On the Predicament of the Current TV English Teaching Programs and Its Solutions

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Abstract. From the late seventies of the last century to the present, China's TV English teaching programs have experienced four stages: initiation, development, transformation and dormant period. Now such programs are no longer glorious, and the impacts are from a variety of English teaching ways provided by the new rising media, English learning resources available easily under the information background and social public opinions questioning the current English education, and so on. Facing the predicament, the breakthrough path of the current TV English teaching programs lies in the followings: firstly, we should learn from the new media while highlighting the characteristics of TV English teaching; secondly, according to the needs of the specific learning audience, we should set the key teaching programs; thirdly, combining preaching and imparting knowledge and solving doubts, we should explore the blanks in the media market; fourthly, creating a fun packaging, we should pursue the sustainable development of the program; lastly, using the multi-screen interactive participation, we should increase the viscosity of the learning audience to the program.

Introduction

Since its inception in the late 1970s, TV English teaching programs in China have been developing for nearly 40 years. During this period, they have experienced four stages: enlightenment, development, transformation and dormancy. From 1977 to 1982, the TV English teaching program in China was in the stage of enlightenment, and the TV English lecture produced by CCTV, presided over by Chen Lin and Wu Qing, was the representative. It was through this group of lectures that Chinese audiences began to understand the world. From 1982 to 1999, CCTV launched TV English teaching films such as "Follow Me" and "Travel across the United States", which set off two upsurges of English learning for the whole Chinese people and formed the stage of development of TV English teaching programs in China. From 1999 to 2006, beginning with broadcasting "Hope-English Magazine" and "Yanghua Lianpian"(Modern English) TV teaching programs respectively by CCTV Science and Education Channel (CCTV10) and Beijing Television Station and ending with the suspension of "Dynamic English" by CCTV Film Channel, the TV English teaching program in China was in its transitional period, with breakthroughs and innovations in both content and form. Since 2006, due to the development of information technology and the impact of new media such as internet, the TV English teaching program in China have been in a dormant period.

The Impacts on TV English Teaching Programs

Looking back on the development of TV English teaching programs in China, we can see that "TV English teaching is not only teaching a language, but also providing a convenient tool for Chinese people to broaden their horizons and integrate into the world. The program form is also blended from the original simple teaching to the present situation. The content of the program is from knowledge to practicality, which makes the TV English teaching program constantly bring forth new ideas." [1] But
looking at the current TV English teaching in China, this kind of program is no longer glorious, but has been in a downturn for a long time. Its impacts mainly come from the following aspects:

Firstly, the rising of new media has provided many ways for English teaching. Some scholars divide English teaching media into three types: audio-visual media, print media and emerging media according to the different media at the present stage. [2] As a kind of audio-visual media, TV is more impacted by new media such as Internet and mobile phone in English teaching. Compared with the new media, TV English teaching has disadvantages such as limited broadcasting time, inability to interact in real time, and students’ being easily tired. With the support of network information technology, students can search the required English information through the network or use mobile phone software to find answers for all kinds of English problems at any time. At the same time, various kinds of online schools are springing up. On the one hand, they bring vitality to English teaching; on the other hand, they also bring impacts to TV teaching. In addition, as the same audio-visual media, many foreign television channels, such as CNN TV programs in the United States and BBC programs in the United Kingdom, can be directly watched by students through the installation of satellite TV reception facilities in many universities, which undoubtedly has a great impact on the current TV English teaching programs.

Secondly, under the background of information technology, English learning resources are abundant, diverse and easy to access. With the development of China's education and publishing industry, various English books, newspapers and magazines are flooding the publishing market, providing students with rich learning resources, including the original English textbooks and articles; various post-graduate examination books, CET-4 and CET-6, IELTS, TOEFL, BEC and other test guidance books, synchronous guidance or practice materials for English courses at all levels; various English magazines, such as 21st Century English, China Daily (English Edition), Beijing Review, Crazy English and so on. In contrast, as a kind of teaching aid which needs to be watched and is slightly inconvenient, the attraction of TV English teaching programs to students is greatly reduced.

