

# OVERCOMING THE TEACHER/TECHNOLOGY GAP: Authentic Video Texts in Foreign Language Instruction

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## Introduction

In keeping with recent high-tech trends in the foreign language discipline, interactive videodisc systems are becoming available for foreign language instruction, as evidenced by efforts at several higher education institutions in the US.\* (See Bush and Crotty 1988; Gale 1988; Jensen and Lyman 1988; Murray, Morgenstern, and Furstenberg 1988; Rivera-LaScala 1988; Rubin 1988; Schulz 1988; Verano and Geiss 1988/89.) Meanwhile, however, a widespread dilemma persists in the foreign language profession: the pervasive gap between the foreign language instructor and video technology, as June Phillips (1988) identified the problem in her address at the 1988 PICS Conference on Video in Language Teaching at Middlebury College. This gap results in inefficient use of video texts in the classroom. While some instructors undoubtedly still lack ready access to video technology, the real reasons for the technology gap are more profound.

One major cause of the predicament is the disparity between students of the TV generation, who are oriented toward images, and teachers, who are frequently oriented toward texts. Even when VCRs and video texts are available for instruction, the typical foreign language teacher continues to focus on words and grammar. A second explanation for the gap is that instructors must integrate video into their curricula through carefully sequenced student tasks. Yet teachers often lack the time and expertise to create such assignments. Without interactive tasks, the video experience turns into that traditional, once-a-week, passive form of viewing known as the

"culture hour." A third problem arises from the traditional uneasiness experienced by instructors when confronted with authentic texts. Because they are uncomfortable with those texts' high degree of linguistic sophistication, they generally alter the original passages and thereby undermine the pedagogical value of authentic texts (Allen, Bernhardt, Berry, and Demel 1988; Bush and Crotty, 1988; Swaffar 1985). To integrate authentic video materials successfully into the classroom, the instructor has to simplify student tasks instead of simplifying the authentic video text. This can best be achieved by correlating the video text to a cognitive sequence such as Magnan's (1985) multi-sequence evaluation. Ideally, there should be a continuum that leads from recognition of ideas and words to active synthesis of concepts and vocabulary. Unfortunately, most foreign language instructors lack the opportunity and training to create video-related learning tasks of this nature.

The pervasive dilemma of foreign language technology can thus be formulated more precisely by the following question: What approaches that are effective, convenient, and inexpensive can be implemented by the *typical* foreign language high school or college instructor in the *typical* foreign language classroom equipped with a VCR and video material? My solution to this problem has evolved

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## Overcoming the Teacher/Technology Gap

during a project developed under the auspices of an EESA Title II grant awarded by the Texas Coordinating Board of Higher Education. The grant project resulted in readily accessible and ready-to-use student activity programs correlated to nine authentic German video segments from the well-known program *Deutschlandspiegel*, which has been disseminated in the U.S. for several years by the Goethe Institute. The student activity programs and worksheets, printed as the publication *Deutschlandspiegel: Was wir damit im Unterricht machen* (Mirror of Germany: How to use it in the classroom) and a videocassette with the correlated video segments have been available from the Goethe Institute, Houston, since 1987. The book and cassette are now available in a second edition, expanded with topic-related authentic reading texts, from PICS (the Project for International Communication Studies).

### The Project Design

The project was designed to produce dynamic learner materials. The principal consideration was that the video texts and student activity programs be easily integrated into an average German curriculum reflecting a foreign language proficiency orientation. A second factor was the rationale for the selection of the video texts. The third, and probably most crucial, determinant for the project design was conceptualizing the learner strategies on the basis of current interdisciplinary research. Finally, for long-term effect, the project aspired to produce a pedagogical model: after utilizing all or most of the programs, instructors should be able to transfer the same design to other authentic video materials in German and in other second languages.

