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Lesson Plan: Bilingual Education and ‘Rigged Game’

School type: Gymnasium, Vienna

Class: 8th form/12. Schulstufe

Level according to CEFR: B2-C1

Number of students: .15

Date & time of lesson: Dec. 2025

RATIONALE

Contextualization

1 *How does this lesson fit into the broader teaching module (preceding & subsequent lessons)?*

In previous lessons, students have worked with poetry, specifically genre-specific language features and poetic devices concerning form and function. This lesson builds on this prior knowledge and is concerned with spoken word poetry as a specific genre of poetry, introducing students to its specific features (audiotext, gestures, etc.) and its affordances for discussing societal and political issues. Subsequent lessons can build on this foundational knowledge and work with spoken word performances on other topics.

2 *Which language skills and systems previously acquired are necessary to participate successfully in the lesson?*

- understanding complex language in oral form
- engaging with poetry and deducing poetic meaning
- engaging in verbal discussions about topics relating to their life worlds
- recognising and comprehending poetic devices, specifically metaphor and simile
- using poetic devices, specifically metaphor and simile, for the expression of personal experiences and attitudes in writing and speaking

Topic appropriateness and relevance

The topic of the poem, bilingualism in the school system, is relevant due to current issues in Austrian schools and the public discourse surrounding it. The shortcomings and personal problems described by the author are similar to problems bilingual students face in Austrian schools. While the students are familiar with the discourse surrounding this topic as discussed by the media and politicians, engaging with this topic through the spoken word poem allows for a discussion that focuses on personal experiences rather than statistics, therefore better allowing for expressing their own opinions and relating the content to their own experiences. Students are enabled to do so by engaging with spoken word poetry as a genre in reception as well as in a brief productive task to also express their feelings toward the topic poetically.

Reference to curriculum

„Der reflektierende Umgang mit Sprache [...] ist im Unterricht zu fördern. Durch vergleichende Beobachtungen ist die Motivation zum Spracherwerb zu steigern, die allgemeine Sprachlernkompetenz zu erhöhen und ein vertieftes Sprachverständnis sowie das Reflektieren über Sprache und Mehrsprachigkeit zu ermöglichen. Dies kann auch durch fächerübergreifende Aktivitäten geschehen“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2023, p. 175*).

„[I]m direkten Kontakt und in den Medien gesprochene Standardsprache verstehen können, wenn es um vertraute oder auch um weniger vertraute Themen geht, wie man ihnen normalerweise im privaten, gesellschaftlichen, beruflichen Leben oder in der Ausbildung begegnet“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2023, p.181*).

„Gedanken und Meinungen präzise ausdrücken, überzeugend argumentieren und auf komplexe Argumentationen anderer reagieren können“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2025, p. 181*).

Focus on the following competences

- “Can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between people” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, Understanding audio (or signed) media and recordings, C1*).
- “Can exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity. No signs of having to restrict what they want to say” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, General linguistic range, C2*).
- “Is skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, Identifying cues and inferring (spoken, signed and written), C2*).
- “Can produce clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts in an assured, personal, natural style appropriate to the reader in mind” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, Creative Writing, C1*).

Precise learning outcomes formulated as *can-do* statements

- Students can understand the content relating to issues of bilingualism in schools and the poetic delivery thereof in *Rigged Game* by Dylan Garity.
- Students can identify and deconstruct poetic devices such as metaphors, simile, audiotextual features etc. in *Rigged Game* through listening and working with a transcript.
- Students can identify the affordances of said poetic devices in creating and intensifying poetic meaning.
- Students can relate the content of *Rigged Game* to the discourse surrounding bilingualism in the Austrian school system and express their own opinion and share their experiences.

- Students can identify the affordances of spoken word poetry such as *Rigged Game* for societal discussions such as bilingualism in schools.
- Students can use the poetic language of *Rigged Game* as an inspiration for conveying their own attitudes and experiences of bilingualism in schools poetically.

Relevant EPOSTL descriptors

- “I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognise and interpret typical features of spoken language (tone of voice, intonation, style of speaking etc.) (EPOSTL, 2007, p. 25).”
- “I can locate and select listening and reading materials appropriate for the needs of my learners from a variety of sources, such as literature, mass media and the Internet“ (EPOSTL, 2007, p. 31).

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE

| rough time frame | procedure | interaction format | skills / systems | materials | notes |
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| 5 | The teacher inquires on the students’ familiarity with spoken word poetry. Genre specifics are briefly discussed. The teacher then states the title of the poem <i>Rigged Game</i> – from the title, students state their expectations on what the topic of the poem may be and explain their reasoning. | T-S | drawing on prior/world knowledge interpreting vague expressions | whiteboard | Have audio and video on YouTube set up before starting the lesson, ideally. |
| 2 | Teacher provides instructions for the task in the following step and prepares for playback. The students are instructed to listen for the main content points of the poem: The overall topic, specific problems connected to as well as the poet’s attitudes. | T-S | / | | Ensure comprehension of instructions and repeat if necessary. Wait for students to ready their writing materials and quiet down before starting playback. |
| 3 | The poetry performance is listened to for the first time. Students listen for the poem’s main content points, take notes and compare it to their expectations made previously. | S | listening for main points | projector, audio system, writing materials | / |

