Navigating the City: Acquiring German through TPRS and Technology

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Introduction and Rationale

Five high school boys are wandering about the *Englischer Garten* in Munich, Germany. While on an organized group tour of Germany, the boys have ventured off on their own to explore Munich and see what *they* want. After all, their German teacher has shown them how to navigate the extensive train system. It is a sunny, warm day in June and they are taking in the sights and sounds of the popular, recreational park. After walking some time, they stop for refreshments. Having practiced such restaurant scenes many times in class, the boys order and pay the waiter with no mishaps. It has grown late, and they rush to retrace their steps and return to the subway station to get to their intended destination: the soccer stadium to the north of town. All soccer players, the boys had planned a tour of the *Fußballstadion* as *the* highlight of their trip to Germany. The short detour at the *Englischer Garten* – lovely as it was – was on the way, and they only wanted to take a quick look and move on to their real goal. After searching for an hour, the boys cannot find the entrance and realize they are lost. Could they dare ask a German for help? They had never really practiced such a situation in class. Too intimidated to ask anyone in German and too embarrassed to ask in English, they continue searching on their own. Hours pass before the boys find the entrance. Not only have they missed their opportunity to *tour* the soccer stadium, they will have no time to even see it. Frustrated and disappointed, the boys make their way back to meet their tour group at *Marienplatz* in the heart of Munich.

This is a true story of what happened to some of my students on a trip to Germany in 2007. The scenario illustrates how ill-prepared students can often be to use foreign language in "the real world." Although teachers try to impart helpful language in relevant situations, oftentimes this language eludes even the strongest students when they need it most. Last year, I had some seniors in their fourth course in German who had trouble carrying on a basic conversation with me in the language. Although they knew the grammar on tests and they could write basic sentences, they remained reluctant to communicate with me in a one-on-one situation. Other students attempted to speak, but often communication broke down due to limited vocabulary and unclear structure. My

students learned grammar and structure, then listened to and read authentic literature, practices which adhere to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as well as the pacing guides established for each level of German I teach. I provided them with countless communicative activities, but many students remained unwilling to express themselves in German. I found my students' skills in writing and particularly in speaking were weak. This realization made me see a need for change in my approach to instruction. How could I in good conscience send these students out into the world with a sense they were poor communicators in German? After all, communication is more or less the main goal in studying a foreign language.

A critical task for teachers nowadays is to equip students with skills for the 21st century. One of these important skills is good communication – also in a foreign language such as German. In order to help students develop their communication skills in German, it is important to encourage them to stay with the language long enough to make some gains in proficiency. I teach German levels 1-4 at an urban high school of approximately 2,000 students with a very diverse population. My lower level classes are relatively full, but my upper level classes are quite small. Many students in our district take the very minimum in foreign language because of so many other course offerings. On the one hand they may not see the relevance of learning a language such as German; on the other hand the difficult nature of the grammar can be a hurdle for the learners, giving German a reputation for being more difficult than other foreign languages. My school district contains twelve high schools and services close to 130,000 students. Within this district, only 1% of the students take German. Naturally it is my personal goal to increase my enrollment, lower attrition rates, and change German's reputation for being "the tough language." In my classroom I need to motivate students to want to learn German by providing them with a relevant purpose for learning the language. Increased engagement and enjoyment in the process of learning German should increase students' effort and persistence to gain knowledge of the language.

This curriculum unit targets my combined German 3/4 class to make learning German relevant for them. This particular class has a large range of proficiency levels in the German language, which often is the case in my higher-level classes. There are several students from an immersion program who are extremely fluent but weak in accuracy combined with students of average proficiency who have *learned* the language rather than *acquired* it. These students want to learn information which can be useful to them in real-world situations. This year an added motivation for them is the newly organized German-American Partnership Program we have started with a German school in northern Germany. After a group of German students from their school comes to stay with students from the German 3/4 class, several of my American students will be returning the visit in the summer. This upcoming trip gives the students a heightened sense of purpose for the unit, which I have entitled *Navigating the City*.

The goal of the unit is to expose students to all aspects of travelling to and exploring a German city – from communicating with host families before the trip to arriving at the airport to requesting assistance while underway. Since my students will be in the German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 60 kilometers from Hamburg, I will use Hamburg as the focus city of the unit. Students will explore the history and sights, make inquiries, and communicate with actual students and teachers at the school. The culmination of the unit will be a presentation of the students' "experience" in Hamburg.

The unit is designed to last for three weeks and will provide a wide variety of activities to meet the needs of the very diverse learners in the group. It will take place during the second quarter of the semester course. In this way, students will already be familiar with some of the strategies I will incorporate and can focus better on the content of the unit.

Strategies

To accomplish the goals of this unit, I will use a wide variety of strategies. Because the German 3/4 course has such diverse learners with extreme differences in language proficiency as well as cognitive development, I will incorporate TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling) strategies to provide comprehensible input of the subject matter and reduce students' affective filter in the classroom environment. Since my district is emphasizing improved literacy for all students, another goal of this unit is to improve learners' literacy skills in terms of reading and writing. TPRS inherently supports such a goal and I would also like to harness students' interest in technology to capture and keep their attention, for their input and also for their production of German. The learners will use technology to research the history of the (in)famous pirate Klaus Störtebeker and unique sightseeing attractions of Hamburg such as the ship museum Rickmer Rickmers. Students will further use technology in communicative, task-based activities – such as PowerPoint presentations to document their purchases at the St. Pauli *Fischmarkt*; short film and audio clips of their visit to the *Miniatur-Wunderland* of model trains; or illustrated stories of the students finding and then climbing the steps of Hamburg's most famous church, the Michel. This combination of strategies will not only promote cultural literacy but should also motivate learners to explore the city of Hamburg.

