



Comics-A road map towards English Language Acquisition

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT *English has become a universal language. Its presence and position in the world has expanded enormously in the recent decades. Many money-making industries such as BPO, Medical Transcription and IT add to the importance. So it is needless to say that English occupies a place of prestige in our country. Since the demand for the language is increasing day by day, everyone has become eager to learn English Language. But the twelve years of school education fails to give the indented outcome that is the fluency in speaking English. To achieve the fluency, Language Immersion in other words, creating an English atmosphere to learn the language will be of great help. This paper is an attempt to show, how comics could be used to attain language immersion in the primary school class rooms. Comics is a visual art, often paired along with writing. Nowadays comics is recognized as a distinct medium, capable of telling all kinds of stories and it has not only reached great quantity in sales, but also in diversity of genres. It has globally been superseded in popularity by newer media like television and Internet. With the help of this elevated medium, the teacher can immerse English Language in the class room because it will grab the attention of the children and triggers their mind. Once this is achieved, acquisition will be an easy task.*

Introduction:

In the present scenario the importance of English cannot be denied and ignored since it is a most widely spoken language. It also plays a major role in all the sectors. Especially the country like India: A land of diversity where English links people. Its presence and position in the world has expanded enormously in the recent decades. So it is needless to say that everyone should acquire the language because already everyone started the process. But most of them failed to achieve their goal of learning English. They are many reasons such as

They do not have exposure in the target language.

- They do not have people at home who speak in the language.
- They failed to choose appropriate method which is suitable for them.
- The list goes on. To achieve the indented outcome that is the fluency in speaking English, Language Immersion in other words, creating an English atmosphere to learn the language will bear the fruit. This paper is an attempt to show, how comics could be used to attain language immersion in the primary school class rooms.

Comics:

Comics is a new art, just a century old. Comics is sequential images emerged independently as ways of telling stories in other words sequential images have been used to convey information. Mostly visual language is used in the beginning. Visual language is composed of include a graphic structure, morphology, and sequences which are to be decoded, organized by means of a navigational structure which directs to the beginning of a sequence and its progression. These graphic elements lead to a conceptual structure, with further possibilities for studying event and narrative structures. On the whole reading and watching comics is a kind of play training, a pleasurable experience, triggers high intensity often repeated like.

An effective Medium for Teaching English:

Comics is appealing to the dominant senses and vision.

It not only tells story and also trains social cognition and opens up imaginative space. Comic books are today widely considered to be potentially capable of complex and profound expression as both literary and visual art forms. Later technological advancement also incorporate with comics and the multimedia version of comics also came into existence. Comics have globally been superseded in popularity by newer media like television and Internet in the second half of the twentieth century. It has become capable of telling all kinds of stories.

Comics is a powerful medium through which one can easily reach primary class students. If it is used in the teaching learning process of English, it is easy to get the attention from the learners as well as to sustain the interest of the learners. The wider reach of Chutty TV, Pogo and Chithiram TV will stood as an example.

It is true that comics is an entertaining medium. Whether it could be used for serious learning? Whether will meet the purpose? The answer will be YES. It will grab the attention; learners will be happy and comfortable. It will put them at ease and the learners will be fully involved more than all they immersed in the context. Once this achieved, Language acquisition will be simple because in the twelve years of school education we are building up a serious class room setting which could be suitable for other subjects not for language learning. The serious class room setting will bring the element fear in the minds of the learner where they will not try anything new because they have the fear of making mistake which will never lead to successful language acquisition.

Procedure:

By using comics immersed ambient will be created in which the teacher can teach all the four skills such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing and added to that lateral thinking also taught with the help of comics.

The next question will be how it will be used in a language class room? The procedure follows:

Printed version of the comics could be projected with help of OHB or otherwise the photocopies could be circulated among the students.

First level: After sometime ask the students to summarize the story, They make mistakes in grammar and also in the story line. Do not aim for accuracy. Let the learners to be fluent.

Second level: Teacher can review the story and make the students also to participate in the discussion. Opinions also invited from the students and ask the students to analyze the characters in the comics.

Third level: Teacher can ask the students to play the roles in the comics. Make them to enact.

By doing all these, the skill of speaking will be trained. In the beginning they will make numerous errors later the errors will be reduced.

To give training in writing, First few pages of comics could be circulated and ask the students conclude the story and ask them to write a analysis of the story, study the characters in the comics.

Multimedia version of the comics can be screened to the students and ask them to listen to the conversation and they have to repeat later the teacher will make them to transcribe the dialogues. Listening is very important skill through which the acquire sentence structure, idiomatic expressions and vocabularies. It gives them the language exposure because so far except the English language teacher, learners never heard anybody speaking in English. The mother tongue is acquired through listening to the elders at home.

Students can be asked to read the comics and ask them to comprehend. While they are reading their pronunciation will be corrected and how to read with meaningful pause and also the words to be stressed and not to be stressed.

When the above mentioned procedure followed, the ambient for language learning will be created. If it could be done regularly the process of acquisition will be triggered.

Role of the Teacher:

Teacher should select some interesting and short comics which is suitable for the learner. They have to initiate and guide the discussion. They have given chance to everyone and they have to make everyone to participate in the discussion. They have assign roles to the learners. They have to play the video version of the comics with meaningful pause which will help the learners to transcribe.

The major role of teacher is to monitor the performances of the learners. In the beginning errors could be tolerated later it will be corrected by making them contact with the target language. The teacher should encourage them to be fluent and accuracy will be attained in the passage of time.

It is not only an activity or drill to engage the class. It should be evaluated but in a different way by using grading sheet in which the individuals' performance will not compared with the whole class rather with the person's previous performance. The level of improvement should be traced by the teacher.

Role of the Learner:

The learners are asked play multiple roles in this method. They have summarize the story, analyze the characters as well as the story, participate in the discussion which is initiated by the teacher, need to perform the roles which is assigned to them, have to act, have to repeat after listening to the Radio and then have to transcribe. Learners should actively involve in all the process which will lead them to the context of immersion.

Conclusion:

In this process there is a chance for the learners to be distracted but teacher's ability will rectify this fall. On the whole it is a useful method for teaching English because it creates an ambient in which the learner has the chance of speaking, reading, writing and listening in the target language. It builds confidence in the learner because it is a play way and there is no fear of committing any mistake and language is nothing but a confidence building game.

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