

## **Video in the classroom**

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Video is a powerful medium. When it is used well, it can bring colour and variety to your classrooms. Off-air recording of news, drama and comedy are a marvelously rich resource. However, we must not be wooed to such an extent by the seductiveness of the medium that we do not exercise the same rigour in selection and use that we do with other resource materials.

Firstly we must think what are our objectives? Are we going to use video to bring information and content to the lesson? Do we want to expose our students to certain varieties of language or have we chosen video to exemplify certain communication techniques? Content, language or communication: we could use video to work in all three areas but it would be a mistake to try to input all three at the same time. In each case the last application could be vocabulary exercises.

So, the first step is to be clear. What you want to use the video extract for? The next question is how are we going to use it? Are we going to show it just once? Are we going to break it into short extracts? Are we going to show it with sound down? Video presents us with a number of methodological options. In every case, we need to be clear about these options. As a general rule, one should follow these guidelines:

- preparation warm-up activities
- sound down / sound up
- short / long extracts
- one viewing / repeat viewings
- feedback
- follow- up activities.

If you are working with low-level students, the time of preparation will clearly increase. Showing the extract without sound first often helps them to anticipate the soundtrack. As with all listening activities we need to make it clear what we expect of the students: precise and detailed comprehension or simply a global understanding? If the latter, we may well show longer extracts, if the former, you need to use the video very interactively: stopping, rewinding and repeating frequently.

In conclusion it should be pointed out that video is a very useful and efficient addition to the teacher's armoury of resources. It is easier and more fun for the students to watch video than listening to audio-recordings. Besides, visual messages are often as important as the verbal ones. Nevertheless the use of video in the classroom should be carefully planned.