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2006–2007
Professional Development
Workshop Materials

Special Focus:
Reading Skills
and Strategies

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Special Focus: Reading Skills and Strategies

Important Note: The following set of materials is organized around a particular theme, or "special focus," that reflects important topics in the AP German Language course. The materials are intended to provide teachers with resources and classroom ideas relating to these topics. The special focus, as well as the specific content of the materials, cannot and should not be taken as an indication that a particular topic will appear on the AP Exam.

Introduction

Mary Ashcraft
Retired teacher
Member, AATG (American Association of Teachers of German)

One of the most challenging tasks for us as teachers of advanced language learners is to raise the achievement level of our students in reading comprehension. Building a reading program that leads students to high levels of proficiency and success on the AP German Exam is a complex task. We need to choose texts of appropriate language levels that are appealing and motivating to students. Our classroom procedures should allow students to interact with texts in a variety of ways, encourage the use of advanced structures, and ease the acquisition and retention of new vocabulary. As AP teachers we need to make sure students are familiar with and comfortable reading many different types of texts in order to assure that their performance on the exam is a true reflection of their language abilities.

The following collection of articles will help us do all those things. This compilation contains the very latest information on the reading content of the AP German Exam, a detailed listing of appropriate reading resources for all levels of instruction, practical classroom strategies based on the most recent research findings, and best practices of experienced, successful high school German teachers. What awaits you is a wealth of information about the AP Exam, along with concrete tips and strategies that will help you prepare your students for success in reading.

Viel Glück und Freude beim Lesen!

Special Focus: Reading Skills and Strategies

Selecting Appropriate Textual Materials to Assess Reading Skills on the AP German Exam

Thomas Lovik
Chair, AP German Exam Development Committee
Michigan State University

The task of the AP German Development Committee when designing the reading portion of the AP German Exam is to identify appropriate, workable, and interesting reading selections. By convention these vary in length from 300 to 1,000 words. They must also contain sufficient amounts of information to allow for the creation of five or more multiple-choice items with plausible (if not highly attractive) distracters, or incorrect options.

Committee members bear in mind that what works in one's own classroom may not always be appropriate for a testing context. This applies to all types of teaching and testing. Some reading texts are controversial, biased, liable to provoke negative reactions from the test-taker, narrowly focused in terms of vocabulary and expressions, or complicated either linguistically or topically. While perhaps acceptable for the classroom, they are not appropriate for a high-stakes testing situation. It is also important to remember that expository prose presents comprehension problems for the learner that are different than the ones presented by a narrative text. Whereas grammatical structures, vocabulary, and expressions tend to cause difficulties in expository prose texts (Bensoussan 1990, Kroll 1993, Tarone 1977), comprehension difficulties in narrative texts can arise from global comprehension problems (DuBravac and Dalle 2002). The AP German Exam should include both types of texts. The Exam Development Committee prefers to find expository-prose texts that contain relatively unambiguous informational content that can be tested in a multiple-choice format. In addition, every exam contains at least one narrative text, often but not always a literary selection.

The committee's guiding rule when selecting reading texts for the AP German Exam is to identify those that match the perceived abilities of the third-year college German student. The expectations in this regard have shifted markedly in recent years. A 2003 curriculum survey by the College Board found that short stories are the most frequently used reading text in the college courses surveyed (88 percent) followed by news articles (68 percent) and magazine articles (62 percent) (Bischof, 2005). Those of us who teach third-year German language classes at the college level are likely to utilize primarily, if not exclusively, twentieth or twenty-first century German literary and cultural texts.

Appropriate reading selections should be cohesive and concise (with a maximum length of 1,000 words) excerpts that are engaging for the students and relatively concrete in their language. Descriptions of people and places come to mind as appropriate selections.

All Exam Development Committee members have their own reliable sources for appropriate reading texts, which encompass a broad spectrum of print and digital materials. Sophisticated magazines like *Der Spiegel* or highbrow newspapers like *Die Zeit* do not typically yield useful texts, both because the contents are narrowly focused and because the language is often too difficult for students. On the other hand, youth magazines like *Bravo*, which might thematically appeal to students, are not appropriate because they use a colloquial language that is too current for most students. In the middle of the spectrum lies an array of commercial and noncommercial magazines and newspapers written for young people, parents, and the general public that offers a treasure trove of appealing human interest stories. These include many regional newspapers and government and other free publications. Topics that frequently prove universally appealing to students and that are also rich with content are animal, travel, and adventure stories; profiles of people; and descriptions of events. The committee avoids current news stories, which become outdated since the texts are prepared up to one and a half years before the exam is given. In addition, when deciding which texts to include in the next year's exam, the committee must always balance the reading topics with the topics found in other portions of the exam. In regards to comprehensibility, the bottom line is that the texts need to be understandable to the projected third-year college student without the aid of a dictionary or other reference work. Starting in 2006, some limited glossing of vocabulary will appear on the reading selections and published texts will be accompanied by source information.

The longer reading selection is often an excerpt from a literary work. Texts or authors that are too widely known or used in high school curricula are not appropriate for testing purposes. The challenge to the committee is to find an engaging, 1,000-word excerpt from a well-written longer work or short story. Committee members always look for good reading passages and are delighted to find a hidden gem in a longer work by a well-known author or an as-yet-undiscovered new author. The Internet provides some possibilities, although the search for interesting and engaging readings can be frustrating due to the lack of restrictions on what appears on the Web. Recent publications of short stories by young children and emerging authors have proven to be a reliable source of reading passages. Similarly, serialized novels in newspapers; advice columns in magazines; anecdotes from the newspaper; human interest stories from in-flight magazines; and

descriptions of events, cities, and people have all been useful in designing the reading portion of the AP German Exam.

Once all the proposed reading passages have been vetted by the committee and the texts have been selected, the most difficult task begins—posing multiple-choice content questions that reflect a range of difficulty levels. Here again, what works in one's own classroom may not work as well in a standardized exam situation.

Sample Reading with Questions

„Mein Mann ist jetzt mein Angestellter"
Günter Hoffman, 188 Wörter (*Bild der Frau*, 20. Dez. 2004, S. 28)

Ein leichter Duft von frischem Kardamom und Koriander liegt in der Luft. Kein Wunder, die Holzregale sind mit orientalischen Köstlichkeiten gefüllt. Mittendrin bedienen Gabriele Westphal (29) und ihr Mann Samir (30) Kunden. Seit 15 Monaten betreiben die beiden den exotischen Lebensmittelladen. Mit Erfolg! Kaum zu glauben, daß sie vorher zehn Jahre lang hauptsächlich von Sozialhilfen lebten. „Mein Mann fand immer nur Gelegenheitsjobs und meine Bewerbungen wurden abgelehnt, weil ich drei Kinder habe", sagt Gabriele.

Dann kam ihr die Idee für den Lebensmittelladen mit Partyservice. Im Sommer 2002 gewährte das Sozialamt die Hilfe zum Lebensunterhalt, ein Darlehen für die Wirtschaftlichkeitsprüfung des Projektes und finanzierte einen Kurs in Buchhaltung für Gabriele. Freunde halfen mit einem privaten Kredit. „Damit konnten wir den Laden einrichten, Waren kaufen. "Am 1. September 2003 ist Premiere: Gabriele eröffnet „ihren Traum". Ihr Mann ist bei ihr angestellt. „Wir arbeiten rund um die Uhr, kaufen ein, machen die Buchführung, verteilen Flyer, errechnen Angebote für den Partyservice. "Genug zu tun. Trotzdem möchte Gabriele noch einen Stand in der Markthalle oder ein arabisches Café einrichten. „ So können wir unseren Kindern endlich eine Perspektive geben!"

1. Warum riecht es nach Kardamom und Koriander?
   a. Gabriele Westphal trägt ein Parfum mit diesem Duft.
   b. Gabriele Westphal verkauft diese Produkte.
   c. Gabriele Westphal backt gerade Plätzchen.
   d. Gabriele Westphal hat diesen Duft sehr gern.
2. Warum hat Gabriele zehn Jahre lang nicht gearbeitet?
   a. Sie hat keinen Job bekommen.
   b. Sie hatte keine Ausbildung.
   c. Sie hat keine Zeit gehabt.
   d. Sie hatte keine Lust.
3. Was ist passiert, damit die beiden ihren Laden aufmachen konnten?
   a. Samir hat sein Wirtschaftsstudium beendet.
   b. Sie haben Geld für eine Kursgebühr bekommen.
   c. Sie haben den richtigen Ort für den Laden gefunden.
   d. Sie haben eine Party organisiert, um Investoren zu finden.
4. Was möchten Gabriele und Samir in der Zukunft machen?
   a. Sie möchten rund um die Uhr arbeiten.
   b. Sie möchten Flyer verteilen.
   c. Sie möchten mehr Kinder haben.
   d. Sie möchten ein Café haben.
5. Warum ist das Projekt so wichtig für Gabriele und Samir?
   a. Damit können sie ihren Kindern zeigen, was wichtig ist.
   b. Damit können sie viel Geld verdienen.
   c. Damit können sie zeigen, dass sie eine moderne Ehe haben.
   d. Damit können sie selber viele tolle Produkte haben.

Answers

1b, 2a, 3b, 4d, 5a

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Reading Across Levels

Elizabeth Smith
Plano Senior High School
Plano, Texas

Introduction

It is hard to imagine that there are students in our classrooms today who cannot read in their first language, but statistics show that time spent reading and reading comprehension are at all-time low levels. Our students often don't have reading sources available to them at home and don't seem interested in reading at all. After all, they have all types of electronic information systems. Why should they read? We German teachers then walk into their first-year classroom and enthusiastically inform them that we are going to read in another language, when they can't necessarily process reading in their first language. What are our odds of developing readers in this second language? Actually, we can be very effective if we approach reading in the right way and have our students read consistently throughout their German instruction. The strategies and reading sources I describe in the following paragraphs will provide you with a wide variety of appropriate reading texts for every level, and will ensure that your students are well prepared to tackle the reading passages of the AP German Exam.

