Use of Storytelling as a Didactic Strategy to Facilitate Students' Comprehension of the Concept of Hegemony

Ludy Stefany Barón Ballesteros and Daniel Antonio Cely Ayala

Thesis Proposal to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Language Teaching with an Emphasis in English

Director

Sol Smith Fuentes

Master in Language Didactics

Universidad Industrial de Santander

Facultad de Ciencias Humanas

Escuela de Idiomas

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés

Bucaramanga

2026

Acknowledgements

This study is dedicated to our parents: Consuelo Ballesteros and Ramiro Barón, Myriam Ayala and Jorge Cely. Thank you for standing by our side through every step of this journey and for always believing in what we could achieve. You taught us the true value of education, a legacy we now pledge to pass on as future educators.

To our closest family members, Dayli, Mateo, Nidia, Luis, Nohemit and William. Thank you for your constant encouragement. Your unwavering faith in our growth has meant everything to us.

To professor Sol Smith, our thesis advisor, thank you for your patience, trust, and constant guidance. Your deeply human approach to education and your example in the classroom, inspired us to be transformative teachers. We truly appreciate you for believing in our project and for helping us navigate the ever-changing nature of research.

To Luis, for being a great friend and fundamental support. Thank you for your willingness to help, your attention to detail, and for being there at every stage. Your presence was key in keeping the work moving forward.

To our friends Mariana, Clara, Edward, Juan José, Fernando, Julián, Jaider, Steven, Carolain. Thank you for your company that made every moment worth it.

To our beloved companion pets Esmeralda, Jupiter and Jack, we cherish you for being by our side and for your unconditional company.

Finally, to those who embark in this journey from the very beginning: Daniel and Ludy. Today, we can proudly say that we fulfilled our commitments, treasured our friendship, and gave our best for this research.

Table of Contents

1. Contextualization 11

1.1 Problem Statement 11

1.2 Research Question 14

1.3 Justification 14

1.4 Objectives 17

2. Theoretical Framework 17

2.1 Conceptual Framework 17

2.1.1 Storytelling 17

2.1.1.1 Definition of Storytelling. 17

2.1.1.2 Storytelling Modalities. 18

2.1.1.3 Characteristics of Storytelling. 19

2.1.1.4 Benefits of Storytelling. 21

2.1.2 Hegemony 22

2.1.2.1 Definition of Hegemony. 22

2.1.2.2 Domains of Hegemony. 24

2.2 Literature Review 26

2.2.1 Storytelling in Education 26

3. Research Methodology 32

3.1 Methodology 32

3.2 Research Design 32

3.3 Population 33

3.4 Data Collection Instruments 33

3.4.1 Questionnaire 34

3.4.2 Participant Observations 35

3.4.3 Test 36

3.4.4 Interviews 36

4. Methodological Design of the Intervention 37

4.1 Focus Within Hegemony 38

4.2 Featured Storytelling Characteristics 43

4.3 Materials 44

4.4 Class Assessment 45

5. Analysis of the Results 46

5.1 Initial Understanding of Hegemony 47

5.2 Behaviours and Performance During the Intervention 53

5.2.1 Character Types 53

5.2.2 Ending Types 58

5.2.3 Multisensory Materials 61

5.2.4 Participation roles 64

5.3 Effectiveness of Storytelling After the Intervention 67

5.3.1 Post-Test Results 68

5.3.2 Group Interview Results 73

6. Conclusions 76

Bibliographic References 79

Appendices 89

Table of Tables

Table 1. Alignment of Secondary Objectives and Data Collection Instruments 34

Table 2. Components description for each session of the intervention 38

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Representation of Consent in Hegemony 23

Figure 2. Kunar Province in Iron Man 24

Figure 3. Kunar Province in reality 24

Figure 4. Second session's warm-up example 37

Figure 5. Role-play talk show characters 40

Figure 6. Multisensory-Comic book pages N.5 and N.6 41

Figure 7. Concluding event of third session's story 42

Figure 8. Students interacting with the letters 43

Figure 9. Digital Characterization of Antonio Rich 44

Figure 10. Digital and Physical version of the letters used 45

Figure 11. Have you ever heard about Hegemony/Hegemonía? 48

Figure 12. Where have you heard about this term? 48

Figure 13. What do you think Hegemony stands for? 49

Figure 14. Which of the following situations do you consider are cases of Hegemony? 51

Figure 15. Antonio Rich's Controversial Comments 54

Figure 16. Observation Guide Segment- Third Intervention 55

Figure 17. Third Letter used for the Hegemony in Education Session 55

Figure 18. Observation Guide Segment- Fourth Intervention 56

Figure 19. Antonio Rich throughout the intervention 57

Figure 20. Story Closure from the Gender-Based Hegemony session 59

Figure 21. Observation Guide Extract - Gender Based session 59

Figure 22. Last letter from the Hegemony in Education session 60

Figure 23. Extract of the Comic 62

Figure 24. Change in Brayan Miguel's appearance throughout the story 63

Figure 25. Students Participation in the three mentioned sessions 64

Figure 26. Observation Grid for the Class on Linguistic Hegemony 67

Figure 27. Categorization of Key Concepts Identified in Post-test Mind Map 69

Figure 28. Post-test productions of Students N.3 and N.8 70

Figure 29. Post-test productions of Students N.6 and N.4 72

Table of Appendices

Appendix A. Informed Consent Document 89

Appendix B. Questionnaire 91

Appendix C. Observation Guide 93

Appendix D. Formative Test 94

Appendix E. Interview Questions 94

Appendix F. Comic-Based Format - Cultural Hegemony Session 94

Appendix G. Branching Storytelling Format - Gender-Based Hegemony Session 94

Appendix H. Gamified Format - Hegemony In Education 94

Abstract

Title: Use of Storytelling as a Didactic Strategy to Facilitate Students' Comprehension of the Concept of Hegemony*

Authors: Ludy Stefany Barón Ballesteros and Daniel Antonio Cely Ayala**

Keywords: storytelling, didactic transposition, hegemony, comprehension, complex concepts.

Description:

This action-research study investigates the use of storytelling as a teaching strategy to facilitate comprehension of hegemony among eighteen fourth-semester participants enrolled in the Critical Pedagogies course at Universidad Industrial de Santander. To achieve this, four sessions were designed and implemented, incorporating various storytelling elements and formats to teach students about the characteristics and domains of hegemony. Data was collected by five instruments throughout the whole intervention: (1) pre-test, (2) session assessments, (3) observations, (4) post-test, and (5) interviews. The findings revealed that prior to the intervention, students had a limited understanding of the concept of hegemony. However, after implementing storytelling, a positive change was observed, as participants demonstrated a development of their conceptual understanding through four dimensions: factual, procedural, connection of ideas, and knowledge transfer (Mills, 2016). In other words, students recognized the relevance of storytelling and hegemony, corrected previous misconceptions, and expanded their comprehension of the concept's characteristics and domains. This outcome suggests that storytelling is an effective strategy for didactic transposition that can be used to complement and support teaching complex concepts in higher education.

---

*Bachelors Thesis

** Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Escuela de Idiomas. Director Sol Smith Fuentes Hernandez. Master in language didactics.

Resumen

Título: El uso de storytelling como estrategia didáctica para facilitar la comprensión del concepto de hegemonía por parte de los estudiantes*

Autores: Ludy Stefany Barón Ballesteros and Daniel Antonio Cely Ayala**

Palabras Clave: storytelling, transposición didáctica, hegemonía, comprensión, conceptos complejos.

Descripción:

Este estudio de investigación-acción analiza el uso de *storytelling*[1] como estrategia didáctica para facilitar la comprensión del concepto de hegemonía en dieciocho participantes de cuarto semestre matriculados en el curso de Pedagogías Críticas de la Universidad Industrial de Santander. Para ello, se diseñaron y llevaron a cabo cuatro sesiones, incorporando diversos elementos y formatos narrativos con el fin de enseñar a los estudiantes las características y las dimensiones de la hegemonía. Los datos se recopilaron mediante cinco instrumentos a lo largo de toda la intervención: (1) prueba diagnóstica, (2) evaluaciones de las sesiones, (3) observaciones, (4) prueba posterior y (5) entrevistas. Los resultados revelaron que, antes de la intervención, los estudiantes tenían una comprensión limitada del concepto de hegemonía. Sin embargo, tras implementar *storytelling,* se observó un cambio que benefició a los participantes, ya que estos expandieron su asimilación conceptual a través de las cuatro dimensiones de Mills (2016): factual, procedimental, conexión de ideas y transferencia de conocimiento. En otras palabras, los estudiantes reconocieron la relevancia del *storytelling* y de la hegemonía, corrigieron conceptos erróneos previos y ampliaron su comprensión de las características y las dimensiones del concepto. Este resultado sugiere que el *storytelling* es una estrategia eficaz para la transposición didáctica que puede utilizarse para complementar y apoyar la enseñanza de conceptos complejos en la educación superior.

---

*Trabajo de Grado

** Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Escuela de Idiomas. Director Sol Smith Fuentes Hernandez. Maestría en didáctica de la lengua.

[1] Se mantiene el término storytelling en inglés debido a que su uso en la literatura especializada trasciende la simple narración de historias y hace referencia a una estrategia pedagógica específica para la construcción y transmisión de conocimientos mediante narrativas.

1. Contextualization

1.1 Problem Statement

In higher education, students encounter a wide range of theoretical concepts crucial to their fields of study. For instance, in teaching programs, students are prone to encounter concepts that will equip them to unveil power dynamics, situate learning as a student-centered approach, and propose meaningful classroom practices. Nevertheless, comprehending these theoretical terms often requires students to perform complex mental processes, including understanding, contextualizing, and adapting.

In the context of English as a Foreign language (EFL), Jiménez et al. (2017) argue that students encounter difficulties when interpreting academic texts with complex conceptualizations. They must elucidate these concepts despite their limited linguistic proficiency and simultaneously engage in a demanding process of extrapolation to internalize the terms.

The literature reports three reasons why specialized jargon and/or specific concepts can be challenging to interiorize. First, academic texts are inherently formal, complex, and highly structured, demanding high levels of linguistic and contextual competence from the reader (Jiménez et al., 2017). Consequently**,** students reading about a new term may initially get redirected to other meanings that differ from the original definition. Translanguaging, for example, which is the use of all linguistic resources to express meaning without restricting languages (Han et al., 2023), may be mistakenly interpreted as translation. This confusion may arise because both terms share the prefix "trans", which students might associate with movement or change between languages.

Second, due to the formal nature of the academic text, which in most cases is disconnected from real-world situations, students tend to consider them irrelevant and challenging to apply. Without the necessary conceptual understanding and contextualization,

complex terms may be misinterpreted and narrative fragmented (Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012). To illustrate, consider a scenario where a professor introduces a new concept called the *hedonic treadmill* which can be defined as the emotional adaptation people undergo after receiving positive or negative stimuli (Akenji et al., 2025). Initially, students may perceive the concept as an unfamiliar psychological or philosophical theory. Because it falls outside their existing knowledge base, they struggle to immediately associate it with other concepts such as consumerism or capitalism. Recognizing this disconnect, the professor decides to offer a simpler, more contextualized explanation using a story of someone who is constantly buying iphones every single month in order to feel the same excitement every time. By providing this example, the professor is able to exemplify the hedonic treadmill analogy in which as much as they run, people remain in the same position. Evidently, transpositioning the explanation using real word scenarios improves understanding, enabling students to see the concept's everyday relevance instead of simply memorizing its definition.

Third, how teachers address the concept places a crucial role in facilitating or hindering students' development of independence and critical thinking. When teachers encourage active participation in the classroom through question-based scenarios and active methodologies (e.g. project-based learning), students have the opportunity to reflect and develop their own ideas around the concept. The opposite occurs when teachers follow a scripted curriculum uncritically, as their role becomes that of a mere transmitter of knowledge rather than a facilitator. Consequently, students become part of the banking education dynamics (Freire, 2006; Melling & Pilkington, 2018), which jeopardizes the development of analytical reasoning, logical thinking and metacognition. Instead of completely adopting the curriculum, teachers should, as suggested by Trillo and Sanjurjo (2013), base and adapt their practices on a critical learning agenda to engage with the student's context. Therefore, the absence of a critical didactic approach aimed at fostering agency significantly impacts

students' understanding, hindering their capacity to critically engage with educational context.

As a consequence of the three aforementioned reasons, students may feel demotivated. Persistent feelings of this nature could lead to further issues such as drop-out rates and a reduction in academic performance. As González et al. (2021) and Wang and Littlewood (2021) mention, there is a correlation between the emotional well-being of students and their academic competences. Since students consider themselves incapable of grasping the concepts, they confront the feeling of frustration while underperforming in their assignments. Ultimately, without adequate support and adaptive teaching strategies, students may disengage from their academic programs**.**

In the particular case of Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS), there are multiple complex and disciplinary terms which, due to their level of complexity and extent, could pose a comprehension problem for students. By reading the academic plan for the subject of Critical Pedagogies, in the fourth semester of the Bachelor's Degree Programme in English Language Teaching, it was noticed that multiple highly level concepts are constantly intertwined, one of them being the concept of Hegemony. This term refers to the imposition of certain ideas and values such as meritocracy, Status Quo or Native-Speakerism, which become normalised within society, thereby making them difficult to identify and challenge (Rauber, 2016). Due to its constant evolution and influence on different societal structures, students' inability to comprehend its magnitude and potential impact could be problematic. Hegemony becomes internalized as common sense, it weaponizes schools, universities, religious and political institutions, and establishes standards to consider what counts as valid knowledge or who counts as a valid speaker. (Apple, 2004; Phillipson 1992).

Therefore, this research paper focused on hegemony, addressing the causes of the lack of comprehension through the use of storytelling as a didactic transposition strategy to simplify and facilitate its understanding.

1.2 Research Question

In order to investigate the impact of incorporating storytelling into the explanation of the concept of hegemony, the following research question was formulated: To what extent does the use of storytelling, as a didactic strategy, facilitate students' comprehension of the concept of Hegemony in the Critical Pedagogies course at UIS?

1.3 Justification

Consider the possibility that, often unconsciously, you have been continually conceding your agency to dominant social influences throughout your life, even in matters that may appear trivial. In other words, you give your agency through consent rather than force. Antonio Gramsci defines the aforementioned as hegemony, which refers to the subtle imposition of certain ideas and values like inequality, discrimination, institutional conformity, linguistic hierarchies that shape societal norms and become normalized (Gomez, 2016). This phenomenon is intricately embedded into nearly every facet of our lives and is likely experienced by all of us to a certain extent. Consequently, it might be expected that the concept is easy to understand and relate to; however, it often remains unrecognized and is regarded as complex.

Within a classroom, hegemony is an indispensable term that marks the basis of highly intriguing debates (see the Native-Speaker Myth, Davies, 2003), functioning as an umbrella concept that opens up different paths to foster knowledge creation and develop high-order thinking skills. These skills are essential for preservice teachers as they prepare to become transformative intellectuals who can cultivate political, economic, and social awareness in their students (Giroux, 2002).

Especially in education, hegemony is evident through the use of dominant structures like standardized national curricula (Giroux, 1992), Eurocentric textbooks, and monolingual institutional policies (Ellis, 2007), which influence how subjects are taught, for instance. Mathison and Ross (2002) discuss that hegemony shapes educational policies by reinforcing the dominance of standardized curricula. These systems often focus on producing measurable results, such as test scores and grades, leading to a marginalization of other teaching approaches that are not easily quantifiable. With that in mind, didactic transposition emerges as a valuable strategy to challenge these power structures in education by adapting and facilitating dominant knowledge transmission techniques into democratic learning (Achiam, 2014). Although there are many ways to do didactic transposition, storytelling seems a suitable option among others. As demonstrated by Koening and Zorn (2002), who apply didactic transposition through storytelling to nursery students, this approach helps students to extract relevant concepts and provide meaning through analysis, classification, and summarization of stories. In their case, researchers utilize patient and nurse narratives to illustrate real-life experiences, immersing students in the content so that they could see the knowledge reflected in their practices. Transposing this approach to teaching hegemony could also yield significant benefits. By employing narratives that encourage students to engage with and relate to the subject matter, it is possible to address the common barriers to comprehension that were previously mentioned. Not only that, but storytelling is also particularly well-suited to current educational demands, as it can be adapted to digital resources, effectively engaging with the growing digital native population (Yang et al., 2020).

From a less theoretical perspective, in our experience as pre-service teachers in an EFL context, we have encountered complex concepts that were not properly contextualized, leading to difficulties in understanding. Furthermore, teachers are expected to continually develop approaches that foster more effective and motivating learning experiences for

students. This pedagogical challenge initially prompted us to design a didactic transposition that could bridge this gap. Although many academic concepts could have been chosen, we focused on the combination of Hegemony and Storytelling. We recognize that in language classrooms, students do not merely learn grammar; they navigate a complex space where language, power, and identity intersect. Exploring hegemony allows us to critically examine how power is distributed in relation to language and culture. By pairing this abstract concept with storytelling, we can transform a dense theory into a tangible narrative, ultimately raising students' critical awareness within the educational context.

1.4 Objectives

To accomplish such an endeavor, certain objectives have been designed:

General objective:

- To facilitate students' understanding of Hegemony, conceptualized as a system of cultural and ideological dominance that operates not only through physical force, but through the active consent and internalization of values like Linguistic Hierarchy, Hyper-Individualism, Heteronormativity, and Epistemic Neutrality.

