MOTIVATING LANGUAGE LEARNING THROUGH ONLINE RADIO

E. Pérez-Femenía, M. Iglesias-García

University of Alicante (SPAIN)

Abstract

Radio is the means of communication with the best adaptation to ICT changes, integrating its routine to the internet. Since the European Parliament urged the governments of member states in 2008 to enforce actions that advocate for media literacy programmes, especially in schools, there has been a development in Spain for technological modernisation, which instead of seeking an establishment in media education, has been aimed at providing technological infrastructures to schools. Ultimately a “simple” technology translation. Society in the 20th century is characterised as multicultural and multilingual as a result of cultural and human diversity. Bilingualism is the rule rather than the exception, meaning that a great part of the world’s population is able to communicate in more than one language. But being exposed passively to a language is not efficient when trying to learn it. Social interaction is fundamental to acquire the sounds of a language. An education of the 21st century must improve the way languages are learnt and used, starting with our own, and a communicational approach might be the key. Of all the existing language teaching methods throughout history since the 18th century, those oriented towards achieving communicative proficiency stand out. Reaching a “hearing education” could be obtained thanks to the radio, for the means enables speaking, benefits listening, stimulates imagination and allows the sound’s quality and typology to be understood. In this sense, we need to consider how to improve language teaching and learning for both foreign and official languages in Spain, and more specifically, the ability required for speaking. This is the context in which the school Radio at the secondary school IES Mediterrània in Benidorm appears. This online radio is proposed as a motivational tool to favour language learning in a multilingual and multicultural environment like Benidorm in a moment in which new generations are not only originators, but also producers and prosumers of mass media. It is an educational project, aimed at students between 12 and 18 years old, who play the role of journalists in front of the microphones, reaching an integrated treatment of the four working languages (Valencian, Spanish, English and French). News, interviews and cultural spaces are some of the programmes designed by themselves that can be heard on IVOOX and on the center's website. Thirty-two programmes have been recorded so far in the languages used in the center (Valencian, Spanish, English and French). The creation and recording process of a radio programme implies working with the four competencies, both oral and written, when drafting scripts, searching information about the chosen topics and recording them (listening and writing comprehension and production). The programmes are broadcasted live weekly on the internet through the streaming programme and with recorded audios (podcast). Among the people taking part in the project we can find students with Asperger’s Syndrome, Autism, Cerebral Palsy and Down Syndrome. The radio has allowed them to be empowered like the young people they are, autonomous beings with their own initiative.

Keywords: Radio, multilingualism, media literacy, motivation, language learning.

1 INTRODUCTION

It is becoming increasingly necessary to introduce the media in a real way in teaching. Communication and education, separately, have no meaning in today's world [1]. The five core competences on which, according to UNESCO [2], media and information literacy focus, are: understanding, critical thinking, creativity, intercultural awareness and citizenship. Thus, young people should receive a critical, active and plural education about the media. Edu-communication for literacy in children and young people is already part of formal education in countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the Nordic countries such as Norway, Sweden and Finland [3]. In Spain, there still is a long way to go. However, there are numerous scientific articles and research that focus on this topic. They are looking to introduce the media in education as a motivational resource to promote learning of languages, besides socializing and transmission of values.

The 21st century education must improve the learning and use of languages, starting with their own and the communicative approach could be the key. Moreover, it is important to reflect how to improve the teaching and learning of languages, both foreign and native languages in Spain, and particularly
the oral comprehension skill. "The data takes us in front of the importance of media for the learning of foreign languages and, particularly, for the ability of oral comprehension" [4].

With the Internet’s help, the radio becomes "a window of opportunities for conducting radio workshops that do not exclusively seek media impact, but appropriate technology and accessibility to improve communication and social skills" [5]. It can even help to build a digital identity in a world where citizens, especially the youngest, not only consume, but also produce messages on a daily basis on social networks in different languages. In this context, online radio can promote and improve the use of languages, enhance oral and written skills through teamwork.

1.1 Language learning

21st’s century society is distinguished from other centuries by being multicultural and multilingual, as a result of cultural and human diversity. Therefore, learning languages is a need to train the citizens of the future. In fact, the European Union’s and Unesco’s aim is to open up education and training systems to the outside world. It is also necessary to increase mobility, exchanges and strengthen European cooperation and subscribing to the minority or local languages.