### Instructional Integration

The instructional integration of the video materials occurs in two ways: by providing information on topics of interest and by

complementing work in other language skill areas (beyond listening) at various levels. First, the topics of the *Deutschlandspiegel* segments indicate which ones best tie into particular topics in the regular language curriculum. The segment "Einkaufspassage" (shopping mall), for example, can be integrated naturally into the traditional chapter content on shopping and stores. The selection "Die Deutschen reisen wieder" (the Germans are traveling again) complements a chapter on traveling and vacations. Since most textbooks have sections on sports or recreation, the *Deutschlandspiegel* selections about sports can be helpful. Sports topics have become student favorites ever since Steffi Graf and Boris Becker became international sports heroes. To counteract the traditional focus in German curricula on *Fußball*, a male-dominated sport, the two sports selections feature women athletes. Additional video segments on social and economic topics of urban renewal, novel life styles for the aged, wine growing, fashions, and the cultural idiosyncrasies of *Freizeit* and *Kaffeepause* (leisure time and coffee break) provide further complementary activities for related textbook topics.

The second important way in which the video materials are integrated into instruction is that the activity sets follow the students' learning progression for meaningful language development along the lines of Magnan's (1985) model of multi-sequence evaluation. Beginning with and underscoring recognition and understanding of ideas and words in texts, this cognitive continuum leads to manipulation and memorization of selected concepts and vocabulary, followed by contextualized tasks requiring application of the text content and language, and culminating in discourse tasks demanding active synthesis of the concepts represented by the vocabulary. The integration of the four language skills occurs readily in this learning continuum: recognition takes place in listening and reading comprehension; manipulation, based on this understanding, entails speaking and writing tasks closely related to

specific images or scenes of the video text; contextualized tasks require speaking or writing to apply concepts and words from the video text to personalized topics; finally, discourse tasks demand synthesis via writing or speaking about one's ideas or opinions relevant to the video content.

To present a range of examples for the learning continuum between comprehension and discourse, several *Deutschlandspiegel* segments are supported by two different student activity sets—one at the Novice level to be used with beginning students, another follow-up set for students at the Intermediate and Advanced levels of oral proficiency. These levels are defined according to the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*. At the Novice level, the student activities focus heavily on listening comprehension as optimal input (Krashen 1979). Effective listening skills serve as a basis later in the cognitive continuum for the processing of spoken language. Ariew (1987) has discussed the effective use of the video medium for teaching listening comprehension. Research by Vigil (1987, 100-101) suggests that learners exposed to language structures via authentic texts develop the skill to produce language coherently, rather than as isolated components of language. And recently, Valdes, Lessa, Echeverriarza and Pino (1988) demonstrated the carryover from listening comprehension to oral proficiency. In addition to the emphasis on listening comprehension, the student activities for the Novice level also introduce vocabulary and reading skills. This is illustrated in the following Novice program, entitled *Einkaufspassage in Hamburg*.

*Einkaufspassage in Hamburg* (Novice)

You will see a short video segment with the title "Einkaufspassage in Hamburg."

TASK 1: When you read or hear this title, what comes to your mind? Please write down your ideas about the title. (Are you wondering what "Einkaufspassage" means?)

\_\_\_\_\_ ist eine Einkaufspassage.

TASK 2: What will this program be about? Please underline the relevant words:

Idee, Luxus, Einkaufsparadies, Bundesrepublik, Restaurants, Wind, Wetter, Jeans, Auto, Schaufenster, Bleistift, Schuhe, Jacke

TASK 3: What activities will this program show? Please underline: einkaufen, Fußball spielen, essen, anprobieren, Schaufenster ansehen, Bier trinken, ins Kino gehen, Luxus finanzieren, studieren, kosten, bringen, sitzen

TASK 4: Do you know what these words mean?

- einkaufen = to shop
- Einkaufspassage = Galleria in Houston
- geschützt = protected
- sich ausruhen = sich hinsetzen
- Geschäft = wo man einkauft
- neugierig = man will alles sehen
- Versicherung = Autoversicherung wie State Farm, Lebensversicherung wie Mutual of Omaha, Gesundheitsversicherung wie Blue Cross

Now please watch the program; try to make intelligent guesses about the content from the pictures and language.

[VIDEO]

TASK 5: Write briefly what the segment is about.

TASK 6: A: Write down the words that you understood.

B: Write down which words you would like to know.

TASK 7: Please watch the segment again. Listen for other words you understand. Please write them down.

[VIDEO]

TASK 8: What do the following expressions mean? Play the segment until you find

## Overcoming the Teacher/Technology Gap

the terms; watch the scene and guess the meaning. (Write down the counter numbers.)

