



THE IMPORTANCE OF CARTOONS DURING EFL CLASSES FOR CHILDREN IN THE VIEW OF PROSPECTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

As children tend to get bored easily during EFL classes, teachers are responsible for finding and applying the most constructive and intriguing methods to keep young learners passionate about language learning. To this end, this article is devoted to discuss one of the effective ways of teaching children, which is using cartoons, with providing final statistics of the survey that held among potential English language teachers both as a learner and as an instructor.

Introduction

Acquiring a language is not an easy and effortless process, especially for young children. Children are often more enthusiastic and lively as learners. However, they also lose interest more quickly and are less able to keep themselves motivated on tasks they find difficult (Cameron, 2001). In this case one of the most effective ways can be watching cartoons as they can attract the attention and fuel children's passion to learning process. Cartoons can be used at anytime during the teaching and training as long as they are relevant to the point or purpose. This specific purpose can be supportive to start a lesson, to keep the learners occupied, alert, and live up the class and to wake them up after a lunch break. Cartoons can be used as a useful source of improving the learning atmosphere (C, 2018).

Literature review

The effectiveness and strengths of the use of cartoons during language teaching classes have been a hot topic of discussion for many decades. Researchers have dived into the issue to examine the power and efficacy of it and successfully proved positive sides of cartoons in language acquisition.

One of the thorough literatures on that field is a case study intended to examine the impacts of cartoons on motivating beginner students to speak in Beninese secondary schools (Egounletia, 2018). In this study experimental research was carried in two secondary schools which were located in the Atlantic region, involving four (4) EFL teachers and two hundred and thirty (230) students. According to the statistics of that study, even though teachers had not used cartoons during classes on a regular basis, students found cartoons highly motivated and constructive for all aspects of language skills. Actually, exposing students to cartoons



facilitates their oral production and helps them compensate for the problems they encounter. It also helps them sound normal in their use of the foreign language (Egounletia, 2018).

In 2019, two subsequent investigations were carried by researchers. The one empirical experiment was conducted in Sri Lanka by (Gamage, 2019). In this study he examined cartoons as a supplementary teaching tool and discussed the active involvement of thirty-five (35) first year students who attached to the Department of Town and Country Planning of the Faculty of Architecture. The significance of the study is that it was carried by employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods: classroom observation and a questionnaire. Students mentioned that the cartoon related speaking activity improved their personal relationships such as positive interdependence, individual accountability, personal interaction and socialization with fellow students through mutual support. In conclusion, this study concurs the fact that cartoons can be productively incorporated as an authentic supplementary tool (Gamage, 2019).

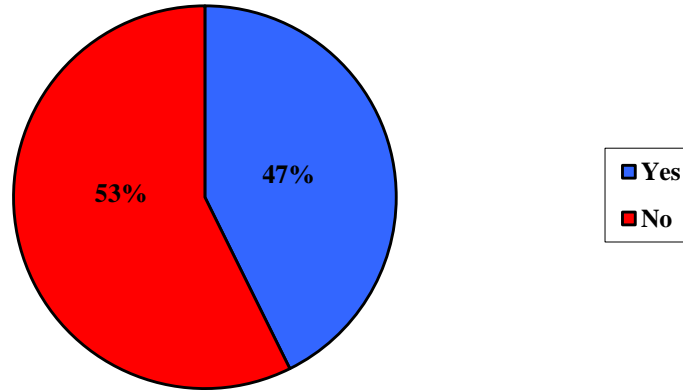
The second experiment was devoted to investigate the effectiveness of cartoons on 5th grade students (Nazar, 2019). His study involved sixty-four (64) students, dividing into 2 groups in which their test results compared before and after using cartoons. The research revealed that there was a significant difference between 2 groups, claiming the efficacy of using cartoons in teaching once again. The use of such aids is not only restricted to anyone field, but can also be encouraged to apply to solve problems of the learners in other subjects like sciences, mathematics as efficiently as for foreign languages (Nazar, 2019).

The latest thorough experiment to ensure the essence of the use of cartoons was conducted in 2020 by Ali S. Alghonaim in Saudi Arabia was one of the turning points in these kinds of empirical studies. According to him (Alghonaim, 2020) the research adopted a longitudinal research methodology aiming to find if watching English TV cartoons without even minimum use of language could impact the child's pronunciation compared to his counterparts of Arab learners of English. Watching cartoons from an early age is essential as it enables a child in a non-English speaking background and country to develop proper pronunciation skills because a child has less hindrance in acquiring the language since the process starts at a young age, that is optimum for language acquisition, and the materials provided are captivating.

