A didactic unit about women and cinema

Título: A didactic unit about women and cinema. **Target:** 1º Bachillerato. **Asignatura:** Inglés. **Autor:** Gloria Pérez Peirats, Licenciada en Filología Inglesa, Profesora de Inglés en Educación Secundaria.

The cinema is practically made by men and is a directed gaze. This teaching unit will try students to learn about external factors affecting films as production and social context; cinematic codes to analyse: the sequence, the photographic image, the staging, the mobile frame (close-ups, medium shots, ...), and assembly.

We will build a teaching unit using a film as part of an English class. The instrumentality of English language will help us to treat education for equality between men and women, and simultaneously implement grammatical structures and vocabulary learned in the ESO, as well as writing and speaking skills in English

We will watch the film *Dracula* by Francis Ford Coppola in English, and will do some activities that are shown below.

This didactic unit is designed for students at 1st of "Bachillerato". They are between the ages of 16 and 17 years old, and it involves the subject of English language. They will be working in a group of five people.

As a result of this didactic unit students will learn:

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Understand general and specific information from a film
- Express and interact in a foreign language with some autonomy level
- Write simple texts efficiently
- Sensitize students about gender stereotypes of most images
- Develop in students the ability to read images
- Make them aware of the role played by the image in the construction of themselves
- Enable boys and girls to be free from the stereotypes imposed by the dichotomous division between genres

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Write a brief film review
- Participate in a debate using speaking time democratically
- Talk about specific questions related to technical details about the film

CONTENTS

- Talk about the different roles between men and women in a formal presentation
- Understand their classmates presentations for the correct development of the class

- Interact in the final debate and with their classmates when working

- Understand the information they search on the Net about the "film review"

- Write a film review

- Organisation and autonomous use of learning resources such as search engines, ICT tools, reference books,…

- Participation in activities and group work

- Confidence and initiative to express themselves in public and in writing

KEY COMPETENCES

In our didactic unit we are dealing with all the most important competences for the English language. They are:

- Communicative competence

- Information process and digital knowledge

- Social and civic competence

- Learning to learn competence

- Personal initiative and autonomy competence

Students must develop them to achieve personal realisation, to think like adults and continue learning throughout life.

METHODOLOGY

The goal as teachers is to allow our students to become communicatively competent and to see beyond the images in a film. They will be more motivated to study English if they feel that they are learning to do something useful with the target language. Moreover, thanks to the film our students will be exposed to authentic English language.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

We will follow this grid:

	Developing 1	Accomplished 2	Excellent 3	Score
Content	The information required has been obtained partially	The information is complete and acceptable	The information is complete and excellent	
Lay out	They haven't taken enough care with the lay out	The lay out is acceptable	Very clear, well structured and visual	
Oral presentation	Difficult to follow	Clear but they didn't get the audience involved	They captured the audience's interest and prepared activities to involve it	
Cooperation within the team	Too much individual work	The cooperation is visible; the individual sections are not well linked	The individual sections are well linked to each other and the result is a well structured collaborative work	
TOTAL SCORE:				/12

TIME

Four sessions of 55 minutes each one.

WOMEN AND CINEMA

SESSION-1

Before watching the film, the teacher begins with a warm-up activity.

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1. Warm-up activity:

    a) Do you like cinema?

    b) Which was the last film you watched?

    c) Do you know what are we going to do in this class?

After that, they begin to watch the film.

SESSION-2

Students will finish to watch the film.

Then, the teacher asks the students to write the film review for homework. They have to complete the model below.

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3. **Homework**. Complete the following review about the film.

FILM REVIEW

Title of the film:……………………………………………………………………………………………

Director:……………………………………………………………………………………………

Genre:……………………………**Country:**……………………**Year:**…………………………….

