

*Sounds in European E-Learning - SEEL*  
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# **SEEL**

## **Survey - Interviews**

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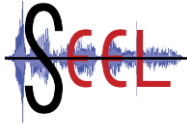


## **SEEL, Survey – Interviews**

### **About the Interviews**

We have done interviews with three teachers and three students from six different schools. Here are the questions we asked:

- INTERVIEW - teacher
  - How old are your students?
  - What subjects do you teach?
  - What technical equipment can you use in your school?
  - Do you use any form of sound during your lessons? If so – what and how?
  - Can you describe some lesson or activity where you use sounds?
  - In what way do you think use of sound can influence the result of an activity?
  - What sources or databases of sounds do you use?
  - Do you sometimes use “background music”, e. g. during a student’s individual work or tests?
  - Is there any activity / application / software or technical equipment you would like to use but for some reason you cannot?
  - If you have three wishes about using sounds in educational process – what would they be?
- INTERVIEW - student
  - When you remind yourself about lessons you took part in, were there any of them where you used any kind of sound?
  - Have you ever had a possibility to listen to music during an individual work or a test? If so, does it help you and how?
  - Do you listen to music during your home preparations? If so, how does it help you?



- Is there any activity / application / software or technical equipment you would like to use but for some reason you cannot?
- If you have three wishes about using sounds in educational process – what would they be?

### **Interview with Mr. Daniel Vychodil**

He is the teacher in a basic school (the 2nd stage) and lecturer of the further education of the teachers. He teaches approximately 170 pupils aged 11 to 15.

School subjects: Geography, German language

Interview date: 2015-02-24

Interview length: 9 minutes

He uses his own laptop at school. It is worse with speakers in his school. The only quality speakers are in the music lab. He and one of his colleagues use a set of portable speakers.

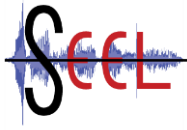
He focuses on geography. He tries to bring innovation strategies in this subject.

He uses tiny bell ring to let pupils know, that the time is over or there is another instruction etc.

Daniel starts lots of his lessons by trying to promote the kids imagination: he asks kids to close their eyes and he describes the geographical phenomenon which is going to be the core of the lesson in as much colourful way as it is possible. The kids' task is to imagine (make the mental image) what it is being described. After they study the phenomenon using photos, texts, videos etc. in the next steps of the lesson, they compare the original idea formed by the listening of teacher's voice with the fact they obtain in the lesson.

Daniel collects the myths and stories of the cultures they study in geography lessons. In every suitable situation or theme they held the so-called ritual of the loud reading around the burning candle. Daniel reads aloud and then they discuss the meaning of the story, the values or wisdom they contain.

Daniel sometimes uses the background music for individual work or tests, but only if the kids do not mind.



Daniel uses the short videos in an interesting way. He plays some of them without audio and he asks the students to add the audio by themselves: the commentaries, possible sounds etc. As an example of this strategy he mentioned the fluctuations in sea level according to absorbing the water in glaciers.

Daniel thinks that some online database of quality, original nature and cultural sounds (sea waves, glacier destruction, animal sounds, music, languages typical for different regions, wind sound etc.) that he and his students can use in the lessons would be very helpful. He likes the idea of connecting the theoretical part of knowledge with the sense – audio: “What I hear when I enter the tropical forest or the tundra?”

Daniel believes that the ideal way to develop an all rounded character is to include a wide spectrum of sensations. He argues that the euroatlantic civilization has diverted the concept of education to extremes in certain aspects and that there should be more effort towards balance. By connecting the thought, experience, feeling and esthetic side of things allows for a more harmonic view of the world, which is exactly what Daniel aims for in educating.

### **Interview with Mrs. Šárka Pudilová**

She is the teacher at Business Academy in Chrudim wheres he teaches pupils aged 15 to 20.

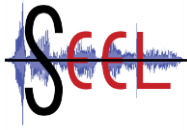
School subjects: English Language, Conversation in English Language

Interview date: 2015-02-21

Interview length: 9 minutes

For the sound interpretation teachers at this school have the possibility to use CD and DVD players, well equipped computer laboratory and a special language laboratory with a smart-board and speakers. All of this equipment is owned by the school.

During her lessons, Mrs. Pudilová uses sound very often – usually some tape-scripts recorded on a CD. For example there is special software connected with students' textbooks where they can listen to different conversations or simulations using speakers or the smart-board. Then the students can watch short videos or films.



Mrs. Pudilová also often uses websites [helpforenglish.cz](http://helpforenglish.cz) and [bridgeonline.cz](http://bridgeonline.cz) where many audio files (e. g. audiobooks, audio comics, etc.) can be found.