Motivational Strategies

Learning about the city itself should appeal to many students of German, and my ultimate goal is for them to share their experiences with their classmates. While the task-based activities will provide the students with content, students in a split level class such as this one often reveal apprehension when speaking about these experiences. In the first weeks

of class, I noticed the least proficient students resisting speaking in front of their classmates, intimidated by the oral skills of the more advanced students. At first, the most proficient students from the immersion school also held back speaking so as not to "show off" in front of the older students. By applying motivational strategies to reduce students' apprehension in the classroom, I have encouraged all students to contribute to discussion at their level and accept the answers of classmates. In his book, *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*, Zoltan Dörnyei speaks of creating a positive classroom environment for all students" by promoting cohesion in the learner group." He suggests allowing students to take ownership of the classroom by making group decisions on how to arrange the room, what to place on the walls, even which music to play during "downtime." In addition, I have allowed student production to occur more naturally – not through forced methods as I have in the past.

TPRS

Instead of handing students a list of vocabulary to process and then immediately expect them to use the words in skits or role plays, I now use a more gradual approach which motivates students to produce the language. They are empowered to use their new German language with the help of the group storytelling strategy of TPRS.

TPRS was created by Blaine Ray, as Spanish teacher who was also seeking ways to aid his students in learning a language. It has been further developed by countless other global language teachers throughout the world, and it is widely used in the US. Influenced at first by James Asher, author of *Learning Another Language Through Actions* and creator of the TPR (Total Physical Response) method of teaching language, Blaine Ray sought to incorporate movements and gestures in his teaching to help students internalize vocabulary, grammar and structures in a communicative manner. Later, as Stephen D. Krashen developed his theory of second language acquisition (as described in his book *The Natural Approach*), Blaine Ray realized his developing TPRS fell in line perfectly with Krashen's theories. In the book, Krashen explains that learners *acquire* language in the course of communicating naturally; in contrast, people *learn* a language by consciously studying its rules and grammar. Krashen's concept of providing "comprehensible input" in the target language opposes teaching grammar and form explicitly. Like Krashen, D. Freeman-Larsen also speaks of making content meaningful to learners. Freeman-Larsen explains in the article "State of the art on input in second language acquisition" that simplified input is required for second language learners to process the meaning and hear structures. The teacher's speech must be modified: slower speech, less complicated structures, high-frequency vocabulary, and normal word order. TPRS provides just this type of frequent comprehensible input for second language learners through gestures, storytelling, role playing, reading and re-telling of stories. Acquisition takes place because students can actually understand the stories and grow in

confidence as their interlanguage develops.

In TPRS, vocabulary is introduced a little at a time, and it is constantly recycled. Grammar is presented in context, as opposed to being taught explicitly. Correct grammar forms are reinforced through repetition in storytelling, reading material as well as dictation with immediate feedback. Occasionally, teachers give "pop up" grammar instruction, more or less to help students notice aspects of the language. Students take timed writings twice a week to re-tell stories they have heard in class or produce new ones, thus giving teachers the opportunity to see the degree to which vocabulary and grammar acquisition is occurring. Production on the part of the student is kept at a minimum at the beginning of a TPRS course, so as to allow students to acquire correct form through listening. Current research on second language acquisition has taught me that a great deal of input is needed before students can be expected to produce output especially in the early stages. My former teaching had been very grammar-based with much emphasis on production before students were developmentally ready. The difficulties my students encountered in Munich prove that they clearly had not "acquired" enough German to help them in their critical situation, even if they had "learned" enough to score well on tests. Through the TPRS strategies of storytelling, role playing, re-telling stories in speaking and writing, the German 3/4 students will hear and tell about the city of Hamburg. I anticipate that all the students will grow in proficiency and acquire the kind of German they can use in the real world.

Literacy Approach – Free Voluntary Reading

Our national focus on literacy suggests that students should be reading and writing in all content areas – even the foreign language classroom. To this end our school has adopted the motto "Everyone reads, everyone writes, everyday, on grade level, using complete sentences." When I have tried including reading tasks in past years, many students have claimed the experience to be too difficult. Even with pre-reading activities, discussion, and graphic organizers – all useful tools for reading in the content area – students counted German readers an exercise in frustration. With this discouraging experience in my background, I asked myself how on earth I could improve students' literacy skills in German by reading. Stephen D. Krashen explains in *The Power of Reading* that giving students the option to choose their reading material is the key. He describes 54 separate cases in which he researched students who engaged in Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) over longer periods of time and found the literacy skills of these students to be more advanced than students who did not read voluntarily. Krashen states, "Reading is the only way, the only way we become good readers, develop good writing style, an adequate vocabulary, advanced grammatical competence, and the only way we become good spellers." In other words, students improve in all areas of literacy by reading. Professor Jamie Rankin of Princeton University also experimented with Extensive Reading in an intermediate German course. He opted for German Easy Readers which were slightly below the level of his students, thus allowing them to read

easily and confidently. Professor Rankin reports that students felt empowered because they could successfully read in German without assistance. With graded readers, students needed less translation; they could focus more on form and grammar. Most of Professor Rankin's students believed that the extensive reading boosted their confidence to the degree that they were more willing and able to tackle more difficult authentic texts which might have seemed to difficult for them beforehand. Extensive reading seems to help students understand grammar and comprehend the language better.

Many studies with extensive reading highlight its benefits for expanding students' vocabulary in the second language. In *Reading for Academic Purposes: Guidelines for the ESL/EFL Teacher,* authors Grabe and Stoller describe using both direct and indirect vocabulary instruction to encourage student reading literacy in the second language. For direct instruction, they recommend teachers integrate key word, graphic organizers analysis of word parts, associations, flashcards, mnemonic techniques, games, word family exercises, illustrations, drawings and realia. Grabe and Stoller explain that having students reading extensively allows them to develop their own skills in vocabulary building by guessing word meanings from context and making notes of interesting new words to increase their word recognition. Beniko Mason and Stephen D. Krashen studied Japanese students of English at the college level, who had previously failed English. The class engaged in Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) in the form of graded readers with homework given as writing a synopsis of reading and respond in a diary in Japanese. The class outperformed another group with which it was directly compared whose students had learned in a traditional classroom of grammar and translations. Studies such as this demonstrate how students take responsibility for their own learning in acquiring the second language when they can choose their own reading materials.

