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Use of Audio- Visual Aids in Teaching of English: An Analysis

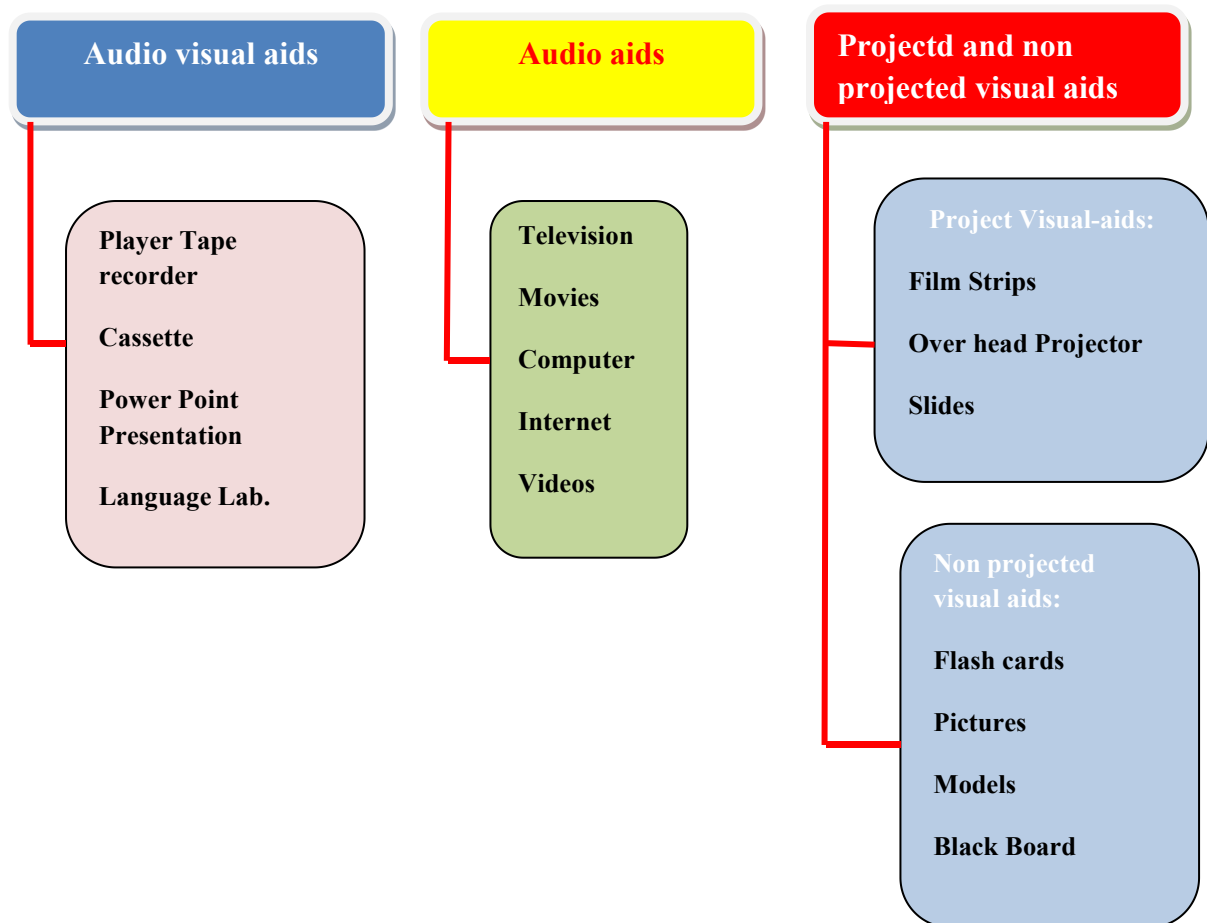
Manju Devi*

*Assistant Professor of English, Gaur Brahman Degree College, Rohtak, Haryana (India)