Reading from Day One

It is essential that students work on reading regularly, and addressing reading skills is still applicable at the high school level. From the first day of their German I class, they can certainly be exposed to written language. Because there are so many cognates in German, beginning reading is much easier than it is in many other languages. Let's start with the first day of school. How many teachers have students fill out information forms? Most of us do that, and it is very simple to write these in German. With the cognates, most students have no problem filling out those forms asking for "*Name*," "*Adresse,*" "*Telefonnummer*," "*Hobbys*," and so forth.

There are also many fun paragraphs that are filled with cognates, which make great reading on the first day of class. Here is an example:

> Peter ist 16 Jahre alt. Er geht zur Schule. Er lernt Englisch, Spanisch, Mathe, Musik und Biologie. Er hat einen Bruder. Er heißt Max. Er ist im Kindergarten. Er hat auch eine Schwester. Sie heißt Eva. Sein Vater ist Elektriker. Seine Mutter ist Hausfrau. Die Familie hat eine Katze. Sie heißt

> Mitzi. Der Hund ist ein Pudel und er heißt Mephi. Am Montag spielt Peter Fuβball. Am Freitag schwimmt er. Im Winter ist es kalt und er schwimmt in der Schwimmhalle.

These first selections should make students feel at ease with attempting to read in German. It is important that paragraphs like this use only basic vocabulary and structures and deal with everyday subjects.

Before we turn our attention to the vast array of materials we can use to supplement our reading instruction, we should remember that most of our textbooks also have very easy reading passages starting at the beginning of the course work. These texts can provide us with a useful source of authentic materials that are based on familiar topics and are level appropriate. While it is certainly true that we need to search out multiple sources for our language instruction, we should also not dismiss the resources that our textbooks have to offer. By choosing the best of both textbook and supplementary materials, we can motivate our students with a variety of reading options.

Supplementary Readers

Our choice of supplemental reading materials begins at the truly elementary level. These offerings are associated with the total physical response storytelling (TPRS) movement, which definitely likes to recycle and reinforce vocabulary. The following are novellas with a limited vocabulary:

- *Arme Anna* by Blaine Ray
- *Fast stirbt e*r by Lisa Ray Turner and Blaine Ray
- *Petra reist nach Kalifornien* by Lisa Ray Turner and Blaine Ray

For the second level:

- *Mein eigenes Auto* by Lisa Ray Turner and Blaine Ray
- *Die Reise seines Lebens* by Lisa Ray Turner and Blaine Ray

All of the above titles can be ordered from www.blaineraytprs.com.

Thematic Short Stories About Me by German teacher Robert Williams is not a novella but a collection of short stories that are grouped together thematically. It is an excellent group of stories, which come with accompanying exercises. The sequel is *Thematic Short Stories All Around Me* by Robert Williams. He has recently published the next two books in the series, available through Teacher's Discovery, Inc.: *Thematic Short Stories About Everything* and *Thematic Short Stories About Everything Else*.

A wonderful little reader called *Geld oder Liebe* by Sabine Lewis can be used as a review at the end of the first year or at the beginning of the second year. I use it for review at the beginning of German II. The sequel, *Hände weg von meinem Kopf!* by Sabine Lewis and Stephen Poe, is described as a level 2 reader. Although these books don't come with any type of exercises, they do have vocabulary lists at the end, which is reassuring for the students. The books are well written and increase appropriately in difficulty, so they probably don't need to be glossed.

Publisher Materials

Many of the publishing companies sell books that are geared to beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of German. Some of the textbook publishers also have graded readers that accompany their textbooks. Each of the major American textbook publishers takes a different approach to incorporating reading into their programs. It is always good to start with things furnished with your textbooks (if they are indeed part of your textbook adoption). Before using them, I would suggest reading through the stories to find out which level they are actually geared to. Although they are classified, basically, as beginning, intermediate, and advanced, the books' descriptors may not correspond to your students' skills. Most publishers rate works according to the number of high-frequency vocabulary items used, and that ranking may not be a reliable predictor of your students' reading level. It is important to give students a feeling of success and not have them become too discouraged by what you think is a real challenge. It is like shopping for clothes: Sizes are inconsistent and you may have to try them on before buying. You might have to try different stories and books before finding some that you and your students feel comfortable with.

McDougal Littell, which publishes the series *Auf Deutsch!*, has the *Graded German Reader: Erste Stufe*, intended for levels 1 and 2. It is nicely glossed and leads readers through very easy anecdotes and short stories to a complete short story. There are exercises for comprehension and idioms with each reading selection. For the advanced levels, there is also the reader *Allerlei zum Lesen* by Teichert and Teichert, which provides prereading, vocabulary, and comprehension exercises for every story.

EMC/Paradigm Publishing, which publishes the *Deutsch Aktuell* series, has the American publishing rights for the Klett Verlag graded readers listed below. Those texts feature vocabulary glossed on each page, and some include exercises at the end of the book.

Holt, Rinehart, and Winston offers the most developmental plan for reading. They publish a series of three readers, *Lies mit mir! 1*, *Lies mit mir! 2*, and *Lies mit mir! 3*,

which all contain not only short stories but also prereading strategies, reading strategies, and exercises for postreading. Each book has a *Wortschatz* at the end, as well as an answer key for the exercises. There is an accompanying booklet entitled *Reading Strategies and Skills* to help the teacher in implementing the suggestions.

Langenscheidt publishes a series of readers about *Detektiv* Müller and his trusty secretary/assistant Bea Braun, which are appropriate on several levels. They are classified at levels 1, 2, or 3, but again, you have to decide if they are appropriate for your level of instruction. One helpful aspect of these books is that the characters reappear, so once the students have read a couple of them, they know what to expect. Another compelling feature is that they are culturally interesting and varied. They take place in different towns and during different festivals, so students learn about German-speaking countries and culture while learning the language. These books are not accompanied by extensive teaching materials, although they do have some exercises at the end. However, there are vocabulary lists and exercises for several of the books on the Internet. As teachers across the country have used the books, they have developed their own exercises to share. By far the most extensive collection of materials to use with readers and stories is on Anne Green's Kinder- und Jugendliteratur im Deutschunterricht site at http://kjl.aatg.org.

I traditionally have students read a couple of books from this Langenscheidt series as a class, and then encourage the students to read others in the series on their own. Several years ago I was able to get a grant to buy reading materials for the classroom. I now have a "lending library" for the students who are interested in reading on their own. Depending on students' abilities to read independently, I sometimes have required them to read more books outside of class and report back to me. I have even tried having students do required reading in the summer. You need to be careful when requiring students to read on their own and without proper direction. If it is too difficult and frustrating for them, it could set back their reading progress.

Before ordering books for your students, you might want to do a Web search to see if there are materials available for you to use. Here are some of the titles from the Langenscheidt series.

Level 1:
- *Adel und edle Steine*
- *Berliner Pokalfieber*
- *Donauwalzer*
- *Elvis in Köln*

- *Hamburg hin- und zurück*
- *Ein Mann zuviel*
- *Der Märchenkönig*
- *Oh, Maria*
- *Oktoberfest*

Level 2:
- *Barbara*
- *Bild ohne Rahmen*
- *Ebbe und Flut*
- *Einer singt falsch*
- *Ferien bei Freunden*
- *Das Gold der alten Dame*
- *Grenzverkehr am Bodensee*
- *Heidelberger Herbst*
- *Mord auf dem Golfplatz*
- *Tatort Frankfurt*
- *Tödlicher Schnee*

Level 3:
- *Ein Fall auf Rügen*
- *Der Fall Schlachter*
- *Haus ohne Hoffnung*
- *Leipziger Allerlei*
- *Müller in New York*

Klett Verlag also has an "Easy Readers" series (available through EMC/Paradigm Publishing) that has some excellent offerings, which are divided into levels A, B, C, and D. Again, I think it is hard to take the ratings at face value. You need to match them with your students' abilities and their experience. In some ways, these readers are more difficult than those listed above because they are adaptations of novels or stories. They are not related to one another, as are the readers in the above-mentioned series, and they don't have the same characters, but they do have some excellent texts written by famous German authors. One of my favorites is *Lenchens Geheimnis* by Michael Ende. It is labeled an A-level book because it uses only 600 words in the telling of the story, yet most of it is written in the simple past tense, which the students don't learn until later. These books have some exercises and there are teaching materials for a few of them on the Internet. Some of the offerings are as follows:

Level A:
- *Gänsebraten und andere Geschichten* by Jo Hanns Rösler
- *Lenchens Geheimnis* by Michael Ende
- *Mein Onkel Franz* by Erich Kästner
- *Münchhausens Abenteuer* by Gottfried August Bürger
- *Till Eulenspiegel*

Level B:
- *Emil und die Detektive* by Erich Kästner
- *Kein Schnaps für Tamara* by Hansjörg Martin
- *Die Weiße Rose* by Inge Scholl

Level C:
- *Drei Männer im Schnee* by Erich Kästner

Level D:
- *Erzählungen* by Heinrich Böll
- *Der kleine Grenzverkehr* by Erich Kästner

There are more in the above series, but I have not used them. I would assume they are the same high quality as the ones mentioned.

La Spiga readers are also grouped by difficulty level, and they offer some very elementary selections. The beginner-level books, which say they use only 300 words, are very easy reading and can be used at level 1. They are generally about familiar topics and stories so the students can relate to them easily. They also include exercises within the chapters. The content of these books is not as culturally rich as some of the others available. Selected titles from this series appear below:

Beginning-level books (300 words):
- *Aschenputtel*
- *Barbarossa*
- *Dracula*
- *Herkules*
- *Wilhelm Tell*

Beginning-level books (500 words):
- *Albtraum im Orient Express*
- *Titanic*

- *Tristan und Isolde*
- *Sherlock Holmes*
- *Die Walküre*

Intermediate-level books (600-1000 words):
- *Faust*
- *Die Geschichte der Anne Frank*
- *In der Hand Schindlers*
- *Max und Moritz*
- *Struwwelpeter*
- *Till Eulenspiegel*
- *Winnetou*

Another series of graded readers is published by **Black Cat Publishing** in conjunction with Langenscheidt. The books in this series are interesting because they come with teaching suggestions and are accompanied by audio CDs. The activities that are included in the books are extensive and include vocabulary exercises, grammatical exercises, speaking and writing prompts, and comprehension exercises. These readers are grouped as *Anfänger* 1 and 2 and *Fortgeschrittene* 1 and 2. Some are original stories and others are based on literature.

