



MODULE Comprehension Strategies Using Video

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Building awareness of how comprehension in the foreign language is constructed
- Developing skills: acquiring linguistic comprehension and reading strategies

METHOD:

In a simulation exercise the teachers assume the role of pupils

DURATION:

1 hour, 30 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Video clip of a TV advert. Any video clip is suitable. However it is important that the video clip should be as short as possible (maximum 1 minute). The language used should be such that the participants do not or hardly understand the text. The video clip should contain more pictures than spoken text, have strong visual elements such as colour, symbols, gestures and mimicry, and possibly contain written text in the form of short titles or slogans.
- Observation sheets and instructions

PROCEDURE:

Participants get together in small groups. The aim of the task is explained. Everyone should ask themselves one question during the video viewing: “What process does one go through to understand a foreign language?” This is set against the background of how pupils - without discouraging them in any way - can be introduced to materials of authentic content in the foreign language.

The observation grids and instructions are distributed prior to watching the video clip. If required, the video clip can be shown several times.

1. Sheets for watching the video clip (on OHT):

What is this all about? Your thoughts and hypotheses? What have you understood? What helped you to do this? What did you base your assumptions on? What did you not understand?

2. Instructions:

Everybody makes their own notes and the results of the observation are exchanged in the group. The content of the video excerpt is to be summarised in one sentence - either in the target language (L2) or in the mother tongue (L1). Spontaneous remarks may be made in the mother tongue (L1). The results of the group are discussed briefly in the plenary. In a feedback session the team leader collects the comprehension strategies on an OHT and presents the groups' selection criteria for authentic materials in bilingual teaching.

COMMENTARY:

This activity is especially suitable for courses with specialist subject teachers, as participants will often have no previous knowledge of language teaching methodology. This activity is



particularly reliable in teacher training. Within a training course, the use of this in the first part of the course is recommended because the emphasis here is on reflection. Afterwards these ideas can be made more concrete in a trial phase. For example, looking at how the meaning of texts can be worked out using comprehension strategies, or the use of comprehension strategies when working with authentic video material.