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The role of electronic media in the teaching of English language

Our University English teacher never failed to use the opportunity to emphasize the value of electronic media and scientific journals in language teaching and learning. She would conclude her lesson with the advice: “Read articles. They will enrich your English”. Her advice became useful when we started to teach English and Communication Skills at Technical University for Power Engineering students with hardly any specialized teaching and learning materials.

Media has opened new dimensions in learning. Now education is no longer a constant for anyone. Media has brought education to the doorstep of each and every individual. All forms of media – the newspaper, radio, television and internet are equally important in the process of education.

Textbooks are never enough for the large number of students. But the students have to learn and to learn, they must be taught. So we turned to the available newspapers (Kyiv Post, Digest, etc), magazines (What’s On, Newsweek, etc) and learned journals, as a resource for help.

Electronic media are media that use electronics or electromechanical audience to access the content. This is in contrast to static media (mainly print media), which today are most often created electronically, but do not require electronics to be accessed by the end user in the printed form. The primary electronic media sources familiar to the general public are video recordings, audio recordings, multimedia presentations, slide presentations, CD-ROM and online content. Most new media are in the form of digital media. However, electronic media may be in either analogue electronics data or digital electronic data format. [1]

Following our teacher's advice, we soon realized that articles can be used to teach many aspects of language and communication skills. Thus, editorials and gossip columns, serious and light-hearted newspapers can teach formal and informal varieties of English. Letters to the editor can demonstrate good features of letter writing. Interviews can illustrate questioning techniques. Various articles can provide direct and reported speech for grammar samples of study. Newspapers and magazines provide models of good written form: paragraphs, topic sentences, introductions, conclusions, etc. We usually require from my students to list and to bring to class the vocabulary items and expressions they encounter in newspapers. Such home assignments have become immensely valuable.

We have used electronic media extensively because they have certain qualities that make them effective as teaching tools, and these are: availability (electronic media is the most readily available English language teaching aid. Relevant parts of the article can be easily multiplied and made available to the group); affordability (newspapers are cheap; they also can be easily taken from the local library).

From our own teaching experience, we can admit that electronic media, scientific articles and magazines can facilitate English language teaching and learning. Electronic media are ubiquitous in most of the developed world. Electronic media devices have found their way into all parts of modern life.

Literature

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_media
2. "What is media? Definition and meaning". BusinessDictionary.com.
3. Cory Janssen. "What is Communication Media? – Definition from Techopedia". Techopedia.com.