AUDIO MEDIA

The process of teaching can be enhanced by using various forms of media. Audio Media is one of them.

The medium of instruction which uses only sound is called the Audio Media.

- In this module, we will learn more about the following audio media:

i)   Disc based Audio

ii)   Educational Radio

iii) Audio Conference

iv)   Podcasts, and

v)   Streaming Audio

(I) Disc based Audio

Disc based audio is the audio that is recorded on a digital optical storage disc.

It can contain different types of audio materials. For example the disc could contain speeches, action songs, music, folk-tales and drama, stories, etc.

It enhances learning of verbal information and can be helpful for teaching foreign languages.

ADVANTAGES

- Audio recordings can play music, provide motivation and convey information.

- Audio recordings can be used along with worksheets and or other projected visual materials.

- It helps to provide drill and practice or teach a skill for e.g. in overcoming poor speech habits and correcting actual speech defects, development of conversation skill, expression of power, etc.

LIMITATIONS

Some of the limitations of Disc based audio are:

- If the disc gets scratched, then it cannot be used.

- Discs can save limited data

- With cloud storage and extended storage space on the hard disc, disc based audio storage has become less important.

(II) Educational Radio

Educational radio is the term given to the radio medium used in formal learning systems.

It is typically used as a means for course material delivery, and often integrated with various kinds of interaction.

Radio is a powerful mass medium used in education for disseminating information, imparting instruction and giving entertainment.

Radio is one of the cheapest technologies in comparison with other technologies and covers a wide geographical area.

ADVANTAGES

Educational Radio enhances imagination of the learners.

It is resourceful as it can bring the people dead or alive to the classroom who have made rare contributions to the society through their speeches, lectures or talks.

It provides up-to-date information on current research findings.

Radio extends the area of acquaintance, it brings the world into classroom through description, narration, etc.

LIMITATIONS

Lack of visual aids is the major disadvantage of educational radio. It is difficult to capture the attention of students with no visual aids.

It is a one way communication. So, there is a lack of feedback from the audience.

Development of educational radio programmes by the instructors may be time consuming.

Broadcast is affected by bad weather.

(III) Audio Conference

When a meeting between several parties is held over the telephone, instead of in person, it is called an audio conference or teleconference.

There is no special equipment or knowledge required to hold them.

In situations where sound or spoken language is central to learning objectives, the use of audio technology is crucial for learning.

For teachers and students, it is easier to convey emotion and personality via the spoken word rather than the written word.

ADVANTAGES

- Audio conferencing is a cost-effective communication tool.
- Audio conferencing is easily accessible.
- Audio conferencing can save a lot of time and money.

LIMITATIONS

- The communication is only verbal.
- Audio conferencing cannot keep you focused.
- The quality of conference call is not reliable.

(IV) Podcasts

- A Podcast is a form of digital media which is made up of a series of audio files known as episodes usually with a common theme.

- It is made available on the internet for downloading to a computer or portable media player which can be received by subscribers automatically.

- Types of Podcasts

  i. Audio Podcasts - Audio only, plays on any mp3 player.

  ii. Enhanced podcast - Audio + images (like a narrated slideshow), and

  iii. Video podcast - Audio + video

ADVANTAGES

- Learning becomes interesting and highly motivating

- Learning occurs on the go which means that students can access the downloaded/streamed audio file anytime.

- Once subscribed to a particular podcast the learner gets automatic downloads of subsequent podcasts.

- It develops students listening skills.

LIMITATIONS

- The language used in the podcast, the experiences and illustrations cited in the podcast may not suit the students past experiences or maturity level.

- It is difficult to locate podcasts related to teaching and learning school subjects.

- Working knowledge with ICT tools is necessary

- Some podcasts are chargeable

(V) Streaming Audio

Audio streaming is the practice of delivering real-time audio through a network connection.

Streaming is a technology that allows you to listen to audio, without having to download it.

Once the broadcast is finished, if you want it again, then you have to re-stream it from its source.

ADVANTAGES

- It encourages students to become more independent and responsible for their own learning.

- It provides students with a study aid

- It is good for auditory learners

LIMITATIONS

- Internet connectivity is required.

- Battery life of the device is affected.

- Students' ability to ask questions or participate in discussion is limited.