Anfänger 1*:*
- *Erich ist verschwunden*
- *Der Fluch der Mumie*
- *Die Nachbarn*

Anfänger 2*:*
- *Albert Einstein*
- *Der Blonde Eckbert*
- *Der Gestiefelte Kater/Das Tapfere Schneiderlein*
- *Das Haus an den Klippen*
- *Kaspar Hauser*
- *Mord im Grand Hotel*
- *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte*
- *Die Rache des Computers*
- *Der Runenberg*
- *Der Schimmelreiter*
- *Die schwarze Spinne*

Fortgeschrittene 1:
- *Effi Briest*
- *Die Nibelungen*

Fortgeschrittene 2:
- *Das öde Haus*
- *Der Sandmann*

Authentic Materials: Using the Internet and Newspapers

The readers and stories cited above are by and large narrative texts. As AP German teachers, however, we need to make sure our students are prepared to read and comprehend expository texts with factual content. Where do we find classroom materials for this kind of reading? When I started teaching, there was no such thing as an Internet. If we wanted authentic materials, we had to wait for them to come by mail or we had to go to Germany and bring them back ourselves. Neither method was very efficient in bringing current events to the classroom. Yet, reading about current events is an essential teaching tool. If students know anything about political and social issues in their home culture, they can easily relate to an article in German. Because the topic is familiar, students can transfer their knowledge in their native language to the contents of an article in the second language. In addition, as they read, they are developing vocabulary that they can use later to write on or discuss the very topics about which they have read. The Internet gives us a great source for the texts we need concerning current events, people, and places.

Warm-up activities in my classes are generally reading related. Students expect to read something and answer basic questions at the beginning of every class. They don't feel threatened because they know I won't ask them to read something they can't handle. Yet, by performing this short reading activity on a daily basis, the students are developing valuable reading strategies, which they can apply when they read stories or novels. Regular reading not only increases vocabulary but also reinforces syntactical patterns.

It is easy to use current events articles at all levels, even at the most elementary. In fact, with a little effort, all levels of your class can use and read the same article; they just do different things with it. For instance, if you use an article on winter weather in Germany, you can use it for all students. When I use articles and they have accompanying pictures, I always give the students the articles with the pictures. In "real life," people have various clues they can use while interpreting a reading selection. At level 1, students are given the article and asked general questions concerning what the article is about based on the pictures, the headline, or any words they might recognize. They are asked to find

two or three words they recognize in the article. That is all they need to do with it. When they reach the second or third level German course, they are asked to find more specific information in the article. At the AP level, they are not asked to find information; instead, they are asked to make judgments based on the information they understand. The fact is, the teacher needs to find only one article, duplicate enough to have a classroom set, and produce different reading tasks. Even the beginning student, who only has to figure out what the article is about, has learned something about reading and vocabulary.

There are several sources on the Internet that are appropriate for finding reading materials for German students of all levels. These two sites are especially good for beginning students because of content and vocabulary:
- www.blindeKuh.de
- www.labbe.de

Other Internet sites that have news from everywhere and for every level are:
- www.berlin-online.de
- www.bild.t-online.de
- www.diepresse.com
- www.germany-info.org
- www.krone.at
- www.kurier.at
- www.nzz.ch
- www.salzburg.com
- www.spiegel.de
- www.stern.de
- www.vaterland.li
- www.welt.de
- www.zeit.de

I also use two newspapers that are published in the United States but are written in German. They are a great source of human interest stories. They are the *Nordamerikanische Wochen-Post* and *Amerika Woche*. I attempt to use articles from these sources as warm-up materials on a regular basis. There are other print resources as well, but I can recommend those two as being especially good. One of the most important services we can provide our students while teaching them reading skills is to help them recognize the type of reading they are encountering. If they can recognize an advertisement, they can look for identifying products and attributes of products. If they can recognize interview format, they can zero in on questions and answers. If they can recognize a pure news article, they know how to look for the main information in the

beginning paragraph. These different types of texts are all represented in both Internet and print sources. Most of the reading our students will be doing when they first go to a German-speaking country will be signs, ads, forms, and directions. We need to introduce them to those written forms early and often.

Using Literature

Students in advanced classes find books written for young people in German-speaking countries interesting and motivating. There are many authors who lend themselves to teenage readers. Paul Maar, Janosch, Christine Nöstlinger, Peter Härtling, Uwe Timm, and Norbert Landa have written a variety of materials that are very entertaining and span many levels. The best source for choosing a work of children's literature and finding the accompanying teaching materials is the *Jugendliteratur* Web site cited above.

Of course, by the time the students are in German IV or German V, they are capable of reading great works of literature, and they should at some time be exposed to them. However, for the purposes of the AP Exam, students don't need the language of the classics. They need more contemporary language and they need good reading habits. This can only be achieved if the students enjoy reading and have been guided through instruction at an appropriate rate. Some of our favorite things to read in my AP German class are *Besuch der alten Dame*, *Romulus der Große*, and *Der Richtr und sein Henker* by Friedrich Dürrenmatt; *Damals war es Friedrich* by Hans Peter Richter; and *Die Dreigroschen Oper* by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill. Although these are difficult to read and are considered to be classical literature, they also include a lot of dialogue, which makes them manageable.

Conclusion

It is imperative that our students begin reading from the first day they are in class. "Übung macht den Meister" is an important proverb to follow when it comes to reading. We must be careful, though, to teach students how to read with appropriate prereading strategies and reading techniques. We must continually emphasize that reading in the German language class is not conducted only for the sake of reading—it is a tool to master the language. And we must bring these students up through the "reading ranks." They must be encouraged to stretch, but we must be careful not to discourage them by giving them readings they can't handle or that won't interest them. Once they relax in the reading mode, they will find their language greatly improved.

Motivating the Language Learner through Reading: From Theory to Practice

Aleidine J. Moeller
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, Nebraska

The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (1999) delineates three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Instead of isolating skills into speaking, reading, writing, and listening, *Standards* describes an integrated approach to the development of the skills necessary to learn a world language. The three modes represent a more inclusive approach to language learning, a literacy approach that underscores the reciprocal relationships among readers, writers, texts, culture, and language learning (Kern and Schultz 2005).

Reading as an Active Process

Communication occurs when we deliver information (presentational mode) to an audience or interact with individuals through dialogue or conversation (interpersonal mode). Information can also be received through books, magazines, lectures, and other media (interpretive mode). The interpretive mode is a more receptive form of communication, a primary source of information from a distance that does not allow for two-way negotiation.

The mental engagement required to make sense of written texts underscores the fact that reading is an interactive process whereby the reader takes in information and constantly constructs meaning. Barnett describes reading as "a mental process, as the reader's active participation in the creation of meaning, as a manipulation of strategies, as a receptive rather than as a passive skill" (1989, 2). Goodman (1967) defines reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game" that involves a) anticipating that which is not yet known, b) forming hypotheses about what is to come, c) making predictions about the text, then d) confirming or rejecting hypotheses.

Overcoming Obstacles to Reading in the Language Classroom

The knowledge and skills required to access written texts often serve as deterrents to second language readers who are still struggling to read the lines, much less between the lines. Morgenroth (1969) captures the reading challenges a second language learner experiences through the following simile:

> Handing the . . . student foreign literature for discussion and analysis is like handing a child a sealed jar of candy. He may see what is inside and like what is inside but he is less likely to get fed than frustrated and disgusted. Teaching him to open the jar lets him get at the contents, sort them out and appreciate the quality of the mixture. (p. 57)

The instructor plays a pivotal role in making a text accessible in ways that motivate the learner to read, to comprehend, to persist, and ultimately to achieve the full benefits from a written text.

Maxim (2000) suggests that teachers engage students in an open discussion in English about their notion of reading comprehension. A discussion about what it means to comprehend a text will help students clear up misconceptions such as the belief that every word on the page needs to be understood to ensure comprehension. Maxim suggests such discussions be repeated during the semester in order to overcome deeply rooted misconceptions about reading in the target language and existing biases regarding target-language reading.

In order to discover the reading habits of language learners, teachers should survey their students about the types of reading they have done in the last two weeks (magazines, newspapers, online content, text messages, novels). Equipped with this information, the instructor can provide reading materials similar to those the students choose in their first language.

Purpose of Reading

An individual typically reads for two purposes: pleasure or information. The language classroom can integrate readings that meet both of these needs. Pleasure reading can motivate learners to read for meaning and comprehension while practicing and honing skills such as contextual guessing. Reading for information promotes learning across disciplines and content areas, addressing the cognitive needs of learners while building linguistic skills in the second language.

In teaching reading comprehension in the language classroom, learning tasks must be designed that allow the language learner to progress from "reading the lines" to "reading between the lines" (Corless and Gaskell 1983, 94). This skill is developed over time and through repeated exposures to language and culture. Carefully sequenced reading tasks and procedures can enable the language learner to progress from discovering new language, ideas, and information to practicing the language, evaluating the content,

and finally using the language and content in sustained dialogue or writing (Pachler 1999). To optimize fluency, understanding, and reading enjoyment, these tasks must be carefully interwoven with reading-strategy training.

Successful comprehension will depend on the purposes for which the individual is listening or reading. "Understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible" (Grellet 1981, 3). This may mean the reader simply scans to find some detail of interest, such as scanning a television log to find an interesting program. Alternatively, it may involve finding main ideas and supporting details to ensure successful comprehension. In other cases, comprehension of every detail is necessary.

Selection of Texts

The first step to a successful reading experience for high school learners is to select texts that engage the minds, hearts, and imaginations of the readers. Compelling sequential texts that captivate the interest of the readers and activate prior knowledge are successful in motivating students to read for pleasure. These texts must match the linguistic capability, interest, and intellectual and emotional maturity of the reader. When students read for pleasure, they acquire language and cultural competence through comprehensible input and can continue to improve their language skills without teachers and formal study (Krashen 1993). Terry (2005) has his students read *Planet of the Apes* in his intermediate French class (second year of college). He reports that students felt comfortable and read on their own, often far in advance of the schedule on the syllabus. He chose this novel in particular because it was "fun, psychological and played with your head," often leaving the reader hanging at the end of a chapter and thus motivating the readers to read on their own to determine what happened. Terry says that students felt a sense of accomplishment after having read an entire novel. Students learned a lot of language related to space and science fiction while enjoying a book that was pleasurable to read. There is compelling evidence that recreational reading is effective. Those who read more read better, write better, have larger vocabularies, and have better control of grammar (Krashen 1993; Elley and Mangubhai 1983).

