



SEEL

Description of three typical teaching situations and how they can be fostered by audios and sounds

Sound in European E-Learning
Description of three typical teaching situations and how they can be fostered by audios and sounds (01/A3)
Report

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Introduction

(UPB will provide a common introduction after compiling the reports.)

Learning and Teaching Situation A

Description of Learning Situation A

Frameconditions of Situation:

- Duration / Estimated Teaching time 45 minutes
- Subject English Language
- Information about the Learner 11 – 15 years old
- Methods individual / collaborative, silent work phases
- Media video + audio
- Content music (e. g. youtube.com)
- Goals finding courage to use a foreign language, improving pronunciation and understanding

Lip dubbing is an activity where you overlap the sound of a video with your own sound. During English lessons students work both collaboratively and individually to create a video in which they lip synch to a song that is audio dubbed. Key to the success of this activity is the motivation to learn that it generates with the target group. We have used lip dubs in two ways during our English lessons, both of them producing results that demonstrate improvement in skills of language acquisition, pronunciation, listening, and creativity.

During lessons, the target group works collaboratively reading the text and dividing up different lines/ parts among themselves. We go through the text together so that they understand what they are going to be lip synching. Then, the students practice pronunciation of their various parts, and they work together to create choreography. When they have practiced sufficiently, we record their parts while students perform, often with the help of a computer, a smart phone or a video camera. Finally, we edit our recorded video with the original audio of the song, usually using a program Movie Maker. Because there is something permanent being made the students want to do their best. The process engages the target group in learning these skills without realizing they are learning. Often, because the students need to do several takes, they must repeat the pronunciation, movement and phrases, just as if they were doing a more traditional drilling exercise; however, with this activity, they are engaged mind and body, and are not aware of the skills practiced and attained until the end product - the video - is produced.

Lip dubs can also be assigned as an optional homework. In such cases, we have allowed students to choose their own music and style, and create their own videos. Their creativity shines through just as much as in the more guided collaborative activity. I also have experience using music in math lessons in addition to English lessons. On some days when they must work on math problems that are sometimes long and



complex, I allow students to bring in headphones to listen to the type of music they want while they work on these problems. Surprisingly, their concentration and focus remains steady, and in some cases, improves in terms of being able to stay on task and practice successfully.

In conclusion, then, the advantages of using lip dubs to enhance learning are manifold: first and most importantly, students are motivated because the activity is fun. At this age, (middle school), music is one of the most important ways that students relate to each other and the world around them, and using music to enhance academic learning makes it relevant and engaging. In effect, when they lip dub, they want to know what they are singing about. Secondly, they improve their creativity and feel a sense of individual accomplishment as they see themselves singing in English. In addition, they improve both pronunciation and language acquisition because they must repeat the process while doing several takes. Finally, this activity engages several types of learning—audial, visual, kinaesthetic—and in the end, it is quite simply a lot of fun.

Description how this learning situation could be fostered by audios and sounds

Please describe how audios could improve the teaching / learning situation. Please explain the following aspects:

- Define / Explain these audios – We usually use different songs for this kind of activity. It is good to choose a well understandable one and that's why for example fast heavy metal genre is not the greatest choice.
- Reasons for using these audios – Almost everyone likes to listen to music. Only thing that varies is a favourite style. Generally speaking while we use songs during educational process students motivation and enjoyment of the lesson are much higher because they make use of a stuff they like.
- Way of using these audios – As described above we use recordings of songs as a considerable support for foreign pronunciation learning. The students, while they have to understand the purpose of the song and catch pronunciation of different expressions, should listen to the recording several times.
- How and what do the audios improve? – Many young learners are afraid to talk in public so they do not speak at all. Lip dubbing gives them an opportunity to start “speaking” in a safer environment. We believe this highly influences their courage to begin with a real communication and participate in a conversation. It also improves pronunciation in a foreign language.



Learning and Teaching Situation B

Description of Learning Situation B

Frameconditions of Situation:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| • Duration / Estimated Teaching time | 45 minutes |
| • Subject | English language |
| • Information about the Learner | 11 – 15 years old |
| • Methods | individual work |
| • Media | audio or video + audio |
| • Content | short stories or conversations
(e. g. esl-lab.com) |
| • Goals | improving listening skills and
understanding |

Before a lesson we have to prepare a worksheet with tasks to do while listening and an audio sample. Chosen audio samples are used to support various topics pupils go through. We usually use audios with native speakers. Sometimes we choose a video sample that includes the audio. Pupils prefer that and can also deduce some answers according to the video if they don't understand a part they need to.

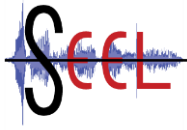
Listening skills are very important. The ability to understand well must be trained and practised very often, which is especially true for Czech students because unlike Czech, the English language sounds very different from the written form. It requires plenty of time to improve these skills.

The lesson starts with a pre-listening phase. The goal of this phase is to help pupils prepare themselves and to activate them. We always acquaint pupils with the topic and the goal. It is necessary to motivate listeners as well. We try to find out what pupils know about the topic. We ask them various questions and we talk to each other about it in English, of course.

