Encouraging reading through ICTs: an analysis of the Monica's gang video

ARTICLE

Naiara Porto da Silva Coqueiro
Secretaria de Educação, Brumado, BA, Brasil
Erivan Coqueiro Sousa
Universidade do Estado da Bahia, Salvador, BA, Brasil
Handherson Leyltton Costa Damasceno
Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Sertão Pernambucano, Salgueiro, PE, Brasil

Abstract
This paper aims to discuss the theme of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as a medium capable of influencing children and adolescents, encouraging a taste for reading literary texts. In this analysis, in order to discuss possible uses of these tools to encourage reading, a video by Turma da Mônica (Maurício de Sousa), available on YouTube, was analyzed. The methodology adopted is a literature review on the subject and from the perspective of video taxonomy for the analysis. The results showed that the use of ICTs can arouse interest in reading, expanding the possibilities of forming readers.

Keywords: Encouragement; Reading; ICTs; Monica's Gang.

Icts e o incentivo à leitura: análise de um vídeo da turma da Mônica

Resumo
Este trabalho apresenta uma discussão sobre a temática das Tecnologias da Informação e Comunicação - TICs como suporte capaz de influenciar crianças e adolescentes, incentivando o gosto pela leitura de textos literários. Nessa análise, ao discutir possíveis usos dessas ferramentas para incentivar a leitura, foi analisado um vídeo da Turma da Mônica (Maurício de Sousa), disponível no YouTube. A fundamentação teórica baseia-se em uma pesquisa bibliográfica sobre o tema e na perspetiva da taxonomia de vídeo para analisar o vídeo. Assim, os resultados demonstram que o uso das TICs pode despertar o interesse pela leitura, ampliando as possibilidades de formação de leitores.

Palavras-chave: Incentivo; Leitura; TICs; Turma da Mônica

1 Introduction

The practice of reading provides the reader with both an immediate delight, caused by reading and the text itself, and access to new information and content, enabling them to broaden their knowledge and interest in the world and its events. In this sense, this paper...
discusses the possibility of encouraging reading and contributing to the formation of readers through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

In this case, the Monica’s Gang video "compromising evidence", available on YouTube. Because it has animated audiovisual resources, colorful composition and an engaging narrative, it could possibly encourage those who watch it to take an interest in Turma da Mônica’s printed work. Therefore, the teacher could use these resources to arouse student interest in the video and the printed work.

From this perspective, school is the environment where the act of reading is fundamental: learning and reading are necessarily linked. Throughout their school life, students come into contact with texts of different genres in order to broaden their training for life in society, opening up paths to greater knowledge about reality and increasing their critical capacity.

For Zilberman (2009), when communication takes place through reading, there is a wider scope, reaching social dimensions (representations that have repercussions in society), poetic dimensions (the way the work is written, impacting the senses of those who read it) and, finally, aesthetic dimensions, which affect the reception of the work by the reading public, and may have consequences.

The world of reading - and its scope - is dynamic and has already been constituted, throughout history, with different technical supports, in which new technologies underpin changes. Thus, for example, we went from manuscripts to printed text and now digital technology is changing practices and reaching places and audiences that were unthinkable some time ago. According to Chartier (2011), the new modalities can be considered modified forms of continuation of the manuscript and the printed text, since changes in society affect everything: the world is not static and neither are the technologies that underpin texts. Works change in response to the needs and desires of their audience.

With the new era of computers, the internet, electronic devices and digital applications, readers are increasingly using text-specific tools to access reading (such as kindle, chromebook etc.). In this way, ICTs are affecting the practice of reading, generating changes in the "classic" access to printed text on paper: the text being read is increasingly
a digital text. Reading has been adapted to communication technologies and media, and
digital books are associated with texts in multiple languages, image links, animations, films,
drawings and videos. Reading activities are multiple and associated in contemporary times,
using hybrid language, composing a new fabric of meanings, available to an audience
increasingly accustomed to the diversity of codes. "It is through multiple languages that
the public [...] establishes interactions with their peers, with adults, with objects and nature,
giving meaning to their experiences and building knowledge" (NOGUEIRA; SOUSA, 2023,
p. 02).

