

COMICS: A LEARNING STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE THINKING OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is aiming at analyzing the perceptions of undergraduate students about using comics as a learning strategy in the tourism and hospitality higher education. This study is using qualitative approach to understand the importance of using comics in improving the level of innovative thinking and problem solving skills in elective tourism and hospitality courses. The research was conducted using Thematic Appreciation Test (TAT) and semi-structured interviews. The results indicated that using comics as a teaching strategy can help in bridging the gap between theory and practice. Moreover, it can be considered as a motivator for innovation in the tourism and hospitality education.

Keywords: Tourism, Hospitality, Innovative Thinking, Learning Strategy, Comics, Higher Education, Thematic Appreciation Test.

INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges to tourism and hospitality education is associated with the teaching and learning strategies used in lectures (Stansbie, Nash & Chang, 2016). Using learning strategies which are concentrating on teamwork, reflective practice and sharing knowledge will allow tourism and hospitality students to improve their innovations and problem solving skills (Ovsenik, 2013). Moreover, Ruhanen (2006) found that these strategies will affect the students' ability to understand the links between theory and practice in tourism and hospitality industry. The use of innovative education strategies such as active learning is important to support students' reflective practice (Salmon, 2013). Active learning aiming at making lectures interactive and encourage teamwork learning (Silberman, 1996). In addition, active learning include many strategies in tourism and hospitality education such as games, comics, movies and role play (Bowles,

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2006; Chau & Cheung, 2018; Goldenberg, Lee & O'Bannon, 2010; Ritzko & Robinson, 2006; Wolff, Wagner, Oznanski, Schiller & Santen, 2015).

In this study, comics as an active learning strategy will be investigated in the context of tourism and hospitality higher education with reference to undergraduate students. There are several studies highlighted the importance of using comics strategy for students in higher education (Fabian & MacLean, 2014; Goldenberg et al., 2010). However, there are few studies investigated comics in tourism and hospitality education (Goldenberg et al., 2010; Silva, Santos & Bispo, 2017). Therefore, this study is going to be the first in-depth analysis using the comics as a teaching strategy in tourism and hospitality education in Egypt. This study is contributing to the development and improvement of educational practices as well as enabling significant impacts on the learning process in tourism and hospitality higher education. This research is aiming at bridging the gap between theory and practice in tourism and hospitality education.

Tourism and hospitality higher education started in Egypt in 1962. At that time, two institutions were formed in Cairo, and then in 1975 they were joined to form on college under the name of Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Helwan University (Hewedi, Doma & Al-Hamamsy, 1998). Over the last five decades, more tourism and hospitality faculties and colleges have been established at public and private Egyptian universities and currently there are more than 50 public and private higher colleges of tourism and hospitality in Egypt (Afifi, 2011). Despite the large number of undergraduate courses in tourism and hospitality throughout the country and its growing expansion, there are several challenges such as the gap between real market demands and academic training (Abou-Shouk, Abdelhakim & Hewedi, 2014). To overcome this gab, innovative and active learning strategies should be implemented to foster reflexivity of tourism and hospitality students and the ability of bridging the gap between theory and practice (Fatima, Ghandforoush, Khan & Mascio, 2019). Therefore, this paper aims to investigate comics as an innovative strategy for tourism and hospitality higher education to achieve the competitiveness in learning. To achieve this aim, the following research questions were developed:

- What is the structure of creating comics in tourism and hospitality undergraduate courses?
- How comics will contribute to the tourism and hospitality undergraduate courses?

Active Learning and Comics

Higher education should allow students to be active in the learning process, giving them the opportunity to participate, reflect and have the critical thinking (Boud, Cohen & Sampson, 2014; López-Bonilla & López-Bonilla, 2014). In addition, Schillemans, Van Twist & Vanhommerig (2013) highlighted the need for innovative and interactive learning methods that go beyond the limits of a traditional education to reflective and transformative learning.

The development of learning strategies that is appropriate to the characteristics of the students is essential for the quality of the teaching-learning process (Wang, Shannon & Ross, 2013). In the context of higher education, the use of different innovative strategies helps to consolidate meaningful learning practices and optimization of professional education (Boctor, 2013). In addition, Bergmann & Sams (2012) declared that building curriculum content should be depending on

students' needs as they are the targets for the learning process. Thus, the lecturer should be creative and be concerned not only with “what” to learn to the student, but “why” and “how” (Halili & Zainuddin, 2015).

