



Materials Review

TAPES WITH WORKBOOKS — *Wir sprechen Deutsch*. Harry A. Walbruck, Ilona M. Paul, and Eberhard Buser. Set I: *Deutschland Einmal Anders* (Walbruck & Paul, 1969), Set II: *Deutschland Von Nord Nach Sud* (Walbruck & Paul, 1969), Set III: *Deutschland Einst und Jetzt* (Walbruck & Buser, 1970). National Textbook Company (8259 Niles Center Road, Skokie, Ill. 60076), 1970. (A series of German tapes and workbooks based on photographs; each picture captioned, followed by a set of related questions and General Discussion Topic; complete German-English vocabulary; tapes with questions and answers; teachers key; 64 pgs. per volume; workbook, \$1.50 net, 5 or more \$1.20 net each; tape or cassette set, \$3.75 i.p.s., \$10.00 net each.)

The authors tell us that their goal is "to provide students who had at least one semester or one year of German with some interesting supplementary topics of conversation to be used both inside and outside the classroom." The focal point of each topic consists of one or two black and white photographs. In *Deutschland Einmal Anders* the pictures of a train station, schedule, and clock are headed by the title "Auf dem Bahnhof". They are aptly captioned in German by an explanation of the European 24 hour time system which runs from noon to 24 o'clock. A set of fifteen questions follows. Some refer specifically to what the students see in the picture, other questions demand arbitrary answers and still others are subjective. For example, some of the questions from the "Auf dem Bahnhof" topic include: 'Wie spat ist es offiziell auf der Uhr?', 'Wie nennt man die selbe Zeit inoffiziell?', 'Auf welchen Gleis fuhr der Zug ab?', 'Weshalb benutzt man die Eisenbahn Weniger in den USA?', 'Wohin sind Sie schon einmal mit der Eisenbahn gereist?'. New words like 'Abfahrt, Bahnsteig, Gleis' are explained entirely in German immediately following the set of questions. The General Discussion Topic "Beschreiben Sie das Leben auf einem Bahnsteig" ends the chapter. Another topic from the same volume which not only stimulates conversation but indirectly teaches German customs and ways is "Begrussungssitten". The difference between the use of 'du' and 'Sie', taking off one's hat, and the position of a man and woman while walking, is made clear in the photographs, the caption and the subsequent questions. The General Topic for

I am currently using *Deutschland — Einst und Jetzt* in an intermediate composition-conversation class. There are eight students in conversation is 'Beschreiben Sie eine Berggussung in Deutschland'. It is, like the other topics, a fine point of departure for general conversations, too.

Materials Review

Set II, *Deutschland von Nord nach Sud*, is descriptive, picturesque and highly informative. Its content is a trip beginning on the northern island of Sylt and ending in southern Garmich-Partemkirchen. The picture workbook is an excellent supplement to an advanced geography unit or it can be used entirely by itself. Three maps of the 'norddeutsche Tiefland', 'Mittelgebirgszone', and "Alpenland' point out the places visited. The captions of the many photographs include a short historical background of the city or area as well as specific information, for example, the number of ships arriving daily in the harbor of Duisburg, the height of the Feldberg, the age of the Freiburger Munster and general population figures. The selection of places visited, which include Berlin, is by no means complete. Yet, the photographs offer enough stimuli and can serve as a point of departure to any teacher's favorite place that he may want to discuss with his students.

Set III, *Deutschland — Einst und Jetzt*, focuses on Germany of today, modern, progressive, Americanized, and yet showing traces of the past. The more advanced German student will find in the synthesis of old and new challenging and thought-provoking topics for conversation. Examples are 'Finden Sie es bedauerlich, wenn alte romantische Strasschen modernen Autobahnen Platz machen müssen?', or 'Welche Möglichkeiten können in der Zukunft durch die friedliche Anwendung der Kernenergie erschlossen werden?'. The transition to American culture is often made in topics such as 'Auf welchen Gebieten und in welchen Organisationen können die Bundesrepublik und die zusammenarbeiten?' and 'Warum gibt es in Amerika in Gegensatz zu Deutschland keine staatliche Theater?'. It is the authors' hope that out of the knowledge and recognition of other cultures the student will gain a deeper understanding of his own ways of life.

Each of the picture workbooks is accompanied by a tape recording of the questions and possible answers. Since in many cases variations of answers are acceptable and needed, the student can easily compare his answers with those on tape. At the same time, he is subconsciously guided to use the new vocabulary in his answers. The tapes' immediate playback availability solidifies new terms, verb forms, as well as grammatical sentence structure in the students' mind. He is then prepared to participate at a fluent pace in the general discussion topic, without having to grope for the specific word or phrase relating to the particular conversation.

the class, freshman, sophomores, and juniors. Except for two, all have studied in a German speaking country and all have five years of High School and College German combined. The class meets twice a week for one hour. One hour per week is scheduled for conversation,

Materials Review

workbook and tape. The student are asked to prepare oral answers to the questions. This involves looking up new vocabulary and listening to the tape for the correct pronunciation, speech patterns and grammatical structures of the answers. Since our Laboratory has individual recording booths, the students have to record their answers as well. Those students who have not done adequate background preparation find themselves unable to keep up with the flow of the ensuing conversation. The vocabulary and sentence structure is that challenging.

During class, the students have the picture(s) before them. So as not to have a rigid question-answer session based on the text, I devise impromptu questions to further stimulate their interest. For example, in the chapter "Energie aus Atomen" some of the questions in the text are: 'Was fur ein Kraftwerk zeigt das Bild?', 'Welche anderen Arten von Kraftwerken gibt es noch?', 'Wie verwandelt man Kernenergie in Strom?'. I supplement these questions with some of my own, for example, "Wo in Amerika gibt es Kernkraftwerke?" and 'Welche Vor-und Nachteile bestehen in der Atom-Energie?'. The questions have proved to be so thought-provoking that the students were only too eager to discuss them. Many times the class period ended before we even had a chance to pose the General Discussion Topic at the end of the Chapter. And all that in German!

I supplied additional words the student wished to use but did not know the German equivalent for, by writing them on the board. Every student had to copy these into his personal vocabulary notebook required for the course. In the following class session I usually asked one student to quickly tell the class what was discussed the week before.

I would recommend *Deutschland von Nord nach Sud* and *Deutschland Einmal Anders* for the second and third year level, whereas *Deutschland — Einst und Jetzt* is definitely for the third and possibly fourth year student. The captions underneath the photographs, the questions, the General Discussion Topics and the taped questions and answers are by their very nature provoking and exciting enough to encourage the most timid student to speak German. If the maxim 'A picture speaks a thousand words' can be applied here, the photographs alone will elicit a response from your student.

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