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CULTURE: THE BASIS FOR LEARNING BUSINESS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

ABSTRACT

In this article, we will first review various perspectives on the teaching of culture and what effect this can have on intercultural interaction in language teaching. We then take a look at ways of using culture to teach a foreign language. The first example is how preparing to write a German *Lebenslauf* can serve as a means to get to know and better understand fellow classmates. In addition, we look at how preparing for a mock job interview can function as the basis for teaching German. Finally, we see that students appreciate and value the use of culture in the teaching of Business German.

KEYWORDS: Business German, language teaching, culture, intercultural interaction, *Lebenslauf*, role-plays

INTRODUCTION

Is culture an integral aspect of a Professional German course? How should language instructors incorporate culture into the course? If culture is an important part of business language instruction, does it interest and motivate students to learn more about German and business? In the following article, we will demonstrate how a language teacher can implement culture in intermediate Business German instruction.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Savignon 1972) is the goal of many language classrooms, and Kramersch (1995) has argued that “both native speakers and non-native speakers potentially belong to several speech communities of which they are more or less recognized, more or less unrecognized members” (8). Consequently, the concept of “them and us” and the concept of the so-called native speaker as the only owner of the second language (L2) or the unquestioned authority of it are no longer valid. One native speaker, a single language, and one national culture are inflexible (Kramersch 1995). We need to ask whether language learning is even possible without any connections to the speech community’s history and culture. These links make the learning of a foreign language more interesting and informative. Can language be a medium of communication without culture (Kramersch 1995)?

Two primary tasks of a language instructor should be to provide learners with culture information concerning the L2 and its people, and to provide

experience with the second culture (C2),¹ clearly a very difficult and complex mission. The increasing number of people who are members of two or more cultures (Kramsch 1995) or the fact that an individual belongs to more than one discourse community demonstrates that teaching culture opens the spectrum to a broader understanding of the world. According to Garfinkel (1972), the foundation of culture is not its shared knowledge, but its shared rules of interpretation. If we regard language as a tool for understanding the world, students then need a shared cultural background in order to be culturally competent when using language to understand and interpret the world.

CULTURE IN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

In the late 1980s, Lally (1998) summarized how the use of materials had changed language instruction. Courses that made use of materials (1) tended to emphasize functional language use, (2) emphasized grammar less, (3) specified goals, (4) emphasized listening and reading comprehension, (5) expanded communicative activities, and (6) implemented authentic language (307). Brynes (1988) emphasized that many of these suggestions had already found their way into standard foreign language instruction; however, she maintained that foreign language writing activities and the treatment of grammar on a discourse level were still lacking. And Kramsch (1988) asserted that culture was lacking in language instruction. Twenty years later, scholars (Byram 1998; Hager 2011; Crozet and Liddicoat 2000) are still appealing to the profession to include culture in language instruction.

When selecting language teaching materials, Brynes (1988) provided several noteworthy suggestions to consider. First she proposed a meaningful transfer perspective contained in teaching materials, a perspective that recognizes “the maxims of conversational behaviors, for instance, being informative, being cooperative, being truthful, being grounded in the situationally and socially derived use of language” (30). She maintained that

any pragmatic dimension of any textbook needs to be enriched, augmented, and frequently partially supplanted by the teacher. A textbook can suggest the negotiated, interactive quality of language use, but only the teacher can realize it in the classroom. (31)

In many learning situations even today, it is up to the instructor to provide the necessary cultural information that supplies students with the background they need in order to be successful communicating in the target language.

¹ “Culture One” refers to the learner’s own culture, and “Culture Two” refers to the culture of the target language group.

At roughly the same time, Kramersch (1988) pointed out that foreign language materials were unique because they were based in the native culture of the users of the language, yet they also provided learners a way out of their own culture. Consequently, students had exposure to foreign modes of thought and behavior that could change learners' ways (85). As is already well known, Kramersch (1988) maintained that the depiction of culture in foreign language teaching materials needed reevaluation concerning four main points:

- Factual information: Culture texts need to provide information about the target culture seen from both the culture one (C1) and culture two (C2) perspective, including information about the native culture of the learner seen from both points of view.
- Relations between facts: The material should highlight the socio-political connections between the cultural facts contained in the material.
- Construction of concepts from facts: The connections between facts need to be abstract enough to permit generalizations and meaningful comparisons between C1 and C2. These meanings should run the full gambit of human experience: social, political, moral, symbolic, and esthetic.
- Cognitive and affective abilities: Learners should have access to exercises and activities that stimulate relational thinking, abstraction, and metaphor, critical analysis of facts and their presentation (Kramersch 1988, 53).

