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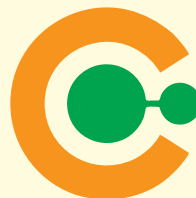
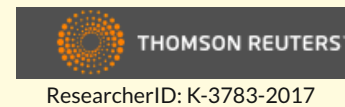
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## The Use of Print and Electronic Media to Teach English to Enable Communicative Skills

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### ABSTRACT

The significant role of media in today's world of education system, makes it an interesting and indispensable tool in the teaching of English. The print and electronic media have emerged as the most useful tools in disseminating information. Similarly media can be used very effectively in the teaching of English. In fact human life became closer from local to global via internet to cover the gaps of the social, political and economic, cultural and art developments and changes today. The objective of this paper is to discuss how media in particular the print and electronic can be used in the teaching of English. From local to global it puts forth the procedure in the teaching of English which involves the Integration of Media, Selection of Materials and the Frequency of use. It suggests the different activities that can be done using the media. The receptive and productive activities are so planned that they cover the LSRW skills and as well as grammar and vocabulary.

**Keywords:** *teaching English, use of media, building English vocabulary, LSRW, etc.*

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## FULL PAPER

Today the education system promotes the students as well as employment sector for the industry ready. The media has emerged as the most potential source for disseminating information. The print and electronic always coupled with the Internet has ushered in far reaching changes in a technology-enabled world. The monumental role played by media in today's knowledge based world makes it an interesting and indispensable tool in the teaching of English. The use of the media in the classroom adds yet another new dimension to technological applications simultaneously opening and exploring new avenues in the English instructional pattern.

The goal of this paper is to discuss how print and electronic media can be efficiently used in the teaching and learning of English; how training in different aspects of language awareness can be profitably imparted. According to Singh (2005), "Any device which by sight and sound increase individuals' experience beyond that acquired through read described as an audio-visual aids". Media includes both the print media and the electronic media. In my study I shall limit myself to the print and electronic media.

The newspaper and the electronic media are considered in many educational circles as "living textbooks". They present learners with the latest information, furnish new and updated events replete with interpretations. Viewing the electronic and reading the newspapers enable the learners to expand their knowledge base and sharpen their skill set comprehensively— communication skills, soft skills and life skills as well.

Since the content is context based and relates to the day-to-day situation, and learning takes place in a very natural environment. The content widens the knowledge base, which in turn enriches communication. Consolidation also takes place in a very natural manner through regular exposure to the media and routine mechanical drilling can be avoided. One significant advantage is that in learning English through the media the learner can progress from guided study to autonomous learning.

In this activity of using the media, both the teacher and the learner have specific roles to play. The teacher is the innovator, researcher, critical thinker, motivator, and facilitator and the learner is a processor, strategy user and critical thinker.

### **Functions of Communicative Activities:**

Using the media in the teaching of English is merely an extension of the real life experience of the learner. Throughout his life, the learner acquires a lot of information both oral and written from the media. It would be but reasonable to apply the same natural pattern to learning in the classroom. Moreover this information is presented in day-today English, which is update and contemporary, and this makes the learning effective, authentic and accessible too.

Both the Print and electronic media can be integrated profitably in the teaching of English. At times any one mode would do. Using them training can be imparted in all the four skills—LSRW, in fact integrating all of them thereby enhancing the language awareness of the learners and consequently their competence. The input skills listening and reading will lead to the output skills speaking and writing. The teacher should plan various activities and tasks and provide guidelines to deal with the news reports and articles or talks appropriately so as to acquire the targeted skill/s.

#### **Design and Selection of Materials:**

The Design and selection of materials should be very careful, taking into consideration the interests of the learners, the level of difficulty and the length of the news item or article as well. A rich variety of materials types are to be identified. Topics are to be chosen to cater to the widest variety of students' needs and interests. If content with high level of interest is chosen, learners may acquire the language more willingly. Corresponding to the learners' area of interest the appropriate material has to be chosen. At the undergraduate level news items, sports news, travel or adventure anything would rouse the interest of the student. The news items selected should be current rather than outdated. Only then will the interest be sustained.

Linguistic appropriateness is another factor to be taken into consideration. As is the case with any text, the level of difficulty should not be below the learner's standard. It should be challenging enough to enable the reader to use the appropriate strategy. Similarly materials extremely difficult for the average reader would pose a problem. The choice of materials should correspond to the learner's needs. If the preparation is for GRE or GMAT, or for placements where a high level of vocabulary is used, then the editorial would be the right choice. In the Indian context, the Deccan Chronicle could be introduced, followed by The New Indian Express and The Hindu. Similarly a news section from the city edition of the Deccan Chronicle, Party Whirl for example, could be used to teach informal use of the language. The language of editorials and academic articles could be taught as specimen for formal writing, (for instance, Editorial from The Hindu).

However Brinton cautions that comprehensibility is as critical as authenticity. Sometimes materials have to be adapted to make them suitable for use. This may mean linguistic simplification or providing strategies to assist her (Brinton et al., 17).

