COMMUNITY RADIO AND TV ACADEMY – A NEW FACE TO MULTIMEDIA LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract

The changing landscapes in the field of business and entrepreneurship escalated the demand for expertise in communication. Focusing on educational outcomes and effective utilisation of the available ICT initiatives such as community radio and TV academy, English faculty took an initiative of collaborative learning approach targeting language proficiency and social responsibility in students and academic awareness in the community. Quantification of the outcome is interesting and worthy enough to share on a research platform. With this view, this paper presents the outcomes of the approach that etched a mark in the lives of the students and the community. Alongside, the establishment of TV academy widened the scope of creative and artistic ability of the young minds. MALL, WALL, CALL and other ICT tools gave a new face to teaching-learning method, yet the outcome in terms of English language proficiency is not satisfactory. At this juncture community radio station supported by Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), Government of India and TV academy supported by Sri Vishnu Educational Society ignited new light.

Key Words: English proficiency, community, creative skills, social responsibility.

1. Introduction

Language is integrated with life and is a major tool for communication and community development. For any normal healthy individual mother tongue comes with less effort when compared to any other language. In a pluralistic country like India a foreign language is nothing but an addition to its diversity. Advent of British rule in India impacted the nation in myriad ways. Looking at the positive side of it, one cannot refute the advantage of permeability of English language into Indian life. Industrialization and the progress of science and technology changed the contours of knowledge in general and English Language, in particular.

The role of English language in globalizing people picked up special focus and attention. By and by the teaching-learning process of English language in technical institutions took new directions. The changing landscapes in the field of business and entrepreneurship escalated the demand for expertise in communication both written and spoken. Intertwined with various aspects of human life language is the sinew of social values. Keeping this as a major focus and to utilize unique technological initiatives such as community radio and TV academy, English faculty in Sri Vishnu Educational Society, Bhimavaram, took an initiative of collaborative learning approach targeting language proficiency and social responsibility in students and academic awareness in the community.

2. Back ground

Standing at the threshold of sixty-seventh year of independence, India dressed more colorfully in its success, expanding its potentialities in multiple directions. The intellectual waves of Marconi of Yester years metamorphosed into the expressive ways of community. And the only way, that a community can exercise its right to speech / expression, is a community radio. The community radio could meet the relevant needs of the rural communities, especially the disadvantaged in the remote areas.

Quite interestingly the educational institutions envisaging the need of community development put forth its interest in establishing the community radio. Sri Vishnu Educational Society established by late Padmabhushan Dr B V Raju is a non-profit educational institution and its educational programmes also include socially oriented programmes in rural areas which culminated in the establishment of Radio Vishnu 90.4 in the campus on 15 April 2007.

Maintaining the service ethos to the present day the institution is well applauded for its commitment and perseverance. This provided the necessary impetus for the radio station. It designed its programs with a vision to give voice to voiceless and is working with a motto – for the community and by the students. With the budding engineers at the helm, it targeted the development of the community by bringing awareness in sanitation, health and hygiene, primary education, and other general information. Children and women are the prime focus as it strongly believes that bringing the transformation in their attitude directly helps to create a better society. All the students, with their zeal to serve the community, are taking part in disseminating the information or messages in different forms. Also using Radio as a powerful tool they are fine tuning their linguistic skills, creative skills and technical skills. Community Radio brought a welcome relief to the common man and also to the student as an important tool of infotainment. The Community radio station and the TV academy in the campus opened new windows to the creativity and became an easy reach to all. Messages are not just didactic but rhythmic touching the aesthetic sensibilities. Both education and entertainment go hand in hand, motivating the students towards community development and self-satisfaction.

3. Objectives

A community radio station in the institution basically acts as a vehicle for the community, academicians, students, voluntary sectors, artists, NGOs and citizens to work in partnership to share the information, generate content, interact, educate, involve in furthering the development of community. Alongside, the establishment of TV academy widened the scope of creative and artistic ability of the young minds. MALL, CALL, WALL and other ICT tools gave a new face to teaching-learning method, yet the outcome in terms of English language proficiency is not satisfactory. At this juncture community radio station supported by Commonwealth Educational

Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), Government of India and TV academy supported by the institution ignited new light. Students develop messages on local priorities, get involved in script writing, organize quizzes and discussions, interview eminent people visiting the institution and learning the technical aspects of transmission and broadcasting. When the outcome is quantified it endorsed the pivotal role of community radio station and TV academy in transforming the student into elite individual with social commitment and language proficiency.

