

Role of Televisual Literacy in Second Language Teaching

Reena Mittal, DAK Degree College, India

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Abstract

In non-native English speaking countries like Asian countries, where English is learnt as second language, teachers explore innovative practices for SLT. Televisual aids are really helpful as teaching tool. The present paper is writer's endeavour to know how and why they work. Television, in present days, is used in social system by 95%. Although in Asian countries, we still don't have smart classes to show Audio-video aids to students. But Television is available in nearly every home. Families devote quality time in watching programmes. In that way, it can work as a mode of practice and learning. Second language does not mean only to learn language but we must prepare students to read, write, and speak target language. For all this, it is mandatory to show them visual aids, so they can see culture and traditions too to make their understanding clear. The present paper is focussed on the use of television in SLT as it is easily available and accessible. The purpose of the paper is to suggest innovative ways to make SLL interesting for non- native speakers and learners. Also suggestions were made keeping in mind socio and economic conditions of developing countries.

Keywords: Multimedia, Television, Vocabulary, Devices, Audio-Visual aids.

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Introduction

Invent of technology has changed the life and way of teaching of language teacher. English language teacher is always on toes to introduce new technological advancement in their teaching sessions. These days every academic discussion, seminar or workshop start and ends with introducing new technological advancement. We have many new range of technological resources which can be used and display of them sometimes ease out the task of language teachers. Two technological advancement plays a vital role in language teaching and put a drastic change; first; Tape Recorder and Television and secondly; Computer and Mobiles. Advent of Tape Recorder and Television bring Audio-visual aids into existence which bring not only liveliness in teaching but bring innumerable options for learning and practising. Television, a technology which has combined audio and visual world, brings richness in language and cultural learning. The present paper is my endeavour to use Television in language teaching. I teach under graduate students, who are well aware of technology but many of them are coming from semi-urban background with middle or lower income strata. We cannot impose them to use modern gizmos as iPad and Mobiles with all present operating system. They cannot afford it. In that case, Television, which is nearly available in every home of India, put a good effect on teaching. The aim of this article is to explore the potential of teaching through television and set out some framework for using televisual devices in second language teaching.

Sources

The focus of the paper is to use television and its contents for language teaching. We will focus on using useful programmes and clips from television. For language teaching, we will use Advertisements (for English), news for speaking, Reality TV shows for pronunciation and again speaking, Movies and Drama for expressions and accent of speaking, Game shows for vocabulary. Teachers can use clips for putting a weight on what they are explaining. The role of popular culture can be well seen in fashion world, so, it can always be helpful in language teaching. Movies and entertainment world always give us relevant matter to adapt. So, it can be a useful instrument for language teaching tasks. The main features, we can focus with the help of television:-

- Visual and audio aid
- Contemporary cultural, traditional and social life
- Second language learning can be compare with Native language as we have programmes in many languages.
- Pronunciation, speaking and facial expressions while second language usage (as they are different from native language).

Television and Its social usage

In the present times, television is the greatest mass medium of entertainment and daily information. It is nearly present in everybody's home and people use it frequently and regularly. It is, I think, central figure of every family. In this way we can use it in our teaching too. For my students, whose families are not even economically strong, television is the source of entertainment. They can talk a lot over it. They are well aware with its channels, programmes and can talk endlessly over issues discussed in them. Programmes such as Kaun Banega Crorepati, broadcast in India in Hindi, similar programme is in Britain by name of Who Want to be Millionaire? So, all this give a feeling of Globalisation. What we can do is to promote them to see these programmes in their target language. There are many other programmes, reality shows which teach second language without much effort.

Objective and Methodology

The main objective of the study is to examine the use of audio-visual aids in teaching second language i.e. English to non-native English speakers. In Asia, the use of English is so prominent that it has become lingua franca. But some or other researches are still needed to make it more effective and affluent. The present paper is focussed on the use of Televisual aids and main focus is on:-

- How can these be used?
- Main sources of these aids,
- Students attitude and opinion towards them,
- Teacher's attitude and opinion.

The points and methodology discussed here is based on the students who are between 18 to 20 years of age and focussing on ESL. Their opinions were taken randomly. Some fellow colleagues were also interviewed about this topic. They gave information about their own usage of Audio-visual aids in class room.

