Municipio de Dosquebradas” with students from sixth grade (12 to 15 years old). The aim was to improve reading comprehension through comics in L1; Tejedor and Izquierdo assert that even though this study was done emphasizing L1 it was relevant to their research due to the many prospects it showed in the reading process. The results showed that the use of comics improved students’ reading-comprehension abilities; where students were able to identify spatial-temporal aspects, ideas, and characters. The third study included was done by Araujo y Mejia (2015), at the “Antonio Nariño Institute in Pasto” with the participation of 25 students from sixth grade. The aim was to implement comics to improve text production; the results showed that

comics iconic-verbal nature, enhanced students' observation and interpretation abilities through creativity, not to mention the ludic and dynamic alternatives implicit in them. International studies showed the same results; comics help students with their concentration, dynamic, and motivational aspects. As for cons, they founded that some comics used had sexist and not interesting content to women; however, according to the research in Colombia, Tejedor and Izquierdo asserted that women were the ones that had more knowledge of comics and were more active in their tasks. This is something teachers need to take into account when choosing the material, this has been said in many studies above, not only about comics but about children's literature as well. According to Johnson and Hernández (As cited by Tejedor and Izquierdo, p. 28), comics can be considered as a mediation tool, being the teacher who determines its importance in the classroom.

Going back to the present study, Tejedor and Izquierdo mentioned some kind of comics that are worth to mention, for many teachers do not have knowledge of the wide topics they can find in comics; among them are manga, adventure, police, and fiction comics. For this research, they chose fiction topics and adopted three perspectives; the first one, the language as a bridge to communication; the learning vision through the task approach, and the classroom vision as a space to socialize. For the reading activities, they asked students for their preferences which were about fiction science; that for they used a comic named "swamp thing" and the "last man on earth". Here they planned three sections for the reading skill; a pre-reading to evaluate previous knowledge, while-reading to seek for comprehension where students answered questions proposed to this end, and the last part was about the activities, where students have to place in order some strips to seek if students understood the comics sequence. For the writing part, they chose other comics; the task was divided also into three sections; in the first one, the

student socialized ideas, read the comics, described a character and created a strip to guess the final outcome of the comic. On the second section, students were asked to rewrite a new version from the Red Riding Hood. On the last section, students were presented with some images without dialogue, where they had to write and play the dialogue they offered.

The results of this study showed that students found comics an excellent tool to learn vocabulary, to establish relation between context and images, and to memorize thanks to the visual component; on the other hand, comics also facilitated comprehension because the messages were perceived easily; as for the writing skill, the results showed that students founded comics to be a good way to narrate, infer, argue, describe, and follow sequences; likewise, they provide interesting and a wide range of topics to write about. On the human part, students agree that comics provided a relaxed environment, they were engaging for their use of cultural and historical context; equally, they boosted their enthusiasm and self-confidence. Johnson and Hernandez (As cited by Tejedor and Izquierdo, p. 80) comics are a systematic medium that forms part of the popular culture, meaning that their topics are of general interest.

The language hidden in the sequential arts of comics

This research starts with an assertion by Tiemensma (2009) that is relevant to the aim of this monograph; the researcher highlights that the 21st century is a visual world with a visual culture; Lyga (As cited by Tiemensma, 2009, p. 3), states that comic readers need skills such as to be able to interpret the characters' nonverbal gestures, to discern the story's plot and to make inferences. These statements practically answer the question proposed in this investigation, which is, what role comics could play to get children engaged in reading and developing a reading habit? As the author said, we live in a visual world, and comics are visual; its power is on its arts. According to Barry (As cited by Tiemensma, 2009, p. 2), it is images, not words, that

communicate most deeply, and when an image is combined with words, like in a comic strip, the words become secondary but the language of images remains primary. To emphasize this point, the author claims that children learn to read pictures before they can read print. Therefore, teachers can exploit this feature to create meaningful activities to involve students in their own learning.

Likewise, the author pinpoints that there is still controversy about using comics in the classroom by some scholars; Gray Harker (As cited by Tiemensma, 2009, p. 6), argued that comic books were among the most profound and cultural threat of the day. However, many other researchers advocate for their use; here, the author offers the direct approach of comics as an excellent tool, which entails that the images allow students to experience visually and directly the story; the images and the text complement each other, and the images hold children's attention longer. On the other hand, comics help to bring a positive attitude toward reading according to the author, for students enjoy reading them; to support this claim, the researcher included the following information over a survey on the use of comics that took place twice in different years, in the United Kingdom to 8.000 learners, the results showed both times that comics are the most potent form of periodical reading.

To sum, the author asserts that students who have problems with reading prefer comics as oppose to long text; comics are tools to motivate students, they have a wide range of topic such as in biology, Darwin's evolution theory by Ulaby (2005) and the history of the universe by Gonick (1994) - see more in Science Stories Comic www.bbrc.ac.uk/life/comic - comics can also foster language development, they are readable, their speech and thought are reported directly, the language is personal and brief, they are good to teach punctuation, are easy to comprehend, they can enhance second language learning, (Tiemensma, 2009, p. 8). However,

according to the author, when choosing them, teachers should be careful, for their themes are limited to use in the classroom because some of them feature violence and adult content.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This monograph is in the research line of education and human development because it is framed into the development of competences; among them are language, communicative skills, and didactics. On human development, this project aims to train teacher on how to use children's literature and comics in the English language field, on didactics to provide information on the use of these teaching tools, and guidance on the use of methodologies and strategies to map a class based on these resources.

