

# Promoting speaking in the first language



Materials for heritage language teaching

**Didactic suggestions**



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## Explanations, abbreviations

First language: Also mother tongue or family language: the first language a child has learned and speaks at home. Some children have two first languages.

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School language: The language that is spoken in the schools of the host country. In addition, the local dialect may count as an environment language.

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Abbreviations: S = student  
T = teacher (instructor)

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### Legend

for indications referencing organizational form, class, time requirements concerning teaching proposals:

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IW = individual work

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WP = working with a partner

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SG = small group

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WC = whole class

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1<sup>st</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

Suitable for... to... (e. g. 2nd– 4th grade).  
Keeping in mind that this designation may vary according to the requirements of the individual students.

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10–15 minutes

Approximate time requirement, e. g. 20 minutes.  
(Estimated time varies, must be determined by the instructor according to the level and the requirements of the class).

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# Preface to the series “Materials for heritage language teaching”

Heritage language teaching (HLT), or mother-tongue teaching, known mostly as “Herkunftssprachlicher Unterricht (HSU)” in Germany and Austria and “Unterricht in Heimatlicher Sprache und Kultur (HSK)” in Switzerland, plays an important role in the development of a child’s identity and language. It promotes multilingualism and serves as a valuable personal and social resource. The awareness of this fact has long been borne out by research and framework guidelines, such as the recommendations of the Council of Europe R(82)18 and R(98)6. Nevertheless, this kind of instruction for the most part still takes place under more difficult conditions than regular curriculum classes. Various factors are responsible:

- Heritage language education is on an insecure footing institutionally and financially in many places. In Switzerland, for instance, heritage language teachers almost everywhere are paid by the country of origin or even the parents.
- Heritage language classes are often poorly coordinated with regular classroom instruction; contact and cooperation with regular curriculum teaching staff is often very poorly developed.
- Heritage language classes often occur only two hours per week, which makes constructive, uninterrupted learning more difficult.
- Heritage language classes are mostly optional, and the commitment on the part of the students is not very strong.
- Heritage language classes involve multiclass teaching as a rule, with students from the 1st to the 9th grade joined into a single class. This requires a great deal of internal differentiation and didactical skill on the part of the instructor.
- The heterogeneity of the student body in heritage language classrooms is extremely high in terms of the students’ linguistic competence as well. While some have acquired at home good proficiency in both dialect and standard use of their native language, others may speak only dialect. For second or third generation heritage speakers who have already resided for many years in the new country, the language spoken there (e.g. German) has become the dominant language, while their command of the first language is limited to dialect, transmitted exclusively orally, and with a vocabulary reduced to familiar issues.

- The heritage language instructors have generally received a good basic education in their countries of origin, but they are not at all prepared for the realities and the challenges of teaching in a multiclass environment in the migration destination countries. Professional development opportunities in the host countries exist for the most part only to an insufficient extent.

The series “Materials for heritage language teaching” supports the teachers of native language education classes in their important and demanding task and thereby hopes to contribute to the optimal quality of this kind of learning. The review of the backgrounds and principles of the current pedagogy and didactics in western and northern European immigration countries (c.f. the volume Foundations...) furthers this goal, supported with concrete practical suggestions and models for the classroom in the workbooks “didactic suggestions”. Their main emphasis is the promotion of linguistic competence. The didactical suggestions purposely revert to the pedagogical principles and procedures that are familiar to the students from the regular curriculum and its teaching materials. This familiarity brings heritage language education and regular curriculum instruction in close contact and ensures the greatest possible coherence between the two. As the teachers of the heritage language education programs familiarize themselves with the didactic approaches and specific proceedings that are currently used in the regular curricula, they receive further training and, it is hoped, a strengthening of their stature as partners of equal value in the educational process of the students who are growing up bilingually and bi-culturally.

The series “Materials for heritage language teaching” is published by the Center for International Projects in Education (IPE) at the Zurich University of Teacher Education. It is developed in close collaboration between Swiss and other West European specialists on the one hand, as well as experts and practicing instructors of heritage language programs. This ensures that the offered information and suggestions reflect the real circumstances, needs and possibilities of heritage language programs and meet the objective of functionality and practicality.



# Introduction

## 1. What does “orality” mean?

Besides written expression, orality or oral expression is the second largest area of language application. (Strictly speaking, it is the first in the history of mankind as well as with almost all individuals. The cultural techniques of writing and reading emerge only after a long phase of purely oral communication.)

Oral communication is comprised of the two aspects, listening and speaking: the receptive side (hearing/listening comprehension) and the productive side (speaking) or oral communication. This indicates that the promotion of listening comprehension plays an equal and important role in terms of the development of communicative competences.

The work in the area of orality has to observe its own rules but does not occur separately from the promotion of writing competence. Rather, the two major areas are connected in what can be characterized as a circular relationship. That which is practiced in the area of oral communication will subsequently benefit the written expression and a developed written competence has beneficial consequences for the differentiation in oral communication.

Among the specific characteristics of oral use of language are the following points, which are also important for work in school:

- In oral communicative situations, the interlocutors are normally in the same place at the same time. This facilitates the use of mimicry and gestural language and non-verbal, situation signals (e.g. pointing out a person nearby or the cloudy sky). These non-verbal means help to support comprehension and are useful and functional in light of the “fleetingness” of oral communication. This is quite different in written situations, where the steps of «writing» and «reading» take place in a time-delayed fashion and can be repeated as well by going over and re-reading a text. (Phone conversations or written chats, represent a special position, which is not subject of this discussion.)

- In terms of language, orality follows its own rules, which are different from written language. Thus, incomplete sentences, sentence fragments, repetitions, selective language switching (e.g. from the first language to the language of the school, or from standard language to dialect), associative jumps, etc., are considered normal and do not interfere in everyday conversations, or only in exceptional cases. In the case of “cultivated” oral expression, such as in a presentation in school, stricter norms apply that are more oriented toward written expression. Here too, it would be totally false to demand of the students that they speak in a manner “as if printed”. However, this should not mean to forego training speech situations where a deliberately cultivated oral style and motivating contexts (scenic representations, oral presentations, etc.) are practiced.

## 2. Promoting orality – and what this means for HLT

Oral expression plays an important role in language teaching, and this applies of course to heritage language teaching as well. The importance of this role is already apparent in that the major part of communication takes place orally (particularly in the lower level classes). In order to effectively participate in the daily lessons, students must be able to listen and comprehend while listening and, on the other hand, they must have acquired various productive abilities in the area of oral expression. The prominent position of orality is shown in the following overview of the language skill areas and fields of action:

	Receptive abilities	Productive abilities
Orality: primary, “innate” talents	listening (listening-comprehension)	speaking
Literacy: secondary acquired cultural techniques	reading (reading-comprehension)	writing

As a peripheral complement to the two major areas of oral and written competence, the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar should be mentioned. This occurs “naturally” and uncontrolled, but is also supported and furthered in school.

The construction of the cultural techniques reading and writing requires in most cases developed abilities in the oral aspects of listening and speaking. The majority of the children have acquired good competences in this regard at the age of entering school, at least in terms of everyday language use. It is self-evident that language instruction in the schools has nevertheless a whole range of developmental tasks at hand in the area of orality. The pertinent main aspects (didactics of conversation, narrating, presenting, etc.) are discussed in chapter 4a "goals and work areas in the field of oral competency". These main considerations are also applicable for HLT and constitute the foundation for the relevant teaching suggestions in the practice section of this publication.