During Mrs. Pudilová's lessons, the most common activities connected with listening are:

- Listening exercises with different types of worksheets, e. g. looking for the right answer or true / false decisions, completing missing parts of a text, matching a text to a title, answering some questions.
- Listening to some background sounds, e. g. walking steps + knocking and then creating a story or a dialogue based on these background sounds.
- Listening to a story or a conversation while the students use a computer programme where they go through a questionnaire / voting system / exercise connected with the listening.

Except of above mentioned two websites Mrs. Pudilová uses these sources of sounds:

- [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) – for music
- magazine Bridge with CDs and Internet support

Speaking about music, listening to songs is sometimes used during the lessons but the pupils are not allowed to listen to it during their individual work or tests.

There is no activity or software that Mrs. Pudilová wants to use but she cannot. On the other hand she would like to have more quality equipment for listening to sounds, e. g. speakers in all the classrooms. Then she would like to have more audio-books divided into several difficulty levels.

### **Interview with Miss Klára Bartošová**

I interviewed my colleague called Klára Bartošová about the use of sounds and audios in learning process. She teaches at The Basic School of Dr. J. Malika in Chrudim. She is a young teacher at the very beginning of her professional career. She started teaching in 2013. The age of pupils she teaches is between 11 and 15. The subjects belonging to her teaching qualification are Art and Czech Language.

She finds the conditions for her work as very good. The equipment she can use in the educational process is a notebook or a CD player. In every single classroom there is a data projector and loudspeakers that can cover the whole room with a sound. In the school there is a wireless connection to the Internet. She finds that very important for



her. Thanks to it she can use lots of various online sources all around the school building.

She has some experiences with the use of sounds and audios in the educational process. She finds that very important for her and interesting for her pupils. She uses audios especially in the form of music or spoken words, often as a part of videos.

She likes to use extracts of writings, either in form of audio samples with spoken words or in form of movies or recorded dramatic performances. First her pupils read the extracts in their reading books. Then she uses the audio or video form of the same extract. Children prefer that because some of them don't like reading. It is one of the ways how to acquaint pupils with literary works because they find this way of work less boring. In higher grades in case of discussing the author of the writing she uses extracts from documentaries about the author's life and work.

In linguistic lessons she uses very interesting method of playing music containing Czech lyrics. Children try to write down words they hear according to the task, for example every noun, verb, preposition and so on. In higher grades they listen to recordings of spoken texts. Pupils with their teacher evaluate the speech together. They are focused on grammatical and ungrammatical expressions. In Art lessons she often uses so-called background music during individual work. If she needs to arouse emotions in children or make a special atmosphere she chooses the music on her own. It is usually related to the topic of the lesson.

But more often children can choose the type of music they want to listen to. They can listen to their favourite radio stations or bring some music to school from home. Children use their own players and headphones. She appreciates a better atmosphere and more quiet in the lessons with the background music. Via music she tries to influence pupils' feelings and emotions according to the topic of the lesson.

Sounds or audios are common elements of Klára's work. She would like to use it more often. Nowadays she thinks of and looks for other ways how to use audios meaningfully in the educational process. She would appreciate a database of various background music and extracts of film adaptations of novels.



## **Interview with Miss Barbora Sommersová**

I did my interview with Barbora Sommers who is currently studying Multimedia at the Economics University of Prague. She graduated from the English gymnasium Open Gate. When I asked her about how sound was used in her lessons in middle school and high school she told me that during English lessons her professor would play audiobooks in order to keep the students engaged in the book they were reading. It was easy to lose concentration while students read out loud or to themselves and using audiobooks proved to be an effective way to maintain their concentration. During history lessons sound was also used. She remembered examples of her professor playing significant historical speeches from the past. The tone that politicians use is very important during speeches and by playing the speeches out loud as opposed to reading them, the students were able to gain a better understanding of what the speaker was trying to say and therefore were able to analyse the speeches more efficiently. Further, at university she had a class about editing sound, where she used sound editing software called Protools. During this class she said the sound database [freesounds.org](http://freesounds.org) was very helpful with finding various sounds that she could work with.

When asked if she ever used sound during some individual work, she replied that her art teacher in high school allowed her to listen to music while she painted. It was important to her because she felt that it enhanced the creative experience and made the entire process of painting more positive and real. While working on certain homework or studying for certain subjects she listens to classical music in the background. However, when studying for subjects that require a lot of memorization, she finds it easier to concentrate with no sounds playing at all.

Barbora further talked about how it would be nice to have the option of sound proof headphones, that don't allow you to hear anything at all. She thinks that for certain classes it would help her concentrate more. Further, she believes that for many students it's a big help to listen to music while working and therefore the option of listening to music during class should be available.

