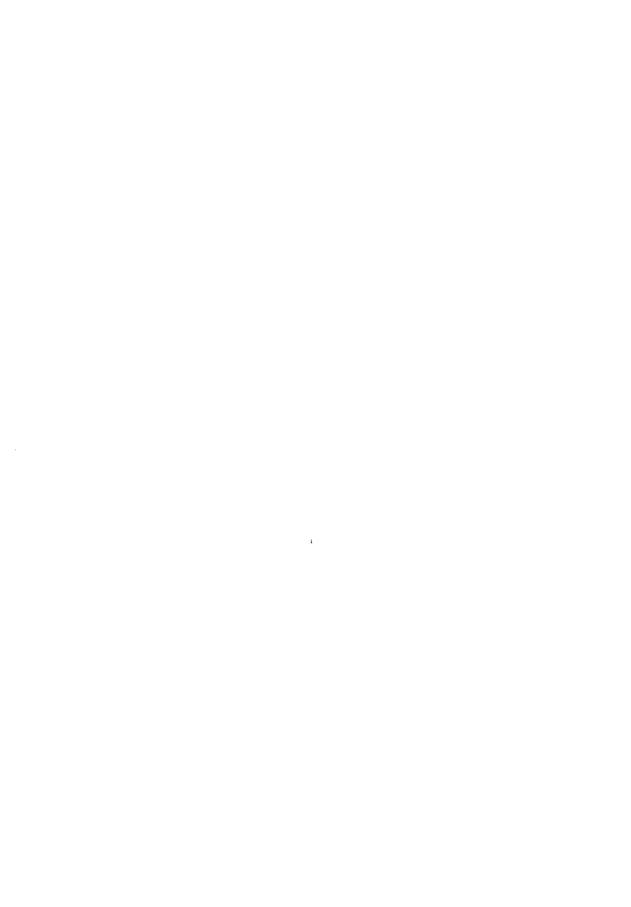# 4.

Guidelines for a Mentor Training Session

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The training sessions outlined below is addressed to prospective teacher trainers. It wants to deal with a well-defined teaching and learning task, that of Satellite TV viewing.

The session has manifold goals, among which:

a. to give a demonstration of how academic knowledge on a topic should be "rewritten" in a pedagogical format for a training session

b. to have teachers experiment on themselves the learning problems raised by the task

c. to raise the trainees' awareness about the different stages of the TV information processing (in terms of input processing and elaboration, rehearsal and memorisation) and of the learning strategies that one has to resort to in order to carry out the different tasks successfully.

d. to apply the pedagogical knowledge so far developed to create an original Satellite TV learning unit based on both the theoretical and pedagogical knowledge acquired in the teacher training sessions

The whole activities could require from 9 to 6 hours, depending on the teachers' needs. The ideal number of trainees should be in the range of twenty, working with one teacher, though additional tutoring might be necessary in certain phases (for instance, when the trainees are invited to create their own TV clip and to write the lay-out of the lesson.)

The whole activity could be usefully integrated by the video, realised specifically for the project, containing both a short academic presentation and a demo-lesson held in Italy in a 12th grade High School.

The success of the seminar will heavily depend on the technological equipment at hand; the participants should be able to use an overhead-projector, a Satellite TV broadcast system, a video-recorder and, if possible an integrated TV-computer interface to digitalise, record and manipulate the video material.

Structure of a teacher trainers' session:

	TEACHER TRAINER	TRAINEES
step 1	getting started	Discussion groups
	elicitation of opinions and attitudes self-evaluation	individual response problems\choices
step 2	Teachers' view on the use of video	work with peers to obtain feedback
		identify classes\types make inferences
step 3	advantages and disadvantages of viewing video	individual\group discussion
step 4	modalities, goals, function of video off-line line viewing guided viewing structured viewing autonomous viewing	individual\ focussing on a problem making notes, grids
step 5	worksheet on guided viewing video students' notes	reading making predictions\ viewing analysis comments\discussion
step 6	worksheets of videolesson plan	reading viewing\evaluating discussion in small groups
step 7	tasks and learning strategies	reading\ focussing a problem matching

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A good starting point to present the theme of the seminar would be that of showing a piece of a programme and ask teacher trainers to self evaluate their level of comprehension and to reflect on the factors affecting the quality of processing of a TV text:

Phase I:
Elicitation of opinions and attitudes

a. How well did you understand this satellite TV programme?   **100%**
                                                                  80%
                                                                  70%
                                                                  less

b. What can affect the level of comprehension?