The data collected in this monograph was done in a systematic qualitative gathering research method of documentary case-studies done on the use of children's literature and comics in the teaching and learning English process for EFL/ESL. This study is based only on applied research and won't include numeric data, but it will shed light on the experiences teachers and students had around the world while using these resources to enhance students own learning. According to Krashen (1982) "Many researchers are no longer involved in language teaching and language acquisition, and do not interact with the teacher; that for, teachers and material developers pay little attention to research and theorizing of any sort" (p. 5).

Although, qualitative research has many challenges such as the fact this research will be done on the authors' judgment on what was or not considered relevant for this research, this o not diminished the value of this study, for according to Mason (2002) "Qualitative research

requires a highly active engagement from its practitioners, and a great deal of effort – intellectual, practical, physical, and emotional” (p. 1).

According to Mason (2002) Through qualitative, research we can explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences, and imaginings of our research participants, the ways that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationships work, and the significance of the meanings that they generate. (p.1)

This study was based also on a constructed grounded methodology; it involved an exploration, content analysis, and descriptive study. To understand the situation and gather data, initially the internet for valid source data was skimmed, then, the input considered important was selected based on the diversity of setting where the studies took place and the validity of the study per se. According to Mason (2002) “Grounded methodology is broadly ‘interpretivist’ in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted” (p. 3).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented in this section are the ones provided by the following researchers, Bland, 2013; Englund, 2016; Ghosn, 2002, 2013; Mourão, 2016; Orozco Giraldo, 2013; Porras Gonzalez, 2010; Rass and Holzman, 2010; Yu Chang, 2007, and Zulaica Isasti, 2012 on the use of children's literature in the ESL/EFL classroom. Likewise, from comics' researchers, Clydesdale, 2007; Graham, 2011; Jones, 2010; Ma'arif dan Ashlihah, 2018; Muntaha & Widayanti 2018; Tejedor and Izquierdo, 2017, and Tiemensma, 2009; which showed the same results. The main differences among them lie in their structure and the tools used to produce them; for example, while children's stories are done in prose, comics use pictures as a narrative with short sentences or information in chunks. Comics is done in strips, it has panels, balloons, and their length is shorter; these elements need to be analyzed in class.

Contributions

- They provide motivation and enjoyment which engage students in the process.
- Meaningful context.
- It contributes to language acquisition, through vocabulary gain.
- Presents natural or real-life language.
- Promotes literacy, critical thinking, autonomy through reading, and memorization.
- Promotes comprehension.

- The illustration as support and picture interpretation, enhancing students' observation skill.
- Promotes prediction.
- Develop awareness of grammar without focusing on it.
- Students can learn sentence structures, for its predictable linguistic patterns and repetition.
- The whole context develops and improves the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).
- Students can learn about different cultures, which promotes tolerance.
- Promotes creativity and awakes imagination.
- Develops social, reception, and production skills.
- Develops cognitive, emotional, and affective capacities.
- Promotes self-confidence.
- Promote challenges that should be set to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).
- Provide a relaxed environment.
- Help to identify spatial-temporal aspects, ideas, and characters.

Content

They should be and have

- Foreign and Students' culture.
- Sentence patterns
- Emotional elements
- Cognates
- Repetition

- Rhythm
- Melody
- Alliteration which happens when two words start with the same sound and are used many times (See tongue twisters)
- Visual support and stimulation. The illustration should be rich, clear, dynamic, and dramatic.
- Should have all verb tenses, especially the past tense.
- Onomatopoeias.

Genres types

The genre types range from

- Fairytales, nursery rhymes, and songs.
- Fiction and non-fiction themes.
- Fantasy, fables, and humor.
- Poetry, Myths, Epics, even biographies.
 - o Here, researchers leave out simplified and controlled vocabulary stories and graded readers.
- In comics, there are police, politics, science, and adventures themes among many others.

Methods and strategies

- Communicative competences focusing on culture
- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)
- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)
- Global methodologies based on content.
- Extension Reading Program (ERP)

- The Natural Approach by Krashen.
- Students-centred learning. (According to their interest, level, and age).
- Task approach.
- Use of L1 to encourage students and avoid frustration.
- Story-based lesson and content-based methods.
- PACE Model in which teachers give a grammar start point, reinforce the concept through activities and leave students to build their grammar understanding, to be corrected by the teacher if it is necessary.
- Dialogic and significance approach.
- Intertextual Response where students make connections with other books, movies, videos or T.V. programs.
- Strategies such as rereading with small children, for it does not work with older kids.
- Reading silently and aloud, while explaining new vocabulary.
- Pictures interpretation and discussions.
- Scenes illustration.
- Recalling experiences (brainstorming) to link those to students' own feelings.
- Filling-in activities, rewriting, and imitation after reading. This works for both comics and stories.
- Retelling the story by mapping it.
- Writing a letter to a character from the story for children's literature and writing a strip for comics.
- Reading along with the teacher or after the teacher.
- Pretend reading (This strategy is for small children).

- Interaction reading with before, during, and after reading-discussion to stimulate comprehension and reflection. This can be done with open-end questions.
- The use of peritextual features to retail the story, promote discussion, or to guess.
- Guessing games.
- Performing reading.
- Digital story reading.
- Negotiation interaction.
- Individual and collaborative activities.
- The use of children's literature and comics need to be constant the whole year round to obtain relevant results.

