Audio-Visual Aids in Teaching

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Abstract

In the modern era of language teaching a new dimension has been added in the existing methods and techniques. With the development of technology and the increase of sources of information, teachers continuously try different ways to motivate students and make lessons interesting.

Nowadays, language teachers are using a variety of audio-visual aids. Along with text books, they use related pictures, audio clips, posters, video, power point slides and so on in language classrooms. It has many benefits but needs a lot of preparation, a good presentation and of course the proper equipment. Audio-visual tools can be used to do a great number of jobs. But their effectiveness, of course, depends upon many factors such as the amount of money available and the amount of time spent in preparation. An audio-visual program can be worth the time and money invested, provided that sound and realistic goals are established, which are related to the needs and understanding of the many audiences throughout the community.

Keywords : audio-visual, aids, tools

Introduction

Audio-visual aids are very important in education system. Audio-visual aids are those devices which are used in classrooms to encourage teaching-learning process and make it easier and interesting. They are the best tools for making teaching effective. So there is no doubt that technical devices have greater impact. Audio-visual aids provide the learners with realistic experience, which captures their attention and helps in the understanding of the historical phenomena. They appeal to the mind through the visual auditory senses. There is a famous Chinese proverb : "*One seeing is worth a hundred words*" ; it is in fact that we receive knowledge through our senses and this makes teaching- learning process more effective. .

The History of Audio-Visual Aids

Pictorial images have been utilized as communicative media since the Egyptian, Greek and Roman times. Both Cicero and Seneca approved of visual forms in instruction; while Saint Jerome recognized the value of object materials by their teaching of alphabet with the aid of blocks.

During the middle ages, the Church used such visual stimuli as relics, bells, candles and rosary to teach religious lessons. But it was only the Renaissance when the visual sensoryconcept began to flourish. A new natural art developed in contrast to the old one, travel and discovery prospered, modern technology unfolded with the invention of a process making paper. As a result of these technical achievement, photography,

multi-colored illustrations, radio, TV and motion pictures were used.

In the midst of this scientific scientific Renaissance Johan Amos Comenius and a group of realists proclaimed that the senses were the real basis for all learning. Other great teachers quickly joined Comenius, being influenced by the so called "object-teaching".

Audio-visual aids were also used during and after the World War II by the armed service. The successful use of pictures and other visual aids in the U.S. armed forces during the World War II proved the effectiveness of instructional tools.

After the use of training films and other visual aids during the war, audio-visual technology gradually developed in sophistication and its use became more widespread in educational establishments such as schools, universities, colleges, galleries etc.

Types of Audio-Visual Aids

Audio-visual aids strengthen an instructor's verbal presentation while helping his students capture a specific message. These aids help an audience's attention throughout a   presentation and help them remember particular information. If instructors use simple, efficient aids, they will enhance their teaching.

Before going into the types of audio-visual aids, we must define the basic term itself. Audio-visual is, of course, a combination of two words: audio- referring to that which we can hear and visual- referring to which we can see. The term "aids", used in reference to the speaker, rules out his physical presence (visual) and unrecorded voice (audio).

Training aids

Usually instructors will use training aids, for instance, instructional videos l, to help students understand a particular subject or idea. DVD-s or videotapes cover an assortment of topics, allowing he teacher to select prepared material to enhance his subject. Training aids can be played on MP3 player, lap top or CD player.

Presentation Slides

Teachers create their own presentation slides to add personality to lessons. They can use graphic, music, photos and charts as needed for each component of a topic. Computer programs that create slides include Microsoft PowerPoint, Google Presentations, Adobe Publishers and Apple Keynote.

Digital Projectors

The idea of projecting images can be dated to ancient times from the "camera obscura" of Ancient Greece, to the mirrors used in Ancient Egypt and the combination of the two for viewing and trace objects and paper during the Renaissance period.

Overhead projectors were used by the U.S Army to train groups of servicemen during World War II. Before coming a common classroom tool, overhead projectors were used in bowling alleys to project scores. Nowadays, teachers prefer this method to the traditional blackboard as they are able to face students while writing and presenting the information.

Digital Projectors allow instructors to display 3D images large enough for the audience to view and to demonstrate material or simulate assembly of components for a particular project.

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Audio Recordings

Instructors who want to include a speech or lecture from an authoritarian source use audio recording to supplement class discussions. Audio recordings develop students' confidence. They allow students to record themselves doing an activity, for instance, reading until they are comfortable with the finished product. It encourages cooperative and collaborative work. As students work in groups to conduct interviews with their peers, they work collaboratively.

Students fluency is also improved. Audio recording allows students to listen to themselves reading and suggests ways in which they may improve their skills.

Students with writing difficulties are allowed to use aa audio recording as a means of expressing themselves effectively. It also encourages students to use audio and narration feature where available in order to aid their comprehension of a written piece of text.

Multimedia

Multimedia combines elements from a variety of audio-visual aids, allowing a teacher to use his or her own materials with others'. Multimedia may use websites, slide shows, computer based training courses and TV in one teaching session. Multimedia offers an arrangement of communication tools for an audience that may include several learning styles.

