

Using Tattoos As A Teaching Aid In The Classroom

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Abstract

The intent of the researcher is to find out the solution for the problems that are prevalent in an ESL classroom especially the kind of material that can be used to enhance teaching basic grammar such as vocabulary, Simple structures, phrasal verbs, SVO, tenses and expression. This paper analyses the responses of a batch of 30 First year Bachelor of English students by using Tattoos as a class room activity.

Keywords: tattoos, teaching strategy, students.

Introduction

Tattoos as an expressive form of communication, is considered to be one of the most popular and trendiest art form. Most of the young Adult Learners are fascinated by this form of art and often indulge in using them as a form of expression irrespective of a permanent or temporary type. The irony of tattoos is such that whether students understand or don't understand the content, language is predominantly used in tattoo designing these days than to those of the older generations. Tattoos are expressions of one's inner thoughts and feelings; it is an emotion which is expressed from the heart and mind. In fact, the mind is like a house of emotions generating various forms of thoughts and expressions. A normal human being would express emotions both conceived and expressed. Some of the expressive emotions often displayed by humans are sadness, laughter, fear, thrill, excitement, anxiety most strongest of all are emotions desire, However, it has always been argued whether the mind could be controlled through expression. The paper also examines how text and script based tattoos have taken over the 21st generation.

As a matter of fact human beings are skilled at expressing their desires and emotions through art, academics, hobbies but we can see that the major mode of expression is through art, art can be categorised into different forms like martial art, some individuals prefer painting, sketching, designing, music, and even through dance. Tattoos have now become one such art which is both popular and trendy especially among youth and the Middle aged.

The origin of Tattoos dates back to the 17th Century, According to Merriam-Webster "Historians as well as moreover, proclaim that in 1777 the word 'tattoo' first entered the English language". Cook a British officer was one of the first persons who had mentioned about tattoos in his diaries, (Skemman) in his book documented that "In 1769 he recorded the word tattoo, which signified "to stamp". In any case, further references to the word tattoo can be followed back before, to around mid 1600,

白 White	婚 Marriage	妓 Bitch	假 Fake	真 Real
銀 Silver	金 Gold	巨 Giant	仇 Hate	強 Strong
中 Middle	夏 Summer	信 Believe	陽 Sun	月 Moon
賊 Thief	淫 Smattily	王 King	幹 Fuck	女 Girl
野 Wild	神 God	仇 Hate	銀 Silver	婚 Marriage
信 Believe	中 Middle	賊 Thief	妓 Bitch	王 King
強 Strong	幹 Fuck	女 Girl	淫 Smattily	陽 Sun
陽 Sun	神 God	王 King	銀 Silver	金 Gold

however
misty

F "A" Blessing, growing of the earth.	B "B" Boat and the spring.	J "C" Full moon, autumn and sunrise.	M "D" Wolf, seal, power and love.	S "E" Crushed ice, waves and eyes and seas everything.	P "F" Wealth, words of honor and the mountain growing.
X "G" Lightning and thunder news.	*"H" Thunder in the sky, sea of the earth and winter.	I "I" Ice, water, the ocean and the lake.	∞ "J" Good luck, sea streaming.	∞ "K" Battle between good and evil, inner peace.	↑ "L" Creature, ship, stars.
† "M" Soil of the earth, work capability, summer.	† "N" Clean, language of the animals.	∞ "O" Reign, language of the fish and food.	∞ "P" Healing, save, the good life.	∞ "Q" Heavenly powers, bearded and good arrival.	∞ "R" Arrows on a string, fast journey.
R "S" Bravest, sensitive, lucky journey.	∞ "T" Moon of the sky, fire and sign.	↑ "U" Mouth of the wolf, brave and vision.	∞ "V" Life, wind and protective water.	∞ "W" Victory, proud, great and justice.	∞ "X" Arrows, advice, heroism.
† "Z" Light, hope and love.	未 "A" Being well, good wind and eagle eyes.	† "O" Arrows in the air, unexpected finding and happiness.			

with

importance”.

Fig1-Chinese Tattoos and their meaning Fig 2-Scandinavian Tattoos and their meaning

Coonor, in his article on Tattoos stated that “The oldest tattoos on record belonged to Ötzi, the European Tyrolean Iceman who died in 3250 B.C, After discovering his body on the Austrian-Italian border”. Let us understand that Tattoos are permanent inked images either in the form of words or images and are often done so by using different colour inks and needles, up to a hundred to thousand piercings are bombarded in the outer layer of the skin just to get an expression.