Television and English Teaching

Television has always extended the force and influence of the English language. Television brings motivation, confidence and fluency in English teaching and learning. Motivation is the most important feature in second language learning. TV shows are an integral part of students' life. We have observed students talking to each other as free time about Television artist, their shows and roles, their fashion, the way they act and speak. So, in this way, we come to know that in their subconscious mind, Students ape and imitate these programmes as their role model. The 'visuality' of these programmes can be as invaluable teaching tool. It enable learner to understand more because they are not only listening but seeing too. And mind it, visual clues support verbal message more and provide a focus and attention. Visual aids provide variety of themes over a single subject and 'variety add spice to life'. Teachers can put their opinion more strongly with the help of visual clips with less toil and that will put more effect. I still remember my BA III class, who were unable to follow real expression of poem, "The Night of the scorpion", but when I show them a clipping on YouTube, the class ends with emotional note for the poem and understanding the real love of a mother for her children. What we teachers can do is, to use these in our daily teachings. Although second language is not that way easy that can be learned, with television only but it's really wonderful to expose oneself to target language with the

help of television. We can learn grammatical structures, vocabulary, speaking practices that too easily and enjoying Audio-visual aids.

Television and Language Skills

Language skill and speaking practice is a broad area when we talk about second language learning and teaching. A lot of researches are being made time to time when we talk about role of television in learning language skills. We, as teachers, encounter these researches in our daily life too. In Asia, many of us learn and speak English as second language. I remember my early days as school-student, when we have no such technically equipped classrooms, we learn a lot of speaking skills listening BBC news only. Watching any Television programme involves receptive ability as viewer see and hears both, and as a result respond more accurately and aptly. But there is a group of researchers who debate that television or visual clips can shape initial understanding and speaking skills only. According to Bygate (1991:3), there is a set of requirements when we learn second language that too non-native speakers. We need to learn vocabulary, Grammar and other aspects of that target language. A skill does not mean only imitation and practising but it means knowledge of language with all its intricacies. In this respect we have two skills; Interaction skill which means communication, taking your own decision (means a learner should know which words to speak and how to speak). Audio-Lingual skill, which means to perceive, recall and articulate. So, to learn first part, tele visual aids give a lot to teacher and language learner. When we talk or explore beneficiaries of spoken part, role of television and visual aids can't be ignored. Not only this, the expression and emotion we have to put in speaking that can also be learned through these visual aids. In second language learning, normally learner lacks in showing facial expressions or the inner feel of the speaking. That can be learned by visual aids. Every language has different expression or facial movements. To know flawless language means to know with all these.

Televsual aids and vocabulary of SL

Teaching vocabulary of the second language is the most difficult and researched part of ESL. Vocabulary is second most important part of language as it provides beauty to language. We can learn grammatical structure and pronunciation too, but how can we express ourselves when we don't have words to express. These Televsual aids help a lot in learning vocabulary. Actually television works as real motivator for speaking and learning. We see and realise the importance of our target language. For this, we made a comparison among students of BA I class. They are 75 in number having no or little background of speaking English. They all are Hindi speaking, learning English at undergraduate level. Only they have knowledge of basic Grammar rules and can construct simple sentences. They were given vocabulary with the help of text book and asked to learn and reproduce. But they are full of errors. But when same class is given task after showing them clipping of vocabulary, they not only learn to speak and spellings too, but reproduce them as it is. It motivate not only learners but to me too. Televsual aids also give more expressions to the voice of teachers. Visual materials bring the teaching to mind in the future and enhance the students' credibility. They make teaching and learning clear and increase more interest in teaching more effectively. They make teacher and student closer as both enjoy visual aids simultaneously and discuss them freely. It even makes the bonding of teachers and student stronger which is the base of teaching learning relationship.

Debate for the use of Televisual aids

The most significant development in today world is towards emphasizing the question on how we can use and improve the use of television. In recent years, many researches are made about the use of television in curriculum learning and language teaching programmes. Second language teachers are always in forefront to discuss the use of audio-visual aids and techniques, for better understanding and presentation. Even USA, which is one of the most developed country, emphasize in using televisual aids for second language learning. It even sometimes fulfils the shortage of teachers as we can engage students in some video seeing and to do activities. To understand this we made a practice in our BA II year class. United States Information Agency had created a series of film namely "Let's learn English", has 132 films each of 15 minutes. It tells about beginners English. We showed this film every day in class of 65 students and other 60 students were taught through traditional lectures and eye to eye contact method. This series has audio-lingual approach of teaching and it was prepared after a careful research. It gives great and useful lessons on Grammar, vocabulary and learners wait daily for a new round of film. The film is made of simple and understandable English. After one month, when we have been finished with 25 episodes, we find really astonishing results. The group of students who learn through Audio-visual aid excels in their area. Students, whom teachers were giving personal attention, feel hesitant in expressing their real problematic areas.

We can appreciate the fact that videos or visual based learning always give a good response when we talk about second language learning. With the rapid development of science, technology and electronic devices, multimedia has taken a large place in teaching and language classrooms too. We can use audio, video, animation films and change the atmosphere of the class. Activities related to electronic technological advancements plays a positive role. Their growth has changed the concept of teaching. Their use is applicable and useable in various language teaching situations. We can understand the necessity of tale visual aids in English language teaching in various ways such as:

- **To Enhance students interest in CRT**

The stereo typed teaching of language makes it dull, boring and unproductive. But these audio-visuals not only make atmosphere lively but increase the power of understanding. Even dull and inactive students indulge themselves in related activities.