After that pupils already know that the main activity is listening. First we put some new vocabulary on the board. These are words that often appear in the audio sample and we call them key words. We try together to remember their Czech meanings and how to pronounce and spell them. We write the words in the English language in one column and the Czech meanings beside. Pupils read them and repeat them again and again. After a while we start to delete English words one after another and pupils keep repeating the words. At the end of the activity they only see the Czech meanings and repeat them in English a few times. At this moment they are prepared to listen to a new audio sample because they know the words occurring more frequently.

The pupils acquaint themselves with the tasks and questions before listening and it is necessary to make sure everybody understands exactly what to do. Sometimes children try to predict the right answers. It is used for better motivation. It is quite important to tell pupils how many times they will hear the text.

The audio sample is usually divided into some sequences and there are tasks to do for each of them. We always play each sequence of the sample at least twice. It is not necessary for children to understand everything they hear. Pupils try to do the tasks. After the first listening the pupils should understand the general meaning of the text. During the second listening they get a more detailed understanding.



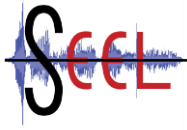
Finally pupils get a written tape-script and can follow it while listening for the last time. At the same time they correct and complete their answers. Then we check the answers together with pupils.

The post-listening phase serves to utilize the knowledge gained from listening. We do various activities to revise what pupils have learned during the lesson with a focus on the vocabulary and important phrases. We use exercises like answering questions, multiple choice questions or gap-filling. We like using the method of reconstruction, which is when pupils work in small groups and reconstruct the text they listened to and try to retell it or mime.

Description how this learning situation could be fostered by audios and sounds

Please describe how audios could improve the teaching / learning situation. Please explain the following aspects:

- Define / Explain these audios – Short spoken stories or conversations, up to four minutes long. They are mostly recorded by native speakers.
- Reasons for using these audios – Listening to an original pronunciation even with some noises in background highly improves the ability to understand a spoken language. Recordings that are a part of nowadays textbooks usually present recordings cleaned of all the noises and buzzes and that does not match the reality. That is why we prefer to use audios with background noises, e. g. people's talk in a restaurant.
- Way of using these audios – Described above.
- How and what do the audios improve? – They largely improve learners' ability to understand spoken foreign language and orientation in a conversation.



Learning and Teaching Situation C

Description of Learning Situation C

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Duration / Estimated Teaching time | 45 minutes |
| • Subject | English Language |
| • Information about the Learner | 11 – 15 years old |
| • Methods | individual / collaborative work |
| • Media | audio or video + audio |
| • Content | music (e. g. youtube.com or Spotify) |
| • Goals | improving listening skills and understanding |

During English lessons it is very common to use different songs and music as a listening practice. For younger pupils this activity is prepared by the teacher but older ones often prepare it by themselves.

First there is a problem to find a right song. Its English should be understandable and due to the pupils' skills with the minimum level of used slang language. As a very good source of various songs and music styles we can mention Spotify (www.spotify.com) or YouTube (www.youtube.com). There are also many websites focused on lyrics, e. g. AZLyrics (www.azlyrics.com) or MetroLyrics (www.metrolyrics.com).

The lesson usually starts with a short discussion about the music style of the chosen song. Then the pupils get a worksheet with lyrics. The problem is that there are some empty gaps where pupils have to fill in the missing words during the listening. We listen to the song once or twice depending on its difficulty. After checking the completed lyrics there is again a discussion about the meaning of the song – what pupils think its composer wrote about. During the last part of the activity we listen to the song once more. Some students sing concurrently with the singer while the others, who are shy or not sure about their language skills, follow the text and lip-dubbing (as described above).

This kind of activity has several benefits:

- All the pupils listen to some kind of music and nowadays the most of the teenagers listen mainly to songs in English. So it is the natural way of improving language skills done through something they like.
- In songs there is mainly common spoken language used. That means it is often very different from English which pupils meet in school textbooks. Of course it is necessary to point out the differences between literary and non-literary language.
- It is usually easier to memorize and rehearse words and sounds when they rhyme and are connected with a melody.

Description how this learning situation could be fostered by audios and sounds

Please describe how audios could improve the teaching / learning situation. Please explain the following aspects:



- Define / Explain these audios – As mentioned above we try to find and use songs with minimum of slang language and somewhat easy to understand.
- Reasons for using these audios – Learners intend to remember and understand a foreign language more easily while they listen to an unstudied audios so songs and music itself offer a free and easy way to make their skills better.
- Way of using these audios – Described above.
- How and what do the audios improve? – Activities using songs widely improve listening and understanding skills and they also help to break barriers for further communication. As we have experienced during our international exchange projects while students are able to sing together with their peers from other countries and cultures it is more comfortable for them to build relationships and start communication.



Appendix

Generally speaking use of audios during our foreign language lessons highly helps to improve learners listening and understanding skills and also it enlarges their vocabulary knowledge. Last but not least it encourages them to communicate in a foreign language and breaks barriers (shyness to talk, cultural barriers, etc.). We strongly recommend using these kinds of activities as a regular part of educational process.