Main characters:……………………………………………………………………………

Theme:……………………………………………………………………………………..
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Plot:………………………………………………………………………………………
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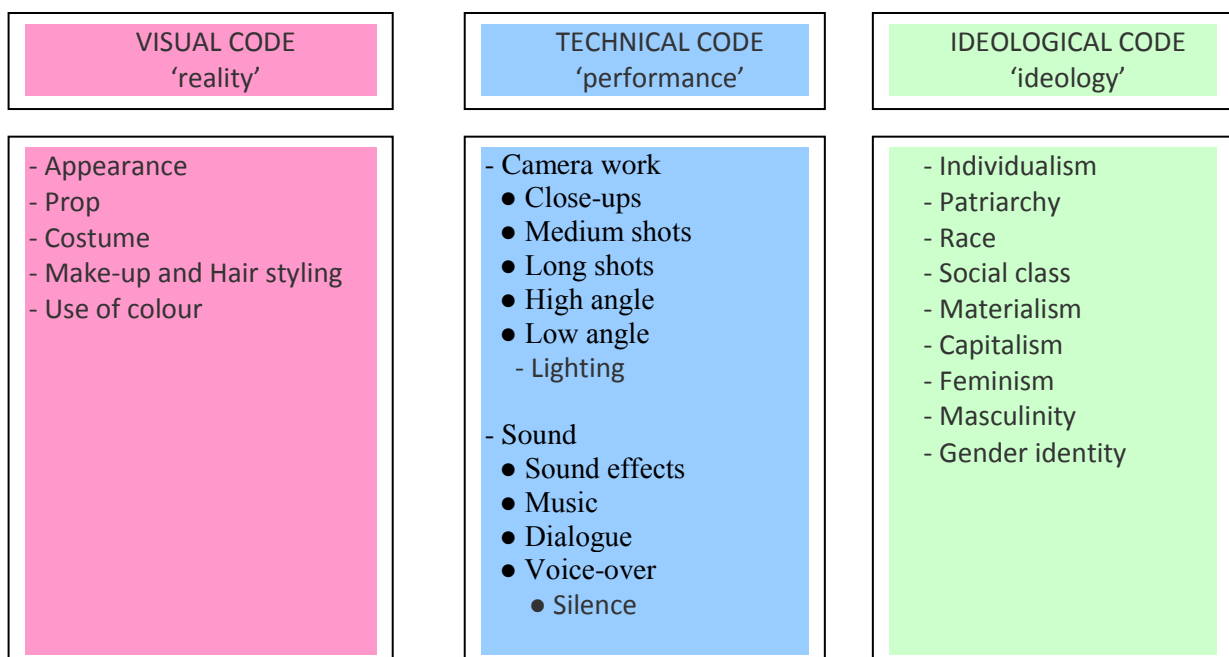………………………………………………………………………………………

SESSION-3

The teacher explains some of the features of film texts and how to analyse a sequence according to John Fish.

Firstly, students need to know what a sequence is in order to choose it and analyse it. So, according to Wikipedia a "**sequence**" is a series of scenes that form a distinct narrative unit, which is usually connected either by unity of location or unity of time.

John Fish says that any televised or filmed event is codified in three different ways: visual, technical and ideological code.

HOW TO ANALYSE A SEQUENCE OF A FILM

VISUAL CODE 'reality'	TECHNICAL CODE 'performance'	IDEOLOGICAL CODE 'ideology'

- Appearance
- Prop
- Costume
- Make-up and Hair styling
- Use of colour
	- Camera work
	  ● Close-ups
	  ● Medium shots
	  ● Long shots
	  ● High angle
	  ● Low angle
	   - Lighting
	
	- Sound
	  ● Sound effects
	  ● Music
	  ● Dialogue
	  ● Voice-over
	   ● Silence
		- Individualism
		- Patriarchy
		- Race
		- Social class
		- Materialism
		- Capitalism
		- Feminism
		- Masculinity
		- Gender identity

E.g. The sequence when the vampire bites Lucy.

- VISUAL CODE: Here the most important element is the blood, and everything is related to it, for instance Lucy's hair and dress are red. Furthermore, we find a cross-cut shot showing some blood seen through a microscope. It gives tension and unity to the sequence. Finally, Lucy is represented with sensual and voluptuous movements. Although the female character is the vampire's victim, she is represented as a danger, a temptation.

- TECHNICAL CODE: there is a contrast between light and darkness. Darkness is outside the house and it means danger to the unknown, whereas we find a pale light inside the house. This is half security. Then, we watch some close-ups of Lucy and the vampire's bite. Once again, the female character is seen as a defenseless and very feminine woman, in other words, we see her as a sexual object and an easy press. Moreover, we hear wolves howling and Lucy's wailings. The sound of the wolves increases the tension and Lucy's wailings show temptation.

- IDEOLOGICAL CODE: we are in a patriarchal society. Lucy is represented as a defenseless woman helped by two men when she is bitten. At the same time she is seen as a big danger for herself and society because she shows too much sensuality and voluptuous movements. Furthermore the blood exchange is related to nowadays diseases like AIDS.

Students participate in the following debate.

3. Students try to participate in the following debate:

a) Which functions does the female characters have in the film?
b) How are they represented from a visual point of view (colour, light,…)? How are they framed by the camera?
c) How is the end? Has it implications for the female character?
d) Can we show a woman without being a sexual object?
e) Can a woman be happy without finding her "charming prince"?

4. **Homework** After thinking about the debate's questions, students have to analyse a chosen sequence of the film according to the teacher's explanation, and showing how women are treated in the film from a gender perspective.

SESSION-4

Students will submit the review of the film to the teacher and will present the analysis of the chosen sequence to the rest of the class. ●

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