In addition to these points, Bolten (1994) proposed eight areas important to teaching a business language. These eight areas assist in preparing students to succeed in the workplace using German, and are critical for learners to successfully work and function in a global economy.

- Knowledge of grammar that is relevant to professional needs,
- Skills in the foreign language (Bolten does not say which skills),
- Paralinguistic and nonverbal elements necessary for communication in the target language (TL),
- Cultural elements in the C2 including information pertaining to business customs and everyday behavior including business contexts,
- Comparison to equivalent elements in one's own culture,
- Technical elements in reference to organization of business areas of the C2 in comparison to the learner's C1,
- Awareness of intercultural communication situations in general as well as between C1 and C2 (Bolten 1994, 20).

Bolten asserts that covering one of these points (for example, vocabulary) one day, and another (such as intercultural communication) on another day does not prove to be very successful. He feels it is necessary to use an integrative approach as much as possible; in other words, using a real-life situation where communicative discourse is paramount. Students will be confronted with such situations later at the workplace, and it is only to their advantage to be familiar with the complexity of these situations beforehand.

In learning a new culture, foreign language students usually do not have practical exposure to the target culture. Consequently, they need to start learning the new culture by being made aware of the practices, or beliefs and values, of their own culture, and then the counterparts to these in the target culture. The outcome of this exposure may result in practices (beliefs and values) being (1) the same as in the native culture, (2) the same as in the target culture, or (3) a hybrid of both cultures. The hybrid culture is an original practice adapted or transformed to suit the customs of the target culture, and it is an interculture. The student gradually acquires an approximate system of practices (beliefs and values); the beginning point in this process differs from later stages because exposure to new input affects the interculture (Liddicoat 2002).

An interculture is the learners' noticing of and reflection on the received input, and each new stage of an interculture is the development of different aspects of a set of intercultural practices, or beliefs and values (Liddicoat 2002). Intercultural interaction is not a matter of simply maintaining one's own cultural schema, nor adopting those of another. It is locating an in-between place (a third place) or adopting a third culture with interactants; it is not merely observing difference, it is experiencing difference. It is an encounter (Crozet et al. 1999). The third place develops when interactants are open, willing, and able to communicate and expose themselves to new meanings. It creates a medium where engaged individuals can relate and where each individual is active in the creation of the third place; thus, the third place unfolds through the verbal and nonverbal messages of the involved parties (Broome 1991).

INTERCULTURAL INTERACTION

Even though the objectives of intercultural learning are complex, they need to be incorporated into the language learning context. Byram (1997) argues that the language classroom provides a space for the systematic and structured acquisition of skills and knowledge necessary for intercultural interaction and meaning negotiation.

In communication, language and culture merge to create meaning when involved individuals interpret each other's speech acts. Meanings are not completely locked into conventional word glosses and grammatical structures because they also depend upon events and situations. A listener frames a situation and deduces meaning from it. Ellis and Roberts (1987) contend that within Second Language Acquisition an interactive context is generated partially by a speaker's particular and individual choices at a local level and partially by speakers making inferences about each other based on assumptions and shared knowledge about the world and how to accomplish things interactionally. Therefore, communication creates, re-creates, and modifies meanings located in situations, evolving into "the essence of culture" and constitutive of culture, language, and society (Sherzer 1987).

According to Shweder (1984), "no sociocultural environment exists or has identity independent of the way human beings seize meanings and resources from it, while every human being has her or his subjectivity and mental life altered through the process of seizing meanings and resources from some sociocultural environment and using them" (2). Markus and Hamedani (2007) assert that the mechanisms for meaning-making are not merely found in the head of the meaning maker or in the artifacts or practices of the world around us but are shared throughout both.

In L2 learning, the learner's interpretation of the situation and its interactional features are very important. Strategic components of communicative language ability are essential when a language acquirer needs to assess a communicative context, implement a befitting discourse domain, plan an appropriate communicative response to the context, and finally execute a response (Douglas 2004). According to Widdowson (2001), language itself does not communicate information, it provides instead directions for which schemas in the user's mind are implemented. Douglas (2004) argues that language and the contextual situation are important for directing how an individual should engage in communicating. Interpretative procedures in communication align and adjust the involved persons' schema enough so that each interlocutor is satisfied that understanding has been achieved. If the participants have a common cultural background, very little interpretation may be necessary. If the interlocutors are from different cultural backgrounds, this may, however, not be the situation.

