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## **LEARNING & TEACHING WITH TV5**

and translated by Silvana Tobiolo, 2000

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The benefits of exposing students to a variety of televisual material:

1. Learners are exposed to authentic language,
2. Linguistic information is only a small part of a message. Using televisual documents one can concentrate on all non-linguistic information: visual and/or audio,
3. Short documents can be used,
4. Televisual documents can serve as a starting point for various tasks, supporting oral and written expression.
5. The linguistic level of the document is not important, what is important is the level of the tasks set for students to work on a particular document.
6. The proposed activities were chosen because they validate what students are capable of doing and help them to overcome their fear of not understanding everything that is said.

Genres and Tasks

[Film and fiction](#)

[Cooking shows](#)

[Music shows and video clips](#)

[News bulletins](#)

[Weather bulletins](#)

### **Learning and teaching with televisual documents**

The context of language acquisition often takes place with a choice of documents and their linguistic composition (new words, grammatical forms, etc.) highlighted by their assumed linguistic difficulty (unknown words, the fast flow of natural speech, etc.). To focus on 'hidden' language is an essential characteristic of communication: a great part of a message is communicated non-verbally. Interpersonal communication is relative to the situation in which it occurs, i.e. gestures, proximity, kinesthetics...In the media, visual or audio messages and linguistic messages are inseparable. The visual and the audio elements (sound, music, voice, intonation, situation, the physical aspect of the speaker, the action, etc.) transmit essential cues and clues to construct meaning.

Working with televisual documents does not simply mean to watch television, but to consciously look at the document with the aid of a **structure** and **purpose**. The document acts as a support to analyse, summarise, reformulate, imitate,

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critique, judge, and compose texts or produce oral exchanges. The teacher responds to the cognitive competence of the learners by: observing, modeling, recognizing, associating, classifying, solving, anticipating and formulating hypotheses. A possible strategy could be the analysis of a televisual document (planning, centring, camera movements, editing, images, etc.). This would be a valid focus on media. The use of televisual documents together with media studies would result in an integrated program for learners.

The tasks proposed outline possible linguistic levels at which to work with documents. It is not necessary to exploit or analyse everything to the point of exhaustion. With practice, the same type of document can be used for several levels. Working with 5 documents each with their own specific objective is more effective than working with 1 resource with five different objectives.

Learners will slowly gain confidence. They will become used to working with authentic language and will no longer fear being faced with unknown language. The experience will become one where the development of comprehension strategies is encouraged. On the other hand, if this contact with authenticity is too forced it could result in failure.

### **The choice of resources**

The longer the document, the more difficult it is to manage the richness of the information that is transmitted and the more teacher centred the lessons will become. We recommend selecting very short documents, from a few seconds to a few minutes long: film extracts, news sequences, some questioning-response exchanges from interviews, extracts from documentaries, reports or sports broadcasts, weather forecasts, etc.

It is possible to choose longer documents: reports, news bulletins etc. but it will require planning to keep a balance between explanation and viewing. As a result, teaching needs to be quite focussed on the outcomes you wish the students to achieve: imitation, synthesis of information, and formation of opinions, critical analysis...

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Most broadcasts belong to a well-coded television genre. They have a format, a duration time and a framework. They have a generic beginning and a generic ending. The different broadcasting times are identifiable and therefore predictable (for planning). The broadcast schedule makes it easy to repeat the pedagogical approach, with little preparation, with other documents of the same type.

Students are motivated by the fact that these documents are modern and up to date. Instead of taping the broadcasts and keeping them for a year or two, it is more judicious to present students with more recent broadcasts of the same genre. The content can be more or less the same, but the effect of current material is very effective for motivating the learners both in the short and long term.

### **A new pedagogical benchmark**

The pedagogical originality of working with TV5 offers:

- An integrated approach to the French language and to daily life in France,
- The possibility of changing the image of language teaching, and current language present in the media,
- A new, personal benchmark for the teacher, where there is continual exposure to authentic language and the scope of constant improvement of the teacher's own linguistic skills.