- A. das größte Einkaufsparadies in der Bundesrepublik
- B. geschützt vor Wind und Wetter
- C. viele sehen nur neugierig in die Schaufenster
- D. das ganze gehört einigen Versicherungen

TASK 9: Do you like to go shopping? Where? What kinds of things do you shop for? [VIDEO]

TASK 10: Listen to the segment while you read the text.

TASK 11: Please write down three reasons why you liked or disliked the segment.

TASK 12: What questions do you have about the segment?

TASK 13: Form a group with three other students. Use German magazines to build a collage of pictures and words pertaining to the topic of shopping malls.

The cognitive progression is readily apparent in this sequence. Tasks 1, 2, 3, and 4 are designed as preview activities for initial recognition of video text content and vocabulary. To facilitate this process, the name of a local shopping mall and many cognate words are used in these tasks, leading students to schematize the visual and linguistic details on the basis of their own expectations. Students are encouraged to make hypotheses about the meaning of the video segment. As post-viewing assignments, tasks 5 and 6 require students to recall what the people in the segment do or say. These recall activities, as initial manipulation of understood text information, are student-centered because the questions are open-ended. Since this program is at the Novice level, the students' responses are mostly in English. Task 6, however, is designed to motivate students to write words in German and to discover additional German words.

The continuum phase of recognition is re-entered in task 7, which encourages students to listen for further words. Cycling the learning phase of manipulation to a more difficult level, task 8 requires that students identify specific scenes that are vital for understanding the *Einkaufspassage* segment. This task is performed in collaborative group work requiring that students negotiate with each other about which video images match the language phrases given in the activity. In order to accomplish this assignment without using a productive skill in the target language, students are asked to write down the appropriate VCR counter numbers. In task 9, the learning progression provides contextualized activities in which students apply the previously understood and manipulated concepts and vocabulary to answer personalized questions.

The activities can be used as written assignments or carried out in small groups. Students will often answer the questions in very basic and flawed German; they are, however, not pressured to perform in the target language and can use English. When students use English, for example, they develop the concept of shopping and shopping malls more extensively than by answering the questions with a few simple German words. This effect correlates well with Lee's (1985) research on written recall. In view of current comprehension theories (Vigil 1987; Valdes, Lessa, Echeverriarza, and Pino 1988) it appears more efficient for the development of the speaking skill to let Novice students perform task 9 in English.

In task 10, students view the video segment again while silently reading the printed text for comprehension. By combining listening and reading comprehension in this way, the program cycles students in task 10 for the third time through the recognition stage of the learning continuum. Task 11 requires the students to synthesize actively the meaning of the video segment by expressing an opinion about what is done or said in the video

segment, supporting their statements with three reasons. This activity, also performed in English, underscores the students' personal interaction with the content of the video sequence. Task 12 continues this engagement with the video text by encouraging students to ask questions about the program *Einkaufspassage*. Finally, task 13, featuring cooperative group work, treats the same topic via authentic video and print media. Although the students use English with each other to accomplish the group assignment, they are nevertheless interacting intensely with authentic German texts because their task is to look for print images as well as language such as headlines, advertisement slogans, picture captions, phrases and words. This assignment is particularly meaningful as a final task for the Novice set because the students actively and efficiently use the concepts and related German language which they have learned from the program. The resulting text collages represent products from motivated learners and reflect their achievement and satisfaction as well.

The follow-up Intermediate level activity set based on the segment *Einkaufspassage* differs from the Novice set in several ways. First, it is designed for students at or near the Intermediate level of oral proficiency, which is characterized by meaningful creation with the language and therefore includes integration of the speaking skill. Second, all tasks are now presented in German, although the students still have the opportunity, at least initially, to perform those tasks in English that relate to comprehension assignments. Third, this activity set includes oral communication tasks of increasing complexity in accordance with task requirements in the higher ranges of the proficiency guidelines. Such tasks represent spiraling re-entries at the contextualized and discourse phases of the learning continuum, which continues to be the model for the design of the Intermediate level program. A brief discussion of the following activity program will highlight the spiraling features in particular.

Vol. 23, No. 1, Winter 1990

*Einkaufspassage in Hamburg*  
(Intermediate/Advanced)

Sie werden jetzt ein kurzes Videoprogramm sehen, mit dem Titel "Einkaufspassage in Hamburg."

AUFGABE 1: Schreiben Sie in Stichworten, was Ihnen einfällt bei diesem Titel. (Sie können auch auf Englisch schreiben.)