India is a country full of diversity having different culture, languages, dialects and regional languages. It has 122 major languages including 1599 dialects and other regional languages. Constitution has given recognition to 22 languages. Article 343 and The Official Language Act, 1963 recognised Hindi and English as official language of the country. English was introduced in 1935 through Minute of Macaulay and it is taught as second language in the country. English, being a foreign language, creates problems to learner as well as the teachers of English. Learners fail to grasp second language as quickly as they grasp mother tongue. The learners, especially in North Indian regions find difficulty in learning this language. Here, in this situation, the role of the teacher increases. To make teaching interesting and accessible, it is necessary for the teacher to go beyond the words. A good teacher does not want to leave any stone unturned to teach his students. He does every possible effort to make learning process accessible. Bertrand Russell emphasises, “More important than the curriculum is the question of the methods of teaching and the spirit in which the teaching is given” (Web). Audio- Visual aids are the supportive aids or I must say these are the weapons of a teacher through which he tries to convey his message efficiently to the students. The teacher started teaching through power point presentations, audio-visual aids to impart knowledge effectively. Of course, these techniques attract attention of the learners and wave off boredom in the class. Mayer also holds the same opinion when asserts, “If the instruction is given in the class using both words and visuals, learning become faster (cited in Dolati, 6)

To inculcate listening, speaking, writing and reading skills in second language learner, the teacher uses various approaches and methods. Assistance of various audio and visual tools is taken to bridge gap between the teacher and the taught. Gone are the days when teacher used to teach students with a black board, chalk and duster. In ancient days, India was not advanced in matter of technology. Teaching was teacher centric and traditional ways were the only means to give knowledge. With the advancement of science, traditional teaching methods are changing slowly and steadily. Audio aids are those aids which are used in recording form while visual tools are meant to be shown. Various audio visual like films, Video compact discs, and over head projectors are used by the teacher to give them first hand experiences of incidents, pronunciation.

Webster dictionary defines audio visual aids as, “training or educational material directed at both the senses of hearing and the sense of sight, films, recordings, photographs, etc. used in classroom instructions, library collections or the likes” (qtd in Wikipedia). In the era of information technology, new tools have been invented to facilitate teaching with more advanced devices. Internet has brought a revolution in the field of education and transformed the way of teaching and learning. Language laboratory is an important aid now a day. Learners can improve their four basic skills by practicing various drills. In this regard, Harmer opines, “The language laboratory helps to train some students to rally listen to what they say and how they say it. When they compare their pronunciation with the correct version on the tape, they begin to notice the differences, and this awareness, over a period, helps them to hear and pronounce English better” (142-43). Now, audio visual aids are more accessible. Teacher can show video clips during his teaching from you tube or face book. To avoid monotony of teaching, he can show power point presentations. Electronic gadgets like digital language labs, smart boards and LCD projectors help to make class lively, interactive and interesting. The detailed list of audio-visual aids is:



Outbreak of Covid-19, completely changed the teaching learning process. Due to global health crisis, life has come to a standstill. All the students were caged in their houses and physical teaching was only a dream till the pandemic ends. Parents were anxious about their children and students were under stress. A new problem arose before all the teachers of world. All the institutions have to be shut down to minimize the spread of the virus. A great impediment appeared in the way of teaching and learning. The nation builders were finding themselves helpless. Though, they were helpless but not hopeless. They mustered courage to grapple with new technologies and resumed to their work. Virtual class rooms come into existence in the place of physical class. During Covid 19, a shift in attitude and teaching mode is the need of time. No doubt, we all are living in the uncertainties. As the graph of active case is increasing, it can't be said that things will be normal very soon. Looking at the present scenario, online teaching is the only mean through which teacher can meet their students virtually and instruct them. In this tough period these audio visual aids are the only way to disseminate knowledge. It's the need of the time that teacher should increase his strength technically and keep his students busy in this adverse time. To keep them physically and mentally fit, it's necessary to keep them busy. The role of the teacher is also increases in many ways. Audio visual aids are teachers' weapon and with the help of these aids they can conquer the situation.