The use of current televisual documents challenges the teacher to discover unknown documents and language together with students and to accept that not all of what is said will be understood. The goal is to learn together to manage the information in order to succeed in the understanding of the target language. The new relationship between teacher and learner is based on the acquisition of work techniques where everyone participates in the learning.

NB TV5 is now called TV5Monde

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## FILM AND FICTION

### Objectives

- knowing how to identify and present elements in a film
- creating a situation that facilitates communication
- making hypotheses
- expressing opinions
- reporting on vocabulary
- written and oral expression

Choose a short extract (2 to 3 minutes) that presents a unit of meaning (e.g. a person opens a door, enters the room, does something and then exits.) Or, a key moment of a film may be chosen, or a comic situation. The same extract can be used as a support for different activities in accordance with the student's level, for example:

- at a beginning level: simply look out for particular words or expressions; list objects, describe a character, etc.;
- at an intermediate level: identify the speakers and their relationship, generally understand the information, express opinions about a situation, etc.;
- at an advanced level: understand a document in a detailed way, critically analyse a document, present arguments, etc.;

### 1 Extracts without sound (Beginner and Intermediate levels)

- a Identify characters and their relationships (age, dress, social status)
- b Make a hypothesis of the situation. Where does the action occur? What era/time? What happens?
- c Make a hypothesis of what is said by the protagonists. Write it down. Play the scene with sound.
- d Make a written and oral recount of what is happening from the point of view of the protagonist.

#### Other activities

- Imagine what happened before the scene and what will happen after;
- Describe expressions and gestures of characters using adjectives and adverbs;
- Create a list of questions about the situation, place, and people.
- Eg. Where is the scene? What is the age of the protagonist? Follow this up by showing the scene with sound.

### 2 Extract with sound (Intermediate and Advanced)

- a List the essential elements of the extract (where the scene takes place, who are the characters, when is it set, what is the intention).
- b Report the conversations between protagonists (who said what to whom?)

#### Other activities

- View the scene twice, take notes for each viewing, compare notes with other students and finally compare with the original scene.

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## COOKING SHOWS

### Objectives

- lexical enrichment: cooking, taste
- giving instructions
- expressing opinions

### 1 The beginning (Beginning and Intermediate)

- Watch the scene twice without sound.
- In pairs, make a list of:
  - the location where the show takes place
  - objects and actions related to the cooking world.
- According to the students what type of music could accompany this type of show.
- Watch the show with the sound.
- Comment on the characteristics of the music (soft, lively, modern, etc.)
- What type of instruments can you recognize in the music?
- What feelings does this music evoke in you?

### 2 The presentation (Beginning and Intermediate)

- Watch the first 40 seconds of the broadcast without sound.
- In pairs, imagine what the presenter could be saying.
- Share with the class.
- Watch the same sequence with sound.
- Pick out all of the words that relate to cooking.
- Share with the class.

### 3 The guests (Beginning and Intermediate)

- Different guests are sometimes invited onto the cooking show. They are introduced to the audience. For example: "My name is X and I'm an actor".
- Choose an extract from a show.
- Forward to the introduction of a guest: "My name is X...".
- Imagine what could come next.
- (b) Show the extract.
- Note all of the words that are understood.
- (c) Show the extract.
- Share with the class a summary of what the guest(s) said.

### 4 The title (Intermediate)

- What do you think of the title? What does the title make you think of? Does the title relate to the extracts you have seen?
- What do you think of the extracts?

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### 5 The recipes (Beginning and Intermediate)

- What do you find in a recipe? (Ingredients, quantities, method...)
- In pairs or in groups of three, try to find as many words as possible to complete the table below in five minutes:

Ingredients	Instructions
Butter	Chop the vegetables
Flour	Stir gently
Etc.	Etc.

b Share with the class.

- In groups, create a recipe and present it.

### 6 At the table (Beginning and Intermediate)

a In pairs, make a list of rules or table manners in your country and in another country of your choice.

What shouldn't you do at the table? Why is this not acceptable?

What is the importance given to food in general?