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| 5 | <p>The students and the teacher discuss what they gathered from the first listening. The topic – issues of bilingualism in the school system – is established. The experiences the author of the poem are discussed in relation to the students’ experiences. The teacher assists with guiding questions. These insights are compared to the initial expectations made by the students.</p> | S-T, S-S | <p>interpreting poetry</p> <p>summarising main points</p> <p>connecting texts to prior/world knowledge</p> | notes taken, whiteboard | <p>Write down main topic areas onto the blackboard. Be of assistance with vocabulary if necessary.</p> <p>Examples for guiding questions: “What is this poem about? What specific problem concerning bilingualism? What does the author reveal about their feelings toward the topic? ...”</p> |
| 5 | <p>Based on the discussion of <i>Rigged Game</i>, the topic of bilingualism in schools is discussed more generally. Students share personal experiences as well as opinions and impressions on the discourse on bilingualism in schools in Austria. Through this, the affordances of spoken word poetry for engaging in this discourse are discussed – how it is different from the portrayal in the topic in the media, how the genre allows for personal expression, etc.</p> | S-T, S-S | <p>connecting texts to prior/world knowledge</p> <p>identifying and discussing genre specifics</p> | | <p>Moderate discussion and provide questions and input to keep the students from digressing too far from the topic.</p> <p>Examples for guiding questions: “Have you followed discussions of this topic in Austria? What differences do you notice between this poem and the discussion of the topic in Austrian media? Do you think the poem tackles the issue better than the media? Does anyone want to share a personal experience connected to bilingualism in school?”</p> |

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| 3 | The teacher hands out a transcript of the poem and instructs the students to work with the transcript, marking poetic devices (such as metaphors and similes) and noting features specific to spoken word poetry (such as accompanying gestures, audiotextual features) the author uses to intensify his portrayal of the struggles of being bilingual in a monolingual school system while listening. | T-S | | | |
| 7 | The poetry performance is listened to for a second and third time. Students work with the transcript according to the instructions given previously. | S | identifying poetic devices/performance features and relating them to content and functions | transcript handout, projector, audio system, writing materials | <p>Monitor students as they work and be of assistance if students face difficulties.</p> <p>If the prior discussions took up more time than initially planned or if the students seem to be too fatigued for more than one further playback, the third playback can be skipped.</p> |
| 5 | Collectively, the results of the previous task are compared. Students state which features they identified and what their function within the performance is. Through this, the features of spoken word poetry mentioned at the beginning of the lesson are related to this specific performance and topic. Students also note points raised by other students or the teacher on their handouts if they failed to identify them themselves. | S-S, S-T | explaining poetic devices/performance features concerning formal aspects and functions | notes on handouts, whiteboard | <p>Make sure that poetic devices are correctly named and characterised. Write them onto the whiteboard if unknown.</p> <p>Highlight the slight differences between the performance and the transcript and connect this to the nature of spoken word poetry.</p> |
| 2 | The teacher gives instructions for the post-listening task described in the next step. | T-S | | | The following tasks can may also be used as homework and a way of continuing a |

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| | | | | | sequence on poetry in the next session. |
| 8 | The teacher instructs the students to produce a small number of verses expressing their own experiences with and opinions on bilingualism in schools. They use <i>Rigged Game</i> and its use of poetic devices etc. for inspiration. | S | creative writing using poetic devices | writing materials | <p>Monitor students as they work and be of assistance if students face difficulties.</p> <p>If students struggle to come up with verses, advise them to use a verse from the original poem as a blueprint and adapt it to their own views, e.g., by copying the phrase “Learning to read in a new language before you can even read in your own is like...”</p> <p>If students struggle to come up with verses related to the topic, the topic can be extended to similar problems they see with the school system.</p> |
| 5 | Students volunteer to perform their verses. Collectively, the genre-specific features used by the student are identified by the other students. | S-S, S-T | identifying poetic devices/performance features and relating them to content and functions performing original poetry | completed verses | <p>Encourage students to read out their productions and ensure an inviting atmosphere.</p> <p>Lead the discussion with guiding questions.</p> |

LIST OF SOURCES INCL. TEACHING MATERIALS

Bundesministerium für Bildung. (2023). *Gesamte Rechtsvorschrift für Lehrpläne – allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen, Fassung vom 30.11.2025*. <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008568>

Button Poetry. (2013, September 6). *Dylan Garity – Rigged Game*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/bo3KFUzyMUI?si=A601PNjuYiXGV2FP>

Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR). Companion Volume*. <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>

Garity, Dylan. (n.d.). *Rigged Game*. GiftsToGive.org. <https://www.giftstogive.org/dylan-garitys-rigged-game/>

Newby, D., Allan, R., Fenner, A.-B., Jones, B., Komorowska, H., & Soghikyan, K. (2007). *European portfolio for student teachers of languages*. European Centre for Modern Languages. <https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/ECML-resources/EPOSTL-EN.pdf?ver=2018-03-22-164301-450>