People magazine, romance novels, interviews with people in the news, articles on topics of interest, and current events that appeal to adolescents will capture students' attention and imagination and will result in improved reading skills. In order to become self-reliant readers, students have to be exposed to appropriate texts from the start, and, at the same time, they have to be taught necessary strategies for interacting with these

texts. Texts that are familiar to students, concrete in content, redundant, and contain a consistent point of view reduce reading comprehension problems. It is important for AP teachers to remember that selections used on the exam are not just literary texts, but include a variety of other sources. This affords the AP teacher the opportunity to provide materials that appeal to all students.

Phases of Reading

In a reading lesson—as in any good lesson—it is necessary to capture the attention of the students at the onset of the activity, in this case as they begin the written text, in order to engage them actively. In what is often termed the **prereading phase**, the learner discovers the text by gathering ideas, collecting thoughts, identifying vocabulary, and sequencing actions. Depending on the focus of the reading (for example, reading for meaning, or reading to gain insight into grammar structures, vocabulary, and culture) there are many ways to promote interest. One can have students predict from the title what the story is about; create a title based on the first paragraph; answer the what, who, when, and where questions based on a reading of only the first paragraph; or select the picture that best illustrates the content of the first paragraph.

The **second phase** engages the learner in language practice through retelling, interpreting, and reorganizing the language and information contained in the text. The **third phase** requires the learner to do something independent with the language and to integrate the content with previous knowledge and language in order to arrive at a higher level of understanding and language skill.

Practical Applications: Strategies that Work

Once an appropriate text has been chosen, it is desirable to find prereading strategies that motivate and engage learners in the text. The following are examples of such strategies for prereading and initial reading:

- Learners read only the first paragraph of the text. Students turn the text over and the teacher records words that students recall from the text. These words are then grouped semantically and students are asked to identify **what**, **when**, **where**, **who,** and **why** based only on the first paragraph. This leads to predicting what the text will be about.
- Working with a partner, learners are given parts of a story that has been cut into sections by paragraph. The pairs are asked to place the paragraphs in logical, sequential, or chronological order.

- Learners receive the text in cut-up sections and are asked to match the pictures to the appropriate paragraph and then place them in logical order. This works especially well with fairy tales and causally structured texts with predictable story lines.
- Learners receive envelopes containing subtitles and the story cut into paragraphs. They match each paragraph with an appropriate subtitle that summarizes the content of the paragraph.

The next stage of reading strategies includes carefully scaffolded and guided reading of the text followed by close reading and analysis of the text. Examples are the following activities:

- Students are asked to identify and analyze tone, emotion, and atmosphere using visual cues (a symbol of a happy face, sad face, or neutral face, for example) and use the text to defend their choice.
- Using a graphic organizer (such as a Venn diagram), students compare and contrast two characters in the story.
- Half of the class receives a graphic organizer containing nine squares and students are asked to select the nine key words that represent the development of the plot of the story; the other half of the class receives the same nine-square organizer but is asked to draw the nine main events of the story. The next day students are paired (one picture and one word) and asked to compare and interpret their organizers.

In order to probe more deeply into the meaning of the text, learners can be asked to create a series of questions that are answered in the text. The creation of such questions requires a deeper analysis of the text and reveals the learner's observations and reactions to the text. This can assist the instructor in identifying what learners have understood and where the understanding is lacking. Another effective strategy is to have students identify that portion of the text where they get lost and cannot fully understand or decipher the meaning of the text. Pairing students to summarize these sections of the text using English quickly clears up such difficult sections. Paraphrasing these sentences and paragraphs is an excellent strategy for gaining linguistic knowledge and discourse competence. Another strategy that assists the learner through difficult passages is to have readers identify the topic sentence and supporting statements within the paragraph.

The next level of interpretation involves the identification of the author's opinions and the way the author expresses these opinions. The language instructor can facilitate such an advanced-level skill through graphic and visual organizers and

checklists. Providing a list of statements about the text and requiring students to determine if the assertions are supported in the text (citing the line within the text) is effective in guiding students to both read the text more closely and interpret the text. Another effective strategy is to select five statements, events, characteristics, or adjectives relating to a character in the story and ask the language learner to place these items on a continuum of most important to least important. Students are then placed in pairs to justify their rankings and negotiate their decisions. This type of activity optimizes cognitive engagement of the learner and involves a deep reading and interpretation of the text.

In order to promote interpretive skills, students can be asked to fill in the "Unbestimmtheitsstellen/Leerstellen" in a text (Bredella 1984). For example, if there is reference to a dog, each reader envisions a dog unique to his or her knowledge and personal experiences. The reader's experiences and imagination determine how these "holes" or "gaps" that occur in a text will be filled. By allowing readers the opportunity to articulate or describe what they are visualizing, they become actively involved in the text. For example, a novel may contain a scene where two individuals meet and become infatuated with one another. The students could write a narrative describing the thoughts of one of these two characters, or compose a dialogue that might occur between the woman and her best friend as she describes the meeting. This puts the reader in the role of co-constructor of the text, and is likely to result in higher motivation to continue reading in order to determine if the interpretation was accurate.

Integration of Modes of Communication

Combining reading with writing and requiring a product forces students to read and analyze a written text from a variety of perspectives. Moeller (1993) used Dürrenmatt's *Der Richter und sein Henker* as a venue for creating a newspaper based on the novel. Students studied authentic German newspapers and created an original newspaper (*Der Nachrichter)* that reflected the content of Dürrenmatt's novel. Each student took on a task that ensured a deeper level of learning (for example, the ingredients of a murder mystery in the form of a recipe, Tschanz writing to Dear Abby, a reporter describing the crime, a feminist perspective of the crime, death notices) and was engaged on an intimate level with the literary text in the writing of the newspaper articles. By the linking of language and subject matter from other areas of the curriculum (e.g., social studies, history, art), the isolation of the language class is countered when the personal world of the reader encounters a new worldview in a text that unites both world and word (Freire and Macedo 1987). Teaching subjects in isolation fails to provide students with the necessary context to fully comprehend the interconnectedness of disciplines

and deprives them of the opportunity to practice such higher-level skills as synthesis and analysis. When students read for information they learn content across disciplines, expand their knowledge about the world, and build literacy regarding the target culture.

The articles in this collection provide a model of well-chosen texts and carefully sequenced activities that demonstrate how to move second language learners from initial language discovery and knowledge to practicing the language, evaluating the content, and, finally, making use of both language and content in sustained communication. This collection of articles is intended to provide teachers of German with ideas for structuring and sequencing instruction so that a classroom plan for teaching reading comprehension can be devised. Research has revealed that reading is a major source of linguistic input, which is so necessary for successful language learning. Reading leads to language acquisition, expands the knowledge base across disciplines, and connects students with authentic language and culture. Through reading, students develop interpretation and analysis skills, new cultural schemata, and cultural literacy with regard to the language community's heritage.

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Empowering Students of German to Become Successful Readers

Susan Ferguson
Hinsdale Central High School
Hinsdale, Illinois

Second language classrooms are typically full of interactive learning activities that have students listening and speaking in their second language. However, the joy of actively hearing and speaking a new language too often turns to tedium, frustration, and boredom when students read in the second language. Why does this occur? To better understand this, let's put ourselves in the place of a second language student who is reading and responding to a text. Let's read this "second language" text and answer the comprehension questions that follow:

> The mogernous pizertial ardman spugled luftmently aun der leserte.
>
> 1. What *spugled aun der leserte*?
>
> 2. What did the *ardman* do?
>
> 3. What kind of *ardman spugled aun der leserte*?
>
> 4. How did the *ardman spugle*?
>
> 5. Where did the *ardman spugle*?

Were you able to answer all of the questions? (1. the *ardman*, 2. *spugled*, 3. *mogernous, pizertial*, 4. *lufmently*, and 5. *aun der leserte*) If so, then we're ready to move on to the next chapter and the next set of comprehension questions. But—did you actually understand or learn anything?

This example illustrates all too well the experience of students in many of our German classrooms. Before learning effective strategies for teaching reading, I used to assign students a text to read and then give them comprehension questions. Afterward we would engage in traditional discussions during which I would ask students questions, assess their responses, and follow up by explaining, expanding upon, and translating the text with them. Whenever I read their written responses, however, I would realize that they had merely identified the connected vocabulary in the text and then copied down everything

around it, knowing the answer was in there somewhere. On reflection, I realized that my German students were being smart readers but not comprehending readers. They were merely transferring vocabulary from the text to their answers just as you did in the example above. They also realized that they could come to class the next day and have it all explained through our traditional discussions. The problem lay with my approach to teaching reading. To achieve the desired outcome, I needed instead to provide directed-reading assignments that would empower my students to become independent readers in charge of their reading processes—before, during, and after reading.

Accordingly, I began to learn all I could about the processes of reading and to experiment with strategies that would enhance those processes in the context of learning a second language.

The results have been dramatic. These results became evident through reading Erich Kästner's *Drei Männer im Schnee*. Where formerly many of my German students had found this book "hard" and thus boring, students taught through my revised strategies became engaged, interested, motivated readers who loved the story and its main character. I had changed neither the words on the page nor the difficulty of the vocabulary, but instead, by preparing students in advance, helped them make connections with the reading and interact effectively with the texts. I saw firsthand that students are motivated to read in their second language when they know **how** to read.

Drei Männer im Schnee is a delightful story, but it takes a while for the plot to unfold. Formerly, I would give students vocabulary lists to accompany the reading, assign chapters to read, and have students answer comprehension questions. We would then have follow-up discussions and clarifications in class. We were usually about halfway through the book before students would begin to recognize all of the characters and understand what was happening in the story, but by this time most of them had lost interest or just given up. All of us have had the experience of not beginning to like a book until we "get into it." Students reading texts in a foreign language are not going to be as patient as they might be in reading one in their native language, which does not pose any additional obstacles.