Many educational researchers (Dredge et al., 2013; Gross et al., 2017; Yan & Cheung, 2012) have found that traditional teaching has little effectiveness in achieving a change in concept of tourism and hospitality. One of the active learning processes that are gaining ground at different levels of education is comic strategy which is defined as the combination of class work and online work under the guidance of the teacher, becoming an experience of integrated responsibility learning and shared proactive commitment (Green, 2013). In addition, the comics' strategy evolves from a lecturer-centered approach to student-centered approach (Herbst et al., 2011).

According to Anderman, Andrzejewski & Allen (2011) knowing the profile of the student is the first step for the effective higher education and the next step is to identify the appropriate style of learning and teaching strategies. Silva et al. (2017) proposed a learning system with five relevant dimensions: learning styles, students and lectures experience, reflective practice, learning environment and active teaching strategies. The use of more active teaching strategies can be incorporated into the tourism and hospitality education process to reduce the gap between theory and practice and to enable the students to better solve the future problems in the real practice (Ovsenik, 2013). The application of active learning strategies requires the training of lectures and students, who should be participated in active learning process (McCabe & O'Connor, 2014). According to Silva et al. (2017), active learning strategies such as comics should focus on the student to enhance the creativity and innovation in the teaching.

Marianthi, Boulodakis & Retalis (2016) pointed out that comic are considered as a figurative expression, which is accompanied by the presence of images where an adequate interpenetration between the presence of words and drawings distinguishing continuity between the story, time and finally highlights the presence of the balloon that contains the text but in turn delimits the protagonist. Di Raddo (2006) highlighted that comics are considered as a narrative mechanism where the structure is not only part of the system; rather it is made up by the language and image. While Vassilikopoulou et al. (2011) indicated that comic is considered as a structure of narrative character conformed by a set of character sequence progressive on the characters in order to integrate with the respective elements that make up phonetic writing.

Comics as a teaching strategy can be found in primary, secondary and higher education (Anderman et al., 2011; Green, 2013; Herbst et al., 2011). On the other hand, this strategy is not yet popular in tourism and hospitality higher education and some lectures are unaware of its use as a teaching strategy and do not recognize its relevance to achieving the interned learning outcomes (Silva et al., 2017).

When addressing the use of comics as a teaching strategy in higher education, it must consider the need to merge theory with reality. A comic must incorporate all characteristics of scientific objectivity, reliability and facts (Vassilikopoulou et al., 2011). The formation of comics in tourism and hospitality education can be through expressing the reality of work in a sequence of images and narratives (Silva et al., 2017). Wurdinger & Carlson (2010) indicated that comics support students to feel comfortable to share their ideas and participate in the learning process. Therefore, the use of comics in tourism and hospitality education involves presenting a variety of specific comics within a given context.

Silva et al. (2017) developed a structure using comics as an innovative strategy in higher education. It proposes five stages which should be implemented in lecture. Those five stages are consisting of the following stages: recognition, planning, action, observation and reflection.

Recognition is the presentation of the comics' strategy to students in the lecture. This stage involves establishing a connection between any issues related to the topic addressed in the lecture and encourage students to reflect on that topic and transform reality to comics.

Planning is the guidance process from the lecturer to the students on creating comics. At this stage, the individual reflection from students is going to be presented through establishing a sequence of simple actions for the comic. After individual reflection, which can last 30 min, the lecturer will form random groups from students, to initiate collective reflection and discuss their proposals and explain their comics. The guidance of the lecture should include the following steps:

- 1) Compose sequences (beginning, middle and end). Thus they may include pictures or bullets of different shapes and sizes;
- 2) Identify the characters and identify the action for each one.
- 3) Identify bubbles which may differ according to the target topic. Dialogues between characters will be created.

Action is the drawing stage. Comics will be drawn using any free on-line websites. Moreover, each group should prepare a description of the comic and reflect on all the moments during its creation.

The fourth and fifth stages are reflection and observation. These steps involve the presentation of the comic by groups in lecture. During the presentation, each group illustrates which aspects linked to the basic theory of the topic based on the creation of the comic.

To conclude, all of the previous steps proposed by Silva et al., (2017) can help students to think critically and to establish relationships between theory and practice. This innovative strategy encourages exchange of experiences, making decisions and allowing students represent a professional situation based on theoretical precepts. Finally, it contributes to the development of reflective practice in the field of tourism and hospitality.

In addition, this study is relying on the flipped classroom approach in order to enhance the students learning through comics (Mei, 2017). The flipped classroom or flipped learning model aims to reverse the roles of traditional teaching. At the beginning, the lecturer design attractive learning materials for students such as videos, Prezi presentations, etc. and the students are responsible to explore those materials to obtain basic knowledge before going to class. After that, receiving and answering questions and comments from students. Finally, the students should be capable of expanding their knowledge through practical experiences through using comics' strategy (Huang & Hong, 2016).