The concept and positive results of FVR have encouraged me to experiment with it in German 3/4. If I want my students to read and write well, expand their vocabulary, and improve their grammar, research shows they must spend time reading. TPRS takes this into consideration in its schedule: one day is devoted to storytelling followed by a day of reading. In preparation for the *Navigating the City* unit, I have already started setting aside time in the German 3/4 class to read; the student response has been overwhelmingly positive. Students can read at their own pace without the pressure of having to answer comprehension questions or take a test on the material. They enjoy the pure pleasure of reading and freedom to choose their own reading material in German. Their only accountability in this task is to make written notes on new and interesting words and their thoughts about the book. Eager, higher level students can read more advanced selections and focus on the more difficult vocabulary and grammatical points. In turn, the lower-level students are free to choose material which meets their needs and keeps them interested.

While the district's textbooks for German meet some of the needs of the 21st-century student, the content is not necessarily presented in an engaging, relevant manner. There is a chapter which highlights Hamburg and the Hanseatic League in the German 3 book which I intend to use as a basis. My plan is to supplement the textbook with additional material such as TPRS stories, scenarios and online clips to prepare them for life outside of school. During the *Navigating the City* unit, students will also read short stories by Gerhard Maroscher which involve a boy travelling to a foreign country and the situations he encounters there. The students will read these stories in class together in addition to reading online text and viewing film clips about the northern German Klaus Störtebeker who was a Robinhood-like pirate from the 14th century. I expect these intriguing stories to engage the students more than the material they will find in the textbook. In order to prepare them for each reading assignment, I will access students' prior knowledge of the subject matter, use helpful pre-reading strategies, discussion, and graphic organizers to help students decipher meaning from the stories – this time, convinced students will complete the tasks willingly and confidently. In *Remapping the Foreign Language Curriculum: An Approach through Multiple Literacies*, Katherine Arens and Janet Swaffar explain that a reader's familiarity with a text topic "affects readability." They suggest allowing students to read a text on a similar topic in English will "render the FL text more readable."As needed, I will allow the lower level students to read certain content in English beforehand and outside of class to give them some foundation, especially on Klaus Störtebeker, in order to read the German website more efficiently.

Task-Based Projects

After initial instruction, students will collaborate with partners or small groups in task-based projects. Although I frequently allow my students to work in groups, it is often difficult to pinpoint any tangible learning that has taken place. In "Rethinking Communicative Language Teaching: A Focus on Access to Fluency," Elizabeth Gatbonton and Norman Segalowitz explore the uses of such projects to achieve the type of communicative language teaching that I would like to model. They write of a program called ACCESS (Automatization in Communicative Contexts of Essential Speech Segments. Students brainstorm phrases, learn these in context, and practice them in a "real-life" situation to increase accuracy and fluency. By employing the model, students' language acquisition will be more evident and thus measurable. In *How Languages are Learned*, Lightbown and Spada maintain that within the "interaction hypothesis" students *must* engage in conversation for second language acquisition to occur. This chance to communicate socially with others and negotiate meaning by modifying their speech is vital to the process.

Students will receive the task of planning a trip to Hamburg and researching activities which interest them such as taking a boat ride on the Alster or a tour of the Hamburg

Dungeon. I will designate one of the higher level German 4 students for each small group so that students will have support in exploring the advanced language in the various websites available to them. By integrating these heritage speakers into the groups, I know that the students will be engaged and motivated to communicate in German and will negotiate meaning more effectively.

On other occasions, students will have the freedom to work in "centers" of learning to explore aspects of the city. Such centers will include multimedia presentations, authentic reading materials (such as train and boat schedules) as well as local newspapers. My intention with the centers is to allow for differentiation amongst the students; students will work at their own pace to include as many aspects of the city as they can. The products of student engagement in these centers will be combined in the students' final presentation of their "experience" in Hamburg.

Technology

My final and perhaps most crucial goal involves communicating information to students using the computer, a tool which interests them. Teachers, especially ones who have been teaching quite a long time, need to remember that learners' needs change continuously. Mark Prensky, author of "Digital Natives," explains that today's generation has grown up in a digital age, in which technology plays a natural role. While many younger teachers integrate technology easily into their instruction, the older generation, the "Digital Immigrants," speak a different language in that they are often not as technologically savvy. Prensky states that "the single biggest problem facing education today is that our Digital Immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language." Prensky speaks of the "new" pedagogy, one which is less teacher-centered and less dependent on lecturing. Instead technology supports instruction by allowing kids to teach themselves with teacher guidance.

This technological "need" of today's students can be difficult for some older teachers to understand, and they may be hesitant to use it as a tool in class. Although many teachers are becoming more adept with technology in the classroom, lack of resources and limitations on usage remain impediments in the education world, but instruction with more technology can definitely be a future goal. Today's teachers are much more aware of different learning styles and the need to stimulate both the right and left brain hemispheres. Multimedia delivery can aid teachers in providing material for all learners. Tetyana Sydorenko of Michigan State University did a study on input modalities and their efficacy in a class of students learning Russian. Sydorenko explains that verbal and non-verbal stimuli (as in visual images) are "processed by two different systems" of the brain but that these interact with one another. When both systems are activated through

the use of text and visual images via multimedia, second language learning can be increased and students can better recall vocabulary and structure. She suggests including video clips to enhance student learning because they represent "authentic input" with visual images which help learners overcome their limited knowledge of vocabulary.