I needed to change my approach in order to engage my students in several learning experiences **before** I even passed out the readers. I first assigned the following journal prompts to my students:

> Was ist Freundschaft? Wie weiβ man, dass jemand ein treuer Freund oder eine treue Freundin ist? Was sind die fünf wichtigsten Dinge in deinem Leben? Was ist etwas Wichtiges, was man nicht mit Geld kaufen kann?

This kind of reflective journal assignment has become an integral part of my teaching. As second language teachers we help students learn to write in German, but writing to learn (Santa et al. 2004) is just as important as learning to write. Writing brings a "commitment on paper" from every student. I call this reflective journaling the "brain to hand to paper" process.

The next day in class, students shared their journal responses and discussed their thoughts with a partner. Examples of student responses follow:

> "Ein treuer Freund hat dich immer gern—es macht nichts was man hat oder was man tut."
>
> "Liebe und Freundschaft sind wichtig, aber man kann sie nicht kaufen."

Students then engaged in a discussion in their cooperative learning groups, where they heard more ideas and asked each other questions about their responses. The class discussion that followed was generated by feedback from each group. Because each student had committed thoughts to paper and brought something valuable to the discussion, we had a rich discussion that involved everyone. Also important is that each student was beginning to make connections with the themes of the book.

To prepare for the next class, I asked students to write questions in order to interview (in German, of course) a visitor who was coming to class the next day. They were to formulate questions that would help them find out something about this "mystery man." The day of the next class, students came prepared, and they had many questions designed to help them get to know the character. At the beginning of class that day I entered, dressed for the part, as Eduard Tobler, the story's protagonist. I wore a suit and tie and had tucked my hair under a black derby. Students began asking me questions, and I answered in character. As the interview developed, questions became spontaneous, and students began asking follow-up questions to previous questions and answers. I also "led" students by providing them with information I wanted them to know about the story. The following is an excerpt from the interview. All students participated by asking at least one question. **S** indicates a student question and **T**, Tobler's response.

> **T**: Guten Morgen! Es freut mich, euch kennenzulernen! Ich bin ein sehr beschäftiger Mann, aber es ist so schön, hier bei euch zu sein.
>
> **S**: Wie heissen Sie?
>
> **T**: Ich heisse Eduard Tobler.

S: Wo wohnen Sie, Herr Tobler?

T: In Charlottenburg, einem schönen Stadtteil von Berlin.

S: Haben Sie eine Familie?

T: Meine Frau ist leider gestorben, aber ich habe eine Tochter, Hilde.

S: Wie alt sind Sie?

T: Normalerweise ist es nicht höflich, das zu fragen, aber fünfundfünfzig.

S: Wohnen Sie gern in Berlin? Was halten Sie von der Berliner Mauer?

T: Die Berliner Mauer? Und was ist das? Was für eine Mauer meint ihr?

S: Welches Jahr ist es denn, Herr Tobler?

T: 1932.

S: Wie finden Sie Adolf Hitler?

T: Adolf Hitler? Ich kenne ihn nicht, und ich habe gar keine Meinung. Ich interessiere mich gar nicht für Politik. Ich bin aber mit der Regierung unzufrieden. Es gibt zur Zeit so viele Probleme. So viele Leute sind arbeitslos. Ich weiβ, wie glücklich ich bin, so viel Geld zu haben, und dass ich diese Probleme nicht habe.

S: Sind Sie Millionär?

T: O, ja! Ich besitze viele Banken, Bergwerke, Fabriken, und sogar Schifffahrtslinien. Ich bin sehr, sehr reich!

S: Haben Sie es gern, reich zu sein?

T: O, es gibt ja Vorteile. Ich wohne in einer grossen Villa in Berlin, und ich habe viele Dienstboten. Ich habe genügend Geld, alles zu machen, was ich will. Aber manchmal ist das auch nicht so toll. Ich besitze viele Dinge, aber man kann nicht alles kaufen. Sagt mal, habt ihr Freunde?

(In character as Tobler, I then asked students how they know someone is their friend. I told them that I don't know if someone likes me for who I am, or if they like only my money.)

By the end of the interview, students knew the framework for the story. In 1930s Berlin, Eduard Tobler is the richest man in the city; he lives in a large villa, has many servants, has a chauffeur and limousine, and owns many banks and businesses. He is a lonely widower with a 21-year-old daughter, and he longs for a real friend. His dilemma is how to be sure that people like him for who he is and not just because of his money. Through the students' questions and my guiding the direction of the discussion, students found out all this information. I also enlisted students' help in making a plan to go anonymously to a hotel in Switzerland wearing old clothes, which is what Tobler does in *Drei Männer im Schnee*.

Students who participated in the interview became familiar with the basic plot of the story and many of the characters; they had gotten hooked and could hardly wait to begin reading. They had important background knowledge about the story, and their minds were full of questions that they now would seek answers to in the text. Students also felt a sense of ownership, as I had enlisted their help in devising a plan for Tobler. They began reading with the enthusiastic purpose of finding out about Eduard Tobler's plan, and if he does indeed find a friend. Now my students loved the book, and found it neither hard nor boring.

As students read the book, I gave them directed-reading activities using a variety of strategies to help them organize their thoughts, clarify their understanding, and refine their purpose for reading. For example, students used graphic organizers to "map" Tobler's character throughout the book as they read. They described Tobler's character and supported their descriptions with evidence from the text based on what the character says, what he does, or how he reacts to situations. These organizers helped students not only to grasp Tobler's character but also to interact more effectively with the story as it unfolds. After reading, students chose four adjectives that they thought best describe Tobler, and wrote those on a character map organizer along with support from the text. In the center of this organizer students drew or created a picture of Tobler, accompanied by a succinct characterization they wrote based on their notes. Students read some chapters in class and created a free-form concept map or illustration of the most important events. Each group then retold the story for the class, using their drawing. (If time is short for this part of the assignment, you can "jigsaw" some chapters, with each group assigned and retelling a different chapter.)

In the post-reading phase I helped students monitor their comprehension and summarize, evaluate, and apply what they had learned. After reading, students also completed a pyramid-shaped organizer to summarize the story, choosing descriptive words to describe the main character, main events, setting, and resolution. This format makes students focus on vocabulary and use it in a succinct manner as they summarize. The following is an example of student work:

Tobler
reich, anspruchslos
Villa, Berge, Hotel in der Schweiz
Preisträger kommen an, Verwirrung beim Hotel
Männer finden Freundschaft und teilen Erlebnisse
Hilde kommt und verliebt sich in Hagedorn
Hagedorn entdeckt die Wahrheit; hat einen Freund, Liebe und eine Arbeitsstelle!

What I have learned as a second language teacher is that I must carefully plan instruction with reading to model effective comprehension strategies. As students use and learn these strategies, they access prior knowledge; set a purpose for reading; interact with the text and construct meaning; and synthesize, summarize, and apply what they have read. I have found that as students are guided through the reading processes, the responsibility for their comprehension of and interaction with the text shifts from me to my students, enabling them to become more independent readers. Most important, I have learned and seen for myself that readers thus enabled in second language classrooms become motivated readers. Students love reading *Drei Männer im Schnee*. As an integral part of our communicative classroom, reading has at last become enjoyable for my students.

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"Mittagspause": A Model for Moving Language Learners from Reading the Lines to Reading Between the Lines

Aleidine J. Moeller
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, Nebraska

This article is designed to serve as a model for approaching a literary text with students of German in ways that maximize language learning and cultural understanding through practical, hands-on activities that motivate the learner. The approaches and ideas described here exemplify strategies taken from the research base on effective instruction (Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock 2001). Teachers can review the ideas and strategies provided here and select those that best meet the needs of their students and the purpose of the unit; they are not expected to use all the activities. Many of these strategies are interactive and are designed to engage students actively in the learning process. I have also included a pedagogical rationale to help the teacher understand why these activities are effective in enhancing student learning and achievement.

I have chosen the text "Mittagspause" by Wolf Wondratschek (1969) because it is short, the language is appropriate for intermediate German language learners in high school and college, the sentence structure is simple, and the content lends itself easily to multiple interpretations and analyses. Another primary reason for choosing this narrative is that numerous supplementary authentic texts (*Zubringertexte*) can easily be integrated into this text. *Zubringertexte* are authentic texts that are related in content to the original text and allow the teacher to expand on the topics that emerge in the original text. For example, in the case of "Mittagspause," pictures of cafés, paintings, ads, newspaper articles, songs, and poems can all be added to this teaching unit to address a diversity of learning styles and interests.

The first step is to prepare the narrative text in the following format. (The text below is taken from Wondratschek's *Früher Begann der Tag mit Einer Schußwunde* and appears by permission of Carl Hanser Verlag. Note that the story is also available in full online at http://homepages.compuserve.de/fineliners/mittagsp.htm and other sites, as well as in such textbooks as the third edition of *Mitlesen Mitteilen—Literarische Texte zum Lesen, Sprechen, Schreiben und Hören*, published by Thomson Heinle in 2004).

1 Sie sitzt im Straßencafé. Sie schlägt sofort die Beine übereinander.

2 Sie hat wenig Zeit. Sie blättert in einem Modejournal. Die Eltern

wissen, dass sie schön ist. Sie sehen es nicht gern.

Zum Beispiel: Sie hat Freunde. Trotzdem sagt sie nicht, das ist mein

bester Freund, wenn sie zu Hause einen Freund vorstellt.

Zum Beispiel: Die Männer lachen und schauen herüber und stellen

sich ihr Gesicht ohne Sonnenbrille vor.

Das Straßencafé ist überfüllt. Sie weiß genau, was sie will. Auch am

Nebentisch sitzt ein Mädchen mit Beinen.

Sie hasst Lippenstift. Sie bestellt einen Kaffee. Manchmal denkt sie an Filme und denkt

an Liebesfilme. Alles muss schnell gehen.

Freitags reicht die Zeit, um einen Cognac zum Kaffee zu bestellen.

Aber freitags regnet es oft.

Mit einer Sonnenbrille ist es einfacher, nicht rot zu werden. Mit

Zigaretten wäre es noch einfacher. Sie bedauert, dass sie keine

Lungenzüge kann.

Die Mittagspause ist ein Spielzeug. Wenn sie nicht angesprochen

wird, stellt sie sich vor, wie es wäre, wenn sie ein Mann ansprechen

würde. Sie würde lachen. Sie würde eine ausweichende Antwort

geben. Vielleicht würde sie sagen, dass der Stuhl neben ihr besetzt

sei. Gestern wurde sie angesprochen. Gestern war der Stuhl frei.