Advancement of technology made it possible for teacher to disseminate knowledge through online mode without any hindrance. All the educational institutes take the responsibility to empower their teachers and students with technology. To meet this purpose many webinars, FDPs, MOOCS are going to be organised by various institutions. All these programmes are making teachers and students techno friendly so that the task of teaching can run smoothly. Both, teachers and students grab this opportunity whole heartedly and learning new means of teaching and learning. With traditional learning, now blended learning come in to existence where teachers are teaching through on line platforms like Google meet, Webex, Zoom. To improve listening, speaking, reading and writing, they are making audio and video through various software. It only becomes possible by various courses run under NCRET, MHRD and DGHE. Though the virtual learning class. They are sharing their material through Google class room, insert learning, you tube, powtoon, Jamboard and wiki page etc. They send work through online white boards and engage them in learning. Various online applications like Khoot, Menti, Google forms, Hot potato, Quizlet, Quizziz.com are used to take formative and summative assessment of the students. To enhance communication skills of the learners, Podbean, Vocarro, Youglish, Padlet are very useful and engaging tools. Speechyards, Podcast, TeachVid, Accent Rosie, is very valuable application for listening skill of the learners.

Audio- visual aids have been always helpful, though the importance of it have increased in this tough time. It empowered the teachers and learners with new applications and tools of learning. Aids make the class interactive and engaging. The implementation of aid in teaching makes learning process easy, comprehensible and denounces stress. Albert Einstein states, “It is the supreme art of teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and joy” (Web). All the tools are very beneficial and the advantages of audio-visual aids are as following:

- ❖ Students are techno friendly and they love to learn more from apps than text books. Audio-visual aids create interest among learners and they retain things for longer time.
- ❖ Teachers can give firsthand experience to the learners by showing clips of a particular place or incidents, for e.g, Macbeth can easily taught by showing movie of it. Any historical place can be shown through video clips which help the learners to comprehend the things more quickly.
- ❖ Audio-Visual aids stimulates all sensory organs of the learners, hence, learning level of the students increases. They taste, see, hear, smell and feel through aids and enjoy learning.
- ❖ Audio- Visual aids catch attention of the students. They look videos and other content with concentration which helps to maintain discipline in the class.
- ❖ The same pace and teaching can't be reproduced if teacher teaches in class. Recorded audios and videos can be heard time and again which helps the learner to revise again and again if some problem occurs.
- ❖ Through aids, abstract ideas can be expressed effectively and efficiently. Sometimes teacher encounter difficulty to convey meaning of abstract words or things but with the help of appropriate aids it can be done easily.
- ❖ Audio- Visual aids helps to avoid monotony and boredom in the class and students remain active throughout learning process.

There is no denying the fact that audio- visual aids are very useful and facilitates teaching learning in a very effective manner. As every coin has two sides so the shortcomings cannot be ignored of these aids. Cakir is absolutely right when he writes:

The main disadvantages are cost, inconvenience, maintenance and some cases of the fear of technology. Additionally, the sound and vision, quality of the copies or home-produced materials may not be ideal. Another important issue in this case is that the teacher should be well-trained on using and exploiting the video. Otherwise, it becomes boring and purposeless for the students (68).

Apart from this, there are other shortcomings also that need to be considered seriously. Some of these are:

- ❖ The teaching process becomes more mechanical and least scope remains for teacher-taught interaction. It also increases dependency of the teacher on the teaching aids.
- ❖ It is also possible that student do not pay attention to the teacher as they think that they will get recording which they can hear after the class.
- ❖ There are many colleges in country where basic infrastructure is not available. Without proper infrastructure, such type of teaching can't be possible.
- ❖ Sometimes technological glitches cause great problems. It requires more technical knowledge on the part of teacher otherwise it will consume time as well as money.
- ❖ In online teaching, it becomes more challenging as teacher can't control the class. It requires more commitment and discipline on the part of learners as teacher can't force a student to study.
- ❖ In online language classes, while practicing pronunciation drills, the teacher can't trace mouth movement of the learners and can't guide properly.

Though there are some limitations of audio visual aids yet the paramount importance of audio-visual cannot be neglected. In student centric learning, the focus of teaching is on students, the purpose of which is to enhance the quality of the teaching and promote quality learning. The shortcomings can be minimised if proper care is taken on the part of teacher. Students can be sensitized to utilise the teaching of audio visual aids. English is second language of Indians and students find it difficult to learn. They do not take much interest in learning the language of Britishers. But, being a lingua franca, English is global language so its need of the time that learner should understand significance of it and endeavour to make proficiency of it. Audio-visual aids can help the teacher and learner to meet this purpose efficiently.

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