Finally, the public opinion questions the current English education, and the reform of English score reduction in college entrance examination contributes to the flames. Like other disciplines, English education in China, including primary and secondary schools and even universities, has many drawbacks due to the persistent pursuit of high enrollment rate or CET-4 or CET-6 pass rate, which is also the focus of the public's discussion and appeal. However, with the recent introduction of the reform plan of English score reduction in College Entrance Examination in many regions, people seem to feel that the status of English subject has declined and English teaching is no longer popular. As a result, this trend of thought has spread to the already declining TV English teaching, making this kind of program even worse.

**The Internal Advantages of TV English Teaching Programs**

But will English teaching be cancelled in order to "improve the status of mother tongue" and "rebuild national confidence", as the *tide army* cheers on the Internet? In fact, this is only the wishful thinking of those people who misunderstood the intention of the English reform of College Entrance Examination. As a national policy, English teaching plays an important role in cultivating our ability to absorb the achievements of human civilization, learn from foreign advanced science and technology, enhance mutual understanding between China and the world, and ultimately realize the Chinese Dream. In contemporary China, English education will not be weakened, let alone cancelled. Some studies have shown that over 92% of the world's information will be transmitted through English in the next 50 years.[3] That is to say, as a tool of communication with foreign countries, English is indispensable to Chinese people living in the "global village", and English teaching is naturally indispensable. As a useful supplement to English teaching, TV English teaching programs have the importance of continuing existence and irreplaceable. Compared with other new media, TV English teaching programs still have the following inherent advantages:

Firstly, it has a wide range of dissemination, wide influence and higher value of curriculum resources. As a widely used, influential and widely covered communication tool invented by human
beings in the 20th century, television has become an important part of the daily life of members of modern society. Among its many functions, TV can provide learning resources and carry out English teaching, which is still an important reason for many audiences to watch specific TV programs. Compared with the English learning resources provided by other new media, the curriculum resources provided by TV English teaching programs for the audience are of higher value. Qi Xiumiao, an English teacher, pointed out that the value of the curriculum resources of TV English teaching lies in: firstly, it embodies the environmental requirements of language acquisition; secondly, it creates an immersive language acquisition environment for learners through the production of programs with rich voice and emotion, genuine contexts, and in-place audio-visual; secondly, it embodies the requirements of the times and closely links the selected language materials with social development and scientific and technological progress, which shows a great sense of the times. Thirdly, it embodies the requirements of richness, rich content and large amount of information. Finally, it also embodies the requirements of interesting, and its content is close to life and interesting.

Secondly, TV English teaching emphasizes cooperation and can focus on the advantages of all parties to create high-quality TV textbooks. Compared with other new media, TV English teaching programs are more technical and comprehensive, and have stricter requirements for the use of teachers and teaching organizations. In the production stage, TV English teaching programs need the cooperation of editing, directing, shooting, recording, art, lighting and so on. In the stage of teaching and broadcasting, a lot of technical management work need to be done by behind-the-scenes personnel. As for the TV textbook, it is more knowledgeable and authoritative because it can bring together experts and scholars who have the expertise of academia or teaching circles to participate in the production of TV textbooks or the teaching of TV English. This scientific way of using teachers reasonably and giving full play to excellent teachers' abilities is also the embodiment of the intensive advantages of TV English teaching programs.

Thirdly, it is helpful to eliminate the interference of new media on English learning and provide students with correct and useful information. New media has its advantages and disadvantages. Some scholars have pointed out that a large number of English information and fierce media competition have interfered with English teaching and also had a certain negative impact. One of its manifestations is that students' behavior and ideology are vulnerable to the influence of bad information on the Internet and make mistakes because of the lag of information filtering technology and control technology. The second is that a large number of English information often has different views when describing the same thing, which makes students at a loss. The third is that the marketization of mass media has led some new media to break through the moral bottom line to satisfy the curiosity of college students and propagate some false English information, which has a great negative impact on English teaching. In contrast, TV English teaching can exclude all kinds of foreseeable bad information and interference in the stage of program planning and production to ensure the quality of teaching materials.

Fourthly, the diversification of TV functions makes it possible for audiences to watch English teaching programs at any time. With the development of science and technology, the functions of TV are becoming more and more diverse. The audience can manage TV programs quickly, such as reservation, storage and replay. Especially the smart TV with full open platform and operating system can partly realize the network instant connection function of new media such as computers or mobile phones. It can be said that the development of TV functions has brought hope for the revival of English teaching programs.