Multilingualism refers to the personal, social or school circumstances in which three or more languages are acquired and used in an integrated manner [6]. It is obvious that knowledge of languages generates more opportunities, improves employment and enriches citizens with a greater number of professional proficiency. But language learning can not be only relegated to the educational sphere. The media and all the spaces where information exchanges are produced, must also lead a social role during the language teaching process. In addition, it is important to emphasize in the learning of second or third languages the important parts that linguistic attitudes play, and how attitudinal and motivational factors influence linguistic learning. The various actors, such as family (in particular parents), school and mass media can contribute to the origin or change of this type of attitudes, the last one acquiring great importance [7].

The globalized society of knowledge requires the development of communicative skills and abilities, not only in a foreign language, but in several. And the Common Framework of Reference for languages, drawn up by the Council of Europe, must define what should be taught to achieve the predicted communicative objectives in each of the levels. In this sense, "the exposure and use of the language that students make through the media has a very significant positive effect on oral comprehension skills" [8].

Among all the methods of teaching languages that have been throughout history since the eighteenth century, it is worth highlighting those that are oriented towards the achievement of communicative competence. And, in this line, everything seems to indicate that we move in a more open direction and less standardized methods, where they will have more strength activities that focus on values, attitudes, feelings, self-esteem and interpersonal communication [9]. As explained by Tomé [10], feedback strategies for the correction of pronunciation are a fundamental factor and particularly collaborative practices among students. The obtained results highlight quantitative aspects (increase of oral productions in the class space and in the different web environments: weblogs, podcast, social networks), as well as qualitative aspects, related to the involvement of students in the different learning contexts of pronunciation" [10].

If bilingualism is the rule rather than the exception, and all languages we know can be learned, mere passive exposure to a language is apparently not the most effective method to learn it. It will be necessary to interact to acquire knowledge in that language [11]. As Wong [12] says, "Criticisms of current educational practices in language teaching in primary and secondary schools have focused especially on the preeminence of a behaviourial system based on presentation, practice and production with an excessive dependence on decontextualized materials and a poorly balanced approach, which has led to the direct teaching of language above communicative skills" (p.10).

In this sense, both social networks and ICT and, in particular, the radio for its easy accessibility, are the key to promote contextualized and connected learning of a second language or foreign languages. One of the main advantages of the start up of an online school radio is the improvement in the fluency of oral language [13], without leaving aside the ability to develop through this media the other skills, such as written expression, oral and written comprehension.
1.2 Media literacy

Since European Parliament urged in 2008 the governments of the member states to implement actions to incorporate media literacy programs, mainly in schools, technological modernization initiatives have been developed in Spain. Nevertheless, looking for implementation of a media education, the aim was to provide technological infrastructure in schools. Resuming, a "simple" translation of technologies.

Edu-communication or Media Literacy is not a new discipline. The Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire was one of the first precursors of the term. It has been used since the 1970s and was admitted by UNESCO in 1979, an organization that places a great part of its hopes for cultural transformation in Education Communication, recommending education "with", "through", and "from" the media, in order to adapt the knowledge of a society dominated by mass media, hyperinflation and technological acculturation to new forms of social organization. It is about offering an education that teaches thinking and not obeying [14].

Over the past three decades, the achieved experience in countries such as the United States, Japan, France, Mexico and Brazil, has been demonstrated the great social and pedagogical potential of new media as teaching resources for support in teaching-learning processes at the service of training. Up to this point, education of excellence and quality is associated by extension to the quality of channels and communication systems that are implemented in the learning process [15]. From this point of view, it is said that the traditional idea of "literacy" is linked to the process of creation and interpretation of the written text. As Scolari [16] explains, in Paulo Freire's pedagogy, literacy is not just about teaching, reading and writing. It is necessary to teach the way of interpreting critically what one reads, so that the reading-writer fully consider himself as a transformer of society.

Today we live in a world where citizens, especially the youngest, not only consume, but also produce messages on a daily basis on social networks. In this sense, there is a change of perspective and it is studied with greater interest how the audiences actively construct the meaning of the texts of the media. The old media consumer is now a prosumer (producer and consumer), an active subject who creates new content and shares it. It is this context in which the concept of transmedia literacy emerges [16].

The first theories about the media (Theory of the hypodermic needle, Theory of the magic bullet, etc.), have already pointed out that the media had a great influence on society. In fact, it was considered that a society, characterized by psychological isolation and impersonalization, reacted uniformly to the powerful stimuli of media messages [17].