Walker (2000) contends that through repeated practice, learning another language should create in the learner's mind default behaviors in society and language that underpin culturally befitting behavior. Language teachers cannot present all aspects of the target culture, but they should identify

and stage performable parts of it that can be rationalized within a coherent concept of culture. In Walker's view, performed culture begins with meaning and treats language as a medium for accessing and consequently more completely participating in that meaning.

According to Walker, learners' interpretations exist in their native culture, and the goal in language learning should be for students to participate in the interpretations of any sector of the target culture where they will be involved in personal interactions or conducting social transactions. L2 acquirers should learn to communicate within the target culture, not to create interpretations that are typical of other cultures or languages. In preparation for students to be able to participate in interpretations, they need to construct a memory of the target culture. By experiencing the acquisition of the target language, individuals collect an array of increasingly complex interactions within the C2 that assist in communicating and making interpretations.

The goal of learning to communicate in another language is to achieve the ability to formulate intentions in that language. One's intentions in a social environment—e.g., to conduct business or personal relations—must be recognized and accepted by the involved parties. Language learners must learn to perceive their counterpart's intentions. Without mutual understanding of intentions, whatever we produce in language will seldom be what we intend. Therefore, the individual is confronted with a "chain of being" in a culture: culture determines contexts, contexts produce meaning, meaning creates intentions, and intentions define individuals. Through the establishment of intentions in second language instruction, we expand the focus to contexts that are equal to, or are greater than, the linguistic code. This can result in the L2 learner using the L2 context, using the native context, or adapting a meta-culture strategy (Walker 2000).

In the following sections we will discuss how cultural language teaching can be used in order to achieve the preceding cultural aspects of language teaching. These points are not only advantageous to teaching a language but they are also important for assessing the learner's success at acquiring language and the necessary culture skills. An integral aspect of communicative language teaching is language assessment that holistically invites the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning in the foreign language found in specific (cultural) contexts. Through this type of assessment, learners can more naturally understand the foreign language at the contextual level, rather than remain focused at a sentential level. Assessment should necessitate observable performance and be evolving, i.e., formative; however, it does not need to be the focal point; often the contrary is true. Throughout

the process of formative assessment, students are constantly in the process of preparing materials, making assessment an important part of daily classroom activities. Language assessment needs to focus on a wide variety of skills necessary beyond the language classroom (see Bolten above, for example). Consequently, language learning can openly achieve the development of heightened cognitive competencies implemented in other aspects of learners' lives that merit incorporation into language assessment. The student's meta-linguistic knowledge should also be a focal point of language assessment in order to develop the acquirer's linguistic knowledge and its role in worldly experience. Implementing these elements cultivates learners' language abilities and allows them to demonstrate their language skills (Bachman 1990; Bolten 1994; Savignon 1997). Using such forms of assessment emphasizes students' abilities, instead of stressing what they cannot do or do not know.

According to Savignon (1997), language assessment measures progress, is a motivating factor, provides L2 learning strategies, and prepares learners for real-world experience. If students are able to assess their progress, their performance constitutes an observable and valuable indicator of their abilities to both themselves and their teacher, and it supplies learners with an outcome of their own language acquisition that is motivating. Language assessment should be more than traditional assessment; it should stimulate knowledge and practice of various language applications, extending far beyond the classroom. Language assessment should include the evaluation of the quality, type, application, and appropriateness of statements within a particular context.

LEBENS-LÄUFE—CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND ASSESSMENT

To reiterate, Kramsch (1988) has emphasized the importance of making students aware of how culture is seen in both the C1 and the C2 by the target culture and by the learners' own culture(s). One way of accomplishing this is by using discourse. Standard in some business language textbooks (Hager 2002b) is the use of cultural discourse to present the perspectives of the C1 and C2 from all four angles: the target culture in reference to its own perspective and to the C1, and the C1 in reference to the C2 and to its own perspective.