Tattoos come in different designs, it depends on the individual's preference and choice, they can be symbolic using signs or symbols, religious, designs using symmetry and patterns, characters, tribal tattoos and Script or Text based Tattoos using Letters and words which are very common. However, text based Tattoos can be very meaningful, they can make a statement, express feelings or a message. To get a better understanding of text based or script based tattoos let us look at some of the tattoos people have tattooed.



Fig 1: Example of Biblical Name



Fig 2: Example of a Phrase



Fig 3: An Emotional feeling

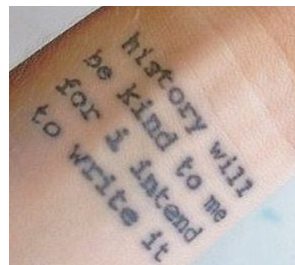


Fig 4: Another Emotion

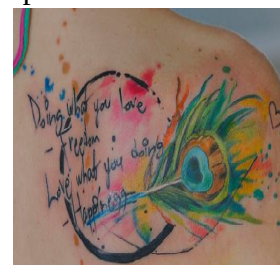


Fig 5: An expression of Love

People often tattoo either their children's name, parents name, spouse name, God, character, personality, at times even a few lines of a song or a poem, passages from the bible, Quotes may be a character or a dialogue.

In present society where everything is so fast and forwarded, tattoo shapes one's identity in a bit different way and could be described as a form of self-expression. Tattoo carries a meaning, a story, which is very own and very individualistic. That's why a completely same image of a tattoo can carry a different meaning to its owner and sometime to viewers. Therefore, making something in our body permanently in the form of tattoo and the pain of having it shows one's commitment to it. Paper or an art hanging in the wall could be destroyed, but a tattoo is something that would be with that person till death, until and unless his body is being destroyed. People carry it with them every day, it becomes a part of their body, and it becomes the new skin, in which they are carrying a story and reflecting their identity and attaching their inner self with it.

Main themes for tattoos

According to Lora S. Irish these are the five main themes for tattoos:

Fantasy

Fantasy Figures are found in countless cultures from Celtic to Tribal to Asian. For those wishing to make a commanding individual statement, the fire-breathing dragon can represent good (hope, purity, women as creators, protection against hostile spiritual forces) and evil (Satan, rage, raw power, jealousy). Other fantasy figures are more whimsical. Fairies can symbolize the nurturing and maternal nature of women or the power of the human spirit. Green men, creatures whose faces are surrounded by or made from leaves, personify nature are symbols of rebirth.

Celtic

Three hundred years of Viking invasions in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and northern England had a lot to do with evolution of Celtic art as it exists today. Characterized by intricately woven patterns that are often accented by images of people and animals, these designs may have been created simply for their beauty since no meaning for the patterns and symbols have never been recorded. What they represent, then, is left to personal interpretation. The continual looping designs, for example, can signify the continuum of life and eternity. The interlaced Celtic Knots may represent Love and interdependence.

Floral

In the art world, a rose is not just a rose. Red roses commonly represent love and passion; white roses, virginity and purity; yellow roses, jealousy and infidelity. Then there is the carnation, a metaphor for betrothal; the chrysanthemum, a symbol of optimism and long life; the daisy, a sign of innocence; the iris, a representation of death as well as faith, valor, and wisdom; the lily, a mark of purity, innocence, and the virgin Mary; the daffodil, a symbol of unrequited love; the morning glory, a representation of the transience of life; and the violet, a sign of faithfulness, humility and chastity.

Symbols

From Celtic crosses to lighthouses, symbols can make a powerful statement about who you are and what you believe. The Celtic cross, for example, is an emblem of the Christian faith, and its characteristic circle, a metaphor for eternity. Angels represent good and evil spirits; unicorns stand for power, purification, healing, wisdom, renewal and external life. The eagle signifies ingenuity, its wings represent protection, and its gripping talons ruin to evildoers. In Christianity, it also represents salvation, redemption, and resurrection. The lighthouse symbolizes guidance through life.

Wildlife

Whether you love to hunt or fish or simply love animals, wildlife is rich in symbolism. A wolf can represent a deadly enemy, or it can signify protection and bravery. The bear may be an emblem of protection, or it may serve as a symbol of healing, strength and bravery. The ram symbolizes authority and leadership; the owl, vigilance and quick-wittedness; the horse, readiness to act for one's country as well as speed, intellect, and virility. The pelican represents piety, self-sacrifice and virtue. Fish are symbols of prowess and fortitude, the forces of industry and science.