Specific objectives:

- To diagnose students' prior knowledge and misconceptions regarding the concept of Hegemony.
- To implement a series of educational storytelling sessions specifically tailored to illustrate how hegemony functions within daily institutional and educational settings.
- To assess the effectiveness of the storytelling sessions in transforming students' comprehension of the concept of hegemony.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Storytelling

2.1.1.1 Definition of Storytelling. Storytelling functions as a didactic strategy that transmits information, allowing people to become emotionally immersed through narrative, dialogue, and details that capture audience interest. Whether the story is fictional or based on real-life scenarios, it fosters learning and reflection (Salix, 2024; Storytelling Toolkit, n.d.). Moreover, storytelling has applicability in different contexts such as marketing, emotional well-being, and education.

In marketing, storytelling is the powerful narrative that conveys the message of "we" as a team and incorporates the innovative factor that makes the listeners feel connected as

potential protagonists of a story (McCausland & McCausland, 2022). In the medical area, storytelling has shown effectiveness in treating patients who have suffered traumatic events by creating stories of patients' experiences along with other techniques to modify behaviors (Ofoegbu et al., 2020). However, in the field of education, several researchers have implemented storytelling for learning purposes, some of whom call this strategy story-based learning (see Georgopoulou & Griva, 2012; Huang, 2006; McQuiggan et al., 2008; Wong et al., 2018; Yang, 2011). Storytelling in this matter has served as a comprehensive understanding of concepts making them more teachable and easily acquired by students (Saritepeci, 2020)

2.1.1.2 Storytelling Modalities. Storytelling has been a key strategy and has evolved alongside social progress. Since ancient times, narratives have always been rich in messages, emotions, and history by shaping social dynamics. As narrative techniques have transformed over time, storytelling has transitioned across various modes, adopting oral and digital modalities. This progression originated when oral tradition emerged to communicate knowledge and valuable aspects of cultures across generations (López, 2024). However, with the advent of technology, storytelling has evolved from an oral modality to a digital one. In this regard, digital storytelling has provided a new form of a narrative using digital tools that promote students' increased motivation, autonomous learning and engagement (Yang et al., 2020).

Within this digitalization of narratives, multisensory elements integrate various sensory stimuli that go beyond common visual and auditory sensory engagement. That is, they surpass the boundaries of traditional spoken or written narratives by fostering innovative and immersive environments that stimulate the full range of student's senses, including visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic (Ferreira & Vasconcelos, 2020; Kucirkova & Kamola, 2022). Incorporating multisensory features into digital storytelling not only makes narratives

more vivid and impactful, but also broadens the ways stories can be told. This expansion includes several distinct formats such: role-play, comic-based, branching and gamified storytelling.

In the role-play format, the storyteller and audience interact dynamically, allowing participants to become protagonists of a narrative (Duong et al., 2026). Meanwhile, comic-based storytelling relies on a sequential arrangement of visual, interactive, and textual components to facilitate reader comprehension (Fenici & Mosca, 2024). As for branching narratives, they offer an immersive experience where readers actively choose the story's direction, ultimately shaping its conclusion (Rutta et al., 2021). Lastly, gamified storytelling integrates game-like mechanics such as challenges and rewards into the plot to encourage collaborative participation (Warman et al., 2025).

2.1.1.3 Characteristics of Storytelling. Both traditional and digital storytelling have a sequence of steps that permit the creation of different narratives. According to the Storytelling Toolkit compiled by the Smithsonian Institution and MUSEWEB Foundation[1] (n.d.), a story is composed of three crucial moments: beginning, middle, and end.

In the first moment, the storyteller starts by capturing the listener's intrigue and providing hope for possible changes in the future development of the events. Moving into the second moment of the story, "the events must become bigger and better and their excitement and involvement must gradually increase as the story moves forward" (Storytelling Toolkit, n.d., p. 10). Regarding the third moment, storytelling suggests two characteristics related to reaching the climax of the story and its closure: a close ending and an open ending.

In a closed ending, the main conflict and answers are resolved, fulfilling all audience's expectations and emotions. In contrast, an open ending leaves the conflict

[1] The Smithsonian Learning Lab stands out for its rich repository of digital resources designed to enhance cultural awareness and support educational initiatives aimed at improving students' learning experiences through research-driven approaches. Similarly, the MuseWeb Foundation drives cultural innovation by funding and supporting groundbreaking projects in the cultural heritage sector. Together, these initiatives promote creativity, learning, and global collaboration across digital and cultural fields.

unresolved, allowing the audience to interpret and use their creativity in unanswered questions. However, taking any decision over the above-mentioned characteristics is solely and exclusively done by the storyteller.

Additionally, there are some other elements such as the characters and the conflict display that enrich the story and awaken people's interest. As for the characters, they can be classified into detailed, non-detailed, and recurring types within the story. That means they can have complex emotions and transformations, single motivations and vague qualities or multiple recontextualized appearances (Kodirjonovich, 2025; Schmitt & Buschek, 2021).

Characters are not only essential to performing actions but also for engaging with the audience by creating deep connections. Maslej et al. (2017) explain that when the public relates to and identifies with the characters, they establish a parasocial relationship, creating emotional closeness and understanding of their situations. Moreover, Maslej et al. (2017) also highlight that besides relatability, complexity makes the characters feel more realistic and therefore engaging. This complexity becomes particularly important at the boiling point of the story, where the conflict portrayal is driven by the characters' attitude toward adversity and their problem-solving skills. Even if the characters do not fully overcome the conflict, their journey can still resonate with the audience, keeping them emotionally invested (Storytelling Toolkit, n.d.).

To exemplify the aforementioned, let us introduce the story of Matilda by Roald Dahl. Matilda, the main character, is presented as a gifted girl whose abilities are advanced for her age. Likewise, it sets up the themes of good versus evil and intelligence over ignorance while being included in the daily life of the character. In the middle part, Matilda meets teachers Honey and Trunchbull. In this section, there is a character development where Matilda gradually becomes involved in more conflicts to defend what she considers right, increasing the story's tension. In the end, Matilda's story from the surface accomplishes a resolution to

the problems by making Trunchbull leave, being adopted by Mistress Honey, and imparting a message of her feeling of belonging. However, some questions still arise over Matilda's future like: Did she see her parents again? or Did she continue having powers? This suggests that the story can have both closed and open endings at the same time.

2.1.1.4 Benefits of Storytelling. Storytelling has proven effective in various settings, from business to education, as it helps convey knowledge through narratives that sound reasonable and connect with the audience (Huang, 2006; McCausland & McCausland, 2022; McQuiggan et al., 2008; Ofoegbu et al., 2020). In other words, storytelling acts as a bridge that links rational and emotional dimensions.

On the cognitive side, storytelling transforms abstract concepts into more tangible experiences, and its multisensory elements create a memorable learning experience, thereby aiding in the retention of ideas (Tarjadinata, 2025). In addition, storytelling incorporates higher-order skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative expression while students learn through stories (McDougal et al., 2020). These mental processes, particularly critical thinking, are strengthened because storytelling functions as a reflective conscious practice grounded in lived experiences that generate knowledge. By humanizing complex concepts and fostering reflective thinking, storytelling empowers students to become critical thinkers who are capable of challenging systemic injustices and envisioning new social realities (Nangia, 2025; Santamaría, 2025).

On the emotional side, this didactic strategy transforms the complexity of scholarly knowledge into a more comprehensive and contextualized format in the classroom, encouraging students to maintain willingness and interest in learning (Jamilah et al., 2021). Likewise, by immersing themselves in a story, the audience finds the content more meaningful and comprehensible, as stories are contextualized according to the listeners' environment (Qodirova, 2025).

As you can see, storytelling enhances comprehension and critical thinking by maintaining an engaging presentation of content, a structured narrative, and multisensory elements. It also fosters an emotional connection due to its adaptability to various contexts, making it a valuable approach to education.

2.1.2 Hegemony

2.1.2.1 Definition of Hegemony. Antonio Gramsci defines hegemony as the dominance of the ruling class over some subaltern social groups, maintained not only through force, but also through the consent of people (Gomez, 2016)

Coercion is the absence of mutual agreement and involves some form of threat, whereas consent occurs when the people agree to and legitimize the authority (Burmester, 2024). The combination of these two characteristics provides hegemony with a variety of ideological tools that permeate all aspects of social life (Darder et al., 2023). In this way, dominant groups, characterized by their political, cultural, and economic influence, are able to shape social practices and discourses. Consequently, the worldview of those in power becomes normalized and accepted as common sense. As Rauber (2016) highlights, this leads individuals to give their agency and act against their true interests, as they have been ideologically conditioned to accept the values of the ruling class as the only correct ones, without questioning their ulterior motives (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Representation of Consent in Hegemony

Note. The figure humorously illustrates how individuals may willingly surrender their agency and support those in power without question. Therefore, individuals come to believe that the ruling group's authority is natural and justified. *Source*: RoseVision2, Twitter.

Moreover, Rauber (2016) indicates that different institutions constantly reshape and legitimize hegemony over time, maintaining loyalty to its principles. For instance, before the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, racial segregation in the United States was enforced by Jim Crow laws, mandating the separation of Black and White individuals in public spaces, schools, and transportation. While these laws were dismantled after the movement, white hegemony adapted rather than disappeared. Systematic racism persisted through economic disparities, such as discriminatory housing practices and unequal school funding, which continue to reinforce segregation in other subtle ways (Bonilla-Silva, 2013).

This adaptability, however, cannot be attributed to solely hierarchical control. As the philosopher Micahel Foucault argues, hegemony emerges from the complex web of power relations that exist across all social interactions (Kükürt, 2022). Accordingly, hegemony reflects broader societal structures and institutions that extend their power beyond political alliances, intertwining deeply with the culture of society.

2.1.2.2 Domains of Hegemony. Hegemony can manifest in various spheres of influence in society, such as culture, language, gender relations or education, and can take different forms, including discourse, media or information (Agnew, 2005; Camacho, 2006). These different domains of Hegemony intersect and reinforce one another, shaping societal norms, values and perspectives.

To exemplify, in the blockbuster film *Iron Man* (2008), Afghanistan is depicted as a desolated and inhospitable region (see Figure 2), reinforcing negative stereotypes about the Middle East and its people, despite the region's more green look (see Figure 3). This portrayal aligns with a broader Western narrative that views the Middle East as a dangerous and uncivilized 'other', which serves to justify intervention and military action of the United States (Bryant, 2011). The film demonstrates how hegemony operates through media, perpetuating stereotypes that reinforce Western dominance and marginalize non-Western voices. As it is evidenced, the film reinforces cultural hegemony but also serves as a political agenda by shaping perception in favor of Western interests.

Figure 2

Kunar Province in Iron Man

Note. The film's protagonist, Tony Stark, is standing in a location within Kunar Province. The landscape is characterized by its rocky terrain and sparse greenery.

Source: Favreau, J. (2008). *Iron Man*. Marvel Studios.

Figure 3

Kunar Province in reality

Note. The landscape is characterized by the mountainous terrain, yet it showcases more greenery and vegetation. *Source*: The Kabul Times.

Beyond shaping perceptions, hegemonic practices also regulate how individuals behave and interact with others. In particular, gender-based hegemony draws attention as it operates through an asymmetrical order between femininity and masculinity, in which gender differences are maintained (Budgeon, 2013). This unequal hierarchy legitimizes patriarchal relations not only by subordinating women but also men that diverge from dominant standards such as emotional control, heterosexuality, or strength. This means that even men who traditionally hold positions of power, are subject to strict social expectations, to the extent that behaviours outside the norm are feminized and stigmatized (Hearn, 2004). Consequently, to avoid recrimination, men and women are prescribed how they should look and express themselves to remain within hegemonic boundaries.

Education is another key pillar of society that constantly encounters power dynamics that influence individuals' worldviews and experiences. In this sense, education becomes a field where power is consolidated and contested, contributing to the formation of hegemony

(Kükürt, 2022). These power structures that perpetuate dominant ideologies often manifest in areas such as curricula, education policies, or textbooks.

Namely, Caro and Caro (2020) and Köksal and Ulum (2021), highlighted the hegemonic presence of British (England) and North American (USA) culture in English textbooks, sometimes reinforcing stereotypes or exaggerating cultural aspects, which sustained a narrow worldview in educational materials. To illustrate, in the *Cutting Edge* textbook, videos in lessons about "World Culture" promote British Culture, particularly London, as a global standard for fashion and style, while neglecting the representation of other English-speaking cultures (Caro & Caro, 2020).

Another sphere of hegemonic influence observable in education is the linguistic domain, as it shapes speaking preferences and ways in the learning process. Within this domain, one dominant version of a language becomes naturalized as superior, marginalizing other varieties or languages e.g. African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Indian English, Singaporean English (Singlish), and Caribbean creoles (Al-Kahtany & Alhamami, 2022). For instance, Miranda et al. (2024) found that despite efforts to promote linguistic diversity in Colombian universities, English remains the predominant language, clearly illustrating a case of linguistic imperialism, as other languages, including native ones, are often subaltern.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Storytelling in Education

After a thoughtful review of the theory that frames the current investigation, it was crucial to consider the practical application of storytelling in teaching. This literature review aimed to explore research on the implementation of storytelling as a strategy to do didactic transposition in teaching complex concepts. Although no studies were found that use storytelling to teach specifically the concept of hegemony, research shows this strategy has

proven effective in fields like health and English education, highlighting its potential value in broader educational contexts. Considering the above, the gathered studies provided reference points on teaching techniques using storytelling, as well as insights into the subsequent adaptation and application of those methods in the actual study.

In health education, a field that constantly encounters complex terminology, it was interesting to look at what other scholars have done and recommend when implementing storytelling in an educational setting.

Firstly, Koening and Zorn (2002) explored the use of storytelling in nursing education to teach nursing students complex themes such as traumatic brain injury, family dynamics, and ethical dilemmas, for instance. Their research showcased an example of how to implement storytelling to make the learning process more relatable and immersive. Their implementation of stories followed a series of stages. At the beginning, a pre-story stage introduced key concepts, allowing students to recognize and mentally prepare for the content in the story. In the next stage, the story itself was narrated, with interspersed discussions to engage students actively. These discussions included thought-provoking questions and predictions relevant to both the story and its topic. Besides the stages, the storyteller also used a first-person narrative, drawing from the real-life experiences of a school nurse, which added authenticity and relevance to the learning experience. According to the analysis after the implementation, researchers asserted that this use of storytelling enhances comprehension and critical thinking as it facilitates the connection between theoretical knowledge and real-world applications that match the students' background.

As you can see, the insights from Koening and Zorn's study (2002) offer valuable guidance for structuring classroom interventions. Their emphasis on a pre-story contextualization phase underscores the importance of familiarizing students with foundational concepts and vocabulary before engaging with the narrative. In our research

project, this preparatory stage helps pre-service teachers approach hegemony with greater understanding and readiness, priming them to identify and analyze the concepts within the story. Furthermore, integrating discussions at key points encourages students to actively question and critique the story, fostering critical thinking. This focus on critical thinking aligns well with the learning objectives of the Critical Pedagogies course, as students are encouraged to apply analytical skills to deconstruct power structures and cultural narratives within educational contexts.

Secondly, in the same fashion, Whitmore and Schild (2022) choose a storytelling strategy to enhance learners' comprehension of complex health policy concepts and exemplify their application outside the classroom. This approach immersed a group of undergraduate students from the University of Alaska Anchorage in connecting course content to real-life experiences. The students were further engaged in creating a policy proposal story that acknowledged community necessities.

During the implementation, the authors incorporated a “watch one- do one- teach one” methodology. In the virtual sessions, students followed a series of steps within this methodology. First, the *watch one* step consisted in listening to community members and expert guest *storytellers* who shared their experiences with certain health policies, providing real-world application and context to the students. For instance, a story was shared about Medicaid reimbursement policy, shifting the perspective of a mom being helped to give birth in a well-equipped hospital to a mom leaving their family by traveling miles away and giving birth alone. Second, students were encouraged to *do one* and created a narrative-based assignment with key elements of the health issues discussed by the guest storytellers. At that point, students reflected on the stories and internalized the information. Third, in the *teach one* stage, students presented a policy proposal from published sources in which they

explained the impact of its implementation and how it can be improved to meet better health conditions of the population.

As a result, students understood the process behind policy creation as an active and practical process rather than as abstract information, allowing them to recognize inequities in healthcare. Similarly, students could perform active participation in storytelling sessions by evaluating information critically while boosting their confidence when reinforcing their voices in health policy discussions. Ultimately, in light of this investigation, storytelling plays a crucial role in giving agency to the students by showing a clear picture of a situation to obtain a more relevant lived experience. Simultaneously, students can connect one specific scenario with broader social issues or complex concepts as it is needed when inquiring into the concept of hegemony.

While storytelling has shown effectiveness in teaching complex concepts in other fields as established before, it is essential to remark that the present study aims to implement storytelling in an EFL context. In this setting, students are not only engaging with new terms and ideas but also learning in a second language. Therefore, it is important to examine the findings from scholars in a similar context.

For instance, Yang (2011) used storytelling in education for children, focusing specifically on developing vocabulary comprehension, along with speaking and grammar skills. In their study, storytelling was implemented within a virtual course where the teacher served as the storyteller and the students as the audience in a video conference. Instruction involved a variety of story types, including fictional narratives, culturally relevant stories, real-life experiences, as well as stories with physical responses through acting by the teacher. Moreover, to further engage students, recurring characters were introduced, each assigned recognizable roles that fostered connection and continuity across different stories. Additionally, the storyteller strategically shifted points of view (POVs) between stories,

adopting perspectives that aligned with specific narrative purposes to deepen comprehension and maintain engagement. The analysis of the results indicated that storytelling positively impacts language development, content retention, and grammar and vocabulary comprehension. While Yang's (2011) study was conducted with a younger age group, our study could similarly benefit from using several storytelling types to make the process more dynamic. Furthermore, introducing distinct characters with unique backgrounds and roles, as well as incorporating multiple character perspectives within the narrative could add depth to the story, especially when addressing complex social themes.

