



Five College Center for World Languages

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3D: External Materials

3D: On Using External Materials

Common Question: Can I use outside materials not included in the student's study materials?

If external materials (such as multimedia or authentic materials) correspond to what the student is currently studying in his/her study materials and as dictated in the syllabus then, yes, you may use external materials. At the end of the semester students will have an oral evaluation scheduled with a professional evaluator. This evaluator is testing the student based on what the student has covered in his/her study materials and syllabus and how s/he communicates. Therefore, your priority in planning the conversation speaking activities should be emphasizing the study materials students are using to teach themselves the language. If you find multimedia examples, such as online videos or songs that exemplify the material and complement the material without introducing too many new vocabulary words or advanced linguistic structures, then feel free to use them. Examples of appropriate and inappropriate external materials are illustrated below:

Appropriate: Student is learning the vocabulary for vacations and holidays. In the vocabulary for vacation, the student does not learn about vacationing in the mountains, only at the seaside or in a city. The conversation partner brings in a very short commercial in the target language about seaside vacationing.

Inappropriate: Student is learning the vocabulary for vacations and holidays. In the vocabulary for vacation, the student does not learn about vacationing in the mountains, only at the seaside or in a city. The conversation partner brings in a short advertisement about camping in the mountains.

Example of appropriate use of an external resource:

Students Discussing Song

Here students are listening to a song and discussing it. This is a listening exercise at the same time that it is a cultural exercise because they are discussing the song and its role in the target culture.

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