

ETV in Singapore

Ng, Sin Yue

1991

Ng, S. Y. (1991). ETV in Singapore. In AMIC ICC Seminar on Children and Television : Cipanas, September 11-13, 1991. Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research & Information Centre.

<https://hdl.handle.net/10356/93345>

ETV In Singapore

By

Ng Sin Yue

ETV IN SINGAPORE

I INTRODUCTION:

The Ministry of Education in Singapore first started its ETV services as a pilot project in 1967. Today, ETV has become an integral part of the school curriculum. The Department of Educational Technology (DET) which is responsible for the production ETV programmes is the branch of the Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore (CDIS). And the CDIS is one of the 7 divisions of the Ministry of Education. CDIS established in 1980, is charged with mission of improving the teaching-learning process through the provision of quality curriculum packages. These packages comprise not only textbooks, pupil workbooks and teacher guides but a wide range of audio visual materials including ETV programmes. The ETV programmes produced cover wide spectrum of subject: from core subjects such as Languages, Science and Mathematics to other subjects such as History, Geography, Moral Education and Social Studies.

There are ten producers in the ETV section in CDIS. All are qualified teachers with at least

5 years of teaching experience.

The producers are supported by a full technical crew. We produce between 120 and 150, 10 - 15 minute ETV programmes yearly. The programmes are transmitted over the national TV station twice a week.

II THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF ETV IN SINGAPORE

I would like to share with you the three major characteristics of ETV in Singapore.

1. ETV is PART AND PARCEL OF THE CDIS MULTI-MEDIA INSTRUCTIONAL PACKAGES FOR SCHOOLS.

In Singapore, ETV programmes are an integral part of multi-media packages. It is impossible to discuss ETV without first mentioning these multi-media instructional packages which are designed, developed, produced and disseminated by the Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore (CDIS). Our clients are all the schools in Singapore.

1.1 WHAT DOES A CDIS INSTRUCTIONAL PACKAGE COMPRISE?

As I mentioned earlier, apart from the print materials such as textbooks, teacher's guides and workbooks, CDIS also produces a wide range of AV materials (non-print) consisting of audio tapes, OHT masters, slides, picture cards, wall charts, and ETV programmes.

The print materials are produced by the writing teams which consist of teachers seconded from school. They work closely with the Media Specialists who are in charge of the production of these non-print materials. Thus, together they produce very closely integrated print and non-print materials for nearly every subject at all levels, for schools in Singapore.

1.2 WHY MULTI-MEDIA PACKAGES.

The numerous tests and research conducted on right and left brain processing since the 50s show that the left and right hemisphere of the human brain process information and

experience differently. The left hemisphere processes verbal data and language; whereas the right hemisphere processes non-verbal data such as music and visuals. In order to develop and integrate both right and left mode processing skills, to ensure that pupils learn better and faster, we produce instructional materials in such a way that both hemispheres of the brain are equally stimulated. To achieve this verbal (print) and non-verbal (non-print) materials are, therefore, necessary.

Another reason to include AV materials in our curriculum packages is the power in the visual media itself.

An experiment carried out by the Harvard Business School showed that the retention of learned materials in a group of students taught by audio-visual method was 38.5 % greater than in a control group taught by more traditional methods i.e. chalk & talk.

Another research done by the same institute confirmed this. The finding showed that information we gather about our world comes through our 5 senses in the following proportions:

| | | |
|---------|-----|---|
| TASTE | 1 | % |
| TOUCH | 1.5 | % |
| SMELL | 3.5 | % |
| HEARING | 11 | % |
| SIGHT | 83 | % |

These figures tell us 2 things:

- . What we see is about 8 times more powerful than what we hear.
- . The teacher's voice conveys only one-tenth of the information the pupils receive.

The same research done by the Haward Business School also showed that pupils remember, on average:

- 10 % of what they READ
- 20 % of what they HEAR
- 30 % of what they SEE
- 50 % of what they SEE & HEAR
- 80 % of what they SAY
- 90 % of what they SAY & DO

This finding tells us:

- . A multi-media teaching method that combines seeing and hearing is more effective than seeing or hearing alone.
- . Pupils learn best when they are actively participating - that is talking and doing.