Of course, these changes do not cancel out previous practices; on the contrary, it
is possible that, through contact with digital texts and media, some readers will become
more interested in printed books. The technological advance of something does not mean
that the previous one necessarily falls into disuse: television did not cancel out radio;
cinema did not extinguish theater either; printed narratives did not extinguish oral tales;
comic book adaptations did not cause original literary works to fall into disuse.

In the material we intend to analyze, the Turma da Mônica cartoon, a work originally
published in comic books - by Maurício de Sousa - and, at the same time, also made
available as cartoons, broadcast for free on YouTube, we can see that the change in
technological support has not diminished the public's interest in comic books. On the
contrary, different languages come together to promote the characters and one format
strengthens the other. We can say from this that the audience of the "original" media is
constantly influenced by the new adaptations, and that the languages intertwine, expanding
the possibilities of reading practices, incorporating, in the case studied here, digital
technologies into the other media.

In relation to Maurício de Sousa's body of work, Bento and Neves (2009) state that
the artist's cultural collection covers various segments, such as printed and digital comics,
the latter being available on the internet, and there are also videos, which are cartoons,
available on the online platform YouTube. This variety of genres has won over not only
children, but also adults who enjoy the characters' antics.
Thus, with the advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), access to the videos, through the YouTube Channel, has become easier. YouTube\textsuperscript{1}, thus become more effective in the most diverse social groups. In this context, the video under analysis, Turma da Mônica "Provas Comprometedoras", by Mauricio de Sousa, with the use of ICTs, would help with communication, interaction, access to knowledge and learning on the part of children.

2 Methodology

This article is a bibliographic review study, as it dialogues with authors who deal with the subject, through various texts such as books, theses, dissertations, articles published in reputable magazines and journals. It also discusses reading, the reader, video, digital technologies, verbal and visual language. With regard to the analysis of the Turma da Mônica video, it is based on the taxonomy of videos (SANTOS, 2015) which, due to the way the content is laid out and presented, favors the awakening of the imagination, and is an important tool that has been gaining relevance in the educational universe.

According to Santos (2015), it is necessary to consider the technical aspects of the media (video), such as image and sound quality, timing, broadcast channel and subtitles. These aspects are taken into account when choosing the video, with quality being paramount in all of them so as not to impair the students’ follow-up. Thus, it is not too long for the audience in question, it has a clear image, listenable audio, it is available on an open and free channel, YouTube, the subtitles are objective and the font is large, making it easy to read.

There are also pedagogical aspects that relate to various elements, but to meet the objectives of this analysis, the definition of the theme and the plot (problematic) are listed. According to Santos (2015), these aspects relate to the purpose of the video and/or how the teacher intends to use it in the teaching and learning process. Thus, the theme of the video is compromising evidence and the plot develops with the characters from Turma

da Mônica, both of which will be discussed further in the analysis topic. In this context, it is believed that the educational video encourages children to mobilize their television references, their specific televisual reading skills, generating great motivation, including for other learning, as is the case with reading the Monica's Gang source work, the printed format.

The aim of this article is therefore to analyze how Information and Communication Technologies encourage children to read. To this end, it discusses the Monica's Gang video, with the episode "Compromising Tests", available on YouTube, to exemplify how teachers can develop reading activities in the classroom and motivate children to pay attention to digital technologies and subsequently seek out other sources of reading, especially the printed medium.

The video chosen for analysis is a cartoon featuring the best-known characters created by Maurício de Sousa, namely: Monica, Magali, Cascão, and Cebolinha, as well as, in the case of this video, Monica's mother and Cebolinha's mother. The main focus of the story takes place in Mônica's home, where she takes advantage of being alone to wear her mother's clothes, shoes, accessories and make-up. Cebolinha abuses the situation and manages to take a photo of Mônica with all the props, which aren't hers, and starts blackmailing her.