Fifthly, TV English teaching can be watched by many people at the same time, which is easy to create a classroom learning atmosphere. Audiences can choose to watch programs at home with their families or at school with their classmates. In this way, several people can form a small classroom and create an atmosphere of learning together. They can discuss problems with each other, and supervise and review the knowledge they have learned, so as to achieve good learning results.
Breakthrough Path of TV English Teaching Programs

Although TV English teaching programs still have the irreplaceable advantages than new media, it is also an indisputable fact that the current TV English teaching programs are no longer brilliant compared with the original ones. Then, in the face of the new situation of knowledge dissemination in the information age, how to resolve the crisis, innovate and breakthrough in English teaching programs, win audiences, and improve the ratings, this is a question that the media and English teachers should think about. In my opinion, in the face of the impact of new media, the breakthroughs in the development of TV English teaching programs should be in the following aspects:

Firstly, learn from the new media communication; highlight the characteristics of television teaching. New media, such as Internet technology, computer and mobile phone, have played a certain role in promoting English learning and have also brought some impacts on TV English teaching. However, these new media provide congenital deficiencies such as uneven resources, uncertain sources, fragmentation of information and so on, which leave a glimmer of vitality for TV English teaching. On the basis of drawing lessons from the characteristics of new media information dissemination, such as promptness, diversity and easy interaction, TV teaching programs should avoid their shortcomings and highlight their own communication characteristics by innovating the content and form of programs. First of all, the content of English teaching programs should be complete and systematic, and the audiences can achieve certain assessment goals after one stage of learning. Secondly, the length of English teaching programs should be appropriate, and each course should be maintained at about half an hour. Thirdly, the broadcasting time should be reasonable. On the weekends or the winter and summer holidays the programs should focus on morning and afternoon, while during the weeks the programs should be arranged around breakfast, noon and evening meals. At the same time, the broadcasting frequency of the program should be guaranteed to be two to three times a week. Finally, TV English teaching should set up an interactive link with the audience, through the opening of short messages, micro-letters, micro-blogs and other forms, to achieve instant communication with the audience.

Secondly, according to the specific learning audience, set the program teaching focus. With the acceleration of internationalization in China, English has become more and more important in our work and life. Therefore, learning English is no longer just the needs of students at school, and people of all ages are more or less interested in learning English. As a result, the audience of TV English teaching programs has become more complex and diverse from the original single structure. Faced with the new situation, if TV English teaching wants to continue to develop, its program must first have a directional orientation, that is, according to the different needs of audiences, to design and produce different teaching programs. Generally speaking, the fixed audiences of TV English teaching programs can be divided into three categories, namely, all kinds of students with TV watching conditions, office workers with English learning needs and other people who are interested in English. For school students, English programs should be combined with their school application textbooks and mastery of English, pay attention to the imparting of micro-knowledge such as grammar explanation, word and sentence discrimination; for office workers, they should take full account of the actual application of English in their work, and produce professional language learning programs mainly listening and speaking, or targeted professional business English programs; for others, the focus of TV English teaching programs should be on the communication of daily language in order to improve the oral expression and listening comprehension of these non-specific groups.

Thirdly, integrate teaching with preaching and explore the gap in the media market. As a teaching program, TV English teaching should embody the "teacher" style and focus on the concept of preaching, teaching and solving puzzles. Some researchers divide the current domestic English teaching programs into three types: vibrant, classroom teaching and situational teaching. Using the classification for reference, we can match the content of "puzzle-solving" with the lively TV English teaching programs, and design and develop simultaneous English courses guidance in various forms for student audiences at different levels, or answer questions specifically for the high school entrance examination and the college entrance examination. For the content of "teaching", we can simulate classroom teaching programs, and design and develop systematic and characteristic TV
English textbooks aiming at improving the comprehensive abilities of audiences in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating set up a teaching program. We could also introduce and transform foreign original English learning resources, such as appreciation and interpretation of classical English movies. As for the "missionary" content, we should incorporate it into situational teaching and use English as a medium of communication to educate our audiences about Chinese traditional culture so that they can recognize the differences between Chinese and Western cultures while learning western languages and cultures, and cultivate cultural consciousness in their hearts, so as to build up self-confidence in their native cultures. In order to achieve the unity of the above different contents and forms, we should be good at innovation, explore the gap in the media market, and create our own characteristic teaching programs. In this respect, Jiangsu Education Channel has set a good example for us. The quarterly program Jiangsu English Spelling Competition: Season 1, which they developed and produced with English as the main language of communication, has achieved good communication effect because it fills the gap in the same market. At the beginning of its broadcast on March 7, 2014, the program attracted nearly 10,000 pupils from Grade 3 to Grade 6 to sign up for participation. After the program was broadcast, there was a heated discussion on the internet.