ETV IS TO INFORM, INSTRUCT AND IMPART VALUES,
EACH PROGRAMME COMES WITH SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL
OBJECTIVES.

A week ago I received a call from a parent. In the conversation he told me that he liked it when his children watched our ETV programmes because 'they are different from other commercial programmes'. 'My children learn something at the end of the programme', he said. This comment from the parent highlights the characteristics of ETV programmes which is to inform, instruct and impart values rather than to entertain.

But this does not mean that ETV programmes should not be entertaining. I totally agree with the approach adopted by the Children's Television Workshop, producers of the famous 'Sesame Streets' Series, which incorporate humour, special effects, background music and other

entertaining features in educational programmes. The marriage of education with entertainment is one of the recent revolutions in teaching, a union which has yielded such saying as 'learning can be fun', 'learning while they laugh' and 'education by entertainment'. Entertainment reduces stress and a stress-free environment facilitates learning. However, you would agree with me that ETV is an expensive media. We cannot afford to accept incidental learning, pure fun and entertainment as a norm for ETV production. Moreover, feedback from teachers also show that sheer enrichment or supplementary programmes are less used by them in schools. In Singapore, besides being interesting and appealing, ETV programmes must have solid content and be pedagogical sound and must be of relevance to the curriculum. When we conceptualise a new series, we have to consider how the programmes are to be used. Teaching strategies and specific and observable instructional objectives are, therefore, suggested in the teacher's guide to ensure effective use of the programmes. The constant challenge for our ETV producers is to ensure that a proper balance of the entertainment and instructional value is maintained.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ARE INCORPORATED INTO THE ETV PROGRAMMES TO ENHANCE TEACHING FOR LEARNING

One of the instructional strategies we incorporate into the programmes is the 4MAT learning model developed by Bernice McCarthy. In the 4MAT model, 4 different learning styles are highlighted. McCarthy believes that pupils perceive information in four different ways. According to her, our school system has all along been favouring the type two learners who are primarily interested in facts and figures. To rectify this bias, it is necessary to provide a variety of previewing and postviewing activities to the pupils to cater to the needs of different learners so that whatever their learning style, they can benefit equally from the lesson.

At this juncture, I would like to share with you the teaching procedure for a programme entitled 'Vegetable Farm'^(Annex A) demonstration. This is to illustrate how we incorporate the 4MAT strategy into our programmes. 'Vegetable Farm' is one of the 6 programmes for primary two pupils. These programmes are designed to provide beginning

learners of English with opportunities to acquire basic oral communication skills.

A. Introducing the Language

1. Distribute vegetables to pupils and have them observe the vegetables. Get them to look at the shapes and colours. Ask pupils to feel the different textures and to sniff them. Ask pupils to describe the vegetables based on their observations.
2. Cut some of the vegetables and get pupils to taste them. Ask them to describe the different taste and say if they like eating the vegetables.
3. Ask pupils to name some of the vegetables. Label them with the teacher-prepared word cards.
4. Ask pupils if they know other vegetables. Get them to talk about these vegetables.

5. Ask pupils to share with the class where they think vegetables come from.

The series of previewing activities mainly cater to what Bernic McCarthy refers to as type one learners. Type one learners are primarily interested in personal meaning and personal experiences.

B. Providing the New Information

1. Tell pupils to watch out for the different vegetables in the filmlet. Get pupils to identify them as they appear on the screen.
2. Also ask pupils to pay attention to the way vegetables are grown in the traditional farm and in the hydroponic farm.
- *3. View filmlet on the different vegetable farms.

These activities provide facts for the pupils who are the pupils who are type two learners. Type two learners are primarily interested in the facts that deepen understanding. For these

pupils, we provide interesting information related to the concept.

C. Discussing the Experience

1. Ask pupils to name at least 6 vegetables that they saw in the filmlet. Get pupils to match the vegetables identified with the the appropriate word card.
2. Get pupils to briefly describe the vegetables.
3. Ask pupils to talk about and compare the differences and similarities between a traditional vegetable farm and a hydroponic farm.

