

Graphic Novels: An Embryonic Pedagogical Tool for Practical Subjects, Prolific art, and Second language; Substantiating Objectives of NEP-2020

Bhagoji, Manisha D

Research Scholar, Dept. Of English, KTHM College, Nashik, under the guidance of Dr. Hemkant Vijay Dhade. Assistant Professor, Kalvan Education Society Arts, Commerce, and Science College, Kalwan, Nashik

Abstract

Graphic Novels are the latent means of acquiring language skills in terms of acquisition of a second language and creativity in education, if it is brought as a part of syllabi in academics. Many small types of research are conducted on the GNs to find out the popularity of it over textbooks by librarians, using it in the classroom to teach English as a second language amongst Chinese elementary pupils, minor research to teach the German Language with GNs, teaching vocabulary with it and so on. With the help of available outcomes of these relevant researches on the topic, the present research paper focuses on and identifies the scope for the pedagogical implications of it in instruction in the present scenario. Along with language skills, GNs introduce a wide range of knowledge of assorted subjects leading to creativity. Language is the predominant part of the GNs to be studied however, the emerging potential skills with the use of it in academics, could be developed by sighting the objectives of the present NEP 2020. Cognitive development is also stimulated with the help of GNs. The creativity in students with GNs has a good scope for skill development. The technicality, organized story, the format, and the illustrations are some of the areas along with the language that attracts the students to it than traditional textbooks. Graphic Novels have never been considered a serious piece of literature but a format. Usage of it in the practical subjects may result in better learning and generating good taught students than that degree holders. According to NEP-2020, the education should be skill-based; considering this objective the GNs exhibit a great amount of scope in learning with efficiency. Using it in the new syllabus for imparting the knowledge and flourishing the skills will prove it to be effective pedagogical means of teaching practical subjects as well.

Keywords: Graphic Novels, prolific art, Pedagogical tool, Psycholinguistics, Nep-2020, Skill-based education, Young Adult Literature (YAL)

Introduction: - Graphic Novels vs Comics

Graphic Novels and Comics look alike due to their similar illustrations, but they are a bit different from each other in terms of the content and the way the story is narrated through illustrations. The content of the story through balloons in comics is limited as it comes in periodicals. However, the story through Graphic Novels is always complete with its proper beginning, middle, and the proper end. The story in Comics focuses on creating excitement and surprises for the upcoming part of the story that generates the interest amongst the readers however, in GNs also the story is told in an attempt without delay that makes the reader to be connected to the book until the story is read completely. GNs interpret a single story throughout the book, for example, MAUS by Art Spiegelman, Comics in contrast show events or incidental stories focusing adventures of the superhero or the impressive character of the story. For example, Spiderman, Adventures of Tintin, Chacha- Choudhary, etc..... GNs are generally designed for young adult readers so the storyline seems to be

mature enough to be read by the population but the comics are considered the children's books thereby focusing on the smaller adventures with young characters or supernatural heroes in the story-generating interest in them to be connected to it, resulting in to be the habitual reader. GNs exhibit a variety of topics making a brilliant step in spreading a thought in the reader's mind effectively; the violence & the trauma in MAUS delineates the social issues. Comics on the other hand generally focus on fictional or supernatural content like Sandman, Batman, etc. GNs are never considered a serious piece of literature but a format. Conversely, in Japan, it is called '*Manga*' which is read from right to left & top to bottom. However, the different directions of the presentations through illustration don't make much difference between the differently termed books; *Graphic Novels* and *Manga*.

Graphic Novel is the term coined by *Richard Kyle* in 1964 in one of his essays based on comics and got familiarized in the 1980s. Comics were popularized in the 1930s. UK,

USA & Japan are considered the good market for comics. As the term ‘Comics’ indicates humor; it is not necessary that the text of it is humorous or the story is with comic effect. It is just a series of short stories with an open end that can be continued with the next parts of the story or the adventure. The term is quite similar to that of the literary term ‘Poetic Justice’, according to which Good is Rewarded and Bad is Punished but most literary stories abstain from the poetic justice to make it interesting or to focus on the factual part of the life. Shakespeare’s plays like Macbeth and Antigone by Sophocles are some of the prominent examples that suit the situation very well.

