Use of Teaching Aids in Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT　　*Teaching in the schools has been criticized as theoretical, boring, and uninteresting and a routine work, as the transfer as communication of information, knowledge and skills from the teachers to the students is generally carried out through chalk talk method. The knowledge and awareness among the teachers about the equipment for use in the teaching-learning process is not only poor but also lethargic to use in the classroom. In certain cases the equipment is also not provided by the managements. In such a case improvised equipment can be made and use in the teaching-learning process to make it more effective. There are certain instructional aids that can help a teacher to clarify, correlate and coordinate various concepts and interpretations to make learning more concrete, effective, interesting, meaningful and inspirational. These aids are called teaching aids. These aids are also named as audio-visual aids in the sense that they call upon the auditory and visual sense of the learners.*

Introduction-
Teaching aids are used to enable the learners to achieve the learning objectives effectively and interestingly. There are audio-visual aids such as blackboard, maps, charts, globes, and pictures etc., which are traditional in nature. Now-a-days electronic media have come in a big way and are apt to influence not only communication and education, but also the manner and behaviour, lifestyle, attitudes, and interests of the clientele. These media and materials provide direct as well as vicarious or improvised learning experiences to the students at all levels of education. These include traditional aids as well as electronic media evolved from time to time in large variety and great novelty.

Meaning of teaching aids
A teacher has an inherent desire that his teaching should be as effective as possible. What he teaches should be carefully attended, clearly understood, grasped and fixed in the minds of his students. In other words, a good teaching always aims at the effective communication and appropriate learning outcomes. For realizing both these objectives, a teacher has to make use of different types of aid material just as charts, maps, models, concrete objects, films, tapes, projectors, radio, television and similar other resources. All such materials, instruments and resources that aid to the effective realization of his teaching objectives may be termed as teaching aids in the field of teaching-learning.

Definitions – According to Good's dictionary of Education, "a teaching aid is anything by means of which the learning process may be encouraged or carried out on through the sense of hearing or sense of sight."

Classification of teaching aids–Teaching aids and material can be classified in a number of ways. However, here we may mention two different approaches for their classification.

A. *Traditional approach*: This is an age-old approach, and according to this, here we can classify teaching aids into four categories:
1. *Audio aids*: This category includes audio aids- the aids which call upon the auditory senses and thus help the individuals learn through listening. The examples are phonograph records, radio broadcasts and magnetic tape recordings.
2. *Visual aids*: In this category we have visual aids- the aids which call upon the visual senses and then help the learners learn through viewing. These aids may be further broken into sub-categories: **projective** and **non- projective** aids. Under the projective aids, we may have visual aids like silent motion picture and filmstrips, epidiascope, magic lanterns, micro-projections, and projection with the opaque and overhead projector. The non-projective aids appeals to the sense of sight. It may include chalkboard, felt board, bulletin broad, photographs, posters, maps, charts, globes, models, specimens, textbook illustrations, etc.
3. *Audio-visual aids*: In This category, we may place audio-visual aids- the aids which call upon the auditory and visual senses and thus help the learners learn through listening as well as

viewing. Examples are television, sound motion pictures, synchronized audio-slide projection, radio vision and computer-assisted instructions.

4. *Activity aids*: We may place the aids that facilitate learning through sight and sound as well as through doing in this category. The examples of such aids are dramatization and role –playing, experimentation in a laboratory or workshop, etc.

B. ***Technological approach***: According to this approach, the teaching aids may be classified into the following categories:

1. *Simple hardware*: Magic lantern, epidiascope, slide projectors, filmstrip projectors, opaque projectors and overhead projector, etc.

2. *Hardware*: Radio, television, radio-vision, telelecture, records player, tape recorder, motion pictures, teaching machines, and computer.

3. *Software*: Slides and filmstrips, pictures and other printed material, graphic aids such as graphs, charts, maps, diagrams, cartoons and posters and three-dimensional objects like models and specimens.

Using teaching aids in Language Teaching

Unsuccessful language learning is always due to failure of imagination than lack of intelligence. One major cause of this failure is the failure on the part of the teacher realizes that words alone need not be enough to carry the student over in to the situation that he is trying to present. A common failure on the part of the students is their inability to create imaginatively in their mind, the picture of the situation that the words are supposed to build-up. Audiovisual aids in one form or another help the students to imagine an experience beyond the reach of the classroom. Thus they serve as a link between the learner and the language.

Non- projective aids---
Blackboard-

Blackboard represents the oldest and most commonly used teaching aid. Although not a visual aid itself it can be used for the display of visual material in the classroom teaching. Blackboard, in fact, is synonymous to a classroom. A class can function without chair, desks or even rooms to sit in but not without the aid of a blackboard. That is why, in the new educational policy tremendous emphasis has been given to the necessity and use of the blackboard as an instructional aid by the name "operation blackboard"

In language teaching the blackboard can be used for introducing new material. After the students have mastered the pronunciation of a new word the teacher can introduce then to the written from by writing it on the board at what he judges to be the right moment. The Structure teaching substitution tables can be built up step by step and in collaboration with the class. Short compositions and dialogues which are the joint effort of the whole class may also be built up sentence by sentence on the board. The imaginative teacher will be able to think of many other ways of making the blackboard the focus of the class effort of this kind. It will be mistake to think that the blackboard is meant only for writing.