Cons

- Most children's literature is done with L1 students in mind.
- They can be linguistically inappropriate.
- I can contain stilted, dated, confusing, and complex language.
- Teachers have limited time to choose and prepare material for the class.
- Teachers feel insecure when reading, for their limited knowledge of the topic and English proficiency.
- There are no resources available.
- In comics, teachers might have to explain some jokes.
- Comics have vague lexicon.

Avoid

- Stereotypes, sexist, violence, in general, adult content.
- Long stories and repetition with older children.

- Post-modern picture books, for its incongruity between text and illustration.
- Rereading same story or comic to old children, this strategy only works with kids; pre-garden or garden, and maybe, first graders.
- Abusing the use of L1.

Comparing the pros and cons results showed in all studies gathered in this monograph, it is possible to say that instead to detriment students' English learning process, children's literature and comics are resources that can empower teachers' and students' teaching-learning process. Needless to say, that like any other resource, they have some issues that need to be addressed by the teacher during the preparation and presentation of the class.

What all the researchers agree on is that both, children's literature and comics motivate students and provide many venues to teach and learn a foreign language and that the absence of these resources in the classroom is due to the teachers' limited knowledge of English literature, their limited time to prepare classes, the teacher and students' English low proficiency, the difficulty to find these resources and their cost. Even most results were positive, some researchers still have some reservation on their use; for example, Yu Chang points out that almost all L1 are not good to teach a foreign language, for they do not include children's own culture, their language is not appropriated, neither relevant to some countries situations; Mourão, for example, said that even though pictures are helpful to maintain students' confidence, they do not help students to think critically, for illustration provide the meaning beforehand. But in these cases, the researchers are living out the power of reading just for fun and what it implies, the "motivation" factor that is missing across classrooms.

On account of this, some countries like the USA, Chile, and some Arabic countries are producing their literature and translating comics into the target language to motivate language

learning. In the USA, for example, students are learning Spanish with Condorito, and this comic is translated into English as well – Condorito, the Adventure Begins; in Chile - Copiapo, Condorito have been translated into English through the English program “With Condorito I learn English” by the Regional Secretariat Ministry of Education, the municipality and the Barrick Mining Company (Diario Chañarillo, 2010). The problem with comics is that teachers may have to explain the vague lexicon and some jokes and that jokes may lead to an uncontrollable class, but according to Coreil and Napoliello (1993) “Having fun with language develops critical thinking skills and helps readers and writers to expand their means of communication” (p. 42). Teachers need to remember also that humor relief stress and a free stress environment help students with motivation and learning retention. Other features to take into consideration are the stereotypes, sexism, violence, and adult content from comics; here the teachers’ judgment play a huge role, for they are the ones who have to control these issues.

Most researchers agree on the approaches, methodologies, and strategies to use while using children’s literature and comics; but the “The Extensive Reading Program” proposed by Bland, 2013-for stories and Jones, 2010- for comics, that intended to help students with reading problems showed some poor results while using children’s literature with primary students, but according with the author this could be possibly for the lack of enough resources to implement it, while the same program with young adults using comics was a success. On this Krashen (As cited by Bland, 2013) states that without school libraries with a good variety of children’s literature, also in the L2, the chances for children to become readers, and all the empowerment that being a reader entails, are extremely unequal, and an extensive reading program has little chance to be persuasive and successful. Another strategy that did not work well was the use of long stories and rereading with older children; if rereading is applied, the teacher needs to create

multiple including physical activities; instead of repeating the book reading, Leander and Boldt (2012) point out that students should be engage in pedagogic multiliteracies, which according to the New London Group, 1996, (As cited by Leander and Boldt, 2012, p. 23) presented a powerful redefinition of texts and practices, moving the field from “literacy” to “literacies” through recognizing multiple ways of communicating and making meaning, including such modes as visual, audio, spatial, behavioral, and gestural. Here I conserve the authors’ quotation marks.

The use of L1 was a plus but being careful to balance its use. This topic still is in debate, many scholars advocate on its use (Harmer, 2007; Johnson & Lee, 1987; Kang, 2008; Harbord, 1992; Atkinson, 1987; Rinvoluceri, 2002; Krashen, 1982; Swan, 1985; Tomlinson, 2000), others against it. According to Rinvoluceri (As cited by Hanáková and Metruk, 2017, p. 2) claims that L1 is a useful tool and ignoring it would be a waste of a valuable resource; on the other hand, the direct method (Principles of the Berlitz Schools) hinder its use, according to Sauveur (As cited by Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 9) a foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner’s native tongue if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action; though, this idea had changed nowadays.

About the PACE Model, which was mention only by Ghosn, (2013), it is important for the implicit way grammar is taught; teachers need to keep in mind that this topic is one of the main problems among students, for they found grammar to be difficult and boring. This does not mean that grammar should not be taught explicitly. According to Tütüniş (2012), “Teachers need to be sensible by using both implicit and explicit techniques in their L2 instruction, but at the same time being a good researcher by doing action research and evaluating the new ideas put

forward by the scholars” (p. 122). This means that teachers need to find a way to teach grammar in a fun way.

About genders, there was no limit, all researchers agree on the use of poetry, fantasy, myth and legends, fables, fairy tales, songs, nursery rhythms, fiction and not fiction.