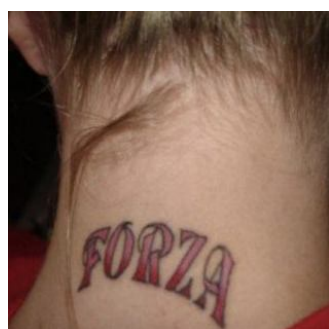
The objective of this paper is to prove that one does not require strong communication in English rather than a creative mind to express their feelings and emotions using tattoos. This art form of expression is catching up with all generation's students from Middle school right up to people after retirement all find tattooing fancy and trendy. On the other hand

younger generation of students are not very aware of the implications of the procedures but rather simply adorn tattoos that are temporary mostly in the form of stickers.

The First year students of course are aware of the tattoos but not the value of it. The students were asked to create tattoos of their own using their imagination. Samples of tattoos downloaded from the Internet were used as an instigating force to stimulate the minds of the students either to appreciate the art of tattoos or the message inscribed in it. The initial response of the students for this activity is not quite appreciable. But once students started working on their own, it became an awesome and much involving activity.

Peer-interaction regarding the types of tattoos and the messages inscribed in the tattoos has become more prevalent among students in spite of hiccups in the initial stages. The researcher has only triggered the phase of the activity often by interacting with the students. This activity in turn helps students firstly to love the art forms and secondly learn the ways of passing or transmitting message that they desire to pass on. Spending time in fixing these types of tattoos among teenagers is found to be significant rather concentrating on their studies. This activity has direct as well as indirect implications in learning a language.

Vocabulary



Italian tattoos come in a variety of shapes and sizes, including the Italian cross, the Italian horn, and the green, white, and red Italian flag (including a number of variations of it, like the flag condensed in an outline of Italy or in an outline of stars). The meaning of the word 'Forza' is 'force' or 'strength'.

Sentences



The students who are passionate about tattooing usually don't think about the impact of the sentences which they inscribe in the parts of their body. Definitely learning will take place if they are informed. This picture is such that encourages the adults to understand the meaning as well the pattern of the phrases/sentences in the tattoos.

Uses of tattoos in a classroom

- Students apply design principles (such as unity, contrast, balance, movement, direction, emphasis, and center of interest) with great skill.
- Choice and application of color shows an advanced knowledge of color relationships. Color choice enhances the idea being expressed.
- Application of paint is pre-planned and done in a logical, sequential manner
- Students have integrated the four tattoo ideas to create "one piece" very successfully. Fused images together to create one fluid work.
- Students can describe in detail at any point during the painting process how s/he envisions the final product and how they intend to reach their goal. Very focused and goal-oriented.

- Drawing is expressive and detailed. Shapes, patterns, shading and/or texture are used to add interest to the painting. Students have great control and are able to experiment a little.
- Students have taken the technique being studied and applied it in a way that is totally his/her own. The student's personality/voice comes through.

Methodology: Students were

Conclusion

There are several studies in recent years show that there is an ever-increasing rate of getting tattoo among the people from all types of ages, occupations, social classes, gender (Armstrong 215) and major representations were from school adolescents and college students (Armstrong & Pace 181). As Per Bell (53), tattooing is “sometimes struggle for individualization in a society”. There are many reasons for getting tattoos including describing personal tales, expressing individuality, spiritual meaning, fashion, marking new beginnings like birth, adulthood, marriage, divorce, death, etc. and even marking memories as milestone for love or loss (Christensen 430). There are myths that people got tattoos for personal advertisement as for others seeing and interpreting more about it (Bell 53). Study of Johnson (45) revealed that there are a lot of influence comes from television and movies where people did their tattoos on their body to make them more like to the character portrayed on the screen; not physically but through an emotional connection.

In conclusion, it can be said that there may be different reasons as well as meaning behind what is evidently seen are as varied as the people concerned. The present paper indicates that there is no one group, no one age or gender, no one occupation type, no one personality, and no particular level of social status that get tattoos. We may conclude from the subjective stories of the respondents that major motivations for acquisition tattoos varied and can be expressed here through the following categories: personal tale, media, individuality, idolizing someone, fashion, scar hiding, marking memory, spiritual meaning to showcasing body. The researcher attempts to identify a new teaching and learning strategy through tattoos and tattooing. He has further listed out certain tattoos that can be used to enhance teaching basic grammar such as vocabulary, Simple structures, phrasal verbs, SVO, tenses and expression in a classroom.

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