Preparing students to write their own *Lebenslauf* (resume) can accomplish this by having learners complete the following activity. The instructor presents two resumes to the class; one American resume and one German *Lebenslauf* for the same person. Students compare them and find at least five differences between the two. The material itself (not the teacher!) stimulates the questions "why" there are these differences and "what" these differences could mean. To many learners' surprise, Germans have to attach a photo to

their *Lebenslauf* in order to make the *Lebenslauf* complete. This can lead to a very good discussion about the pros and cons of requiring a picture. The material and the following discussion provide students a great deal of information about the other culture, as well as their own. This knowledge promotes a greater intercultural awareness among the learners. An additional advantage to being aware of cultural differences is that having this awareness helps young people de-emphasize the effects of stereotypes and prejudices.

Learning how to write a resume in another language/culture can be an enlightening cultural experience. Writing a curriculum vitae in German can be an interesting, and at the same time, a stimulating activity because students are the ultimate experts as far as the content is concerned. Because the teacher and fellow students do not know the content, real negotiation of meaning in the target language is necessary. This negotiated meaning is not only personal but also cultural. According to Rivers (1975) and Omaggio-Hadley (2001), once language learners have reached the point of mastering the skill-getting aspects of writing, they should be presented with skill-using activities that emphasize the use of the language for expressive writing and purposeful communication. What is more expressive and communicative than preparing a job application with the appropriate materials for the target culture?

The use of different cultural perspectives is very helpful in preparing to write a *Lebenslauf*, and reading information about how to write one can provide new cultural perspectives to job applicants. Omaggio-Hadley (2001) and Galloway (1992) suggest following a four-step process for cultural reading. In the first step, learners engage in a prereading task that focuses their minds on the culture topic that will be found in the reading passage. Step two orients readers to the authentic material through the use of tasks. In the third step learners examine various intercultural contrasts and form or test hypotheses about the target culture through reading the cultural material. The final step involves reflection on what students have read and their integration of the information into their knowledge base. At this stage, Galloway (1992) suggests engaging learners in writing tasks. Using this procedure for several different cultural topics and combining them into one larger cultural scenario works well as the basis for projects (Hager 2009) or for a mock job interview.

The prereading activity for a *Lebenslauf* entails a discussion about what students feel they would need to put on a *Lebenslauf* if they were applying for a job or an internship in Germany. During the discussion, the instructor lists the items suggested by the class participants on the board, and then they rank the items by the importance according to their own criteria. After completing the ranking, the teacher presents the learners with a German *Lebenslauf* and has the students, working in pairs, find the corresponding information on it.

Once they have had time to find various differences, the instructor initiates a class discussion about the cultural differences as learners are encouraged to express their feelings and opinions about these differences.

According to Bailey (1997), “the type of information included and the format of the document [she is referring here to a curriculum vitae] present a rich source of culture and reveal much about German thought” (31). These new ideas, concepts, and perspectives about culture often need to be brought to the learner’s attention, which the suggested activities appropriately do. Students should read authentic materials/guidelines for writing a German *Lebenslauf* before we assign them the task of writing their own *Lebenslauf*. The reading material should not only contain information and guidelines for writing a *Lebenslauf* but also provide explanations about why the *Lebenslauf* is written in a particular way. Taylor (1994) refers to this type of information as a “meaning schema.”

Before writing a *Lebenslauf*, American students should learn which information is relevant in a German *Lebenslauf*. It consists of information about work experience, education, and training, usually typed in table format. However, a *Werdegang*² is a detailed summary of information about work experience, education, and job training, including information not found in the *Lebenslauf* and is normally presented orally during a job interview. Learners need to be aware that a *Lebenslauf* is brief and succinct. Any detailed descriptions of what one did at his/her job would be included in the *Werdegang*, not the *Lebenslauf*. Students need to learn how to highlight in their *Lebenslauf* the most important experiences and stages in their life. [For the instructor’s information, Web sites such as <http://bewerbung-forum.de/lebenslauf.html> provide tips on how to decide which information is relevant for a German *Lebenslauf*.]