In addition, there are a few peculiarities and special aspects in the promotion of oral competence in HLT, particularly in terms of phonetics, vocabulary and syntax, as presently discussed more specifically. Their cause is the side by side of dialects and standard forms in many languages, and the fact that many students only know their first language in the dialectal variety spoken at home. As a result, and a challenge for HLT and its stated goals of introducing the standard language, the following tasks and work emphases developed:

#### **a) Careful introduction to the phonemes of the first language**

This includes the introduction to and the acoustical training of particularly those sounds of the standard language which are either not known in dialect or not distinguished in dialect. For example, in the southern Slavic languages, the sounds or phonemes „tsch“ and „tch“ are differentiated as in the German word „Hütchen“ (little hat), though the first is expressed in writing as <č> whereas „tch“ is expressed as <č>. In Albanian, the same distinction is made with the graphemes <ç> und <q> whereas in many dialects, this distinction (which is also difficult for foreigners) is not made. This means that special speaking and listening exercises are necessary. Their goal is to sensitize the ear of the children with sound discrimination exercises, as this distinction is also relevant for writing. Without this special training, the students would commit the same errors over and over again in their texts due to lacking differentiation. The following example from German instruction shows different spellings of words like „Kese“ (cheese) and „Medchen“ (young girl) instead of „Käse“ and „Mädchen“ by students who failed to differentiate between „ä“ and the long „e“. Acoustical sound discrimination exercises (which most students already know from their regular curriculum classes) can be implemented without problems. See the suggestions in #1 of the practice section. An especially appropriate context for this is the introduction of the particular graphemes in the first or second grade.

#### **b) Vocabulary work**

Words are on a linguistic level above the phonemes and graphemes. Here too, there are many kinds of differences between the standard variant and the dialects in the first language, as well as between the dialects. These should be discussed and possibly shown on a chart for visualization, as they have valuable potentials for language reflection and learning about one's language and its facets. Moreover, the standard language concepts should be introduced and practiced cautiously and gradually. It would be a good idea to provide the students with a notebook to write down words or phrases to build sentences, first orally, then in writing. The work with vocabulary, discussed here, represents an important aspect of language education in HLT and should be deliberately embraced and fostered. The reason is compelling, as many children and adolescents who grow up in the migration only have a very limited mastery of their first language, i.e. reduced to everyday vocabulary, oral use and dialect only. It is no wonder that many of them feel more confident in using the language of the immigration country in which they are being taught and furthered on a daily basis. HLT occupies a central position, and for children of educationally disadvantaged families it remains the only institution in terms of the important goal of making the first language available for a more sophisticated use. Orality – listening comprehension and one's own oral expression play a role here, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. It facilitates encounters and attempts to try new facets of language use which are mostly simpler and more anxiety-free than those in written expression. Thus, well reflected and planned learning arrangements to foster oral competence are of highest value in terms of the goal of acquiring good literal competences in the first language.

#### **c) Expanded means of speech and syntax**

Vocabulary work that only deals with stand alone words would fall short of the mark, without the previously referenced phrases, which naturally belong to the vocabulary of every language. These phrases must be learned, practiced and applied multiple times in order to become part of the students' active vocabulary. It is methodologically preferable to practice this first orally and then in writing. The same also holds true for the following two types of word groups, or language means:

1. So-called „chunks“ or set phrases, such as „I would like ...“, „may I please...“, „could you please ...“ etc. Chunks are of high value in everyday formulated communication situations. That children know these also in the standard variant of their first language is a prerequisite for their mastery. For training purposes, and practicing with playful situations, brief role plays are best suitable.

2. Moreover, as a means of speech with a particularly high value for school purposes, a series of frequently-used phrases should be available for implementation in descriptions, discussions, short presentation, etc. In terms of <discussions>, this would include language means and building blocks for sentences, such as “In my opinion, it is like this...”, “I don’t share this view..”, “I totally agree/disagree..”, “This is fundamentally right, but ...” etc. Such language means must first be compiled with the students. The recourse to the school language can be very useful, since it is already known to the students. The language means are subsequently written down and practiced extensively. The photographs from the Spanish HLT in London, depicted in the handbook “Foundations and backgrounds” (chapter 7 B.4), are a visualization of simple speech means which contribute a great deal to the building of first language competences. Exercise #12 in the Practice Part shows how the students can be supported with the building blocks of a sentence, which they can use to relate to one another in conversation, thereby strengthening the coherence of the discussion.

With the next higher language level – grammar with its partial components morphology and syntax – different requirements apply, depending on the first language and the differences between dialect and standard language. The Kosovar students have to learn, among other things, the special infinitive construction of the Albanian standard language, the South-Slavic ones have to contend with the correct application of the cases in the standard variant, etc. As a learning psychological overall guideline for a lasting acquisition of language, it is certainly the case that the students should first understand that which they should learn (which is best accomplished through discovery learning) and applied and practiced in multiple forms and phases. Orality plays an important role in this as well (for recognition and naming), but also in terms of dialogical, action- oriented practice and forms of application.

## d) Cross-linking of first and second languages

HLT students know and speak not only their first language, but also the language of the school in their host country. They feel often more competent in the school language, which is not surprising in light of their daily interaction with it in their regular curriculum classes. In promoting the students’ first language in HLT, it is important to utilize all resources and competences which students have acquired from studying the school language. For instance, this includes a vocabulary which is often broader than their limited vocabulary in the first language, which centers around domestic and familiar themes. This means that vocabulary work in the first language can be linked and referred to the school language, where many terms and concepts are already present and clarified. This eliminates long explanations in the first language, and only requires the mediation and application of the term in the first language. This concerns primarily the more sophisticated, school-related vocabulary, which is essential for a good command of the language, but also the referenced expanded language means. These connections are also valuable in counteracting the highly problematic disintegration of vocabularies in the first language and school language (where children often retain the familiar-domestic vocabulary in the first language and master the more demanding school-related vocabulary in the language of the school). In a broader sense, these resources and previous knowledge can and should also be relied on in considering grammatical phenomena or the mediation of learning strategies (see also workbook 5 of this series). In all of these cases, orality as the medium of discussion and training plays an important role as well when the ultimate goal is an increase in literal competences. It is obvious that this medium can only be fully used if the acquisition and development of oral competencies has been duly supported and practised with the necessary time and attention.

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## 3. Goals and structure of this publication

The present volume is closely related to the didactic publications 1 and 2 of the series “Materials for heritage language teaching”. Whereas volumes 1 and 2 comprise suggestions for teaching writing and reading in the first language, the present volume is devoted to the vast area of orality. This includes sub-aspects of listening/listening comprehension and speaking, as shown in the overview. Contrary to the areas of reading and writing, this is not a matter of cultural techniques which have to be mediated in school from the ground up, but rather an extension and building of competencies that are related to daily life, which almost all children have acquired in their pre-school

days. It is the task of the school to further develop these competencies to the extent that they are available and functional for increasingly more challenging contexts. In HLT this occurs with a focus on the first language, particularly its standard variant. That productive relationships can be established with the school language has been shown in chapter 2d.

The teaching proposals and didactic suggestions, designed to subsequently support HLT instructors in their important work to promote oral competence, have been divided in the following areas (which fundamentally comprise the productive as well as the receptive dimension, e. g., speaking and listening):

- Acoustical training; suggestions for creative language use
- To conduct oneself adequately in conversations – in pairs and in groups
- Narrating and playful interpreting of experiences and stories
- Presenting and reciting

A particularly broad space with 13 teaching proposals is devoted to Part II: (“To conduct oneself adequately in conversations – in pairs and in groups”). This is no accident: the skills and the competencies that are discussed here constitute essentially the entire foundation of communication and require particularly careful training.

The 32 teaching proposals are structured around a center of easily comprehensible presentations of the proposed procedure. They are preceded by partial references to supplement the formulation of goals and offer further background information. The rubrics “variants” and “comments” at the end of many teaching proposals include methodological alternatives as well as references to didactic-methodological detail aspects.

There are references to various aspects and exercises in the other volumes of the series “didactic suggestions” as well. In light of the importance of oral competence for the writing-related themes, this is not surprising. We refer especially to the following publications and chapters:



*Workbook 1  
Promoting writing in the first language:*

See among others, the suggestions for oral preliminary exercises, etc. Practice section: chapters 1, 2, 7.4, 14, 18 etc.



