Web 2.0 Tools in the Foreign Language Classroom: an original project-based lesson.

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this research is to examine how the incorporation of Web 2.0 tools in the foreign language classroom can become a useful tool in the hands of educators whose priority is to teach digital literate individuals in an expanding digital world, be it in the virtual classroom or in other aspects of the students' everyday life. In order to achieve such an aim, the teacher designed an original topic-based project with the help of Video Ant. The project was divided in two sessions, both of which focused on building listening and speaking skills as part of exam preparation since the students were being trained for B1/B2 CEFR level examinations. The idea behind selecting a video story so as to achieve such an aim can be explained in terms of students' likes and interests as all teenages nowadays are exposed to such material via social media and streaming platforms, so it would come as natural to them to readily engage in the process and ultimately acquire language in a fun way.

1. INTRODUCTION

Advancements in technology revolutionised the modern classroom and paved the way to incorporate computer-related material in the learning environment; traditional education was thus transformed by urging students as well as educators to explore alternative methods which doubted pre-existing notions of how web tools could be explored and utilised with the aim of consequently creating online communities that would benefit both parties (Avgerou, Vlachos, 2016). *New literacies*, that means any type of literacy developed in the recent post-typography period (Semali, 2001, in Avgerou, Vlachos, 2016), entail the combination of technology with existing social operations that work under a given symbolic system so as to generate as well as spread knowledge (Scribner & Cole, 1981, in Avgerou, Vlachos, 2016). The inclusion of video in the foreign language classroom is paramount in supporting the notion of new literacies in the sense that authentic real-life incidents can be projected in the learning environment, which incidents provide instances for acquiring and developing different language skills through various tasks, apart from creating an entertaining and varied learning experience (Allan, 1985, in Vlachos et al., 2020).

2. WEB 2.0 TOOLS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

In the contemporary digitally-literate world where, apart from technological awareness, there exists the need for critical thinking as well as collaboration and common-sense (European Center for Modern Languages & Ollivier, 2018, in Vlachos et al., 2020), the use of web 2.0 tools in the school environment is important in boosting socialisation and creativeness among individuals who share knowledge and cooperate in authentic circumstances (Peachey, 2019, in Vlachos et al., 2020). ICT awareness provides individuals with the essential tools for continuous learning through the implementation of multimodality; as well as that, it offers opportunities for differentiation by creating blended environments which lead to building metacognition via collaborative instances (Cope & Kalantzis, 2013, in Vlachos et al., 2020). In that sense, it only comes as natural that web 2.0 tools support the development of *21st century skills*, which skills entail and presuppose problem solving techniques via cooperation and interaction as well as self-directed individuals who are ready to adapt to sociocultural circumstances by being responsible and flexible at the same time (Chu et al., 2017).

3. PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

The idea of incorporating projects in the foreign language environment is not new. As Brewster, Ellis and Girard (1992, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020) point out, the combination of different elements and notions that comprise various areas of an educational setting aid learners in their effort to acquire knowledge. In that light, project-based learning guides students through the pathway of exploring a topic from different perspectives and via diverse material pertinent to various sections of the curriculum (Zouganeli, 2004, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020). Topic-based projects allow for collaboration among participating individuals who follow instructions under a given framework and become autonomous by employing all their strengths and talents so as to learn holistically (Legutke & Thomas, 1991, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020). Moreover, students of varied levels of aptitude are united and become involved in making their individual contributions which reveal their uniqueness and creativity via collaborating instances (Fried-Booth, 2002, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Teaching Context

The class in question consists of four learners aged 13, three male and one female, who attend secondary education. They make part of a small foreign language school group and their language level is B1 CEFR. This means that they are independent users of language who are ready to comprehend the main ideas of clearly-stated information on frequently encountered topics, they can deal with everyday exchanges, they are able to interact orally as well as in written form so as to express their opinion on matters pertinent to their preferences and, lastly, they can talk about their aspirations and concerns with well-developed argumentation (Sifakis, 2004). The class is homogenous as all individuals share a common sociocultural identity and come from the same linguistic background (Greek). The educator is bilingual (Greek-Italian), with 19 years of experience in teaching, and has a degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. The coursebook used, "Ultimate B1" by Hamilton House ELT, comprises supplementary material such as IWB software, apart from the usual Workbook, Grammar book and Companion, so as to aid the class in becoming more acquainted with the use of technology while learning. The specific students are being prepared for examinations of the corresponding level, so class management, in terms of materials and methodology, complies with the norms of the curriculum which requires that individuals be trained in all four skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking.