From the above, several overlapping factors in using comics as an active and innovative learning strategy in tourism and hospitality education can be identified. These factors need further investigations which may incorporate some concepts such as active learning, flipped classroom and comics to offer appropriate framework for using comics in tourism and hospitality education (Figure 1). This framework is suggested by the researchers based on several studies of active learning (Boctor, 2013; Green, 2013; Herbst et al., 2011; Silva et al., 2017; Yan & Cheung, 2012). In order to have effective comics' strategy in tourism and

hospitality higher education, this framework proposes that lecturers need to follow four steps: review the students' profiles, design the comics' strategy in a way to attract students to participate, using the flipped course approach and finally practicing and producing comics through engaging students in active learning.

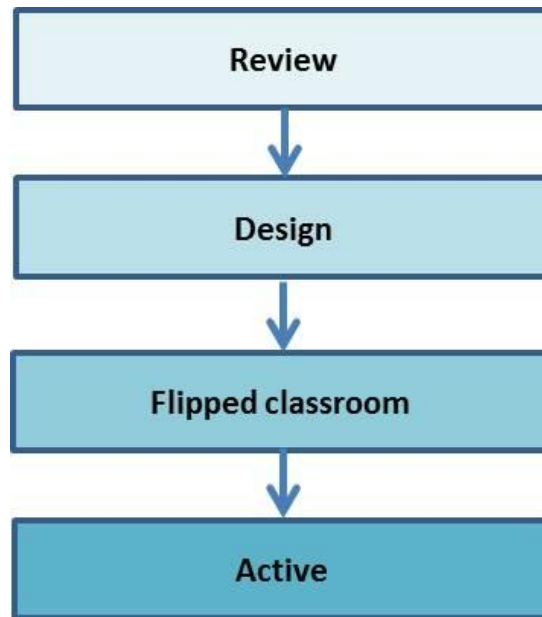


Figure 1. Initial framework for using comics as innovative strategy for tourism and hospitality students.

METHODOLOGY

This research paper is using qualitative approach to understand the students' experiences of developing comics in tourism and hospitality undergraduate courses. Inductive approach is going to be used to make semi-structured interviews and thematic appreciation test in order to be able to validate the results (Schreier, 2012; Shneidman, 2013; Westwood, 2007).

The population of this study is students from faculty of tourism and hotel management, Helwan University, Egypt. The targeted sample was students who are studying in the following courses: airline companies (practical), introduction to tourism industry, problems in hotels industry, hotel management. To examine the impact of using comics in tourism and hospitality higher education, primary data was collected through semi structured interviews with 20 students. 10 of them are from tourism studies department and the other 10 students are from hotel management department. Non-probability sampling technique is used for data collection as this research is concentrating on specific students who are studying specific courses and therefore reducing randomness is important (Schreier, 2012; Tansey, 2007). From ethical point of view, all participated students of this research are informed about the purpose of this study (Lichtman, 2012).

The semi-structured interviews were applied by informing the students about the process of creating a comic and an investigation was developed. The theoretical model (Figure 1) will be used as a guide to perform this interview. Thoughts, attitudes and experiences of the students were collected through semi-structured interview. This interview is consisting of questions about the steps of the theoretical model: review, design, flipped course approach and engaging students in active learning. In addition, questions about creating comics, learning with comics, difficulties of learning with comics, link theories with practice by using

comics, creative thinking and contribution of comics' strategy in their academic learning in the tourism and hospitality courses were asked.

The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) which is developed by Murray (1943) is considered one of the most projective technique of measuring experiences, thoughts and personality in education (Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000). Moreover, previous studies indicate that projective techniques such as TAT are reliable in marketing and management research as well (Soley, 2010). However, some studies highlight that TAT might be linked to low factor loadings, and inconsistent findings (Bornstein, 2007). To overcome those defects, this research is going to implement semi-structured interviews in addition to TAT to validate the results and make it more reliable (Westwood, 2007). In this research, the TAT consists of a set of 20 comics (10 comics developed by tourism students and 10 comics developed by hospitality students) in which each one showing different situation related to the topic discussed in the lecture. Two lectures for each group of at least 2 h duration each were used to implement this technique. The atmosphere of the TAT was favorable for the students to be able to reveal their creativity. Students are asked to create stories based on these comics, and these stories would be assessed by the researchers to understand the effectiveness of those comics. Four questions were asked to student in parallel with the TAT:

- 1) What has fostered the comic to show?
- 2) What is the comic talking about at the moment?
- 3) What are the characters in the comic think about?
- 4) What is the outcome of the comic?

