

Improve Students' Listening Skill By The Utilization Of Radio

Broadcasts In English

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Abstract: Teaching foreign languages is always estimated to be challenging to the young learners of language. The environment of the classroom has improved and complicated by the advancement of electronic technologies. Modern technology has transformed the way students learn and interact with their environment. Broadcast media are regarded as eye and hear of the people because they look for information on behalf of the general public. Media have always formed an important part of modern education since the beginning of the twentieth century. From print to radio, television, and today's Web-enabled e-learning, each medium has been seen as a potential solution for the problems, inadequacies and certain ills of education. Radio broadcast is a very effective tool that can serve to supplement class room instruction especially of English, efficiently and effectively. In this article the strategies of teaching and learning foreign languages are given with the help of radio broadcasts in English.

Key words: Keywords: Educational radio and television programs, educational broadcasts.

The teaching and learning of any language has to be made keeping in view that language is a social phenomenon. The language learning always has an underlying internal social function in the community. Radio and Television are broadcast media meant to disseminate audio and video signal, messages, information or programs to wide range of audience. Radio and television are already playing a role in educating the populace non-formally through various educational channels and programs, but there is significant potential to capitalize on their ability to enhance development and learning curriculum content among secondary school students Broadcast media on its own help the populace to be conscious and aware of various events near and far away from them. Radio and

television are now inseparable with the society because of the numerous roles they play including educational function. Educational broadcasting refers to television programming and radio programming providing or related to courses of study. The term "educational" is also applied at times to other programs that are particularly enlightening, informative or intellectually stimulating. Educational broadcast is the term given to the medium's use in formal learning systems, whether primary or higher education (Berman, 2008)¹. It is typically used as a means for course material delivery, and often integrated with various kinds of interaction: for example, in classrooms, discussion groups, or via the telephone. Community radio, on the other hand, involves informal learning processes whereby communities plan, own, and operate their own radio stations. The informal learning topics of community radio typically include child nutrition, family planning, and agricultural tips. Community radio necessarily involves a non-profit enterprise, community ownership and participation, and usually a participatory approach to learning.

Since the mass media have been established, education has been put at the forefront of the fruits to be reaped or as an objective for the development of the mass media. Since education has been linked to the creation of communication systems that can reach wide populations, educational broadcasting has been identified with development and nation building. However, they are powerful socializing agents to reach large heterogeneous and widely dispersed audience. It is observed that millions of people over huge areas can be reached very quickly via radio and television by spreading news, information, entertainment and so on. Indeed, they represent powerful tools of socializing people and students in particular through their different educative programs which increase the level of literacy in the society.

Sambo (2012)² noted that broadcast media are tools that invest the past with

¹ Berman, S. D. (2008). *The Return of Educational Radio?* Canada: MDE Programme, Athabasca University.

² Sambo, M.H. (2012). *Assessment of the implementation of Basic Science programme in Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State.* A PhD Thesis University of Agriculture, Makurdi. Benue State-Nigeria

an air of reality. They provide the learners with realistic experience, which capture their attention and help in the understanding of the historical phenomena. They appeal to the mind through the visual auditory senses. Access to educational radio and television makes learning process more effective and productive. Also, those educational programs can be recorded to benefit learners by listening and viewing the lesson programs severally, hence aids their retention. Therefore, educational radio and television encourage learning, make it easier and interesting.

The English language today enjoys the status of Global language, link language, and official language. So it is relevant to review and analyze the status of English teaching and learning in India time to time for identifying the areas that need to be amended and improved. Language learning involves ,mastery of four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills are mastered on more or less hierarchical fashion and mastery of one depends on the other. The first step towards learning any language is ‘Listening’ that language, practicing the listening skill is the foundation stone of language learning. The term ‘listening’ is refers to the ability to understand, how a particular sentence relates to what else has been said and its function in the communication. At this stage the listener selects what is relevant to his purpose and rejects what is irrelevant. According to the Dictionary of Education “listening is the art of paying close attention to the conversation of another person or persons in order to obtain selectively verbal and nonverbal clauses to behavioral patterns explicit or implicit.” In ancient times much emphasis was laid on the listening skill because education system in those days was depended on speaking and listening. However with the advent of printing the emphasis passed to reading also but still listening and speaking are considered the initial steps towards developing communication skill in particular language and their relevance cannot be challenged. Listening is essential to promote classroom interaction between the teachers and students. It is an active knowledge guided process.