Questions 2 & 3 should provide pupils with opportunities to practise the Simple Present Tense.

4. Write down pupils responses and read these with the class.

5. To provide further practice in using the Simple Present Tense, ask pupils the following questions:
- i) Which is your favourite vegetable?
 - ii) Can you tell me more about it?
 - iii) How do you like this vegetable to be cooked?
6. Get pupils to classify the various vegetables featured into the following suggested categories:
- i) Vegetables that have no leaves.
 - ii) Vegetables that have leaves.
 - iii) Vegetables that are often eaten raw.
 - iv) Vegetables that are often eaten cooked.

Several new and exciting categories can be generated.

Allow pupils the option to create new categories.

These activities are to cater the type three learners who are interested in how things work and in doing things. They are the common-sense learners. We cater to this group of learners by providing hands-on activities for practice and mastery.

D. Follow-Up Activity

Divide class into working groups and distribute to each group the following materials and vegetables:

- i) plain white art paper
- ii) plastic knives
- iii) water/poster colour
- iv) brushes
- v) a potato
- vi) a ladies' finger
- vii) a carrot

Get the group to create a combined vegetable-print. Completed work may be displayed.

These activities are suggested to provide the type 4 learners with opportunities for cooperative learning that encourage creative application of the learned concepts.

(Annex A)

VEGETABLE FARM

THEME : VEGETABLES

Aims

- . To equip beginning learners of English with basic oral communication skills.
- . To present and introduce to learners different types of vegetables found in the supermarket.
- . To provide learners with a vicarious experience in order that they may be able to articulate their thoughts in the target language.

Objectives

Day 1

- i) Pupils will be able to talk about the vegetables that they have seen in their visits to the market/supermarket.
- ii) Pupils will be able to name & to briefly describe the vegetables brought in by the teacher.
- iii) Pupils will be able to compare the different vegetables introduced.
- iv) Pupils will be able to name the vegetables introduced in the ETV programme.
- v) Pupils will be able to talk briefly about how vegetables are grown in a traditional farm and in a hydroponic farm.

- vi) Pupils working in groups will be able to create a vegetable-print, using potatoes, ladies' fingers and/or carrots.

Day 2

- i) Pupils will be able to name the 5 different vegetables featured in the story.
- ii) Pupils will be able to talk about the 5 vegetables in terms of their colour, texture, and if possible, their character.
- iii) Pupils will be able to select one vegetable (of the 5 featured) that they like, and give reasons to justify their choice.
- iv) Each pupil will be able to write a few sentences on one of the following :
 - . Tomato
 - . Potato
 - . Onion
 - . Turnip
 - . Princess Celery

Summary of ETV Programme (approx. 13 mins 30 secs in duration)

Part One of the programme takes pupils to a vegetable farm that plants caixin in the traditional way. Next, pupils are introduced to high-tech farming - hydroponics. Pupils get to see how cherry tomatoes, 'kangkong', gailan and xiao baicai flourish in a soilless environment. Part One ends with a visit to the vegetable wholesaler market.

Part Two is a story about five vegetables - a tomato, a potato, an onion, a turnip and a head of celery - each with a distinct character. Celery, who is both arrogant and rude, realises after a life-threatening experience, that she needs friends.

Lyrics

Oh ... Hip ! Hip ! Hurray !
It's a happy happy day.
We'll always be together
Vegetable friends forever.
Turnip, Potato,
Onion, Tomato,
Princess Celery
We're a salad family.
Oh ... Hip ! Hip ! Hurray !
It's a happy happy day.

DAY 1

Experience

View the filmlet on the traditional and hydroponic farms in the ETV programme entitled **VEGETABLE FARM**.