4. Methodology

'Experience is the best teacher,' emphasizing this maxim the Department of English in Sri Vishnu Educational Society carved a niche in educating the students through unique methods. Faculty with their holistic efforts put forth the radio station and TV academy in the campus for effective utility. This initiative gave way to a new face to English multimedia language lab. Keeping in view, the need for multi-talent workmanship of the industry, students' future professional demands and academic or research demands, a special module is designed for English language lab. Special attention is given to LSRW skills.

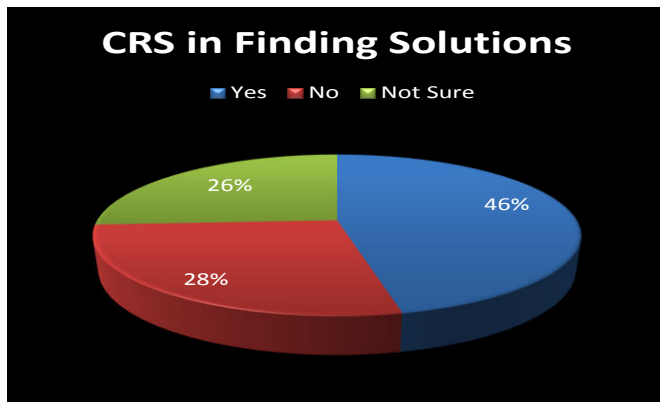### 4.1. Radio Vishnu 90.4

➤ **Broadcasting Schedule**:
- Morning programmes (from 6AM to 10 AM) centres on devotion, personality development, health care, moral values and farmer's programme.
- Afternoon programmes (from 12AM to 6PM) centres on the important day to day information, children's programmes, story narration, women special, information on various academic courses, knowledge-based programmes, songs by the students, interviews, phone-in, letters from the listeners;
- Evening programmes (from 6 to 8 PM) focus on Great personalities, role models, science and technology, music.

➤ **Target Students**: B.Tech First year students
➤ **English language lab schedule**: 3 hours per week with 30 students. Out of 3 hrs,, 2 hours are for regular lab curriculum and 1 hour is for radio programmes
➤ **Grouping of the students**: Enthusiasm as a basis, students are divided into six groups consisting of five students in each.
➤ **Topics**: Each group is free to choose any of the topics relating to the programmes scheduled to broadcast. They develop the content originally or from other sources. The group members internally help one another. After the meticulous evaluation of the Lab instructor, the content in various message forms is submitted to the Programme in-charge of the radio station.
➤ **Role of the Instructor**: The instructor facilitates the students by proofreading their scripts, testing voice modulation and ensuring the authenticity of the content. The evaluation rubric given below is followed to assess the progress of the student.

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Need to improve
Cultural Convention	Followed cultural conventions required for the presentation. Queries also answered	Opening and closing and development of the content are in a proper manner.	Very good beginning and the presentation ends without closing remarks.	Directly diving into the topic of the presentation in a hurry and closed with the same current.

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	appropriately.			
Content	Apt theme with logical progress of the information. Clarity of thought using simple language.	Presents the topic with more emphasis on the theme and adequate information.	Students can be able to understand the presentation though there is no sequence of information.	Students cannot understand the presentation as there is no information in particular.
Pronunciation	Fluent with accurate pronunciation throughout the presentation.	Flow is there in the presentation but not accuracy.	A few pronunciation errors are identified and often hesitant.	Presentation has many a pronunciation error.
Grammar	Throughout the presentation no grammatical errors are identified.	A few grammar mistakes are identified in the presentation.	Throughout the presentation occasionally grammar mistakes are noticed.	Too many grammar mistakes in the presentation.
Vocabulary	Throughout the presentation apt words according to the context is used.	Words which are used in the presentation are good but not up to the mark.	A few unreasonable words are used in the presentation.	Inappropriate vocabulary is used in the presentation.
Stress and Intonation	Apt voice modulation synchronizing with the emotional flow of the content. Proper stress and intonation is used throughout the presentation.	Voice modulation derailed occasionally making it flat. A few mistakes are found in uttering the words.	Stress and intonation is occasionally correct.	No awareness of stress and intonation.