### 7 Poetic recipes table (Beginning and Intermediate)

a Invent a new recipe:

- A magic potion
- A beauty elixir
- A recipe that helps to form life-long friendships, etc

b Read the recipes.

### 8 Extension task (Intermediate)

a Read and try out a recipe from a target language cookbook.

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## MUSIC SHOWS

A music video is an ideal format to be used in a lesson: it consists of a short semantic unit (song and image). It is a living document, belonging to the contemporary world; the linguistic aspect consists of studying the text of the song, and also working on reflection of the visual and audio content, written and oral activities, exchanges between learners about what the clips evoke in them.

The techniques that are generally employed to use video documents can also be applied to music clips.

### 1. Qualities of a music video (Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced)

*What are the criteria for a quality video?*

In the mother tongue for beginners and in target language for advanced students, define some criteria for judging a video. The teacher leads the discussion and formulates questions to facilitate the explanation of abstract ideas.

Examples of responses include:

- the quality of images
- the quality of technique
- originality
- choreography
- relationship between text and image
- the music
- the performance
- the scenery

Look at the video. In pairs, give your point of view on each criterion. Share with class.

### 2. Choosing a video

List the components. Give different tasks to subgroups, for example.

- Note all the places shown in a video.
- List the celebrities/characters.
- Note the sequence of actions.

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- List the filming techniques of the video (wide angle, close ups, medium shots, editing)
- Note how many times the camera changes angle.
- Circle the words below that relate to the music video:

Clear	Gloomy
Colourful	In black and white
Fast	Slow
Beautiful	Ugly
Monotonous	Exciting
One setting	Several settings
Male singer	Female singer
Lively	Musicians
Camera movements	Fixed camera

The aim of this task is to develop critical literacy skills, consequently if the students don't like this task they should be able to express the reasons why.

### **3 Retell** (Intermediate and Advanced)

View the video one time only.

Using visual memory, try to recount what happens in the video.

What support did the celebrity have? What happened to him/her? Etc.

### **4 Prediction** (Intermediate and Advanced)

- a Listen to the song.
- b In small groups, imagine a video for this song. Share this with the class.
- c View the video.
- d Give your opinion on the version made by the record company.

### **5 Theme, vocabulary, text, video** (Intermediate and Advanced)

- a Give all the words related to the theme of the chosen song.
- b Write a text using as many words as possible.
- c View the video.

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### **6 Sound** (Intermediate and Advanced)

- a View the video without sound and in small groups try to imagine what the song is about. (The teacher could also give words from the song to beginning students.)
- b Create a text based on the video.
- c Read aloud the texts produced.
- d View the video with the sound.

### **7 The interview**

- a Try to write a character portrait of one of the artists in the music video.
- b In small groups prepare a list of questions to ask the artist. One student takes on the role of the artist. The others ask him/her the questions.
- c If possible try to find a copy of an interview with this same artist.
- d After the student role-play read out the interview. Which questions did the artist actually answer?

### **8 Letters**

Write a letter to a singer asking him/her to give an opinion of his/her video to the class.

Choose a video preferred by the class and write a letter to the artist care of the record company asking him/her to recount his/her real life experience to the class; a photo or the address of a fan club.

### **9 Class project**

From a song, imagine a scene of a music video that would need the participation of everyone in the classroom.

- a Design a sequence of scenes.
- b Film the video.
- c Each participant is given a cassette.

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## NEWS BULLETINS

### Objectives

- presenting facts
- expressing opinions
- making hypotheses
- comparing different media

### 1. Before viewing the news

- a. What information would you expect to find in the news today?
- b. What is the usual sequence of a news bulletin?  
(eg. daily events, national and international politics, economy and finance, culture and sport...).

### 2. View the news

- a. How much news from different cities is found on the news?
- b. In pairs, write down the titles of the stories on the news. Share with the class.
- c. In pairs complete the following table and share with class:

News story	Where? When?	Who?
1. <i>Politics</i>	<i>Russia yesterday</i>	<i>Boris Eltsine and members of the government.</i>
2.		

