

Radio Instruction Programme for Learning Herald of a new dawn in the schools of Uttar Pradesh



Eleven year Roshni of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, Mishranepur, Kanoj, likes listening and learning English through the radio. She is happy when she gets to practice English with her friends and classmates. Janki of Class VI is happy that she is able to learn English in such a “fun way” and wants this programme to continue. Gunjan also of Class VI feels that she can learn English better with the help of this programme. All these children are referring to the radio programme Aao Angrezi Seekhen (We Learn English) to improve children’s communication skills in English



The Programme:

To improve children’s English, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, UP, supported by UNICEF, initiated the programme *Aao Angrezi Seekhen (We Learn English)*. The programme was launched in the state on 17 July 2017. The Centre of Learning Resources (CLR), Pune developed the entire content of the programme. This is a 15 minutes bilingual interactive series designed in entertainment-education (e-e) format, with a central character called Sunita didi. She is the radio teacher who interacts with the children in the classroom, asks them questions and teaches them how to answer in English. It relies extensively on local language support for learning English and is structured as a dramatized series in which young Hindi-speaking children learn English from an older English speaker. The programme is innovative, interactive and child friendly. The radio lessons contain skits, songs, language games, general conversation etc. In addition, it requires the classroom teacher to revise the entire lesson by herself after the audio lesson is complete.

Before getting upscaled in all the KGBVs and UPS, this programme was piloted by SCERT through DIET Lucknow in 2008 in Lucknow and later on expanded to Lucknow division. The programme was broadcast to nearly 35,000 children in classes 4 and 6. However, the programme was not be scaled up further. An independent assessment of the programme at the end of one year showed “that the “Aao Angrezi Sikhen” was a welcome break from

the routine English class. It not only helped in creating an environment in schools, but also helped children become more proficient in spoken English”.

Target Audience:

The primary target audience of this programme are the children studying in Class VI in 746 KGBVs (approx. 27895 children)¹and in 56680 Upper Primary Schools (approx. 12,02,239 children)², but the students of other classes also love listening to this programme.

Ashutosh, a teacher in Primary School, Talgram teaches class IV-V and says that the children look forward to hearing this programme from 10:45 -11:00 AM. The children are so excited that they gather round the radio and sit in pin drop silence as soon as the programme starts. He adds that it is heartening to watch the children practice the lesson with each other long after the class is over.



Specialties of the Programme:

- The programme uses an innovative, interactive pedagogy known as Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI). This allows listeners to not only hear English being spoken, but gives them opportunities during the radio lesson itself to speak in English.
- The radio lessons are bilingual: in Hindi and English.
- The radio lessons contain a variety of child-friendly formats - drama, songs, language games, which hold the interest of the school children.
- Along with the focus on teaching spoken English, the lessons promote attitudes and behaviour related to democracy, secularism, gender, health, small family norm, etc.
- IRI pedagogy has been very successfully used to teach English, other school subjects and educational programmes for adults in a number of other countries.

Process:

The orientation for the programme was done at four levels; State, district, block and school.

The District Coordinators (Gender) were oriented for two days at the state level who in turn took forward the programme at the district level to the DCs training and community, ABRCs, KGBV wardens and English teachers of KGBVs.

The DC (training) oriented the English teachers of the



¹ Number of class VI children studying in KGBVs.

² Number of class VI children studying in UPS.

Upper Primary Schools and 880 Block level Nodal ABRCCs. At school level, Community members including SMCs and members of Maa Samoo³ were also told about this programme .

Challenges:

Despite the popularity and reach of the programme, there are a few challenges in the implementation of the programme;

- At times the signal is hampered during broadcast.
- Some of the schools, especially the UPS do not have radio sets which are in working condition.

Next Steps:

- Mid line assessment of the programme.
- Mapping to find out the schools which do not have functional radio sets so that corrective action can be taken.

Media coverage



³ Group of mothers formed at the school level to monitor Mid-Day Meal.