In another study, Huang (2006) conducted research using storytelling to improve the reading comprehension and word recall abilities of Taiwanese sixth graders in the EFL context. The 72 students were divided into three groups in concordance with their reading proficiency skills. To analyze the effectiveness of contextualized storytelling, the groups were taught under three different methodologies: Text-Only Reading (Control Group C), Illustration-Supplemented Reading (Group I), and Contextualized Storytelling (Group S). In Group C, students read the story solely as text without additional visual or auditory aids. For Group I, students were presented with the reading text, the text with the support of illustrations only, a methodology called the Dual-Code Model. In Group S, storytelling was implemented. Students started by listening to the story narrated before reading the illustrated text. In addition to that, storytelling was supported with auditory cues, interaction, and prediction via multisensory elements. Storytelling played a significant role since it included expressive language and constant questioning leading to active interaction and comprehension by students. To assess students' improvement in comprehension and vocabulary retention, the researchers utilized a word recall test and story retelling.

The results showed that students in Group S had a better understanding of the story since the storytelling implemented in that group was supported by the multi-sensory

approach. Also, students increased their confidence in reading English text and less proficient learners were engaged. However, the word recall did not change statistically between the groups. After reviewing the implementation of storytelling, a connection emerges between the storytelling strategy and the actual study focused on the concept of hegemony. In this study, Huang (2006) emphasizes the use of storytelling as a strategy to unpack complex ideas, making them more relatable and tangible for learners. Moreover, when storytelling is combined with multi-sensory resources -such as images, videos, and even emojis-rather than relying on written texts, there is an increase in effectiveness. In the context of teaching hegemony, by innovating with different representational modes, storytelling serves as a powerful strategy for breaking down abstract concepts, allowing students to engage with them more effectively.

In conclusion, the work of Koening and Zorn (2002), Whitmore and Schild (2022), Yang (2011), and Huang (2006) demonstrate the effectiveness of storytelling in enhancing motivation and comprehension by providing real-life context and creating a direct connection to the content. This is because storytelling shifts the traditional paradigm of highly formal text and instruction toward a more dynamic and relatable one, thereby increasing students' learning outcomes and performance. These authors make valuable contributions regarding the implementation of storytelling in the current research context. These include the importance of a preparatory phase, where foundational concepts, vocabulary, and relevant information are introduced before the story begins. In line with this, discussion moments should be integrated to allow students to have an active role as agents of their own learning, helping them to gain a clearer understanding of concepts through reflection of vivid scenarios. Moreover, to further enhance the dynamism of storytelling, it is essential to use different types of stories depending on the intention, complemented with multi-sensory resources and detailed characters that make the content more appealing.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Methodology

This investigation aims to explore the dynamic and subjective experiences of undergraduate students in relation to a newly implemented educational strategy. It aligns with the qualitative framework, which provides a holistic and flexible methodology for understanding reality based on participants' lived experiences (Hernandez et al., 2014). Furthermore, qualitative research seeks to assess how phenomena or situations evolve naturally, without external manipulation.

In this specific context, the qualitative approach enabled the collection of students' insights regarding the use of storytelling as a strategy to explain socio-political concepts, while also acknowledging their unique contexts. By employing diverse data collection techniques, such as interviews and observations, this approach embraced the voices of participants, offering a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of storytelling as an educational strategy.

3.2 Research Design

The current study adopts an action research methodological design, which emphasizes taking action to create meaningful change and improvement within educational contexts. According to McNiff and Whitehead (2011), this design not only fosters better educational practices but also generates valuable insights into the advancement of knowledge and theory. Action research bridges the gap between theory and practice, encouraging researchers to actively reflect on their interventions to ensure they remain responsive to the needs of the population they serve (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). This reflective process is particularly valuable for this study, as it permits continuous assessment of whether the implementation of storytelling as a strategy is effective or whether adjustments are needed to better serve the participants. Moreover, the design allows for critical observation of how the research

intervention influences the students' learning process, in this case, the impact of storytelling on complex concept comprehension.

3.3 Population

In research, population refers to the entire group of individuals or cases that share specific characteristics relevant to the study, from which a sample is drawn for analysis (Hernández et al., 2014). The target population of this research consisted of eighteen fourth-semester undergraduate students from the program of English Language Teaching at Universidad Industrial de Santander. A convenience sampling technique was employed, as this non-probability method relies on the specific purposes and criteria established by a researcher rather than statistical probability (Hernández et al., 2014). This method was selected because the participants were readily accessible and met the selection criteria, as they were enrolled in the Critical Pedagogies Course, whose syllabus included the concept of hegemony, directly aligning with the objectives of the study. Moreover, participants were provided an informed consent document (see Appendix A) prior to the start of the study to ensure they understand the purpose and details of the research.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

To gather the necessary data to fulfill the objectives of this research, a variety of instruments was selected to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the impact of storytelling to teach the concept of hegemony. These instruments included a questionnaire, classroom observation guides, a formative test, and student interviews (see Table 1).

Table 1

Alignment of Secondary Objectives and Data Collection Instruments

Specific Objective	Instrument
1. To diagnose students' prior knowledge and misconceptions regarding the concept of Hegemony	Questionnaire
2. To implement a series of educational storytelling sessions specifically tailored to illustrate how hegemony functions within daily institutional and educational settings.	Participant Observations
3. To assess the effectiveness of the storytelling sessions in transforming students' comprehension of the concept of hegemony.	Formative Written Test Interviews

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Hernández et al. (2014) define a questionnaire as a data collection instrument composed of a series of questions designed to measure one or more variables. It must align with the research problem and objectives and can include both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire of the current research assessed the participants' existing knowledge and understanding of the concept of hegemony. As detailed in Appendix B, the questionnaire primarily consisted of closed-ended questions to determine the participants' previous encounters with the concept of hegemony, understanding of the term, and examples in society where it may be present. In addition, an open-ended question was included to allow participants to express, in their own words, their understanding. This input was crucial for obtaining insights into their perspectives and identifying any misconceptions before the implementation.

3.4.2 Participant Observations

Participant Observations were used to document particular aspects of participants' behaviour and actions in a natural setting, with the researcher actively joining the sample group and becoming part of the process (Musante, 2015). This approach aligned with the research design, as the researchers adopted the role of storytellers in the intervention by role-playing, guiding the story narration, and interacting directly with students. In order to avoid missing any crucial information, an additional external observer was assigned to monitor and help record the observations.

To facilitate this observation process, a guide with pre-established criteria was used to systematically record relevant behaviours (see Appendix C). The guide format was structured into four categories: body language, storytelling characteristics, performance assessment, and other unanticipated events or actions. Each category included approximately 10 items for the observer to indicate whether the item occurred or not, as well as an additional column to write an additional comment on the interaction noted if necessary. To begin with the first category, body language, participants were evaluated over gestures such as nodding, frowning, and crossing arms, which could contribute to a better understanding of the story's impact. Continuing with the storytelling characteristics category, it assessed participants' involvement when certain features of the story excelled. For instance, it was to observe whether students showed excitement when a recurring character reappeared or if they engaged in a discussion when the story was open-ended or closed-ended. Furthermore, the performance assessment category focused on students' willingness to comment on the story by confidently asking and answering questions, connecting the story with real-world issues or providing examples related to the story. Lastly, the other unanticipated events or actions category was designated to add remarks that were not previously contemplated in the items from the other categories.

3.4.3 Test

In the educational field, tests are designed to evaluate or assess teaching effectiveness and students' learning outcomes. Their implementation can be done in the function of three major purposes such as identifying prior knowledge, monitoring students' progression, and assessing students' improvement after the lesson (Olajide, 2018). In line with the assessment of students' insights into the concept of hegemony, a formative written test was implemented. This ensured both accountability and student achievement in mastering the identification of hegemony as defined by the researchers' conceptualization of the term, in alignment with the main objective. (see Appendix D). Students had the opportunity to express their understanding by incorporating narrative characteristics based on storytelling, allowing them to demonstrate their comprehension freely and creatively.

3.4.4 Interviews

As part of the qualitative data collection instruments, interviews capture the specific context of participants' responses facilitating the understanding of their thoughts and feelings. Cohen et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of interpersonal exchange in generating knowledge as well as the contextual nature of research data in assessing a phenomenon. Specifically, a semi-structured interview was used due to its prearranged questions and the flexibility of the researcher's decisions over omitting or inquiring more information based on participants' answers (Hernández et al. 2014). Within the scope of this study, it was used to analyze students' perceptions of the impact of storytelling as strategy on the comprehension of Hegemony (see Appendix E). Analogously, the responses of the participants were compared to other data collection instruments, such as the test, to provide a more comprehensive picture.

4. Methodological Design of the Intervention

Four distinct sessions were designed and implemented within the critical pedagogy classroom during March the 20th until April 10th during 2025-1. Although each session had its own specific purpose and focus, they were conceived as interconnected stages to progressively reinforce students' comprehension of hegemony. Their implementation followed the same sequence of activities, which consisted of a warm-up, a story, and an assessment. Starting with the warm-up, participants were exposed to different dynamics related to their social context and to the type of hegemony addressed. For instance, in the second session, the warm-up was related to cultural products, in which students had to classify each item presented as cringe or trendy (see Figure 4). The result of their interactions prepared them for the cultural hegemony class, activating participants' prior knowledge before the story segment of the intervention.

Figure 4

Second session's warm-up example

Note. Students were asked to give their opinion and decide whether they considered famous Colombian soap operas to be trendy or cringe. https://surl.li/xcqmpn

Concerning the story segment of the class, which was the central point of the intervention, each narrative was carefully crafted with consideration for three key design components: Focus within hegemony, featured storytelling characteristics, and materials (see Table 2 for a summary).

Table 2

Components description for each session of the intervention

	Hegemonic Domain	**Focus within Hegemony**	**Featured Storytelling Characteristics**	**Story Content**	**Materials**
Session 1	Language and Linguistic Hierarchy	Agency	Role-playing, Detailed Characters	The first session took the form of a role-play talk show where two students from the critical pedagogy class impersonated some characters to face Antonio Rich, a Colombian born man, raised in the UK with ideas of native-speakerism.	Prompts, Costumes, Sounds, Character sheets, Backdrop
Session 2	Culture and Hyper-Individualism	Dominance and Consent	Multisensory elements, Detailed Characters, Open Ending	The second one was a comic about Brayan Miguel, a man following TikTok trends and consenting to the imposition of cultural norms on his identity as a Latino.	Multisensory comic, videos, sound cues, screen
Session 3	Gender and Heteronormativity	Adaptability of Hegemony	Detailed Characters, Close Ending	In the third one, a branching storytelling format was used to narrate the story of Sarah, a UIS college student, facing gender-based hegemonic situations.	Sound effects, Screen
Session 4	Education and Epistemic Neutrality	Power Dynamics	Non-detailed Characters, Open Ending	In the fourth one, in a gamified format, the story followed an unknown subversive English teacher from an alternative universe, who sent letters to the students mentioning how politics, educational institutions, and curricula reinforce dominant power structures.	Letters, Screen

4.1 Focus Within Hegemony

As previously discussed, hegemony is a broad term encompassing spheres of influence across various areas of society (Darder et al., 2023; Rauber, 2016). This influence is sustained through dominant ideologies that permeate everyday life, ultimately shaping how

individuals and groups perceive and engage with the world (Darder et al., 2023). To focus on the spheres most relevant to students, the selected domains for developing the stories were language, culture, gender and education. With this in mind, each story was structured so that the first session addressed topics that were more immediate and relatable to participants, gradually progressing toward more complex and specific subjects by the fourth session. Additionally, each session highlighted specific characteristics of hegemony to help students better identify them and, as the sessions progressed, connect them with one another. Some of the characteristics emphasized throughout the four sessions were agency (Rauber, 2016), dominance and consent (Burmester, 2024), the adaptability of hegemony (Rauber, 2016), and power dynamics (Kükürt, 2022).

Regarding the first story, it concentrated on linguistic hegemony and its social dominance through a role-play format. The narrative focused on a talk show setting (see Figure 5), centered on the interactions and discussions among a group of characters. Throughout the story, they encounter and address various hegemonic practices related to British English supremacy, dialect marginalization, linguistic stereotypes, and discriminatory hierarchies. These dynamics were embodied by Antonio Rich, a recurring character raised in the United Kingdom who harbored rigid notions of native speakerism, forcing the other characters to face his comments and behaviours. These events served to exemplify how language discrimination takes place, and how individual agency can manifest through defiance or preservation.

Figure 5

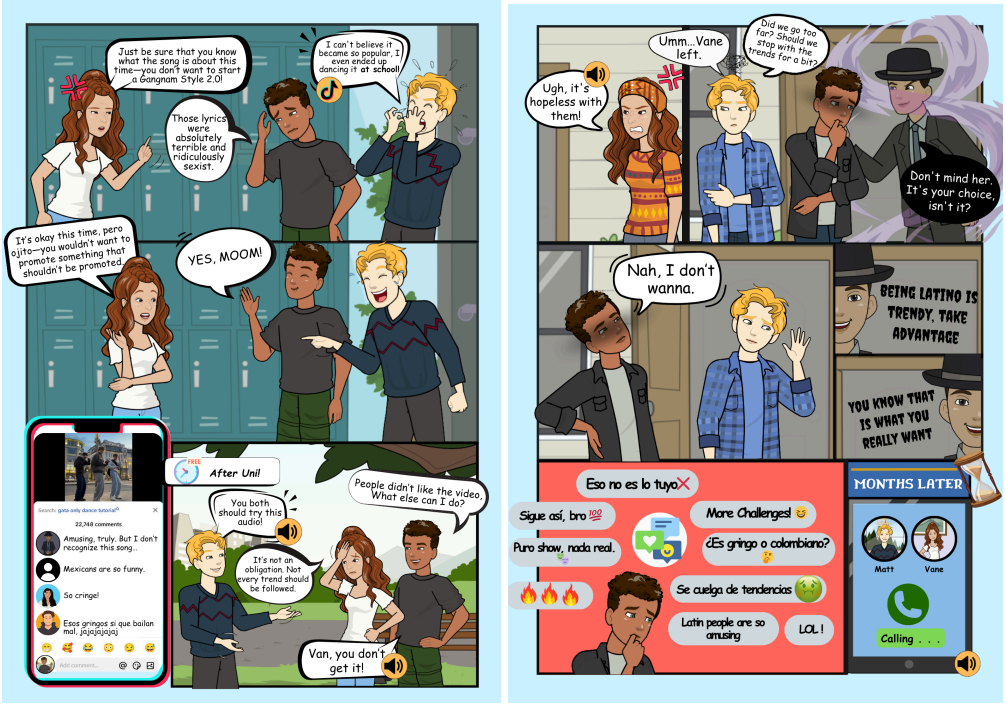
Role-play talk show characters

Note. The characters were portrayed by the researchers and two study participants.

Concerning the second story, it was created around cultural hegemony and identity loss through a comic-based format. The narrative focused on the life of a Latino descendant protagonist named Brayan Miguel, centering on this transformation as he assimilates into various mainstream trends. Throughout the comic, he is exposed to dominant cultural norms portrayed as the standard, illustrating how external forces define what is appropriate and normal, while the media actively encourages the marginalization of his own authentic cultural values. These events represented the interplay between consent and coercion, demonstrating how systemic dominance takes place not just through external pressure, but through the protagonist's willing submission to a cultural authority (see Figure 6).

Figure 6

Multisensory-Comic book pages N.5 and N.6



Note. Brayan Miguel chooses to ignore his friends' warnings about harmful internet trends and instead submits to a manipulative figure, portrayed by Antonio Rich, who encourages him to exploit his Latino identity for views.

Regarding the third session, the story concentrated on gender hegemony and how it adapts over time through a branching storytelling format (see Appendix G). The narrative focused on Sarah's everyday life as a college student, centering on her experiences at her home, friend group, and educational center. She encounters various hegemonic practices related to gender ideologies, beauty standards, *micro-machismos,* and societal expectations. Those events served as examples of how gender hegemony might take place, its variety, and how they may impact both genders.

Additionally, the scenarios were carefully selected to allow for the demonstration of the adaptability of hegemony. For example, at the end of the story, Sarah's mother reflected on what her daughter told her, mentioning to the audience that, despite these events being

different from her own childhood experiences, they have similar characteristics and patterns in terms of shaping perspectives and behavior (see Figure 7). This shows the parallelism between old and current hegemonic practices.

Figure 7

Concluding event of third session's story

Note. The protagonist's mother realizes that the events of the story are similar to past events, despite the passage of time.

Regarding the fourth session, the story focused on hegemony on education and power dynamics through a gamified format (see Appendix H). The narrative unfolded in an alternate universe, where student-readers followed a collection of letters written by an unknown English teacher that questioned mainstream schooling methods (see Figure 8). The narrative showed how curricula reinforces existing power structures to reflect the ideals of a dominant group and how politics shape public opinion. These events represented the tension between systematic indoctrination and resistance, illustrating how institutions shape knowledge while demonstrating that established power dynamics can be challenged with the right foundation.