> **Outcome:**
- Free time is productively utilized by the students as well as the community.
- Students made considerable progress in LSRW skills.
- Students participation and enthusiasm geared up and a few of them even started utilizing the 'Earn while learn' scheme provided by the institution by working in the station.
- Teaching-learning process took a new dimension and the approach stood exemplary.
- Students' confidence escalated, they became less diffident and accomplished simultaneously various technical skills associated with editing and transmitting of the content.
- Health academic relation is established between the students and the community.
- After surveying the listenership of the programs, it boosted the talent spirit. Almost half of the respondents at 46% were of the opinion that Radio Station (CRS) was very useful, entertaining and sometimes even suggesting solutions to some of their problems. Above all, it is connecting the community with the academia. This is one of the noteworthy achievements of Radio Vishnu though an improvement is very much required. The graph below elucidates this fact.

CRS in Finding Solutions

Yes   No   Not Sure

26%

46%

28%

4.2.TV Academy:

Vishnu TV Academy telecasts programmes confining to the campus alone. It runs on the motto 'for the students and by the students.' It is also offering certificate courses in theatre arts affiliated to Andhra University. The programmes are designed by the students and presently the transmission is for 2 hours in the evening.

➢ **Proficiency of LSRW skills**

- As a sequence to the progress of Students' language skills, English Proficiency Lab prescribed in the curriculum for the second year B.Tech students aims at fine tuning the presentation skills.
- Making optimum utility of the TV academy in the campus, students are instructed to prepare short films on any topic of their choice. This enables them to experience the application aspect of their engineering knowledge, correct certain behavioural traits such as blinking of eye, swinging of legs, scratching the head etc. and also to avoid certain habitual hackneyed expressions and monotony in word usage.
- To provide the necessary impetus, initially the instructor facilitates in suggesting topics such as Solar Sails, Swarm Technology, Oceanography, Stereo-lithography, Bionic Body parts, Nano Technology, Meteorology, Rainbow Technology, Digital Jewelry etc.
- Through these programs they can explore and represent information dynamically. Communication makes them focus on complex processes, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The evaluation rubric given below is for assessing the progress of the student.

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Need to improve
Cultural Convention	Followed cultural conventions required for the presentation. Queries also answered appropriately.	Opening and closing and development of the content are in a proper manner.	Very good beginning and the presentation ends without closing remarks.	Directly diving into the topic of the presentation in a hurry and closed with the same current.
Content	Apt theme with logical progress of the information. Clarity of thought using simple language.	Presents the topic with more emphasis on theme and adequate information.	Students can be able to understand the presentation though there is no sequence of information.	Students cannot understand the presentation as there is no information in particular.
Eye Contact	Very good eye contact	Very good eye contact	Now and then tried to	Reading directly from

	is maintained throughout the presentation.	is maintained but occasionally peeping into the notes.	look at the audience and most of the time concentrated on the notes	the notes and no eye contact is missing throughout the presentation.
Body Language	Proper Body language is used throughout the presentation	Though failed sometimes, but maximum managed to maintain descriptive gestures	Occasionally some gestures are made in the presentation	Stands in an attention mode throughout the presentation.
Pronunciation	Fluent with accurate pronunciation throughout the presentation.	Flow is there in the presentation but not accuracy.	A few pronunciation errors are identified and often hesitant.	Presentation has many a pronunciation error.
Grammar	Throughout the presentation no grammatical errors are identified.	A few grammar mistakes are identified in the presentation.	Throughout the presentation occasionally grammar mistakes are noticed.	Too many grammar mistakes in the presentation.
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5. **Conclusion**

With seven years of relentless services, Radio Vishnu 90.4 made a spark in the community as well as academia. The creative ability became contagious among students. Mutual assistance with the community strengthened students' social commitment towards the welfare of the people. It stood exemplary to other institutions and became a guiding spirit for those who are looking towards establishing community radio station. Vishnu TV Academy won many laurels not just for producing short films but young directors, script writers and actors at institution level. These first few steps are essential to the overall progress of the students. With the special focus on LSRW skills this facility brought a new dimension to teaching-learning process.

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