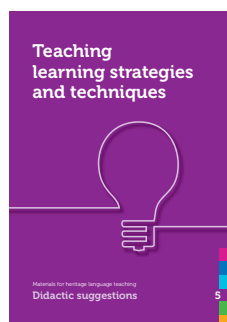
*Workbook 2  
Promoting reading in the first language:*

See particularly the chapters dealing with reading out loud: 1, 10, 11 and 16 in the Practice section;



*Workbook 4  
Promoting intercultural competences:*

The majority of the teaching suggestions comprise important oral aspects (clarifying discussions, objective discussions, etc.);



*Workbook 5  
Mediation of learning strategies and techniques:*

The oral aspects here mainly concern the exchanges of experiences with various learning strategies.

Lastly, a special feature should be mentioned that distinguishes the current volume from the others of the series. Three young teachers have contributed substantially to this work (Livia Huber, Annina Ruder, Flavio Ruffo), having dedicated their bachelor work with dedication and much energy to the topic “Promotion of orality in HLT”. Together with the project leader and the responsible editors on the part of HLT (Dragana Dimitrijević and Gordana Nikolić), a team emerged that was as innovative from its composition as it was productive from its functional operation.

As important sources, among many others, the following language teaching materials were consulted: “Sprachfenster”, “Sprachland”, “Sprachwelt Deutsch”, “Die Sprachstarken” and “Pipapo”. The relationship to these teaching materials ensures language didactic actuality and supports the cross-linking of HLT and mainstream classroom education.

## 4. Three key aspects of current didactics in orality

The area of orality is a huge field with an extensive literature in various languages and traditions. The different traditions are reflected, for instance, in the significance which target areas, such as “democratic discussions in the class council” or “expressive reciting of poems” have or had in various cultures. In the following, we are limiting the focus on a few aspects about which there might be a consensus in the didactics of orality among the western and northern European immigration countries, and which are also of interest to the practice of HLT.

### a) Goals and fields of work in the area of orality

The overarching goal of educational promotion in the areas of listening and speaking is the strengthening of students’ communicative competence to act. This occurs in regular curriculum classes as well as in HLT in age-appropriate fashion and in observation of the additional goal to lead students to an increasingly competent use of the standard language.

In oral language production, i. e., speaking, a distinction is made between dialogical and monological forms with distinctive objectives and working methods. The entire approach to teaching speech communication relates to dialogical forms. Its goal is adequate conduct in dialogs, conflict discussions, social role play, interviews, (played) phone conversations, etc., as well as the democratic, speaking and listening compoment (possibly guided by established rules of discussion) for group discussions, class talks, debates for the purpose of conflict resolution, etc. The monological forms comprise narrating, reporting and presenting in various contexts (with the clear, appealing dissemination of content as central objective), but also reciting, the deliberate creative reading out loud and many forms of school theater, which also includes powerfully expressive language.

The “listening” aspect is generally practiced in conjunction with speaking and its attendant objectives. However, it is imperative that it be supported with appropriate, targeted assignments – be they related to the understanding of content, democratic discussion behavior, or the quality of reciting a poem. Simply listening without a clear purpose or focus is not very productive. The important aspect is “differentiated listening” even in those learning situations that serve to observe linguistic anomalies, e. g. recognizing different dialectal variants in the first language (with audio samples) or the sensitization to certain characteristics in oral expression of a person or group. The listening competencies here favor the important and exciting aspect of linguistic reflection.

Aside from the referenced forms which concern primarily communicative exercises and learning situations, there is also a type of skills-related training situations which is not centered around a defined content, but a language aspect. To this category belong the aforementioned differentiation exercises of simliar phonemes (example: č / ć, see chapter 2a) and other sound discrimination and pronunciation practice exercises, particulary in the lower level classes. The corresponding practice can occur either through reproductive speech exercises, or a somewhat freer guided speech (in reproductive speech, a pattern is repeated and rehearsed, in guided speech, a template is followed with variations; see scaffolding, described in vol. 1 (Promoting writing) in chapter 4d of the introduction, as well as in the handbook “Foundations and backgrounds” in chapter 8A.5a. In broader sense, vocabulary work and the mediation of expanded means of verbal expression can be counted as skills-related training. Both areas are of high importance for HLT because they help to lead students to a developed competence in the first language and to a bilinguality that is a balanced as possible; see chapter 2b and 2c.

### b) About the attitude of instructors in terms of discussions and questions

If students have to expand and develop their linguistic competences, they require adequate time and application opportunities. The extent afforded to them depends largely on the discussion and questioning behavior of the instructor. If teacher A constantly communicates in the traditional, narrow “query mode” (“What is the name of the longest river in our country of origin?”, “Where did the protagonist of our story live?” etc.), his/her students will hardly be able to develop linguistically. Conversely, if teacher B poses open questions or engages the students with prompts, rather than narrow, inauthentic questions, the students are automatically led to a developing oral language production. Examples of such questions might include “What have you learned about the rivers and lakes in our country?”, “Discuss, what you like or dislike in the protagonist’s behavior in our story!”.

Unfortunately, too many instructors tend to intuitively embrace an attitude of questioning and discussing – presumably steeped in their own school experiences – which affords the students far too little opportunities to speak. Investigations have shown that the speaking share of entirely normal teachers is often 20 to 30 times higher than the share of individual students. In order to improve this situation in their own teaching approach, instructors should observe the following points:

- 
- Do not repeat the students' answers (this so-called "teacher-echo" seems redundant and prevents students' getting accustomed to speak loudly and clearly). Similarly unfortunate is the ritual acknowledgement of answers with "good!", "super!", "exactly" etc.; which corresponds to an outdated teacher-centered style.

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- In discussing texts, content, problems or conflicts, work primarily with conversation prompts or at least wide, genuine questions (avoid spurious, narrow questions). Such prompts for an introduction to a conversation and its continuation should be carefully planned; they are only quasi internalized with experience gained from much teaching practice.

- 
- Agreeing on rules and rituals and practicing them with the class allows the instructor to step into the background as much as possible. For instance, in group discussions or class discussions, the students can very well call on themselves or pass on the word to someone else, if this has been practiced, and if a prompt or an assignment was issued at the beginning (and not a question by the teacher which automatically calls for an answer).

- 
- The same goal is supported with the choice of a student-centered teaching style which at least reduces the instructor's central and dominant position in terms of the share of speaking opportunity (see also the handbook "Foundations and backgrounds", chapters 5 and 6). Admittedly, this is a challenging task for HLT where the instructors must often manage several classes or groups at the same time. Nevertheless, here too, a teacher-centric approach can be mitigated through delegating some of the responsibility to the students.

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### **c) Observing oral performance, assessing and targeted promotion**

The observation and promotion-oriented assessment of oral performance is more time-consuming than the one for written texts. Listening and analyzing is only possible with audio or video recordings. This generally exceeds the scope of what is possible. However, it should be applied in notable cases (e.g. an audio recording while a student reads a text), as it leads to much more accurate results.

To avoid the danger of generalized and therefore not very useful assessments in the area of oral competence, it is recommended to follow a criteria-oriented, focused approach which, naturally, has to be adjusted

according to student age and proficiency level. See also chapter 7 in the handbook "Foundations and backgrounds" (Promotion-oriented performance assessment, with excellent practice examples in Part B). To complement them, here are some additional hints:

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- In terms of a "formal", declared observation and assessment situation (e.g. a presentation, scene of a play, a recitation, etc.): prior to the event, clear criteria should be established and communicated, if possible in form of a criteria matrix with several points. This renders the assessment more transparent for the students and offers immediate starting points for subsequent fostering and continuation of work. Finding appropriate exercises and forms of training is part of the instructors' professionalism.