4.2 Original Lesson

The original lesson (see appx) focuses on building listening skills with the aid of video material. Since syllabus requirements dictate that learners be trained in comprehension of oral input, the tutor chose to base the lesson on building those strategies necessary for the achievement of that goal. As well as that, the fact that modern students are representatives of the *i-Generation*, which generation relates to computer literate individuals born after the 1990s (Carlson, 2005, in Avgerou, Vlachos, 2016), created the need to incorporate multimodal material in the learning process so as to create a more fruitful experience. The lesson follows the project-based approach to learning and its topic is "Food Waste", a matter which resonates with young audiences since it is an issue every contemporary household has to address on a global level.

The specific project-based listening lesson comprises six tasks which follow the rules of *situated learning* in the sense that they encourage students to find various answers to a significant problem relevant to their experiences (Warschauer & Whittaker, 1997, in Vlachos et al., 2020). It is teacher-facilitated: the educator selected the specific topic and provided students with access to different websites which were incorporated in the tasks designed for that purpose (Vlachos et al., 2020); by being the facilitator, the teacher urges learners to investigate the material selected so as to encourage them to feel autonomous in their effort to gain knowledge (Brandl, 2002, in Vlachos et al, 2020). It is worth noting that the project-based approach supports teacher-facilitated situated learning as it focuses mainly on the needs and abilities of the students but also requires scaffolding on the part of the educator (Vlachos et al., 2020).

4.2.1 Session 1

The first task (see appx) acts as a pre-viewing warm-up and requires that students ask questions on the topic; it also serves as an introduction to the project. The questions are projected through the IWB so that all the class can see them simultaneously. The aim of the task is twofold: on one hand the topic is introduced to the class; on the other hand, students need to resort to background knowledge and experience so as to express their personal opinion and brainstorm for further information, thus activating *schemata* (the mental recall of vague memory-related notions) (Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977; Rumelhart,1980; Anderson & Pearson; 1988, in Williams & Moran, 1989). Last, students are involved in class discussion, which activity boosts collaboration and team spirit.

The next task (Fig.1) includes an animated video, originally with no sound, that is projected (the first time straight through) to the students via IWB and serves as orientation to the notion of food waste (Hill, 1999, in Vlachos et al., 2020). Viewing the video silently allows students to make their own assumptions on its content and focus on bodily cues so as to examine a different sociocultural behaviour as well as try to interpret the heroes' feelings and thoughts, which tactic enables learners to identify appropriate register (Tomalin, 1990, in Vlachos et al., 2020). The students watch the video for a second time, during which the tutor pauses the sequence when necessary so as to help individuals concentrate on specific pieces of information (Allan, 1985, in Vlachos et al., 2020) so that they can answer the first question. The second question presented to them focuses on encouraging learners to express their ideas by resorting to previous personal experience that way involving them in fruitful group conversation via linking the content of the video with their own culture and habits. Apart from that, they are asked to provide viable solutions, thus supporting self-direction, responsibility and reliance, all important elements of *21st century skills*.

Fig.1 Task 2: Food Waste: an animated educational video.

Task number 3 (Fig.2) was created with the aid of VideoAnt software. Students access the link and are encouraged to use their tablets/mobile phones/laptops to provide their answers to the questions included, which boosts self-reliance and independence. The students are free to make their own choices as to which viewing techniques they wish to employ so as to complete the task, for instance pausing when necessary. This tactic allows for active viewing on the part of learners who are expected to make assumptions based on the content and elicit the pieces of information which are useful for the completion of the task, which presupposes their active participation in the process (Vlachos et al., 2020) and activates feelings of self-confidence. At this point, the teacher acts as a mediator and facilitator who gives students the freedom to act on their own initiative but is ready to intervene and scaffold when assistance is required.
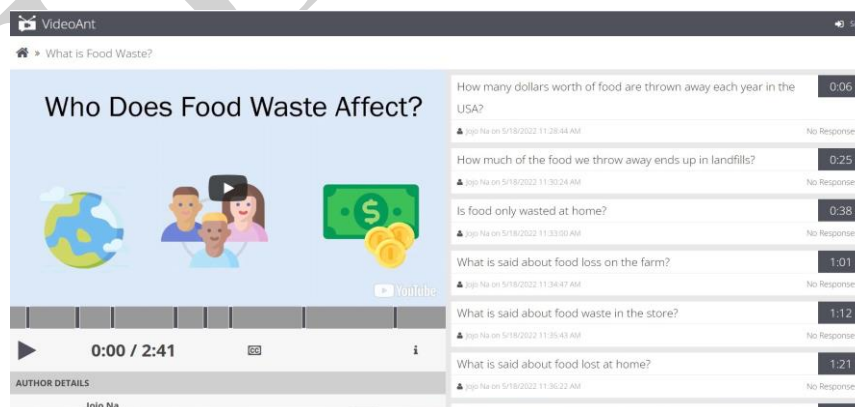

Fig.2 Task 3: Video Ant, Food Waste.