3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the school environment

It is well known that communication is the transmission of information and knowledge between people through the codes and symbols (language) of a given community, because it is in the exchange of knowledge that coexistence in society is established. With the advent of ICTs, communicative practice has been made easier, as it has become faster to read, interpret, analyze and memorize words, phrases, texts and books. According to Sousa, Coqueiro and Nunes (2021, p. 125) "the use of the internet favors communicative interactivity, since it has images, audios, videos, glossaries, texts and hypertexts, which are tools available at any time, place or language". Furthermore, on
the internet, we can find content, share it, write, rewrite and announce it, as well as other actions, so that different interlocutors can also make use of communication.

According to Menezes, Couto and Santos (2019), children born after the 1990s have various digital devices in their daily lives, such as radio, television, video games, computers, cell phones, tablet, tik tok and others. In this way, we now have a community that is part of the information age and which both uses traditional ways of transmitting knowledge (speech, printed materials, radio, TV) and uses ICTs, as the examples mentioned above show.

This current generation of children, teenagers, young people and adults are called digital natives, since they were born after the 1990s and are familiar with the various ICTs (Menezes; Couto; Santos, 2019) and seek knowledge, leisure, interaction, interactivity and forms of entertainment in these environments. In this context, it is understood that there are possibilities for developing reading practices in the school environment in a more creative and attractive way, using digital tools, since they are familiar to students.

One technological resource that is easily accessible to children is television, which broadcasts through channels such as the Brazilian Television System (SBT), TV Cultura and TV Escola., YouTube, Netflix, children's programs and cartoons that contribute to the acquisition of language, namely written, visual, auditory and body language, as well as educational content in various areas. Programs and cartoons broadcast on TV or on the internet would be a kind of stimulus for students, given that children often watch cartoons and programs.

We would also highlight the YouTube platform, hosted on the internet, which has videos of music clips, dances, films, cartoons and fairy tales, for example, which children can access anywhere and at any time for entertainment and could be used in the classroom as a tool to encourage reading. It is also possible to pause the video and/or return to a specific part in order to highlight a certain aspect for educational purposes, such as audio, verbal and non-verbal. It is possible to stimulate children's artistic language, such as the development of drawing, crafts or other manual arts and the ability to relate to others. YouTube can be accessed via smart TVs, computers, laptops, cell phones and
smartphones, which are important digital technological resources and connect to the internet.

It is well known that it is not so easy to work with digital technologies, as "many teachers find it difficult to plan their lessons using media, as some were born before the advent of TDICs" (SOUSA; COQUEIRO; NUNES, 2021, p. 129). In addition, these technologies were not part of these teachers' playtime or their time as students in basic education. Most of them don't feel confident handling them in the classroom and consider themselves (semi) illiterate in the digital field. "Adapting to the new reading modalities that have emerged can be a challenge for many and even tiring for others" (OLIVEIRA; QUEIROS, 2022, p. 03).

In this vein, Mill (2018) points out that people who were born before the 1990s did not have access to electronic devices, as they were only used by people from social classes with greater purchasing power. From the 1990s onwards, and especially in the 2000s, many ICTs became more popular through internet cafés and due to the reduction in the cost of installing home internet and lower prices for electronic devices. As a result, more people are using them to study, work, communicate, entertain themselves and make purchases.

4 Identifying with Turma da Mônica and encouraging reading

According to Campos (2008), readers of Turma da Mônica, regardless of their age, have had a lot of fun with its characters, as they always stir the imagination of those who follow the adventures in this collection. The main characters such as Monica, Magali, Cebolinha and Cascão have common characteristics that attract readers, especially children. Common are "the large ears, always turned towards the child, which prove that the character is a great communicator and is always attentive to listening to them. The large eyes, in turn, clearly show the character's emotions and frankness" (CAMPOS, 2008, p. 84). Readers identify with these characters because of Monica's spirit of leadership, Cebolinha's way of speaking and mischievous manner; Cascão's dislike of bathing and, finally, those gluttonous children like Magali.
Figure 01: Cascão, Cebolinha, Mônica and Magali.

