

THE IMPACT OF COMIC BOOKS AS A MODERN GENRE OF LITERATURE AND ART ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS' LINGUISTIC LITERACY

J. Sardar, Form IX

Supervisors – **V. Doronina**, English Teacher,

I. Gerusova, English Teacher

State Establishment of Education “Pinsk Secondary School No. 8”

Every self-respecting person should have a rich vocabulary, correct pronunciation, stress and intonation. We should use words in accordance with their meaning, have correctly constructed phrases and sentences, be able to adapt the speech to a specific communication situation [1]. It is scientifically proven that one of the effective ways to form linguistic literacy is reading books.

The relevance of the topic is determined by the fact that nowadays teens prefer comics to novels because of their visual appeal and simple language [2]. But they don't notice the fact that reading novels helps to develop intelligence, literacy, critical thinking.

To make sure of this, we went to the City Central Library in the sector of literature in foreign languages. We asked the librarian about which format of literature is the most readable among teenagers. Her answer was that comics are the most popular, especially graphic novels.

We got the same answer in the OZ bookstore. The sales assistant argued the choice by saying that the graphic novel version uses visuals to tell the story so the actions and settings are immediately brought to life through illustrations.

The aim of the research is the determination of the impact of comic books on the development of pupils' linguistic literacy.

This aim involves the following tasks: to reveal the history of comics and their formats; to identify the most readable comic book formats and their distinctive features; to determine the linguistic features of the language of the novel “The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood” and its graphic novel; to make own comics and compare them with the original literary works; to create the interactive reading trainer “The Row-er of Reading”.

The object of this research is comic books. The subject of this research is the linguistic features of comics.

Comics are fashionable, but do they affect the development and replenishment of the vocabulary of teenagers as well as the imagination. To make sure, I decided to compare my favorite novel “The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood” by Howard Pyle and its graphic novel [3], [4].

The linguistic features of the language of graphic novels lie in the interaction of text and image, where text is often a secondary element and serves to complement the visual narrative rather than its primary engine [2].

The main linguistic features.

Laconicism and subtext. The text is often brief, leaving plenty of space for interpretation.

There are many profound examples found in the graphic novel. We see how Robin Hood appears as the hangman and helps his allies and says: “See how Robin Hood is true to his friends” and then we are given a short text on top, which says the rest of the outlaws bring into action, after this the situation is not explained anymore. In the traditional novel situation is explained very dramatically with a lot of dramatic flair. The scene is described with a lot of detail about his cleverness and the trust that his friends have in him and his bravery and the bond he has with his friends.

Text functionality. Text functionality, replicas signals thoughts, to serve not only to convey information but also create an atmosphere.

We can see in the illustration the music playing by the window and Robin Hood thoughts and then we see an arrow come through the window and then Robin Hood's thoughts which reveals the hopeful character of Robin Hood. In the traditional novel this narrative really delves into his thoughts and emotion you get a sense of his determination and his hope even though he's in a tough spot little moments.

Ontopoeia and onomatopoeia. The use of words that mimic sounds, such as “BOOM!”, “BANG!”, “CRUNCH”, is an integral part of the graphic language, enhancing the visual impact and dynamism of the scene.

The best example of ontopoeia and onomatopoeia is when the men of Gisborne have the house surrounded and are smashing things and arrows through the windows which makes the furniture fall over with the thud and the arrows going “WOOSH”, “WOOSH” right past them we can also see the soldiers saying “ARGHH” when the arrows hit them back. In the novel this scene is action packed and it is described with a lot of tension and vivid imagery.

Variety of text forms. In addition to dialogues various type of text inserts are used for example speech bubbles for characters dialogue thought balloons to convey inner thoughts.

Good example is when Robin Hood jumps out of the window with a crash and when he lands on the ground he says “OOF”. In the traditional novel scene is full of excitement when Robin Hood and Marian are about to be married it is described with a lot of suspense.

Text and image interdependency. The text and visual elements do not exist in isolation, but complement and enrich each other, creating a single, comprehensive narrative system.

A good mention of this is when Robin Hood is surrounded by the fire with no escape. A figure appears through the smoke who looks like to be a mysterious knight with black armour and a black horse who saves Robin. In the traditional novel the author describes the moment that is filled with tension and a sense of mystery.

In the novel the storytelling is purely textual, so it dives deeply into the inner thoughts of characters, the details of the settings and the nuances of the plot as well as the climax.

During the English Week, I was the initiator to hold “Roundtable discussion”. Students were encouraged to bring their favorite books in English. I noticed that most of the students brought comics.

I decided to conduct a survey among the students of our school. We interviewed 285 pupils of 5-11 forms. Pupils of 5-7 forms were asked the question: Would you prefer to read: a book or a comic book “Cinderella”? Pupils of 8-11 forms were asked the question: Would you prefer to read: a book or a comic book “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer”?

We can see that 82% of the pupils of 5-7 forms chose a comic book. They said that the language of the comic book is easier than the language of the novel. In comics you can guess the plot by the pictures. 75% of the students of 8-11 forms also prefer comic books. They answered that they like to read comics, as it takes less time than reading the novel.

That’s why based on the results of the survey, we asked students to create their own comics based on famous fairy tales or literary works. 34 comics were created.

As I have poor drawing skills, I decided to make my own comics using artificial intelligence (AI). With its help I created four comics based on fairy tales “The Three Little Pigs”, “Little Red Riding Hood”, “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”, “The Master Cat or Puss in Boots”

After analyzing the comics created by AI and by the students and we noticed that both of them had some grammar and spelling mistakes, the plot was not always fully revealed, the dialogues didn’t correspond to the text of fairy tales, the characters looked completely different as I imagined them when I had read the originals by myself.

So, we may conclude that comics sometimes give us distorted plot, description of heroes and their dialogues in comparison with the original literary works. That’s why to make sure that we understand the comics in the correct way we should read the original.

To motivate students to read the original literary works we decided to create the interactive reading trainer “The Rower of Reading” which includes the fairy tales, the comics created by AI and by the students and the tasks.

Our research showed that after reading the comics, students are eager to read the novels as they serve as a smooth transition from pictures to reading large volumes of texts. We proved that reading novels helps to advance intelligence, critical thinking and develop pupils’ linguistic literacy.

The research describes the history of comics and its formats, where graphic novels are presented as the most popular comic book format. The research reflects the differences between the linguistic features of the language of graphic novels and classical novels. It also represents the results of the creation and comparison of the pupils’ comics.

Our research proves that reading comics is a smooth transition from pictures to large volumes of texts. As a result, students are eager to read big novels as means of the development of pupils’ linguistic literacy.

Reference

1. UT Permian Basin [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа: <https://libguides.utpb.edu/c.php?g=1282626&p=9414386> – Date of access: 03.04.2025.
2. GET YOURSELF A COMIC BOOK [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа: <https://www.dvothecodex.com/post/what-is-the-main-purpose-of-having-a-comic-book#:~:text=The%20main%20purpose%20of%20having%20a%20comic%20book%20is%20to,help%20readers%20relax%20and%20unwind>. – Date of access: 18.02.2025.
3. Russel Punter. Matteo Pincelli, The Adventures of Robin Hood (graphic novel): USBORNE Publishing (England, London), 2024. – 103p. – Date of access: 13.01.2025.
4. Howard Pyle, The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10148> – Date of access: 12.12.2024.