According to Escalante y Caldera “The foundation of these genders is the imaginative function of literature that allows students personal enrichment, knowledge of their cultural heritage and social context, the identity reaffirmation, and the contact with different worlds which favors the development of divergent thinking” (p. 670).

Regarding Post-modern picture books, Yu Chang (2007) advises being careful when using them, for their text are not congruent with their illustrations. On the other hand, Meek (As cited by Wu, 2014, p. 809) notes that a reader’s move into newer, harder books depends on tolerance for ambiguity, an understanding that patience is needed and that the author will eventually resolve the puzzles. According to Mackey and McClay (As cited by Wu, 2014, p. 806), postmodern picture books cause the reader’s attention to move from place to place, from text to picture and back, in a fluid way. Wu (2014) asserts that these books are “Characterized by many meanings” (p. 806).

The last problems identified by almost all the researchers are that the teachers have limited time to choose and prepare material and that there are not resources available. About this, Krashen (As cited by Ghosn, 2002, p. 176), has pointed out that children in less developed countries are at a disadvantage compared to children in developed countries in terms of access to print and books. Said that in this monograph’s conclusion there are some links where children’s literature and comics can be found. In addition, a proposal of several exercises using comics is included in the Appendix A of this document.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Michele Landsberg, a Canadian Critic (as cited by Zulaica Isasti, 2013) quoted ‘Good books can do so much for children. At their best, they expand horizons and instill in children a sense of the wonderful complexity of life. No other pleasure can so richly furnish a child’s mind’. Agreeing with this statement and having faced the same challenges many teachers face while being an English teacher to primary students and young adults, I founded myself analyzing my own experiences as a student. For me, it was a need; I was learning ESL for I was living in the USA; for my students English is taught as a foreign language; that for, it is more complicated for them, adding the lack of resources and primary English teachers with good English proficiency, and their reality, which is that in Colombia, English is only used by few privileged citizens, the few foreigners that live here, and the still limited amount of tourists in the country.

In my experience as a student, I was taught with a communicative story-based approach; that for, I bought and read every fairy tale, novel, or comic I could; I started by reading Mickey Mouse stories, *The Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and others by Dr. Seuss, *the Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame, 1908; *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery, 1908; *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling, 1997, and *the Hidden Garden* by Frances Hodgson N., 1911, as for comics, I read *Garfield*, *Archie comics*, *Mafalda*, and *Dennis the menace*, to mention some. I used the same strategies researchers are advising, such as rewriting the stories, read

aloud and silently, and translation, to mention some, but the most important part was that I maintained my motivation to read even though I didn't understand every single word.

Said that I decided to gather this information about the use of children's literature and comics in the classroom; my objective is to provide enough information on this matter, to show teachers why they should trust these resources as effective tools to teach English. They present some challenges, but most researchers only advise to be careful when choosing and using them; other than that, the results showed positive outcomes. But what is more important for teachers to keep in mind, it is not to take lightly the power of a good writing, even though if it is to read just for fun.

Among these writings are graphic novels (the most popular Manga) for Young adults who are the most reticent people to grab a book to read. According to Templer (2009), "A substantial body of evidence asserts that using graphic novel and comics in the classroom produces learning opportunities over a wide range of subjects and benefits students from the hesitant to the gifted ones" (n. p.). Researchers also include Digital Stories, but Cassany (2013) advises to be careful when using this digital form, for reading online is more abstract and nonlinear; this means that students can concentrate better when reading on paper while online readers need to be more controlled to avoid just skimming for information; though, he highlights the importance of the TICs use in the classroom.

Although many teachers might say that most studies were done in ESL and that EFL presents greater difficulties, which is true, it is worse to ignore that students are not learning English and that you could make the difference if you try. It is also worse to see the emptiness in the students' eyes staring around, looking for a fly passing by or to see a bunch of sleeping students who are wondering when the class is going to be over. But, what if...? The answer is

in your hands. In Appendix B, authors, websites for children's literature, and sites for comic strips creation are included to help you in this endeavor.

REFERENCES

- Bastidas, J. A. (2017). More Than Half a Century Teaching EFL in Colombia secondary schools: Tracing Back Our Footprints to Understand the Present. *HOW*, 24 (1), 10-26.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.19183/how.24.1.348>
- Bernal Plazas, J. and Sánchez, Y. M. (2013). *Incorporating Comic-strips to Develop English Reading Comprehension Skills in a Public School in Bogotá* (bachelor thesis degree). La Salle University, Bogotá, Colombia.
- Bland, J. (2013). Introduction to Children's Literature in Second Language Education. *Research Gate*, 1(1), 1-11. doi: 10.13140/2.1.3945.5362.
- Bland, J. (2013). *Children's Literature and Learner Empowerment: Children and Teenagers in English Language Education*. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.co/books?id=-tXUCaT6EKUC&printsec=frontcover&hl=es&source=gbs_atb#v=onepage&q&f=false
- [Cassany, D.]. (2013, noviembre 07). *Nuevas Perspectivas: Lectura digital y crítica* [Video File]. Recuperado de <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIs2DMumRhs>
- Clydesdale, Jacqui. (2007). A bridge to another world: using comics in the second language classroom. *ResearchGate*, { }. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241734336_A_bridge_to_another_world_using_comics_in_the_second_language_classroom
- Coreil Clyde, Ed. & Napoliello, M. (1993). The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning, *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning (ERIC)*, 1(2), 1-202.