In his book, *Brave New Digital Classroom: Technology and Foreign Language Learning,* Robert J. Blake supports the idea that technology aid students in learning. He explains that the Internet is not only helpful for vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension, but also that "one of its greatest strengths lie in providing opportunities to reflect on literacy and interpretation." He promotes the concept of Content-based Instruction (CBI) in which teachers incorporate the Internet in student-centered, communicative, real-world activities. With the "real-life" situations planned in this unit, it is my goal to allow students to do just that – teach each other and themselves – and learn to negotiate for meaning while at the same time keeping their interest level high. The National Standards on Teaching Foreign Language include technology as a major component in helping students become proficient in a second language. North Carolina Standard Course of Study emphasizes the three communicative modes: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. All of these modes can be addressed through Computer-Assisted Learning. Since my *Digital Native* students are familiar with computers and the Internet, I will provide online activities for input through reading and listening as well as several for their production of the language. A good portion of the task-based assignments will involve multimedia content. Students will access online newspapers, informational websites, train schedules, and even film clips. Students will also have a culminating activity which involves technology: a Photo Story which they will present to their peers. The presentation should combine all of the helpful background information, essential phrases, and relevant situational dialogues students will read, see and hear throughout the unit. Students will give an oral/visual presentation as if they had just returned from a trip to Hamburg by including pictures, videos, orally recorded narrations and dialogues.

Activities

Pre-Assessment

In order to determine the students' knowledge of cities and especially the gap in knowledge between the higher and lower levels in the class, I will give students a pre-assessment. Students will identify pictures of places commonly found in cities, brainstorm words they associate with cities, make suggestions about questions they might ask or respond to in a city. Based on these results, I will create vocabulary lists for levels 3 and 4 (and possibly a third for the heritage speakers).

TPRS Stories

During the three-week unit, students will listen to and help create stories about traveling to a city. These stories will incorporate the critical vocabulary needed for them to read a variety of texts in German and recognize the words. I will present these stories orally while students respond verbally and physically to fill in and confirm the details. Such stories usually involve a person who needs something in particular and must travel somewhere to address that need. In the second location, he encounters some type of problem for which he must recruit help in solving. Finally he travels to a third location where he solves the problem. The stories may include outlandish or realistic details, but they mirror real-life situations in that students employ their critical thinking skills. I will tell three such stories: travelling from Grevesmühlen (the site of our sister school) by train, getting from the *Hauptbahnhof* to the Rickmer Rickmers ship museum/restaurant, and buying gifts for the host family at the *Alsterarkade*. In the pre- and post-telling of each story, I will provide variety of vocabulary-building activities for students to internalize these new vocabulary words in the form of TPR gestures, games, word bank and close activities.

Students will re-enact each story as a role play in small groups; finally they will re-tell each story in writing, incorporating a specified number of new vocabulary words into the text.

Wordchamp.com

After the comprehensible input provided through the stories, students will further practice vocabulary and sentence structure in website HYPERLINK "http://www.wordchamp.com/" www.wordchamp.com/ which provides flashcards, grammar exercises, cloze exercises, and even reading support. I will assign several vocabulary-related tasks per week for students to complete. Students cannot move forward without answering questions correctly, so it reinforces accuracy in spelling, capitalization and it clearly helps with comprehension. As an online tool which students can complete in school or at home, the tasks appeal to them; the teacher can monitor students' progress and communicate with them via the site as well. Students benefit from such individualized, engaging activities using the computer. I will alternate such activities with more traditional ones such as reading short stories together.

German Reader

As a group we will read the short stories by Gerhard Maroscher about a boy who would like to travel but is held back by his mother. He stows away in an airplane and he is later

discovered by a wealthy woman in whose dog crate he has fallen asleep. She takes him in and allows him to travel with her as his dog sitter.

Activity 1

Students will work with partners to compare information about their own experiences. These experiences should revolve around travel, provided the students have experiences to share. Students should trade partners several times to compare with several classmates. In *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*, James Lee and Bill Vanpatten highlight useful tools for task-based communication in the foreign language classroom. This exercise is based on one of their activities. They will use questions to guide their discussion:

Beschreibe eine Situation, in der deine Eltern verboten haben, dir irgendwo hinzureisen.	Wie has du dieses Problem gelöst?
Mein Partner/Meine Partnerin hat auch ein Problem mit den Eltern gehabt. Beschreibe es.	Er/Sie hat das Problem so gelöst......
Beschreibe das Problem des Jungen in der Kurzgeschichte.	Wie hat er sein Problem gelöst?
Ähnlichkeiten/Unterschiede zwischen mein Problem und sein/ihr Problem:	Ähnlichkeiten/ Unterschiede bei der Lösung:

After clarifying their problem situations and means of solving them, students will write a paragraph comparing and contrasting their problem with that of another classmate and evaluating whose solution was best. This activity highlights students' comprehension of the text, accesses their own experience and allows them to use critical thinking to compare, evaluate and draw conclusions. Since improving literacy is a district goal, these types of reading/writing activities are especially useful.

Activity 2

Students will take the information from the short story (or alternatively their own personal story) and use the website HYPERLINK "http://www.goanimate.com" www.goanimate.com to create a cartoon version online in German. The site is a free Web 2.0 tool which allows the user to create characters in scenes, add movement, text and music. Students will use one classroom period to individually create a finished cartoon of at least one minute. Students present their work to the class.

Online Reading and Speaking Activities

Since Stephen Krashen emphasizes that reading in the second language plays a crucial role in students' learning, I will provide a wide variety of reading selections related to the topic of the city, including online material, to achieve my goal of integrating technology.

Activity 1

Students will read a variety of texts online as part of the Free Voluntary Reading strategy. Three times a week during the unit, I will allow them to choose from three online newspapers (Grevesmühlen, Hamburg or Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) and read articles of their choice. While the more advanced students may be able to freely and easily comprehend newspapers for native speakers, the lower level German 3 students will need some extra support.

Under the HYPERLINK "http://www.wordchamp.com/"www.wordchamp.com Web Reader function, students can enter a web address and receive vocabulary support while reading. As students hover over certain unknown words with the mouse, the Web Reader offers translations in a small visual box. By using this Web Reading function, students can read material above their level without having to stop and open a dictionary. It allows for quick and easy comprehension of texts which would otherwise be inaccessible for the students. The FVR strategy is meant to encourage students' interest in reading in German and to build their vocabulary and cultural understanding of the area to which they will be travelling. I have, therefore, no specific written assignments for this task. On the other hand, I will ask the students to share what they read and learned on the FVR days. They will interview classmates as to the information they discovered, and we will make a GAPP board where students can post interesting facts and news stories about the region.