Figure 8

Students interacting with the letters

4.2 Featured Storytelling Characteristics

Regarding the featured storytelling characteristics, all the sessions throughout the intervention incorporated key narrative components. Each story followed a clear structure that included beginning, middle and end, as well as a defined plot composed of events leading to a resolution (Storytelling Toolkit, n.d.). Overall, the storytelling characteristics implemented included acting, narration, characterization, and varied types of endings, such as open-ended and close-ended.

Although every session combined characteristics in a distinct way, some components were shared across some sessions. For instance, characterization was particularly significant. The depth and complexity of the character description differed in all sessions, in order to assess if this had any impact on participants' comprehension and interest. Additionally, a transversal character named Antonio Rich (see Figure 9) appeared throughout the intervention. He served as the protagonist in the first session and as a secondary or minor character in the other sessions. This recurrence was intentional, as participants responded positively to the character in the first session.

Figure 9

Digital Characterization of Antonio Rich

Note. He is portrayed as a man who was born and raised in Colombia, whose birth name is Antonio Rico. After living in the United Kingdom, he adopts a conservative stance towards British English,viewing it as the correct model in which English should be learned.

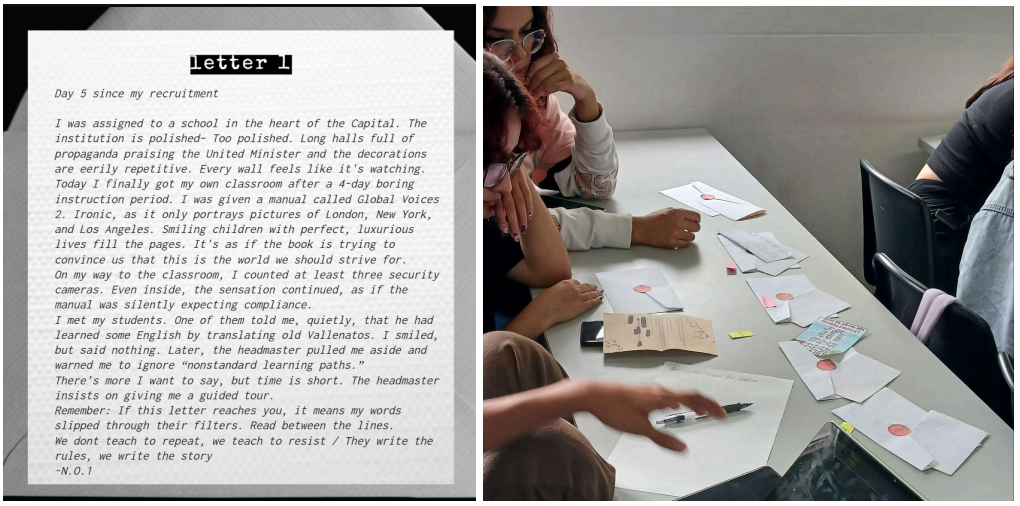
4.3 Materials

As part of each class, students followed not only the storytelling characteristics such as plot, characters, and story structure to make the story engaging. Digital storytelling was also infused with traditional storytelling, creating well-equipped classes that made use of a variety of materials, both online and in person, including multisensory elements, videos, games, projectors, interactive slides, prompts, backdrops, and other materials. For instance, In session 4, participants were immersed in a dystopian world in which they were an insurgent group that received a letter from an infiltrated member of their group in the system. In that case, students were contextualized by physical and personalized letters (see Figure 10) as well as they were challenged in finding cues for unlocking levels. Every time they needed to unlock a level on the TV, they were asked to find a code by moving around the classroom, telling a tongue twister, or resolving a riddle. The possibility of including various resources in

classes allowed students to receive information in forms that prioritized involvement with the material rather than a passive form of learning. This type of dynamic in the classroom served as an anti-hegemonic practice, as students moved beyond passive education to active involvement fostering critical thinking in their learning process.

Figure 10

Digital and Physical version of the letters used



4.4 Class Assessment

Each session ended with a Google Forms assessment, which followed a uniform three-part distribution in order to check: the participants' satisfaction with the class's implementations, specific comprehension of the story's events and general comprehension of the story's theme.

A Likert scale ranging from one to five was used for the satisfaction questions in the first section, with one representing the lowest value and five representing the highest. To be specific, students were asked to assess both their overall class satisfaction and their perception with the implemented storytelling characteristic in each session.

The second part of the assessment consisted of specific multiple-choice questions regarding events and character actions within the story in order to check participants’ understanding of the purpose and significance of those hegemonic situations. The third and

concluding section of the assessment featured true-or-false questions that were broader in scope than the previous section. These questions were designed to determine whether the participants understood the overall theme and ideas of the story, specifically regarding hegemony and the characteristics emphasized during the session.

Overall, the assessment indicated a positive perception of satisfaction throughout the intervention sessions, as participants consistently rated each questionnaire item 4 or 5. Additionally, students' comprehension was found to be strong, as their responses to the assessment items were accurate. Notably, the percentage of correct answers for each item remained above 70% of the participants, indicating a generally high level of understanding of specific events and themes of hegemony in the stories.

5. Analysis of the Results

This chapter presents an analysis of the findings obtained to assess how storytelling facilitates the understanding of hegemony among students in the Critical Pedagogy course. To structure the discussion of the data, the chapter is divided into three sections: the initial understanding of hegemony, behaviors and performances during the intervention and the effectiveness of the storytelling after the intervention. The first one addresses the assessment of participants' prior knowledge and misconceptions before the pedagogical intervention, analyzed through Mills' (2016) dimensions of factual, procedural, and transfer understanding. The second one, details the qualitative analysis guided by grounded theory, examining the students' reactions to the characteristics of the narrative design, such as types of characters, types of endings, multisensory materials and participatory roles. The third one, examines the participants' conceptual development following the intervention using post-test results and group interviews, analyzed using Mills' (2016) theory.

5.1 Initial Understanding of Hegemony

To achieve the first objective, which was to identify students' prior knowledge of the concept of hegemony, the five-question diagnostic questionnaire (see Appendix B) was analyzed using the theoretical propositions of Mills (2016). According to this author, conceptual understanding is achieved under different dimensions which include: 1) Factual and Procedural Knowledge, which refers to remembering specific facts and comprehending the processes or circumstances that lead to events; 2) Connection Between Ideas, where students develop understanding by linking concepts instead of learning isolated information; and 3) Knowledge Transfer, which is the ability to apply prior knowledge to new situations and contexts.

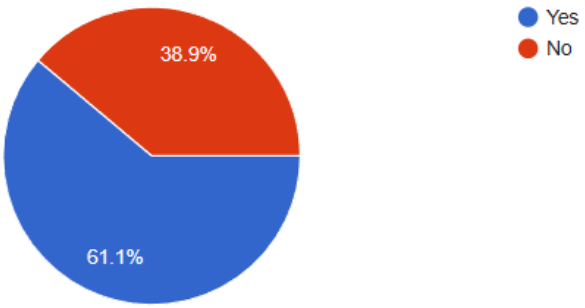
Therefore, conceptual understanding means comprehending the term's processes, magnitude, and its adaptability across different environments. For the current study, a deep conceptual understanding of hegemony requires moving from a simple definition, as it involves recognizing hegemony as a dynamic process of dominance exercised by ruling groups over subaltern groups. Crucially, this dominance is maintained not just through force but also through people's consent. Moreover, it requires acknowledging how hegemony interacts with individual agency, and how the invisible power dynamics manifest across multiple dimensions of social life such as language, culture, education, and gender.

Applying these theoretical dimensions of conceptual understanding as an analytical lens for the diagnostic questionnaire began with assessing students' baseline familiarity with the term. When asked about their awareness of the concept (see Figure 11), 38.9% of the eighteen participants indicated that they had never heard of the term, whereas 61.1% reported having encountered it before. These initial results suggest that students entered the study with varying levels of prior exposure to the concept. However, while the majority recognized the

word hegemony, this familiarity reflects only a surface-level awareness of its existence, rather than the structured factual or procedural knowledge defined by Mills (2016).

Figure 11

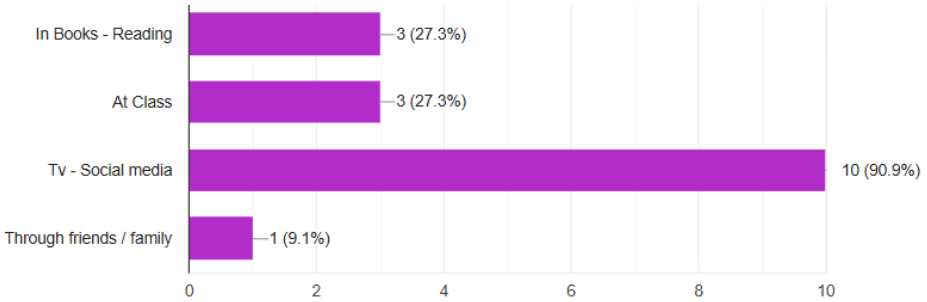
Have you ever heard about Hegemony/Hegemonía?



To better understand the nature of this baseline awareness, the second question focused on the sources of students' exposure (see Figure 12). The results showed that the most frequently selected sources were television and social media, chosen by 90% of the students. As Yoedtadi and Pribadi (2020) argue, these media serve as vessels for the exposure of hegemony, providing platforms for the expression of hegemonic practices and the highlighting of social dynamics. In contrast, formal educational contexts and interpersonal environments played a much smaller role. Books and class lectures were each selected by only 27% of participants, while conversations with family or friends accounted for just 9%. This disparity suggests that students' initial contact with the concept of hegemony mainly comes from media rather than from academic instruction or interpersonal discussions.

Figure 12

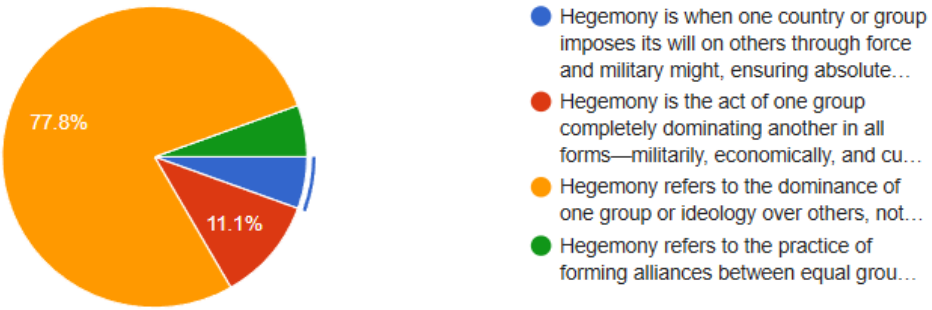
Where have you heard about this term?



When asked to choose one definition of hegemony over four options (see Figure 13), the majority of participants (77.8%) chose the one that defined hegemony as the dominance of one group or ideology over others, not just through direct power, but by shaping cultural norms, values, and beliefs in such a way that this dominance appears natural or beneficial to everyone. These results indicate that a significant portion of the students possessed a baseline level of factual knowledge, as they could distinguish the correct option. While this recognition is a starting point for conceptual understanding, it does not guarantee that students are able to transfer or apply the concept to complex, real-life scenarios. Furthermore, because this was a multiple-choice question, the possibility of correct answers due to random guessing must be considered. Consequently, the remaining questions of the diagnostic questionnaire were designed to further assess, more complex dimensions of the students' conceptual comprehension.

Figure 13

What do you think Hegemony stands for?



When asked to define the concept of hegemony in their words, the data revealed that participants fell into two distinct categories based on their level of comprehension: those with a partial or incomplete understanding, and those showing clear misconceptions.

The first category encompassed 14 participants (82%) who possessed a baseline awareness of the concept but failed to achieve a multidimensional, deep grasp. The responses within this group demonstrated varying degrees of basic factual knowledge; however, they

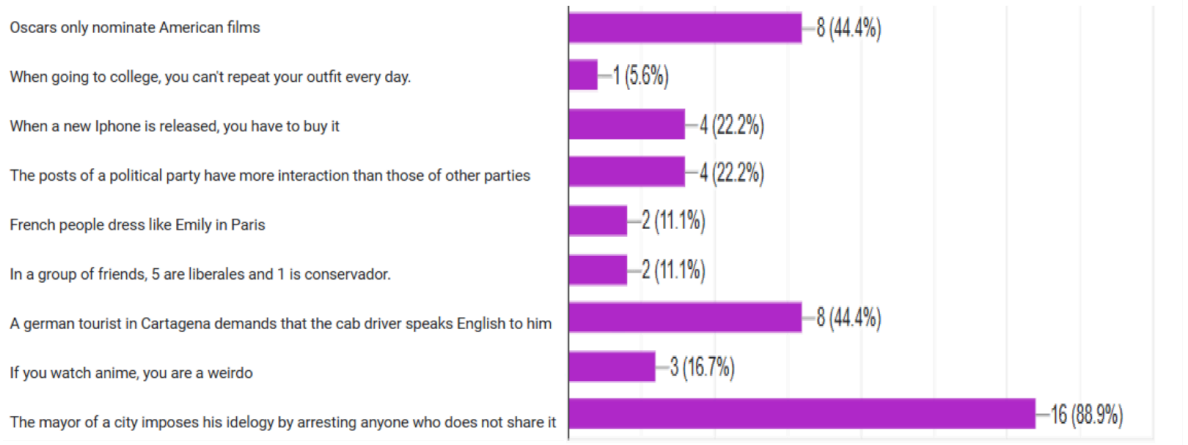
fell short of a functional, procedural understanding and connection between ideas. For instance, participants' definitions such as *"The dominance of a group or ideology over others"* (student_5) or *"The power reflected from the government to the people"* (student_12) successfully identify a visible, systemic dimension of power. However, these descriptions remain strictly linear as students lack procedural depth because they fail to recognize hegemony as an invisible, fluid process sustained through consent rather than direct coercion. Also students showed a lack of development in their knowledge transfer dimension, as their perception of hegemony remained superficial, focused on political aspects or beauty standards, overlooking the broadness of Hegemony and its significant influence on social spheres such as cultural, linguistic, gender and education (Agnew, 2005; Al-Kahtany & Alhamami, 2022; Budgeon, 2013; Kükürt, 2022).

The second category included responses from three participants (17.6%) that demonstrated clear misconceptions about students' factual and procedural knowledge regarding the concept of hegemony. Mills (2016) emphasizes that misconceptions act as rigid barriers to conceptual understanding, hindering the proper assimilation of new knowledge and requiring correction for meaningful learning to occur. Within this group, responses revealed a lack of procedural knowledge needed to connect with the core characteristics of hegemony. This misalignment is evident in responses such as *"Es cuando un grupo se siente inferior a los demás"* (student_11) or *"Being forced to believe in something by higher ups"* (student_9). By viewing hegemony as direct physical force, total coercion, or just a feeling of inferiority, these students overlook the subtle ways this type of power actually works. Since they lack a clear factual baseline and find it difficult to connect social structures to daily life, their understanding remains disconnected rather than fully formed. These misconceptions are significant, as hegemonic practices involve well-defined power dynamics, subtle imposition, and precise standards (Gómez, 2016).

Regarding the final questions of the diagnostic test, students were presented with ten scenarios and asked to identify those they believed exemplified the concept of hegemony. Some scenarios accurately illustrated hegemonic practices, while others served as distractors intended to reveal potential misconceptions (see Figure 14). Consistent with the previous question, the results revealed a significant gap in students' procedural knowledge, particularly regarding the internal dynamics of hegemony. This disparity was evident in the students' tendency to focus almost exclusively on coercion as the primary driving force, while overlooking the structural significance of consent. Notably, 88% of participants chose the scenario in which a city mayor enforces his ideas by making arrests, indicating that students strongly associate hegemony with political parties and mistakenly believe that imposing ideologies through direct compulsion is a necessary condition for hegemony to take place.

Figure 14

Which of the following situations do you consider are cases of Hegemony?



Nonetheless, students did not completely fall for the misconception scenarios, demonstrating some ability to connect ideas beyond political boundaries. The participants' second and third most frequently selected scenarios, each chosen by 44% of students, were both clear examples of hegemonic practices in different areas of influence. One scenario

addressed Western hegemony in the film industry, while the other highlighted a linguistic hierarchy in which one language was unfairly prioritized over another. These responses showed that some students could connect systemic dominance to cultural and linguistic domains. However, the difference in percentages compared to the political scenarios indicated that these conceptual connections remained fragmented.

None of the seven remaining scenarios received even a 30% selection rate. This decline indicated a lack of knowledge transfer among students, suggesting that their ability to apply the concept of hegemony to new situations is highly context-dependent. When hegemonic practices are deeply embedded and normalized within everyday cultural traditions, they may be more difficult for students to identify. As a result, while participants could apply their knowledge to some cultural hierarchies, such as those related to media or language, they failed to recognize more subtle, naturalized forms of dominance, dismissing them entirely as non-hegemonic.

Overall, the diagnostic test reveals that students have a superficial understanding of hegemony, which has largely been acquired through social media, but lack a genuine procedural understanding of the concept. Although they recognize the term in multiple-choice questions, their own definitions are incomplete and brief, e.g., dominance of a group, ignoring the key consent mechanism. The disconnect is further confirmed by the misconception that hegemony implies physical coercion and the students' difficulty in applying the concept to everyday life. Ultimately, their knowledge is fragmented into isolated domains such as politics or beauty. Mills (2016) defines students with fragmented knowledge as novice learners with disorganized metal structures, which in this case, have not yet gained a clear understanding of hegemony as a comprehensive social process.