Retrieved July 30, 2019 from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED381995.pdf>

Cummins, Jim. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction.

Encyclopedia of Language and Education, *Language Education in Europe: The Common European Framework of Reference* (487-499). New York, U.S.A.: Springer Science + Business Media LLC.

EF EPI (2018). *EF English Proficiency Index: El Rankin mundial más grande según su dominio del inglés*. Bogotá, Colombia: EF Education First 2019. Recuperado de <https://www.ef.com.co/epi/>

Eisner, W. (1985). *Comics and Sequential Art*. Retrieved from

<https://alphalight.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/will-eisner-theory-of-comics-sequential-art.pdf>

Englund, M. (2016). *English as a Second Language and Children's literature : An empirical study on Swedish elementary school teachers' methods and attitudes towards the use of children's literature in the English classroom* (master degree). Dalarna University, Borlänge y Falun, Sweden.

Escalante, D. T. & Caldera, R. V. (2008). Literatura para niños: una forma natural de aprender a leer. *EDUCERE, La Revista Venezolana de educación*. Recuperado de

<https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/356/35614570002.pdf>

Galda, L., Liang, L. A., and Cullinan, B. E. (2015). *Literature and the Child*. Boston, U.S.A.: CENGAGE Learning.

Ghosn, I. K. (2002). Four good reasons to use literature in primary school ELT. *ELT Journal*, 56(2), 172-179. Retrieved from

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.476.2159&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

- Ghosn, I. K. (2013). *Storybridge to Second Language Literacy: The Theory, Research, and Practice of Teaching English with Children's Literature*. Charlotte, N.C. U.S.A, IAP-Information Age Publishing Inc.
- Graham, S. (2011). Comics in the Classroom: Something to Be Taken Seriously. *ResearchGate*. 2{}. 92-102. doi: 10.5746/LEiA/11/V2/I1/A07/Graham
- Hanáková, M. & Metruk, R. (2017). The Use of L1 in the Process of Teaching English. *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods, ResearchGate*. 7{}, {}. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318826935_The_Use_of_L1_in_the_Process_of_Teaching_English
- ICFES (2017). *Balance. Así les fue a los estudiantes del país en la prueba saber 11: ICFES*. Bogotá, Colombia, 2019 Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación ICFES. Recuperado de <http://www2.icfes.gov.co/item/2380-balance-asi-les-fue-a-los-estudiantes-del-pais-en-la-prueba-saber-11-icfes>
- Jones, Evan. (2010). The Use of Comic Book Style Reading Material in an EFL Extensive Reading Program: A Look at the Changes in Attitude and Motivation to Read in English in a *Language Education in Asia*. 1. 10.5746/LEiA/10/V1/A19/Jones.
- Krashen, S.T. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Retrieved from http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles_and_practice.pdf
- Leander, K. & Boldt, G. (2013). Rereading "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies" Bodies, Texts, and Emergence. *Journal of Literacy Research*. 45{}. 22-46. doi: 10.1177/1086296X12468587.
- Ma'arif dan Ashlihah, I. B. (2018). *The use of Comic Strips for Elementary Students'*

- Vocabulary Mastery* [PDF]. Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas KH., Retrieve August 10, 2019 from <https://journal.unusida.ac.id/index.php/jls/article/view/166/125>
- Maipú 849 (30 de Julio de 2010). Condorito enseñará a hablar inglés a estudiantes copiapinos. *Diario Chañarchillo*. Recuperado de http://www.chanarcillo.cl/articulos_ver_anterior.php?id=30370&prox
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. Retrieved from http://www.sxf.uevora.pt/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Mason_2002.pdf
- MinEducación (MEN) (2019). *Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo Colombia 2004 - 2019. Inglés como Lengua Extranjera: Una estrategia para la Competitividad*. { }. Recuperado de https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1621/articles-132560_recurso_pdf_programa_nacional_bilinguismo.pdf
- Moreno Marulanda, C. P. (2009). *Análisis de la Implementación de las Políticas Públicas del Bilingüismo en Bogotá* (tesis de maestría). Universidad de la Salle, Bogotá, Colombia.
- Mourão, S. (2016). Picturebooks in the Primary EFL Classroom: Authentic Literature for an Authentic Response, *CLELEjournal*, 4 (1), 25-43. Retrieved August 3rd, 2019 from <http://clelejournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Picturebooks-Authentic-literature-for-an-authentic-response-CLELEjournal-4.1.pdf>
- Orozco Giraldo, C. (2013). Porque en la Lenguas la Forma si Cuenta. *Forma y Función*, 26 (2), 173-204. Recuperado Julio 17th, 2019 de <http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/fyf/v26n2/v26n2a08.pdf>
- Porras González, N. I. (2010). Teaching English through Stories: A Meaningful and Fun Way for Children to Learn the Language. *Bdigital, Portal de Revistas UN*, 12(1), 95-106. Retrieved on August 10th, 2019 from

<https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/13855/36809>

Rass, R. A. and Holzman, S. (March, 2010). English Language Teaching: Children's Literature in Traditional Arab Schools for Teaching English as a Foreign Language, *CCSE English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 64-70. Retrieved on August 7th, 2019 from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1081448.pdf>

Richards, J. C. and Rodgers, T. S. (1986). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A description and Analysis*. Retrieved from <https://aguswuryanto.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/approaches-and-methods-in-language-teaching.pdf>