To help students be able to better decide which information to include in their *Lebenslauf*, they can complete the following exercise. They can write a *Werdegang* for themselves and then give the corrected version to another student who highlights the most important information. The first student uses the highlighted information to assist in writing his/her *Lebenslauf*. In another exercise, students use their written *Werdegang* as the basis for telling a partner their *Werdegang*. The purpose of this exercise is to give students the opportunity to orally present their *Werdegang* (which they will later have to do during a mock interview) and use the perfect tense in doing so. While

² I realize that some sources for writing a *Lebenslauf* refer to parts of the *Lebenslauf* as *Werdegang* (professional profile). To avoid totally confusing my students, I keep the two separate.

they relate their *Werdegang*, their partners take notes and later report back to the class, using the perfect tense, whereas the written *Werdegang* is in the imperfect tense. Using both the *Lebenslauf* and the *Werdegang* at the beginning of the semester allows for learners to communicate in German orally so that everyone in class gets to know their classmates better. These two items of the job application process function also as good assessment tools that should be evaluated for linguistic and cultural aspects.

The goal of a professional language course should be to provide students with not only the proper language training but also the necessary cultural background so they can appropriately apply the language. In order to be able to apply the material, learners must also have opportunities to do so through discussions, role-plays, and writing assignments. To determine the effectiveness of this approach, class members were asked to provide their feelings about their Business German course. The results indicated that a large number of students appreciated cultural information because they felt it was more interesting than material found in regular courses. They also felt that they could benefit from the information in their future careers (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. STUDENT OPINIONS

Student opinion	Number of students (percentage of students)
The material is more interesting than in regular classes	6 (33.3%)
The material is relevant and important for my future career	3 (16.7%)
The activities (role-plays) and class discussions were enjoyable	5 (27.8%)
Other aspects of the course were important, e.g., grammar instruction	4 (22.2%)
Total number of students	18 (100%)

MOCK JOB INTERVIEW

In many business language courses, discourse plays an important role in the job interview. Various sources ranging from textbooks (Hager 2002b) to YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfqXbErPgaU&feature=rrelated>) provide lists of the most popular questions asked during a German job interview. Such lists can function as the basis for the discourse aspect of a mock job interview. In groups of two or three students, learners decide on three or four important questions to ask at a job interview. In a plenum,

each group writes their questions on the blackboard. The complete class then compares all questions and comes up with the most frequent questions for the class. These questions then serve as the basis for a class discussion about the relevancy of the questions and from whose point of view the questions were conceived—from the interviewee’s point of view or from the interviewer’s. Afterwards students read one of the lists of the most frequent questions from the textbook or other source (see above). Learners then compare the class list of most frequent questions with the list they read. This is followed by a class discussion pertaining to the lists. It is important to get students’ opinions on why there are differences between the two lists so they can later revise their group lists for their mock interview.

Most students have not had much experience with a job interview in English and none (or very little) in German. It is important to supply them with information about the structure and set-up of an interview, not just the possible questions during the interview. The article “Sicher durchs Interview: Wie Personaler Bewerber in die Mangel nehmen” from *Spiegel Online* provides learners with information about the seven phases of a German interview. Indeed, it is very important to talk about each phase and its relevance in class. This discussion can serve not only to emphasize the structure and discourse aspects of the job interview but also to stress the importance of body language in communication in general and at a job interview in particular.

Body language is one aspect of the job interview that is not often discussed in language courses; however, it is just as important as discourse. The instructor can demonstrate various forms of body language and have students decide from which culture each one comes—American, German, or some other culture—and what each possibly means. [Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) provide a very good exercise for doing this.] This can be followed by reading additional information about body language during a job interview (see Appendix A) to help learners better understand the importance of it. The best option is watching a video or film clip (Hager 2002a; Tognozzi 2010) because visuals can demonstrate how individuals live, think, and behave (i.e., their local culture), in addition to providing information about word choice, intonation, and body language. Cardon (2010) points out that films stimulate a natural observation process that occurs when an individual encounters another culture, and he maintains that teachers can assist learners in identifying nuances and ambiguity in cultures that are not readily apparent by using film.

As we have already discussed concerning reading, while watching and working with videos or film clips there are three steps suggested—pre-viewing, viewing, and post-viewing (Hager 2002a; Hedderich 1993; Roell

2010). The previewing activities are those mentioned in the last paragraph. The viewing exercise is found in Appendix B. The post-viewing activity is a class discussion of the questions provided in the viewing exercise and the mock interview to follow. The effectiveness of this culture module about body language comes from the authentic material that provides tips on how to behave during a job interview.