Methodology

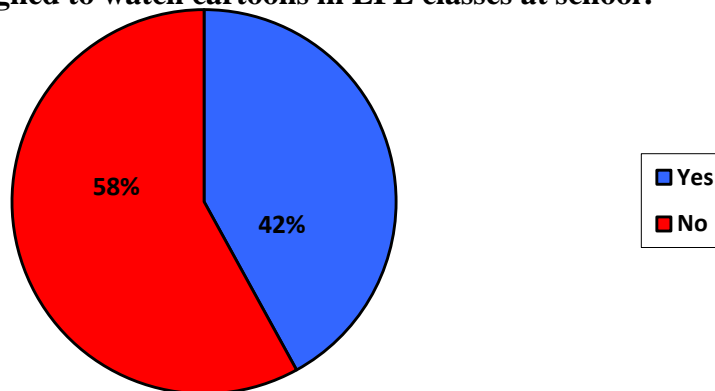
Overall, 7 questions were asked from 19 participants who are all English Philology Faculty students at Uzbekistan State World Languages University. They were questioned about their own experience, opinions, expectations and whether they will use cartoons as a teaching tool in the future or not. The students (16 female and 3 male students) have enough experience in language learning and teaching, half of them being in that field from 5 to 10 years. The design of the survey was complicated in order to investigate their perspective under scrutiny.

1. Did you watch cartoons in English when you were a child?
19 responses

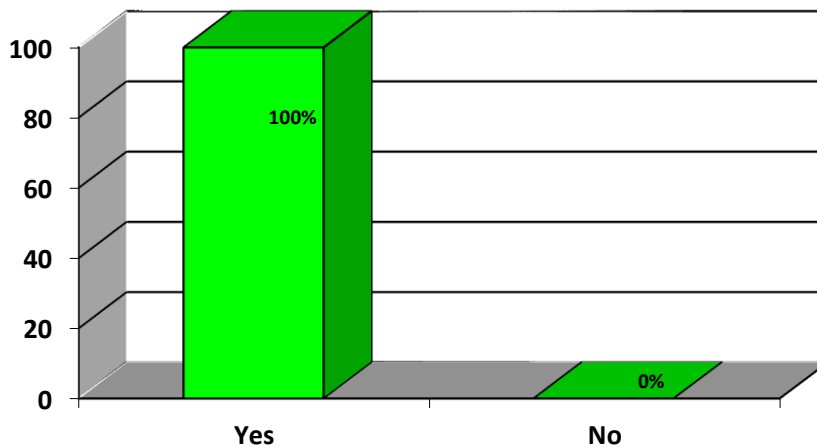


1. In the first part of the survey, participants were asked whether they watched cartoons to learn English language or not. While 47% of responders claimed that they used cartoons as a means of learning a language, 53% of students answered “No”. It can be concluded that not all students are aware of cartoons as a learning and teaching tool.

2. Were you assigned to watch cartoons in EFL classes at school?
19 responses



2. In the second part data collection students were asked about their experience at school to find out the attitude towards using cartoons at schools. Even though 42% of responders gave positive answers, the majority of them (58%) stated that they were not given any tasks related to cartoons at school. This reveals that even EFL teachers ignore the importance of animated cartoons in many cases.



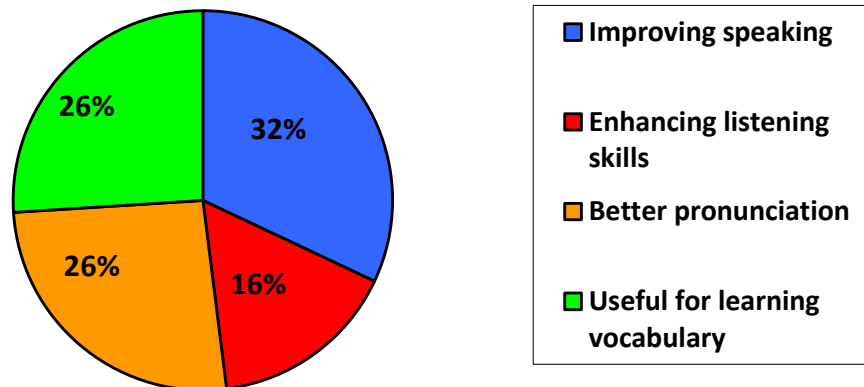
3. Do you think it is useful for children to watch cartoons in English to make the learning process easier?

19 responses

3. The third question was devoted to demonstrate students' own opinions about the use of cartoons. Surprisingly, although not all of them experienced cartoons as a means of language learning, everyone approved cartoons and found them very handy.