Literature Review:

GNs are an emerging subject in the arena of research though countable small researches conducted on the popularity of it over textbooks by the librarian, using GNs in the acquisition of the second language for intermediate students of China, Learning the German Language with it, learning vocabulary, enhancing reading skill are some of the topics which were covered briefly by the scholars. However, besides the above-mentioned factors, GNs can be studied

seriously considering a potential or possible means of instruction to acquire the several skills through its implication in the academics. GNs can stimulate cognitive functionality as well. It exhibits ample scope in Higher education considering the skill-based education by NEP-2020.

Multifaceted GNs:

“Comic strips and graphic novels could be used in a variety of ways such as to teach history, math, science, or literature” (Templer). According to the research by the librarians, GNs are preferred to textbooks by the students. The design of the book, illustrations, brevity of the language, and attractive pages appeal to the students to read them frequently. GNs are considered the young adult literature (YAL) for the young adult readers (YAR), showcasing a wide - range of the subjects which make the readers widen their General Knowledge. (i.e. 1. *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, a non-fiction GN exhibits one of the social problems of polish Jew and the Holocaust survivors. 2. *Palestine* by Joe Sacco portrays the history and the plight of the Palestinian. 3. *The Best We Could Do* by Thi Bui is a chronicle of the author’s parents’ life during Vietnam War.) The fictional GNs

like 4. Watchman by Alan Moore showed American Superheroes who change history 5.

Anaya's Ghost by Vera Brosgol on ghost stories is a kind of varied topic seen through illustration. The illustrations used in the story help the readers to understand the story easily and quickly, probably that's the reason readers love to read graphic novels more than the actual textbooks. The story in the GN runs through the bubbles. Bubbles are the space in the illustrations where the dialogues or monologues are written to express the characters. The story gets narrated through the dialogues & the characters' points of view. Characters of the GNs are quite more popular than those actual novels. Spiderman, Sandman, and Batman, are some of the popular Characters that are known by almost all individuals. There are several other novels in which the characters are popular yet they are not known to many. For example, Emma, Jane Austen's famous character is known by only English literature readers. However, to know about the superheroes of GNs one need not be a good reader, yet the GNs make you to be a good reader. One of the researches talks about using GNs by a teacher to read aloud activities to enhance reading skills amongst the first-grade students; seems to be

quite evident in developing the reading skills with the help of GNs.

GNs - Potential Tool to Learn English Language Scientifically:

GNs are one of the good tools to learn the linguistic theories as a part of studying language easily if it is seen in co-relation and implementation of it in GNs. "Graphic novels are cross curricular and so they can be used across different subject areas" (Gonzales). "Gene (2018) has used graphic novels and comic strips as a tool for teaching math."

As per Ferdinand De Saussure's theory, a Sign is the expression of a signifier to refer to the signified. In the context of GNs, the text in the bubble and the illustrations can be seen as signs and the signifier that expresses the signified meaning story or the concept of the story quite easily in GNs.

According to Saussure, language is arbitrary. Learning different words and sentences with the actual visuals in front of the eyes in GNs helps the user to use the Langue (Set of Rules) of the second language to be familiar with its parole (Function of it). It can also be used as a discourse for the analysis of the

Diachronic study of the language while studying synchronic the language. Laryngeal Theory of Saussure can go well along in terms of studying and understanding it with GNs.

When the linguistic theories are studied through their implementation in the actual book; it's like the demonstration of the formula with practical, which helps in understanding the concept in a better way to be remembered it for longer rather; than forever. The practical demonstration can be seen either in physics, chemistry, or mathematics but hardly in languages. However, through GNs these practical linguistic theories seem to be possible and effective as well. The pragmatic way of studying the languages and theories stimulates the cognitive functions in a better way helping to acquire the second language effectively.

Considering the psychological dimension of English learning as a language, its principles say that language is acquired by its practical use; knowing the meanings of words or sentences won't help the user of it sufficiently. The English language is understood well when it is learned

contextually, which develops a great interest in a learner. Having a diverse range of the topics of the GNs helps in maintaining the interest of the reader. It also exhibits the multi-skill platform for the potential skills developer.