Activity 2

Students will focus on essential phrases for specific situations such as checking into a hotel, asking for directions and ordering in a restaurant. The website HYPERLINK "http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages"www.bbc.co.uk/languages provides learners with a wide variety of opportunities to explore language: everything from basic grammar to geographical information to *faux pas* in the foreign culture. Students will access the categories *German Talk* and *Deutsch Plus* to view essential phrases and apply them in online practice modules. They will have the option of working on their own at their own pace or working in a small group to identify and practice helpful phrases. In order to prove that they have completed the modules, students will copy and email me the final

pages, or submit them to me in hard copy.

Activity 3

I would also like to provide activities in which students practice speaking in situations they are likely to encounter in Germany. In order to simulate such common situations, I will use HYPERLINK "http://www.lingt.com" www.lingt.com. In this free website, teachers can create speaking activities for students to practice individually with the use of a microphone. Using this website, I will record questions online to which students will then record a response. Students simply click on a speech bubble to receive the question prompt and then click a second bubble to record. The program is quite user-friendly once students practice it. My questions will be grouped by category:
meeting the family
at school
asking for information (at the train station/the Michel/the soccer stadium, on the subway, etc.)
getting lost and asking directions
purchasing tickets (for a musical, for a boat ride on the Alster)
in the restaurant
saying goodbyes

Activity 4

After completing these online modules, we will play a game of Guess the Topic. The students will state a phrase learned in the modules, and the class should guess the location or situation in which one would hear or say it.

Activity 5

In a Family Feud Activity, students are placed into two groups to recycle the language of the city. Categories will be of the following sort:

Statements you are likely to hear in a train station
Questions you might ask in a restaurant
Ways you might ask for directions
Airport terms

Activity 6

To further students' cultural literacy, I will assign students research tasks in which they will navigate the city of Hamburg in order to complete tasks and document those in a travel journal in German. The travel journal will be turned in and graded as rough draft of their final project. In this way, I can check students' spelling and grammar before they enter material into the Photo Story program.

Starting in the town of Grevesmühlen, students will plan a two-day visit to Hamburg in which they must plan the roundtrip by train, accommodations, daily events, and meals. Students will receive a budget and may "spend" the money as they see fit. This freedom teaches students to be responsible with their funds and provides alternatives to those students who would like to participate in more expensive sightseeing activities.

The students will have to plan both travel to and from Hamburg by train as well as reserve their overnight accommodations. For train travel, they will use the following website to research prices and times: HYPERLINK "../../../AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary Internet Files/Low/Content.IE5/7718SDYR/www.bahn.de/p/view/index.shtml"www.bahn.de/p/view/index.shtml. Students should choose a roundtrip fare and explain why this is the most attractive, convenient, etc. for their purposes. As far as their overnight stay, students may choose from a variety of locations depending on their budget. Hamburg offers hotels, bed and breakfasts and youth hostels for travelers. I will provide students with helpful websites for locating accommodations for the overnight stay:

 HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg-tourism.de/en/#stop" www.hamburg-tourism.de/en/#stop
 HYPERLINK "http://www.deutsche-pensionen.de/pension-hamburg/" www.deutsche-pensionen.de/pension-hamburg/
 HYPERLINK "http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/hamburg-germany.html" www.bedandbreakfast.com/hamburg-germany.html
 HYPERLINK "http://www.jugendherberge.de/de/" www.jugendherberge.de/de/

   Of course, the students will have to eat in Hamburg as well. They should choose two different restaurants for dinner, locate the menus and record a memorable event during the meal in their travel journals. Naturally I will encourage them to try German restaurants. Students will include one restaurant with pictures or a simulated meal on video into the project. Students may search for restaurants on their own or find one at HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg-magazin.de/gastliches/restaurants.html"www.hamburg-magazin.de/gastliches/restaurants.html.

   Students should "travel" to various attractions in groups, with one German 4 student assigned to each group. Each student will, however, record his or her individual experiences for the final project. Students will be assigned 4-5 sights in Hamburg to

research location, prices, opening times, and background information. Individuals and groups will have choices based on their interests and hobbies as to what they will visit; however, I would like each attraction to be covered by at least one individual or group. In this way students will receive a comprehensive view of the city in the final project presentations. Each of the sightseeing attractions will involve a specific task and require students to "document" their experience in German with which they will create the Photo Story project of their Hamburg impressions. Students will videotape themselves or produce a transcript of conversations they have in each location in order to reinforce language we learn in the unit. Students can incorporate the videos or record the dialogues later in the Photo Story task. Students may use the online city map of Hamburg to locate sightseeing attractions: HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.citysam.de/stadtplan-hamburg.htm"www.hamburg.citysam.de/stadtplan-hamburg.htm. The suggested attractions along with tasks include

Alsterarkaden:
> HYPERLINK "http://www.pro-wohnen.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten-hamburg-Alsterarkaden.htm"www.pro-wohnen.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten-hamburg-Alsterarkaden.htm
> You are searching for a special type of tea to purchase as a gift for your host parents in Grevesmühlen. Locate a shop in the *Alsterarkaden*, include the name and price of the tea and record the conversation on video.

Ballinstadt Auswandererwelt Museum: HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/1090316/ballinstadt.html"www.hamburg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/1090316/ballinstadt.html
> You are searching for information about your great-great-great grandfather who left Germany in 1888 to emigrateto the United States. Record statistics about German emigrants and explore the conditions for passengers during the period of greatest emigration.

Binnenalster + Jungfernstieg: HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/jungfernstieg/"www.hamburg.de/jungfernstieg/ + HYPERLINK "http://www.alstertouristik.de/alsterrundfahrt.php"www.alstertouristik.de/alsterrundfahrt.php.You and your friends would like to take a boat ride on the Alster. Find the location from where the boats leave, inquire about prices, times, and student discounts.

St. Pauli Fischmarkt: HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/fischmarkt/"www.hamburg.de/fischmarkt/. You want to purchase some Nordseekrabben at the Fish market. Find out which city train to take to get there from the Hauptbahnhof, when the market is open, and what else you can buy there besides fish.