Source: Print from the Official Turma da Mônica Channel on YouTube, de 2015.

Turma da Mônica has vibrant colors, such as green, red, yellow and blue, and easy-to-understand language, characteristics that were created from the daily lives of children.

These characteristics are the same in both the comic book and the cartoon. This is what attracts the audience to watch the cartoon under analysis in this article. It is also possible that the public will show an interest in reading the printed work and in reading other genres. According to Zilberman (2009), all strategies are significant for cognitive development, for the development of reading in the classroom through different media.

In view of the above, we understand that showing the Monica's Gang video in the classroom can be viable, as it presents a hybrid language, with images, movements and audio, made up of short sentences, with words used in children's daily lives and easy to understand.

According to Campos (2008), the pedagogical themes presented by some videos, both on the YouTube platform and on the Turma da Mônica websites, are all suitable for the student audience, such as traffic campaigns, health, healthy habits and oral health, respect for others, in other words, the use of play to motivate the learning process on various topics and encourage reading. In this way, Turma da Mônica videos, available on websites and platforms on the internet, can entertain, raise awareness and contribute to the teaching-learning process for children.
The colorful images, whether in print or on video, act as a lure to attract students' attention. The funny content of the characters' behavior (Monica and Cebolinha's intrigues, Cascão's dirtiness and Magali's gluttony) brings joy to the students who are interested in watching the video to the end, imagining other possibilities for the narrative, thinking about what the next scenes will be like, entering a world of make-believe. In this sense, this student may become interested in getting to know the source work, the Turma da Mônica comics, through teacher encouragement.

5 Analysis of the Turma da Mônica video Compromising evidence with the support of ICTs

The official Turma da Mônica YouTube channel was created on July 30, 2012 and currently has 82,644,451 views and 19.1 million subscribers. The video, which is the subject of this study, was published on September 18, 2015. It is seven minutes and 50 seconds long. On this channel, there are countless other videos of all the gangs created by Maurício de Sousa, and every Wednesday at 8pm, a new video is released about Mônica Toy. And every Friday a new Turma da Mônica Clássica video is released. This channel also contains links to Turma da Mônica’s other social networks, namely the official website, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. You can also view the official channel in English and Spanish.

In the narrative of the cartoon, the mother of the main character, Mônica, leaves home and leaves her daughter alone. Faced with this situation, the girl goes to her mother's room to put on her mother's clothes, accessories, shoes and make-up and imitates her (see figure 02). However, Chives catches the moment through the window, takes a photo, makes several copies and sends one to Monica to blackmail her, threatening to show the photos to her mother, proving that she has moved things in her mother’s absence, if the girl doesn't do what he asks. Monica, frightened, tears up the photograph, throwing the

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2 This video was last accessed on August 17, 2023. It's important to note that the number of views of this video increases with each update of the page.
pieces on the floor and gives in to Cebolinha's every whim until she comes up with a plan to reverse the situation and become the "owner of the street" again.

Figure 02: Monica wearing her mother's clothes.

Source: Print from the Official Turma da Mônica Channel on youtube, de 2015.

So Monica goes to Cebolinha's house and gets a photo of him sitting on the toilet. She then decides to blackmail him, threatening to show the photo to all his friends if he doesn't give her copies of the photo of her wearing her mother's clothes. Chives immediately hands over all the photos. He is then beaten up by Monica herself. However, Monica's mother discovers what has happened, as she finds pieces of the photo torn up on the floor, puts them together and finds out what the picture is about. The most interesting thing is that she doesn't get angry at the girl's attitude; on the contrary, she's happy because she sees that her daughter is becoming a young lady.

It's common for children to get up to mischief when they're alone. The fact that Monica wears her mother's clothes is proof of a common attitude among children. It's a process of imitation, in other words, children want to imitate those adults who are references in their lives.