Sánchez Jabba, A. (2013). *Bilingüismo en Colombia: Documentos de trabajo sobre Economía Regional* [PDF]. Colombia: Banco de la Republica. Recuperado en Julio 27, 2019 de http://www.banrep.gov.co/docum/Lectura_finanzas/pdf/dtser_191.pdf

Smallwood, B. A. (1988). Children's literature for Limited English Proficient Students, Ages 9-14. *Department of Education: Office of Educational Research and Improvement ERIC*. 4 (22), 021-142. Retrieved on July 14, 2019 from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED356647.pdf>

Tejedor, J. P. and Izquierdo, F. A. (2017). *El Cómic como Herramienta Didáctica en los Procesos de Lectoescritura de los Estudiantes de Nivel Elemental (a1) de inglés de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas* (tesis de pregrado). Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia.

Templer, Bill. (2009). Graphic Novels in the ESL Classroom. *ResearchGate*, 11(3), 1-20. Retrieved on July 6, 2019 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26626104_Graphic_Novels_in_the_ESL_Class

room

- Thomas James, M. A., Rev. (1881). *Aesop's Fables: A New Version, Chiefly from Original Sources*. Retrieved from <https://memory.loc.gov/service/gdc/scd0001/2013/20131001005ae/20131001005ae.pdf>
- Tiemensma, L. (2009). *Visual literacy: to comics or not to comics? Promoting literacy using comics* [PDF]. Milan, Italy: World Library and Information Congress: 75th IFLA General Conference and Council. Retrieved on July 2, 2019 from <https://www.ifla.org/past-wlic/2009/94-tiemensma-en.pdf>
- Tütüniş, B. (2012). Grammar in EFL Pedagogy: To be or not to be: Explicit or Implicit Grammar Instruction in EFL. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(5), 120-122. Retrieved on July 3, 2019 from http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_5_March_2012/12.pdf
- Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia. (n. d.). *Líneas de investigación de la ECEDU*. Retrieved from <https://academia.unad.edu.co/ecedu/investigacion-y-productividad/lineas-de-investigacion>
- Whiting, J., Ph.D. (2016). *Using Comics in the English Language Classroom* [PDF]. New Hampshire, U.S.A, Plymouth State University, Retrieved on August 6, 2019 from <http://idiom.nystesol.org/Fall2016/15.pdf>
- Widayanti, A. & Muntaha, M. (2018). Islamic web comics as visual aid in teaching English for islamic secondary school students. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society*, 3(1), 75-90. doi: 3. 75. 10.22515/islimus.v3i1.1298.
- Wu, S. (2014). Negotiation of Narratives in Postmodern Books. Theory and Practice in Language Studies. *Academy Publisher* 4(4), 806-810. doi: 10.4304/tpls.4.4.806-810.

Yu Chang, J. F. Y. (2007). *The Role of Children's Literature in the Teaching of English to Young Learners in Taiwan* (Ph.D. thesis). University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.

Zulaica Isasti, G. (2013). *La utilización del cuento en la enseñanza del inglés en la Educación Primaria* (tesis de pregrado). Universidad de la Rioja, Logroño, España.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL OF EXERCISES WITH STORIES AND COMICS

To apply some results, I created the following exercises.

Proposals with Stories

Proposal 1: Imagining your own story

- 📖 Create your own simple story to teach kids only two adjectives (Big and Small), two colors (Blue and Yellow) and leave them to enjoy drawing.

Mary is in the Garden



(Draw some greeneries and flowers for the butterflies)

Mary is looking at two butterflies flying over the flowers; one is yellow and the other one is _____.

The _____ is small and the blue is _____, both are beautiful.

Mary likes some insects and animals in general.

Do you like them too?

She has a _____ dog and a _____ cat; they are also playing in the garden.

What kind of pet do you have?

Oh! Mary got distracted talking to you and the butterflies went away.

Now she sees a caterpillar, it is yellow and big.

Do you like caterpillars?

They eat a lot.

What do you think they like to eat?

Yes, they like green leaves and _____.

(Draw a caterpillar/Dibuja una oruga.



Answer the questions/Responde las preguntas: (kids may answer orally in Spanish, while the teacher write it down in English); this strategy is applied to EFL students.

1. What color are the butterflies?

2. What color is the caterpillar?

3. Does Mary have a bird?

4. What animals does Mary have as pets?

Draw your pet/Dibuja tu mascota.



Proposal 2: Translating short stories or fables

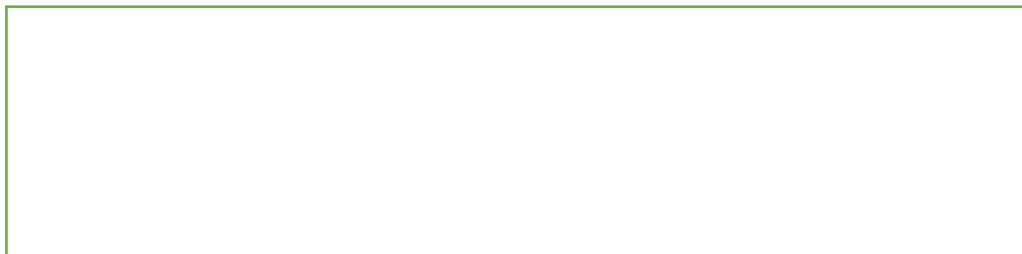
📖 Translate stories from Colombian authors, that way students could relate and link memories. This story can be used with fourth and fifth grade.