5.2 Behaviours and Performance During the Intervention

As this study adopts a qualitative approach, the findings in this section are guided through Grounded Theory, following Strauss and Corbin's coding paradigm (Vollstedt & Rezat, 2019). The data were collected using the observation guide (see Appendix C) and analyzed through open, axial and selective coding to explore how participants constructed meaning around hegemony and performed critical awareness. Within this analytical framework, observable participant reactions such as physical gestures, verbal criticism, and engagement levels were first identified through open coding. Then, with axial coding, these behavioural reactions were connected to the main storytelling narrative design features that structure this section: character types, ending types, multisensory materials and participation roles. Finally, selective coding integrated these relationships to illustrate how specific narrative properties directly conditioned student participation, emotional resonance and critical performance during the intervention.

5.2.1 Character Types

Overall, the three types of characters, which were detailed, non-detailed, and recurring, effectively immersed students in the narrative. By observing how characters' choices and responses to hegemonic situations shaped the story's progression and conclusion. Specifically, this variety of character types captured student attention and fostered imagination and participation.

Regarding the detailed character design, it proved to be highly effective as it captured participants' attention, evoked emotions, and facilitated connections between story events and real-life experiences. This effect occurs because this character type involves creating distinct visual features and consistent personality traits, which research shows can enhance audience engagement and emotional connection (Maslej et al., 2017). In the intervention sessions on Linguistic, Cultural, and Gender-based hegemony, the storytelling strategy was intentionally

applied to ensure participants interacted with well-defined characters, thereby reinforcing the observed impact.

To illustrate, consider the example of Antonio Rich. He was created to represent an English-speaking individual born in Colombia who established his life in the UK. Throughout the sessions, Antonio was portrayed as rude, frequently making disrespectful and irritating remarks about language supremacy, accent discrimination, cultural superiority, and gender bias (see Figure 15).

Figure 15

Antonio Rich's Controversial Comments

Note. Extract from the Gender-Based hegemony session materials. Antonio Rich comments on the protagonist's late arrival with her friends.

Observations indicate that students engaged with the narrative by gasping, appearing tense, or cringing. As recorded in the observation checklist (see Figure 16), participants identified Antonio's Rich misogynistic behaviours toward Sarah. These physical and verbal indicators demonstrate how detailed character design evoked emotional resonance, prompting students to recognize and critique the subtle forms of gender-based hegemony that were portrayed.

Figure 16

Observation Guide Segment- Third Intervention

Storytelling elements usage	Students verbally articulate feelings of compassion, understanding, or identification with the characters' emotions or actions in the story	✓		Some S consider Antonio is misogynist and they don't like it
	Ss follow the progression of events to overaching themes or messages in the story	✓		They identified misogyny
	Ss relate better to the story when the character is detailed	✓		
	Ss relate to the story despite the absence of detailed character descriptions			
	Ss show excitement when a recurrent character reappears in different stories	✓		Antonio Rich, Juan
	Ss connect with the story when it is narrated in first person	✓		Since they have to make decisions for Sarah

In reference to the non-detailed character design, it was found to encourage participants' imagination, contributing to lesson engagement and knowledge acquisition. This approach prioritizes the weight on the character's actions over detailed characterization, providing deeper insight into their behavior and decisions (Prasetyo, 2024). This was particularly evident in the fourth session, which focused on hegemony in Education. The narrative was delivered from a first-person perspective through letters written by a character whose profession was the only detail disclosed to the students (see Figure 17). By emphasizing the story content over physical descriptions, participants were driven to use their creativity and internalize the story by projecting themselves into the narrative.

Figure 17

Third Letter used for the Hegemony in Education Session

Day 30

It's been a month. I've built trust with some teachers. Slowly, I shared our views on education—on what it could be. Their eyes sparked with hope. They decided to speak to the headmaster. They asked for flexibility—not just with the materials, but with how we teach, what we prioritize, and who we center: the children.
One week later, agents from the United Minister arrived. The teachers were relocated to a different location on the outskirts. The headmaster was shaken. They were among the longest-serving staff.
Since then, surveillance has increased. We are being watched closely. Even me.
But I won't give in.
We dont teach to repeat, we teach to resist / They write the rules, we write the story
-N.O.1

Set in a dystopian alternate world ruled by a government called The United Minister, the narrative positioned students as members of a dissident group opposing the government's strict educational rules and imposed curriculum. These policies were depicted as rigid, closed-minded, and conservative, making the authorities resistant to diversity and new ideas. Within this contextualization, participants were observed taking a more active role by responding to narrative prompts, recalling key plot events and connecting the story's underlying purpose.

As illustrated in Figure 18, the findings confirm that the absence of detailed character descriptions did not tamper participant engagement. Instead, students successfully embodied the protagonist and achieved deeper narrative immersion, particularly through first-person narration and interactive discussions. Crucially, this immersion enabled participants to connect the fictional narrative to their real-life experiences, leading them to recognize hegemony as an active social phenomenon and position themselves as potential agents of change.

Figure 18

Observation Guide Segment- Fourth Intervention

Storytelling elements usage	Students verbally articulate feelings of compassion, understanding, or identification with the characters' emotions or actions in the story			
	Ss follow the progression of events to overaching themes or messages in the story	✓		agent of change,
	Ss relate better to the story when the character is detailed			
	Ss relate to the story despite the absence of detailed character descriptions	✓		They understood the teacher's intentions
	Ss show excitement when a recurrent character reappears in different stories			
	Ss connect with the story when it is narrated in first person	✓		
	Ss verbally express their comprehension when multisensory elements are used	✓		slides, letters, ts' lecture
	Ss engage in the intersperesed discussions within the story	✓		by answering ts questions
	Ss comprehend better the stories' purpose where there is a preparatory stage before hand			

Concerning the recurring character type, it proved to be efficient to spark excitement, curiosity and emotional impact of the story on students. This effect can be explained by the

familiarity that is formed between the audience and the developing layers of a character's personality across different stories, which keeps the audience engaged over the long term (Strong, 2021). In the case of this research, the character Antonio Rich appeared throughout the intervention, exhibiting varying degrees of involvement and impact on the story (see Figure 19), while consistently maintaining and expanding his core identity.

Figure 19

Antonio Rich throughout the intervention

Note. Antonio Rich was presented in the Linguistic hegemony as the main character who kept radical ideas over native speakerism and accent. In the Cultural hegemony session, Antonio was a hater on social media who manipulated another character's identity. In the Gender-based session, he performed as a phonetics professor expressing sexist comments. In the hegemony in Education session, he worked as a postman delivering the story letters to the participants.

Observations showed that students actively reacted and re-engaged whenever Antonio Rich appeared or was mentioned. For example, during the comic-based session on Cultural hegemony, upon reading his dialogues, students imitated his British accent, which he had previously demonstrated during the Linguistic hegemony session. Over time, Antonio Rich became a memorable reference point within the classroom dynamic, serving as an embodiment of hegemonic behaviors. As students grew familiar with the character and observed his behavior across diverse scenarios, the central hegemonic topic became easier to identify. The recurring presence of a recognizable figure throughout the intervention maintained student interest and encouraged engagement with the narrative's critical messages.

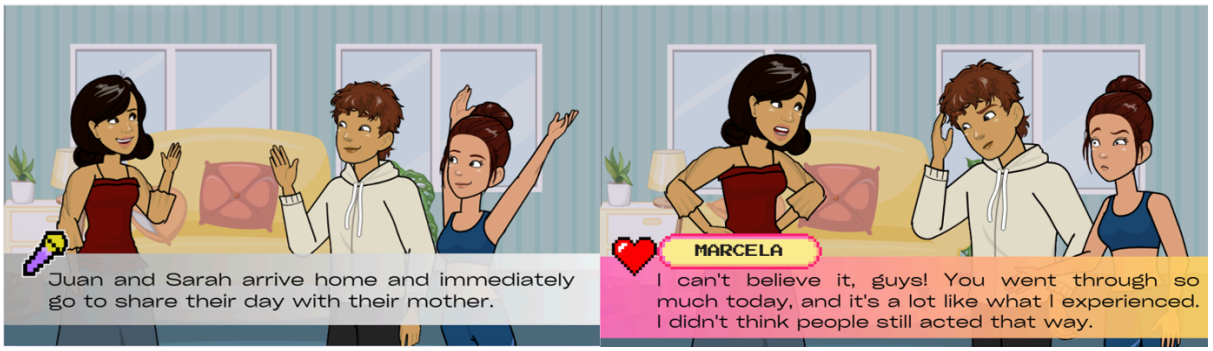
5.2.2 Ending Types

Regarding ending types, the intervention incorporated both open and close endings, which evoked different reactions in students. On the one hand, close-ended stories were found to foster a sense of completeness by giving reassurance through expected outcomes and clear resolution. In turn, this encouraged participants to engage more actively and develop a deeper understanding of the different parts and outcomes of the story. Thereby, providing readers with a structured closure of the story and the character's arc enables students to analyze and compare events in greater depth, thus facilitating a reflective conclusion (Salix, 2024; Storytelling Toolkit, n.d.).

In the intervention, the sessions on Linguistic and Gender-based hegemonies were designed with this closed type of ending. In both instances, students either verbally or physically expressed their emotions, followed the sequence of events while identifying key concepts, and actively participated after the story ended. In particular, in the closure of the Gender-Based hegemony story, the characters reflected on and discussed how gender oppression continuously evolves and adapts over time (see Figure 20).

Figure 20

Story Closure from the Gender-Based Hegemony session



Note. Extract from the Gender-Based Hegemony session materials. Through her reaction to the events, the character Marcela implies that she also lived through similar experiences in the past.

This reflective closure enabled students to recognize how gender-based hegemony shifts from one set of standards to another while maintaining its core values of imposing beauty benchmarks, enforcing gender roles, and perpetuating chauvinism, thus demonstrating its enduring adaptability. Consequently, closed endings encouraged students to draw more inferences about the story, discuss narrative events and relate these dynamics to real-world issues such as misogyny and societal expectations (see Figure 21), thereby demonstrating a developing conceptual and procedural comprehension of hegemony (Mills, 2016).

Figure 21

Observation Guide Extract - Gender Based session

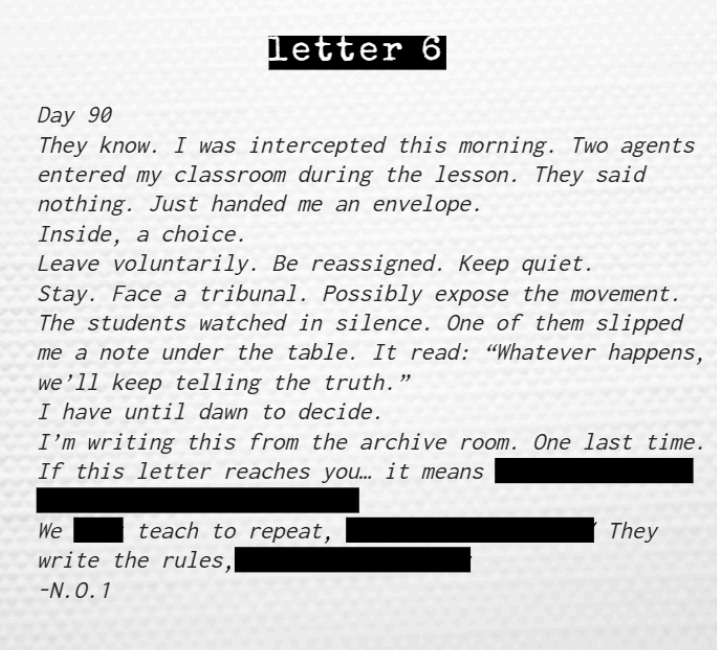
	Ss actively engage in after discussions when the story is closed-ended	✓		
Performance Assessment	Ss ask questions throughout the story	✓		
	Students raise their hands confidently to answer or ask questions.	✓		when they were asked A or B
	Students provide correct or nearly correct answers	✓		
	Students repeat the same mistakes despite feedback			
	Ss connect the story's theme to real-world issuess or events	✓		gender roles, misogyny, racism fulfil a quota on series.
	Ss provide different examples related to the story's content	✓		a man do his make up as well
	Ss critically engage regarding the story's ending	✓		They express their thoughts about events in the story
	Ss take notes,write key points or create summaries during of after the story			
	Ss identiy and recall key events in the story	✓		S asked about something happened to the character
	Ss explains how one event leads to another in the narrative	✓		well, they're the ones making Sarah's decisions

On the other hand, open-ended stories were found to produce lower levels of active engagement and negative behaviors. Although this storytelling characteristic was intended to encourage participation, the absence of a definitive closure created uncertainty among students, which decreased their level of interaction. In an open-ended narrative, the plot remains unresolved, leaving readers with a sense of emptiness that denies the fulfillment of a specific resolution (Salix, 2024).

During the sessions on hegemony in culture and education, it was observed that students were less willing to contribute in creating and discussing an ending, compared to their engagement in lessons with a close-ended story. Specifically, in the hegemony in Education session, participants were asked to help create the ending of the story about a teacher facing the pressures of a standardized curriculum. (see Figure 22).

Figure 22

Last letter from the Hegemony in Education session



In this activity, students were required to consider and weigh the consequences of whether the protagonist should persist in the struggle or to yield to oppression. However, participants' behaviours during this open ending reflected hesitation to participate. Student

contributions were limited to answering direct questions from the storytellers, without offering any comments on the story's outcome. Additionally, their body language conveyed a sense of disengagement or uncertainty, with a marked tendency toward fidgeting (i.e., restless handling of objects) and leaning their heads against their classmates.

This lack of active involvement may stem from a combination of the student's inherent shyness or a lack of emotional connection to the protagonist's dilemma. Although participants are students in a teaching program, some may not yet fully identify with the professional conflicts depicted in the scenario, making it challenging to empathize with the character's systemic struggle. Overall, these observations suggest that open-ended narrative structures require higher levels of emotional connection and structured scaffolding to overcome student hesitation to participate.

5.2.3 Multisensory Materials

Regarding multisensory elements, stimuli transcend the boundaries of traditional narrative by integrating visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic dimensions to foster immersive learning environments. The intervention incorporated a variety of media, such as interactive slides, sound effects, set design, digital comics, and physical letters, in order to diversify how information was perceived and processed by the participants.

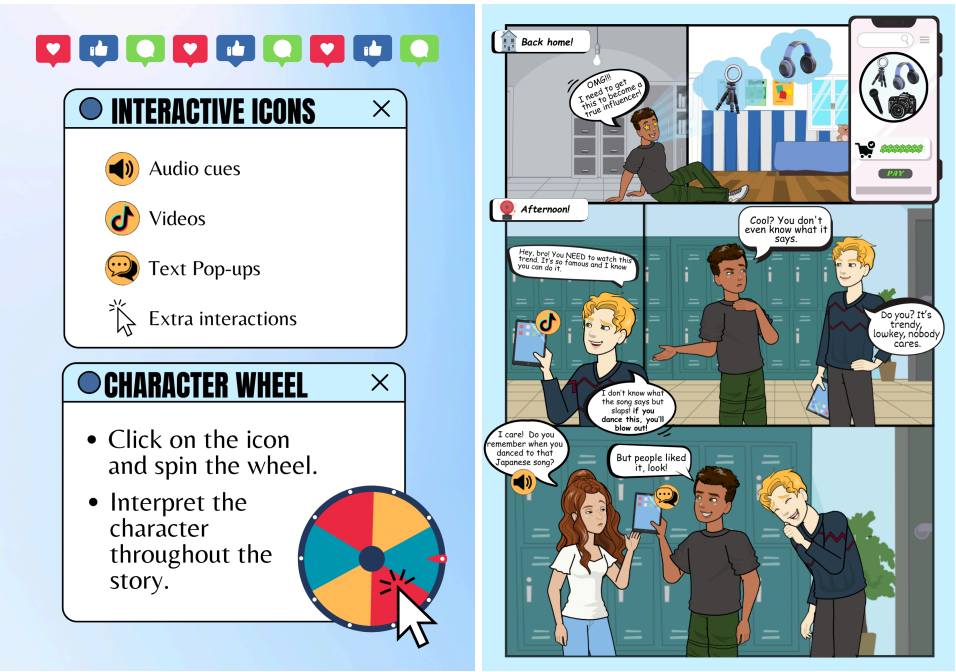
The data collected indicate that these materials sparked curiosity and intrinsic interest, as students demonstrated an active willingness to explore the resources and paid close attention to sensory details that complemented the story. However, interaction with multimodality also revealed a shifting focus of attention, showing that a high stimuli load or format unfamiliarity could temporarily increase students' cognitive load.

To illustrate the aforementioned, an interactive comic format was introduced during the session on Cultural Hegemony. The comic presented the story of Brayan Miguel, a character who uncritically adopted trends and media influences, ultimately losing his sense of

cultural identity. The digital material visually represented story developments while integrating interactive icons which played audio cues, pop-up text, and video clips that were trendy and related to the story (see Figure 23). Thus, through the interaction with the material, students could visualize what type of trends and cultural values were referenced by the characters.

Figure 23

Extract of the Comic



Note. The first image explains the different interactive icons used to guide students. The second image shows the second page of the story, where these icons are implemented.