In this research, analyzing qualitative data should be developed through specific stages according to Saunders & Lewis (2012). Those stages comprise four main actions: categorization, unitizing data, recognizing relationships and developing categories and developing and testing theories to reach conclusions. In terms of categorization, this research classified the collected responses from the students into categories. Those categories have been concluded from the theoretical model. In terms of utilizing data, this research assigned relevant pieces of information of the collected data to the appropriate category of the model.

Hence, Ethical considerations" were implemented through coding all students' names. The coding process was done to respect the confidentiality of the students' answers. The coding names depend on the initials of Tourism Students (TS) and Hospitality Students (HS). For example, (TS1, TS22, HS1, HS2, etc...). Manual qualitative data analysis was more useful as the researchers were more involved in it and got closer to the data, becoming used to the students words and using the analysis to build ideas and themes. In terms of recognizing relationships and developing categories, the researcher used a simple matrix to sort the data and make it easy to understand. In this matrix, collected data was placed within the cells of the matrix. This activity enabled the researcher to identify key aspects regarding the use of comics as active learning strategy in tourism and hospitality higher education. With regards to developing and testing theories to reach conclusions, this research used the analyzed data to develop a final version of the comics as innovative and active learning strategy model.

FINDINGS

Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interview

In this section, analyses of the semi-structured interviews conducted with students will be presented. The stages illustrated in Figure 1 investigated through exploring the students' experiences and opinions about using comics as an innovative strategy. Moreover, explanation of each stage and its reflection on undergraduate tourism and hospitality students will be explained.

Review

The interview initiated with the presentation of the comics strategy to the students. Most of the interviewed students indicated that their individual experiences might affect the developing of this strategy in the learning process. They highlighted the importance of developing student profiles.

It depends on the personality and experiences of each one of us. Some students might not have the level of creativity to engage in comics' strategy. Other students might see this process as waste of time (HS7).

Yes, in my opinion, I think they should understand our backgrounds with regards to: the level of technology used by students, the age, boys or girls, the society culture (TS9).

In general, the results highlighted that professional experiences of lecturers have an impact on the development of comics' strategy in the classroom (TS2).

Some of my lecturers are not funny. They are very strict and practical. So, I think they will not be able to develop this strategy in their classes (HS7).

The interviewed students highlighted the importance of developing their skills, the lecturer skills in order to be able to use this strategy. They indicated that motivating them to engage in this strategy is important as well.

I think you need to encourage me to participate in developing comics. I don't know how to use it. I need training. I think some of our lecturers are not able to use this strategy. They need someone to train them (TS9).

Design

In this stage, the researchers asked the interviewees some questions about their opinion about the factors affecting this stage. All of the interviewed students for tourism and hospitality departments indicated that setting clear rubrics and specified time are the major factors affecting this stage.

How can I develop a comic without understanding what I should do? Tell me exactly what the required points to develop this comic are and I will do it (TS10).

This strategy is taking long time from me. You need to tell me exactly how long this strategy is going to take from my time (HS1).

Flipped

This stage depends on recording videos, using presentations or interactive resources and sending them to the students. They should study them at home before the class. The work in the classroom is consisting of carrying out comics to put the knowledge into practice. Most of the interviewed students indicated that those three

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strategies are useful in explaining the lecture to them and giving them the opportunity to innovate in the class.

Flipped classroom gives us the opportunity to perform other types of activities such as comics (HS10).

It enhances the collaboration environment and encourages student collaboration and therefore reinforces our motivation (TS1).

Using Prezi and videos helped us to acquire knowledge in our peace of time and be able to study the information in a different way (HS5).

Active

In the active stage, the participated students were asked about the important factors affecting them to engage in comics' strategy. Most of the respondents declared that it is not only important to be active but also to be constructive and interactive.

To be active for me means to refresh and activate my existing knowledge through developing comics (HS2).

I can practice this strategy but I think we need to critically explain our comics to order to have the ability of understanding the topic (TS4).

With regards to comics, I usually add new information to the comic to enrich it and innovate. I try to do my best to make my lecturer and colleagues like it (HS6).

I think comics helped me to interact with my colleagues as I can comment on their comics (TS8).

When asked the students about the process of creating the comic, the students highlighted the importance of planning stage in the theoretical model (Figure 1). TS5 stated that:

There was a discussion among us as a group about the topic to be addressed and the names of the characters. Then the subject was debated, deepened and developed by all the members. Once the script was established, the pictures were organized and presented in class.