Seelye (1993) has proposed activating culture modules through simulations. Kramersch (1988) supports this idea but cautions, “simulating and role-playing authentic contexts are excellent activities, but only if they serve the purpose of raising the consciousness of the learners about their native cultural patterns of thought and those of the foreign culture” (84). Simulations or role-plays in teaching about business administration create the chance for students to learn about the expectations that they will encounter in the professional world and provide them with varied responses to possible problems they may encounter there later (Völler 1998). Völler (1998) proposes three steps for using role-plays in business: (1) preparation, (2) presentation, and (3) evaluation. Through the use of culture scenarios and simulations, students have the chance to apply culture information to real-world situations, providing them the opportunity to practice the acquired cultural knowledge and appropriate language. Videotaping the role-plays for the debriefing process that follows is advantageous because it supplies a good source for drawing students’ attention to their cultural patterns and how these patterns may vary from those of Germans in similar situations.

Students should conduct a mock job interview in class that incorporates culture reading materials and videos. This allows them to perform in their own words and through their own eyes what they have learned from the information, or how they view the new (cultural) information. One benefit of this activity is that learners are able (to expand upon their own identities by) to incorporate the information as a facet of their identity without feeling obliged to abandon their original identity. Hager (1997) has pointed out this is a problem with some foreign language learners. Depending on the class situation and the individual student, the instructor can prepare brief role descriptions or name tags for students in advance (see Appendix C), as proposed by Ladousse (1987). However, those students who are already familiar with simulations should have more freedom to implement their own interpretations and ideas (Kramersch 1988; Omaggio-Hadley 2001; Seelye 1993; Völler 1998).

Role-plays were very popular among students in a recent class (see Table 2). More than 50% of the class liked doing role-plays while less than 15% did not. Many class members even asked for more, and some class

members wanted role-plays to be substituted for a test or equally weighted as a test. Seelye (1993) makes several suggestions on how to use role-plays for testing purposes. Some of the learners indicated that they learned more through role-plays because simulations compelled students to really understand the vocabulary and culture and to use specific terms in a real context. Eleven out of eighteen learners liked the cooperative aspect of doing role-plays.

TABLE 2. SURVEY OF STUDENT INTEREST IN ROLE-PLAYS

Student comments about role-plays	Number of students (percentage)
“I like role-plays”	12 (66%)
“I don’t like role-plays”	2 (11.3%)
“I am not sure”	2 (11.3%)
No answer	2 (11.3%)
Total number of students	18 (100%)

During the preparations before the actual simulation, students really had to think about the situation and take the cultural differences found in the material into consideration. Some class members exaggerated some differences, but by so doing, they demonstrated that they had understood what the differences were about and what was important to Germans. Role-plays are an indispensable tool for teaching culture because they involve learning and understanding the other culture by doing, not merely listening to a lecture.

Role-plays are a means of a communicative approach because negotiation of meaning and decision-making are the foundation of this activity. Willis (1996) maintains that these two elements are essential for the successful implementation of such tasks in the classroom. According to Kramsch (1988) and Paulsell (1994), these aspects of negotiating meaning and decision-making have been lacking in foreign language materials for a long time. With the help of simulations, students are actively involved and have a greater say in the pace and direction of the whole course, while improving their speaking skills. One student commented that “role-plays were fun and forced people to think. They helped gain confidence in speaking German in front of people.”

CONCLUSION

In this article, we reviewed how the profession views the teaching of culture in language instruction and what effect this can have on intercultural interaction.

Then we took a look at three possible ways of using cultural material in language teaching. First, we discussed how teaching culture and discussing relevant issues to students used a communicative approach and stimulated learners' interest in professional topics. Then we discussed how writing a *Lebenslauf* provided both teacher and students with information about fellow classmates. Finally, we saw how role-plays and simulations brought language and culture together in a communicative language learning situation, which encourages learners to more adeptly acquire language and culture.

Teaching language through culture can be extra work for teachers because they must augment much of the materials provided by textbooks (see Byrnes above). However, learners' responses to it are generally very positive. One student commented that "the class had more interesting subjects than a normal class" and another learner liked "the different material that was covered because it was not a typical German class of situational German texts." The business culture aspect of the course provided him with a different view of German culture and language.

To reiterate, Byram (1997) contends that the language classroom is a place for the systematic and structured acquisition of skills and knowledge needed for intercultural interaction and meaning negotiation. Students seem to be aware of this as well. One learner liked the interactive "stuff" in class a lot because he felt he was forced to speak German frequently and that would help improve his pronunciation and communicative skills, while another commented that "the interactive parts and writing parts were helpful." In addition, the interactive "stuff" allowed for the dynamic negotiation of meaning through the expression and interpretation of involved interactants, which is an integral aspect of communicative language teaching (Savignon 1972).