Gestern war sie froh, dass in der Mittagspause alles sehr schnell geht.

Beim Abendessen sprechen die Eltern davon, dass sie auch einmal jung waren. Vater sagt, er meine es nur gut. Mutter sagt sogar, sie habe eigentlich Angst. Sie antwortet, die Mittagspause ist ungefährlich.

Sie hat mittlerweile gelernt, sich nicht zu entscheiden. Sie ist ein Mädchen wie andere Mädchen. Sie beantwortet eine Frage mit einer Frage.

Obwohl sie regelmäßig im Straßencafé sitzt, ist die Mittagspause anstrengender als Briefeschreiben. Sie wird von allen Seiten beobachtet. Sie spürt sofort, dass sie Hände hat.

Der Rock ist nicht zu übersehen. Hauptsache, sie ist pünktlich. Im Straßencafé gibt es keine Betrunkenen. Sie spielt mit der Handtasche. Sie kauft jetzt keine Zeitung.

Es ist schön, dass in jeder Mittagspause eine Katastrophe passieren könnte. Sie könnte sich sehr verspäten. Sie könnte sich sehr verlieben. Wenn keine Bedienung kommt, geht sie hinein und bezahlt den Kaffee an der Theke.

An der Schreibmaschine hat sie viel Zeit, an Katastrophen zu

42 denken. Katastrophe ist ihr Lieblingswort. Ohne das Lieblingswort

43 wäre die Mittagspause langweilig.[1]

It is important that the lines be numbered in order to give the teacher and students quick access to specific citations from the text that provide evidence to support interpretations and discussion.

Prereading Strategies

The teacher distributes only the following first paragraph of the text to the German students:

1 Sie sitzt im Straßencafé. Sie schlägt sofort die Beine übereinander.

2 Sie hat wenig Zeit. Sie blättert in einem Modejournal. Die Eltern

3 wissen, dass sie schön ist. Sie sehen es nicht gern.[2]

Once all students have finished reading the first paragraph, the teacher has them turn it over on their desks. The teacher asks students to recall words from the text (by creating an associogram) as the teacher writes them on an overhead. As these words are recorded, the students recall more and more words from associations that trigger the memory (*Straßencafé, Sie, Modejournal, blättert, Beine, Eltern, schön, übereinander*). Using the list on the overhead transparency, paired students form semantic clusters or webs (words that fit together logically, like *Modejournal/blättern, Straßencafé/sitzen*) and organize these word clusters in chronological order. Recalling words allows the language learner to put vocabulary into context, and semantic clustering encourages and binds meaning through associations. This activity yields the key vocabulary and a plot outline. The teacher can add synonyms for this vocabulary (*hat wenig Zeit = sie hat es eilig; Modejournal = Magazin; Eltern = Mutter und Vater; schön = gut aussehend*) in an effort to increase vocabulary associations.

The teacher then places five question words on the board: *wer, was, wo, wann, warum*. Students are asked to offer responses and the teacher records these for all students to see.

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1. Wolf Wondratschek, *Früher Begann der Tag mit Einer Schußwunde*: "Mittagspause." Copyright © Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1969.

2. *Ibid*.

For example:

Wer?	Was?	Wann?	Wo?	Warum?
Sie	blättert	während des Tages	im Straßencafé	Kaffeepause

Students individually hypothesize what they think is going to happen and record this on paper (5–10 minutes). They share their narratives with a partner and compare answers using a Venn diagram (two concentric circles that overlap; to retrieve an example of a Venn diagram and other graphic organizers, visit this URL: www.graphic.org/goindex.html). Several students can orally share their predictions of what will happen in the story. Because they have been asked to anticipate what will happen, students become motivated to confirm or refute their hypotheses.

This approach allows students to bring in their own experiences and become coauthors in constructing meaning from the text. According to Bredella (1985), readers will fill in the gaps with their own experiences and knowledge—a phenomenon that provides the teacher with a venue for asking readers to articulate what occurred and to inquire as to how they filled in those gaps (*Unbestimmtheitsstellen*). This reader-response method is one that allows the readers to become involved with the plot and characters in ways that motivate them to continue to read.

First Reading

The students are given the rest of the text to read (for a period of silent sustained reading), as well as a magic marker to highlight unfamiliar words (to be used only after they have read it through once in its entirety). Groups of three are formed to review those unfamiliar words and students are asked to talk aloud (in their groups) as they try to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words. The teacher circulates, listens, and assists in the discovery phase of these words. Once this step is completed, the teacher asks if there are any words they still don't understand. The teacher then uses questions and cues to help students discover the meaning of the unknown words and, if needed, provides translations.

Students are presented with the following graphic, but without the words in the cells. Half the class receives instructions (included at the top of the sheet containing the graphic) to draw scenes from the story's plot in the nine blocks, with the important elements in chronological order; the other half of the class is to use key words rather than illustrations. This can be given as a homework assignment or completed in class.

Students are then paired up (each one who has illustrated the text matched with someone who has recorded key words) and asked to compare their graphic organizers to determine the similarities and differences. They negotiate and construct one graphic organizer with each cell containing one student-drawn picture and one word that represent their common thinking.

Mädchen	Straßencafé	Modejournal
Eltern	Männer	Sonnenbrille
Mittagspause	Büro	Katastrophe

They then form groups of four, again comparing their results and coming to a consensus as to which nine words and illustrations best summarize the text.

Students are next asked to summarize the story in telegram style (e.g., "Mädchen sitzt; sucht Abenteuer; spielt mit Männern; Eltern sorgen; Männer genießen; langweilige Arbeit"). This can be done individually or in pairs. When working in pairs, students negotiate more and it becomes an interactive, cooperative learning task. Strategies for summarizing texts should be reviewed, and the activity should be modeled by the teacher to ensure that all learners understand how to approach the task.

After this series of language input activities, the teacher can begin to pose questions about the text. *Richtig oder Falsch* (or *Quatsch*) statements are posed and students must determine which line of the text supports their response (hence the numbering of the lines of the text). Again, this can be done individually or with partners, depending on the purpose. The teacher begins with simple statements ("Sie hat nur eine Mutter") and moves to more complex questions, such as "Sie ist gelangweilt"; "Das Mädchen ist selbstbewußt." As students seek answers, they read and reread the text, each time retaining more vocabulary and making connections among words leading to long-term memory. A drawing like Ernst Hassebrauk's *Sitzende junge Frau in Sebusein* (1927) of a woman sitting in a café can be introduced via overhead or computer to focus students on comparing a visual depiction and a narrative text. A search on www.google.de, *Bilder*, using the words *sitzende junge Frau*, for example, yields many good visuals to choose from. Using a Venn diagram, students can determine how accurate this painting is in depicting the woman described in the text. One side of the Venn diagram indicates the

text, the other side the picture. Common features of both are recorded in the overlapping section of the two concentric circles. This activity requires a detailed analysis and interpretation of the text and picture, as well as negotiation with a peer. When students are organized into pairs or small groups, their affective filters are lowered, and they will be actively engaged in constructing meaning and interpreting the content of the text (no one gets left out of a pair!). The teacher monitors the discussions, asking students to talk aloud in order to give voice to their thought processes so that the teacher can assist as needed and determine what students understand and what may need to be clarified. The teacher notes these misunderstandings of the text and injects them into the conversation at optimal moments during the discussion.

Reading: Retelling, Interpreting, Reorganizing the Text

The next step is to get students to probe deeper into the text and to practice language. Students are asked to identify all the verbs in the text and attribute the verbs, as appropriate, to the characters (*Sie, Eltern, Männer*) mentioned. For example:

Sie: blättert, sitzt, schlägt die Beine übereinander, hat wenig Zeit

Eltern: wissen, sehen es nicht gern

Männer: lachen, sich vorstellen, herüberschauen, vorstellen

The teacher asks the students to consider the roles the author assigns to each of these individuals (*Sie*: waiting for adventure/catastrophe; *Eltern*: protective, controlling, providing approval/disapproval, knowledgeable, experienced; *Männer*: superficial, seeking adventure). The teacher can now begin to ask questions that promote critical thinking and interpretation of the text: "Was denken die Männer?" "Warum lachen sie?" "Was wollen die Männer den Eltern nach?" "Was will sie?"

A mini-lesson on reflexive verbs may be appropriate at this point. Drawing students' attention to the verbs *sich vorstellen* versus *vorstellen*, both of which are used in this text, will allow the teacher to highlight the difference in form and meaning. Teaching grammar in context becomes meaningful for students as they can immediately see how form influences meaning and comprehension.

A series of questions introduced in a carefully structured fashion encourages students to read between the lines. For example, the teacher may ask "Was sehen die Eltern nicht gern?" "Worum machen sich die Eltern sorgen?" and then give students an excerpt, such as the lines below, followed by questions not directly answered in the text.

8 Das Straßencafé ist überfüllt. Sie weiß genau, was sie will. Auch am

9 Nebentisch sitzt ein Mädchen mit Beinen.[3]

The teacher instructs the students to consider and respond to the following questions: "Was trägt das Mädchen?" "Wie stellen sie sich die Beine vor?" "Was tut man mit den Beinen, wenn man will, dass sie gemerkt werden sollen?"

Cultural information can be easily integrated into the lesson by introducing the concept of *Straßencafé*. Using pictures of a variety of *Straßencafés* (see http://www.meyer-greifswald.de/fotos/leipzig1/page-0027.html) and highlighting distinctive features that are culturally relevant (ice cream cafés, newspaper cafés, chess cafés) allow students to visualize these firsthand. Numerous culturally specific phenomena can be introduced, such as seating (Ist hier noch frei? Ist der Platz noch frei?) and customs associated with eating in a café (calling over a waiter, requesting the bill, how the utensils are laid out, paying for water and bread, where the hands are during eating, eating with knife and fork). Students can watch a video of individuals eating a meal in a German-speaking country. The first viewing should be without sound in order to put students in the role of observer of what is occurring in the video. What is similar to our culture and what is unique to the target culture can be discerned using a Venn diagram or chart. A second and third viewing of the video with sound focuses students on what the native speakers are talking about. As the students identify topics of discussion that emerge on the video, a comparison can be made with the home culture as regards typical topics of conversation at mealtimes.