Another advantage of observation sheets with stated criteria is that students (at least from the 3rd grade on) can fill out the matrix, and thereby strengthen their sensibility concerning the important points. An example of the assessment sheet for the valuation of presentations can be found in the handbook "Foundations and backgrounds" in chapter 7 B1; see also the volume "Promoting reading in the first language", #18 (matrix for self-evaluation in reading out loud).

- 
- With regard to "informal", not especially announced observations (e.g. in group or class discussions, student presentations, individual readings or similar observable performances), it is useful if the instructor also takes notes about possible careful observations ("X must learn to listen more closely and to respond to the others", "Y has difficulties with the pronunciation of the <v> sound", "Z has made good progress in speaking freely" etc.). Following that, or at a later appropriate time, the instructor can communicate his/her observations to the students concerned, with concrete suggestions for practical improvements.

## 5. Exchanges and cooperation with regular mainstream education

How valuable and stimulating a coordinated approach between HLT and regular curriculum instruction, including the exchanges of experiences, findings and procedures can be, has been repeatedly pointed out in the foundation volume as well as in the other didactic workbooks. In light of the promotion of orality, the following aspects may be of special interest:

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- Exchanges about the topic of speech education: which conversational rules apply with different instructors, how were these rules implemented and how are they practiced?
- 
- Exchanges of methodological forms in the context of democratic conversation education: which forms (e.g. class council, pro/contra discussions, etc.) are being practiced and should be considered a prerequisite?
- 
- Exchanges of ideas and materials for working in the area of scenic plays (small forms of school theater, etc.) and the expressive interpretation of poems and other texts.
- 
- Getting acquainted with the ideas and materials of speech education in regular curriculum classes and with the commentaries about it. There may be adaptable, specific documentation, such as observation and assessment sheets, which could possibly be used for HLT as well.
- 

As a cooperation project with emphasis on orality between mainstream education and HLT, the following ideas may present themselves, be it within the framework of regular curriculum education or in the context of a project week.

- 
- A common conception of a lecture series on poems from various languages, e.g. as conclusion to a parent event; including an audio recording of a multilingual CD of poetry.
- 
- As above, but with language games in various languages. See also teaching suggestion #7.
- 
- As above, but with short scenes from a play or sketches in various languages, possibly a video recording.
- 

- 
- Moreover, see various ideas for short multilingual games and other activities in "Sprachenvielfalt als Chance" (Linguistic diversity as an opportunity), (Schader, 2013).
- 

For the expert review of the introduction, we thank Stefan Hauser and Nadine Nell-Tuor, Center for Oral Communication at the PH Zug, as well as Claudia Ulbrich, sector for Intercultural Pedagogy, Department of Pedagogy, Elementary Education Authority, Zurich Board of Education.

**Part I:**  
**Accoustical training; suggestions  
for creative language use**



# 1

## Accoustical training, five exercises for sound differentiation

### Goal

The following exercises support the students in the important ability to correctly pronounce all of the sounds in their first language. Depending on the first language, this concerns primarily those sounds of the standard variant which the students do not know, based on their dialect. (see chapter 2a in the introduction). Simultaneously, this exercise can help to expand their vocabulary.

Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

5–15 minutes

Preliminary remarks



Materials:

Lists of words; small mirror; pages with fitting pictures.

The primary context of the following exercises is the introduction of a certain sound as part of the alphabetization in the first language (at the end of the 1st grade or beginning of 2nd grade). Parallel to learning the typeface, the correct, natural pronunciation has to be practiced as well. It is entirely possible to begin many pronunciation exercises in kindergarten already, or to repeat them in upper level classes if uncertainties continue to persist in this regard.

### a) Repetition exercises

- The instructor has prepared (or memorized) a list of words which contain the respective sound. S/he sits with one or several students and clearly pronounces the words. The students then repeat them individually and clearly, one after the other.
- Variant: the role of the instructor can also be assumed by an older student who has an impeccable pronunciation.

### b) Exercises with the pocket mirror

- A pocket mirror can help to raise awareness of how sounds are formed. After the teacher has clearly demonstrated the formation of a sound, e. g. the shape of the mouth to create the /m/ and the /n/, the students try to emulate the articulation and check themselves in the mirror. The exercise lends itself well for partner work with an older student.
- This exercise may not be suitable for certain sounds (e. g. /d/ – /t/). What may help in this case, is to feel with the hand the different degrees of exhaled air pressure (more air with /p/ than with /b/ etc.)

### c) Accoustical identification and differentiation exercises

- Identification exercises: the instructor (or an older child with native ability) has a list of words which contain, or do not contain, the respective sound. S/he reads the words to the students. The students raise their hands when words that contain the sought-after sound are articulated, and refrain from doing so with the other words.
- Differentiation exercises (e. g. b – p; d – t; č – ě): one part of the word includes one of the two differentiating sounds (e. g. /b/); the other part contains the other sound (e. g. /p/). The students must indicate which sound (e. g. by raising the left or right hand or holding up a little card, containing the letter b or p, respectively).

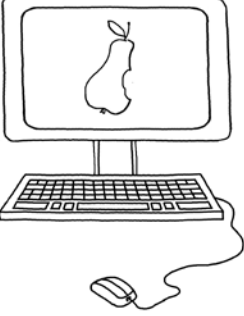
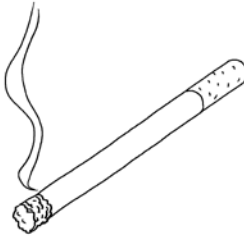
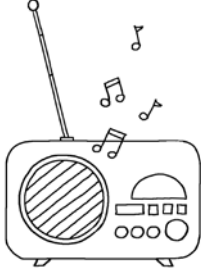
## d) Exercises with pictures

(analog to exercise c)

- Identification exercises: the students receive a sheet of paper with many pictures of objects, which may, or may not contain the respective sound. They must circle all objects which contain the sought-after sound. They then must correctly pronounce the words.
- Differentiation exercises: (e. g. b – p; d – t; ć – č): some of the depicted objects contain one of the sounds to be differentiated (e. g./b/); the others ones contain the other sound (e. g./p/). The students circle the pictures in either red or blue, according to the differentiated sounds. They then must correctly pronounce the words.
- Variants: the students sit in a circle. On the floor in the middle there are two sheets of paper. They are marked with a letter representing a sound; e. g. one of them spells "D, d", and the other one "T, t". Each child receives 5–7 little cards with pictures. One after the other, they show one of the cards. If the card contains one of the sounds, they may place it on the corresponding paper, otherwise they are placed on a blank sheet. (Picture cards can either be bought, or self-made with the help of older students.)

## e) Mark the initial, the medial, or the final syllable

- The students receive a paper with 12 pictures of objects. The respective sound may be at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the word. Below each object there are three fields. The students must check the corresponding field to indicate whether the sought-after sound is at the beginning, the middle, or at the end of the word. (see illustration).

Where is the r ?								
								

# 2

## “Anna says...”

### Goal

*With this exercise, the students practice conscientious listening and listening-comprehension in that they have to quickly process and apply what they have heard. At the same time, they learn in a playful way to follow the prompts of the instructor and to solidify their receptive vocabulary.*

1<sup>st</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> grade

5–10 minutes



### Hints:

This exercise is based on the children’s play “Simon says”, which is known and applied world-wide under various names.

The name “Anna” may of course be replaced with a typical name from the language and culture of the students.

### Procedure:

- The instructor gives the students a simple command that begins with “Anna says”. Example: “Anna says: go silently around the room.”, “Anna says: clap your hands.”.
- The students may only follow the commands if these begin with “Anna says”. If the instructor issues a prompt without uttering “Anna says” (e.g. “come forward!”), the students have to ignore the command.
- If students violate this rule (i. e. react to a prompt that does not begin with “Anna says”), they must sit out for a while or a certain number of rounds.

