



**Listening, Speaking and Current Affairs
Open Sessions**

**Exploiting today's online news for
tomorrow's listening lesson**

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Introduction

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2. Methods used for Development
3. Session Examples
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Background and Rationale: Listening, Speaking and Current Affairs Open Sessions

- In-Sessional: Demand for Listening and Speaking
Semester 1, 2009/10:
 - 1558 total In-Sessional class registrations
 - 433 (28%) non credit-bearing L&S
 - 49 (3%) credit-bearing L&S
 - 156 on waiting list
- Aims of the Open Session
 - to develop L&S skills
 - to develop vocabulary & grammar knowledge
 - to develop cultural knowledge and awareness of current events in the UK and the north-east
 - to assist with the integration of international students into life in the University and the UK
 - to help students and staff engage with us as a source of support
 - to help students develop strategies for independent study

Methods for Development



- General Guidelines
 - Maximum 2 hours preparation
 - Select good video extracts
 - Every extract can be exploited
- Process
 - Select the extract (s)
 - Watch intensively for around 15 minutes; create a rough transcript
 - During intensive viewing, identify features to exploit
 - Develop the session directly on to the powerpoint / create rough teacher's notes in parallel drawing on bank of activities
 - Print out powerpoint slides (visualiser / own reference)
 - Make session slides available to students

Methods for Development



- Use a bank of activities for variety
 - Pre-viewing activities to activate schemata e.g. headlines, vocabulary, pictures, prediction
 - Train your ear e.g. focus on proper nouns; places; numbers; dates; time-related expressions etc.
 - Generic comprehension tasks e.g. who, what, when , where, why
 - Look who's talking e.g. names, roles, objective or subjective?, summary of view
 - Personal reaction e.g. watch to form own opinion on topic or to pass on relevant points to others
 - Cultural Development e.g. people and institutions
 - Vision only / Sound only
 - Discussion topics i.e. For break-out groups

Session Examples

- [11th March 2009](#)
- [22nd October 2009](#)



Teacher Experience of Open Sessions



- Anticipated Problems
 - Difficult to manage large numbers of students
 - No opportunity for individual or open class contributions
 - Reluctant discussion groups
 - Mixed levels causing problems
 - Lecture Theatre rows cause problems
- Actual Experience
 - None of the above
 - Lively, energetic and very interactive sessions
 - Enjoyable to teach
 - Interesting and highly relevant

Student Feedback

Please rate the teaching and learning content of this class

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent	39.4%	28
Very good	40.8%	29
Good	18.3%	13
OK	0.0%	0
Not very good	0.0%	0
Poor	0.0%	0
Extremely poor	0.0%	0
I prefer not to give a rating	1.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		71

Student Feedback:

For you personally, please give your opinion on the level of...

Answer Options	too easy	a little easy	about right	a little difficult	too difficult	Response Count
...the session in general	3	9	61	4	0	77
...the video extracts	1	10	49	17	0	77
...the vocabulary	0	5	59	11	1	76
...the teacher's language	3	8	65	0	0	76
<i>answered question</i>						77

Please give a general, overall rating for this class

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent	32.4%	22
Very good	51.5%	35
Good	14.7%	10
OK	1.5%	1
Not very good	0.0%	0
Poor	0.0%	0
Extremely poor	0.0%	0
I prefer not to give a rating	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		68

Student Feedback



- What the students liked...
 - ‘It's very interesting and for the glossary/new words’
 - ‘the selected videos are up to date and interesting’
 - ‘absorbing, informative and enjoyable.’
 - ‘I met new people and learned new vocabulary. I had an opportunity to know some facts about local companies, economic situation and NUFC.’
 - ‘to talk with other countries people’
 - ‘Good method to improve listening and learning new vocabulary.’
 - ‘I can learn the culture and the vocabulary from this class, it is very useful, make me not very confuse to listen the news.’
 - ‘It was surprisingly exciting and I felt really involved in the process’
 - ‘It is enjoyable because we are very relaxed during the class.’

Student Feedback

- Suggestions for improvements
 - ‘more interactive activity among the whole class,not small group’
 - ‘Increase frequency’ ‘may be lessons longer, two hours for example’
 - ‘different level students together will let the course cannot be suit for everyone.’
 - ‘Try to give us more knowledge about British society and culture.’
 - ‘To send out teasers about the topics of the week is a really good idea that could have been developed further.’
 - ‘Maybe a different way of dividing into groups would help even the most shy (and lazy?) students to stop grouping up only with their friends.’
 - ‘maybe every class has sepcial topic,and tell students early. if they are interested in it ,they will go’
 - ‘maybe it could be better to let each and every one of us speak as apposed to let them speak involentarily. Some of them just like speaking and sometimes out of controll.’

Student Feedback



Finally, would you...

Answer Options	Yes	Maybe	No	Response Count
...come to one of these sessions again?	72	3	0	75
...recommend these sessions to your friends?	64	11	0	75
<i>answered question</i>				75

Conclusion

Every In-Sessional should have one!

- to meet the demand from students
- to develop students' L&S skills and confidence
- to develop students' vocabulary & grammar knowledge
- to develop students' cultural knowledge and awareness of current events locally and nationally
- to integrate students into daily life in the University, the local region and the UK

Explore alternative Open Sessions

- Grammar
- Grammar and Vocabulary in Context
- Pronunciation