The video also features negative speeches and attitudes among the characters. The first is Cebolinha's attitude of photographing Mônica without authorization, in other words, a violation of privacy. Then there's his blackmail to take the girl's rabbit (her favorite toy), to be the "owner of the street" and make the girl his subservient. We also see aspects related to bullying, when Cebolinha calls Mônica chubby and toothy. And finally, we see
revenge on the part of Monica, who gets a piece of evidence that is also compromising and takes it out on the boy, blackmailing him and even fighting with him physically.

**Figure 03**: Mônica serving Cebolinha.

Based on these negative aspects, we understand that the mediator must intervene, explain these negative behaviors among the characters, mediate questions and guide the students not to act in the same way. It is possible to educate using the cartoon in evidence, because "films and cartoons can become important educational resources, enhancing the learning of reading, writing and values as long as the educator is prepared, aware of the choice they have made when bringing videos into the classroom." (SOUZA; LIMA, 2014, p. 11).

We notice in the cartoon that the colorful images are eye-catching and cheerful. "Color is a social symbol, its meaning is attached to vital attitudes [...]" (GONZÁLEZ; ARILLO, 2003, p. 42). The presence of blue, yellow, pink, green and red, which are preferred by children, is recurrent and highlights the environment and the presence of the characters. These editorial strategies help to attract the attention of those watching the video and focus on the image, audio and movement of the facts being narrated. This
technical quality of the images and the engaging narrative dialogues with the technical and pedagogical aspects highlighted by Santos (2015).

The cartoon in question, given its narrative, makes it possible to work on various themes, such as behavior at home, compliance with family rules, the importance of truth, blackmail, friendships, fights and bullying. The speeches of the characters Cebolinha, Mônica and the girl's mother behave like "a polyphonic voice" (MOTA; ALVES; OLIVEIRA, 2012, p. 171), in other words, speeches that are part not only of the fiction of the cartoon but also of the daily lives of many children and mothers.

This voice is made very evident by the fact that the spectators are children, who watch and reproduce. According to Bento and Neves (2009), children learn the content, actions and habits shown in the narrative of the video and thus understand childhood as something magical and playful, because the cartoon, through its characters, influences their way of being.

It's worth mentioning that when the teacher shows the Monica's Gang cartoon in the classroom using digital technologies (computer, television), the students can also watch it at home on TV or on their parents' cell phones. Even those in the early stages of elementary school who haven't yet mastered reading may be able to locate a particular video using Google's audio player, as all they have to do is say the name of the video and Google will automatically search for it and play it back.

The number of children who have access to computers and the internet is growing, and the age range is also widening. Previously accessed more by young people, the internet is now increasingly being used by children aged between 6 and 11. These children were born connected to digital technologies: at less than 2 years old, they already have access to photos taken on digital cameras or their parents' cell phones; at 4 years old, they are already manipulating the mouse, looking directly at the computer screen; they like games, movement and colors; after this age, they already identify icons and know what to click on the screen, even before they learn to read and write (JORDÃO 2009, p. 10).

In addition, the use of digital devices in schools makes it easier to work with a variety of content, which is transmitted with the help of image, sound and animation (movement), which are interconnected in the transmission of the message.
It is also important that, before showing the Monica's Gang video using ICTs, the teacher gives an introduction to the characters, a summary of the story and introduces the author of the work. Afterwards, show the cartoon, promote debates on the themes mentioned, create activities to recreate the narrative, act out the events, record videos and suggest reading the printed work. In this way, the mediator will encourage the reading that was started by using ICTs to watch the Monica's Gang cartoon.

6 Final considerations

Contemporary Information and Communication Technologies make it possible to transmit knowledge through devices, applications and websites that may or may not be connected to the internet, such as a TV, overhead projector, computer, notebook, laptop, webcam, tablet, smartphone, social networks and YouTube channels. In almost all of these media we can access the Turma da Mônica videos. As they are available on YouTube and can be downloaded by saving the file on your computer, cell phone, smartphone or USB stick, you can watch the cartoon even without an internet connection, as many times as you like.