### Suggestions, what Anna could say:

- ▶ “Anna says: touch your right knee.”
- ▶ “Anna says: stand on your chair.”
- ▶ “Anna says: walk like an old man / like an old woman / like a king / like a tiger, stalking a prey / like an ape.”



### Variants:

- A student gives the instructions instead of the instructor.
- The students have to do the opposite of what Anna demands. If “Anna says: sit down”, they have to stand up.

# 3

## “I see something that you don’t see”

### Goal

*The students solidify their oral vocabulary in a playful way and practice their oral expression and listening competences.*

KiGa–6. Kl.

5–20 Min.



Materials:  
possibly a picture book.

Hint:

This game can be played with the entire class, smaller groups, or in teams of two students.

Procedure:

- A child visualizes an object in the classroom that can be seen by all (e. g. the wall board, a door handle, a lamp...). S/he says: “I see something you don’t see.”
- The other students then ask questions to find out which object s/he had in mind. Only questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no” are allowed (e. g. “is it a piece of furniture?”, “is it red?”). By posing skillful questions, the field of possible objects can be narrowed step by step. Example: “Is it on the right side of the classroom? Is it large? Is it green?”. If the answer is positive, the same student may continue to ask questions; if not, it becomes someone else’s turn.
- As soon as a student has correctly guessed the object of interest (“is it the wall board?” “Yes!”), it becomes that student’s turn to think of an object that the other must guess.

Variants:

- Instead of playing with real objects, the game can also be played in small groups with pictures that contain many different objects (optimally suitable for this game are so-called “hidden object pictures”).
- Instead of thinking of an object, the students think of a prominent person, or a classmate, a profession, or other topics that were previously agreed upon.
- The instructor hides an object that has something to do with the lesson’s topic. The object can be hidden in a box, etc. The students must guess what this object could be. This variation may also be suitable as an introduction to a lesson topic (e. g. hidden sun glasses could segue to a “vacation” theme).
- Instead of guessing objects, the students must listen with closed eyes to noises and voices in order to guess what they are. This variant is also suitable to practice listening and to further the ability to concentrate.

# 4

## “Find someone, who...”

### Goal

*This exercise serves to practice the communicative competences and listening comprehension in a simple and playful manner. Additionally, the students get to know each other better by asking questions of each other, carefully listening to the answers and responding adequately.*

1<sup>st</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

10–20 minutes



#### Materials:

Cards with instructions, prepared by the instructor (2–3 per student).

#### Reference:

Piel (2002), page 103 (see Bibliographical reference).

#### Procedure:

- The instructor provides each student with two or three cards with instructions. The instructions are formulated on the cards. For example:



- The students move around in the classroom, asking their classmates the questions from the cards (not formulated, of course: “Does your family hail from a big city in our native country?” etc.). If a student finds a classmate who matches the posed question, s/he notes the person’s name on the corresponding card (or that person writes his/her name on the card). It is possible that several students may sign that same card.
- When all the cards have been signed (or when time has run out, e.g. after 10 minutes), the instructor discusses with the class what new things the students have learned from each other.

#### Comments:

- The instructions should be simple, so that all students find at least one match for the description.
- It is also possible to formulate the instructions on 2–3 different proficiency levels, distributed on different colored cards (green = simple, blue = middle level, red = advanced, etc.). The colors will be distributed according to the age and level of the students.
- The instructions should be class-specific and appropriate for the students’ resources in terms of culture and language.
- The cards with instructions can also be created by older students.
- In order to re-use and prolong the useful life of the cards, they can be laminated or preserved in display pockets.

# 5

## “Hot seat”

### Goal

*The students activate their receptive and productive oral vocabularies by describing and guessing vocabulary. At the same time, they expand and practice their repertoire on sentence patterns in their first language.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> grade

10–20 minutes



Procedure:

- The instructor divides the class into two equally strong groups (A and B). S/he designates two students to go first on the “hot seats”. For that purpose, two chairs are placed in front of the board, facing the class. One student represents group A, the other represents group B.
- The instructor writes a word on the board e. g. “cake” or “our capital city” or “to sneak”). The term involved should be familiar to all students. The students on the hot seat are facing the class and may not see the word.
- When the instructor signals the start of the game, the two groups begin to describe the word. The students may not name the word or the word stem under any circumstances. A group who violates that rule (e. g. by whispering the word to the student on the hot seat) must immediately forfeit that game). The two students on the hot seat must try to guess the word on the board, based on the hints from their group.
- As soon as one of the students on the hot seat correctly names the word on the board, his/her group wins the game.
- The game continues with different students on the hot seat and a new word on the board.

Variants:

- The terms are deliberately chosen in relation to HLT or current topics (Example: the water bodies in our country of origin, famous historical personalities). This way, the game also serves as an introduction to a new topic. If this should be too difficult for the younger students, this present variant should be used for the more advanced students and a simplified version implemented for the younger ones.
- The students choose the words themselves, either freely, or relative to a topic suggested by the instructor. The instructor then selects appropriate words from the students’ suggestions.

# 6

## Nursery rhymes and rhymes; poems and poetry

### Goal

*Working with verses, rhymes and poems is valuable for the most varied aspects of language development (articulation, vocabulary, syntactical repertoire, literary education, etc). This can and should be practiced at all age levels, ranging from the simple nursery rhyme in kindergarten to the discussion of lyric poetry at the upper level. The following suggestions are limited to the introduction of nursery rhymes and rhymes in kindergarten and the lower level classes.*

KiGa–3. Kl.

10–15 Min.



Materials:  
appropriate verses,  
rhymes and poems.

### Hints:

- The nursery rhymes and rhymes that are well-known in every culture, are in fact more important for language development than it would appear at first sight. With their rhythmical structure that stimulates repeating the words, they help to absorb and polish not only words, but whole phrases in a playful, almost suggestive manner. Thus, they contribute to the development of articulation, vocabulary and language structures. A similar process occurs by working with poems in the upper level classes. The students not only become acquainted with an important treasure from their culture; by working with lyrical texts, they also learn specific possibilities and nuances of language use that far surpass what they know from everyday language use. To afford the students these possibilities and make these dimensions accessible to them is no easy task, but an important and beautiful one. How well and successfully this can be accomplished can be seen, among others, in the impressive recitals by many HLT classes from southwestern Europe. See also #29.
- Reference: Silvia Hüsler (2009) (see Bibliographic references).

### Possible sequence:

- The students sit or stretch out on the floor, relaxed and with their eyes closed.
- The instructor recites the verse or rhyme in a slow, clear and loud voice.
- All students now sit in a circle. Together they discuss what they have heard, words they did not understand, and what internal images surfaced.
- Depending on the kind of verse or rhyme, the class collectively creates gestures, movements, etc. to go with the presentation of the verses.
- The instructor recites the verse or rhyme once more and performs the created movements. The children imitate the instructor's movements.
- As soon as they want, the children may participate and recite as well. In the closing phase, the instructor may take him/herself very far back from the recital.

### Variants:

- Introduction by reciting the verse/rhyme at a certain point in time: if the verse/rhyme is designed as an aid to a function (e. g. tidying up), it will be useful if the instructor always recites it in this situation. The children thus absorb it unknowingly and will in time recite and repeat it themselves on this occasion.
- Introduction through pictures (e. g. rhymes with animals): the instructor assembles pertinent pictures that can be used as an aid to orientation and support.
- As a change, older students may assume the introduction of a verse or rhyme.

Comments:

- The rhyme must be repeated various times, so that the children may eventually recite it on their own.
- Movements and gestures help to store the words. They serve as a reminder and orientation help to children if they don't remember how the verse/rhyme continue.

# 7

## Rapid -speak verses, playful language

### Goal

*Rapid-speak verses or tongue twisters (Zungenbrecher or Schnabelwetzter in German) together with other children's verses and playful language activities (see #6) are an integral part of almost all languages. The "work" with them is playful and amusing, while simultaneously promoting careful listening and precise articulation.*

KiGa–3. Kl.