Returning to the text, the teacher again poses questions designed to analyze the text further: "Was will das Mädchen?" "Was hat das mit Beinen zu tun?"

8 Das Straßencafé ist überfüllt. Sie weiß genau, was sie will. Auch am
9 Nebentisch sitzt ein Mädchen mit Beinen.[4]

In an effort to increase vocabulary that is semantically related, the teacher selects the phrase "Ein Mädchen mit Beinen." The teacher asks the students which adjectives that describe legs come to mind when reading this phrase. A series of words is introduced by the students and the teacher that correspond to the image in their minds of "*sie*" (*lang,*

3. *Ibid.* (Copyright © Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1969.)

4. *Ibid.*

schlank, dünn, kurz, kräftig, braungebrannt, sexy, attraktiv, athletisch, muskulös, stark). The students are asked to form a sentence using five adjectives describing the legs of "*sie*" (*Die langen, schlanken, braungebrannten, athletischen, sexy Beine werden von Männern angeschaut*.). This is followed by a sentence that states the exact opposite (*Die kurzen, dicken, weißen, wackligen, alten Beine. . .*).

Using the following lines from the text, the teacher writes three nouns on the overhead transparency: *Lippenstift*, *Liebesfilme*, and *Kaffee*.

10 Sie hasst Lippenstift. Sie bestellt einen Kaffee. Manchmal denkt sie an Filme und denkt

11 an Liebesfilme. Alles muss schnell gehen.[5]

Students are asked to list characteristics about each one of these nouns (e.g., *Lippenstift: wischt ab, zieht an, reizend, verschmiert; Liebesfilme: Unterhaltung, unrealistisch, Hollywood, Zeitverschwendung; Kaffee: Pause, Unterhaltung*). Once they have generated such a list, they identify the commonalities and connections of these three concepts. Students are asked to discuss how this adds to the interpretation of the content of the narrative.

The following analysis/evaluation task breaks information into component parts so that the relationship between the components becomes clear. Students are presented with a list of words and select those that apply to "*sie*." This list includes: *unerfahren, gelangweilt, männerfeindlich, intellektuell, lebensfreudig, redsam, arbeitsam, reich, abenteuerlustig, ausweichend,* and *selbstsicher*. They must defend their choice by providing the line from the text that supports it. They place these words on a continuum ranging from one (least applicable) to ten (most applicable):

1. . . . . 2. . . . . 3. . . . . 4. . . . . 5. . . . . 6. . . . . 7. . . . . 8. . . . . 9. 10

The next paragraph allows for another grammar mini-lesson, this time underscoring the use of the subjunctive versus indicative moods.

17 Die Mittagspause ist ein Spielzeug. Wenn sie nicht angesprochen

18 wird, stellt sie sich vor, wie es wäre, wenn sie ein Mann ansprechen

5. *Ibid.* (Copyright © Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1969.)

19 würde. Sie würde lachen. Sie würde eine ausweichende Antwort

20 geben. Vielleicht würde sie sagen, dass der Stuhl neben ihr besetzt

21 sei. Gestern wurde sie angesprochen. Gestern war der Stuhl frei.

22 Gestern war sie froh, dass in der Mittagspause alles sehr schnell

23 geht.[6]

Students, working in pairs, are asked to form two columns and record all phrases that are fact and all those that are fiction, as shown below:

Reality/Fact	**Not Reality/Fiction**
Die Mittagspause ist ein Spielzeug	wie es wäre
Wenn sie nicht angesprochen wird	wenn sie ein Mann
	ansprechen würde

A detailed review of this paragraph allows students to discern the difference between reality and imagination, which will assist them in interpreting this text accurately. A translation of this paragraph into English will allow students to see how the subjunctive is used in English.

A discussion could ensue regarding the metaphor "die Mittagspause ist ein Spielzeug." Each student is asked to present one reason why the "Mittagspause ist ein Spielzeug." The responses are collected, aggregated, and categorized according to similar responses, as seen below:

Mittagspause	**Spielzeug**
Essen	spielen
Freizeit	
Entspannung	
Zeit vergeht schnell	
Freie Erfindung	
Gegenteil von Arbeit	

6. *Ibid.* (Copyright © Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1969.)

In order to personalize the text, the teacher can use the following excerpt as a discussion prompt:

24 Beim Abendessen sprechen die Eltern davon, dass sie auch einmal

25 jung waren. Vater sagt, er meine es nur gut. Mutter sagt sogar, sie

26 habe eigentlich Angst. Sie antwortet, die Mittagspause ist

27 ungefährlich. [7]

The teacher asks: "Worüber spricht die Familie?" "Die Eltern versuchen dem Mädchen Rat zu geben. Hört das Mädchen zu? Ist das typisch?" "Worüber sprechen ihre Eltern am Abendtisch?" "Worüber geben ihre Eltern Rat? Folgt sie dem Rat? Warum, oder warum nicht?" The teacher can also ask the students to record the topics discussed at the dinner table at home that evening. Students are placed in small groups and compare topics the next day. The teacher has the students compare any advice received from their elders.

The following paragraph provides information and cues about "*sie*." The teacher asks students to list what they learn about her. Students are asked to pose questions that are answered in this portion of the text. This requires a high level of understanding and forces students to read for meaning.

31 Obwohl sie regelmäßig im Straßencafé sitzt, ist die Mittagspause

32 anstrengender als Briefeschreiben. Sie wird von allen Seiten

33 beobachtet. Sie spürt sofort, dass sie Hände hat.

34 Der Rock ist nicht zu übersehen. Hauptsache, sie ist pünktlich. Im

35 Straßencafé gibt es keine Betrunkenen. Sie spielt mit der

36 Handtasche. Sie kauft jetzt keine Zeitung.

7. *Ibid.* (Copyright © Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1969.)

37 Es ist schön, dass in jeder Mittagspause eine Katasprophe passieren

38 könnte. Sie könnte sich sehr verspäten. Sie könnte sich sehr

39 verlieben. Wenn keine Bedienung kommt, geht sie hinein und

40 bezahlt den Kaffee an der Theke.

41 An der Schreibmaschine hat sie viel Zeit, an Katastrophen zu

42 denken. Katastrophe ist ihr Lieblingswort. Ohne das Lieblingswort

43 wäre die Mittagspause langweilig.[8]

An important skill to hone among language learners is the ability to paraphrase. The purpose of paraphrasing a text is to express the content and context of a passage in one's own words by simplifying the structure and vocabulary. The following is an example from "Mittagspause":

12 Freitags reicht die Zeit, um einen Cognac zum Kaffee zu bestellen.

13 Aber freitags regnet es oft.[9]

Paraphrase: Am Freitag hat sie mehr Zeit. Sie bestellt an dem Tag einen Cognac und einen Kaffee. Das Problem ist, dass es freitags oft regnet. Dann sind nicht viele Männer im Café. Dann kauft sie eine Zeitung und liest.
Once the story has been read and the above tasks have been completed, students have had sufficient input and practice to retell the story. One way to make this motivating and interactive is to prepare large (8" x 10") construction-paper signs that contain words and phrases from the story, which are disseminated to students as they walk in the classroom. Each student receives one word or phrase and must locate his/her partner whose phrase matches theirs based on the context of the story: "*sitzt*" matches "*im Straßencafé*"; "*blättert*" matches "*im Modejournal*." Once they have found the matching phrase and person, the students line up chronologically according to the sequence of the story.

8. *Ibid.* (Copyright © Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1969.)

9. *Ibid.*

They are then asked to retell the story using these phrases. This can also be practiced individually by using envelopes containing phrases, which each student must then place in the appropriate sequential order.

Another way to get students motivated to practice circumlocution (talking around a word to convey the meaning without using the word itself) is to introduce the "20,000 Euro" game. This game serves as an excellent review before a unit exam. The students are divided into teams of five to eight, depending on the number of students in the class. One of the team members serves as clue giver and the others must identify six words in 60 seconds from listening to the clues. This is based on the *$20,000 Pyramid* game show. Students may not use any part of the original word and the clue givers must hold their hands behind their backs. The teacher puts up a list of six words that the clue givers must try to elicit from their team members, for example:

Strassencafé	überfüllt	Zigarette
Modejournal	Nebentisch	Lungenzüge
Freunde	Lippenstift	lachen
Beine	Kaffee	Liebesfilme
Sonnenbrille	Filme	Spielzeug
Männer	Freitags	Stuhl

The context of the story is used in an attempt to elicit the appropriate word. As students become more acquainted with the game, more abstract concepts can be added to challenge the students appropriately.

A simulation in which two students each receive a conversation card that describes a situation to be acted out in front of the class is another good speaking activity. One card reads:

> You see a very attractive brunette sitting in a café at a neighboring table. She looks friendly and approachable. You have two tickets to the opera *Die Zauberflöte* tonight. Because your sister became ill you have an extra ticket. Approach this lady and talk her into going to the opera with you. Good luck!

The other card reads:

> You are waiting for your date in a café. He is already half an hour late. This is not the first time this has happened. Suddenly you see a very

attractive young man at a neighboring table—he gets up and approaches your table . . . you are very nervous . . . Enjoy!

Such simulations can be done in pairs or performed in front of the entire class depending on the comfort zone of your students. This promotes authentic communication using the context of the story.