Finally, Barbora talked about her opinions on how sound could be used in education more. An example she used was improving the quality of elearning by adding audio. Instead of having the classic "good job!" that is often used on online activities when you complete something correctly, there could be different sounds to reward you for good



work. For example, it might be more motivation if students could choose at the beginning of an exercise what types of sounds they would like to hear if they answer correctly. There should be a database of sounds they could choose from. The types of sounds could be funny, such as noises that your body makes, funny laughs, teachers saying something special, applause, animal sounds, jokes, short parts of songs, etc. Then, the student has the additional motivation of being entertained if completing an exercise correctly, not just being told “good job”. Barbora also thinks that teachers should always let students know that there is an option of listening to music during class, if it is appropriate.

### **Interview with Miss Blanka Slavíková**

My interview was with an eighteen years old student, Blanka Slavíková. This girl is interested in learning languages and is studying gymnasium in a small town Skuteč in the Czech Republic.

My first question was directed to her memories of different lessons she took place in, when some sound has been used and how. As she remembers, sounds were used in subjects like English, German, French, Czech, Music and PE. In languages they mostly listened to dialogues using earphones, or the teacher used only his computer, switching the volume up. In music they used simple musical instruments and the teacher played the piano. And during PE they did aerobic and dancing, listening to a CD recorder.

Next I was interested in possibilities of listening to music while individual work or test and if so, how did it help. She answered that they weren't allowed to listen to music during writing the tests. They could listen to music either chose by teacher, or their own in Arts. Especially while drawing impressions. Before Christmas time, teachers used to recorded carols of different nations. And in Czech, when they did breathing exercises, they listened to special relax music.

Also I asked if she listens to music during doing homework, and if so, how it helps. She respondent with agree and disagree. She considers music, a relax and source of entertainment during learning Math, Science, Chemistry, counting, PC working, drawing, translating, writing essays. But if she needs to learn some text by memory, she thinks that is necessary be in silence, to be concentrated. I was curious about any application or software that she would like to use in lessons and she isn't able to from some reason.





She told me, that she would like to have the opportunity to load for example a part of audio text that they use at school, to her cell phone or mp3 player. So that she could recorded it any time she needs it. But unfortunately the school hasn't got a good equipment needed for loading.

At least I asked if she has some wishes with regard to sounds in learning, what it would be. She repeated that the most interesting would be an audio-textbook from every important subject. So that she could listen to topic anytime she doesn't have time to read, for example during driving, walking, riding a bike, and waiting for something. That's the time when her mind is doing nothing, she would remember more. She would also prefer everybody at school using earphones and be concentrated but not be disturbed by many noisy factors in the classroom. Her last wish was bearing on P. E., when she would enjoy music playing all lesson, the teacher not speaking, just showing them what to do, so they could more feel the music.

### **Interview with Mr. Václav Němec**

I did my interview with Václav Němec who is studying technical secondary school in Chrudim.

When I asked him about how sound was used in his lessons at the basic school and now at the technical school he told me that during English lessons at the basic school his teacher used listening activities focused on grammar or songs. He learnt songs with using a text and the listening to the CD. He remembered that he enjoyed these music tasks because he likes music and this way was interesting for him. He said it was more interesting and more helpful than learning vocabulary by heart. During music lessons he played the recorder. The sound he heard he made himself and that is why he enjoyed that. He and his schoolmates could use interactive board too and they could listen and guess different types of music. They connected sounds to visual effects there.

Then I asked Vaclav if he could use sound during his individual work. He answered that he was allowed to listen to music a few times. It was pleasant for him because music filtered out all noise around and he was more concentrated.

Vaclav further talked about listening to music during his homework. He thinks that music is a very nice background. It can give more energy. But on the other hand he sometimes likes the silence. It can be easier to concentrate with no sounds around.



Next I was interested in applications or software that he would like to use in lessons and he is not able to do that from any reason. He told me he would like to try to make or to compose music in some software on PC. He tried to combine music at home but he did not have any opportunity to consult with anybody with making music. It is better and more interesting and more challenging to work in class with people they want to do the same things and they can share their ideas together. Vaclav would like to attend to the lecture on the sound because everybody is surrounded by sounds – pleasant and unpleasant too. He is interested in working in absolute silence at school.

In the end I asked him about his wishes with regard to sound in learning. He repeated that it would be useful to use sound and the other senses together. It can help to remember more because for example the sound can be the part that would help you to remind what you learn. His next wish is a little bit funny. He would like to change ringing at school because it is very monotonous. Instead of common ringing he would like to hear different melodies so that he can look forward to the end of the lesson – or the beginning - and to expecting the melody. His last wish is to use the sound in the way it cannot be disgusted to anybody. He told that for example the unpleasant voice of the teacher you will remember all your life.