When analyzing the comics of the participants, it was observed that the comics' strategy goes more beyond the theoretical learning, since it promotes the reflective practice, the exchange of knowledge and can make students understand better links between theory and practice. Therefore, it is important to add a constructive stage to let the students explain the comics to their colleagues and to reflect the feedback of their colleagues into their comics. With regards to the constructive learning process, all participants' emphasized the relevance of exchange knowledge among members of the group for learning the content of the lecture, as indicated by ST7: Each one was creating his idea and complementing the knowledge of the other. While HS1 highlighted that: Each one in my class suggested an idea and we put them together and revised our comic.

Most of the participated students highlighted the importance of adding interactive step which is not only involving practicing and producing comics but also increasing their ability to solve problems and innovative thinking through sharing ideas with their colleagues.

This teaching strategy gives the opportunity to strength our ability to work in groups, listen to the opinions of our colleagues and achieve a result. As well as it helps us to understand the exact meaning for each type of tourists (ST8).

Yes, comics improved my ability to solve problems. In lectures, we used to find a solution for a specific situation through developing comics (HS3).

These activities help us to show our creativity, our learning and better solve the problems managers in hospitality industry dealt with in class (HS1).

Analysis of Thematic Appreciation Test

Many researchers used Thematic Appreciation Test (TAT) in the investigation of personal assessment about specific phenomena (Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000). TAT is producing information around the investigated topic. In this research, this technique is used in the form of stories through comics. The analysis of this approach is depending of the narrative method in which the respondents are giving the opportunity to comment and discuss those comics with the researchers. In addition, the interpretation of respondents' narrations will enrich the research results. This technique is related to the qualitative approach. Therefore, the researchers' interpretations of respondents' perceptions and experience were to develop the final model of this research.

The purpose of this section is to study the drives, emotions and feelings of respondents towards using comics' strategy in tourism and hospitality higher educations. The technique is composed of a number of 20 comics (10 comics related to tourism subjects and 10 comics related to hospitality subjects) representing different situations and scenarios. Participated students are asked to create those comics and tell stories about those comics and the method that they follow in order to develop them. The researchers used the proposed five stages developed by Silva et al. (2017) to apply the TAT. Those five stages are consisting of the following stages: Recognition, planning, action, observation and reflection.

Recognition

Participated students received guidance to start creating comics related to the explained topics. They were introduced by the researchers to Pixton website which will be used as a main tool to create the comics. They tried to make an outline of the comic from their individual reflections based on the flipped classroom approach. The students were stimulated to create comics depending on their creativity. An important note here is not to give the students any help on creating the comics structure. However, they followed the specified steps (Figure 1). This step last for 20 min.

Planning

The researchers motivated the participated students to create comics. With regards to the tourism studies department students, the topic explained by the lecturer was about types of tourists and the impact of tourism on the society. On the other hand, the topic explained to the hospitality students was types of hotels and the impact of hotel industry on the society. They established the sequence of the comic itself using different shapes and size and they used dialogue bubbles. The researchers explained to the students how to use Pixton website in order to create heir comics. Moreover, they started to form small groups to discuss

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the formation of the comic and to reflect on the assigned tourism and hospitality topics. This stage last for 30 min.

Action

After outlining the structure of the comic, students encouraged to use online website to draw their comics in a professional way using (Pixton.com). During the creation of the comic, students can choose shapes, characters and dialogue bubbles, using all their imagination and creativity. This step last for 30 min. Each group should prepare a story of the comic and reflect on all the moments during its creation.

Reflection and Observation

The comics were presented and discussed in the lecture based on the theoretical considerations. This step takes another 40 min. The comic creation activity was presented by two groups (each group is consisting of five students).

A Reflection from Students comics in tourism studies department: The participated students from tourism studies department elaborate on types of tourists as discussed in the lecture based on the flipped classroom approach. Figure 2 illustrates one of the comics produced by the students to explain types of tourists. The students explained this comic to their colleagues and they indicated that created this comic through incorporating their partners' contributions. They tried to solve a problem for one of the tourists who are confused and he is not decided about the right type of tourist which represents him. This comic is representing the innovative thinking of students as they suggested other tourists' types neither explained to them nor showed to them by flipped classroom approach.

