



Video Activity Guidelines for the Lower Level Language Classroom

A video activity for language classroom use should be of short duration (1-3 minutes) for lower level language courses. The video material (whether it be film, news broadcast, publicity, commercials, instructional video, etc.) should apply directly or indirectly to the day's lesson context and/or theme.

Students should not be expected to understand all that they hear if the recording includes audio and video.

Note: You may consider using a video without sound the first time, and then adding the sound for the second viewing. You may also change tasks for each viewing from global to specific, for example. You can also use the video without the sound to target salient vocabulary or to draw upon students' creativity to add their own target language text {live voiceover} to a segment, as an announcer might do.

Students at beginning levels of language instruction have an extremely difficult time comprehending rapid native speech and especially news broadcasts. This could prove to be a very amusing activity if several students played the roles of two interlocutors in a video and wrote the (simple) conversation related to the context of the day.

Plan on showing any video segment at least twice to give students an opportunity to further absorb authentic materials, respond to multiple tasks, and to instill in them a sense of accomplishment as their comprehension improves with each viewing.

Pre-Viewing Activity

Viewing and Listening Strategy

Before showing a video segment in class, it is important to prepare students for the viewing and to get them thinking about the context of the video they are about to see.

Ask yourself the following questions:

What is the context of your lesson for the day?

Does the video segment apply to this context?

How can I talk communicatively in the native language to introduce this video?

Is there any vocabulary that will need to be introduced or reviewed before viewing the video segment?

How is the topic approached? Is it straightforward, subtle, logical, comical, serious?

Ask your students:

Now that I have told you the subject of the video, what do you think you will see?

How does this video relate to the text in today's lesson?

What new vocabulary do you think you might hear?

How much action will you observe in this video clip?

Why is this subject interesting to young students?

If there is vocabulary that should be introduced, use it in a communicative context. In other words, do not simply list vocabulary on the board. Use it in complete, coherent sentences to introduce the video material, and then reinforce it, if desired, with written text on the board or on a handout, overhead or PowerPoint.

You can draw upon students' own experiences when introducing the video. For example, if the video is about animal life, you might ask the students if they have pets, or if anyone has an unusual pet, or talk about your own pets, if applicable.

Viewing Activity

Students should be given a task to complete while they view the video. You may also include different tasks for each viewing, or divide the class into groups, with each group having a different task to complete. As student groups gather different information, be it based on auditory or visual input, an information “gap” situation is created, and this which lends itself nicely to a Follow-Up activity involving participation by the various groups.

For example (These would of course be delivered in the target language):

Group 1 – SPECIFIC TASK - Note all the different types of animals you see (for example). What (if any) linguistic gender applies to this animal? If you do not have the vocabulary for a certain animal, you can consult the dictionary or ask a group member afterwards.

Group 2 – SPECIFIC TASK - What do the animals have in common? Are they all “wild” animals? How big are these animals in general? Where are they found in the world?

Group 3 – GLOBAL TASK - If you were making/filming this video, how might you change it? What would you title it? Why?

Group 4 – GLOBAL TASK - What is the main objective of this video? What audience is targeted in your opinion?

Group 5 – SPECIFIC TASK - If you were sent to the moon to live for one year, and were permitted to take four different animals with you, which animals from the video would you take, and why?

Group 6 – SPECIFIC TASK - This group will complete a cloze exercise targeting specific vocabulary. Their text may be limited to only one paragraph of the total video narration.

Post-Viewing Activity

Your Viewing Activity leads logically into one possible Post-Viewing activity. Have students discuss in groups their responses and compare and compile them for presentation. You can also mix the group members and have them get opinions of others in different groups.

As the culmination of the video activity, have each group present their task “question” and give their responses. Each member may be asked to read one sentence of their summary. Encourage all groups to participate by adding their opinion, or by asking questions.

In this particular case, Group 6 could be asked to do a live narration of the portion of the video text they completed, asking others in the class to recall the salient vocabulary afterwards.

Conclusion

This activity can be completed in approximately 20 minutes class time with a video of two-three minutes length.

Audio-visual technology is a major component of the activity, as well as student-centered instruction with contextualized theme, tasks, and group work. Cultural knowledge is most probably enhanced, as well. Modes include, INTERPRETIVE, PRESENTATIONAL and INTERPERSONAL

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