Initially, it should be noted that radio and television can effectively be utilized to teach individual or public the norms and values of society and reinforce same. Recent development in television has drastically affected educational procedure for improved quality of education offered to students. Television resource in instructional delivery will serve dual purposes and more efficient classroom instruction. The advancement which radio and television offer in education can be evident through accessibility to educative programs and instructional delivery like quiz, debate and so on. Productive situational delivery enhances learners' creative and intellectual development through the use of television images, graphics, audio, test motion for high quality learning. Language learning is based on the mastery of the four basic skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing. The first step in learning any language is listening. All the other skills depend on how far the learner has got the opportunity to listen to the language and that too by authentic speakers of that language. As English language is not the mother tongue (MT) of any group of people in India, so children do not get much practice in listening, as a consequence their speaking skill is also adversely affected. Although new approaches to English teaching like behavioral and humanistic approaches provide better scope for practicing these skills but English teaching in Indian schools have not been oriented according to these approaches. The need of the hour is, that our English teachers get well trained in the four basic skills so that they can be a model speaker with accurate pronunciation and accent for their students and are well prepared to use modern techniques and modern approaches to make English teaching interesting and flawless for their students and are well equipped to supplement their classroom English teaching with other medias. Radio is a powerful media at present in our country due to its economic feasibility and its wide broadcasting. It offers the possibility of extensive deployment in education because of available infrastructure and low cost of producing programmes. Radio is the electronic magic carpet that has the capacity to transport educational

opportunities to faraway places impacting our social, political and cultural life.

Radio broadcast and interactive radio is a very good tool that can serve to supplement class room instruction especially of English efficiently and effectively. Radio educational programmes can provide good speakers of English to students and give them a very clear and interesting explanation of grammatical concepts. Interactive radio can help to improve speaking skill. Although Radio broadcast no doubt has its potential in education but it has not been very well accepted and adequately utilized by schools. One of the main reasons of this is that teachers are not sensitive and are not trained to integrate the radio programmes with their class room teaching. The present paper discusses the ways to utilize radio in helping English teacher trainees to master English language in an effective manner and help them to utilize the benefit of radio in English learning of their students. One of television's most obvious characteristics is its visual aspect. Humans intuitively grasp the power of images to convey meaning, as can be seen in the old adage that values a picture at a thousand times the value of a word. Research in the past two decades has proven what we intuitively know: our brains deal with images differently than print (Saglik & Ozturk, 2001)³. Words are processed in the neocortex where the higher thinking capability of the brain resides. Pictures, however, are handled in the limbic system, rapidly, and trigger instinct, emotion, and impulse (Omenesa, 1997)⁴. Because brains are programmed to remember experiences that have an emotional component, television has a powerful ability to relay experience through the emotions evoked by images. By listening to radio broadcasts some aspects are easily absorbed by the learners.

Subject: Various subjects like mathematics, English language, Yoruba and technological-based subjects are disseminated on radio and television to teach

³ Saglik, Mediha & Ozturk, Serap (2001) Television as an Educational Technology: Using Television At Open Education Faculty, Anadolu University. Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education-TOJDE. 2 (1) 6-21 retrieved from <https://tojde.anadolu.edu.tr/tojde3/pdf/6.pdf>

⁴ Omenesa Z.E. (1997) Rural agricultural radio in Nigeria. An overview of the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Service (NAERLS) Farm Broadcaster. J. Agric Ext. pp. 74-81.

children. This can have titles like ‘my TV teacher’, ‘TV education show’, EST.

Brain Test: Children are also educated and tested through brain test competition shows such as TV quiz, who wants to be a millionaire, work it out, and so on.

Listening podcasts are not new topic to discuss in teaching English. Educational radio and television are very important for several reasons. First, it helps in the delivery of quality educational programs to audience. Learners have the opportunity of listening or viewing relevant educational programs which indirectly enhance their understanding and stimulate their interest towards learning. Radio is the electronic magic carpet that has the capacity to transport educational opportunities to faraway places impacting our social, political and cultural life. The radio educational programmes support the system that is providing facilities to dropouts and those who have not yet entered mainstream education as well as working towards quality enhancement also. s. Radio has potential to be a tremendous resource for learning and dissemination that only requires a radio and an adult facilitator, and it reaches large numbers of teachers and learners who are isolated by distance and poor infrastructure. It can be used in almost any setting, from formal classrooms to community learning centers to outdoor venues. Radio educational programmes can provide good speakers of English to students and give them a very clear and interesting explanation of grammatical concepts. Interactive radio can help to improve speaking skill. Also, material can be recorded from it, preserved and played later to learners. Apart from prepared lessons that are relayed, learners can pickup expressions, vocabulary, pronunciation and other elements of language from the radio. It is also extremely useful for teaching listening comprehension, and particularly valuable in bringing native speakers closer to the learner. The impact of this English Radio Course on Listening and Spoken English Skills of Students was seen as follows.

There was a deep impact of radio course on the listening and spoken English

skills of large numbers of students who have been listened to the broadcasts of English radio course. Teachers were extremely appreciative that the radio lessons helped them to teach spoken English, and that the lessons fulfilled a real need to improve the confidence and abilities of their students to speak English. In the present era of technology Radio has also modified its form. Its scope is widened by accessibility on mobiles, online channels; face book links of radio channels and programmes, as well as interactive radio. Secondly, it helps to increase access to formal education. Educational radio or television can offer a distance education secondary equivalency program for out-of- school youth and adults. Thirdly, educational radio and television programs help to support classes with under qualified teachers. It has been observed that most of the educational Radio or Television channels teach effectively and interestingly various secondary school subject topics. This has been particularly true in the science subjects where teachers are scarce. Fourth, educational radio or television programs expand the experiences of the children. For examples, in sciences, the programs can demonstrate many experiments that would not be possible to do in regular classrooms or even in laboratories. Thus, strengthens the teaching and learning process.

