

Sounding America: Current Perspectives on Soundscapes in Education

Soundscapes play a crucial role in English language education – questions of listening (and choosing not to listen) on both the part of learners and teachers are of great relevance for contemporary learning environments and are inextricably linked to issues of participation in classroom discourse. Further, the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language includes different soundscapes (e.g. spoken word, music, film and other audio(-visual) material) and the reception as well as production of a variety of familiar or unfamiliar sounds and aural texts in a foreign language. Due to the incorporation of numerous cultural (audio-)artifacts in English language education – and due to the United States' dominant position in the production of these cultural artifacts – American soundscapes are especially influential in today's English language classroom and continue to shape learners' understanding of the English language. However, how and which version of the United States is taught via soundscapes in the classroom demands further discussion. Recently, a more critical stance has begun to shape research interests in the field of English language education, as questions regarding material selection are increasingly interested in investigating who can speak, who is heard, and how the English language sounds in and beyond the classroom. These aspects form the starting point for discussions between researchers, teacher educators, and teachers that this workshop aims to foster.

Regarding soundscapes in English language, literature and culture education, the following questions could be addressed in this workshop:

- What are the dominant aspects of learning and working with sound in English language education? Who/what is heard and who/what is silent or silenced in English language classrooms? How does this shape the learners' perception of the English language – and of the United States?
- How does the selection of listening exercises and audio material render identity formations and shape sociocultural understanding of the United States?
- How does learning with music and sound work; cognitively, neurologically, experientially?
- What (interdisciplinary) points of intersection are potent when it comes to learning about soundscapes of/in the USA; socially, regionally, historically, etc.
- What new forms of media help learners access the soundscapes of the USA and how can they be harnessed for the language classroom?
- How can learning with sound be assessed?

We invite papers, projects or case studies on English Language Education and the teaching of American literature, culture and society with a focus on language education and TESOL context. Talks are welcome to combine the different fields of study with research on teaching languages, literatures, cultures and societies.

Workshop Organizers:

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