AUFGABE 2: Welche der folgenden Dinge könnte man in einer Einkaufspassage finden?

Kleider, Essen, Straßenbahn, Pelzmantel, Goldketten, Bäume, Möbel, Kunstgegenstände, Antiquitäten, Lastwagen

AUFGABE 3: Welche Tätigkeiten könnte man in einer Einkaufspassage feststellen?

einkaufen, spaziergehen, Zeitung lesen, verkaufen,

Schokolade essen, im Garten arbeiten, Kaffee trinken,

Kleider waschen, Kuchen essen, Schaufenster ansehen,

Musik hören, segeln, bezahlen, Essen bestellen, Wandern,

Schuhe anprobieren

Sehen Sie jetzt bitte das Programm an.

[VIDEO]

AUFGABE 4: Was denken Sie über diese Einkaufspassage? Bitte kurz aufschreiben.

Sehen Sie das Programm noch einmal an; achten Sie darauf, was die Leute tun.

[VIDEO]

AUFGABE 5: Bitte schreiben Sie auf, was die Leute tun.

AUFGABE 6: Was tun Sie selbst, wenn Sie in eine Einkaufspassage gehen?

AUFGABE 7: Ist eine Shoppingmall so wie diese Einkaufspassage? Ja? Inwiefern? Nein? Warum nicht? Bitte vergleichen Sie.

## Overcoming the Teacher/Technology Gap

**AUFGABE 8:** Bitte schreiben Sie, was die folgenden Ausdrücke bedeuten. (Sie können notfalls nachsehen im kleinen Wortverzeichnis am Ende.)

1. die Säulen - *runde, hohe Stützen für Gebäude (griechisch)*
2. ein Einkaufsparadies -
3. die Marmorböden -
4. man ruht sich aus -
5. man ist geschützt vor dem Wetter -
6. die Geschäfte locken die Leute an -
7. neugierig -
8. die Versicherung -
9. den Luxus finanzieren -

**AUFGABE 9:** Finden Sie heraus:

- A. den Namen der Einkaufspassage
- B. die Anzeichen für den Luxus dieser Passage
- C. wie die Frauen angezogen sind
- D. die Haartrachten der Frauen

**AUFGABE 10:** Mit Partner/in spielen Sie eine Szene in einer teuren Boutique. Sie haben viel Geld!

**AUFGABE 11:** Mit Partner/in spielen Sie eine Szene in einem noblen Restaurant. Sie wollen das beste Essen!

**AUFGABE 12:** Lesen Sie bitte den Text.

**AUFGABE 13:** Hören Sie bitte den 2. Soundtrack an.

[VIDEO]

**AUFGABE 14:** Lesen Sie den Aufsatz "Eine Gewisse Versuchung" in *Die Zeit*.

- A. Beschreiben Sie kurz den Inhalt.
- B. Beschreiben Sie kurz die Hauptidee dieses Aufsatzes.
- C. Schreiben Sie Ihre Meinung, mit wenigstens drei Gründen.
- D. Diskutieren Sie den Aufsatz in Ihrer Gruppe.

**AUFGABE 15:** Diskutieren Sie in Ihrer Gruppe, wieso die Versicherungen den Luxus der Einkaufspassage finanzieren können.

**ANHANG:** Wortverzeichnis

1. ein Einkaufsparadies - eine Shopping mall, die alles hat
2. die Geschäfte locken die Leute an - die Leute wollen die Sachen in den Geschäften sehen und kaufen
3. den Luxus finanzieren - die teure Passage bezahlen
4. man ist geschützt vor dem Wetter - das Glasdach ist gegen Regen
5. man ruht sich aus - man setzt sich hin
6. die Marmorböden - Fußböden mit Marmor belegt
7. neugierig - man will alles sehen
8. die Versicherung - z.B., Lebensversicherung, Autoversicherung, Gesundheitsversicherung

The preview tasks (1, 2, 3, and 4) are conceptually similar to the Novice program, but contain few cognate vocabulary items. In task 5, the first entry at the manipulation level occurs when students describe what people do at the German mall as portrayed in the video segment. In the personalized assignment of task 6, students then relate what they themselves do when they go to a shopping mall. Task 7, a comparison between the German mall and US malls, spirals students towards the Advanced proficiency level, since an Advanced speaker can effectively compare and contrast aspects of a topic. Task 8, at the vocabulary level, presents words which students can effectively use in this comparison. This task could also appear earlier in the program; in fact, even task 9 could profitably precede task 7. Students using these materials have generally reworked the comparison assignment after performing tasks 8 and 9. However, working on the comparison assignment first might also enable students to assimilate the material from tasks 8 and 9 more thoroughly. The personalized tasks 10 and 11, similar to role plays performed during an oral interview, are reentries at the contextualized level, thus spiraling task 6 to a higher level of competence. Tasks 12 and 13, inte-

grating listening and reading comprehension, represent a respirling of the recognition phase.