Key Vocabulary

cucumbers, cabbages, lettuces, carrots, egg plants, vegetables, farm, cherry tomatoes, red chillies, green chillies, ladies' fingers, turnips, ginger, limes

Additional Vocabulary

broccoli, french beans, soil, market, supermarkets, hawkers, hotels, grow, restaurants

Language Items

Simple Present Tense
indicating habitual actions

Materials

- a) Word Cards on the key vocabulary
- b) Vegetables - cucumbers, carrots, turnips, tomatoes, lettuces, onions, limes
- c) Plastic knives
- d) Video Programme entitled **VEGETABLE FARM**

Procedure

- A. Introducing the Language
 - 1. Distribute vegetables to pupils and have them observe the vegetables. Get them to look at the shapes and colours. Ask pupils to feel the different textures and to sniff them. Ask pupils to describe the vegetables based on their observations.
 - 2. Cut some of the vegetables and get pupils to taste them. Ask them to describe the different taste and say if they like eating the vegetables.
 - 3. Ask pupils to name some of the vegetables. Label them with the teacher-prepared word cards.
 - 4. Ask pupils if they know of other vegetables. Get them to talk about these vegetables.
 - 5. Ask pupils to share with the class where they think vegetables come from.

B. Providing the Experience

1. Tell pupils to watch out for the different vegetables in the filmlet. Get pupils to identify them as they appear on the screen.
2. Also ask pupils to pay attention to the way vegetables are grown in the traditional farm and in the hydroponic farm.
3. View filmlet on the different vegetable farms.

C. Discussing the Experience

1. Ask pupils to name at least 6 vegetables that they saw in the Video programme. Get pupils to match the vegetables identified with the appropriate word card.
2. Get pupils to briefly describe the vegetables.
3. Ask pupils to talk about and compare the differences and similarities between a traditional vegetable farm and a hydroponic farm.

Questions 2 & 3 should provide pupils with opportunities to practise the Simple Present Tense.

4. Write down pupils' responses and read through with the class.
5. To provide further practice in using the Simple Present Tense, ask pupils the following questions :
 - i) Which is your favourite vegetable ?
 - ii) Can you tell me more about it ?
 - iii) How do you like this vegetable to be cooked ?
6. Get pupils to classify the various vegetables featured into the following suggested categories :
 - . vegetables that have no leaves.
 - . vegetables that have leaves.
 - . vegetables that are often eaten raw.
 - . vegetables that are often eaten cooked.

Several new and exciting categories can be generated. Allow pupils the option to create new categories.

D. **Follow-Up Activity**
(Mixed Ability Group
Work).

Divide class into
working groups and
distribute to each
group the following
materials and
vegetables :

- . plain white art paper
- . plastic knives
- . water/poster colour
- . brushes
- . a potato
- . a ladies' finger
- . a carrot

Get the group to create
a combined vegetable-
print. Completed work
may be displayed.

DAY 2

Extended Experience

View Part Two of the ETV programme, VEGETABLE FARM.

Materials

- a) Pupils' Dictated "Story"
- b) Pupils' artwork
- c) Video Programme entitled VEGETABLE FARM

Procedure

A Recapitulation

1. Re-read dictated "story" with pupils. Use pointer to get pupils to identify key vocabulary.
2. Display pupils' vegetable-prints and get pupils to comment on the different pieces of work. Pupils may use the following stem in expressing their likes and dislikes :

I like this because ...
I don't like this because ...

B. Extending the Experience

1. View segment on the story in the ETV programme, VEGETABLE FARM.
2. After viewing the story, ask pupils to name and describe the 5 different vegetables featured.

3. Ask pupils to pick out 2 differences and 2 similarities between :

- i) Tomato and Potato
- ii) Onion and Turnip
- iii) Celery and any of the other 4 vegetables.

4. Ask pupils which vegetable (of the 5 featured) they prefer and why.

C. Follow-Up Activity (Individual Work)

Pupils may write short simple sentences to describe any one of the 5 vegetables featured.

Pupils may also want to draw the vegetable that they have described.

D. Additional Activities (Optional)

To further discuss the story, the following questions could be asked :

1. Celery did not like being with Tomato, Potato, Onion and Turnip. Why is that so ?
2. If you were one of the vegetables there, would you help Celery when she started drying up ? Why ?
3. How do you think Celery must have felt when all the other vegetables helped her ?