

**FUNREAD: A Co-Designed
Online Learning Platform
to Enhance English
Language Skills and
Promote Diversity among
Costa Rican ELLs**

**Roberto Rojas-Alfaro,
Ph.D.**

**Salt Lake Community
College**

**Marcela Montenegro
Sánchez, Ed.D.**

Universidad de Costa Rica

Professional development has opened the way for further school-based SJE initiatives.



Potential challenges:

- (1) enduring moments of discomfort
- (2) engaging in open discourse
- (3) advocating for SJE
- (4) practicing self-reflection





SJE classroom offerings can provide brave spaces that foster social justice goals:

- Fostering anti-racist, anti-bias, anti-oppressive mindsets
- Challenging privilege and power
- Promoting more just, equal, and inclusive environments



We believe that teachers should be allowed to:

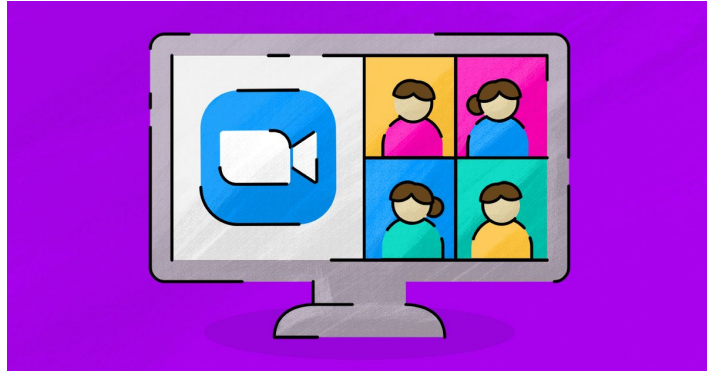
- engage these conversations to unveil institutional practices
- contribute with SJE-oriented teaching and materials development

Bilingual literacy education provides an invaluable opportunity for supporting social justice mindsets with young ELLs via reading instruction



Background

- A nationwide blended EFL learning model



Background

- A COVID-19 group interview with teacher supervisors



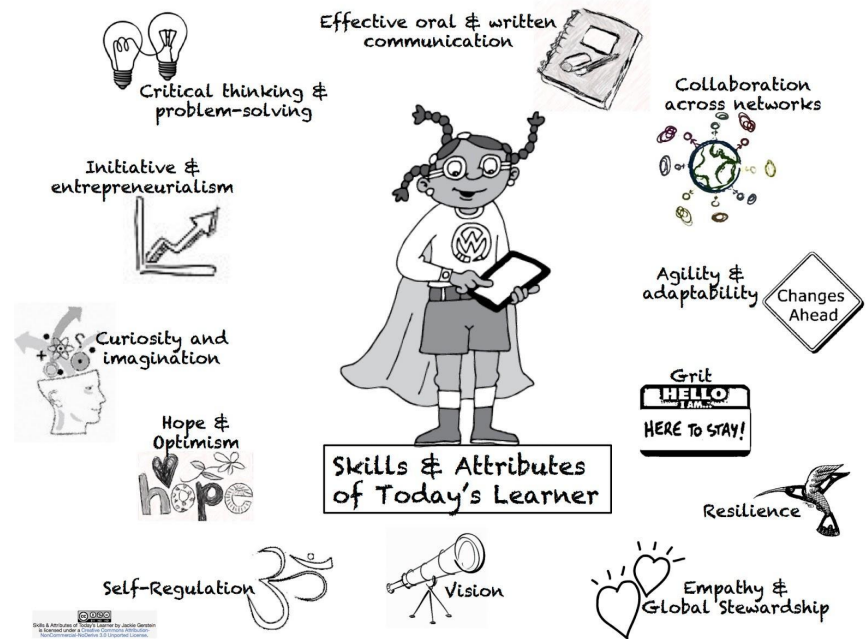
Background

- A set of solutions for teacher-facilitated distance learning



The Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica Seeks:

- (a) The successful incorporation of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in schools
- (b) The development of a bilingual society
- (c) Promotion of critical thinking individuals through effective literacy practices reflected in their curriculum



Literature Review

1. Comics

Social justice is viewed as “a world in which the distribution of resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable, with all members of society physically and psychologically safe and secure as well as recognized and treated with respect” (Nijdam, 2020; p. 192).



Literature Review

2. Gamification

Gamification in digital environments for L2 learning (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2019; Perry, 2015; Rachels & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2018).



Why FUNREAD?