5–10 Min.



Materials:

Tongue twisters in one's native language; collected by the teacher and the students.

References:

Tongue twisters in various languages can be found, for example, under <https://www.heilpaedagogik-info.de/zungenbrecher/287-zungenbrecher-deutsch-sprueche.html>

Procedure:

- The instructor presents a tongue twister and practices reciting it with the students part by part.
- The students practice the tongue twister individually, in pairs or in groups.

Variants:

- The instructor recites the tongue twister 2–3 times and prompts the students to reproduce it themselves, based on their listening comprehension (a less systematic approach than the above).
- The students bring their own tongue twisters to class and teach it to the other children.
- A collection project would be an excellent framework, whereby the students collect and write down tongue twisters and other playful language manifestations from among the family and relatives for the purpose of producing a booklet and audio file (CD, MP3). Moreover, this project could be easily coordinated with mainstream education classes and other language groups. See chapter 4 in the introduction.

Comments:

- Tongue twisters are demanding. Even adults and students with good oral competences may at least initially have difficulties with tongue twisters and must concentrate. Nevertheless, they serve as a good and fun introduction to a lesson, as well as a loosening-up activity in between or at the end of a lesson.
- In order to raise the students' competence level commensurate with the stated goals of the activity, it is important to attempt a nearly perfect reciting of the tongue twisters, the playful character of the activity notwithstanding.



# 8

## Simple role plays

### Goal

*Role plays tend to invigorate the lessons. They promote a deeper understanding of situations and texts, and represent an outstanding form of language training. In this way, the children learn to present themselves, to argue, create with language, and to implement it effectively.*

KiGa–3. Kl.

10–25 Min.



Materials:  
possibly a few props

Hint:

In contrast to the more sophisticated applications of language #26–28 (quasi-reality play, fictitious playing, theater plays) the following suggestions are very simple forms of role play that are, moreover, very much determined by the children themselves. In HLT, they are preferably practiced with the lowest age groups.

Procedure:

- The instructor divides the students in groups of 2–3 for the purpose of representing a scene that they have to imagine and play. The stronger and weaker students should be distributed such that the groups can cooperate well and all students contribute.



- Assignment to the groups: “Think of an everyday discussion scene that you would like to create, practice and present”. Additional suggestions may be required: Maybe something funny could be represented, a scene from your vacation in the country of origin, a language misunderstanding, something from school... Playing the scene may at most take 5 minutes.
- The groups have about 10 minutes to prepare, after which they play the scenes to each other or to the whole class. The other students provide feedback to a series of prepared questions, e. g., Why we liked this scene, why not? How was the representation and the comprehensibility? What caught our attention in terms of the language?

Variants:

- Instead of a scene from everyday life, a starting situation may be prescribed: something from the world of fairy tales, from the future (when you're 50 years old), something from the world of animals, etc. See also #26–28.
- 

Comments:

- Clear instructions are important: the time limit for preparation and play, no fight scenes or chasing anyone, but as much dialog as possible.
- The time required for this exercise can be varied as necessary. If more time is planned, the dialogs can be longer and the groups can be larger. Moreover, the dialogs can be enhanced with props and little backdrops.



**Part II:  
To conduct oneself adequately  
in conversations – in pairs and  
in groups**

# 9

## Establishing and practicing conversational rules

### Goal

*The students discover and practice rules that are important for successful discussions in pairs and in groups. Thus, they expand their communicative and social competences and learn to conduct themselves effectively in their first language in terms of group discussions as well.*

2<sup>nd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

15–30 minutes



Materials:  
possibly a poster

### Hints:

- A prerequisite that allows for productive talks and discussions in the first place is the adherence to certain rules of discussion and democratic behaviors. This applies for private discourse, but even more so in the context of the school, where communicative competence is one of the target areas of social and language education. It is self-evident, however, that establishing such a culture is a long-term process which requires time and again sustained work and practice.
- Aside from the explicit rules for the students, there still exists another, equally important dimension. It concerns the role of the instructors and their conduct in talks and discussion rounds, as indicated in chapter 3c in the introduction. As a reminder, the pertinent key words include: restraint on the part of the instructor, reflective formulation of open questions and suggestions, delegation of moderator functions to the students.

### Structure and central elements of speech education:

- As a starting point, an authentic situation would perhaps be best where, for instance, a communication process was disturbed by someone who repeatedly interrupted and unfairly attacked the other speakers. Such a situation may prompt a discussion of how to better communicate and “how to discuss issues as fair and equal partners”.
- The first two or three rules (at most!) are discussed, agreed upon, and written on a poster. It is important that the students formulate the rules themselves, rather than adopting the teacher’s version. It is most likely that the students are already familiar with the culture of conversation and its rules from their regular curriculum classes. Examples of conversation rules are shown on the next page.
- In the following 2–3 weeks, the rules are practiced repeatedly. Someone from the class can be selected as the responsible moderator who can intervene immediately if someone violates a rule.
- In the next few months, the rules are expanded and further refined and practiced, as described above.
- There should also be regular discussions of the question how our culture of conversation has changed, and where the students still see a potential for improvement.
- Many rules can also be supported with little helpful strategies. See examples on the following page.

## Examples of conversation rules:

- I speak loudly and clearly.
- I listen to the speaker(s).
- I do not interrupt anyone.
- I raise my hand if I want to speak.
- I respect the opinions of my classmates.
- I will not ridicule or laugh at anyone, based on his/her opinion.
- I will not deviate from the discussion topic.
- I will make reference to the previous speaker's comments.
- I make eye contact with my audience when I speak.

---

## Examples of "supportive strategies" for the implementation of certain rules:

- Concerning the rule not to interrupt anyone: the student who speaks holds a ball (or a stone) in his/her hand. When s/he is finished speaking, s/he passes the ball on to the next designated speaker. This signifies clearly that only the child who holds the ball is authorized to speak.
- Concerning the concept of active listening, i.e., the rule of making reference to the previous speaker's comments: for 2–3 discussions, every opinion voiced has to begin with the sentence "XY has said that ..., I personally see it this way: ...". See also #12 with pertinent, specific sentence building blocks.
- Variant of active listening: every student must ask at least once during the discussion ("XY, did I understand you correctly: you mean that ...?").
- Helpful strategies, so that the instructors can withdraw from her central position:
  - a) The students themselves call on each other (or pass the ball on to someone, see above).
  - b) An upper class student is selected as moderator for every larger discussion. This student prepares for the discussion together with the instructor, formulates the beginning questions or prompts and moderates the further process. The instructor only intervenes in case of need. See also #14 and 15.
- A helpful strategy to encourage everyone's participation: each child receives three buttons, paper clips, or paper strips. The students sit in a circle and those who contributed to the discussion place one of those clips, etc., in the center. The goal is that all students deposit their items. This approach prevents some students' dominating the conversation, while others hardly ever have the chance to speak.

# 10

## Preparing for a conversation

### Goal

The students learn to obtain an overview of a topic and to plan how to purposefully express themselves in their first language. This exercise represents the oral equivalent of the exercises for planning a written text; see the volume "Promoting writing in the first language", #8–10, 13, AB1, 16. See also #11 and #22.