There have been some researches to delve into the importance of listening podcasts in English. The researchers found that younger children, especially those aged 2 and 3, who watched a few hours a week of educational programs had higher scoring on academic tests 3 years later than children who did not watch the programs. Younger children who spent many hours watching entertainment programs had lower test scores than those who watched fewer hours. "Viewing of educational programming was associated with better school readiness and better academic skills," "Watching educational television may be an important vehicle for children to get some early learning that can really make a positive contribution." Empirically, radio and television are capable of delivering high quality educational

program to highly diversified audience located across broad geographical expanses-all at a low per unit production cost. Also, United Kingdom Universities have demonstrated that when used as supplementary learning tools, they benefit weaker students (Tripp and Roby, 1996)⁵. The Agency for International Development has shown educational radio and television to be more cost effective and capable of exerting greater learning effect on secondary school students than textbook or teacher education.

There are many strategies and methods have been put into practice to improve student's listening skill. And one of them is interactive radio instruction (IRI) which is operated in English consists of broadcasting lessons to audience on a daily basis, on a particular topic and aimed at specific level. It provides regular structure assistance to teachers and serves to improve the quality of teachers and serves to improve the quality of teaching and enhance learning. IRI also serves to expand access to education, by bringing ready-made lessons to remote schools and learning centers which have few resources and teachers. It is also a cost-effective means of delivering educational content to a large number of people. Interactive Radio Instruction Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) is an innovative, interactive pedagogy; it is a methodology in which a radio broadcast guides a teacher and learners through the activities of a lesson. While listening to the radio, learners actively participate in the lesson by singing, reading, writing, answering questions and solving problems in ways that ensure active learning. IRI is an active teaching methodology designed to make learning fun, is aimed at, improve educational quality, making teaching participatory through Radio broadcast also, providing a forum to teachers and students for sharing their problems and discussing their views with experts and other members of their communities, giving practice in communication skills.

Furthermore, Interactive Radio Instruction will be an extra benefit towards

⁵ (Tripp and Roby, 1996)⁵. The effects of TV on speech education. Educational Research and Reviews, 8(2), 63-68.

improving the quality of English learning and teaching a foreign language effectively. It allows listeners to be able to not only hear English being spoken, but gives them opportunities during the radio lesson itself to speak in English. It can very well employ bilingual approach of English learning in regional medium government schools - where English is rarely spoken or heard, and is taught by teachers whose own knowledge of English is very limited. The bilingual approach helps students to engage in their own learning, and to understand and enjoy English, rather than learning it by rote. Proper exams of listening and speaking skill can be conducted through Interactive Radio. This Interactive Radio Instruction has been very successfully used to teach English, other school subjects and educational programmes for adults in a number of other countries. Although Radio broadcast, no doubt has its potential in education and few courses are running successfully but it has not been very well accepted and adequately utilized by schools all over the country One of the main reason is, that teachers are not sensitive and trained to integrate the radio programmes with their class room teaching. There is an urgent need of well planned and organized strategies to help English teacher trainees to master English language in an effective manner and help them to utilize the benefits of radio in English learning of their students. These are certain suggestive measures of how Radio Broadcast can be used to enhance the proficiency of English teachers in our country. Regular classes to listen to the educational broadcast from radio channels should be made essential. It can be made available in their home or institutes and that should be supplemented by feedback and assignments on it so that their participation is ensured. Refresher courses for teachers, educators should be organized through radio broadcast and IR session Contact programmes for English teacher trainees and in-service teachers to give them help and guidance to utilize radio in their classes in an effective way. The schedule of radio broadcast specially designed for in-service teachers should be revised according to their comfort. Some of the enthusiastic and willing teachers

should be selected and trained to develop scrip writing for radio programmes and conduct IR sessions so that they can take initiative to run such programmes from their local radio channels or community radio. Appraisals of teachers should be done considering their participation in such programmes to motivate them.

Television lessons can be used to supplement other course materials or can be stand-alone lessons. Such lessons have progressed over the years from simply being television programs showing teachers talking, to being more engaging and interactive programs which incorporate issues relevant to the learners. Educational television programs are often accompanied by printed materials and other resources to enhance learning and interaction. These are mostly practiced in advance country or any civilized world.

More so, educational broadcasting, aside from being used for broadcasting specific lessons, radio and television can be used to broadcast general educational programs. Basically, any radio or television program with educational value can be considered a 'general educational program'. While general educational programming consists of a broad range of program types - news programs, documentary programs, quiz shows, educational cartoons est., that afford non-formal educational opportunities for all types of learners. In a sense, any radio or television program with informational and educational values can be considered under this type.

As a final point, all language skills are very important and the teacher should work to improve them. It was found that both methods podcasts and television improved all language skills. However, podcasts improved listening comprehension as it is based on the students' perceptive ability.

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