Subsequently, a reading selection from the newspaper *Die Zeit* is presented to the students. A narrative type of text, this reading selection is about thefts committed by well-dressed and well-to-do people in jewelry stores at an elegant German shopping mall. Topically related to the video segment *Einkaufspassage*, this activity spirals the students into a more difficult comprehension phase. At this point, not all students will be able to continue working with the program, because it is aimed at students with Intermediate High and Advanced level speaking competence. Tasks 14 D and 15, representing in effect the top of the discourse task spiral in this program, are truly discursive assignments designed to provide challenges to small discussion groups of students who aspire to attain the Advanced Plus speaking profile.

It should be noted that the tasks discussed above are representative of the kind of activities that can be correlated in a cognitive progression to authentic materials. The discussion of this learning continuum and the tasks related to its phases does not imply that the two programs about the segment *Einkaufspassage*, as presented here, provide sufficient content and tasks to spiral students' communicative performance from Novice to Intermediate and Advanced levels.

In summary, the instructional integration of the activity sets correlated to *Deutschlandspiegel* segments is based on several features characteristic of proficiency-oriented instruction: the learning continuum, the practice of functions and topics representative of proficiency levels, and the principle of spiraling which assures continuity in developing communicative functions and contexts as seen in the Heilenman and Kaplan (1985, 64-65) model. A unique feature of the project—basing two consecutive activity sets on the same video segment—supports this learning continuity. It also makes the student pro-

grams versatile for the instructor who can implement the two programs related to *Einkaufspassage*, for example, in at least three distinct ways: in different language level classes during the same year; as individualized or small group instruction with different levels in one class (stacked classes); or in intensive courses, summer academies, or other non-traditional curricula, beginning with the Novice level program and expanding its functions and contexts with the follow-up set during subsequent instruction. Thus the unique integrative nature of the student activity sets offers instructors an effective way to facilitate students' internalization of language content and purpose, as well as special approaches for unusual instructional environments.

#### Rationale for Selecting the Video Texts

The selection of the video materials was predicated on three facts: easy access, authenticity of language and culture, and student interest. The most compelling reason for choosing selections from *Deutschlandspiegel* is their availability to the instructor of German from the Goethe Institutes. Another important feature is that permission to adapt the video materials can also be obtained from the Goethe Institute, since video copyright is a thorny topic (Altman 1988; Richardson and Scinicariello 1989). The video texts meet the project's requirement for authenticity in language and culture, because genuine German cultural features or situations are presented in authentic language. Similar to short documentary segments, the *Deutschlandspiegel* selections appeal to students of all ages because they are generally interested in features of the target culture. Although the video segments often lack the ideal semantic match between images and ideas or language, the video pictures nevertheless represent the concepts closely enough that students can access the idea levels of each selection when their own background experiences come in contact with the video content. Finally, the segments have

## Overcoming the Teacher/Technology Gap

been shown to motivate students to find out about Germans, Germany, and German while supplying authentic language input.

### The Research Basis

The design of the learner activities, with special focus on the recognition phase of the cognitive continuum, is based on the most recent interdisciplinary research related to meaningful second language development. Research in schema theory (Schallert 1982) is vital for the design of this project. Stressing the important connection between established and incoming knowledge, this research is applied in those student tasks that link up the program to be viewed with the students' previous experiences. As pointed out above, tasks 1-4 consist of preview activities that relate student knowledge to the content of the video segment. Such associations between new information, concepts, ideas, and language, on the one hand, and the students' personal schemata, on the other, are a crucial aspect of listening and reading comprehension if it is to serve as optimal input. The schema link-up that is evident throughout this project is especially important because of the documentary-like nature of *Deutschlandspiegel*. Learners have more difficulty recalling and consequently understanding this kind of rhetorical organization of a text, which is defined as "collection" in reading comprehension studies, than other text structures (Carrell 1984). Thus students need special listening comprehension tasks, different from the traditional *who, what, when, and where* questions to accommodate and assimilate the structure and content of the video text. As discussed in the section on instructional integration, the comprehension tasks are assessed in a variety of production modes consistent with students' competencies. The tasks include student comments written in English or German, underlined words, images matched with language text, as well as oral assignments. The insights from schema theory, used for some time to facilitate students'

