Multimedia in English Language Teaching

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the uses of the Multimedia in English Language Teaching. Multimedia technology and language teaching have gone hand to hand for a long time and contributed as teaching tools in the language classrooms. However, multimedia technology is still a source of fears and insecurity for many teachers everywhere around the world despite the latest developments applicable to language teaching such as websites, blogs, online journals, teaching methodology and so on. Nowadays it has become fashionable to talk of all these aids as the most important aids in teaching English. And, understandably, this has developed in the teachers of our country a cynical attitude towards all teaching aids. Technology is no longer simply contributing machinery or making authentic material or more resources authentic material or more resources available that teachers can use; it also provides learners with greater access to the target language. As a result, it has the potential to change where and when learning takes place. Furthermore, it can even shape how we view the nature of what it is that we teach. No effective teaching is possible without appropriate aids. This is perhaps more true of teaching as second-language than of teaching one's own mother tongue or a subject. This paper also aims to make non-native speakers of English as language teachers aware of the strategies to use it in an effective manner.

Keywords: English language teaching, multimedia technology, communicative competence, interaction

Introduction

There are two main ways to think about technology for language learning: technology as providing teaching resources and technology as providing enhanced learning experiences. On the one hand, if we think of technology as providing resources, then it is clear that technology has long been associated with language teaching. For years, the technology may have only been chalk and a blackboard. Later, film strips, audio, and video recording and playback equipment were additions to the technological tools available to many teachers. These days, of course, there are digital technological resources that teachers can draw on. The Interest, which connects millions of computers around the world, makes it possible to communicate from one computer to

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another. As a result, the World Wide Web (www or the web), a way of accessing information over the Internet, has enabled teachers to find authentic written, audio and visual texts on most any topic imaginable. There is a breadth and depth of material available for those who know how to surf the web, i.e. use online research tools known as 'search engines' to fund it.

Uses of Multimedia in Teaching English

It is possible to make good use of excellent speakers of English and efficient teachers of language to give programmes and they may be broadcast in any multimedia. They will benefit the students. Without the teachers and the class, it is possible, with the help of any multimedia, to disseminate knowledge at any place. They may fulfill the dearth of the teachers. A good number of students can be collected at a place and can be asked to listen to a particular programme. Multimedia is a good aid for teaching pronunciation. Students may listen to the experts in the field. Every now and then people with good oratorical skills are giving lectures on the multimedia.

There are three stages in a Multimedia lesson. They are: 1) Preparation 2) Listening 3) Follow up. The teacher should tell the pupils what they have to listen. He may give an appropriate introduction. Students must listen to the programme carefully. Afterwards, the teacher puts questions to find out how far they have comprehended the programme. Valuable Media programmes may be recorded and played back when desired. Senior students may be encouraged to listen to news broadcasts and other such programmes in English. This will enrich their knowledge of language and current affairs.

Sophisticated Aids

Multimedia Aids are audio-visual aids. Radio, Television, Video, Computer, Language Laboratory are visual aids. They have become very popular and also better advantages. They appeal to the eyes as well as ears. If they are put to best use they can be very good tools of instruction. Computers also provide the means to access online dictionaries, grammar and style checkers, and concordances. On the other hand, if we think of technology as providing enhanced learning experiences, then the implications are even greater; Technology is no longer simply contributing machinery or making authentic material or more resources available that teachers can use; it also provides learners with greater access to the target language. As a result, it has the potential to change where and when learning takes place. Furthermore, it can even shape how we view the nature of what it is that we teach.

Poetry can be taught with the help of a tape recorder with ease and delight. The record of a poem can be played and replayed; hearing the poem again and again, especially when it is a professional version, is to get at its beauties and meaning gradually. The students will learn to read a poem well only if they hear it well read or said. The professional rendering of a poem

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played by the tape recorder will enable the students to appreciate the important of sound, inflection, stress, pause, intonation, etc, in poetry. The technique of teaching poetry with the help of multimedia has many possible variations. There is no one correct and definitive interpretation of a poem. It is the best therefore to make a clear and obvious decision as to what is important and try to stick to it. The rhythm must be clearly defined, pauses and stresses carefully marked. The teacher first of all reads the poem to the class, trying to give his very best performance.

A language laboratory is a room in which the students are isolated from each other by soundproof walls. Each room has the necessary equipment for practice by the students. The advantages of the set-up are that each student can practice speaking without disturbing others and without being disturbed by others and that whole class of students can simultaneously practice the oral-aural language skills. Language laboratories range from those with quite simple equipment to those with complicated equipment. There should be a number of soundproof booths, each fitted with a set of headphones connected to a microphone in front of the teacher. This arrangement enables the students to listen to the teacher and carry out his instructions, take down his dictation or answer his questions. Also, the teacher can speak direct to all students together and can play the recorded material for the benefit of all.

Many Multimedia come in handy as audio-visual aids. These can be used for playing records of fables, stories, plays, poems, etc., to the class. A portion of the recorded text may be played and necessary explanations given by the teacher. The text in full may be played again; simultaneously a detailed analysis of the text followed by questions put by the teacher to individual students may be attempted.

Advertisements

We generally think of advertisements as having only one purpose of helping the manufacturers to sell their products. But some advertisements can be excellent aids in teaching English. A good advertisement has two sterling qualities: 1) it attracts attention to itself, and 2) its slogan is short and striking enough to be remembered easily. Both these can help in learning the language. By displaying carefully-selected advertisements in English and encouraging the pupils to collect such advertisements the teacher can help them to learn many useful patterns embodied in the slogans. Sometimes an advertising slogan deliberately violates a grammatical rule or coins a new word, just to attract attention. Since such deviations and neologisms usually highlight an important syntactic or morphological rule of the language, these slogans can also be profitably exploited to fix the rule in the minds of the pupils.

However, whenever possible the teacher and the pupils should listen to the radio broadcasts and other recorded material and see English films and television programmes. Indeed,

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for developing listening comprehension and improving pronunciation this multimedia seem almost indispensable.

How the Teacher Uses Multimedia

The teacher directs the learners to different booths to do practice in pronunciation, stress, intonation etc. The master will activate the master-tape and the learners will listen to the taped voice. After listening to the tape, the learner will imitate the native speaker's voice. There is a provision for the learner to record his pronunciations and compare it with the original and also make suitable corrections. The master is able to monitor the student and help him correct his pronunciation. There are variations in the tasks and also several improvements have been made in the system. Students can practice aloud simultaneously but individually they may be able to evaluate their own performance.

Conclusion

The high incidence of poorly qualified teachers only increases the waste of student time and public resources. Good teachers, good textbooks, record, tapes, tape recorders, language laboratories, television sets, cassettes, computers and other audio-visual aids are an indispensable condition for successful implementations of any scheme of teaching English as a second language in India. 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.

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