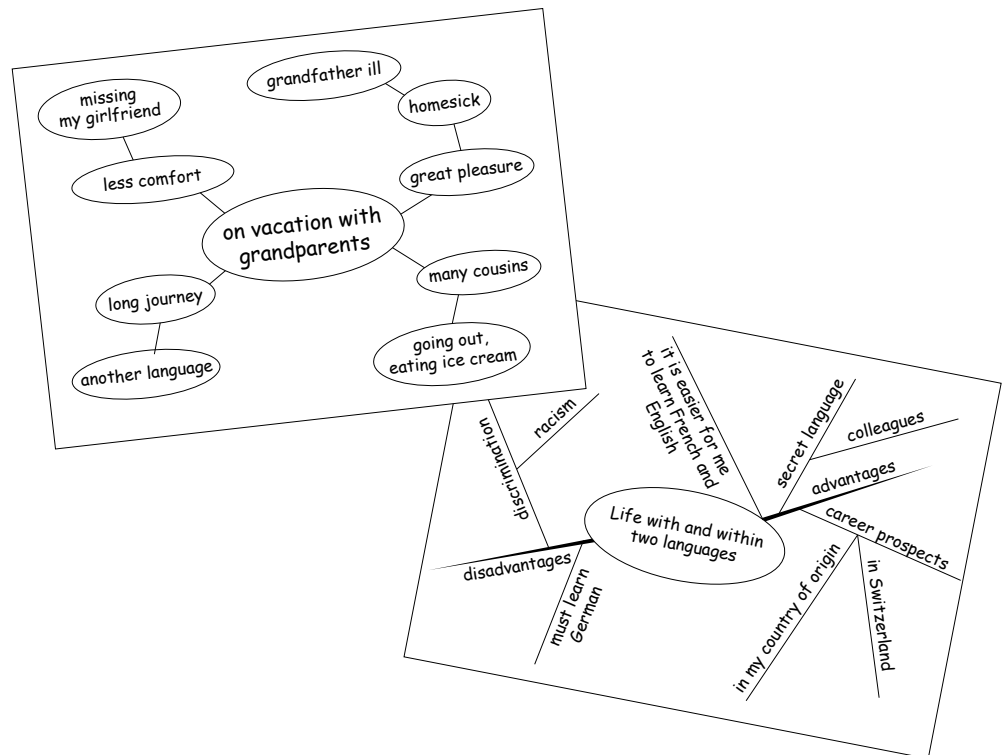
1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> grade

20–45 minutes



Procedure:

- The instructor announces the discussion topic (e. g. "Leisure time in our country of origin and here" or "Where would I like to live in 20 years?").
- The students are allowed 5–10 minutes to individually plan what they could and would like to contribute to the conversation topic. They should jot down their reflections as notes, or as a drawing, a mind map or a cluster. (For a discussion of clusters und mind maps, see #8.1 and 8.2 in the volume "Promoting writing in the first language"). They should also consider how to arrange the sequence of adding their thoughts and contributions to the conversation.



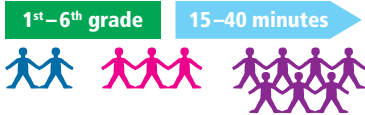
- In pairs, the students then exchange their thoughts and discuss uncertainties, including questions in conjunction with their first language.
- In a round with the class as a whole, the questions are clarified. A small basis vocabulary for the topic of discussion may be written on the board. If possible, this should also include argumentative means of speech, such as "I see it this way ..."; "In my opinion ..." etc. (See #1c in the introduction).
- In the class as a whole, or in small groups, the students conduct the discussion of the announced topic. Naturally, this must occur in observation of the learned rules of discussion (see #9).
- Finally, a short discussion of the quality of the talks and possible problems, including language issues, should take place.

# 11

## “Think – Pair – Share”: An alternative procedure for preparing oneself for a group discussion

### Goal

*The students are supported by a cooperative learning procedure in order to gain an overview of a discussion and plan their contributions to the topic in a coordinated manner.*



### Hint:

- “Think – pair – share” is a well-known and widely used form of cooperative learning. It consists of the following three steps:
  1. to reflect (individually)
  2. to discuss the results in pairs or groups of three students
  3. to present the joint results to the whole class.

Applied to the area of speech education, the procedure helps students to clarify thoughts and to plan individual contributions before the discussion per se, before introducing them into the group conversation.

- This procedure is closely related to the one referenced in #10. It is presented separately here primarily in view of those classes that are already familiar with “think – pair – share” from other contexts (regular curriculum classes, other subjects). The purpose here is to name and differentiate the three phases particularly clearly.

### Procedure:

- The instructor announces the discussion topic (for examples, see #10).
- Phase “think”: individually, the students write down their reflections about the topic on a sheet of paper. Possible lead questions for the students may be written on the board:
  - What is the discussion topic? What is the goal?
  - What kinds of thoughts and images occur to you with this theme?
  - What experiences have you already had with this topic?
  - What do you already know about this topic?
  - What is important to you about this theme?
  - Which questions interest you about this theme?
- Phase “pair”: in pairs or groups of three, the students explain their considerations with the help of their notes. They try to clarify and reduce uncertainties with inquiries and explanations. Questions and problems concerning their first language (missing terms, etc.) are addressed.
- Phase “share”: seated in a circle, the students introduce their thoughts, experiences or questions to the discussion group (whole class or entire group level). The instructor (or a student, if possible) moderates the discussion round.
- Possibly a “meta discussion” a) about the individual steps of the process, b) about the quality of the discussion and potential problems. This discussion should certainly include any questions pertaining to the language and difficulties (what could be improved in terms of the conversation competence in the first language, and how?).



# 12

## Tying into the discussion contributions of others

### Goal

*This exercise serves to practice two important communicative competences: 1. attentive listening and 2. the ability to observe the inner connection or coherence of a discussion.*

3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade

30 minutes



#### Materials:

Large paper strips or a poster for the building blocks of the sentence

#### Hint:

This exercise relates to an important rule of conversation, as suggested in #9 (“In reference to what the previous speaker said”). It supports the students with the sentence building blocks as a tool which they must use to apply the rule. For working with sentence building blocks, see also chapter 2c “Expanded means of speech” in the introduction.

#### Procedure:

- The instructor explains that a good, coherent discussion can only be achieved if the participants relate to one another so that they make connections with the previous speakers’ contributions to the conversation. The instructor and students then discuss possible means of speech or sentence building blocks and write them down on paper strips or a poster.
- To test it, the instructor then makes an assertion and requests that the students make a connection to it with the listed sentence beginnings (e.g. “I find it useful that cell phones are not allowed in class”). This exercise will be repeated with other assertions until the students understand the principle.
- In the next 2–3 group or class discussions, students will deliberately pay attention to the importance of making connections to the previous speakers, either with the prescribed or the students’ own sentences. Following the discussion, the students will engage in reflections about their experiences with the sentence building blocks: which sentence blocks were particularly useful? Are there other sentence blocks that we could utilize?

### Examples of sentence building blocks for reference and linking:

- I would like to ask XY a further question:...
- In this regard, I would like to say the following:...
- XY has alleged/said that..., but...
- I agree with XY. I too, find...
- I do not agree with what XY has said, because...
- To what XY has suggested, I would add:...
- If I understood you right...
- I conclude that...
- It has been my experience that...
- It is good/bad that... / I like it (don’t like it), when...

# 13

## Providing feedback

### Goal

*The students gain experience and practice dealing with feedback in a constructive manner. They learn to formulate feedback in a precise, focused and sympathetic fashion, as well as to accept feedback from others in a positive and responsible manner.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

15–25 minutes



#### Materials:

The students should have short texts (ca. ½ page) on hand, which they had written earlier. (for variants see below).

#### Hints:

- Dealing constructively with feedback in paired and group discussions is a key aspect of a good culture of discussion. Respective exercises must, of course, be practiced repeatedly with variations in order to provide the students with lasting support.
- The important thing is to previously stipulate the rules for feedback with the students. Here are two elementary rules:

1. Feedback must be formulated in the I-form (Example: “I believe that...”, “I like (don’t like) ...”)

2. Opinions must be justified (Ex: “I like your text, because ...”, “I am bothered that you...”, “Because you ...”).

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#### Procedure:

- The children are divided into groups of two. Student A reads his/her text to student B.
- Child B listens attentively while paying attention to his/her thoughts and feelings.
- Child B answers for him/herself the lead questions in note form that are suitable for a feedback. These can refer either to the previously established criteria for the text, or general questions, such as “What do you like about your work, and what not so much?”, “What I would absolutely keep as is, what I would change/improve?”.
- Child B provides student A with feedback, based on his/her notes.
- The exercise is repeated with reversed roles.
- Possible discussion at the meta level: What went well/not so well in providing feedback; what was my own experience with the feedback I received?