The guardian cat

By Rafael Pombo

Translation: Gloria Reyes

(Draw a cat, a mouse, and a piece of cheese)




A peasant who in his pantry kept a Christmas Eve cheese
heard a rattle mouse-like noise nearby of his soda,
and soon, soon, as a clever man whom nobody fishes unguarded;
he brought the cat to guard awake the scoundrel.
And the cat made it so successful,
that both left: - mouse and cheese.

Answer the following questions:

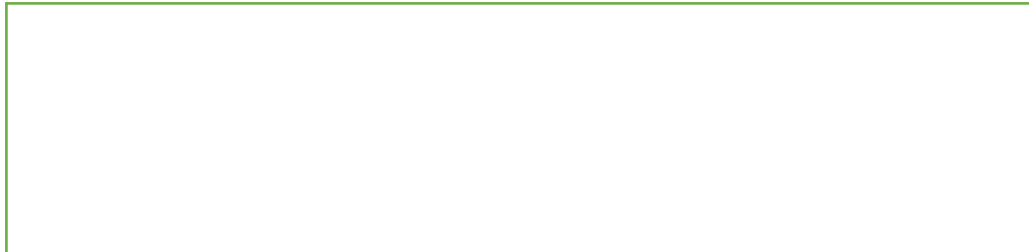
1. Who ate the cheese? _____
2. What did the mouse want to do? _____
3. When was the men going to eat the cheese? _____
4. Where was the mouse? _____
5. Have you seen a mouse? _____
6. What happen to the mouse and cheese? _____

Proposal 3: Creating your own story through investigation

 Think about something unusual from your cultural-region and write a short, simple story. This story can be used by second and third-grade students.

The Santandereana Culona Ants

Draw a culona ant



The Santandereana culona ant is the queen of the cutting leaves, worker ants or arrieras.

As queens, they are in charge to laid eggs for the new colonies. Many people and other animals like birds eat them. Do you eat them too? What do they taste like?

Like many animals, such as squirrels, the arriera ants store food for the whole colony.

The ants are part of the insects' family, its anthills or nests are big and the workers keep them clean. They are hard workers!

Answer these questions:

1. Do you clean your room? _____
2. Do you know other animals who store food? _____
3. Do you know what kind of food do they store? _____
4. Who does laid the eggs? _____
5. What is the name of the ants who collect leaves? _____
6. Who eats the ants' queen? _____

Proposal 4: Searching for native readers

Go to YouTube and find hundreds of stories read by native speakers.

📖 Onomatopoeia, visual support, and adjectives examples: *The Big Hungry Bear* by Don and Audrey Wood (1984).



Even though this book is intended for kindergarten L1 students, it could be used for first, second, and even third graders EFL students. In the following link, a native speaker reads it, to help teachers with pronunciation.

[Kinder Playhouse]. (2015, June 16). *The Big Hungry Bear*. [Video File].

Retrieve on August 10, 2016 from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4Fzm221A08>

Activities:

The teacher may use the cover to explain who is and what means to be an author or an illustrator; she/he may play guess games with students, where

students can predict what will happen next or during the story, why there is not a hungry bear on the cover? Who is the little mouse? Which are the two first adjectives?

How the book contains onomatopoeias, the teacher could ask students to compare if the Spanish language has the same spelling, do they know other onomatopoeias sounds?

Proposal 5: Just reading does not mean comprehension

📖 On the internet, you can find Aesop fables. You can use them for fourth and fifth-grade students.

Aesopia website (2008) *Aesopica: Aesop's Fables in English, Latin and Greek*.

U.K: Oxford University Press. Retrieve from

<http://mythfolklore.net/aesopica/milowinter/32.htm>

Reading and Comprehension

The Grasshopper and the Ant (or Ants)

Aesop



One bright day in late autumn a family of Ants was bustling about in the warm sunshine, drying out the grain they had stored up during the summer, when a starving Grasshopper, his fiddle under his arm, came up and humbly begged for a bite to eat.

"What!" cried the Ants in surprise, "haven't you stored anything away for the winter? What in the world were you doing all last summer?"

"I didn't have time to store up any food," whined the Grasshopper; "I was so busy making music that before I knew it the summer was gone."


The Ants shrugged their shoulders in disgust.

"Making music, were you?" they cried. "Very well; now dance!" And they turned their backs on the Grasshopper and went on with their work.

There is a time for work and a time for play.

Answer the following questions	
Does the story take place in winter or fall (autumn)?	What does the grasshopper was doing in summer?
Why do you think the ant are unhappy with the grasshopper?	
In your own words explain, what did the ants were doing?	
Explain in your own words what does "There's a time for work and a time for play" mean?	
Find in the dictionary the vocabulary you do not know and write a sentence with each one of them.	

Proposal 6: Subscribing to a teachers' resources site

 For young adults, you can find any gender at "Open Library" where you can read or borrow books by signing up.

Internet Archive {}. *Open Library* [Digital Library]. Retrieve from

<https://openlibrary.org/account/create>

goodreads Getting Started Find Friends Set a Goal Rate Books View Recommendations

Next, select your favorite genres.

We use your favorite genres to make better book recommendations and tailor what you see in your Updates feed.