Skill enhancer: Resourcefulness & IT Skill

“For ELL students, creating a comic may be less intimidating than writing a formal essay. A comic creation site recommended by teachers is Bitstrips. Accessible through Facebook or its own website, Bitstrips uniquely allows students to create characters in their own likeness and the likenesses of their family members.” (39). Outlook of the GNs itself speaks about the technical skills that are required to design a kind of attractive book. The illustrative pics, accommodative to the relevant text are no less than that of an artist's job. However, the latest technology has proved to be a great helping hand in this regard to create the imagery for the text through innovative illustrations for the narratives. Carter says, “By acknowledging that there is a process behind the production of comics and asking students to consider the process and even engage in it, teachers help

students build crafting, composing, viewing, and visualizing skills” (71). To develop the illustrative design, one needs to be a good thinker, well (1) when it comes to sketching and then creating innovative pics the young generation is proactively using technology efficiently. The text that generally is adjusted in the bubble in GNs, is used quite wisely considering the brevity of the words as it is one of its important features of it. The language is so concise and precise in GNs needs a lot of changes over the words to select the pertinent ones expressing the veracious sense of the situation. Hence language goes through brilliant formation while using it in GNs. (2) Using the figurative Onomatopoeia is quite common in it, thereby making students understand the figures of speech fairly well. Justifying the creativity to design the GNs which is the prominent attraction of the book, is also considered one of the challenging skills of it. (3) Given young adult readers (students) always love to design cartoons, innovative posters, and flashy kinds of stuff, which can be useful to design GNs. Generally, when it comes to IT or ICT using it for ingenuity, the young adult students exhibit the skillful use of technology. The Convention of technology in

prolific art in terms of drawing and sketches widens the span of innovation. The young generation is quite friendly with ICT and they love to use it for their work. GNs provide a good scope for skill development amongst the creators or the illustrators.

Survey details:

The first-year students of UG of BA & BCA courses were given a small task to find out their opinions about GNs. Twenty Seven out of Thirty students (90%) developed a positive response towards the use of GNs as their preference over the textbook. Jane Austen’s Emma (Textual Novel) and Marvel illustrated Emma (Graphic Novel) by Nancy Butler were given to the students for the reading to generate their opinions about the books for the survey.

According to their opinions, GNs (which they consider Comics, before understanding the difference between GNs & Comics) are quite popular and likable for them. Students prefer GNs to textbooks, the reasons for it are 1. Easy to catch the concept of the story. 2. Convincing logic 3. Illustrations of it are helpful to create visuals of the information 3. Leads to a better understanding of the content. 4. Helps to remember the words and

the dialogues 5. It activates their imagination.
6. Makes them feel pleasant while reading it.
7. Started believing in Study with Joy is possible.
8. Willingness to continue with the reading.
9. Developed interest in studying.
10. Expect more tasks likewise using GNs in studies.
11. Expressed to be the writer and content developer of GNs.

NEP-2020- Requirement of Updated Education:

According to the new NEP-2020, primary school education for students can be imparted in the regional languages for a better understanding of it. The other benefit of this fact is that other regional languages would also be celebrated and preserved, saving them from becoming extinct. The effect of it in long run can be predicted as the pace and willingness of learning the second language may gradually come down. As higher education is designed skill-oriental thereby would be less scope for second language learning. Through GNs (if brought in academics) the pace and willingness may get stimulated saving a lot of time and following the new NEP -2020 successfully.

NEP-2020 expounds on the solution to unemployment through its objectives and the

expectations; which can be attained by revising and modifying the current academic syllabus. The policy focuses on developing professionally as well as lifesaving skills thereby molding the progeny to be prepared for employment at any stage of life. Besides the academic knowledge, the students would be equipped with professional knowledge and would be in a condition to support themselves financially. In higher education leaving any specific academic year in the middle of graduation may not be any more hurdle for them to go on further with acquired knowledge & skills till the specific year of graduation. All they need is the required skill to go ahead in the field and continue flourishing it.

With such an expected outcome of the policy, the academic syllabi must also be well equipped with a multiplicity of skills. Considering the expectations of the policy GN proves to be one of the prospective skill developers given the above (5- skill enhancer) discussed skills.

The identified skills in the light of the inculcation of GNs in academics are:

- The Language skills- for effective communication & Technical writing, to

- be a good reader, to be a good analyst, to be a good language teacher, and ultimately to be a professional linguist.
- IT/ICT skills – for innovators & creative designers.
 - To be the good narrator - story retelling (with the reference of adapted versions of the traditional Novels into Graphic Novels)
 - To be a cartoonist or illustrator.
 - To be the Editor & Publisher.