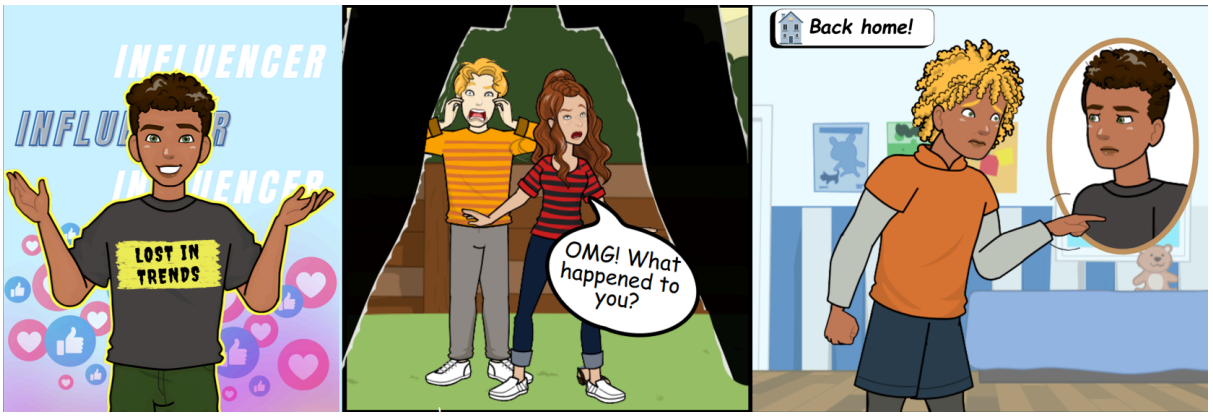
By involving multiple sensory channels, these elements aimed to help students develop more comprehensive mental representations. This makes learning more meaningful, engaging, and lasting, as sensory interaction enhances their retention of knowledge and attention (Ferreira & Vasconcelos, 2020).

Nevertheless, implementing these materials revealed certain operational drawbacks when students worked independently in groups. First, because participants lacked familiarity

with the multimodal interface, a few focused primarily on technical exploration rather than internalizing the story, even though the comic format had been explained beforehand. Second, sudden visual design shifts created momentary comprehension gaps, when Brayan Miguel changed his hair color and clothing to reflect the influence of trends, some participants struggled to recognize him immediately (see Figure 24). This suggests that character transformations in multimodal design should be depicted gradually to prevent cognitive disorientation.

Figure 24

Change in Brayan Miguel's appearance throughout the story



Note. The first picture shows Brayan Miguel's original appearance. The second picture features Brayan Miguel's friends reacting to his new look. In the third picture, the change in appearance of Brayan Miguel.

Importantly, the multimodality did not compromise overall narrative comprehension and experience. When the story was re-narrated under the storyteller's guidance, students appeared less confused and less overwhelmed. Therefore, guided narration helped participants navigate interactive items effectively and perceive how each sensory stimulus complemented the core narrative. Ultimately, this scaffolding reduced cognitive load, restored focus to the thematic content, and enabled students to achieve a deeper critical understanding of cultural hegemony.

5.2.4 Participation roles

Analysis of the intervention revealed that the roles assumed by students during the narrative segments generated contrasting responses in terms of their level of engagement. These dynamics were categorized according to the nature of active or passive participation, and it was observed that each modality shaped interaction with the theoretical content on hegemony in a different way. The sessions that utilized interactive comic, branching storytelling, and gamification formats were characterized by their promotion of active participation. Under this framework, students ceased to be mere recipients of information and instead became agents of their own learning and co-creators of meaning by expressing opinions and making critical decisions about the course of the story (Özeren, 2025). During this participation, students had the opportunity to explore the materials and interact extensively through reading, role-playing, making decisions about the story, or overcoming challenges to unlock new parts of the narrative (see Figure 25).

Figure 25

Students Participation in the three mentioned sessions

Note. In the first picture, participants are roleplaying the story. In the second picture, students read the letters. In the third picture, an interactive decision that participants could take for the story.

To provide more details, in the comic-based format, which was part of the session on cultural hegemony, each student accessed the comic on their cell phone and, working in small groups, followed the story by playing the characters. The comic focused on the imposition of

cultural values through trends, which was particularly relevant since the participants belong to a generation in which trends and social media have a significant impact on self-perception.

In the branching storytelling format used for the session on gender hegemony, participants engaged in peer discussions and interacted with the narrative by making decisions at key moments. These choices altered the story of a college student from their own institution, who was taking similar courses and facing various gender-related scenarios.

In the gamified format, which aligned with the theme of hegemony in education, students worked in small groups to receive physical letters. They could unlock these letters by completing challenges to uncover the story of an English professor, illustrating a potential career path for the study participants.

The behavior observed during these active sessions reflected a high level of engagement, manifested through assertive vocalizations, consistent willingness to share opinions, visible emotional expressions, and sustained curiosity. This participatory approach allowed for a practical application of the domains of hegemony, moving away from the dynamics of banking education (Freire, 2006).

In contrast to the dynamics of co-creation, a distinct mode of interaction was reported during the phases of passive participation, which were most evident in the session on linguistic hegemony delivered via a dramatic role-play format. In this instance, the passive role is defined as an experience in which students process the narrative primarily as listeners, assuming a position similar to that of an audience that receives events and content in a linear fashion rather than intervening directly in their development (Yip, 2022). Most of the group assumed the role of audience, observing the dramatic performance led by the researchers and two selected participants. Methodologically, assigning primary roles to the storytellers was intentional as this was the opening session of the intervention; the aim was to facilitate the presentation of the content and alleviate any uncertainty students might feel regarding a

complex and novel theoretical concept of hegemony. While two students played predetermined secondary roles to complement the stage, the remaining participants focused on observing and receiving the narrative.

The participant observation records revealed an initial response characterized by attention and surprise at the sequence of events presented. However, nuances in group behavior were identified that suggest friction in spontaneous engagement: instances of physical restlessness such as fidgeting or nervous handling of objects were reported, as well as periods of distraction where participation only emerged following mediation or a direct invitation from the narrators. Unlike interactive formats, in this scenario the participants did not initiate interactions on their own, which resulted in a subsequent discussion with a moderate frequency of participation. However, the findings indicate that this more restrained dynamic of reception did not compromise conceptual acquisition (see figure 26), suggesting that factors such as the power of characters' detailed characterization and the relevance of the topic to their professional context managed to sustain the cognitive link to hegemony theory despite the passive nature of their participation.

Figure 26

Observation Grid for the Class on Linguistic Hegemony

Body language	Ss smile or nod	✓		They also laughed a lot
	Ss maintaine eye contact with the storyteller	✓		
	Ss cross arms	✓		
	Ss frown or looked puzzled (tilted head, pursed lips)			
	Ss lean back or slump in their seats	✓		
	Ss scratch their head due to confusion			
	Ss fidget with objects	✓		cellphones, hair hook
	Ss appear physically relaxed or tensed	✓		when they get cringed out the role play
	Ss produce assertive sounds (Ajá, Ohh, Mmm)	✓		
	Students verbally articulate feelings of compassion, understanding, or identification with the characters' emotions or actions in the story	•		Not verbally but they gasped when Antonio said something "classistic"
Performance Assessment	Ss ask questions throughout the story			
	Students raise their hands confidently to answer or ask questions.			
	Students provide correct or nearly correct answers			
	Students repeat the same mistakes despite feedback			
	Ss connect the story's theme to real-world issuess or events			
	Ss provide different examples related to the story's content			
	Ss critically engage regarding the story's ending	•		They were enguged regarding story's endings but not critically
	Ss take notes,write key points or create summaries during of after the story			
	Ss identiy and recall key events in the story			
	Ss explains how one event leads to another in the narrative			
Other unanticipated events or actions	They get cringed out			

Note. These sections of the observation guide indicate that, although some participants were distracted or passively engaged in certain instances, there were still moments of active participation and connection with the topic, largely due to Antonio Rich's portrayal.

5.3 Effectiveness of Storytelling After the Intervention

This section focuses on reporting the extent to which storytelling facilitated theoretical and practical comprehension in order to assess the pedagogical effectiveness of the intervention. The findings were organized according to the two complementary instruments used to capture participant conceptual development: the post-test and group

interviews. Recognizing that tests can represent a traditional and potentially hegemonic mode of assessment, this study integrated semi-structured group interviews to capture a more comprehensive and holistic perspective of students' performance across both written and spoken modalities. The findings were analyzed following Mills' (2016) conceptual understanding framework, which categorizes it into factual, procedural, connection between ideas and transfer knowledge dimensions.

Before delving into details, it must be said that student contributions from both instruments were supported by a translanguaging approach, understood as the strategic and systematic use of the student's entire linguistic repertoire to enhance the construction of meaning (Conteh, 2018; Erling et al., 2025). By challenging traditional English-only dogmas, students were allowed to define and illustrate hegemony using both English and Spanish according to their expressive needs. This linguistic flexibility served as a tool for social justice, removing the language barrier so that students could express their complex reasoning of hegemony based on their own experiences.

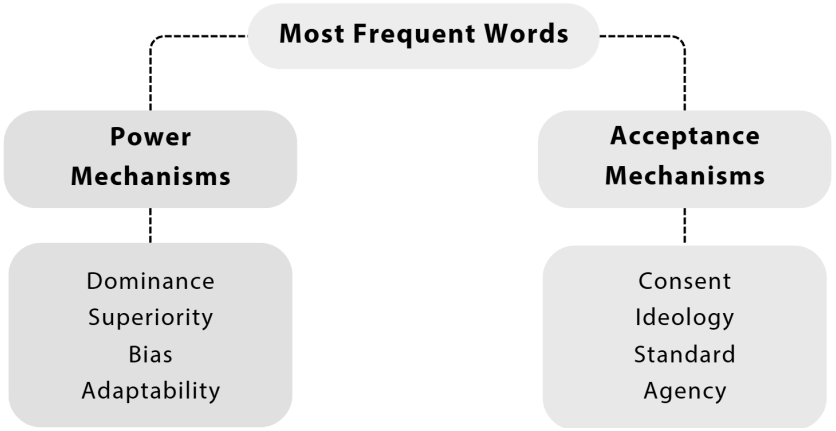
5.3.1 Post-Test Results

The post-test analysis revealed a substantial shift in students' conceptual understanding of hegemony, reflecting positive progress across the cognitive mastery dimensions proposed by Mills (2016). Prior to the intervention, diagnostic data indicated a fragmented comprehension; students struggled to recognize the scope of hegemony or identify the various social domains of influence in which it operates. In contrast, the written productions of the post test demonstrated more comprehensive and integrated conceptualizations as they required students to define the concept of hegemony and provide at least two examples. Based on the nine productions collected, 78% of participants offered a thorough description of what hegemony entails, while 22% demonstrated a partial understanding. Participants moved beyond superficial definitions to articulate how hegemony

functions simultaneously through mechanisms of power and mechanisms of acceptance (see Figure 27).

Figure 27

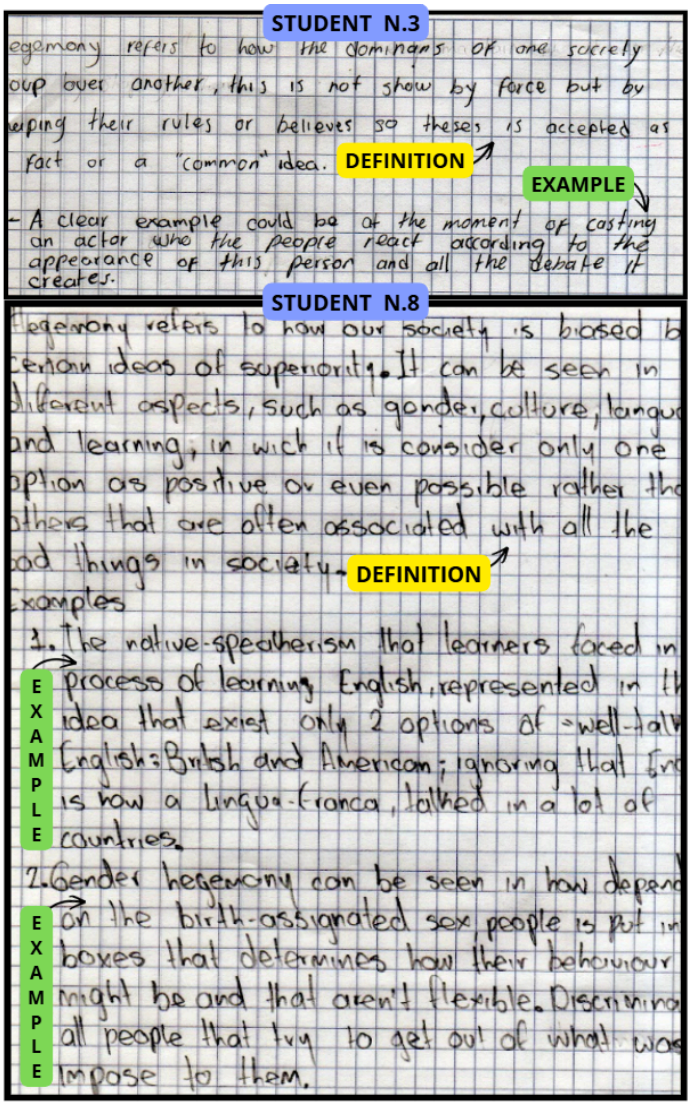
Categorization of Key Concepts Identified in Post-test Mind Map



Regarding power mechanisms, students expressed ideas related to dominance, authority or subjection, reflecting participants' recognition of structural oppression. In terms of acceptance mechanisms, they used terms associated with normalization, internalization, and consensus, demonstrating an awareness that hegemony operated non-coercively through unconscious social validation of everyday actions. This integration of more complex ideas in their written definitions provided evidence of progress within Mills's (2016) dimension of conceptual understanding, particularly in connecting ideas and procedural knowledge. Moreover, it demonstrated a modification of their pre-intervention misconceptions, where they had associated hegemony primarily with coercion and neglected the role of consent. Two written productions that reflect this improvement in the theoretical definition are those of student N.3 and N.8 (see Figure 28).

Figure 28

Post-test productions of Students N.3 and N.8



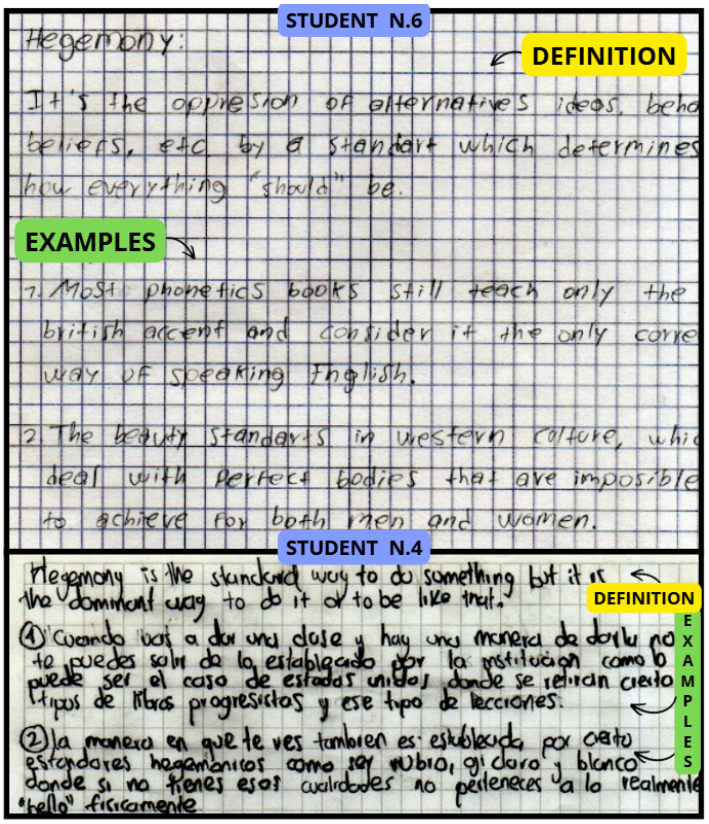
These students collectively demonstrated progress within Factual and Procedural Knowledge by understanding hegemony as a form of dominance maintained through ideological means rather than brute force. Both students expanded on their procedural dimension by conceptualizing hegemony not as a static condition, but a process through which beliefs, norms, and social expectations are accepted as common sense and normalized within a culture. Although students may not explicitly use terminology such as agency or consent, their writing reflected these characteristics by describing how the authority of those

in power is legitimized and subsequently accepted by society, eventually becoming embedded in everyday life (Burmester, 2024; Gómez, 2016; Rauber, 2016).

Additionally, students showed a broader, more integrated understanding of hegemony by identifying, through examples, the various hegemonic domains discussed in each session: linguistic, cultural, gender-based, and educational. This progress directly aligns with Mills' (2016) Connection Between Ideas dimension, rather than focusing mainly on political domains as seen in the pre-test, they linked the core construct of hegemony with the different domains. Notably, among the examples provided by students, gender-based hegemony was the most frequently mentioned, appearing in 68% of responses, followed by educational hegemony, which was referenced in 45% of examples. In their examples, students clearly defined the scope of each hegemonic domain and provided illustrative real-world situations. Furthermore, this ability to contextualize the concept in situations either similar to or different from those discussed in class, reflected a development in the Knowledge Transfer dimension (Mills, 2016). Not only are students expanding the relevant theory in each domain, but they are also applying it to a variety of situations, as shown by the examples from students N.6 and N.4 (see Figure 29).

