

Implementing Comic in ELT in Primary Schools

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Introduction

English plays a vital role in this modern world and especially in Tamil Nadu it is treated as a second language. There are several methods applied in teaching English to the students but still the students are lagging behind in learning and acquiring the second language. Perfect nourishment from the young age will definitely help the students in learning the second language. Therefore the nourishing process should involve according to the age, standard and mental growth. So it very essential to teach the second language (i.e.) English through comics in the early stages.

Activity Based Learning

Activity Based Learning is the current teaching methodology used in the primary schools of Tamil Nadu. The main feature of ABL method is child-friendly education where the student involves in self-learning. In this method the text has produced group of cards which contains lessons for each subject namely Tamil, English, Science, Mathematics, social studies. When the child finishes a group of cards she\he completes a "milestone". The draw backs in this method are

- Teacher plays a minimal role in this method and so the students cannot learn the lessons completely.
- It can be suited for the classroom which contains minimum students.
- In the process self- learning, academically excellent and the average students can learn wherein the below average and the slow learners remain in the same card.

In the course of self -learning the students find very difficult to learn the second language since it involves in teaching grammar, pronunciation, reading and writing.

L2 Material Production

Comic play a dynamic role in English Language Teaching and therefore the material produced for the second language teaching and learning should be created using comic strips. Now in ABL (Activity Based Learning) the text that are prescribed contains rhymes, poems, essay. This subject matter involves lengthy and huge sentence formation and the children find very difficult to learn the language. The ABL method has produced a very less quantity of comics. Instead of placing big and enormous text for the primary school students the

material should be produced using comic strips. By using comic strips in the text, it provides the students

- A lot of white space, where they feel very comfortable with the text while learning.
- It brings an attractive presentation of the subject, where the content is so appealing to the students.
- It invites and encourages the students for active participation in the learning process.
- It also implies novelty and variety through comic strips.
- Through comic strips the material can discuss the culturally relevant ideas, history, geography and other aspects.
- The material which prepared through comic strips brings in different types of learning style namely:
 - i. Visual
 - ii. Auditory
 - iii. Analytical
 - iv. Dependent & Independent

Comic through Krashen's input hypothesis

The comic strips in the primary class room for learning English is achieved through some of the Krashen's input hypothesis. This theory deals with natural order hypothesis, affective filter hypothesis, monitoring hypothesis. These three hypotheses are applicable in using comic strips in the ELT class room. From the hypothesis the method to use the comic strips are as follows:

a) Natural Order Hypothesis

This theory states there is a natural order of learning followed by the student while learning or acquiring the second language. In the early stage they speak the language using conjunctions, gerunds with each verb, auxiliary verb which don't have a proper sentence formation. In the next stage they include articles, prepositions, and singular, plural and in the last stage they use irregular present, past and as a result they succeed in acquiring the language. Through comics the students first listen to the conversation of the characters and imbibe them and try to express in their discourse. Every child has their own way to speak the second language and comics paves the way for the sequential learning of the language which is possible according to nature order hypothesis.

b) Affective Filter Hypothesis

When students are exposed to the second language they involuntarily have emotional attachment towards the second language. These emotional attachments stand as a barrier to the learning process. These affective factors can be reduced using comics since the comics allow the students to feel comfortable with the language and the text. Comics which have cartoons create

fun and entertainment in the students and they involve in the learning process without any fear and stress. Comics don't affect the students rather it create an effect on the students. Listening to the subjects in the form of stories, visuals reduce the fear of learning the second language in the students.

c) Monitor Hypothesis

The monitoring hypothesis is the output of the grammar in the second language. According to Krashen, learning is a monitor and it acts in planning, editing and correcting function. This monitoring is attained through comics because it enriches the language of the students by simple sentence production. The students acquire the language and able to correct since they have learnt the rules and the grammar in the second language. Comic which uses lively language helps the students in their communication process and in monitoring while speaking. Students think about the language used in comics and communicate similarly when there is a break in the discourse of the student the comic language helps to correct and reproduce it.

Comic with Multiple Intelligence Class room

A class room is a mixture of students where they exhibit different talents and skills. It is the duty of the teacher to make the students excel in the language and other subjects. When it comes to the classroom of multiple intelligence second language is achieved only by comics because the syllabus of the ABL method doesn't satisfy the needs of all the students. Multiple Intelligence is the theory developed by Howard Gardner. The theory states every individual have eight type of intelligence through which they solve the problem and understand the world better. It is a cognitive theory, where each intelligent occupies at different proportion. These intelligences are found in the students where they surpass in a particular intelligence and learn the subject through that particular intelligence. Gardner has identified eight types of intelligence. They are:

- Linguistics
- Logical-Analytical
- Music
- Bodily kinetic
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Spatial
- Naturalist

These are the eight types of intelligence through the learning process is fulfilled by the students. But this theory of Multiple Intelligence is not highly fruitful in the ABL classroom. When the theory of multiple intelligence and comic is implemented in ABL method for English Language Teaching the result is highly successful.

Prescribing comics in the multiple intelligence classrooms will produce the following effects and progress in the students,

1. Regarding the *Linguistics intelligence* comics provide a large area to stimulate their intelligence in learning English. From comics they learn more vocabularies, utter the words with appropriate pronunciation, and write in the language with perfect grammar. To develop this intelligence the teacher should dictate the words, make them to write a story using comics, and make them to converse with the words they have learnt from comics.
2. Regarding the *Logical analytical intelligence* the teacher can narrate the starting stages of the story and makes the students to finish the story. The teacher can give puzzles about the words and grammatical structures to these types of students and they automatically involve in the solving process.
3. Regarding the *musical intelligence* the teacher can telecast the audio visual comics to the students. The students immediately respond to these types of comics since they have been accompanied by music and they learn to compose music on comics on their own. As a result English language can be produced in music and songs.
4. Regarding the *Bodily kinetic intelligence* the teacher allow those students to act the comics in the classroom where they willingly participate since they are posing body gestures.
5. Regarding the *Interpersonal intelligence* the teacher can make them engaged in the groups where they can discuss about the comics they are learning and as a result they absorb the morality and the mannerism of the comic characters and apply them in their personality development. Here language acts a medium to transfer the comic to their lives.
6. Regarding the *Intrapersonal intelligence* comics construct these types of students towards creativity. They learn the language through comics, take up the style in which it is written, and try to produce any piece of art using the language.
7. Regarding the *Spatial intelligence* comics persuade the students to participate actively in the language learning. As the comics are filled with cartoon pictures it the students of spatial intelligence learn the second language easily. They voluntarily narrate the story by seeing the picture itself. They also produce or reproduce the comic strip in their own artistic perspective. Comics contribute more visuals as input to these students and as a result second language is automatically developed in them.
8. Regarding the *Nature intelligence* the teacher can take the students a field trip and most of the activity done by the students take place outside the class. Through comics a teacher can bring the environmental subjects to them so as to bring out their intelligence.

Conclusion

Comics budge the children into an imaginary world where they can learn the realistic world. Implementing comics in the primary school breaks the barriers in learning second language. A cent percent communicative competence is possible only by comics because it psychologically attached to the mental growth of the primary kids. Visual effects create more evolution than the words and so when the text is produced with comics then it is very simple to widen the communication in the students.

Reference

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