Films

Films have been used by schools and colleges largely for academic instruction and not for broader purposes. This limited use of films in education perhaps has been responsible for its very slow development in the schools and colleges.

Films that teach basic truths build values and the self control and strong character necessary to live by these values. Lessons in good living need to be taught in films made for post-war education.

Effective use of films kn education begins with the film producer, not with the teacher. If the films are to teach, they must stimulate and influence the students audience in the proper way. Since learning is multiple the children don't learn just one thing at a time, but several things. If scenes are to be reminded by the audience they must be presented with force and vividness. Slow motion and fast motion photography requires a careful explanation with younger audiences.

White or Black Board

White or black boards can be very useful to explain the sequence of ideas or routines. Teachers should write a clear and legible handwriting the important points on the board and avoid overcrowding of information. The size of the words written on the chalkboard should be such that they can be seen even by the back benchers.

Paper Handouts

Handouts are incredibly useful. They are used if the information is too detailed to fit on a slide or if we want the audience to have a full record of our findings. The handouts may be given at the beginning, middle and end of a presentation. If we give out incomplete handouts at key stages during presentation and highlight the missing details vocally, it encourages the audience to fill in the gaps.

Flip Charts

A flip chart is a large pad of paper on a stand. It is a very useful and flexible way of

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recording information during the presentation. We can also use prepared sheets for key points. The writing should be clear and readable, while diagrams as simple as possible.

Video (DVD or VHS)

Video gives a chance to show stimulating visual information. They are used to bring movement, pictures and sound into your presentation. The clip should be directly relevant to the content. The teacher should tell the students what to look for.

Students are more likely to be active learners if engaged in their work and using DVDs. Learning how to use DVD features of chapter requires only a few minutes of instruction and the storage capacity is greater. DVD video has many applications for teachers. Because a basic DVD is easy to use, teachers often assign students projects using them. By providing the topic, the disc and a player, the teacher can encourage students to expand their range of options as they plan, produce and present the material to their learning.

The advantages and disadvantages of using audio-visual aids

Teaching language is not an easy task and it needs to be interesting to remove the anxiety of the learners. For this reason, language teachers tend to adapt different techniques to teach language more effectively and more interestingly. With the rapid growth and availability if technology, language teachers are incorporating different additional aids along with the text books to teach language.

Language teachers are using audio-visual materials such as: computer, different electronic boards, multimedia projector etc. to make the tasks easier and dynamic and to deliver the lectures teach the target language to the learners making the class interesting and contextualized.

Audio-visual aids are used to give meaning to words. A word description of a monkey or banana is always made more real if we are helped by a picture of the real thing, a sound, or better still by seeing the thing itself.

Hence audio-visual aids are aids to understanding. There are three ways of learning a monkey:

1. By hearing it described in words
2. By seeing a picture
3. By seeing a monkey in the jungle.

Studies have shown that the use of audio-visual aids in the classroom is greatly helpful for the students in developing an understanding of complex concepts. The use of these devices enables the students to gasp the concepts quickly and easily. But relying too much on technology, or using it in a thoughtless manner, might make it difficult for teachers to achieve their intended learning outcomes. It might also damage the relationship between the teacher and the students doing more harm than good.

Lets now analyze the advantages and disadvantages of using these devices.

- Clear images

  Learning through the senses becomes the most natural and consequently the easiest, based on the fact that images that we see, hear, touch, smell and taste are

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direct and clear.
- Reduce Verbalism
  They convey the same meaning as words, giving clear concepts.
- Good motivators
  Students are more interested and more attentive. They are focused in learning so it helps in maintaining discipline in the class. This interactive session also develops critical thinking and reasoning. Traditional teaching through verbal instructions can be boring for students. While the use of audio-visual aids provides motivation to students by peaking their curiosity.
- Variety
  It is important to use a variety o teaching methods for students with varying preferences. Teachers also have different tools in their hands.
- Freedom and Time Saving
  Students are free to talk, laugh or comment upon. Time is very important in every aspect of life and the use of different tools in a certain presentation can save time especially when the information is too long for a written or oral communication.
- Attention
  It helps to grab attention of the students.

 On the other hand there are many disadvantages when using audio-visual aids.
- Language problems
  The students may find it difficult to understand a film in English.
- Indifference
  If audio-visual aids are not used with a definite purpose, they lose their significance and purpose.
- Non-effective aids
A good use of these devices needs a good preparation, planning and correct presentation. Teachers need a lot of training by specialized agencies.
- Expensive
  One issue of importance when introducing a new technology into the classroom is the cost related to investing a new equipment and the reality of limited funds.
  The lack of finances might not enable teachers to do their best. It is expensive to use devices like video projectors, DVDs, recorders etc.
- Technical problems
  One of the most common problems is the absence of energy. For example a projector cannot work without electric current.
  The use of audio-visual aids may also distract the audience from the speech as they pay kore attention to the visual aids.
In conclusion, we may say that an appropriate use of audio-visual aids can give the presentation a really superior turn. On the other hand, if we pay more attention to the aids than to the speech they may distract attention of the audience.
So choose the audio-visual aids wisely and become a star in public speaking before the spectators.

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