Figure 29

Post-test productions of Students N.6 and N.4



These examples illustrate how participants identified both gender-based and educational hegemony as manifestations of dominant practices in contemporary contexts. Specifically, student N.6 emphasized gender-based hegemony by highlighting how unrealistic beauty standards are imposed on everyone. They noted how even men, who traditionally hold power, are subjected to strict societal checklists dictating how individuals should look and act (Hearn, 2004). Similarly, student N.4 connected hegemony to education by discussing the mechanisms under the control of academic material. The participant referenced the hidden curriculum in the American education system, illustrating how hegemony is sustained through the selection, modification or acceptance of certain curricula, practices, and policies (Caro & Caro, 2020; Köksal & Ulum, 2021). The lasting impact and meaningful transfer observed in these two domains, as evidenced by the students recalling them even after the

session, may be attributed to the context in which the stories took place. For instance, the gender-based story focused on a female student at UIS, while the educational narrative closely resonated with the participants' own identities as pre-service English teachers. Therefore, by visualizing themselves within these stories, students perceived hegemony as personally relevant, thereby facilitating the deep connections and cognitive transfer that, as Salix (2024) notes, constitute one of the purposes of storytelling as a didactic strategy.

In summary, the post-test demonstrated significant conceptual evolution across Mills' (2016) dimension, showing that storytelling was an effective tool for helping students understand hegemony. However, assessing conceptual understanding solely through written work provides only a partial picture of learning. To move beyond academic definitions and include lived experiences, emotional resonance and critical reflection, the analysis also incorporated findings from group interviews.

5.3.2 Group Interview Results

This phase takes a humanistic and critical approach, valuing not only conceptual accuracy but also the participants' reflections and lived experiences from the intervention, in order to avoid viewing the student as a passive recipient of information. As Shan (2012) emphasizes, emotional and verbal expressions during discourse serve as key indicators for assessing the pedagogical efficacy of an instructional strategy. Reaffirming the post-test findings, the follow-up group interviews confirmed a deep progress in students' conceptual understanding of hegemony across the three dimensions: factual and procedural knowledge, connection between ideas, and knowledge transfer (Mills, 2016).

Regarding factual and procedural knowledge, participants demonstrated a comprehension that surpassed simple definitions, encompassing the dynamic, changing aspects of how hegemony becomes normalized. For instance, student N.7 referenced the

gender based session by reflecting on the adaptability of hegemony across historical periods, specifically in terms of body standards. In the student's exact words:

> *"La hegemonía no es como algo que siempre ha estado súper igual, sino que va cambiando. [...] Algo que ahorita está con la parte del aspecto físico es la musculatura. En las mujeres, ahorita está como el hecho de que sean como atletas, que sean atletas híbrido, y en mujeres que tengan músculo, o sea, que sean delgadas pero que tengan músculo. Y en los 2000 yo me acuerdo que la gracia era que las mujeres fuesen súper delgadas, que la cintura fuese súper pequeña, pero que no tuvieran músculos porque serían súper masculinas. Entonces eso como que va cambiando con la época."* (Interview excerpt_S7)

This reflection illustrates an expanded conceptualization, recognizing how hegemony operates through social norms that are continuously naturalized over time (Rauber, 2016) Similarly, participant N.6 demonstrated procedural knowledge regarding linguistic hegemony by describing the existence of a language hierarchy in which one language is considered superior. They explained how this dominance influences educational and social decisions, not through coercion, but by imposing a particular way of perceiving language (Al-Kahtany & Alhamami 2022). In students N.6 exact words:

> *"está el ejemplo de la lengua, el hecho de creer que una está sobre las otras, como que es más bonita, es más perfecta, es mejor [...] entonces voy a hacer que todos ustedes aprendan esta lengua [...] porque es considerada mejor." (Interview excerpt_S6).*

Concerning the connection between ideas dimension (Mills, 2016), students expressed how narrative elements such as characters served as conceptual anchors. Students N.3 and N.7 highlighted the recurring character of Antonio Rich as a key figure who offered them a clear representation of the concept of hegemony in the session on Linguistic hegemony, helping them connect the theoretical hegemonic mechanisms with tangible social interactions and attitudes. In the students' exact words:

> *"Yo creo que el ejemplo de lo de Antonio Rich en general"* (Interview excerpt_S3)
>
> "*La actuación de Antonio Rico, porque pues es algo que también nos puede identificar lo que es el acento británico, el acento americano, que hay muchos que defienden uno o lo otro, pues entonces allí está como el concepto*" (Interview excerpt_S7).

As regards to knowledge transfer dimension (Mills, 2016), evidence was found when participants cited Antonio's controversial actions, associating them with their very own personal experiences. Case in point, student N.3 connected the rude comments he and his family received while speaking Spanish during a trip to San Andrés Island with Antonio's dismissive attitude in the Linguistic hegemony session. In the student's exact words:

> *"nosotros estábamos hablando español y unas señoras me dijeron, ay, pero ustedes ¿por qué hablan español? Estamos aquí, aquí hablamos inglés, o sea, como que la imposición simplemente porque ellas eran criollas de allá, [...] sólo se podía hablar inglés allá. Entonces yo hice como esa asociación a lo que hacía Antonio Rich"* (Interview excerpt_S3)

This example demonstrates how Antonio Rich's personality, conveyed through detailed characterization, fostered a strong emotional connection and encouraged participants to relate the narrative to their lived experiences, transposing the abstract mechanisms and expression of hegemony into real, recallable moments in their lives. This transfer was further supported by student N.7, who noted that the narrative immersion of the stories enabled participants to project themselves into the hegemonic dynamics explored in class using these exact words.

> *"Obviamente no es que lo estemos viviendo nosotros ahora mismo, pero nos imaginamos dentro de ese mundo en donde tuviésemos que vivir todas esas cosas, y nos imaginamos toda la historia como si fuese parte de la realidad"* (Interview excerpt_S7)

In addition to fostering cognitive development and critical reflection, the use of storytelling made complex critical theory more accessible and engaging compared to conventional university instruction. As a matter of fact, students acknowledged that, although they were accustomed to more conventional teaching methods, the way storytelling was implemented made the content more understandable and easier to assimilate. As stated in the exact words of Students N.1, N.2 and N.3:

> *"logré estar como concentrada en este tipo de actividades, porque llamaban la atención, y probablemente si hubiese sido diferente, si hubiese sido un approach más teórico, hubiese tenido que llegar a mi casa, autoexplicarse, porque no se prestó atención o porque no entendió." (Excerpt_S1)*

> *"O sea, con el fin de hacer más amena la clase. A mí me pareció muy buena la estrategia porque es algo diferente, es algo que no se aplica en todas las clases, con los profesores, y cuando se ejecuta me parece que logra tratar los temas de una mejor manera." (Excerpt_S2)*

> *"Yo la verdad es que sí, porque creo que ya estamos como predeterminados a tener este tipo de enseñanza [traditional education], entonces, claramente la forma en la que ustedes lo hicieron [implementing storytelling] fue mucho más comprensible." (Excerpt_S3)*

Collectively, these findings indicate that implementing storytelling not only enables students to correct prior misconceptions and transfer theoretical constructs to real-life situations, but also transforms the learning experience into a more humanized, meaningful and pedagogically effective process.

6. Conclusions

The purpose of this action-research was to facilitate students' comprehension of the concept of hegemony within a class of Critical Pedagogies at UIS. To achieve this aim, the impact of storytelling over students comprehension was analyzed through the three stages of the intervention: before, during and after.

Before the intervention, the target was to identify students' initial understanding of hegemony. It was found that participants had a vague grasp of the concept, as they manifested to have encountered the term whether on social media or TV. This indicated that students possessed limited factual and procedural knowledge. Although they had an awareness of the concept, they associated hegemony mainly with political ideals enforced through force, showing a lack of connection between ideas and an inability to properly transfer knowledge.

During the intervention, four storytelling sessions were designed and implemented as follows: (1) linguistic hegemony in a role-play based format, (2) cultural hegemony through a comic-based format, (3) gender-based hegemony in a branching storytelling format and (4) hegemony in education through a gamified format. Session by session, students were observed reacting positively to four features of storytelling. First, the presence of characters,

whether recurring, detailed or not, such as Antonio Rich, who as the students was a Colombian citizen and a speaker of English as a Foreign Language, fostered the development of critical consciousness. It was noticed that students engaged more deeply with the content and used their imagination and creativity to embody the character. Second, the use of close endings gave students a sense of certainty, which prompted further inquiries. As a result, they drew inferences and discussed the closure in a more critical way. Third, the incorporation of multisensory materials produced high motivation and engagement, as students interacted with and expressed interest in the materials. Fourth, active participation during the story fostered student agency and captured attention, as students became active agents in their own meaning-making process (Özeren, 2025).

After the intervention, the effectiveness of storytelling in promoting conceptual understanding was analyzed in both written and spoken modalities. Overall, storytelling proved to be an effective transposition strategy, serving as a meaningful tool to help students' comprehend the concept of hegemony. Students not only corrected previous misconceptions, but also broadened their intake of the concept of hegemony, including its applicability and presence in various social domains such as language, culture, gender and education. This reflected growth in students' factual and procedural knowledge, as well as their ability to connect ideas and transfer knowledge, as demonstrated by their written examples related to linguistic hierarchy, influence of social media discourses, gender roles, and subversive practices in education. Moreover, students expressed interest in incorporating this intervention approach in other subjects with theoretical components.

Didactically speaking, storytelling proved to be a powerful counter-hegemonic tool in education, as it allows pre-service teachers to express in a more dynamic way hidden, biased and normalized realities. However, it is suggested for future researchers to consider carefully the integration of multisensory elements as well as the extent of participation given to the

students within the storytelling sessions. That is, when in the stories visual, auditory and kinesthetic elements prevail, it was observed that students felt overwhelmed and prioritized the interaction with the material over the comprehension of the content. In relation to the participation, students got distracted easily when they were given the role of active-listeners instead of the role of collaborators in the development of the story.

One limitation of this study is that the concept of hegemony was not confined to the four sessions. It was also implicitly discussed in relation to other topics belonging to the critical pedagogy syllabus. To mitigate this variable and evaluate didactic effectiveness with greater methodological rigor, it is recommended that future research select samples of students exposed to this theoretical construct exclusively through storytelling. Furthermore, the process revealed an ethical tension for the researchers in training: the complex challenge of deconstructing a concept so deeply rooted in society without inadvertently reproducing hegemonic practices within the intervention design itself.

Bibliographic References

Achiam, M. (2014). *Didactic Transposition: From theoretical notion to research programme*. Ku-dk. https://www.academia.edu/14484107/Didactic_Transposition_From_theoretical_notion_to_research_programme.

Agnew, J. (2005). *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Power (1st ed.)*. Temple University Press. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bibliouis-ebooks/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=298867

Akenji, L., Vergragt, P. J., Brown, H. S., Smith, T. S., & Wallnöfer, L. M. (2025). *Vocabulary for sustainable consumption and lifestyles*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003584056

Al-Kahtany, A., & Alhamami, M. (2022). *Linguistic hegemony and English in higher education.* Sustainable Multilingualism, *20*(1), 18–45. https://doi.org/10.2478/sm-2022-0002

Apple, M. W. (2004). Ideology and curriculum (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2013). *Racism without racists: color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America*. Choice Reviews Online, 51(05), 51–2956.

Bryant, A. (2011). *Iron Man: A Case Study in Orientalism and Hegemony*. Proceedings of GREAT Day, 2010(1), 1. https://knightscholar.geneseo.edu/proceedings-of-great-day/vol2010/iss1/1

Budgeon, S. (2013). *The Dynamics of gender Hegemony: femininities, masculinities and Social change.* Sociology, *48*(2), 317–334. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038513490358

Burmester, I. (2024). *EU and Russian Hegemony in the "Shared Neighbourhood": Between Coercion, Prescription, and Co-optation*. Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-75488-3

Camacho, G. (2006). *Gramsci y el proceso hegemónico educativo*. Revista Electrónica Educare, 9(2), 13–39. https://doi.org/10.15359/ree.9-2.1

Caro, H., & Caro, D. (2020). *Cultural hegemony portrayed in cutting edge Pre-Intermediate textbook*. Enletawa Journal, 12(2), 42–57. https://doi.org/10.19053/2011835x.10951

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research Methods in Education Eighth Edition*. Routledge.

Conteh, J. (2018). *Translanguaging*. ELT Journal, 72(4), 445-447. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy034

Darder, A., Hernandez, K., Lam, K., & Baltodano, M. (2023). *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. Taylor & Francis.

Davies, A. (2003). The native speaker: Myth and reality (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.

Duong, N., Tran, M., & Trinh, L. (2026). *Gamified digital storytelling in marketing education: Evidence from Vietnam on engagement and skill development.* Marketing Education Review, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/10528008.2026.2623510

Ellis, E.M. (2007). *Monolingualism: The unmarked case.* Sociolinguistic Studies, 7, 173-196.

Erling, E., Siwik, F., Haslacher, K., & Foltz, A. (2025). *Have preservice English teachers embraced translanguaging?* In Channel View Publications eBooks (pp. 125-153). https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.29308407.9

Fenici, M., & Mosca, I. (2024). Gamebooks and branching narratives in education: fostering sustainability competences to promote positive social change. *Frontiers in Education*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1335605

Ferreira, F. M., & Vasconcelos, C. (2020). The impact of multisensory instruction on geosciences learning and students' motivation. Geosciences, 10(11), 467. https://doi.org/10.3390/geosciences10110467

Fillmore, L., & Fillmore, C. (2012). *What does text complexity mean for English learners and language minority students.* Understanding language: Language, literacy, and learning in the content areas, 64-74.

Freire, P. (2006). *Cartas a quien pretende enseñar*. Siglo XXI.

Georgopoulou, A., & Griva, E. (2012). *Story-based learning: implementation of a pilot project for early foreign language learning*. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 31, 110-115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.12.025

Giroux, H. (1992). *Language, difference, and curriculum theory: Beyond the politics of clarity.* Theory into practice, 31(3), 219-227 https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543546

Giroux, H. (2002). *Teachers as transformatory intellectuals*. EDucate, 1(2), 46-49. https://itacec.org/afed/document/henry_giroux_2_ok.pdf

Gómez, N. (2016). *El concepto de Hegemonía en Gramsci: Una propuesta para el análisis y la acción política*. Estudios sociales contemporáneos, (15), 152-162. https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/6459/645967672008.pdf

González Castro, I., Vázquez García, M., & Zavala Guirado, M. (2021). *La desmotivación y su relación con factores académicos y psicosociales de estudiantes universitarios*. Docencia Universitaria, 15(2), e1392-. https://doi.org/10.19083/ridu.2021.1392

Han, L., Lu, J., Wen, Z., & Tian, Y. (2023). *Momentary engagement in simultaneous versus consecutive interpreting: through the lens of translanguaging and CDST*. Frontiers in Psychology, 14. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1180379

Hearn, J. (2004). *From hegemonic masculinity to the hegemony of men*. Feminist Theory, *5*(1), 49–72. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700104040813

Hernández Sampieri, R., Fernández Collado, C., & Baptista Lucio, P. (2014). *Metodología de la investigación. Sexta Edición*. Editorial Mc Graw Hill.

Huang, H. (2006). *The effects of storytelling on EFL young learners' reading comprehension and word recall*. English Teaching & Learning, 30(3), 51-74. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/13430535.pdf

Jamilah, N., Suryadi, D., & Priatna, N. (2021). *Analysis of didactic transposition and HLT as a rationale in designing didactic situation*. Proceedings of the 4th Sriwijaya University Learning and Education International Conference (SULE-IC 2020). https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201230.164

Jiménez, P., Rosas, M., & Sáez, C. (2017). *Marco textual y desarrollo de la comprensión de textos académicos en inglés*. Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, 19(1), 84-102. https://doi.org/10.14483/calj.v19n1.7783

Kodirjonovich, M. J. (2025). Archetypes and symbolic images in literary works. *American Journal of Philological Sciences*, *5*(12), 140–143. https://doi.org/10.37547/ajps/volume05issue12-38

Koening, J., & Zorn, C. (2002). *Using storytelling as an approach to teaching and learning with diverse students*. Journal of Nursing Education, 41(9), 393–399. https://doi.org/10.3928/0148-4834-20020901-07

Köksal, D., & Ulum, Ö. (2021). *Analysis of cultural hegemony in Touchstone EFL course book series*. The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal, 21(1), 131-141. https://readingmatrix.com/files/24-o589r4hk.pdf

Kucirkova, N., & Kamola, M. (2022). *Children's stories and multisensory engagement: Insights from a cultural probes study.* International Journal of Educational Research, 114, 101995. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2022.101995

Kükürt, R. O. (2022). *The political nature of education and political placements in the struggle of hegemony in education*. Journal for the Education of Gifted Young Scientists, 10(4), 591–597. https://doi.org/10.17478/jegys.1219312

López, J. A. M. (2024). Desempeño académico y oralidad: interpretación de la teoría de Walter Ong. *Espiral Revista De Docencia E Investigación*, *13*(2), 11–24. https://doi.org/10.15332/erdi.v13i2.3069

Maslej, M., Oatley, K., & Mar, R. (2017). *Creating fictional characters: The role of experience, personality, and social processes*. Psychology of Aesthetics Creativity and the Arts, 11(4), 487–499. https://doi.org/10.1037/aca0000094

Mathison, S., & Ross, E. (2002). *Hegemony and "accountability" in schools and universities*. WorkPlace: a journal for academic labor, (9). https://ices.library.ubc.ca/index.php/workplace/article/view/184050

McCausland, T., & McCausland, T. (2022). *Innovation Storytelling*. Research-Technology Management, 65(3), 61–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2022.2047488

McDougal, E., Syrdal, H., Gravois, R., & Kemp, A. (2020). *The power of story: Using storytelling to increase students' confidence and competence in applying marketing concepts*. Marketing Education Review, 31(2), 119–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/10528008.2020.1853573

McNiff, J., & Whitehead, J. (2011). *All you need to know about action research*. Sage publications.