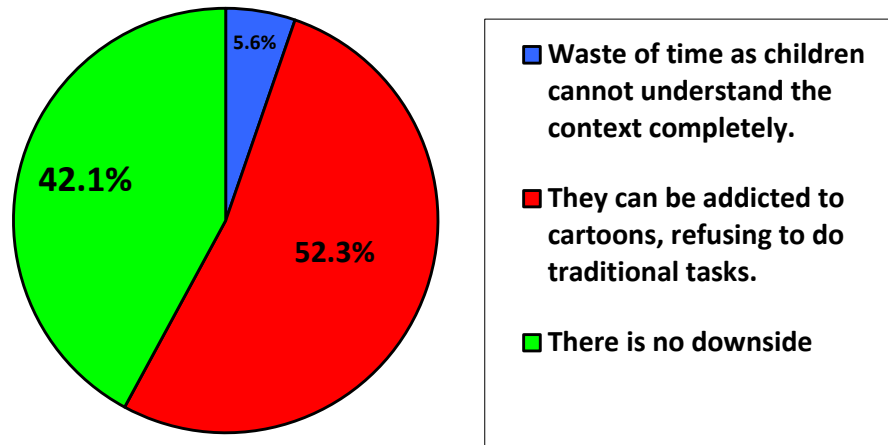
4. What can be the main benefit of cartoons?

19 responses

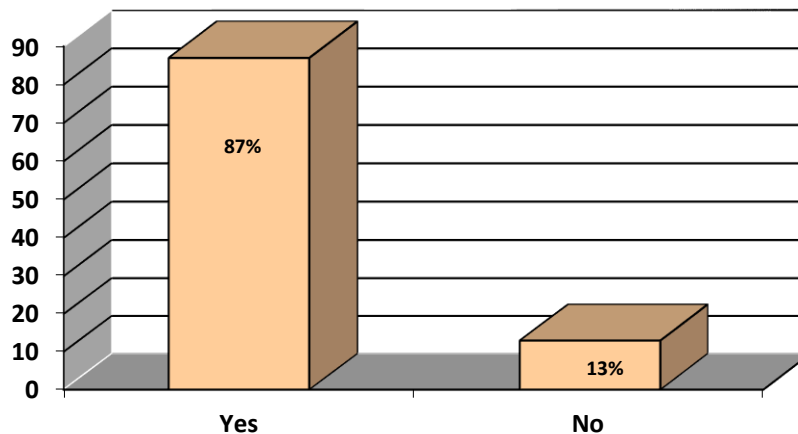


4. In the fourth part of data collection, responders were asked to select the main advantage of using cartoons during EFL classes. To make this process clear they were given 4 options, and they chose the one which they consider the most essential. The majority of the participants (32%) considered that cartoons can improve children's speaking ability, while only 16% of them thought they can be a constructive way of developing listening skills. Responders also believed that cartoons can lead to better pronunciation (26%) and can be effective method of learning new words.

5. What can be the main downside of watching cartoons for children in language learning?
19 responses

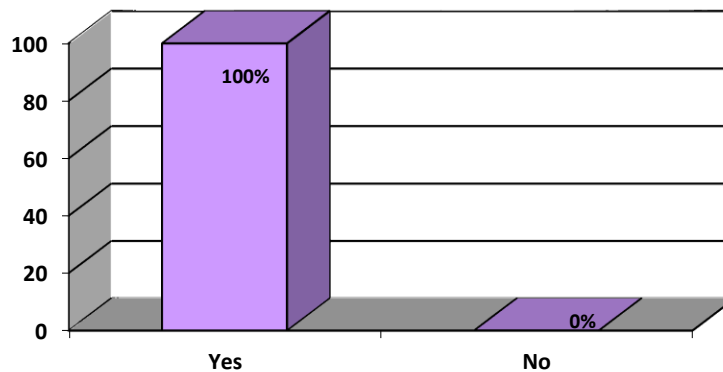


5. In the following question, students had to select the option which can be disadvantageous for children. 52.3% responders considered that young learners can be addicted to cartoons; hence they may refuse to do other tasks, which teachers often assign, mainly because they tend to get bored easily as a consequence of the easiness of acquiring information with the help of cartoons. However, 42.1% of participants found cartoons completely free from any downsides.



6. Do advantages of using cartoons outweigh its disadvantages?
19 responses

6. As a continuation of the questions, students asked whether cartoons are more beneficial or more harmful for children. The responses indicated that vast majority of the participants, namely 87% of them answered positively, while only 13% of responders answered "No". This can be a sign that shows almost all students deemed cartoons efficient.



7. Will you assign watching cartoons to your students in the future?
19 responses

7. The last part of data collection, responders asked whether they will use cartoons during EFL classes or not. Despite the fact that many participants did not experience it on their own, all of them were eager to use cartoons during their classes as a constructive and supplementary tool.

Conclusion

The study indicated that even though using cartoons during English classes was not so common a few years ago, it is becoming popular among young EFL teachers and students. The aforementioned responses proved that cartoons are very handy and intriguing, especially for children. As it is stated thatcartoon series and the language input they contain, along with striking imagery and the kinetic activities performed by the protagonists determine the positive effects that cartoon viewing could bear to the young audience and make cartoons safe and conducive language material for language acquisition (Bishop, 2001). This survey is in line with above researches, claimed the effectiveness of the use of cartoons in the viewpoint of both experienced language learners and prospective EFL teachers. Additionally, they not only have positive attitude towards cartoons, but also they are willing to use them in their future careers.

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