

Photo story lesson plan A(n) (un-)pleasant surprise

Target group	Age group: 14 - 18
Pre knowledge (linguistic)	A1, target language
Pre knowledge (digital)	Not necessarily (can be aims to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic handling digital camera • transferring digital camera data to a computer • creating photo album in PowerPoint • adding speech bubbles to the photos
Aims (linguistic)	Upon the completion of the photo story students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use basic and common language functions and • use informal everyday vocabulary in a genuine setting • get familiar with a new text genre
Aims (digital)	Upon the completion of the photo story students will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic understanding of video production: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creating story - writing dialogues - shooting photos - editing • See pre knowledge

Introduction

Photo stories¹ as described above could very well be the first step in the use of video production in foreign language learning. It involves important elements of video production such as writing, imaging and editing but it uses the less demanding, simpler techniques of digital photography and PowerPoint to create the final product.² Therefore, it probably can't enhance digital competences in the same way as video production can.

However, the main objective of the photo story is learners' linguistic competence. In our pre-research *Exploring the potential of language learning through video making*³, where the theoretical background of our approach is set out, the photo story is described as the "pre-stage" to video production. The photo story enables the teacher to familiarise the students with some basics of video production, but these elements are optional and don't necessarily have to be covered in the foreign language classroom, where time is limited. The photo story is first of all a motivating, problem solving task for foreign language learners (and teachers).

¹ The idea for the lesson is based on the publications of the European Socrates project *Staging Foreign Language Learning. Inszenierung von Fremdsprachenlernen*, Berlin: Cornelsen 2003.

² PowerPoint is mentioned for pragmatic reasons only.

³ Masats, D., Dooly, M., and Costa, X.: *Exploring the potential of language learning through video making*. A L. Gómez Chova, D. Martí Belenguer i I. Candel Torres (Eds.). *Proceedings of EDULEARN09 Conference* (p. 341-352). Valencia (2009): IATED. Available at: http://divisproject.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83&Itemid=83

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Nr	Time	Activities	Work form	Materials	Resources
Let's get started!					
1	5 min	Introduction to the photo story	Plenary	• PPT photo story	• Laptop / projector
2	10 min	Matching phrases with pictures	Pairs	• Handout PPT x number of pairs • Handout phrases x number of pairs	• Annex 1 and 2
3	10 min	Adding 2 sentences to the pictures	Pairs		
4	10 min	Discussion of added sentences, teacher writes them down	Plenary		• White board
5	5 min	Discussion of task	Plenary	• Task x number of students	• Annex 3
6	5 min	Form groups of 3 or 4 students	Plenary		
Let's write!					
7	40 min	Discuss interesting story: number of people, time, place, actions, feelings, plot (unexpected incident) . Teacher assists groups. Start writing dialogues.	Groups	• Task x number of students	
8	30 min	Writing dialogues. Teacher assists groups. Students can use the discussed phrases but are free to write new phrases as well.	Groups	• Handout (annex 2) and collected phrases (see nr 2 and 4)	• White board
9	15 min	Divide tasks: actors, photographer, director.	Groups		
Let's act!					
10	45 min	Taking pictures (resources needed to be checked by teacher – also for nr 11)	Groups		• Cameras x number of groups
Let's make!					
11	45 min	Creating photo story (teacher instructs on do's and don'ts: use photo album function, keep it simple, no animations). Groups have to save their work on a data carrier (memory stick, dvd).	Groups	• Optional: handout creating photo album with PPT (annex 4)	• Computers and connections x number of groups • Annex 4 • Data carrier x nr of groups (for nr 12)
Let's show					
12	..	Groups present their photo story	Plenary	• Data carrier with photo story	• Laptop / projector



Photo story lesson plan – explanatory comments

Let's get started!

Number 1 – 4

In the first phase (nr 1 – 4) the students acquire the linguistic resources they need (to use!) through an (inter-)active genuine use of the target language ([annex 2](#)). This phase integrates the language learning into the digital production and ensures the active use of the target language throughout the writing and filming of the story. The photo story ([annex 1](#)) is however no exception to the common practice of foreign language learning, that students working in groups tend to use their mother tongue and not the target language.

The teacher can adapt the linguistic resources to the level of his students and to any target language. The teacher can repeat language functions already discussed, introduce new ones, introduce old ones in a new setting (functional, distraction), let students collect and use functions in the last x chapters of the text book, etc.

Number 5 – 6

The teacher hands out the task (in [annex 3](#)). We advise groups of maximum 4 students. Especially in the last phase (nr 11), where the PowerPoint is created, groups with more than 4 students exclude involvement of all group members.

Let's write!

Number 7 – 9

This phase enables the teacher to discuss with the students some principles of storytelling in general (students' opinion on the photo story in [annex 1](#)). It also enables a classroom reflection on storytelling in images ("storyboarding"), but again, this is optional and is (could be) cross curricular covered in other subjects (mother tongue, media education, arts).

Let's act! Let's make!

Number 10 - 11

These two tasks are meant to be done outside the classroom (home work). The resources (digital cameras and computers) needed are most likely to be available in all groups, but the availability is checked by the teacher.

The teacher should, if necessary, instruct the students on the use of PowerPoint ([annex 4](#)). Students probably know how to create the photo story with the photo album function and how to add speech bubbles to the photos. Teachers' instructions should aim at keeping it as simple as possible and not to add any animations to each slide.

Let's show!

Number 12

The groups present their photo story to the others. The proceedings can be the same as for group work presentations in general.