The following are additional input activities that can be used to optimize language practice:

1. Construct a series of lists containing four words (e.g., *schön, Beine, Lippenstift, Cognac*). Students must select the word that does not belong, and provide a reason for their decision.
2. Have students place a happy face, sad face, or indifferent face next to each paragraph of the story. Students must be prepared to defend their choices with specific references in the text using the numbers in the margin.
3. Create a paired work activity designed to help students practice the narrative past tense. Students are given 20 sentences that summarize the story, such as:

Student A	**Student B**
* Sie sitzt im Straßencafé	Sie saß im Straßencafé
Sie trug eine Sonnenbrille.	*Sie trägt eine Sonnenbrille

   The student who has the asterisk must convert the present tense sentence into the past tense. Student B responds that the answer is correct or incorrect and provides clues to assist Student A. This allows for peer teaching and interactive grammar practice in the context of the story while reinforcing vocabulary.
4. Sequencing activities are especially effective for spatial learners. Cutting up parts of the story and having students place them in chronological order reinforces reading and comprehension. This can also be done with simple phrases or words, or by matching pictures to words.
5. Create a series of true/false questions and have students rewrite the false ones to make them true.
6. Have students place the following sentences in logical, chronological order:
   a. Sie denkt an Liebesfilme.
   b. Sie findet einen freien Platz.
   c. Sie geht zur Arbeit.
   d. Sie will sich nicht verspäten.
   e. Sie bezahlt die Rechnung.
   f. Sie trinkt den Kaffee.

g. Sie bestellt einen Kaffee.
h. Sie schaut auf die Speisekarte.
i. Sie hat Mittagspause.
j. Sie schlägt die Beine übereinander.
k. Sie sitzt an der Schreibmaschine.
l. Sie blättert im Modejournal.

A capstone activity might consist of asking the student to create a title for this story (note that I did not include this with the text). Of course, they must defend their choices either orally or in writing. This promotes analysis, interpretation, and creativity; titles generated by the students are often more creative than the original title.

Independent Practice

Since this text is about *Männer und Frauen*, the inclusion of Herbert Grönemeyer's song "Männer" is a rich resource for additional vocabulary acquisition. There are 50 words in the text that describe men (e.g., "Männer sind so verletzlich. Männer sind unersetzlich."), the melody is catchy, and the topic is timely. Through a series of pedagogically engaging activities, students quickly learn the vocabulary while being introduced to a famous German songwriter and performer, whom they may recognize as one of the actors in the film *Das Boot*.

Noun
Verb verb
Adjective adjective adjective
A sentence consisting of four words
Synonym

They are asked to write one poem entitled "Männer" and another entitled "Frauen." Here is an example from one of my own high school German students:

Männer
Schlafen weinen
Arrogant frech faul
Männer haben keine Gefühle
Esel
Frauen
Streben, kaufen
Unersetzlich intelligent unnahbar
Frauen müssen immer laufen
Herrscher

This student revealed a lot about her feelings toward men and women. When writing the poems, this student realized how much her own personal experiences influenced the feelings she expressed.

Another creative outlet is an acrostic, where the topic of the poem is written vertically on the paper. Each letter of the topic begins a word that is in some way related to the subject. These poems allow students to summarize, analyze, and go beyond the text to create an original interpretation of the narrative.

M = Männer
I = im Straßencafé
T = tippen
T = Tisch
A = ausweichende Antwort
G = gern
S = Straβencafé
P = peinlich
A = Abendessen
U = Unverheiratet
S = Sonnenbrille
E = Eltern

A *Zubringertext* that is ideal for this literary selection is found in the personal ads that appear in newspapers and magazines. Students can be presented with a newspaper page containing authentic ads. After they have studied the format, abbreviations and content, students are asked to compose an ad that the main character, "*sie,*" might place in the newspaper. Here are two examples:

> Sie sucht einen gefährlichen Typ, der sich nicht gern langweilt. Sie: schön, lange hübsche Beine, schlank, berufstätig.Er muss sein: aggressiv, groβ, lustig, Sinn für Humor.
> Zuschriften unter SZ 36 24 36 (mit Bild bitte).

> Kontoristin sucht Katastrophe. Schöne gelangweilte Frau sucht welterfahrenen, aufgeschlossenen, starken Mann, der gern etwas erleben möchte. Bist du der richtige Mann für mich?
> Zuschriften unter 789748 Garantierte Antwort.

A more challenging activity that promotes creativity and emphasizes teaching across

genres is "*Verdichtung,*" the construction of a poem based on a narrative text. The following poem serves as an example of such a task:

"Verdichtung"
Peter Reitz, Lehrerfortbildungsseminar *participant*
Taos, New Mexico, 1990

Im Straßencafé
Schlägt sie die Beine übereinander.
Kurzer Rock, wenig Zeit,
Modejournal durchblätternd,
Bis der Kaffee kommt.

Sonnenbrille auf.
Was verbirgt sich dahinter,
Denken die Männer.
Man wird nicht so leicht rot.
Ich spüre meine Hände.

Die Mittagspause ist ein Spielzeug.
Wenn einer kommt, mich anspricht,
Ich würde ausweichen.
Fragen mit Fragen beantworten.
Wie gestern, wie immer.

Auch wir waren einmal jung!
Sowas sehen wir nicht gern.
Wir meinen es doch nur gut!
Du solltest dich nicht so zur Schau . . .
Ach, die Eltern!

Dabei ist es doch so ungefährlich.
Keine Betrunkenen.
Nicht jetzt, nicht hier;
Keinerlei Gelegenheit
Für Katastrophen.

Katastrophen—mein Lieblingswort.
Ich könnte mich verlieben.
Im Straßencafé,

Zur Mittagspause?
Warum nicht?

Dann wieder die Schreibmaschine.
Hauptsache, man ist pünktlich.
Zeit, sich Katastrophen auszudenken:
Was hätte passieren können, wenn plötzlich . . .
Morgen vielleicht?[10]

This task requires a careful reading and transformation of the content of the text into a new genre while still capturing the original meaning.
Another written response to this text that builds on the vocabulary and content may be a composition on the topic of "Haben Sie jemals eine Arbeit gehabt, die Sie hassten? Was haben Sie gemacht um die Arbeit zu dulden?"

For advanced learners, a comparison of Peter Bichsel's "Die Tochter," written five years before "Mittagspause," can provide a useful venue for additional reading on a related topic. The following Web site provides a creative and detailed description of this classroom-based project for use in German instruction:
www.teachsam.de/deutsch/d_ubausteine/aut_ub/bic_ub/bic_toc_ub4.htm.

Assessment/Testing

Students should be assessed the way they were taught, and many of the activities described above can be employed in the assessment stage. By using simulations, written responses, conversation cards and other performance-based activities, students will see the relevance of these activities, realize their communicative skills, and be motivated to further pursue their language studies.

Conclusion

It is important to choose a text that a) is appropriate for students' level of maturity and language abilities, b) invites personal involvement, c) relates to student interests, d) introduces students to the target culture, e) fosters cognitive growth, f) offers content that is informational and has motivational value, g) contributes to personal development, h) facilitates language learning, and i) is of an appropriate length and text type. A literary text, such as "Mittagspause," offers an open-endedness that can awaken the emotional

10. Copyright © 1990 Peter Reitz.

involvement necessary to enhance the learning of German language and culture. The strategies offered in this article are designed to create a learning environment that is motivating, actively engages students throughout the reading process, and leads to increased language achievement and proficiency.

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Contributors

About the Editor

Mary Ashcraft taught high school German for over 25 years in the Cleveland area. She most recently served as Foreign Language Department chair and AP German teacher at Shaker Heights High School. Her involvement with the Advanced Placement Program includes 15 years as a classroom teacher and 4 years as a College Board consultant and AP Exam Reader. As an active member of the AATG (American Association of Teachers of German), she served on the Diversity Committee and was elected to the Executive Council in 2004. She has presented national and local professional workshops on a variety of topics, including *Jugendliteratur*, the united Germany, oral proficiency, music in the foreign language classroom, reading skills, cross-disciplinary ecology units, and the use of the Internet. She is currently a part-time instructor of German at the University of Nevada: Las Vegas.

Susan Ferguson has been a teacher of German for 30 years. She is chair of the Foreign Language Department at Hinsdale Central High School in Hinsdale, Illinois. She is a frequent presenter at state and national conferences, and she has won several awards in the field of second language instruction. As a staff development provider through the Bureau of Education and Research, she gives seminars throughout the country on the topic of reading and second language acquisition. She is the author of *Reading in a Foreign Language: Practical Strategies for Strengthening Your Students' Reading Skills in the Target Language (Grades 6–12)*. Her article "Breathing Life into Foreign Language Reading" appeared in the October 2005 issue of *Educational Leadership.*

Thomas (Tom) Lovik is a professor of German at Michigan State University in East Lansing and supervisor of German graduate teaching assistants. He has an M.A. in linguistics and ESL from the University of Minnesota (1976) and a Ph.D. in Germanic linguistics from UC Berkeley (1983). He has published on the TPR (total physical response) method, German-English pragmatic differences, and the German teaching profession. He is lead author, with J. Douglas Guy and Monika Chavez, of a first-year German language textbook, *Vorsprung: An Introduction to the German Language and Culture for Communication*, 2nd edition (Houghton Mifflin, 2007). He is currently the editor of *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German* and the chair of the AP German Development Committee. He serves on the Internationaler Wissenschaftlicher Beirat (International Advisory Board) of the Institute for the German Language in Mannheim, Germany. He was the president of the Michigan Foreign Language Association in 2003, and received that organization's Barbara Ort Smith Award in 1999.

Aleidine (Ali) J. Moeller is the Edith S. Greer Professor of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). She has taught in public schools and in post-secondary departments of modern languages and literatures, and is presently a professor of foreign language education/second language acquisition in the College of Education and Human Sciences at UNL. She has published widely in professional journals (such as *Modern Language Journal, Foreign Language Annals, Unterrichtspraxis,* and *CALICO*) and has served as editor of the Central States Conference Report, guest editor of the *International Journal of Educational Research*, and interim editor of *Unterrichtspraxis*. She is past president of the AATG (American Association of Teachers of German) and is the director of an online professional development project (GOLDEN: German On-Line Distance Education Network) that provides online graduate opportunities for teachers of German. For more information, visit her Web site: http://manila.unl.edu/amoeller.

Elizabeth (Beth) Smith has been a classroom German teacher for 35 years. With a B.A. in modern languages from Kansas State University and an M.A. in German education from the University of Kansas, she has enjoyed teaching German to whole families, and now to new generations. After six years of teaching German in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, she moved to Texas, where she has taught at Plano Senior High School since 1976. She has served the profession as president of the AATG (American Association of Teachers of German), president of the Texas Foreign Language Association, and as Evaluations Chair on the board of SWCOLT (Southwest Conference on Language Teaching). She has been a Reader for the AP German Exam since 1991 and has been giving workshops and week-long institutes on the teaching of AP German for many years. She is a frequent presenter at local, regional, and national conferences on such topics as AP German, vertical teaming, and holistic grading.

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