❏ length   ❏ speed   ❏ type of programme
❏ language variety ❏ familiarity with topic   ❏ interest

Do you know why? Grade the above features in a scale from 1 to 6, 6 for the most relevant, 1 for the less relevant.

c. Do you think it is possible, at least to a certain extent, to predict the language features of a TV programme in terms of lexis and functions?

d. What is the best match of programmes and items? Could you also provide possible content items related to certain programmes?

A. Documentary
B. News
C. Commercials
D. Weather Forecast

language functions	*language item*	*content items?*
persuade	adjectives	
criticize	present progressive	
narrate	imperative	
inform	conditional	
reasssure	numbers	
entertain	progressive	
describe	catchwords	

Phase II

a. Read the following statements provided by teachers about the use of TV in the classroom. What can you guess about the beliefs and teaching styles of these teachers?

Teachers' view on the use of Video

Teacher A

Yes, sometimes I show an English film, in general a movie version of a novel or a play I have done in the syllabus. But it takes a long time.

Well, I introduce the film; I stop the video three or four times and ask questions to check comprehension or to explain something.

Teacher B

Students like it, but they don't understand much, I' m afraid. It's an effective content input, but, as for language, I don't think they learn much.

Teacher C

Very rarely. It's a waste of time. There is too much input. They speak too fast. Sometimes I have problems with comprehension myself. How could I help them in that case?

Teacher D

I show the video, then I press *pause* to select a frame and ask students to describe what they see.

Teacher E

I tried using the TV. It's too annoying to use in the classroom. Preparation (moving to another room, setting the equipment ready, etc.) takes a lot of time.

Teacher F

I rarely use video. It needs a lot of background preparation. When I find an interesting topic\fact in the newpapers I try and find also a TV programme concerning the same event. I show the recorded programmes after reading the newspaper cutting.

b. Which are the pros and cons of viewing TV programmes as a teaching\learning tool?

PROS   CONS

_____   _____

When you watch a recorded TV text, you can use different viewing techniques and carry out different tasks.

1. You can switch off the sound.

   Goal: *Have students focus on the images.*
   Task 1: *Watch these scenes and try to guess what X is saying to Y.*
   Task 2: *Write a short script for these scenes.*

2. You can pause the tape and show a still frame.

   Goal: _____
   Task: _____

3. You can cover the screen and leave the sound on.

   Goal: _____
   Task: _____

4. You can play a sequence pressing the fast forward control.

   Goal: _____
   Task _____

5. You can mask part of the screen (about one half) with adhesive paper.

   Goal: _____
   Task: _____

6. Split the group in two: one half leaves the room, the rest watch the programme.

   Goal _____
   Activity _____

d. What tasks would you carry out with TV viewing?

Main Viewing Tasks

Watch and respond
watch and answer
watch and compare
watch and predict
watch and retell

Watch and discuss
watch and evaluate
watch and analyse
watch and critique

Different modalities of exploitation

Discuss the following three modalities of TV viewing in terms of

- a. **level of difficulty for learners**
- b. **learner's autonomy**
- c. **adaptability to language syllabus**
- d. **language practice**
- e. **skill development**

1. Off-air viewing of Stallite programmes
2. Recorded viewing of Satellite TV programmes in the classroom
     (guided and structured viewing)
3. Recorded viewing of Satellite programmes at home
     (autonomous viewing)

	difficulty	autonomy	adaptability	practice	Skill development
Off-air					
Recorded guided					
Recorded structured					
Recorded autonomous					

Phase III

1.a.　**What are the main stages in the process of comprehension?**

　　How can you enhance comprehension and retention of a TV text?

　　Discuss in pairs and work out an activity aimed at either goals

　　b. **You want to show your students a TV commercial. Lay out the different stages, viewing techniques and tasks. Prepare a grid which can facilitate comprehension**

　　2. You want to facilitate your students' final comprehension of a short programme (let's say 5 to 10 minutes), interfering as little as possible with your prompting.

- What strategies should they activate?
- Identify some important stages in the learning process
- Prepare a sort of guideline with the different stages and the related instructions

　　3. View this short TV news item. State the goals, the skills, the processing stages and the kind of pedagogical manipulation you would choose to make the most of it.