Aptitude of graphic novels to promote vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension.

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ABSTRACT

Recent research in the field of reading indicates that when students encounter language in meaningful contexts, their literacy rates rise markedly. Additionally, when word and image unite in the reading process, as presented in graphic novels, comprehension and proficiency also dramatically improve. In the discipline of foreign language study, not as much research has been conducted on the usefulness of graphic texts to improve second language learners’ vocabulary acquisition and text comprehension as, for example, in the field of reading with picture books. In order to contribute to this growing but underrepresented field of research, I will conduct a series of assessments in my new course, The German Graphic Novel, in fall 2012. The Modern Language Studies department has adopted ACTFL’s Oral Proficiency Interview and the Writing Proficiency Test as instruments to measure the cumulative knowledge of our language majors; and I aim to supplement those tools by developing a series of assessments that probe particular phases of the learning processes that contribute to reaching specific benchmarks.

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