Hagenbecks Tierpark: HYPERLINK "http://www.hagenbeck.de/"www.hagenbeck.de/. You are particularly interested in seeing the *Eismeer* at this zoo. Find out the history of this exhibit and what current changes are affecting the animals there.

Hamburg Dungeon: HYPERLINK

"http://www.hamburg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/1281608/dungeon.html"www.hamburg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/1281608/dungeon.html

> You would like to learn more about the execution of Störtebeker and have read about a new "ride" associated with this exhibit. Describe the ride as well as three other interesting exhibits that you see in the museum.

Hamburger Hafen + Hafenrundfahrt: HYPERLINK "http://www.hadag.de/hafenrundfahrt.php"www.hadag.de/hafenrundfahrt.php

> Discover a bit about the history of the harbor and the company which tours it which is called *hadag*. How much is a tour of the harbor and when do tours take place?

Imtech Arena (Fußballstadion): HYPERLINK "http://www.hsv.de/"www.hsv.de/. You would like to take a tour of the stadium. Find out the dates, times and prices you will need to book such a tour. Name a few of the team's most famous players from the past. Find out who the current coach is.

Micheliskirche: HYPERLINK "http://www.st-michaelis.de/"www.st-michaelis.de/ + HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/michel/"www.hamburg.de/michel/

> You would like to find your way from the Rathaus to the Michel and take a picture of Hamburg from the tower. Find out what it costs to climb the tower of the church and record how many steps there are. Take the picture to document your trip.

Miniatur Wunderland Hamburg: HYPERLINK "http://www.miniatur-wunderland.de/" www.miniatur-wunderland.de/ + HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVURtmxwqMc&feature=channel"www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVURtmxwqMc&feature=channel

> Find out the location, prices and opening times of this amazing miniature train museum. Download the flying to include in your presentation.

Kunsthalle : HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/"www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/. You want to purchase a print of one of the paintings in this art museum to give to a German student you have taken an interest in. Visit the museum and choose three paintings which you would like to buy as prints. Document these in your presentation.

Landungsbrücken - Rickmer Rickmers:

> HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg-hafenrand.de/rick.htm"www.hamburg-hafenrand.de/rick.htm + HYPERLINK "http://www.rickmer-rickmers.de/"www.rickmer-rickmers.de/
> Take a tour on this boot museum and restaurant. Describe the history of the boat briefly and describe the meal you had on it.

Nikolaifleet: HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.citysam.de/nikolaifleet.htm" www.hamburg.citysam.de/nikolaifleet.htm

> Describe how to reach these beautiful structures in Hamburg from the Rathaus. Discover when they were built and to whom they belonged. What are they used for today?

Rathaus HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/rathaus/"www.hamburg.de/rathaus/. Someone in your host family will be getting married again for the tenth time while you are in Germany. Find out why a trip to the Rathaus is necessary. Take pictures of the Rathaus in Hamburg and find out about opening times in case you have time for a tour.
Reeperbahn und die Beatles: HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/1105144/beatlesplatz.html"www.hamburg.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/1105144/beatlesplatz.html. Your parents were big Beatles' fans. You want to locate where and when the Beatles played in Hamburg, travel there in the morning from the *Hauptbahnhof*, and take some pictures to bring back home to your folks.
Stadtpark :
> HYPERLINK "http://tinyurl.com/28t2tjs" tinyurl.com/28t2tjs. You need to get away from the city for a few hours to relax. Find out how to get to the Stadtpark from the *Hauptbahnhof* . Take photos of at least 5 things you can do for recreation the park.

U-Bootmuseum: HYPERLINK "http://www.pro-wohnen.de/U-Boot-Hamburg.htm"www.pro-wohnen.de/U-Boot-Hamburg.htm
> You are a history buff and want to travel to this military relic. Describe how to get there from the *Hauptbahnhof*. Find out where this submarine is from and how long it was in use.

Activity 7

In the course of exploring Hamburg and the region to which the students will be travelling as part of the exchange program, I would very much like them to explore its cultural history. By researching an intriguing story in Hamburg's past, students will likely be interested in discovering more before they travel and while they are in Germany. What could be more intriguing than a true tale of adventure? During the 1300's Klaus Störtebeker and his shipmates plundered boats belonging to the wealthy Hanseatic merchants in Scandinavia, Germany and the Netherlands. According to legend, he stole from the rich and gave to the needy or the underdogs in war. He employed devious surprise tactics and earned a reputation as a renegade. When he and his men were captured during one of their escapades, they were brought to trial in Hamburg and kept in the Hamburg Dungeon. Before his execution, Störterbeker valiantly tried to save the lives of his men. He allegedly pleaded with the executioner to spare the lives of however many men he could walk past *after* his beheading. According to legend, Störtebeker's headless body walked past eleven of his men before it fell. (But the burghers broke their word and had the men executed, anyway). Students will research information about Klaus Störtebeker, the famous "pirate" of northern Germany online.

As a pre-reading activity, we will discuss what students associate with the idea of pirates and rebels like Robin Hood, William Wallace, Che Guevara, Revolutionary War

heroes and even Somalian pirates. Students will brainstorm the attributes, goals, and activities of these men. In addition, the class will examine the circumstances under which certain leaders arise to aid their people. Such individuals often react during times of unfair trade or taxation; in the current uncertain times of our nation, this is indeed a relevant topic. In our German 3 book, *Deutsch Aktuell 3*, students will read about the Hanseatic League to give further foundation to our study of Klaus Störtebeker and his advent upon German history.