Novel
pedagogical
tool

Reading
habits

English
language
skills
developmen
t

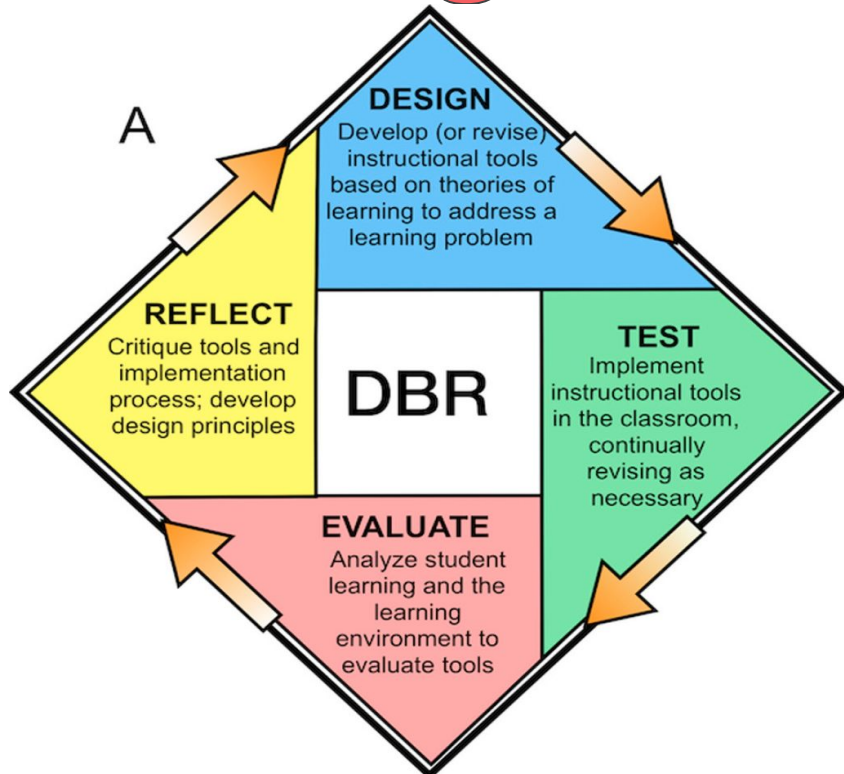
Curricular
content
incorporating
social justice
and cultural
diversity

Learner
needs and
teacher
involvement

Research Questions

1. What are the English language learning needs of sixth grade ELLs in Costa Rica?
2. How can gamified remote teaching and social justice-oriented comics support sixth grade ELLs' reading comprehension and vocabulary development?
3. How can leaderboards, points, and rewards (game mechanics) support sixth grade ELLs' motivation to learn and support their language skills development?
4. How do social justice-oriented comics affect sixth grade ELLs' perspectives about inclusion, diversity, and social identity?

Design Based Research



DBR is conducted by designers focused on:

- (a) understanding contexts,
 - (b) designing effective systems, and
 - (c) making meaningful changes for the subjects of their studies
- (Barab & Squire, 2004; Collins, 1990).

According to Wang and Hannafin (2005), Design Based Research:

“is a systematic but flexible methodology aimed to improve educational practices through iterative analysis, design, development, and implementation, based on collaboration among researchers and practitioners in real-world settings, and leading to contextually-sensitive design principles and theories” (p. 6).

- 1 EFL teacher
- 3 sixth grade classes.

- An elementary school located in an underserved community from the northwestern Pacific coast of Costa Rica

Population

Context

- Triangulation of data obtained from:
- Analysis of observations, interviews, and focus groups
- Pre and post tests gains
- Questionnaire analysis

Data Analysis

Data collection

- Observations
- Interviews
- Analysis of didactic materials
- Focus groups
- Pre and Post test
- Social Justice and Diversity Issues questionnaire

I Phase:

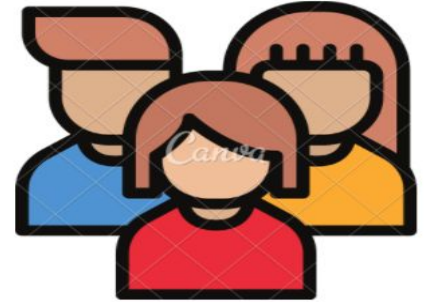


- Conducting interviews to teachers and principal



- Observing the class

Assessing Educational Context



- Making connections



- Analysing and evaluating didactic materials

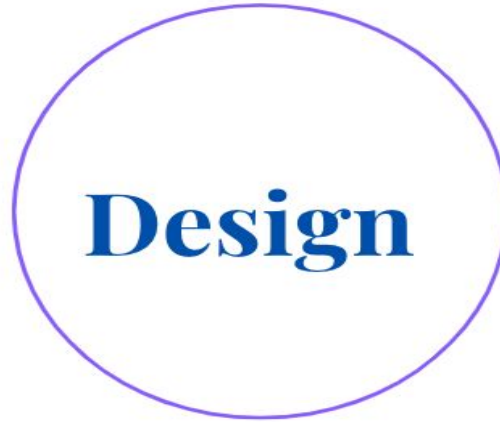
II Phase:



- Goals and Objectives



- Mechanics of the Game



- Focus Groups



- Motivation

III Phase:

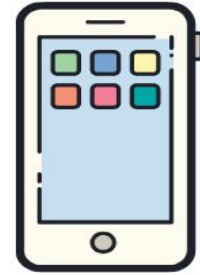


Graphic Design: FUNREAD
Prototype



Channel of Communication

**Implementation
and
Development**



Mobile Devices



Teacher-Researcher
Interaction

IV Phase: Evaluation



Pre Test



- Social Justice and Cultural Diversity Insights



Post-Test

Implications

Mobile App design

Curriculum reform (Social Justice at stake)

Educational Practice

Educational Policies

The use of ICTS (policies)

Professional Development

Thank you !

Q&A

emails: marcelamontenegroucr@gmail.com

roberto.rojas-alfaro@slcc.edu