The next task (Fig.3) was also created via VideoAnt and can be accessed by the students through their personal devices, that way encouraging individual work. Learners are free to pause the video accordingly so as to gather information and answer the questions. It should be mentioned that the responses to both videoAnt projects are visible to all participants, which fosters collaboration and exchange of ideas. The post-viewing discussion that follows both videos connects the information contained with the students' background knowledge and experience that way promoting self-expression and mutual understanding, apart from language acquisition (Vlachos et al., 2020).

The aforementioned tasks comprise the planning stage of the project, at which stage all parties involved (students/teacher) cooperate in order to define aims, content and appropriate register as well as what is expected of learners to create as an end product (Fried & Booth, 2002, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020). Upon completion of the last task, the teacher reveals to students that they are to create their own digital videostory on "Food Waste", in the next session; they are encouraged to find pictures and gather information as homework so that they are well-prepared for the implementation stage and the creation of the digital videostory.
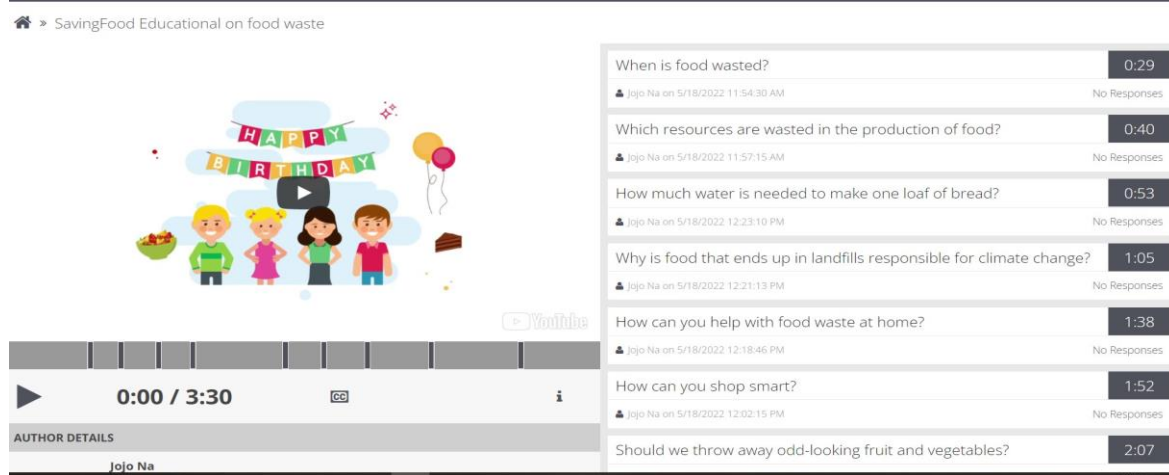

Fig.3 Task 4: Video Ant, Saving Food.

4.2.2 Session 2

In this session, learners are introduced with task 5 which explains what is expected of them to create as an end product. During the implementation stage, the tutor monitors the information collected by the students and encourages them to assume roles and assign duties (Fried & Booth, 2002, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020) so as to create a digital videostory. The class works together to choose the material to be used and plan the steps to be followed; as well as that, they select an application that will enable them to complete the project in the allocated time. The choice to create a digital videostory is based on the fact that it facilitates comprehension of new notions via audiovisual input and enables individuals to link new pieces of information together so as to acquire language (Terrell, u.d., in Vlachos et al., 2020). This particular videostory aims at informing and educating the audience on the topic of "Food Waste". Such stories are one of the most frequent varieties of digital storytelling as identified by Frazel (2011, in Vlachos et al., 2020). The tutor remains the facilitator and is ready to scaffold and advise learners in case they require assistance.