McQuiggan, S., Rowe, J., Lee, S., & Lester, J. (2008). *Story-based learning: The impact of narrative on learning experiences and outcomes*. In Intelligent Tutoring Systems: 9th

International Conference, ITS 2008, Montreal, Canada, June 23-27, 2008 Proceedings 9 (pp. 530-539). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-69132-7_56

Melling, A., & Pilkington, R. (2018). *Paulo Freire and Transformative Education*. In Palgrave Macmillan UK eBooks. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-54250-2

Mills, S. (2016). *Conceptual Understanding: A Concept Analysis*. The Qualitative Report, 21(3), 546-557. https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/conceptual-understanding-concept-analysis/docview/1790520426/se-2

Miranda, N., Bonilla-Medina, S., Wilches, J., Encarnación, C., Silva-Londoño, E., & Bula, L. (2024). *Multilingual policies and Practices in Higher Education: a Nation-Wide Exploration in Colombia*. Íkala Revista De Lenguaje Y Cultura, 29(3). https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.357019

Musante, K. (2015). Participant observation. *Handbook of methods in cultural anthropology*, 251-292.

Nangia, M. (2025). *Narrative Leadership: Counter-Storytelling for Diversity in Higher Education.* Focus on EDI © – Issue 3. Institute for Educational & Social Equity

Ofoegbu, T., Asogwa, U., Ogbonna, C., Aloh, H., Eseadi, C., Eskay, M., Nji, G., Ngwoke, O., Agboti, C., Nnachi, R., Nnachi, O., & Otu, M. (2020). *Effect of digital storytelling intervention on burnout thoughts of adolescent*. Medicine, 99(30), e21164. https://doi.org/10.1097/md.0000000000021164

Olajide, S. (2018). *Test as Tool for Effective Research in the Humanities*. Bulgarian Journal of Science and Education Policy, 12(2), 402-417.http://bjsep.org/getfile.php?id=276

Özeren, E. B. (2025). *Integration of Digital Storytelling into Architectural Education: Exploration of Conceptual Understanding*. Buildings (Basel), 15(11), 1826. https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings15111826

Phillipson, R. (1992). Linguistic imperialism. Oxford University Press.

Prasetyo, G. T. (2024). *CHARACTER DEPICTION WITH BEHAVIORAL PROCESS IN'NOUVELLES VERTES'SHORT STORIES*. Leksema: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra, 9(1), 21-32. https://doi.org/10.22515/ljbs.v9i1.8903

Qodirova, M. (2025). *THE ART OF SEEING BEYOND WORDS: STORYTELLING AS A TOOL FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE*. International Bulletin of Applied Science and Technology (Vol. 5, Number 11, pp. 29–32). Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17588985

Rauber, I. (2016). *Hegemonía, poder popular y sentido común*. El Ágora USB, 16(1), 29–62. https://doi.org/10.21500/16578031.2164

Rutta, C. B., Schiavo, G., Zancanaro, M., & Rubegni, E. (2021). *Comic-based digital storytelling for content and language integrated learning.* Educational Media International, 58(1), 21–36. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2021.1908499

Salix. (2024). Storytelling Method in Learning Process – Thematic analysis. *West Science Business and Management*, *2*(04), 1329–1335. https://doi.org/10.58812/wsbm.v2i04.1725

Santamaría, C. (2025). *Expanding Upon Critical Storytelling to Inform Intersectional Disability Futures*. In Handbook for Educating Students with Disabilities: Implications and Strategies (pp. 905-924). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-60258-0_44

Saritepeci, M. (2020). *Students' and parents' opinions on the use of digital storytelling in science education*. Technology Knowledge and Learning, 26(1), 193–213. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10758-020-09440-y

Schmitt, O., & Buschek, D. (2021). CharacterChat: Supporting the Creation of Fictional Characters through Conversation and Progressive Manifestation with a Chatbot. *Creativity and Cognition*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1145/3450741.3465253

Shan, C. (2012). *Learning Human Emotion from Body Gesture*. In N. M. Seel (Ed.), Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning (Vol. 4, pp. 1887–1889). Springer US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6_1905

Storytelling Toolkit. (n.d). Compiled by Smithsonian Institution and MUSEWEB foundation. Arizona State University. https://static.sustainability.asu.edu/giosMS-uploads/sites/2/2018/03/MoMs_storytelling_toolkit_DCDCedit.pdf

Strong, J. (2021). *Character adaptations: recurrence and return*. Adaptation, 14(1), 109-135. https://doi.org/10.1093/adaptation/apaa028

Tarjadinata, V. (2025). Translanguaging with Multisensory Storytelling: A Conceptual Framework for Enhancing First-Grade Language Acquisition in Multilingual Contexts. *Journal of English Education Forum (JEEF)*, *5*(3), 173–179. https://doi.org/10.29303/jeef.v5i3.925

Trillo, F., & Sanjurjo, L. (2013). *Didáctica para profesores de a pie: propuestas para comprender y mejorar la práctica*. Homo Sapiens Ediciones.

Vollstedt, M., & Rezat, S. (2019). *An Introduction to Grounded Theory with a Special Focus on Axial Coding and the Coding Paradigm*. In ICME-13 monographs (pp. 81–100). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15636-7_4

Wang, S., & Littlewood, W. (2021). *Exploring students' demotivation and remotivation in learning English*. System (Linköping), 103, 102617-. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102617

Warman, A., Arnetty, A., Ifitri, I., Dinanti, F. R., Amiruddin, A., & Zurianti, R. E. (2025). *Effectiveness of storytelling and roleplay in improving oral hygiene knowledge and supporting nutritional health among elementary school students: A quasy experimental study.* AcTion Aceh Nutrition Journal, 10(3), 774. https://doi.org/10.30867/action.v10i3.2657

Whitmore, C., & Schild, K. (2022). *Exploring complex concepts through storytelling: A synchronous online health policy course case study and recommendations for implementing across disciplines*. Open Praxis, 14(3), 242–248. https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.856291159112496

Wong, J. P., Kteily-Hawa, R., Chambers, L. A., Hari, S., Vijaya, C., Suruthi, R., Islam, S., & Vahabi, M. (2018). Exploring the use of fact-based and story-based learning materials for HIV/STI prevention and sexual health promotion with South Asian women in Toronto, Canada. *Health Education Research*, *34*(1), 27–37. https://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyy042

Yang, J. (2011). *Storytelling as a teaching method in ESL classrooms*. DIVA. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A437819&dswid=

Yang, Y., Chen, Y., & Hung, H. (2020). *Digital storytelling as an interdisciplinary project to improve students' English speaking and creative thinking*. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 35(4), 840–862. https://doi-org.bibliotecavirtual.uis.edu.co/10.1080/09588221.2020.1750431

Yip, D. (2022). *Between passive viewing and active choosing in storytelling*. AHFE International, 49. https://doi.org/10.54941/ahfe1002037

Yoedtadi, M. G., & Pribadi, M. A. (2020). Alternative Media as Counter-Hegemony: A Case study of Konde.co and Magdalene.co. *Proceedings of the 2nd Tarumanagara International Conference on the Applications of Social Sciences and Humanities (TICASH 2020)*. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201209.013

Appendices

Appendix A. Informed Consent Document

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study titled “Use of Storytelling as a Didactic Strategy to Facilitate Students’ Comprehension of the Concept of Hegemony”. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate.

Purpose of the Study

The primary goal is to facilitate students’ comprehension of the concept of hegemony through the use of storytelling. The specific objectives are:

1) Identify students' background knowledge about the concept of hegemony.
2) Design and implement storytelling sessions to explain the concept of hegemony within the educational field.
3)Assess the effectiveness of storytelling in the comprehension of the concept of hegemony.

Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take a questionnaire, a formative test, a short interview and be part of some classroom interventions using storytelling to teach the concept of hegemony. The estimated time commitment for your participation is approximately 7 weeks distributed over 2 hours per week.

Risks and Benefits

This research carries no inherent risks for you as a participant, as we will safeguard your anonymity throughout the entire duration of the study and beyond. While there are no direct financial benefits associated with your participation, your involvement will significantly contribute to the advancement of knowledge regarding the usage of storytelling in education to teach complex concepts. Your valuable contribution will play a crucial role in expanding our understanding of this evolving field.

Confidentiality

All the results and your opinions will be confidential and kept in reserve. In presentations and publications resulting from this research, your name will not be associated with any specific result. Additionally, the collected data will be stored during the semester 2025-1, and your name will not be disclosed in any way.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Your decision to participate or not will not affect your relationship with Critical Pedagogies subject at Universidad Industrial de Santander.

Contact Information

Researcher's name: Ludy Stefany Barón Ballesteros

Address: Cra. 27 Calle 9 Ciudad Universitaria. Escuela de Idiomas, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Universidad Industrial de Santander

Researcher's name: Daniel Antonio Cely Ayala

Address: Cra. 27 Calle 9 Ciudad Universitaria. Escuela de Idiomas, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Universidad Industrial de Santander

Consent

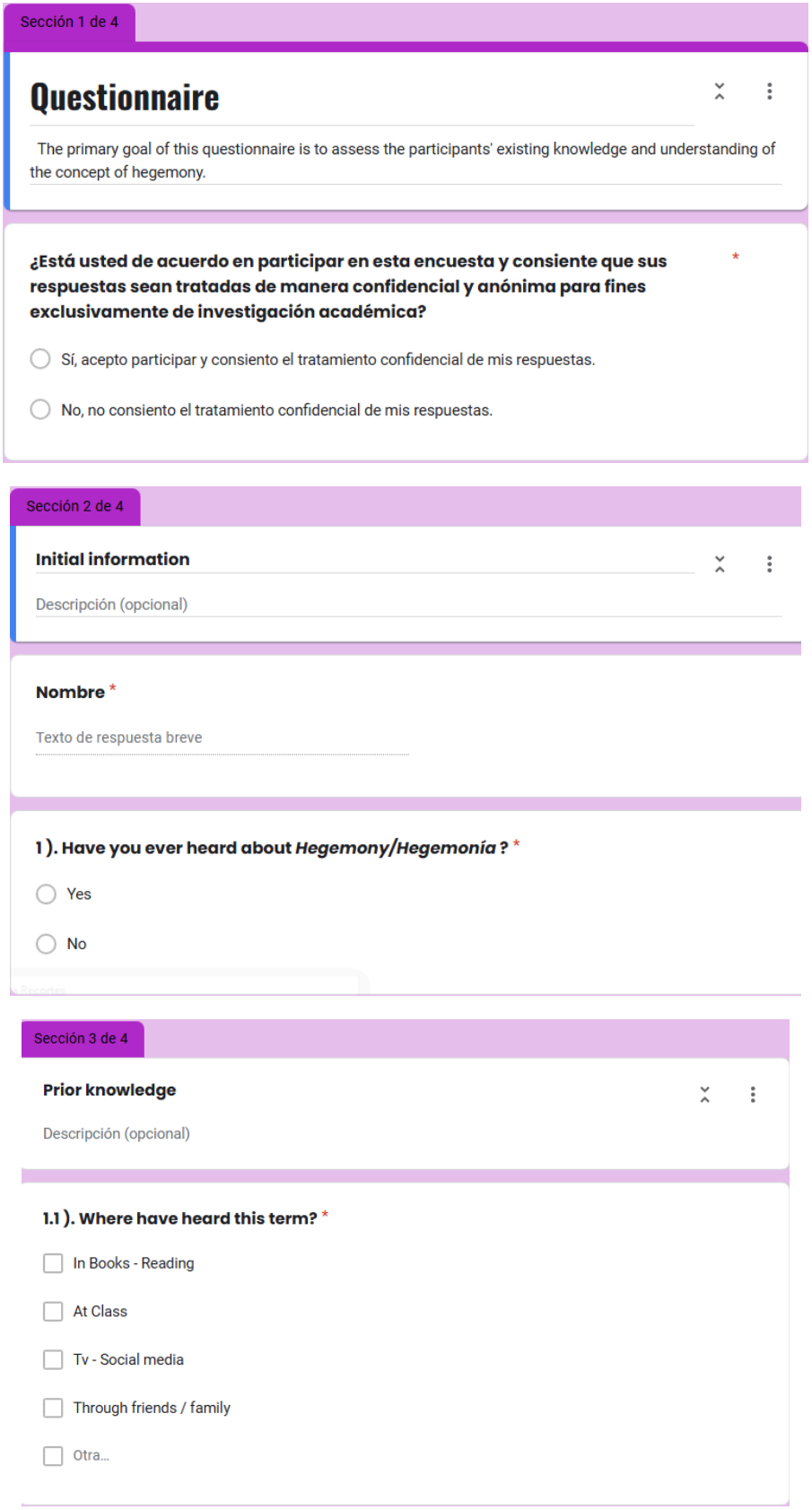
I have read the above information, and I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and they have been answered. I have no doubts about it.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's email: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B. Questionnaire



Sección 4 de 4

Content section

Descripción (opcional)

2). What do you think hegemony stands for? *

- ○ Hegemony is when one country or group imposes its will on others through force and military might, ens...
- ○ Hegemony is the act of one group completely dominating another in all forms—militarily, economically, a...
- ○ Hegemony refers to the dominance of one group or ideology over others, not just through direct power, b...
- ○ Hegemony refers to the practice of forming alliances between equal groups in order to collectively prom...

3). In your own words, how would you describe hegemony? (Puede escribir en español) *

Texto de respuesta largo

4). Which of the following situations do you consider are cases of hegemony? *

- ☐ Oscars only nominate American films
- ☐ When going to college, you can't repeat your outfit every day.
- ☐ When a new Iphone is released, you have to buy it
- ☐ The posts of a political party have more interaction than those of other parties
- ☐ French people dress like Emily in Paris
- ☐ In a group of friends, 5 are liberales and 1 is conservador.
- ☐ A german tourist in Cartagena demands that the cab driver speaks English to him
- ☐ If you watch anime, you are a weirdo
- ☐ The mayor of a city imposes his idelogy by arresting anyone who does not share it

Appendix C. Observation Guide

Date:		Researchers		Daniel Antonio Cely Ayala Ludy Stefany Barón Ballesteros
Lesson:				
Objective:		Course:		Critical Pedagogies #
Category	**Description**	**Yes**	**Not**	**Observations**
Body language	Ss smile or nod			
	Ss maintaine eye contact with the storyteller			
	Ss cross arms			
	Ss frown or looked puzzled (tilted head, pursed lips)			
	Ss lean back or slump in their seats			
	Ss scratch their head due to confusion			
	Ss fidget with objects			
	Ss appear physically relaxed or tensed			
	Ss produce assertive sounds (Ajá, Ohh, Mmm)			
Storytelling characteristics	Students verbally articulate feelings of compassion, understanding, or identification with the characters' emotions or actions in the story			
	Ss follow the progression of events to overaching themes or messages in the story			
	Ss relate better to the story when the character is detailed			
	Ss relate to the story despite the absence of detailed character descriptions			
	Ss show excitement when a recurrent character reappears in different stories			
	Ss connect with the story when it is narrated in first person			
	Ss verbally express their comprehension when multisensory elements are used			
	Ss engage in the intersperesed discussions within the story			
	Ss comprehend better the stories' purpose where there is a preparatory stage before hand			
	Ss actively engage in after discussions when the story is open-ended			
	Ss actively engage in after discussions when the story is closed-ended			
Performance Assessment	Ss ask questions throughout the story			
	Students raise their hands confidently to answer or ask questions.			
	Students provide correct or nearly correct answers			
	Students repeat the same mistakes despite feedback			
	Ss connect the story's theme to real-world issuess or events			
	Ss provide different examples related to the story's content			
	Ss critically engage regarding the story's ending			
	Ss take notes,write key points or create summaries during of after the story			
	Ss identiy and recall key events in the story			
	Ss explains how one event leads to another in the narrative			
Other unanticipated events or actions				

Appendix D. Formative Test

1. **Define the concept of hegemony and provide two cases in which it can manifest.** It could be through examples, descriptions, or narratives.

Appendix E. Interview Questions

1. **¿Qué entiendes por *Storytelling*?**
2. **¿De 1 a 10, qué tanto te ayudó esta estrategía (i.e. storytelling) para comprender el concepto de hegemonía?**
3. **¿Qué momentos de la intervención facilitaron tu comprensión del concepto de hegemonía?**
4. **¿Lograste establecer estrecha conexión con algún personaje mencionado dentro de la intervención?**
5. **¿Consideras que los elementos multisensoriales tuvieron alguna influencia en tu comprensión de las historias y sus mensajes? ¿Cuál destacarías?**
6. **¿Crees que discutir el final de una historia con final abierto te ayudó a entender mejor el concepto de hegemonía? ¿Cómo?**
7. **¿Tuviste algún momento de confusión durante las intervenciones? ¿Qué la generó?**

Appendix F. Comic-Based Format - Cultural Hegemony Session

Available at: https://canva.link/efwpc0iuhr5drnp

Appendix G. Branching Storytelling Format - Gender-Based Hegemony Session

Available at: https://canva.link/41bzgwwaxu6f6ad

Appendix H. Gamified Format - Hegemony In Education

This interactive material has codes to unlock the different parts of the story presented in letters. Letter 1: 17862 ; Letter 2: 21583; Letter 3: 29531; Letter 4:96248; Letter 5: 01304; Letter 6: 10425

Available at: https://view.genially.com/67f2ef35acde2e2917e59c14