Therefore, it is necessary to train citizens in media literacy to favour citizen participation, within the process of socialization of people and language training, at a time when our society is distinguished by multicultural wealth. Keefer [18], in his research on the great influence performed by the media on children's education, argues that the schoolchildren literacy is greater in those places which are more exposed to a greater number of radio stations.

The "Media Literacy" section of the Alliance of Civilizations of the United Nations (UN) have created a few years ago a website (www.aocmedialiteracy.org) that contains resources and materials opened and available to all citizens of the world in English, Arabic and Spanish, but also complemented by a vast database where resources appear in more than 60 languages of the five continents.

Fruit of the joint collaboration between the UN, the European Parliament, the European Commission and UNESCO was the "New Curriculum for Teachers on Media and Information Literacy". As it is said by Aguaded [19], "There is no doubt that the involvement of international organizations is one of the main keys for the development of global policies, the awareness of governments and the public knowledge that it is increasingly necessary to educate people irrespective of their age, race, sex, religion or place of origin for a critical, active and plural education in the media" (p.7). Despite the development in research in recent years and the actions of Parliament and the European Commission, Spain still lacks effective policies that favor true media literacy [20]. Among the proposals to take into account the generalization of media literacy in Spain, Margalef [21] came up with promoting the mediatic creativity of young people through center radios, as well as TV, educational websites, blogs and school newspapers.
1.3 The online radio

Internet has meant an important change in the ways of making and consuming radio. The distribution of content on demand allows you to personalize how and when you listen, where and with what device, thanks to technologies such as podcasting or streaming [22]. Thus, the Network has allowed the radio to break with the limitations of the hertzian signal, achieving a certain ubiquity, which allows the listener to connect to the radio of their choice from anywhere in the world, from a device linked to the Internet [23]. On the other hand, social networks provide the radio with an suitable scenery to multiply contact with listeners and generate new forms of participation and interaction, which make the roles of sender-receiver interchangeable [24].

Another advantage that online radio brings is the low cost and ease of broadcasting through the Internet. It doesn’t require much cost on equipment, since it is enough with a computer, a microphone and a connection to the Network. Therefore, it is a resource easily accessible in educational centers, as will be seen below.

1.4 A school radio project: IES Mediterrània of Benidorm

This is the context in which IES Mediterrània School radio in Benidorm emerges. This online radio is considered as a motivational tool to promote the learning of languages in a multilingual and multicultural environment such as Benidorm, contemplating, in turn, the possibility of working skills, abilities and values, at a time when new generations are not only issuers, but also producers of the media. In this Secondary school Education, there are 800 students enrolled, whom 200 are of different nationalities, mainly from Ukraine, Russia, England, Italy, Morocco, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Pakistan and China. The rest come from Andalusia and Castilla la Mancha and 20% are schoolchildren from Benidorm and surroundings.

There are numerous examples to consider. The experience carried out at the Vicente Forestieri school in Córdoba (Argentina) has allowed children who had difficulties in learning, as a result of the use of radio, to improve reading, oral expression, favouring the self-esteem, bonds of respect and solidarity [25].

In Ghana and in Burkina Faso, in Africa, the radio was raised a few years ago as an instrument that could improve access to didactic content and train its inhabitants in the local language, thus improving the quality of education [26]. In Spain, among the initiatives that emerge, are those that have the support of public administrations, such as Media Radio, an online resource of the National Center for Communication and Educational Information (CNICE); and the Xtec Radio project, promoted by the Department of Education of the Generalitat de Catalunya or Publiradio, an online application for teaching innovation funded by the Agència de Gestió d’Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca (AGAUR) of the Generalitat de Catalunya [27].

It is not a novelty that radio and education have always gone hand in hand. Since the appearance of the radio in the 20ths of the last century, there has always been interest in giving it some educational purpose, both in Europe and in the United States. And years later (50s, 60s), it has appeared in Spain with the radio drama and dramatizations of stories and stories [28].