Task 6 focuses on the students presenting their product so as to check its quality and layout before they attend World Environment Day at school, which is when their final presentation will take place. There follows an evaluation of their effort (see appx), which evaluation entails assessing aspects of the project (tasks, procedure, performance) and serves as a compass that guides the educators through selecting appropriate material and methodology; as well as that, it builds self-aware students who understand their strengths and weaknesses and shape their own independent stance on learning (Phillips et al., 1999, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020).

5. RATIONALE

The choice to construct a topic-centered project-based lesson to the syllabus is justified in the sense that the educator considered it an optimal method so as to unite learners under the same scope and encourage them to participate in tasks that require both individual as well as group work with the aim of creating a joint product that reflects a common goal, that of gaining knowledge holistically through experience and practice (Legutke & Thomas, 1991, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020). Projects, be it short-term or long-term, are a dynamic tool in the hands of educators as they combine various methods and entail the implementation of a multitude of principles so as to unite learners of different abilities and encourage them to make their own original contribution to learning through tasks that boost creativity and cooperation (Fried-Booth, 2002, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020). Organising project work requires the establishment of rules and regulations, the involvement of all parties in class work, careful planning on the part of the tutor and the freedom on behalf of learners to request assistance when needed, which elements build a concrete learning community of participants who share mutual respect (Phillips et al., 1999, in Anastasiadou, Alexiou, 2020).

The inclusion of video material was deemed necessary so as to fulfill the purpose of enhancing speaking and listening skills, both of which, apart from presenting authentic material in an entertaining way, are important elements of the specific curriculum (Alla, 1985, in Vlachos et al., 2020). In addition, video can be useful so as to bring students in contact with new forms of language, especially more elaborate pieces of information that might be slightly more difficult to comprehend but eventually provide the ground for building language through practice via material pertinent to the learners' needs and preferences (Willis, 1983, in Vlachos et al., 2020). Last of all, audiovisual footage is a means of comparing cultures (Stempleski & Tomalin, 1990) as it contains authentic real-life instances that project different cultural elements (Stempleski & Arcario, 1992, in Vlachos et al., 2020) that allow for building intercultural understanding (Vlachos et al., 2020).

Due to skill interdependence, overall student performance depends highly on the development of all four skills (Vlachos et al., 2020). Therefore, it goes without saying that individuals who show ability in oral language usually exhibit good listening aptitude and vice versa; however, they might face issues in their effort to master language, whis issues are relevant to limited knowledge-related experience, lack of adequate language skills as well as ignorance of a different cultural environment (Vlachos et al., 2020). Video is, thus, helpful in creating instances for oral interaction and activates debating on a topic via intercultural comparisons (Trombly, 2000, in Vlachos et al., 2020). It is also an alternative form of listening activity as it combines visual stimuli with aural cues (Linder, 2000, in Vlachos et al., 2020) consequently engaging students in an entertaining task which enables them to construct language implicitly, therefore leading to feelings of confidence when individuals are exposed to authentic material in the long run (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, in Vlachos et al., 2020). Normally, good listeners tend to treat aural input as a whole and retain the overall gist; they do not focus on syntax or morphology to perceive meaning (Cook, 2991, in Vlachos et al., 2020). As a result, in time, language acquisition becomes automatic and natural in learners of a second language who follow the same automatic path as native speakers when processing audio information (Brown & Yule, 1983, in Vlachos et al., 2020).

A listening lesson based on audiovisual material that includes web 2.0 tools supports Gardner's theory of *multiple intelligences* (1993) in the sense that it paves the ground for the different types of intelligences to flourish and learners to express themselves freely in the learning environment. Hence, video input enhances the implicit absorption and comprehension of varied linguistic elements such as syntax and morphology, as well as making inferences based on content through the examination of oral and visual cues, thus supporting the *linguistic intelligence* (Armstrong, 2009, in Popota, 2014). Project work also provides for the *logical-mathematical* students as well as the *kinaesthetic* types; the former follow logic to interpret recurrent models of language and categorise information through deduction and experimentation (Armstrong, 2009, in Popota, 2014) and the latter use their body as a tool for learning (Baum et al., 2005, in Popota, 2014). Furthermore, video footage aids *spatial intelligence*, which is the capacity on the part of learners to create mental representations of aural and visual information received so as to build knowledge of the world around them (Baum et al., 2005, in Popota, 2014). As well as that, *intrapersonal* students feel more comfortable with being self-reliant and working independently and the *interpersonal* types express themselves better when they share knowledge and responsibilities with others under a joint cause (Puchta & Rinvolucri, 2005, in Popota, 2014). Last of all, *musical intelligence* is enhanced through aural cues included in the video, especially when they incorporate memorable melodies (Armstrong, 2003, in Popota, 2014) and *existential* learning is activated as various elements from different approaches and cultures become part and parcel of the lesson so the classroom is converted into a learning community that shares common goals and characteristics, the main goal being knowledge of the world through oneself (McKenzie, 2005, in Popota, 2014). Consequently, individuals operate in a learning environment that allows them to develop their inherent and varied types of intelligences (Fleetham, 2006, in Popota, 2014) since it is a fact that they are interdependent and coexist and complement each other within each individual (Brualdi, 1996, in Popota, 2014).

