Applying Comics to Make Reader-Response Tangible: A Teaching Experience

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Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have introduced new devices and tools that enhance classwork, reshaping the teaching-learning process. Several disciplines, including education, have incorporated ICTs as an ally to sustained innovation. They have taken into account an emerging generation that learns and communicates differently. The internet, then, has become a platform to consult different websites that provide not only information, but pictures, videos, blogs, and lately mobile and PC apps. The Universidad de Costa Rica has not overlooked this global trend, and through La Vicerrectoría de Docencia and its unit METICS, has encouraged its professors to move forward into the study and implementation of these new technologies in their university virtual and physical classrooms. The relationship between language teaching and the ICTs has brought several positive outcomes for students and professors since they have simulated immersion environments reassuring students' commitment to learn a foreign language. However, in the past few decades, a vast majority of efforts has focused on the improvement of linguistic skills, setting aside the development of complementary or critical soft skills. The B.A. in English program at the UCR aims at turning students into professionals capable of developing and improving both, linguistic and critical skills; therefore, the courses of the major—language and literature courses—teach not only macro skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening, but also to question, negotiate, disagree and/or applaud the course content. Regarding literature courses, one of their major challenges is class participation. Even when some teaching techniques can mitigate this

issue, ICT(s) provide an cutting-edge space to promote class participation and innovation has become a priority for the B.A in English program at the UCR, particularly in literature courses. Thus, this paper covers the results of implementing Pixtar, a website application to design and create comics, using the Reader-Response literary approach to elicit, expand, and evaluate students' reactions to *Hills Like White Elephants,* by Ernest Hemingway.

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Biography

Mariana Valverde Vargas graduated from B.A. in English program at UCR. Currently, she is a student in Licenciatura en Docencia Universitaria program and she is writing her thesis to obtain her Masters in English Literature, both graduate programs at the UCR. She has been a language and literature professor at the School of Modern Languages at UCR for almost 8 years. Besides, she is the coordinator of the Radio Show named Inglés por Radio broadcasted in 870UCR. Also, she has worked as a medical consecutive interpreter for different international companies during the last 10 years. Her interests include science fiction, gender theory, children and women literature, and of course medical and legal interpretation.