**Still Images and Oral Recordings: Overview**

These resources include nine sessions each expected to last roughly three hours. Each three hour session is split into two parts. The first half is a practical session devoted to demonstrating the use and vocabulary of a digital camera, downloading photographs and oral recordings onto a computer, captioning downloaded material and transferring material using a memory stick; all in an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) context. The second half focuses on functional grammar and vocabulary to consolidate the first half of the session and also to prepare learners for the next session.

In every session, learners take photos and these are incorporated into the following week’s material. To give a theme to the course, a short writing competition could be introduced at the beginning where learners are requested to write a paragraph about what their town/city means to them.

The original target group was 30-40 year old Chinese ladies at level A1 – A2. They required ESOL classes incorporating citizenship material as three of them were applying for ‘indefinite leave to remain’. After a short session on handling a digital camera, groups of three went out for half an hour to take photos of the city of Inverness. Four (identical) laptops were set up in the class and when everyone returned, the tutor demonstrated how to download the photographs from the camera to a file on the laptop.

Beforehand, the tutor had written these instructions stage by stage, using the correct terminology. The tutor used this model EVERY time they downloaded photographs and in any subsequent handouts. At level A1-A2 it is important to maintain consistency when giving instructions and using technical vocabulary. It soon became apparent that there was a theme in types of photos the learners were taking: views of the city, each other in places around the city and in the classroom (on colder, wetter days). From these, the lesson plans evolved. Building on each session’s photos, the tutor created the nine sessions, week by week, with an underlying theme of talking about and describing photos in different contexts. At the same time, she taught how to put the photos onto a computer, give them a caption and share them.

At the end of the project all the learners were able to put their photos onto their laptops and share their photos - this demonstrated the success of the project. Moreover, learners gained confidence in speaking and using a computer therefore feeling less reliant on family members.

In other classroom situations, three hours might seem too long for an elementary class. But in this project the learners spend half of the session in a more informal environment, either outside taking photos or getting hands-on practice in front of the computer screen, and they work largely at their own pace. The target learners really enjoyed participating for three hours and there were marked improvements in their confidence and language skills, as well as their IT skills.