A HYPOTHESIS ON READING COMIC BOOKS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

AMRITA SHARMA

Department of English, Maharaja Agrasen University, Baddi, Himachal Pradesh, India
E-mail: amrita.sh@yahoo.com

Abstract - Stephen Krashen claims that for second language acquisition, free voluntary reading, in his words, "is the most powerful tool we have in language education, first and second." In this paper, it is discussed (1) that the learners of India get stuck in the second or third stage, according to Stephen Krashen's five stages of SLA, despite practising a foreign language (that is English language) for more than a decade; (2) reading comic books for pleasure could be used to engage learners to develop their language skills; and (3) reading comic books for pleasure, as a matter of fact, is a constructive method to develop language skills in learners.

Keywords - Stephen Krashen; Second Language Acquisition; Stages of Second Language Acquisition, Free Voluntary Reading; L2 Learners; Comic Books.

I. A HYPOTHESIS ON READING COMIC BOOKS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

The education system in India includes studying English subject as one of the core subjects from the kindergarten level to higher education level. If we consider Stephen Krashen's five stages of second language acquisition model as a benchmark, then we have learners learning the language for nearly two decades. This should put them under the stage 5 that states that the learner is at advanced fluency level. Unfortunately, the learners are stuck somewhere in the third and fourth stage. It is because of the fact that the students are compelled to study uninteresting intensive reading material to enhance their skills in regard to reading, building vocabulary, and developing better sentence structures; for written and spoken purposes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

However, Krashen recently shifted to a new school of thought for second language acquisition that recommends the use of extensive reading. Karshen advocates that extensive reading is a preferable way to develop a higher level of L2 learning. On the other hand, Cobb (2007) propounds that L2 cannot be achieved without being exposed to a word family. Unlike earlier days, the learners are not confined to the constraints of formal education.

They read online about the different fields of areas. That's the free voluntary reading that gives them freedom of choice to what to read. This means that reading interests them (if it's interesting according to their needs). To support this hypothesis, a page is studied from a Manga (comics created in Japanese) named One Piece, written and illustrated by a Japanese author Eiichiro Oda, and activity is formed to cater the needs of the learner.



III. ACTIVITY

Instructions: Divide the learners in a group of 4 each.
Estimated Time: 30 -35 minutes
Step 1: Instruct the learners to read the given page.
Step 2: Trainer, then, should dictate the dictation to the learners: (Hint: pirate, anchor, sink, overboard, and strong)
Step 3: Ask the learners to draw a different scene from the comic book page using their own imaginations and the dictation words.
Step 4: Instruct the learners to write and describe the scene that they've drawn (not more than 200-300 words).

IV. CONCLUSION

The learners are exposed to the use of different sentence structures, vocabulary, critical thinking, with the focus on LSRW. Firstly, the pictorial recognition could help the learner to retain the information on how the interrogative sentences differ from imperative. Secondly, dictation words add up to learners' vocabulary. In addition to these, the learner comprehends the use of punctuations and contractions through the page. Therefore, if encountered with different activities, reading comic books could prove beneficial in terms of (a) developing critical thinking; (b) use of short sentences to practice the language at a quicker pace; (c) proper use of vocabulary and punctuations; and (d) focuses on LSRW. Also, it develops interest and curiosity in readers to read further. Furthermore, if this interest develops in the readers then it will support Krashen's theory that Free Voluntary Reading as a powerful tool to teach second language.

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