The positive results of using culture in language instruction not only confirm these ideas about teaching culture but also demonstrate that it is indeed possible and desirable to teach interactive and cultural topics in a Professional German class. The more "authentic" the material and the teaching techniques are (for example, role-plays; see Völler above), the more the learners will benefit from them. The use of cultural materials and "authentic" teaching techniques exposes students to products, processes, and perspectives of German business culture and makes them culturally competent.

Not only students feel it is important to learn about culture, but also the American public in general. In *Public Experience, Attitudes, and Knowledge: A Report on Two National Surveys on International Education*, Hayward and Siaya (2001) determined that more than 90% of the American public believed that "it would be very (53%) or somewhat important (40%) to understand

other cultures and customs to compete successfully in the global economy” (25). In addition, Hayward and Siaya (2001) ascertained that the surveyed public believed that speaking a foreign language correlates positively to understanding other cultures and customs. This can be considered support for the contention that culture needs to be emphasized in teaching any foreign language, especially Professional German, in order to adequately prepare students to be successful in a global economy.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. BODY LANGUAGE

Im Gespräch

Sie grüßen alle freundlich beim Betreten des Raumes, und Sie stellen sich mit Nachnamen vor. Nicht vergessen, dass Ihr Verhalten beim Betreten des Raumes und danach im Zimmer Eindruck machen soll. Eine alte Weisheit sagt: Der erste Eindruck ist der entscheidende. Wenn Sie den Namen Ihres Gesprächspartners nicht verstanden haben, fragen Sie nach. Er wird es gut finden, wenn Sie ihn immer mit dem Nachnamen ansprechen. Zeigen Sie Interesse, aber seien Sie nicht aufdringlich. Ruhige und überlegte Antworten bringen Ihnen mehr als hastige oder spontane. Antworten Sie bereitwillig auf alle Fragen. Sie schauen während des Gespräches die Personen offen und freundlich an. In Deutschland ist ein guter Blickkontakt wichtig. Wenn Sie oft oder lange wegschauen, könnte der Gesprächspartner denken, dass Sie unsicher sind.

APPENDIX B. JOB INTERVIEW VIDEO

Vorstellungsgespräch: Körpersprache bei der Selbstpräsentation

Sehen Sie das folgende Video an und beantworten Sie die Fragen.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_BS18FjZrqY&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PL0121B3EF8F2AD937

1. Was ist eine Selbstpräsentation?

2. Wie beeinflusst die Körpersprache Herrn Müllers Selbstpräsentation?
3. Was macht die beruflichen Erfolge farblos?
4. Wie kann man überheblich wirken?
5. Warum beantwortet Herr Müller die Fragen nicht?
6. Warum müssen Aussage und Körpersprache kongruent sein?

APPENDIX C. ROLE DESCRIPTIONS FOR ROLE-PLAY

Person eins:

Du arbeitest in der Personalabteilung und du hast schon Unterlagen von allen Kandidaten für diese Stelle durchgelesen. Der jetzige Kandidat ist gut, aber es gibt einige Anderen, die besser sind. Du findest auch, dass die Unterlagen dieses Kandidaten auf Persönlichkeitsprobleme hindeuten.

Person zwei:

Du bist der Vorgesetzte dieses Kandidaten. Die Unterlagen vom Kandidaten sind gut und deuten darauf hin, dass der Kandidat für die Stelle gut geeignet ist. Es gibt nur ein Problem! Der Sohn von einem guten Freund hat sich um diese Stelle beworben und Du möchtest lieber den Sohn einstellen.

Person drei:

Das ganze Verfahren ist dir unangenehm. Du wolltest am Vorstellungsgespräch nicht teilnehmen. Du würdest lieber im Labor arbeiten. Der Kandidat ist gut geeignet, aber dein Gefühl sagt, dass er nicht der Richtige ist.

Kandidat:

Du hast gerade dein Studium abgeschlossen und du hast keine richtige Arbeitserfahrung. Du brauchst eine Stelle, weil deine Freundin schwanger ist. Du möchtest diese Stelle, aber du bist nicht ganz sicher, ob die Stelle die Richtige für dich ist.

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