

THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Oynisa Umirzokova

Master Student,

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Samarkand, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT: This article aims to clarify the significance of Mass Media in educational environment, its role in teaching and learning foreign languages, the beneficial sides of different media means in language learning process.

KEYWORDS: media, newspaper, book, television, radio, magazine.

INTRODUCTION

Using different means of Mass Media in foreign language lessons can provide teachers and students with creative and practical ideas. Media gives an opportunity to teachers to meet various needs and interests of the students. They also provide students with a lot of language practices through activities using magazines, radio, TV, movies, books, newspapers, Internet and tasks develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. They encourage students to read English in general, both during and after the lesson, elevating extensive reading by giving the students the motivation and confidence to themselves, the. Media “inform, amuse, startle, anger, entertain, thrill, but very seldom leave anyone untouched”[2, 81]. Mass Media can supply with immense information, they inspire students to speak and support them combine listening, reading, talking and writing skills, through different kinds of tasks. A simple example is Power Point Presentations which aid students to speak fluently, to keep eye contact and to organize ideas. Through Media Presentations there is more cooperation and communication among students rather than working with the pages of a book individually.

The importance of Mass Media. Media is very essential because we recognize the world through using its means; we can comprehend the world and also attempt to interchange it. “We live in a world where media are omnipresent. An increasing number of people spend a great deal of time watching television, reading newspapers and magazines, playing records and listening to the radio... The school and the family share the responsibility of preparing the young person living in a world of powerful images, words and sounds”[4, 76].

Newspapers. Newspapers can be brought easily to the class in various subjects and courses, especially in literature, language classes, history, geography etc. Some of them possess precious information for these subjects, but we should know how to separate this information. Teachers and students use newspapers according to their purposes in different ways. Newspapers can be used for the culture they carry. The more widely learners read, the greater they understand this culture and its meaning. Newspapers can be also used for depicting changes in the language as and helping students and teachers to keep up pace with these changes. Many newspapers are linguistically new and provide valuable linguistic information. They can be used for the broad variety of text sorts and language styles, rarely found in books. Newspapers are very good source for ESP teachers. They can be used as teaching materials to improve students' language skills. Some newspapers are easily read and easily used. Teachers can design exercises to increase reading comprehension, critical thinking skills, writing skills, grammar skills, vocabulary. The teachers should pay attention to the way how to organize a clear activity using them when they have a lot of newspapers and information [3, 157]. Newspapers are mostly suitable for mixed-ability classes, depending on the activity, questions. While planning a lesson using a newspaper, the teacher should take into account the paragraph, the density of information, the length of the article, the complexity of the language, the content, the time available and the level of the students' knowledge.

Magazines. There are diverse types of magazines. Students like to read mostly political, scientific, fashion, cultural, entertaining and sport magazines. This interest of the university and high school students should be used by the teachers to modernize their teaching materials and split the sameness of the lesson by utilizing always the textbooks. As with magazines, newspapers are sources for different subjects, cutting pictures and passages related with particular topics. Magazines are sources in language development in giving pictures to encourage verbal or written stories. For instance, they can be used for introducing clothes and colors, means of transport, stimulating picture discussions, short stories and for other materials which cover a topic that may be under discussion in a language lesson. In terms of how to use magazines in the classroom we can refer to the ideas and keywords given for the newspapers.

Books. "Books are crucial in modern life as well, a driving force in education, business, law, science, medicine and entertainment. Through books the students gain the legacy of knowledge earned by those who came before"[1, 57]. Different aged people find information, relaxation,

pleasure, and inspiration while reading books. Books do not have the immediacy of other Mass Media, but they make up for that by greater punctuality and constancy. Books are preserved in great public libraries or in personal collections. Readers can go back to famous books by rereading them again and again. Others enjoy a book once and pass it on because of wanting others to share their discoveries. “Those who have already discovered the joy of books, however, are hooked for life. And as others become aware of the vast array of books available, they too will find that unrivaled knowledge and pleasure await them between the covers of books” [1, 93]. There is a large area that books cover. Besides them there are lots of books that we read as a class assignment, a novel in the English class, in the course English through Prose and Poetry, in British and American literature course; a book on the planets in the science class, and others. Books are the most bearing of the Mass Media. Some people keep books for years, and libraries save them even for centuries. Here is the right place to mention the words of Franklin Roosevelt: “People die, books never die”.

Radio. Radio has an important share in creating pictures in the mind through the power of words, in developing people’s imagination, it encourages the imagination to fill in the visuals. The listeners can see the drama in their minds. Thus, when radio is used in the classroom it aids students to voice their creativity, to develop their imagination. Radio programs help to learn a language. Radio not only gives new information and entertainment, in language classes it helps the pronunciation, the intonation, the pitch of voice. Students gain a feeling of satisfaction from having understood something of a real podcast and we can see the joy in their faces. They can develop great confidence in their ability to cope with English as it’s spoken out of the classroom. Students can use BBC World Service news bulletin, Voice of America and other foreign radio stations. In such cases students have no possibilities, the teacher can record the news bulletin, transcribe it and prepare to explain any difficult vocabulary that may come out.

Television. Television programs can be used as warming-up activities, pre-activities for the issue, as a supplementary material for a certain topic, for up-to-date information, to update the information in the textbooks. Documentaries on Civil War, on Wildlife, on Discovery Channel, and others, have opened valuable windows for the students. Through these documentaries students learn about cultures, languages, science and others. Some of these documentaries, if carefully selected can be used efficiently in the classrooms and be a part of the curriculum. They help students for better understanding of the subject. As we cannot use TV information when it is

given, we can bring this information into the classroom by videotaping different TV programs for later use.

CONCLUSION

Mass Media helps teachers make teaching and learning visual. A picture tells a thousand words and it helps students develop their thinking and observation skills, it promotes imagination. Media helps with several issues such as: motivation, editing, recycling, drafting, clarity, revising, mixed-ability classes, variety, updating information in the book, giving life and color to lesson procedures and methods, thus at the same time helping the students improve fluency and accuracy.

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