- **To promote Communication**

It is observed that in SLL, some students hesitate to communicate as they lack fluency and accuracy. They sometimes know answers but could not give as they lack self-confidence. But with these videos and visual they become closer and frank. Traditional teaching hampers them and their capacity whereas televisual aids provide greater incentives.

- **To provide knowledge of different cultures**

With technological usage, we can show students even culture of the place and country we are talking about as in India, if I teach them about winter and snow, they won't be able to understand but after visual show, the understanding will increase. Same in the case with traditional festivals dresses etc.

- **To make teaching expressive and effective**
Visual aids make teacher's note effectively and clearly in the mind of learners. They show all things clearly beyond the limit of time, place and action as sitting at one place we can show across the globe.
- **To enhance Teacher and learner contact**
When everybody is busy in visual aids, learner becomes closer to Teacher, and their interaction become frequent and active.
- **To provide better language Teaching Atmosphere**
We cannot bind language teaching in the boundaries of any curriculum. And this technological advancement gives a great space and exposers for understanding language.

Problematic Areas in the use of Televisual Aids

In spite of so many good effects, we have some problems to those teachers and learners have to encounter with such as;

- **Large classrooms cannot use it**
A big populated country like India, where normally classroom size is larger, we cannot rely on them showing usual aids successfully.
- **Dependence of Devices**
It is observed that teachers become so many dependants on the use of these aids, that they feel incomplete without its use. Sometimes they even lack notion of innovative and creative ideas.
- **Loss of one to one communication**
Introduction of Televisual devices have lost teacher and learner communication personally. They remain so much engrossed in their viewing and enjoying and hardly talk to each other. As a result, student teacher relationship sometimes lacks.
- **Lack of Innovative, creative and Imaginative thinking**
The worst use of Televisual aid is that, it makes mind little unimaginative. Learner and teacher create, see, enjoy and use their televisual clippings but they lack imaginative faculty of mind. These televisual aids sometimes become imitation and demonstration only not innovative ideas.

Some suggestions and practices to use

When we are living in technologically advanced arena, we must use it, to make teaching interesting, productive and informative. But use of televisual aid also needs a careful use with some suggestions and precautions, such as:

- **Blackboard Teaching and televisual Aids**
Blackboard Teaching and televisual Aids are complementary to each other, we must understand it, that tele visual aids have to be used as complementary and support to black board teaching.
- **Traditional teaching is Must**
Teacher should always come in class regularly prepared with his lectures and use all these aids as helping tools.
- **Excess is always bad**
Use of Television is good when teacher want to show something to support his statement or version. But a good teacher should use Television to support his material. They can give feeling, expression and practice to your version, but not your own version to student.

The Use of televisual aids in ELT

Many modern language teachers have come to accept televisual aids as a viable means of teaching second language. Those who use multimedia as a teaching tool find that it adds more interest to the class, and because students become interested in televisual aids, they learn more language skills. The integration of multimedia is more effective than using the teacher centre model solely. Television effectiveness lies in the ability to expose students to real situations, language use and pronunciation through video, sound, graphics and electronic interaction. Television geared toward language learning combines English sounds, usage, video, pictures, animation and interactive games that help students practice certain grammar structures, concepts and ideas. Many language programs come on CDs or DVDs, which can also be shown.

Conclusion

The main purpose of using multimedia technology in language teaching is to promote students' motivation and learning interest in the English language. In the non-native English speaking context, this can be a practical way to get them involved in the language learning. To achieve this goal, the language teachers should create a favourable environment for English language teaching, which should be based on the availability of information and teaching materials. While using technology in teaching if students are not too dependent on their mother tongue, they should be motivated to communicate with each other in English. The process of English learning should be more student-centered and less time-consuming. The language teachers should maintain the students' communicative competence through televisual technology. In conclusion, I believe that this process can fully improve students' ideation and practical language skills, which is helpful and useful to ensure and fulfil an effective result of teaching and learning. Barring a few problem areas, televisual aids can be used effectively in classrooms of ELT with proper knowledge on the part of teachers,

overcoming the finance problems in setting up the infrastructure and not allowing the teachers to become technophobes. At present some schools and colleges may not have facility of these televisual aids. Concerning the development of technology, I believe that in future, with the use of multimedia, English teaching will be further developed. The process of English learning will be more student-cantered but less time-consuming. Therefore, it promises that the teaching quality will be improved and students' applied English skills can be effectively cultivated, meaning that students' communicative competence will be further developed. As teachers, we have a responsibility to utilize every means in order to obtain maximum results. If educational television will enable us to teach more effectively -- let us use it.

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Contact Email: mittal.reena23@gmail.com