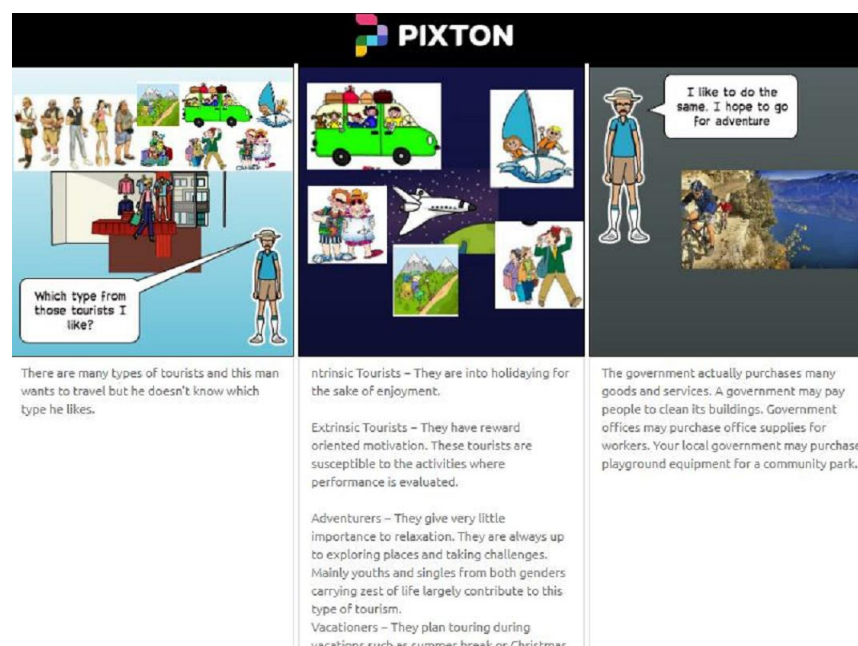


Figure 2. A Comic created by participated students in tourism studies department.

A Reflection from Students comics in hotel management department: The participated students from hospitality department designed comics

related to the types of hotels as discussed in the lecture based on the flipped classroom approach. Figure 3 illustrates one of the comics produced by the students to explain types of hotels. The students explained this comic to their colleagues and they indicated that created this comic through incorporating their partners' contributions. They tried to solve a problem for one of the tourists who are confused and he is not decided about the right type of hotel which represents him. This comic is representing the innovative thinking of students as they suggested the right type of hotel for this tourist depending on the characteristics and features he needs.

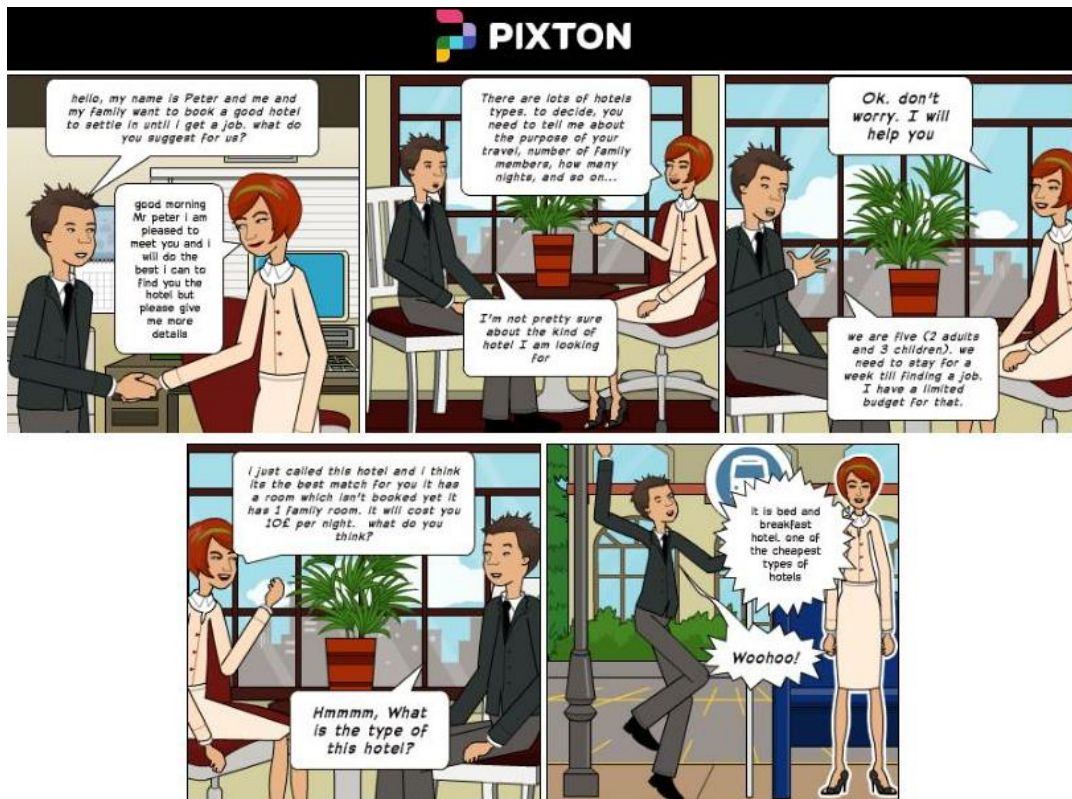


Figure 3. A Comic created by participated students in hotel management department.

