
REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION LEARNERS THROUGH GRAPHIC REALIA

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Abstract: On a daily basis, many of the teachers in English use web-based tools like Face book, Twitter, and some of them also keep blogs. Educational sites are frequently browsed and informative videos are constantly watched and downloaded. However, teachers are reluctant to use these resources in their classroom teaching. Amongst the hurdles pertaining to this issue, 'Digital dissonance' is the initial problem. As in the words of Clarke (et al, 2009, p. 57) "despite using web-based tools in our daily lives; we still haven't seen the potential of using the tools for learning." Followed by this is the mismatch between web-based tools and current curricula. Present syllabus emphasizes knowledge consumption and reproduction through assessments whereas web based tools focus more on process than product (Dowling, 2011). Finally, as the web based learning focuses not just on the product but also the process, assessment presents more challenges (Ehlers, 2009; Gray et al, 2010). This paper gives an overview of how language skills can be honed using info graphic inputs with some easy and helpful ideas for using graphic realia in a language class room. It aims at suggesting some ideas in the process of teaching a foreign language to meet the needs of millennial students and some ways for getting united for digital content creation.

Key Words: digital dissonance, wed based tools, info graphic inputs, millennial students,digital content, graphic realia, virtual world

Today's college demographics and the unique characteristics of next generation learners have generated a great deal of variation in teaching mode and modules. The traditional methods on teaching English have been drastically replaced with info graphic inputs making learning not only interesting but also effective and productive in terms of students' improvement. This in turn expects modern teacher to remain open to the sea change and take new challenges and duties. Here the teachers challenge is to capture interest in the process versus the product (of getting their diploma/degree). (McGuire & Williams in Lieberman, 2002). Teaching through info graphic inputs culminates into good results provided the teacher knows what kind of material he is supposed to select and how to use them without circumscribing the positive role of a teacher in the class room. It gives an unparalleled chance to the teacher to create a virtual world in the classroom itself. The Next Generation Learners and their Distinguished Characteristics: Each generation comes to college with varying characteristics that distinguish them from their predecessors. A new generation of learners has already made an entry into the college classrooms. They are termed as the next generation learners or the millennia learners who are determined and depend on technology and their support system. The method of teaching ten years ago is not in tune to achieve learning with this generation. A paradigm shift is teaching in match with the needs of these students is the need of the hour. The Extended Role of Educator: By observing the next generation learners it is evident that the role of the educator must change. No longer is education a mere recitation through a text and lecture style

model for this is the generation bestowed with building their knowledge through various forms of medium and it is for the educator to provide an arena for engagement and discovery as well as be a content expert and mentor. The ability of this generation also adds to the shift in teaching strategies. Creative content delivery must be integrated in order to keep the students engaged and challenged both in and out of the classroom. The role of an educator hence has extended from being a content expert to a developer of life-long learning. For this to put into practice, today's educators must first understand their audience. By comprehending the learning style of the next generation students, the educators will be more successful in creating a learning centered environment. The Approach: Millennial Students are techsavvy's. They have immediate access to web based information, yet often fail in extracting the depth for the lack of critical thinking. A teacher could retain their interest by using technology in the classroom and applying information learned through "real life" situations. Audio-video aids are a kind of panacea to almost all the problems that a teacher comes across in his or her efforts of making the teaching more effective. Realia refers to the practice of using real and tangible things in the classroom to help students connect with English on a different level. It involves visual, tactile and functional methods for teaching ideas, concepts, vocabulary or grammar. Many teachers are leery of using realia, but here are some easy and helpful ideas for using it in a language class room. The Procedure-Teaching Colloquial Expressions through Info Graphic Inputs: Curious to see whether graphic realia would work for teaching colloquial expressions in English, I applied

this on II B.Tech ECE students dividing them into with a handout on colloquial words with meanings. They were instructed to go through the handout thoroughly in a given time of 15 minutes {Appendix-1}. Followed by this they were asked to build a theme of their choice using the expressions they have memorized. The second group of Students was furnished with the same handout but some pictures that define these expressions were splashed to them in a power point show and they were asked to locate these expressions with the help of hand out {Appendix-2}. Students took active part in identifying the expressions. They too were asked to build a theme of their choice using the expressions they have memorized. Both the groups were asked to swap their papers and do peer analysis. The individual scores of all the thirty performances are totaled in the two groups to find out the group score variations. The total score of group one was 138 with an individual average of 4.6 score. The total score of group two was 156 with an individual average of 5.2 score. It was noticed that the second group worked wonders. The variation in scores indicates that an active recall practice is necessary to commit new vocabulary to long-term memory. As far as language learning is concerned, it is important to record new words in a way that is memorable and manageable. When learners are asked to memorize the colloquial expressions in English or study them they cannot experience the feel of the language as a real language used for real life purposes. Making the students practice English expressions through graphic realia creates the feeling among learners that they are learning a real language which is alive. The Insights Drawn: The use of info graphic inputs in teaching English vocabulary is perceived by the learners as useful, lifelike, and interesting. It reflected in an overall increase in motivation to learn, a more positive attitude towards learning, as well as increased involvement and interest in the subject matter. This indicated the fact that application of theory and evidence based practices to “real life” situations will engage millennial students.