In terms of *21st century skills*, audiovisual material in combination with project work enhances such skills in the sense that, apart from being exposed to the modern digital world and ICT environment, students learn via innovative material which boosts critical awareness, interaction, creativeness and builds inventive individuals who are ready to cooperate under the same scope, which also entails the use of problem solving techniques; apart from that, learners acquire invaluable work and life skills like the ability to adapt to new circumstances, tractability and self-regulation, intercultural awareness and acceptance as well as being responsible and productive leaders (Chu et al., 2017, in Vlachos et al., 2020).

The decision to create a digital videostory as an end-product was made on the grounds that it benefits students in a variety of ways: besides being entertaining and engaging, it offers instances for creative expression through exposure to authentic material, it boosts leadership and a sense of uniqueness in a diverse learning environment that allows for self-expression in the attempt for individuals to gain knowledge; as well as that, the creation of

such a story entails computer literacy and fosters 21st century skills, thus enabling students to exhibit their various types of intelligences in their effort to acquire language (Frazel, 2011:11; Kim, 2014, Papadopoulou & Vlachos, 2014, in Vlachos et al., 2020).

6. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, web 2.0 tools support the development of digital literacy in the learning environment, an important element of contemporary culture. In an ever increasing digital world, it is vital that learners be equipped with the right strategies so as to live up to the expectations of the modern classroom that requires computer literate individuals. ICT awareness offers opportunities for continuous learning via the implementation of multimodality in a cooperative environment and supports differentiation of materials so as to help students actively participate in learning and achieve metacognition skills (Cope & Kalantzis, 2013, in Vlachos et al., 2020). Contemporary global communities are constructed upon characteristics closely linked to 21st century skills which pertain to shaping self-reliant individuals who are ready to cooperate and share knowledge and experience all the while respecting other cultures. This resulted in a shift in education at present; this shift presupposes that learners obtain language following dissimilar paths (Gardner, 1999, in Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004, in Popota, 2014). Thus, it only comes as natural that educators combine the right materials with various approaches in order to create a holistic learning experience that takes into consideration the learners' different levels of aptitude as well as talents and intelligences (Popota, 2014) with the ultimate aim of shaping knowledgeable and independent individuals who are ready to face the challenges of modern society.

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APPENDIX

1. Lesson Worksheet:

Task 1

a. What do you know about food waste?
b. Do you waste food at home or school?

Task 2

Watch the animated video that follows and answer the questions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwS2Xc2IT_0

a. What did you learn about food waste?
b. Can we help?

Task 3

Watch the video, take notes and discuss: https://ant.umn.edu/urhyqaedpt/annotate

Task 4

Watch the video, take notes and discuss: https://ant.umn.edu/zmhcccosmw/annotate

Task 5

Prepare a digital videostory on "Food Waste" to celebrate World Environment Day at school.

Task 6

Present your work, evaluate and discuss with the rest of the class.

2. Lesson Plan

Framework: Project-based
Topic: Food Waste
Sessions: 2
Total duration of sessions: 90 minutes
Aim: Listening/Speaking skills, 21st Century skills
Overall Objectives:
Students should be able to:
- comprehend clearly-stated general ideas on varied topics related to common instances
- watch video footage with straightforward visual input and uncomplicated language
- understand main ideas of video footage on common topics presented in a clear and straightforward way
- describe topics pertinent to their interests in a clear straightforward way following linear order
- make a fluent presentation of a familiar topic related to their interest in a straightforward and easy-to-follow way, in which the main ideas are clearly stated
- answer clearly-stated questions
  (CERF Descriptors, 2020)
- develop critical thinking/problem-solving techniques
- collaborate/build team spirit
- develop digital literacies
- shape understanding of different cultures
- build creativity
- feel autonomous and self-reliant
  (Trilling & Fadel, 2009, in Vlachos et al. 2020)

Level: B1   CEFR
Class: two   female,   two   male,   secondary   education
Materials: Interactive whiteboard, laptop(s)/tablet(s), internet connection, notebooks.