reading comprehension in ESL, are a signal feature of the project's listening comprehension tasks.

Studies in both listening and reading comprehension indicate that second language learners seem to access primarily the macro-level—the ideas—of the text content (Chaudron and Richards 1986; Carrell 1984). Therefore, the first few student tasks for each activity program focus on the major idea unit of the video segment. The link-up with the macro-level of the text represents essentially the text link-up with the students' personal schemata, as well. Thus, the preview tasks, numbered 1-4 in the *Einkaufspassage* example, and identified above as examples for schema link-up, consistently serve as tasks for macro-level access, too. Periodically throughout the activity program, moreover, the students' focus is redirected to the macro-level of the video text, in order to continue the development of their understanding of the text's content and ideas. Pertinent examples are task 8 from the Novice program and tasks 5, 7, 9, and 15 from the Intermediate/Advanced program. Tasks 8 (Novice) and 9 (Intermediate), in particular, which require students to match given language phrases with images and scenes contained in the video text, return the students' attention to important idea units at the text's macro-level. Since authentic texts rarely have consistent macro-markers (Swaffar 1988), the students must frequently use the cognitive strategy of inference to organize textual coherencies in their mind as they perform assignments such as tasks 8 and 9. Thus the program enhances the students' cognitive skills as it improves their comprehension strategies. Although the results of these comprehension-processing studies have been applied in teaching reading comprehension in ESL, they continue to be ignored generally in the field of foreign language listening comprehension. For example, to what extent is subtitling of a video text—a frequent text modification at the micro- (that is, the word) level—effective for second language learners who automatically, because of their personal

schemata, access the macro-level instead? But the interactive processing of information at both the macro- and the micro-levels appears to effect the development of comprehension significantly, as discussed below.

Reading research has shown that readers, using their personal schemata, create their own meaning for the text—a meaning that is not necessarily correlated to the author's intended meaning (Bernhardt 1986). Assuming that this reading research is as valid for listening comprehension as for other reading studies, it represents a crucial addition to schema theory. Listener schema theory is especially important for this project, since its application to the design of the student activities is rather complex. Initially, students' schemata must mesh or connect with the text content. To accomplish this, the students' newly developing schema must be guided to avoid misreading of the text meaning. For such guidance, numerous checks are built into each activity set to keep the learner on track. These restraints point students to the micro-level to identify those vocabulary, discourse, and structure markers that confirm or challenge their initial guesses at the macro-level about the content of the text. In the Novice program, for example, in tasks 2 and 3 students must underline words relevant to the video text's meaning. Words that students generally check correctly in task 2 are *Luxus, Restaurants, Jeans, Schuhe, Jacke*. Students practically never underscore the words *Idee, Bundesrepublik, Wind, Wetter, Schaufenster*. Yet, the last three words represent important idea units of the video segment. In addition, the word *Schaufenster* [display window] conveys an important German cultural notion. Because of their significance for the text content, these essential micro-level features receive special attention in task 8. Here, students match the micro-level phrases with the images portraying the macro-level meaning units.

Consequently, the phases of the students' comprehension occur, in the following somewhat simplified way: the initial activation of

