



Songs in the Language Classroom

Why use music in the language classroom? Some of the reasons teachers use music:-

- to make connections to our students' world here and with young people in Europe
- to promote intercultural learning through the language/ideas expressed in songs
- to supplement themes in class e.g. introduce vocabulary and ideas
- to stretch thinking by exposing students to different musical styles and ideas
- to stir the emotions to prompt personal responses, positive and negative opinions
- to promote memory of language, structures and grammar
- to provide an opportunity for students to use language creatively
- for relaxation and enjoyment – students AND teachers

Music is a universal language promoting connections with language and emotion. Music has unifying qualities and can awaken memories of different times and places.

Music and language helped humans knit together in social groups, and maybe music was first. We are all familiar with the extraordinary power of music to not only evoke emotion, but also to bind us into a group. Think of your feelings at times of group singing - the singing of the national anthem, singing 'Auld Lang Syne' at New Year's Eve, singing in church, campfire singing, carol singing ... fill in your own experience.

<http://www.memory-key.com/Language/music.htm>

Updated Reference 2011: <http://www.memory-key.com/improving/strategies/everyday/music-and-language>

We all have musical intelligence and although we may not all be as music smart as some, we can capitalize on using music to enhance learning. Research shows that children process music in the same hemisphere as language; adults do not.

Using melody to cue memory for text

- *studies support the view that sung lyrics are better remembered than spoken lyrics*
- *however, for melody to be a good recall cue, it needs to be either well-learned, or easily learned*
- *analysis suggests also, that, to be a good recall cue, the text needs to be sufficiently tied to the melody that the melody provides information about the text, such as line and syllable length — e.g., the number of notes in the melody should match the number of syllables in the text*
- *there is evidence that melody not only provides effective recall cues, but also can facilitate initial learning*
- *to do so, the melody needs to be sufficiently simple not to distract from the text it's supporting*
- *a simple background beat can also facilitate recall and learning, but rhythmical intonation (without the background beat) does not.*

<http://www.memory-key.com/strategies/music.htm>

Multiple Intelligences: Musical-Rhythmic Intelligence

The Musical-Rhythmic Intelligence (music smart) is related to a keen sensitivity to music, sounds, tonal patterns, or the human voice. The musical-rhythmic learner easily beats out rhythms, enjoys singing and playing musical instruments and frequently listens to music while studying. This intelligence includes sensitivity to rhythm, pitch, melody, or tone of a musical piece. Activities:

Creating songs; creating rhythms to practice grammar; writing lyrics to illustrate a concept; linking historical periods to music of the period; creating music for drama related activities; singing; linking familiar tunes with concepts; creating songs or jingles to summarize concepts or ideas; playing music in the classroom to stimulate appreciation; developing a score for a video or audio presentation.

<http://www.teresakennedy.com/activities.htm>

Updated reference 2011: <http://www.flbrain.org/activities.htm>

General Ideas for Using Songs in Class

- Make a *Lückentext*
- Have students summarize the story
- Have students act it out
- You act it out
- Have students draw pictures of the story or their impressions
- zerschnittene Text-Streifen in die richtige Reihenfolge bringen

Only with the music/sound:

- make students draw the rhythm
- let them describe the music using adjectives or verbs
- identify musical instruments
- talk about the music/voices of the song

Listening comprehension:

- cloze test with song
- jigsaw with song and let them put it in the right order
- find out rhymes
- correct wrong text of song
- note-taking of only understood words
- count how many times a word/refrain is said

Reading comprehension:

- make vocabulary lists
- reorganize jumbled sentences/paragraphs
- read song step by step and speculate about the story/end of song

Speaking:

- summarize song/story orally
- find new titles for song
- perform mini-dialogues /sketches / role-plays based on song
- debate/discussion about theme of song
- make interviews in class about likes/dislikes song/music/artist etc.