Fourthly, create the entertainment and interest packaging and pursue a sustainable development of programs. For the aesthetic appreciation of any object, the subject will have the experience from the initial feeling of freshness to the final feeling of fatigue, and so will the audience's acceptance of TV programs. Therefore, how to ensure that TV English teaching programs can be constantly new and sustainable development is a problem that must be solved by program producers. At this point, many successful examples abroad are worth learning. For example, it is the American "Spelling Bee" that the "Jiangsu English Spelling Competition" of Jiangsu Education Channel learns from. Since 2006, the program has successfully held more than 90 sessions, and every match can be broadcasted in the mainstream media hotspots, which is due to its interesting and entertaining program packaging. In 1950s, Schramm, an American communication scholar, put forward a formula of "probability of information selection" to explain the decisive factors affecting the audience's choice of programs, that is, "Probability of Choice = Guarantee of Reimbursement / Degree of Effort ". [7] This shows that in order to make the program stand out, its form should be popular, its information easy to understand, and its content meet the needs of the audience. Therefore, in the competition of various new media, if TV English teaching program wants to break out of the tight encirclement and win the audience's favor, it must "teach with pleasure" - teaching is the content as well as the purpose, and "pleasure" the form and the means. [8] And then, only by adhering to the core of education, creating an entertainment shell, imperceptibly disseminating educational ideas in interesting forms and inheriting advanced culture, can educational television media effectively shoulder its social responsibility. [9]

Fifthly, use multi-screen interactive participation to increase the learning audience viscosity. Li Zi, a scholar, believes that under the trend of multi-screen viewing and cross-screen interaction becoming the mainstream, making full use of the respective advantages of traditional media and new media to form multi-party interaction, maximizing the development of interactive functions, increasing audience participation, and effectively improving viewing cohesion are increasingly becoming the key measures to ensure the success of TV programs. [10] Based on this, TV English teaching programs can try to use mobile tweets to open interactive activities such as "rewarding answers" during the broadcasting period. Practice has proved that such interaction can effectively increase the participation and attention of the learning audience, and make English teaching programs achieve good viewing effect. For example, "Jiangsu English Spelling Competition: Season 1" opened an interactive link when the program was broadcast. The first Wechat interactive participation reached 6000 people, and many parents and children were waiting for this TV English teaching course. That is to say, as long as we give full play to the advantages of the media, make use of the interaction and resonance between multi-screens to constantly expand the program sound volume, and constantly enhance the viscosity of the learning audience, so that the TV programs and the audience complement and promote each other, our TV English teaching programs will achieve the effect of 1 + 1 > 2. [9]
Conclusion

In the past half century, although TV English teaching programs in China have never been more brilliant for their being impacted by the rise of new media, which has provided many ways for English teaching, easy access to English learning resources under the background of informationization, and questioning of current English education by public opinion, such program has experienced four stages: enlightenment, development, transformation and dormancy. The inherent advantages displayed in these stages also imply an inevitability and possibility for its future promotion and development. Faced with the impact of new media, the breakthroughs of current TV English teaching programs mainly lie in "learning" and "exploring", specifically, referring to the new media communication, highlighting the characteristics of TV teaching; setting program teaching priorities according to specific learning audiences; exploring the gap of the media market by combining teaching and preaching; creating entertainment packaging, and pursuing the sustainable development of programs; Use multi-screen interactive participation to increase the learning audience viscosity. Only in this way can our TV English teaching programs reproduce the glory of the past in the new situation.

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