Radio IES Mediterrània was launched in October 2017, interacting with the start of the academic year. However, during the previous academic year, the radio was worked with the students in the classroom. It had a positive impact among the students and their families, so the possibility of creating a centre radio, IES Mediterrània radio from Benidorm, increased. With the support of the management, the project was launched and a report was prepared to include it in the PAM (Action Plan for Improvement), which is drawn up by the Regional Ministry of Education of the Generalitat Valenciana, to assign additional hours of teaching staff of the centers, supported by public funds. So that, a Radio Workshop (two hours a week) is given to boys and girls of 1st of ESO (12-13 years of age). The students of this Workshop, apart from learning how to prepare programs (interviews, reports, news reports ...), learn the technical management of the radio: they record programs, make connections with the exterior by telephone and mount the recording through the Audacity program. There are 10 students with Asperger's Syndrome, Autism, Cerebral Palsy and Down Syndrome.
It is an online radio that is considered as a motivational tool to improve language learning in a multilingual environment. The prepared programs by the students are recorded in podcasts and are hosted on the IVOOX platform, which is accessed from the center's website. In addition, the radio program is also uploaded on the website of the educational centre, matched with photographs, to give a greater diffusion (http://mestreacasa.gva.es/web/iesmediterrania).

Students of all levels also participate (from 1st of ESO to 2nd year of Bachillerato) including those of the Training Cycles. It has involved teachers of languages (Valencian, Spanish, English and French), Geography and History, Music, Tourism Training Cycles, Kitchen and hotel Management. The Valencian Language and Literature teacher coordinates the project, although, for the moment, she hasn’t got the hours of dedication included in her timetable.

Regarding the objectives of the radio project, it includes:

1. Learning and using several languages at the same time.
2. Promoting respect for linguistic diversity.
3. Encouraging and reinforcing teamwork.
4. Promoting the initiative and creativity of teachers.
5. Improving oral and written expression.
6. Favouring the educational and social integration of the students.
7. Developing a critical and supportive sense.
8. Intensifying communication among the school community.

It is about teaching to understand, analyze and use the media, to educate and teach through the media and transform them into subject matter (Oliva, 2006, p.30).

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used is the studied case [29] has got a predominantly qualitative approach, based on the observation of a specific case: the study of the school Radio project IES Mediterrània of Benidorm. The data collection used to carry out the research, has been done during the start-up process of the radio, since October 2017, and its development until April 2019.

The programs, contents and students that have participated in the project, have been accounted for. The programs elaborated by the students are taxed in podcast and are uploaded on the platform IVOOX, which is accessed from the website of the centre. In addition, the radio program is also added to the school's website, accompanied by photographs, to give it a wider diffusion.

3 RESULTS

There have been numerous programs that have been produced by schoolchildren for eight months, since the start of the IES Mediterrània Radio broadcasts last October. The first program was devoted to work the contents of History, concerning the celebration of Valencian Community Day (October 9th) together with the Valencian teacher and, a local historian was interviewed. It was elaborated with students of 3rd ESO, who previously worked on the subject, wrote the scripts and recorded the program.

Since then, 30 programs have been recorded in the present languages from the educational Centre (Valencian, Spanish, English and French). Some of these programs have coincided with dates as marked as the Day against Gender Violence, Halloween, Christmas, Peace Day and Working Women's Day.

Other programs have worked the contents of the subjects, like the literary gatherings on reading books, radio spaces on Tourism and Gastronomy to make known the cycles offered by the center, News, with such suggestive titles as "Crèixer en Igualtat", "Retallant Estereotips", "Positive Disrupters", "Tertulia Literaria con ...", "Per un Turisme d'Emocions", "Cooking Experience", "Músic per la Pau", "Tourism Studies" or "Periodistes a l'Atac ". The latter is made by students with Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and Asperger's (see table 1).
Table 1. Description of radio programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inaugurem la radio</td>
<td>Interviews: Mayor, Director, Altea historian</td>
<td>1st and 3rd ESO</td>
<td>Valencian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPB in Halloween’17</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>2nd FPB</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Créixer en la Igualtat,</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>3rd ESO</td>
<td>Valencian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retallant estereotips</td>
<td>Halloween</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Revolució dels Tàpers</td>
<td>Food Magazine</td>
<td>1st Kitchen direction</td>
<td>Spanish, Valencian, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodistas a l’Atac amb...</td>
<td>Interview with a journalist with</td>
<td>Students with Functional diversity</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mário Molines</td>
<td>Cerebral palsy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Valencian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertulia Literaria con...</td>
<td>Literary Gathering</td>
<td>1st PMAR</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herècules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Valencian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Disrupters: per un</td>
<td>Report on emotion tourism</td>
<td>1st Bachillerato</td>
<td>Valencian Spanish, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turisme d’emocions</td>
<td>among adolescents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondalles</td>
<td>Les Marines Literature</td>
<td>1st ESO</td>
<td>Valencian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Informative</td>
<td>2nd Tourism</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking Experience</td>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>2nd Kitchen direction</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Múica per la Pau</td>
<td>Magazine musician interview</td>
<td>4th ESO</td>
<td>Valencian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dia de la dona</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>2nd Bachillerato PMAR</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periódistes a l’atac amb...</td>
<td>Women’s Day</td>
<td>Radio Workshop</td>
<td>Valencian Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanesa</td>
<td>Taekwondo champion</td>
<td>Functional Diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterrània News</td>
<td>The News</td>
<td>2nd Bachillerato</td>
<td>Valencian English French</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own Elaboration.