<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Biography	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Chick Lit	<input type="checkbox"/> Children's
<input type="checkbox"/> Christian	<input type="checkbox"/> Classics	<input type="checkbox"/> Comics	<input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary	<input type="checkbox"/> Cookbooks
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime	<input type="checkbox"/> Ebooks	<input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy	<input type="checkbox"/> Fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Gay and Lesbian
<input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Novels	<input type="checkbox"/> Historical Fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> History	<input type="checkbox"/> Horror	<input type="checkbox"/> Humor and Comedy
<input type="checkbox"/> Manga	<input type="checkbox"/> Memoir	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Mystery	<input type="checkbox"/> Nonfiction
<input type="checkbox"/> Paranormal	<input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Poetry	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Romance	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Science Fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Self Help	<input type="checkbox"/> Suspense
<input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Thriller	<input type="checkbox"/> Travel	<input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult

[Don't see your favorite genres here?](#)

Or go to

English for Students { }. *Teenage Short Stories*. [Digital Library]. Retrieve from

<http://www.english-for-students.com/Teenage-Short-Stories.html>

There you can find free reading short stories from all genders as well.

Modern Stories : An Old Lady and The Lamp

For the angry shouting she saw of modern women, of an old lady and the lamp...
 Once upon a time there lived a beautiful old lady in a small hamlet.
 When she was old the old lady bought a lamp.
 The lamp was very proud of itself that it was the brightest object in the universe.
 One day one night the lamp was blown off, it was lost to the
 Then the old lady told the lamp not to be brought.
 She again brought the lamp, therefore, it was again brought and brought well.
 Hence some say.

[Go to The Other Stories Index](#)

How many books are long, just choose one or two pages and create your own activities.

According to researchers, young adult students like to perform or create their own version of the focal story. Harry Potter is one of the books most read by teens. And don't forget that songs' lyrics are considered part of literature.

Proposals with Comics

Proposal 7: Writing beyond the comic stories

In regards to comics, Garfield and Condorito make a good team for teens.



2/6/1978



Students could write a letter to Jon (the owner of Garfield) putting themselves in Garfield's shoes. This means they have to imagine how Garfield feels about life with Jon, about mice, and its food. They have to use as many adjectives as they can in 2/3 minutes, after that, they have to read the letter to the teacher and peers.

Example: Hello Jon, I am not that happy today with you. Why my dinner is so dump tasteless, bland, and rancid while yours smell so good? I think that you are...

Proposal 8: Guessing through comics

Or guess: What do you think is written here? Be Creative...



Answer: Garfield, you dummy.

Other possible answers:

That is going to hurt.

What a bummer.

It looks like I am not going to eat today.

I didn't want it, anyway...

Davis, J. (2019). *Garfield*. U.S.A.: Paws, Inc. Retrieved from <https://garfield.com/>

Proposal 9: Strengthening verb tenses with comics

Write a story with Condorito while you practice verb tenses.



Condorito thinks he could climb the palm tree.
 He is going to cut some leaves.
 He cuts leaves all the time.
 He cut two leaves. (Past-irregular)
 He have cut two leaves.
 He is making a Christmas tree.
 He had made and decorated a Christmas tree.

Condorito Club (2018). *Condorito*. U.S.A.: support@condoritousa.com. Retrieved from <http://www.condoritousa.com/kiosco-condorito/>

Proposal 10: Rapping with comics

Rap with Archie and friends

You can rap with your students using comics or you can create your rapping comic strip.

The comics can be read, comprehended, and then sang with your students.

Find other Archie and friends' comic books at:

Pinterest {}. *Archie & Friends Double Digest*. U.S.A.: Pinterest. Retrieved from

<https://www.pinterest.es/pin/112801165646770466/?lp=true>



APPENDIX B: SUGGESTED RESOURCES

To know more about the topic, see second languages and literacy, Barrick, 2010; Bernal Plazas and Sánchez, 2013; Coonrod and Hughes, 1994; Eisner, 1985; Galda, Liang, and Cullinan, 2015; Kruise, 1990; Nose Worthy, 2009; Peregoy and Boyle, 2001; Kruise, 1990; Smallwood, 1988, 2002; Templer, 2009; Whiting, 2016; Xu, 2003, and Yau and Jimenez, 2003.

Websites to check for Children's literature

American Literature (2019). *Short Stories for Children*. U.S.A.: Pinterest. Retrieved from

<https://americanliterature.com/short-stories-for-children>

Freechildrenstories.com (2007-2019). *Stories for kids*. U.S.A.: Pajama Publishing Inc. Retrieved

from <https://www.freechildrenstories.com/>

KathaKids () *Short Story*. {}. Retrieved from <https://kathakids.com/tagged/short-story>

Story to Grow by (2019). *Bedtime Stories*. U.S.A.: Stories to Grow by. Retrieved from

<https://www.storiestogrowby.org/bedtime-stories-kids-free/>

Storyberries (2015-2019). *Free Fairy Tales, Bedtime Stories and Poems for Kids*. U.S.A.: An

Elite Cafemedia Family & Parenting Publisher. Retrieved from

<https://www.storyberries.com/>

Creation of Comic Strips

Here are some sites where teachers can work on the creation of comic strips or cartoons:

MakeBeliefsCommix.com, StoryboardThat, Pixton, Canva, Toondoo, Strip Generator, Write Comics, Witty Comics, Comic Master, and Marvel Comics.