I will ask students to complete a webquest to locate answers about the life and times of Klaus Störtebeker. They will search under the following sites:

HYPERLINK "http://www.ndr.de/land_leute/norddeutsche_geschichte/hanse30.html"www.ndr.de/land_leute/norddeutsche_geschichte/hanse30.html

HYPERLINK "http://erwin-rosenthal.de/rosenthal/"erwin-rosenthal.de/rosenthal/

HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/historische-persoenlichkeiten/8460/klaus-stoertebeker.html"www.hamburg.de/historische-persoenlichkeiten/8460/klaus-stoertebeker.html

HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/geschichte/4744/die-stoertebeker-story.html"www.hamburg.de/geschichte/4744/die-stoertebeker-story.html

HYPERLINK "http://www.ndr.de/land_leute/norddeutsche_gesichter/stoertebeker172.html"www.ndr.de/land_leute/norddeutsche_gesichter/stoertebeker172.html

Students who require some extra background in English before reading can find information about Störtebeker as well:

 HYPERLINK "http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/1377163" en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/1377163

 HYPERLINK "http://erwin-rosenthal.de/ruegen/The%20pirate%20Klaus%20Stoertebeker.htm" erwin-rosenthal.de/ruegen/The%20pirate%20Klaus%20Stoertebeker.htm

I will assign the following questions in German:

Who was Klaus Störtebeker?
Where is he believed to be from and when did he live?
What circumstances encouraged him to engage in piracy?
From whom did he steal? To whom did he give?
What type of person was he? What did people think of him?
How and when was he captured?
Where was he brought?
What deal did he make before his execution?
How did he die?

I will play scenes from the recent German film *12 ohne Kopf* about the life and death of Klaus Störtebeker. These can be found on youtube.com under the following addresses:

HYPERLINK
"http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkFFHyu1onk"www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkFFHyu1onk
HYPERLINK
"http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08SUmviybJU&feature=related"www.youtube.com/watch?v=08SUmviybJU&feature=related

In January 2010, the supposed skull of Klaus Störtebeker was stolen from the Hamburger Museum. Students will read the article in Wordchamp.com at HYPERLINK "http://www.welt.de/vermischtes/article5911941/Klaus-Stoertebekers-Schaedel-aus-Museum-gestohlen.html"www.welt.de/vermischtes/article5911941/Klaus-Stoertebekers-Schaedel-aus-Museum-gestohlen.html

Activity 8

To incorporate speaking and writing into this task, students first re-tell the story of Klaus Störtebeker by literally "spinning the yarn" – in a type of "Ball Game" using a ball of yarn. After telling a portion about the life and times of Störtebeker, each student holds onto the string and throws the ball of yarn to someone who has not yet spoken. This ensures that each student has an opportunity to add to the story and that the content is summarized simply and clearly. Students will later work in small groups to compile their findings, create graphic organizers, and collaborate to create a series of slides in a Photo Story about Klaus Störtebeker. These slides will then be added into the final project.

Writing online

Researching a real person who lived in the region we will be visiting will be fascinating, but communicating with a person living there now will add the relevance I am striving to achieve in this unit. I will have one of students create a Facebook group specifically for our classes and also serve as the administrator, inviting all pertinent individuals. Each student will correspond via Facebook from home with one of the students from Gymnasium-am-Tannenberg. Prior to beginning the correspondence, students will read the application of the students they will host in April 2011 to become familiar with them. They will begin with a basic introduction, welcoming them and asking about the students' interests. The students will ask about activities in Grevesmühlen and also in Hamburg to discover the situations they are likely to experience. Such Facebook messages would involve students communicating in English with their partners at the Gymnasium-am-Tannenberg and receiving messages in German. By communicating in their native language, students can write more freely and still gain the benefit of reading

in the target language and learning useful cultural information from a peer in the target culture. I will ask them to print off at least three samples of their emails in German for my review. I will give students a completion grade for the activity. Reading messages and writing online to an actual person will help my students see the relevance of learning German and will encourage them to expand their vocabulary and understanding of the language so as to communicate more clearly. It is an individual activity for the students to communicate informally with peers their own age and hopefully learn something about the region to which they will travel.

Photo Story – Final Project

Photo Story 3 is a Windows application which allows the students to upload pictures, add written text, voice and music files in order arrange into a story line. My students will use Photo Story 3 for their project since our school district encourages it. There are alternatives, however, such as animoto.com, which provide similar applications.
Based on what students have learned while navigating the city of Hamburg, they will create a series of slides in photostory.com depicting their individual experiences. These photo stories will be presented by the individual students upon completion of the unit and will act as students' assessment. As mentioned earlier in this curriculum unit, students will include the following elements in their stories:
pictures of accommodations, restaurants, and sightseeing attractions
written text taken from their travel journals and possible snippets from emails with their

German host families
recorded voice files of conversations and narrations of scenes
background music of songs they heard while in Hamburg
The Photo Story will be worth a test grade. The rubric I will use for grading is based on material from the book *50 German Oral Communication Activities*. It will look something like this:

	Excellent	**Average**	**Needs Improvement**
Deadlines:	Both travel journal and Photo Story are completed on time. 5	Either travel journal or Photo Story is turned in on time. 4 3	Neither travel journal nor Photo Story is turned in on time. 2 1 0
Plot Structure and Cultural Elements of Photo Story	Story is logical and complete with pictures, narrations, conversations and music. 15 13 11	Story is complete with a few rough spots; needs a few more slides/ is missing pictures, narrations, conversations and/or music. 10 8 6	Story is incomplete with major gaps; is missing several slides, pictures, narrations, conversations and/or music. 5 4 3 2 1 0
Correctness and Use of Written German	Written story has minimal grammar errors; depth of grammar and vocabulary	Written story has several grammar errors; depth of grammar and vocabulary	Written story has many grammar errors: depth of grammar and vocabulary

	is level appropriate and excellent. 20 19 18	is not quite level-appropriate. 16 14 12	is limited and needs work; writing is often unclear. 10 7 5 3 2 0
Correctness of German and Pronunciation	Student uses correct grammar + pronunciation. (only minor errors) 10 9	Student uses mostly correct grammar and pronunciation. (some errors) 8 7 6	Student uses incorrect grammar and pronunciation (many errors) 5 4 3 2 1 0

Students will present the Photo Story to their classmates as their experience in "Navigating the City" of Hamburg. I will have them post these stories online on a class blog and also present them to lower level classes such as German 1 or 2 to create interest in the GAPP program and give students an opportunity to speak to a larger audience. I can even imagine the students presenting the story of Klaus Störtebeker to students at the middle schools to invite interest in German language classes. Any speaking opportunity like this can be helpful for students in their general academic skills and will help prepare them for life outside of school. It is my hope that this unit with its travel activities, real-life examples and cultural research aspects will prepare my students for the GAPP trip and make the learning of German relevant and interesting.