SESSION 1: PLANNING (45 minutes)			
TASK	TIME	OBJECTIVES	PROCEDURE
Task 1	5 minutes	- Group work - collaborate - express opinion - use background knowledge - elicit information - introduce topic - introduce vocabulary - brainstorm	T: asks two questions → to introduce topic → to elicit information → to introduce vocabulary → to motivate Ss to express opinion Ss: express opinion → based on background knowledge → brainstorm for ideas → collaborate to answer

Task 2	10 minutes	- Group work - ICT - Watch for content - study facial/bodily cues - focus on thoughts/emotions - predict thoughts/emotions - story-telling - compare/contrast cultural elements - watch for general idea - watch for specific information - express opinion - collaborate - understand topic	T: → plays the video which has no sound-only picture and text → presents topic → encourages Ss to watch for gist/content → encourages collaboration/exchange of ideas → asks qs to elicit information and encourages conversation Ss: → watch for content/gist → watch for specific information → study physical cues → retell the video story → express personal opinion → are engaged in class conversation → compare cultures for better understanding of differences/similarities (*Ss can rewatch the video footage as many times as they wish if necessary)
Task 3	15 minutes	- Individual work - Group work - ICT - Watch for content - watch for detail - focus on information - study cues - focus on thoughts/ emotions - generate thoughts/ emotions - story-telling - compare/ contrast cultural elements - watch for general idea - elicit specific information - express thoughts/ opinions - collaborate - elaborate on topic - take notes - compare/ contrast findings - make decisions	T: → explains how the specific software works (VideoAnt) → plays the video once straight through → encourages Ss to watch for content/gist → replays video → encourages Ss to focus on and elicit specific information → encourages class discussion after watching the footage Ss: → watch for general idea → watch for specific information → use the software to respond to the questions included → take notes → collect data → exchange opinions/ideas on findings → compare/contrast findings → collaborate to decide on useful information
Task 4	15 minutes	- Individual work - Group work - ICT	T: → plays the video once straight through → encourages Ss to watch

		• Watch for content • watch for detail • focus on information • study cues • focus on thoughts/ emotions • generate thoughts/ emotions • story-telling • compare/ contrast cultural elements • watch for general idea • elicit specific information • express thoughts/ opinions • collaborate • elaborate on topic • take notes • compare/ contrast findings • make decisions	for content/gist → replays video → encourages Ss to focus on and elicit specific information → encourages class discussion after watching the footage Ss: → watch for general idea → watch for specific information → use the software to respond to the questions included → take notes → collect data → exchange opinions/ideas on findings → compare/contrast findings → collaborate to decide on useful information
SESSION 2: IMPLEMENTATION/CREATION OF END-PRODUCT/ PRESENTATION/EVALUATION (45 minutes)			
Task 5	35 minutes	• Group work • ICT • make decisions • develop critical thinking • develop creativity • allocate roles • assign duties • collaborate • build self-confidence • build team spirit	T: → explains what is expected of Ss to create as an end-product (a poster) → gives advice on how to organise work Ss/T: collaborate so as to → assign/take on roles and duties Ss: collaborate so as to decide on → information to be included → style and format of the poster → are given time to create their end-product
Task 6 Presentation of end-product Evaluation	10 minutes	• Group work • oral presentation skills • ICT • make decisions • develop critical thinking • develop creativity • allocate roles • assign duties • collaborate • build self-confidence • build team spirit • self-reliance	Ss: → present their work → answer questions on the topic raised by their schoolmates T: → hands out the evaluation form Ss: → make decisions on their strengths and weaknesses → discuss with the rest of the class/teacher the results of the evaluation

		- independence - confidence - public speaking skills - sociocultural awareness - cross-cultural awareness - self-assessment - exchange views - engage in conversation	

3. Self Evaluation Card

Name...

Complete the self-evaluation card

I can	Not Very Well	OK	Very Well
Talk about Food Waste			
Create a videostory Work alone Work with others			
Understand the problem of Food Waste			
Use ICT Use the internet for information			
Feel confident Feel independent			
Present my work to others Ask for help			
Help others Create a project			

4. Links to video footage:

Food waste, an animated educational video	https://www.youtube.com/watch_v=EwS2Xc2IT_0
What is Food Waste?	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6in-HVHzVs
SAVING FOOD EU	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eqxgvZNn0I