The selected topics should be introduced in a systematic manner. First highly interesting topics are to be introduced which train the student in learning the language and using it. Gradually it should culminate in models which enable the learner to select the appropriate language for a particular situation.

#### **Use of Teaching Aids:**

First it has to be borne in mind that the media is not the entire text book. It is just a resource material meant to be a supplement to regular class room learning. The frequency of use should depend on the students' need, requirements, interests

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and time. But regular reading of the newspaper and listening to the news and other programmes would no doubt facilitate the perfection of English.

**Task Based learning Material:**

Based on the approach adopted, the teacher should consider the text, linguistic pattern, tasks and so on. The material must be manipulated so that the targeted goal may be achieved. The material could be used for whole language learning, Communicative Language Teaching or Task Based Language teaching.

**Functional Teaching and Learning Activities:**

The contextual teaching and learning activities span a broad range. They include:

- Language skills
- Vocabulary development
- Discourse organization
- Grammar

Newspapers and the TV can be used in the teaching of all the four skills Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. To begin with the listening skills Clippings, can be recorded from TV programmes and played in the classroom to teach listening comprehension. The activities are planned in the same way as we give them practice in listening skills the pre listening tasks, while listening tasks and post listening tasks. This will expose the learner to the language first and he will get accustomed to listen and comprehend. This is precisely what learners in towns and rural areas need, since in these areas they are not exposed to English except in the classroom. They acquire the much needed ear training and develop awareness in terms of pronunciation, stress, intonation and rhythm of English.

**Productive and Receptive Activities:**

Paraphrasing is the next strategy. As the basic procedure, the 5Ws method (who/whom, what, where, when and why/how) will help to focus on the message and comprehend it. This makes paraphrasing easy.

Apart from the language skills, the newspaper also helps in acquiring good vocabulary. A news item in a newspaper reads Hollywood has made three films on the comic character Superman. And therefore three Supermans were produced, it is not three Supermen. This usage makes us sit up wondering at the excitement English language creates. Similarly while the plural of mouse is mice, there are three Mickey Mouses in the government screams another newspaper. These peculiarities of expressions are common in newspapers and the vocabulary is naturally arresting. These stir one's interest in vocabulary.

**Content and Vocabulary:**

The newspaper is a rich source of vocabulary. One easy way of developing vocabulary is by learning words associated with a particular concept. For example a

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news item on politics would contain words like leaders, politicians, party men, supporters, and activists and so on. If it is election time words like fife, nomination, campaigning, unanimous, contest are some that could be introduced. A learner could very easily learn the words relating it to his real life experience and consolidate his database on a regular basis.

Newspapers are also a good source of synonyms. In news reports writers often use a synonym to avoid sounding repetitious. If the learner knows one of the two words, he can understand both without the help of a dictionary. The minister addressed the reporters. They are variously represented as journalists, scribes, press persons, or media persons.

Collecting related words or grouping words could also be an interesting source of vocabulary. A newspaper with its vast range of news can also be used to locate related words. For example a person who travels is a traveler, extending the same concept of identifying people by their actions we have passenger, commuter, onlooker, bystander, and a host of many others. These are words that a non- native user of English wouldn't actually know and would not be able to learn textbooks easily.

Along with the content words, the most problematic area for a non-native learner is to find the right verb with the right noun or the right adjective with the right noun, the collocation to be brief. It is in a newspaper that a person can very easily come across collocations file a nomination/complaint/charge sheet are some expressions that go beyond politics to law. Similarly, in the traditional way, synonyms, antonyms, word formation, root words can also be taught with interesting content and natural consolidation.

Many words considered special have become part of the common language. The media has given them currency. Today environmental expressions like greenhouse effect, global warming, ozone layer have become a part of our awareness. "Like bird watching word watching must be a hobby; like stamp-collecting word collecting is very interesting" {Krishnamurthy 135), this is possible through the media. It shows the contemporary relevance of print and electronic media to enable the communicative language teaching in the class room.

#### **Communicative and Creative Activities:**

Students try to have their creativity to express the uncertain words like perhaps, possibly, maybe, might, could, may, etc.

List the collocations of the noun ball. Identify the verbs used with it. (For e.g. Hit the ball. But do they beat the ball) List out similar other collocations for runs, give commentary of the game using active or passive voice.

Additional follow up tasks should be given so that what they have learnt will be consolidated.

1. The sound is made mute and the learner is invited to provide commentary on the match.

2. Write a report on the match analyzing the reasons for the victory of India.

Today when English has become the tool of success, a learner benefits by using the media. This is a paper presented on the basis of my experience of using the print and electronic media in teaching communication skills for two years. Much still needs to be done to match the teaching to today's reader who is multimedia savvy integrating the computer, internet, TV, CD Rom and newspaper. Similarly CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning). But this is a challenging task and needs a large amount of time, energy and planning. "Taking up this challenge requires a highly motivated and dedicated individual or a group of individuals". (Stryker and Leaver 311).

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