Bulletin Board:

The bulletin board is a sheet of wood, masonry cork, celesta similar material set within a frame. The used for displaying pictures, charts, posters, clippings, photographs, or other learning materials, it serves as a perpetual magazine. It gives information of direct concern to the pupils and taps their curiosity and desire for knowledge. It provides a practical outlet for artistic talent and creative ability. It helps to unify class sprit by creating a sense of responsibility, appreciation and accomplishment. It stimulates student's interest and enthusiasm to a particular lesson. It must be simple and must telegraph its message quickly, easily and efficiently. The material must be changed frequently. Display must be done neatly and well.

Flannel Board:

The flannel board is somewhat like a Blackboard. But it has added advantages of colour, movement and quick removal, leading to more interest and more learning. Its extreme flexibility permits various arrangements to be tried experimentally. It is a very useful teaching aid, which must be tried and used effectively by language teachers. It is especially helpful in presenting events or ideas in sequence as story unfolds, a report is given, demonstration is performed, steps in process are given or basic concepts are presented in a definite order.

Charts:

Charts are combination of graphics and pictorial media designed for the orderly and logical visualizing of relationship between key facts and ideas. Their main function is to show relationship such as comparisons, relative amounts developments, process, classification and organization.

Types of charts:--

1. Classification chart
2. Genealogy charts
3. Flow charts
4. Relationship chart
5. Tabulation chart
6. Chronology chart

Models:

A model means an imitation, a replica or a copy of a thing, act or process. It is a three-dimensional aid with desired flexibility, size, complexity, safety and cost for effectively achieving instructional objectives. Models are the actual representation of the real objects. The original size or shape of the actual things is changed i.e., enlarge or reduced to suit the learning group. That is why; models are more advantageous and more convenient than actual objects or process. For example, a fly is so small in size in actual condition that it cannot be used as an aid in the classroom, but an enlarged model of a fly can easily show its structure and various organs very well. Similarly, a process or a phenomenon actually in operation cannot be explained to students, but models of the same can be effective aids in explaining the details of their functioning.

Projective Aids:

Film strips: This is one of the easiest methods. The projector can be loaded in advanced and 30to 40clear pictures can be projected on a white wall or screen. The images are sharp and clear and will be visible to a small group even in a class room that is not darkened. One great advantage of this projector is that the picture can be stopped at any point or as long as one likes. Thus the dimension of time is under the teachers control as the pictures can be projected at appropriate moments according to the progress of the lesson.

Colour slides:

They are cheaper than film strips and are cheaper to make. Any colour picture can be taken with a good camera and the resulting transparency mounted in a special cardboard or metal mounts for showing in the class. They can be projected in the screen using a film strip projector with an attachment for showing such mounted transparencies. Up to 36slides can be loaded in advance so that they can be shown one after the other without any trouble or waste of time during the lesson. It is useful to have a rear-projection screen which enables the teacher to show the transparencies without having a darkened room. This will make it convenient for students to take down notes as the teacher is explaining the pictures to them. A further advantage of this type of screen is that the projector and the screen are close together so that the teacher can operate the former and point to the latter quite easily at the same time. They can also provide material for testing the four skills.

The opaque projector or epidiascope:

This can project any paper from a book a photograph, a chart or even small objects on to a screen is a darkened room. The chief advantage of this projector over the slide projector is that any material can be shown without any advance technical preparation. But the main shortcoming is the need for complete darkness in the room which is often difficult to achieve and which interferes with other classroom activities like writing more over the machine is very bulky. Hence its use is usually restricted to the display of illustrated materials during public lectures.

The overhead projector (OHP):

This helps to overcome the problem of howling to him ones back to the class to write on the blackboard. The overhead projector projects what the teacher writes with the special pencil on a transparent plastic film in front of him on to a screen behind him as the faces the class. Since the drawings and writing can be prepared in advance to be projected at the desired time considerable flexibility can be achieved. For e.g. the teacher can first project an exercise and after the class has completed it he can project the answer for self – assessment by the students.

The television:

The television is often used as a substitute for the class room. Being a visual as well as an oral medium it has a for greater impact on the student and can claim their whole attention. Other oral and visual aids can be employed by the teacher on television and thus the effectiveness of many other aids can be combined in one medium. For all its potential, television as a teaching medium cannot succeed on its own. The cooperation of the class teacher is essential.

The linguaphone:

The linguaphone is a kind of gramophone. It is specially designed for helping the children in learning pronunciation or the other sound peculiarities of the language. In a linguaphone a sound amplifier is always fitted. It can also reproduce the speech of the teacher instantly. Many linguaphones have recording devices fitted in them. In that case the speech of the child can be recorded at any time after that. Pronunciation mistakes can then be out and explained to the class.

Conclusion:

Teaching aids are now available in a wide variety and novelty ranging from traditional graphics to electronic materials and media. With a view to making the teaching-learning process more

interesting and effective, it is necessary to select suitable teaching aids suitable to the instructional objectives and students' needs as well as their background. It is, however, desirable that besides commercially prepared readymade materials, students and teachers should join hands in preparing suitable aids according to their interests, expertise and resources available. Learner's participation and involvement enhance their knowledge, understanding and skills, and make education more efficient and pleasurable.

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"The key to change… is to let go of fear."
– Rosanne Cash