Notes

[1]Zoltan Dörnyei. *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 43-45.

[2]Stephen D. Krashen. *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*. (Unknown: Bloodaxe Books Ltd, 1983), 26, 38.

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W. Grabe and F. L. Stoller. "Reading for Academic Purposes: Guidelines for the ESL/EFL Teacher," *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language,* 3 ed., (Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2001), 187-203.

Krashen. *The Power of Reading*, 6-7.

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Ibid., 63.

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N. Lightbown and P.M. Spada. *How Languages Are Learned,* 3rd ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2006), 43.

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Ibid., 64.

Robert J. Blake. *Brave New Digital Classroom: Technology and Foreign Language Learning*. (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 27.

James Lee and Bill Vanpatten. *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*. 2 ed. (New York City: McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages, 2003), 101-102.

Jann-Thorge Thöming . „Klaus Störtebeker." Accessed 10/27/2010**.** HYPERLINK "http://www.hamburg.de/historische-persoenlichkeiten/8460/klaus-stoertebeker.html"**www.hamburg.de/historische-persoenlichkeiten/8460/klaus-stoertebeker.html**.

[19]Wade Petersen. *50 German Oral Communication Activities with Mini-Rubrics*. (Auburn Hills, MI: Teacher's Discovery, 1999).

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        HYPERLINK "http://llt.msu.edu/vol14num2/sydorenko.pdf"
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        persoenlichkeiten/8460/klaus-stoertebeker.html"www.hamburg.de/historische-
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Asher, James J. *Learning Another Language Through Actions*. 6 ed. Los Gatos,
        California: Sky Oaks Productions, 2000.

This classic book describes the history and practice use of Total Physical Response in the foreign language classroom.

Blaz, Deborah. *Foreign Language Teacher's Guide to Active Learning*. Larchmont, NY:
        Eye On Education, 1999.

Booth Olson, Carol . *The Reading/Writing Connection: Strategies for Teaching and
        Learning in the Secondary Classroom (3rd Edition)*. Boston, MA: Allyn &
        Bacon, 2002.
This book offers methods to support students in thinking critically and interacting with text and provides concrete ideas for scaffolding lessons and assessing student work.

*Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing (Cambridge Applied Linguistics)
        ed. Barbara Kroll*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Gregory, Gayle H., and Lin Kuzmich. *Differentiated Literacy Strategies for Student
        Growth and Achievement in Grades 7-12*. 1 ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin
        Press, 2005.
This handbook provides a wealth of ideas on how to provide differentiated instruction in classroom, including pre-assessment ideas, lesson ideas, rubrics, sample questions and graphic organizers.

Ph.D., Mark A. Forget. *MAX Teaching With Reading & Writing: Classroom Activities to Help Students Learn Subject Matter while Acquiring New Skills*. British Columbia, Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2004.

This is an excellent resource for building reading skills in teens. It provides pre-reading, guided reading and assessment strategies as well as sample activities.

Useful Websites for Teachers

HYPERLINK "http://www.animoto.com" www.animoto.com

HYPERLINK "http://www.goanimate.com" www.goanimate.com

HYPERLINK "http://rubistar.4teachers.org/" rubistar.4teachers.org/

HYPERLINK "http://www.wordchamp.com" www.wordchamp.com

HYPERLINK "http://www.zooburst.com" www.zooburst.com

HYPERLINK "http://www.abendblatt.de/" www.abendblatt.de/ (Hamburg newspaper – online version)

HYPERLINK "http://www.ostsee-zeitung.de/ozdigital/lokales/grevesmuehlen/index.phtml" www.ostsee-zeitung.de/ozdigital/lokales/grevesmuehlen/index.phtml (Grevesmühlen newspaper)

HYPERLINK "http://www.ostsee-zeitung.de/" www.ostsee-zeitung.de/ (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern newspaper)

Appendix A

North Carolina State Standards Addressed.

The following list of standards addressed is not intended to be an exhaustive listing.

STRANDS: LISTENING, READING, SPEAKING, WRITING

COMPETENCY GOAL 1: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION – The learner will engage in conversation and exchange information and opinions orally and in writing in the target language.

Objective 1.02 Ask and answer open-ended questions on a wide range of topics orally and in writing.

COMPENTENCY GOAL 2: INTERPRETATIVE COMMUNICATION – The learner will understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics in the

target language.

Objective 2.05: Read and interpret authentic materials (e.g., selected short stories, poetry and other literary works, articles, personal correspondence and simple technical material).

COMPETENCY GOAL 3: PRESENTATIONAL COMMUNICATION – The learner will present information, concept, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics in the target language.

Objective 3.02: Compose and present stories, poems, and skits.

COMPETENCY GOAL 4: CULTURES – The learner will gain knowledge and demonstrate understanding of the relationship among practices, products, and perspectives, of cultures other than his/her own.

Objective 4.04: Examine historical and contemporary literature and the arts in order to understand the cultural practices and perspectives of the target cultures.

Objective 4.06: Discuss the influence of important people, events, and achievements of the target countries on their own and other cultures.

Objective 4.07 Draw interences about contemporary life in the target cultures through print and non-print media, cultural artifacts, and /or interaction with people from those cultures.

COMPETENCY GOAL 7: COMMUNITIES – The learner will use language and/or demonstrate cultural knowledge and understanding within and beyond the school setting for personal, educational, and professional growth and enrichment.

Objective 7.03: Interact with people of other cultures in the target language about familiar topics.

Objective 7.04 Visit places in person or via technology which provide opportunities to use the target language and/or experience the target cultures.