Writing:

- write similar text/song
- invent dialogue from song and role play
- write story /poem to song
- write letter to songwriter/artist
- write critique of song
- build up semantic fields with vocabulary of song
- write new text with some sentences of song
- write end or second part of song

Grammar and vocabulary:

- change the tense
- change all pronouns
- change all adjectives into opposites
- look for unknown word in dictionary/translate
- create punctuation

Games/fun:

- give each student a line/sentence of song and make them dance in a chorus line introducing themselves in the right place based on the moment their line comes up in the song
- eliminate some words of the song and make students put instead an appropriate picture

Other

http://www.cory.de/music/_general.html

Songs Used in the German Classroom

Leon das Chamäleon

from the CD & Book *Sing and Learn German*

[Texts with pictures, songs and instrumental versions: abc melody ISBN 0-9750272-1-2]

Helena de Resende Dantas Salles has used this song for different occasions as described below:-

1. German Day: activity 'Musik'

- a. Firstly, teacher and students talk about chameleons and their features. Teacher then reads the book "The Mixed-up Chameleon" by Eric Carle and talks about the colours, the animal and its features etc. (the book can be read in English if other non-German teachers are running the activity)
- b. Students listen to and sing along "Leon das Chamäleon". They discuss the text written on a poster.
- c. They receive a blank chameleon to decorate. Following that, students paste their chameleon on posters to produce a display.

2. Unit on colours or animals

- a. To introduce or revise colours;
- b. To introduce or revise animals;

Depending on the age group:

- a. prepare a word search including the new vocabulary;
- b. hand out the lyrics missing some words;
- c. using the same melody, ask students to write about another animal describing it.
- d. hand out a blank chameleon for students to colour in, creating a key with the colours used etc

3. Part of the school choir repertoire

- a. As students sing, they rotate in putting up cards with the pictures related to the word.

4. Activity in the local kindergartens

- a. Students discuss about chameleons, watch the choir sing it and decorate their own chameleon.

"For High school I often used *Die Prinzen* to introduce Umwelt (das Fahrrad / der Betriebsdirektor), Konjunktive (Millionär), Liebe (Gabi und Klaus) etc."

Helena Salles – AGTV Committee

Songs Used in the German Classroom

Songs Jaclyn Curnow has used in class are:-

- Die Fantastischen Vier „MFG (Mit Freundlichen Grüßen)“ Alphabet, and SMS, abbreviations. Not all have to be understood, some are explained.
- Iris Gruttman „Schnappi“ – for animals
- Iris Gruttman „Ein Lama aus Yokohama“ – for animals and cultural discussion. Lamas are from South America, they are in Japan trying to eat with chopsticks, exploring German cuisine or challenges with a new culture.
- Die Ärzte - „Hip Hip Hurra“, Fall of the Berlin Wall
- Tokio Hotel – „Über Ende der Welt“, Freedom. Being set free.
- Die Prinzen „Warum Hast Du Das Getan?“ Liebe, Past tense, students write about what happens next. Does the pair break up? Go on a date? See a film?
- Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht – to compare the original lyrics with translation. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar, isn't in English version.
- Blümchen - „Kleiner Satellit“ Techno, Liebe, repetitive.
- Blümchen – „Ich Bin Wieder Hier“, preposition bei dir is in lyrics. Liebe.

Doris Frank shared this video clip on Greetings: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ts5PU_KYwA

Resources: New and Old

Step Into German: <http://www.stepintogerman.org>

- Music videos with text in German and English and often specific worksheets / lesson plans
- Learn about the geography of Germany through music
- Occasional quizzes
- Promotional materials for German (German is 4U)

popKultur: <http://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/lon/prj/pop/enindex.htm>

Goethe-Institut London

- Videos and worksheets and more
- Two songs for the upcoming World Cup: *Fussball ist immer noch wichtig* and *'54. 74'. 90' 2010*

O Susanne ja konjugier für mich! (Regents Publishing Company 1980 ISBN)

Eine kleine Deutschmusik, Uwe Kind (Langenscheidt 1983 ISBN: 3-466-96790-X)

Deutsch Vergnügen, Uwe Kind, Erika Broschek (Langenscheidt 1996 ISBN: 3-468-49557-9)

Wer? Wie? Was? Lieder machen Spaß!, Manfred Wahl (Gilde Verlag 1993 ISBN: 3-86035-005-6)

Ganz Ohr Höranlässe und Arbeitsblätter für Anfänger und Fortgeschrittene
(Langenscheidt 1996. Bestellnummer: 3-468-49559-5)

Schon mal gehört Musik für Deutschlerner, Holm Buchner (Klett 2009 ISBN: 978-3-12-675084-4)

NB: Rolf Zukowski's song *Wie schön, dass du geboren bist* is a well-known common birthday song.