Conclusion: Graphic realia proves to be the best recourse for the upliftment of modern teaching styles. The greatest advantage of this type of materials is that it satisfies both visual and auditory senses of the students. The teacher is now more comfortable and effective with modern resources at his own disposal with a partial freedom from verbal description. Yet the limitation of verbalism is never a stumbling block to the teacher when he moves beyond words {virtual reality} which can help the learners grasp things easily, with least confusion or misunderstanding. When a teacher takes recourse to technology, the purpose is to create interest among

two groups of 30 each. The first group was shared the students and help them learn things easily and effectively. Pertaining to tertiary level and syllabus constraints a teacher can use variety of resource material in the form of info graphic inputs. In doing so it is necessary that a teacher is selective in choosing the appropriate material in the classroom. In spite of the fact that some inputs are very effective they may not fulfill the aim for which they are brought in the classroom. In contrast some of them tend to create adverse effects on the minds of the students if found inappropriate. Hence, a teacher must frame inputs in accordance with the psyche of his students. If students are to be productive members of the 21st Century workplace, they must master the current requirements. As faculty, we are one or more generations ‘obsolete’ from our present learners. Better understanding the next generation learners will help teachers in sorting out strategic plans to effectively meet the learning needs. As the saying goes “To be a teacher, you must learn and adapt as the horizons and landscapes change” lets endeavor to stay current. Appendix – i Go through the below listed phrases/expressions and their meaning thoroughly.

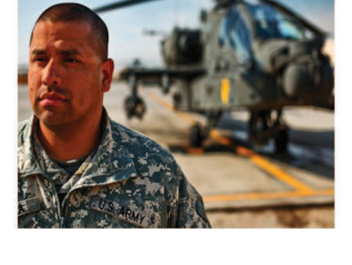
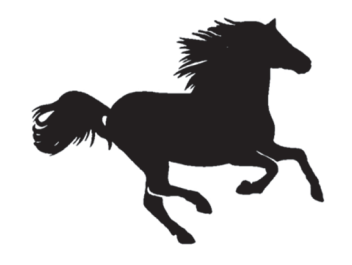
1. Easy going - simple/amiable person
2. Egghead - interested in theories over practical action
3. Bar fly - who spends a lot of time drinking in different bars
4. Bad egg - untrustworthy person
5. Chicken-hearted - lily-livered / coward
6. Chatterbox - very talkative lady
7. Fool's paradise - illusionary happiness
8. Foot tapping - thrilling
9. Crashing bore - a very tedious person
10. Cute pie - attractive/innocent baby
11. Dare devil - adventurous person
12. Boot licker - one who praises others for his needs
13. Book-worm - very fond of reading books
14. Blue-eyed - loving/favorite
15. Big head - proud/conceited
16. Dark horse - a talented person whose merit is not acknowledged
17. Dead fish - inactive/dull person
18. Back seat driver - one who gives unnecessary and unwanted advices
19. Couch potato - a lazy watching TV with no physical work
20. Cinema-buff - who is very fond of movies
21. Ever green - always young/popular/active
22. Eaves dropper - who secretly listens to others' conversations
23. Close fisted - miser, stingy person

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| 24. Cold blooded | - hard hearted | 30. Baby snatcher | - an aged person who marries a boy/girl much junior |
| 25. Copy cat | - who imitates popular style/fashion | 31. Dip stick | - stupid person |
| 26. French leave | - to be absent without intimation | 32. Doormat | - a person with no identity |
| 27. Fresh water sailor | - inexperienced person | 33. Big brother | - domineering/over guiding |
| 28. Good-for-nothing | - worthless person | 34. Butterfly mind | - fickle minded person/not stable |
| 29. Hard nut | - a difficult person to handle | | |

Write down a theme of your choice making use of the above expressions

APPENDIX - II





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