After specifying the theme of the program, we proceed to work in class. Internet is used in searching for information on both, the content and the person selected to interview. The information is then classified and teams are formed to work the different parts of the program.

It is also decided who will be the presenters, responsible for directing the space and who will give way to the different sections of it. Finally, the program is recorded in the radio studio, which are located in the library, it is mounted, it is uploaded on the platform IVOOX and on the link of the web page. As a step prior to the writing of the program, they are formed in radio language and its characteristics, vocalization, breathing and orally.

3.1 Participants

Since October 2017, more than 500 students of different levels have participated (from 1st of ESO to 2nd year of Bachillerato), in addition to the Training Cycles of Cooking and Tourism Management. The highest percentage of participation has been registered in the 3rd and 4th of ESO, with ages between 14 and 16 years.

There is no reason to determine the participation of a particular group. It depends, to a great extent, on the interest and motivation of Teachers. Students of Functional Diversity (Autism, Asperger, Cerebral Palsy and Down’s syndrome), who also participate in the Radio Workshop, are all enrolled in the 2nd year of ESO and also collaborate in the activities of their group (See table 2).
### Table 2: Number of students who have developed programs on the radio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Number students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st and 2nd ESO, Radio workshop (12-13 years)</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd and 4th ESO, PMAR</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st and 2nd Bachillerato</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st and 2nd Tourism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st and 2nd Kitchen direction</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional diversity</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own Elaboration.

### 3.2 Materials

The start-up of the radio was initiated after the decision was taken by the management team to locate the station in the IES library, a work space used by the entire educational community and so to bring and to make known this means of communication, both the teachers and the students. Next, the station was supplied with the necessary material to make it work out and summarized in:

1. A 10-channel surface mixing table.
2. Five hand-held microphones with switch.
3. Five desktop bases Adam Hall S8B.
4. Six HP500 LD headphones.
5. Headphone amplifiers.
7. A Dynamic Vocal Microphone foot microphone.
8. Two wireless stereo microphones.
10. Internet connection.

The students who are enrolled in the Ràdio Workshop, are responsible for its maintenance.

*Figure 1. Students working in the school radio.*
4 CONCLUSIONS

Radio IES Mediterrània, although it is a radio of recent creation, has had a great reception among the students of the school. Boys and girls work enthusiastically at all stages of the process. The elaboration and recording of a radio program involves working out the skills, both oral and written, when writing the scripts, searching for the information about the chosen subjects and recording them (oral and written comprehension, oral and written expression). From one program to the next, they improve significantly, both, writing and oral. This improvement can be verified in the podcasts that are uploaded on the platform. In addition, students of functional diversity have found on the radio a way to empower themselves, to increase their self-confidence, both in the learning process and in social integration.

At the moment the schoolchildren are the ones who ask their teachers to do a radio program. Teachers are gradually joining the initiative. However, teachers of scientific subjects are the ones that have more difficulty in translating the contents of their subject. In this sense, it would be important to have hours of coordination to advise and work with more groups, as well as spreading it through social networks.

In the future it is planned to do surveys for the students and interview the teachers, to know in detail the impact that is having the work on the radio. On the one hand, it is intended to know the perception of students if their work in the radio favours their learning, if it is improving the motivation and social skills in the group and, on the other hand, to know its impact on the knowledge of the subject, analyzing the evolution of qualifications, the interest and the attitude.

At the same time, the radio gives the opportunity to create real situations of communication outside the classroom, where the linguistic and social interaction becomes the way of learning and improving a language, in particular the skills of comprehension and oral expression.

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