To conclude the findings of thematic appreciation test and the analysis of the stories in the comics presented by the students reveal that through a sequence of scenes in the comics, the student can illustrate what they learned about the explained theory in the class and flipped classroom. They confirmed that the use of comics in the courses of tourism and hospitality can contribute to the spread the knowledge and bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The analysis of TAT indicated that working in groups explores difficult and complex issues which can have a result of extracting the creative thinking and experiences of the individuals in the group. The students emphasize that group learning supports the creation of innovative thinking. TS 13 highlighted that: "As we have studied the theory before creating the comic, we were exchanging information and we had no difficulty in understanding the content". On the other hand HS3 revealed that, "the content was more understandable about the impact of hotels on society as the comics helped us to see the causes that have positive or negative impacts on the society allowing us to understand the determining factors that my group chose and those chosen by the other groups".

These reflections indicate the potential of the strategy to enable more significant learning for the students in tourism and hospitality education.

Most of the students' perceptions about the TAT confirmed that there are many positive characteristics for using comics as a learning strategy. One group of students mentioned that comics help them to understand the explanation of each type of tourists. ST8 indicated that "it is possible to remember types of tourist easily just when I remember the comics created by us and by others".

The comics of the students confirm that the use of innovative teaching strategies such as the comics can help them to better understand the relationship between theory and practice. One student said: I felt very comfortable with the topic of hotel types after the comic (HS10).

The use of comics helped in moving from concentrating on teaching strategy to focus on learning strategy. On the other hand, some of the students agree that there is a limitation for this strategy as each group is concentrating on part of the theoretical content studied in lecture.

I would not say it was a difficult strategy. The topic was explained by the lecture. Each group was focused to elaborate on the topic that they choose. We created a comic on what we choose. However, nothing that would prevent us from learning about other topics, as they were addressed by the other groups. (ST7)

DISCUSSION

This study revealed that the comic strategy is an active learning strategy to increase innovation and problem solving skills for tourism and hospitality students. Students from both departments' tourism and hospitality also engaged quickly in the process of developing comics. Thus, motivating students to think about relationships between course contents and innovative ideas to produce comics increased their perceptions about the real practice. The researchers highlighted that giving the opportunity for students to develop their own comics has a great impact on their reflective learning. For instance, undergraduate tourism and hospitality students used what they learned about types of tourists and hotels to develop their comics (Figures 1 and 2). Those comics explain different situations where the students tried to think creatively to identify and compare the different types of tourists and hotels.

According to the findings, this research suggests the following model (Figure 4) based on the students answers from the semi-structured interview and their perceptions about the thematic appreciation test. The suggested model is consisting of eight stages namely: review, prepare, design, flipped, active, constructive, interactive and assessment.