the student schemata more or less coincides with the accessing of the macro-level contained in image and language of the video text (Novice tasks 1-4); subsequent and continuous identification at the micro-level of text words or structures leads students to confirm or reject hypotheses about the text content (Novice tasks 6, 7, 8, and 13); and these assessments at the micro-level lead to subsequent or revised guesses. The Novice student program *Einkaufspassage* serves as an example. The statement at the head of the program and task 1 link up student schemata to text content and also serve as macro-level identifications. After task 1, students generally picture a shopping mall, although one typical of the US, as the topic of the video segment. Tasks 2 and 3 lead students ostensibly into processing word information at the micro-level. However, tasks 2 and 3 interface strongly with the macro-level. When students check the words *Luxus, Restaurants, Jeans* but not *Wind, Wetter, Auto* they make decisions about which words to underline from a macro-level perspective: neither the word *Auto* nor the words *Wind, Wetter* are inclusive in the set of words belonging to their concept of the US shopping mall. Task 4 is again a micro-level activity because it is a vocabulary preview activity. Yet it also simultaneously supports and extends the information already accessed at the macro-level. If students, for example, cannot yet understand the word *Einkaufspassage*, this vocabulary section now provides them with the name of a local mall as a concrete example for the concept. The concept of "insurance" is vital for understanding the funding required to build the German mall. Therefore it is introduced in task 4, because students will not yet have linked that concept with the idea of the mall. Thus this task extends students' processing at the macro-level.

After completing the vocabulary activity, most students successfully understand the content of the video text. Students provide evidence for their comprehension of the meaning of the *Einkaufspassage* segment when

## Overcoming the Teacher/Technology Gap

they write a short summary of the content in task 5. The summary is written in English because use of native language improves recall (Lee 1985). Incidentally, after performing a few more additional tasks in the program, most beginning students can understand the reading text given to them with task 10. After no more than four or five types of tasks related to the video text, many students can read it aloud with remarkably acceptable pronunciation. The interactive reading mode, that is, switching back and forth between macro- and micro-levels, perhaps at times even processing both levels simultaneously, is a hallmark of the successful L1 reader (Carrell 1988). One of the major goals of this project is teaching students this kind of comprehension processing, in order to make them successful listeners and subsequently effective readers as well.

By extending the current educational emphasis on developing students' higher-order thinking skills instead of promoting only passive or rote learning, the video task design used here practices those learner cognitive strategies that result in hypothesis, prediction, inference, analysis, and synthesis. The interactive processing of comprehension by way of the macro- and micro-features of a text, as discussed above, is based on the learner's ability 1) to make intelligent guesses about both macro- and micro-features; 2) to analyze details and synthesize them into holistic meaning units; 3) to predict components of the idea level of the text; and 4) to infer meanings of images, ideas, or micro-structures from other known features surrounding and interactive with the new items. By stressing cognitive skill development for listening and reading comprehension, for vocabulary development, and for evolving and upgrading speaking and writing skills, this project makes a major contribution to the current nationwide emphasis on developing students' cognitive abilities.

## The Pedagogical Model

Initially, the learner programs were designed at the Intermediate/Advanced proficiency levels to upgrade the language proficiency of fifteen Texas high school teachers of German who attended the 1986 Texas Center for Developing Proficiency in German at Southwest Texas State University, supported by a collaborative EESA Title II grant from the Texas Education Agency. Thus the final and critical feature of the project, its teacher-training element, came about by allowing teachers to learn new instructional modes to implement in their classrooms while advancing their own proficiencies using these same methods. After developing higher proficiencies for themselves through the activities, the teachers at the center then designed Novice level program sets for the same video segments they had learned from—program sets they could use in their own high school classes. The ease with which they transferred the designs of the Intermediate/Advanced sets to the Novice level was an indication how well they had understood and internalized the effectiveness of the conceptual features of the project. Subsequent selective classroom observations by the director and informal discussions with the teachers during a follow-up seminar revealed that their students liked and learned from the activities. The most effective use of the materials could be observed in those classrooms whose teachers themselves had progressed most during the center's seminars. The ultimate professional impact of the published project lies in the recognition that by working with ready-made learner programs in their classrooms, instructors learn how to create learner materials. They can base such work on further selections from the wealth of topics contained in the current volumes of *Deutschlandspiegel* and other available authentic video materials. In this manner the project makes a vital start at closing the persistent gap between video technology and the foreign language instructor while benefiting the foreign language student.

\* This represents a longer version of the paper "Authentic Video for Proficiency-Based Instruction," presented at the PICS Conference on Video in Language Teaching, at Middlebury, July 30, 1988.

I wish to thank my colleague Janet Swaffar at UT Austin, for her editorial reading and valuable suggestions for improving this article.

This project was produced under a grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the U. S. Department of Education under the auspices of the Education for Economic Security Act (Title II). Opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the U. S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

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## Overcoming the Teacher/Technology Gap

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