**Audacity Sound Editing Project Student Hand-out**

1. **Using the official audacity manual as reference, explain in your own words the following key words related to Audacity and sound editing in general. (Link:** <http://manual.audacityteam.org/o/>**)**
2. sound format
3. normalisation
4. cross fade in and fade out
5. frequency
6. amplitude
7. mixing sound (multi-track)
8. reverse function
9. lame MP3
10. plugins
11. mono/stereo
12. continuous and discrete functions
13. **Project task**

*Create a sound mix made of different sound samples that represent your feelings throughout a typical day. Make full use of the Audacity features taught by your Computer Science teacher. You will be expected to answer questions in English about the project and at the end, you will also be asked to present your work in English.*

1. **Preparation for presentation task**

**Answer the following questions related to your audacity project.**

1. In 150 words, describe Audacity as a software tool?
2. Name the filters that you used during the project and explain how they work. Choose from: fade in, fade out, noise level and VU meter.
3. What are tracks and what is their purpose?
4. What are the audio formats that you know of? Briefly compare them (e.g. MP3, MP4 and WAV).
5. What is LAME MP3?
6. What are the parameters that influence the file size of your final audio file?
7. What is stereo mix and how can it be used when editing sound?
8. What is the difference between mono and stereo and when do you use either of them?

**Audacity Presentation Criteria**

1. **ORGANISATION** (was the presentation well structured, with a proper introduction, explanation and demonstration?)

1 2 3 4 5

1. **EXPLANATION** (did the student manage to explain his choice of sound samples and clips based on his experiences throughout the day?)

1 2 3 4 5

1. **VOCABULARY** (how familiar was the student with key words related to Audacity)

1 2 3 4 5

1. **GRAMMAR** (accuracy and use of tenses)

1 2 3 4 5

1. **PRONUNCIATION** (clarity)

1 2 3 4 5

1. **DELIVERY** (voice, composure, body posture, eye contact, fluency, register, communication strategies)

1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL: 30 points

MARKING: 50% = 2, 70% = 3, 80% = 4, 90% = 5

Reflection and Evaluation

1. **Strengths (what went well)**

Planning the lessons went smoothly because the two teachers had already worked together before and had the support of the school’s OUTJ-3 coordinator. The technical background of the foreign teachers made it very easy for the regular I.T teacher to communicate his goals. At the same time, it was easy for the foreign teacher to explain the English goals as the I.T teacher understands English very well.

The implementation part was very successful with all the activities carried out within the set time frame. Many factors contributed to this, namely the understanding between the two teachers, very good level of equipment in the classroom and cooperative students. The two teachers were able to carry out their respective tasks without getting in each other’s way. There was a very good level of verbal and non-verbal communication between us and we feel that it contributed hugely.

Despite their initial fears, most of the students performed generally well throughout the unit. They achieved good results in their presentation task, with most of them scoring 4s and 5s. Only two students had 2 or lower but their grades were attributed to long-standing problems in speaking English.

Presentation grades

Group 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Student** | **Grade** |
| A | 3 |
| B | 3 |
| C | 4 |
| D | 5 |
| E | 5 |
| F | - |
| G | 4 |
| H | 4 |

Group 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Student** | **Grade** |
| I | 2 |
| J | 5 |
| K | 5 |
| L | 5 |
| M | 5 |
| N | 4 |
| O | 5 |
| P | 5 |
| R | 5 |
| S | 4 |

After going through this experience, students of this class were much more enthusiastic about using English in technical settings. More importantly, they eventually got used to having two teachers in the same classroom. They also embraced the concept of professional literacy in English and began to appreciate its importance in their career.

1. **Weaknesses (what did not go according to plan / what could have been done better)**

Students’ initial reaction to the idea of explaining this topic in English to the foreign teacher was not exactly as we had hoped. They did not have previous experience working with the foreign teacher and were not generally keen to open up. When they learned that they would have to present their project in English, many of them initially exhibited a degree of apprehension. This applied especially to the first group.

1. **Ideas to consolidate the unit**

Time table constraints prevented the foreign teacher from joining with this class regularly during their English lessons. More team teaching with their regular English teacher could be used to better prepare the students for the unit. Preparation could include an introduction to professional literacy and why it is important for students of technical subjects, introduction to key words, presentation skills and explanation of presentation assessment criteria.

Student feedback

The students were given an evaluation questionnaire that focussed on the lessons with the foreign teacher. The results revealed that they would like more lessons and units of this type. Some of them also acknowledged the importance of seeing the foreign teacher in regular English lessons as well, not only in the I.T lab. A few students noted that their regular I.T teacher clearly had more ownership of the lessons than the foreign teacher whom they perceived as a guest teacher. They would like the foreign teacher to be more involved in other aspects of the lesson. Additionally, many students highlighted the fact the two teachers work well together and clearly know what their roles are in the class.

*(Copies of questionnaires available on request)*

Transferability

This material could be used as it is by any secondary school where Audacity and sound editing is being taught. The most significant transferable element, however, is the development process used because it would apply to any technical topic that involves practical work. This represents all the technical secondary schools in Slovenia and even gymnasiums where technical subjects are taught.

One area that could pose a threat to a successful transfer of this material is the technical knowledge of the English teacher. In the case of SŠTS Šiška, the foreign teacher is a computer engineer, which makes the collaboration with the regular I.T teacher and preparation of materials much easier.

Recommendations

The most crucial guideline for any school that intends to reuse this material is to make sure that a logical process is followed. If any steps are skipped or swapped, the results can vary and more damage can be caused in the students than positive change.

The process used at SŠTS Šiška was as follows:

1. Team teaching planning (align goals of both subjects and agree on the activities that will support them)
2. Explanation of technical concepts in Slovene language
3. Introduction of key words in English by the English teacher
4. Oral reporting while students conduct their practical work (English teacher circulates the class and works with students individually)
5. Preparation for presentation (go through English hand-outs and explain presentation criteria)
6. Presentations in English, followed by technical questions from the I.T teacher

If the goal is to give students the opportunity to present their work and results in English, we feel that it is more important to encourage them throughout the process rather than pointing out every single mistake they make. We believe it goes a long way towards building their confidence for the future.

As for more experienced students, more time can be dedicated on the language used during presentations, including tenses, useful expressions and signposting language. The scope could also be extended to accommodate writing technical reports and documentation in English.