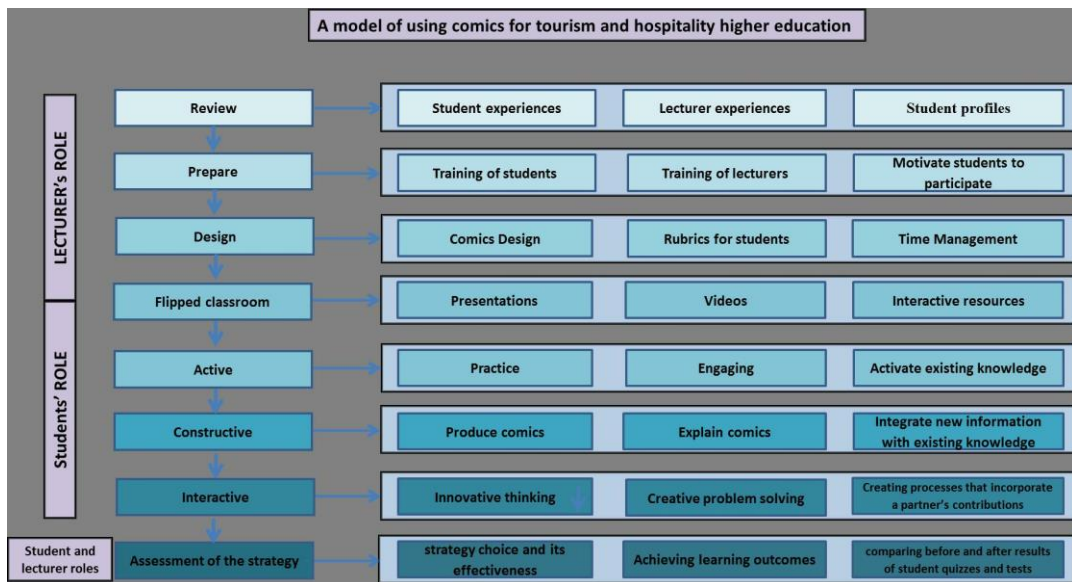


Figure 4. Model of using comics as innovative strategy for tourism and hospitality students.

The design of a comic strategy requires the review of student profiles, lecturer experiences and student experiences. The results of this research lead to the identification of context factors that are relevant to student profiles. This information is going to be useful for decision making in designing comics' strategy. Students' profiles should be reviewed in accordance to their performance indicators, skills, attitudes, behaviors, their level in using technology and their age. The student experiences should be incorporated as an objective in the reviewing process of a comic strategy. The results indicated that students' experiences from academic studies to social interactions have a great impact on the development of comic strategy. Those experiences include teamwork, leadership, written communication and interpersonal relationships. Good lecturers allow systematizing from their experiences. The results indicated that lecturers' experiences are relevant in the process of comics' development. For example, lecturer's attempt to overcome the gap between theory and practice, digital literacy experience, problem solving and time management. To summarize, the lecturer has to review the integration of these three components: student profiles, lecturer experiences and student experiences.

The findings indicated that there is a preparation stage should be added after review stage. This stage should include training of lecturers and students on using this strategy. In addition, motivating students to participate in this strategy is important to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The third stage suggested by this research is called design. Lecturer should design comics to create activities in an easy and effective way. Therefore, guiding students learning towards developing comics is vital. Lecturer should develop an activity in which explaining the goals of the comics through setting a specific rubrics for the students. Those rubrics should include:

- How to generate an idea?
- Identifying the central theme and the conclusion of the story
- Distributing the content in specific paragraphs
- How many characters will the story have?
- The visual elements needed to contextualize the comic story
- Is the content of my comic understood by others?

Flipped classroom is the fourth stage in the suggested model. In this stage, the lecturer should use the flipped classroom approach in order to motivate the students' innovative thinking (Mei, 2017). This approach can be achieved through presentation, videos or interactive resources. This will facilitate the process of developing comics.

Active Learning process can be started at this point. This stage focuses on the student by promoting their participation and continuous reflection through activities that activating existing knowledge. In addition, engage to practice with emphasis on the development of student skills from simple to complex levels through developing comics.

The constructive perspective of learning is the sixth stage in the suggested model. In this stage, the students' role is to produce, explain and integrate new information with existing knowledge in their comics. In fact, tourism and hospitality students used a variety of problem solving strategies, many of them not taught at lecture but built by themselves.

Interactive is the seventh stage in the suggested model. After producing and explaining comics, the students should add a value to their comics through revising them again and trying to creating values from incorporating partners' contributions. This stage will help to motivate the innovative think and problem solving skills of the students. Therefore, the students can have a better understanding for the concepts and reflect the practice in it. The application of this stage will support the students need to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Assessment is the last stage in the suggested model. Lecturers should ask the students what they consider to be the advantages of implementing this type of strategy to their class, this will allow to evaluate the perception of the students in relation to the comics and if, as you considered it, it is a motivation to participate in the activities of class. Lecturers should measure achieving the intended learning outcomes of the course. In addition, they should compare the results of student quizzes and tests before and after applying comics' strategy.

CONCLUSION

This article contributes to the knowledge through developing the model of using comics as innovative strategy for tourism and hospitality students. This model can help lecturers to form a real experience to the students. The results indicated that comics can reduce the gap between theory and practice through contributing to the development of reflective practice in the learning environment. In addition, innovative thinking and problem solving skills can be enhanced through applying this model in the classroom. The study reveals that the use of comics' strategy in tourism and hospitality courses can help stimulate creativity, innovation and reflection of students on the practice of the industry.

This research has many practical implications. For example, lecturers can adapt the proposed model of using comics as active learning strategy to develop the innovation thinking and problem solving skills of their students. Future research could investigate the proposed model into other educational contexts. In addition, other researchers could apply the quantitative approach to test the proposed model on large sample. This research was limited to a limited number of tourism and hospitality students, who were all taking the same course at the same college and therefore future research might be applied to other universities.

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