- d. Choose a news story and summarize it in one sentence.  
(eg. A political crisis put into question the Prime Minister's decision).

### Other activities

Give the learners a list of story titles not in the order that appear in the news.

- *Classify the titles in the order that you think they should appear in the news bulletin. View the news bulletin. What are your comments?*
- Give the learners a list of countries and a separate list of article titles. Watch the news and match the country with the article title

### 3. Analysing a conversation (Intermediate and advanced)

- a. *What is the appropriate tense to recount information?*

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*b. Take note of transitions/links between pieces of information.*

*(eg. And now onto politics...)*

*c. How are the reports announced?*

*(eg. : ...as we cross to our correspondent in Moscow...;...the following images...).*

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### **4. Production activities** (written and oral)

1. View the news bulletin without sound.
2. In groups of two or three, choose a sequence.
5. Create a possible commentary for the sequence. Propose your commentary to the class.
6. Put yourself in the place of a personality of your choice to appear in a report. Make a commentary according to this person's point of view. Propose this commentary to your class.

### **Other activities**

- Create and present your choice of:
  - a news bulletin from your country,
  - an imaginary news bulletin,
  - a news bulletin from your school.
- Compare news bulletins with Australian news bulletins.
  - Commonalities: Describe what these two bulletins have in common
  - Organisation of information:
    - What information opens the news? What importance is put on international, national and regional news? (eg. RAI International considers international news to be very important...)
    - Compare the manner in which the information is presented from one country to another.

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## WEATHER BULLETINS

- Objectives
- oral expression
  - to enrich vocabulary (in the meteorological field)
  - to recognise the name of towns, cities, countries and continents
  - revise numbers

### 1. Weather forecasts

a) Brainstorming:

*Naming the countries that you know.*

Students work in small groups.

*Classify the countries by continent.*

Or, do the same activity putting towns and cities into countries.

b) Choose a continent for the following task.

View a weather forecast (sound and image) for the chosen continent.

Outline:

- Firstly, listen for the countries in that continent that you already know and write them down
- Then, write down the countries that you did not include in your list.

### 1.2 Meteorological symbols

a) Brainstorming:

*Which weather symbols do you remember? (eg. sun, clouds, rain, snow...)*

b) *Connect words and expressions to weather symbols. (eg. sun = hot, heat, it's hot...)*

c) View the weather forecast (with sound and image):

Add to your list of words that relate to the symbols.

If the information is too numerous, the task can be divided up in the class:

Group 1: work on vocabulary associated with the sun

Group 2: work on vocabulary associated with the rain

Group 3: work on vocabulary associated with the cold...

Share new vocabulary with the class

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### **1.3 Temperature**

- a) View the weather forecast (with sound and image)  
Match up temperatures with towns. (eg. It will be 25 degrees in Madrid...The temperature is minus 3 degrees in Norway)
- b) Compare the temperatures of towns and countries.  
(eg, It is hotter in ...(town) than in ...(country).

### **1.4 Other activities**

- c) View the weather forecast without sound.
- d) Put yourself in the place of the weather presenter and give the weather forecast in accordance with the images on the bulletin.
- e) Create a weather forecast and present it to the class (with a map).
- f) Play the weather bulletin without the image.
- g) Material: weather symbols and a blank map of a country/continent of your choice.
- h) Place onto the map the weather symbols according to the weather forecast you are listening to.

## **2. Extension activities**

### **2.1 Proverbs/sayings**

- a) *Research proverbs and sayings about the weather (dictionaries, books...)*
- b) *Compare the proverbs and sayings with those in your language.*
- c) *Create some new proverbs and sayings based on those you researched.*

### **2.2 Nature's barometer (animals and plants...)**

From the sayings in your country, find or create a natural barometer.  
(eg. Swallows fly low (when it's about to rain).

### **2.3 Learning nursery rhymes that talk about rain and fine weather**

These are numerous and entertain the very young.

(eg. Giù dal cielo grigio grigio, zitta zitta, lieve lieve, bianca bianca, sulla terra vien la neve...)

These rhymes can be found in many books and on internet sites.