With the use of these technologies and the fact that many reading activities use hybrid language (combination of texts, images, videos, sounds, signs), available to a growing audience who are familiar with this context, there is the possibility of making a significant contribution to teaching practice. It is also possible to promote interaction, satisfaction and a taste for reading the cartoon and also the printed work, causing immediate delight and access to content for inclusion in the world of work and society. On the other hand, we understand that the cartoon, in evidence, is an educational extension loaded with different discourses and content that enhances learning to read and write.

We believe that the mere use of ICTs does not guarantee student learning, as the teacher must be able to use them as support for challenging, interactive lessons, with the necessary interventions for the evolution of student learning. It is clear that public
authorities must provide continuing teacher training, equip schools with adequate internet connection and computer labs to enable educational work with ICTs.

Thus, by analyzing the main characters in Monica's Gang and making analogies about how they can attract children to a love of reading, we understand that the young audience identifies with the characters, such as their attitudes and colors. In addition, we concluded that the themes addressed in Turma can be worked on in the classroom along with pedagogical content through intertextuality and interdisciplinarity. The video can be used not only to stimulate reading but also writing, rewriting, a new ending for the video, making posters with drawings and research on Monica's Gang, theatrical performances, presentations of small seminars, filming children reproducing the scene from the video and much more.

Thus, each activity can be planned by the teacher with the help of didactic sequences, so that pedagogical practice is guided by a previously reflected action and underpinned by a didactic-technological resource. In addition, it could enrich the use of Turma da Mônica in the classroom and also motivate students to appropriate various forms of reading and literacy.

Therefore, we conclude that Turma da Mônica broadens horizons, since it originated as a comic book, was adapted for TV and then for the internet. In the latter environment, Turma da Mônica appropriates editorial strategies typical of filmic (audiovisual) language, such as image, the sound of speech, lighting, colorful costumes, fascinating scenery, the performance of the authors and humor, to attract and win over the viewer, the reader. This set of elements promotes mental satisfaction, stemming from children’s fantasies, resulting in catharsis.

We understand that, in this way, learning takes place prematurely, because children, as mentioned above, are familiar with accessing videos on YouTube, TikTok, websites and other social networks, thus materializing the teaching-learning process and developing a taste for reading. The reader, based on their interests, draws up their itinerary and, on the internet, finds languages that allow them to interact and create in their own
world, in their own consciousness that they apprehend, evaluate, discard and modify. In this way, the reader becomes an active subject.

References


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*Naiara Porto da Silva Coqueiro, ORCID: 0000-0003-0627-5964*
Prefeitura de Brumado-BA; Mestra em Letras, Cultura, Educação e Linguagens pela UESB; Especialista em Alfabetização e Letramento pela UFBA; em Educação a Distância pela UNEB; Professora na Escola Miguel Mirante em Brumado-BA.
Contribuição de autoria: Pesquisa e escrita do artigo.
Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/7741580467058381
E-mail: naiaraporto25@gmail.com

Erivan Coqueiro Sousa, ORCID: 0000-0003-1636-766X
Universidade do Estado da Bahia (UNEB); Mestre em Educação pela UESB; Especialista em Língua Portuguesa e Literatura no Contexto Educacional, pela UNICESUMAR; Professor no curso de Letras - Português da UNEB e Professor na Escola Suzana Maria Guimarães, em Brumado-BA.
Contribuição de autoria: Escrita e revisão do artigo.
Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/0464314770776794
E-mail: erivanconsultoria01@gmail.com

Handherson Leyltton Costa Damasceno, ORCID: 0000-0003-1589-0942
Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Sertão Pernambucano – IFSertãoPE. Doutor e Mestre em Educação pela UFBA. Licenciado em Pedagogia (UEFS) e em Letras – Português (Centro Universitário Claretiano). Professor do IFSertãoPE – Campus Salgueiro.
Contribuição de autoria: Revisão do artigo.
Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/0325248827574700
E-mail: handhersondamasceno@gmail.com

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