Conclusion & suggestion:

Inculcating GNs as an instructional tool in pedagogy for the practical subjects along with second Languages can be constructive & productive to the students, from the student-centric educational approach. Every student has his/her ability to understand the subjects in his/her way. GNs in instruction can make learning easy and happy for the students of all the grades including Higher Education for multiple subjects. Math, Physics, Chemistry, and many other practical subjects can be taught using illustration; imprinting the educational lesson on the young minds through visuals. Visuals create a great impact on learning and acquiring

things quickly. Learning and developing skills in writing, designing, creating, editing and publishing are the possible ways that GNs suggest. Sketching, drawing, and the other possible skills which are part of prolific art can be enhanced with its implementation of it in education. Education in regional languages and learning a second or foreign language effectively at a good pace can be attained by its implementation in Academics successfully. Learning the linguistic theories easily is possible by the way GNs are. Studying with joy and learning with interest would be experienced by the students resulting in a great learned and skillful generation than that of merely degree holders. Students can develop the prolific arts by referring to GNs for their studies. The discussion of the paper concludes that GNs can be the embryonic pedagogical tool in the instruction thereby enhancing the pace of learning and understanding effectively.

Bibliography/References:

1. Abrams, M H, and Geoffrey G. Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 2015.
2. Broden, Thomas F."9. Ferdinand de Saussure and linguistic

- structuralism". The History of Continental Philosophy, edited by Alan D. Schrift, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013, pp. 1707-1730.
3. Barnard, Henry. English Pedagogy: Education, the School, and the Teacher, in English Literature. Hartford: Brown & Gross, 1876. Internet resource.
 4. Beaty, Bart, and Stephen Weiner. Critical Survey of Graphic Novels: Manga., 2013. Internet resource.
 5. Booker, M K. Encyclopedia of Comic Books and Graphic Novels. Santa Barbara, Calif: Greenwood Press, 2010. Internet resource.
 6. Boerman-Cornell, William, and Jung Kim. Using Graphic Novels in the English Language Arts Classroom., 2020. Internet resource.
 7. Carter, J. B. Going Graphic. *Educational Leadership*, 68-72.2009.
 8. Carter, J. B. Transforming English with Graphic Novels: Moving toward Our "Optimus Prime". *The English Journal*, 97(2), 49-53.2007.
 9. Chun, C. W. Critical Literacies and Graphic Novels for English-
 10. Culler, Jonathan, Ferdinand de Saussure, Ithaca, and New York: Cornell University, 1986.
 11. Goldsmith, Francisca. Graphic Novels Now: Building, Managing, and Marketing a Dynamic Collection. Chicago: American Library Association, 2005.
 12. Gonzales, J. Graphic Novels in the Classroom: A Teacher Roundtable. 2019.
 13. Gonzalez, Jennifer. 'Graphic Novels in the Classroom: A Teacher Roundtable'. *Cult of Pedagogy*, Jennifer Gonzalez, 9 Oct. 2016, <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/teaching-graphic-novels/>.
 14. Herge, Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper, Michael R. Turner, Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper, and Michael R. Turner. *Tintin in the Congo.*, 2016.
 15. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Policy_on_Education
 16. Huebner, Thom, and Charles A. Ferguson. *Crosscurrents in Second*

- Language Acquisition and Linguistic Theories. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Pub. Co, 1991.
17. Maples, Joellen, et al. Using Graphic Novels to Engage English Language Learners. no. 1, Jan. 2016, p. 37. Accessed 29 Apr. 2024.
18. Mortimore, Shannon Renee, "From Picture to Word to the World: A Multimodal, Cultural Studies Approach to Teaching Graphic Novels in the English Classroom" 2009.
19. Monnin, K. Teaching graphic novels: Practical strategies for the secondary ELA classroom. Gainesville, FL: Maupin House Pub.2010.
20. Bhagoji, M. D. (2024). Navigating Global Dynamics in Teacher Education: A Comprehensive Overview. *Shodh Sari*, 03(01), 123–133.
<https://doi.org/10.59231/sari7660>
21. Mori, Kaoru, Abigail Blackman, and Sheldon Drzka. Emma: Vol. 4., 2016
22. Spiegelman, Art. *Maus: a Survivor's Tale*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986/1991.
23. Stevens, David. *A Guided Reader for Secondary English: Pedagogy and Practice*. London: Routledge, 2012. Internet resource.
24. Templer, B. (2009). Graphic Novels in the ESL Classroom. *Humanizing Language Teaching*. [online]. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26626104_Graphic_Novels_in_the_ESL_Classroom [4 February 2020].

Received on Dec 13, 2023

Accepted on March 05, 2024

Published on July 01, 2024

[Graphic Novels: An Embryonic Pedagogical Tool for Practical Subjects, Prolific art, and Second language; Substantiating Objectives of NEP-2020](#) © 2024 by [Manisha D Bhagoji](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](#)