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#### Variants:

- Instead of relating to a text, feedback can also be provided concerning a drawing, a presentation or another personal achievement.
- Feedback can also be provided in larger groups, which increases the number of responses. In addition, there is also the possibility of continued feedback review, thus improving its quality.

# 14

## Accoustical training, five exercises for sound differentiation

### Goal

*If students assume the function of discussion moderator (instead of the instructor), they gain additional opportunities to practice their speaking and listening competences. Additionally, it furthers their autonomy, their social competence and their opportunities to practice democratic conduct.*

4<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

30–45 minutes



Materials:  
Role cards, prepared by the instructor or created in the classroom.

Procedure:

- The instructor first explains that the distribution of clear conversation roles can contribute to the quality of a discussion. Individual roles are then discussed and the cards with appropriate roles are produced (if they had not already been prepared by the instructor. For a sample role card, see next page). Examples of roles or functions:
  - **Discussion leader:**  
Ensures that students stick to the subject, has a complete overview and the primary responsibility (demanding).
  - **Recorder:**  
Takes notes of possible group results (demanding).
  - **Share -of- conversation manager:**  
Ensures that everyone is given a chance, to avoid that individual students dominate the discussion (demanding).
  - **Rule keeper:**  
Ensures that important rules are adhered to, e.g. “only one speaker at a time” or “no one is laughed at” (moderately difficult).
  - **Time manager:**  
Is responsible for compliance with the predetermined talk time (easy).
- The conversation roles are assigned to the students according to their abilities. They receive an appropriate role card which specifies their role and corresponding assignment.
- The roles are first tested by means of a short, simple conversation.
- The discussion will be reviewed with the following questions: what went well? What can still be improved?

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Comments:

- The roles must be adapted according to the group and the conversational context. Every role should provide a genuine benefit to the group discussion. For instance, it would be redundant to appoint a sound volume manager if the group has no issues with loudness.
- All roles are important, but some are more challenging. This provides all students with an opportunity to actively contribute.

Example of a role card for the discussion leader:

Discussion leader	
1.	You open the conversation. <i>"The goal of our discussion today is..."</i>
2.	You then pose a question or ask for opinions. <i>"What do we require to reach this goal?"</i>
3.	You must ensure that the discussion participants stick to the subject. <i>"This does not fit with the topic."</i>
4.	You ask for clarification, if something is not comprehensible. <i>"What do you mean by...?"</i>
5.	You terminate the discussion! <i>"Today, we have agreed that..."</i>
6.	You ask a final question for the conversation: <i>"What do you think went well? What could we do better next time?"</i>

# 15 To assume the role of discussion moderator

**Goal** *This exercise is a simplified version of #14 and pursues the same objectives in the area of speech education: democratic conduct, and free speaking. By limiting the roles to just one (discussion leader), this exercise is also appropriate for younger students (from 2nd grade on) and for shorter discussion rounds.*

2<sup>nd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> grade 15–30 minutes



Procedure:

- It is presumed that a conversation topic has been chosen (either by the instructor or the students) or that the instructor has a prepared list with possible age-appropriate discussion topics from which the students can choose.
- The instructor explains that s/he would like to hand over the moderation of the conversation to a student. Who wants to give it a try? What do you have to pay attention to in guiding the discussion? (Key points: preparing stimulating questions and prompts; observing the time frame; compliance with the conversation rules established thus far.)
- The child who assumes the moderator role is given 5 minutes of preparation time and writes down a few inspiring questions and prompts for the conversation. The instructor must absolutely assist the student in this phase.
- The student initiates the conversation in that s/he writes the topic and the goal on the board and arranges his/her notes.
- The conversation is guided based on the discussion leader's notes.
- In closing, the course of the conversation and the experiences with the leadership of the discussion are briefly reviewed.

Variants:

- The moderator function can also be shared between two students.
- If possible, all students should be afforded the possibility of assuming the leadership of the conversation one time. This will require various conversations. It is also possible to pass on the leadership role of the discussion to another student after 5-10 minutes.
- The discussion leadership can also be implemented and practiced in forms such as class council, etc.

# 16

## Planning discussion

### Goal

*In the planning discussion, the students practice their argumentative skills, as well as their listening comprehension in the first language. Their discussing in a democratic manner things like agreements and clear regulations of responsibility, deadlines, etc. in conjunction with a project strengthens their autonomy and social competence at the same time.*

4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade

30–45 minutes



Hint:

The precondition for this exercise is that the students (or at least a group of them) have the time and theme for a project. This may involve minor projects (e. g. creating posters about various aspects of the country of origin in groups of 3 or 4), medium sized projects (e. g. preparing a presentation about a historical or geographical theme, or the preparation of a poetry recital) or large projects (the conception of a book or a CD with texts in the heritage language; preparation of a festival or a parents' evening with theater, aperitif, etc.). It is important that the time and content-related frame has been predetermined, so that the students can work as independently as possible.

Procedure:

- The students determine the project goal: "What do we want to accomplish together?"
- The students gather ideas: "How can we optimally achieve our goal?"
- The ideas are being discussed within the group or the class as a whole. Key questions: "Which ideas and goals can we realize? Who can contribute something?"
- Finally, a written plan is drafted: "Who does what, how, when, and with whom?"

Comments:

- The first planning discussion is guided by the instructor. After that, the discussion moderator and other roles (e. g. the recorder function) can be assumed by students (see #14 above). The instructor only intervenes when necessary.
- If the procedure, the key terms (in the first language!) and possibly other organizationally important points are listed in writing, this will enable the students to better orient themselves in the discussion and later with their work.

# 17

## Storytelling circle

### Goal

*The storytelling circle is a simple, ritualized form of school communication: the students sit in a circle (e. g. at the beginning of a lesson) and tell each other what they have experienced since the last meeting. In the process, they practice free speaking as well as the ability to narrate events chronologically and, of course, their listening comprehension.*

KiGa–9. Kl.

15 Min.

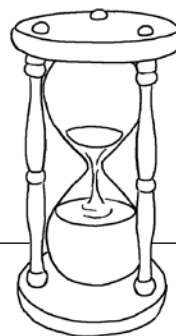


### Procedure:

- To begin the lesson, the instructor asks the students (or only those of a certain level) to sit in a circle. The students are familiar with the ritualized form of the telling circle and know, that for the next 15 minutes, they may relate their experiences from the previous week. The instructor tells as well what s/he has experienced and what worries him or her.
- Of course, the discussion rules (see #9) which have already been introduced, must be observed. The leadership function may also be assumed by a student, if this has been practiced before (see #14 and 15).
- The following rules have been proven useful for practicing listening comprehension: the students may ask the child who speaks a couple of questions. Then, it is the next student's turn to tell about his/her experiences.

### Variants:

- The telling circle can also take place at the end of a lesson unit instead of the beginning of the class.
- In case of a current event that preoccupies the students, the story telling circle may also be used for a discussion on the subject, with the time limit extended, as required.



### Comments:

- Each student determines if s/he wants to participate in the conversation or not. However, the instructor should ensure that mostly every child participates.
- In general, children like to tell stories in great detail. The instructor or the student moderator must ensure no students exceed the time limit and that all have a chance to tell. An hourglass may be a very useful means to enforce time restrictions. If the sand has passed through the hour glass (2 or 3 minutes), this signifies the speaker's time has run out.

# 18

## Discussing and arguing together

### Goal

*The purpose of this exercise is to further the development and expansion of the students' argumentative repertoire and relevant strategies. The students must represent an opinion concerning a certain topic, search for appropriate arguments and consider how they would react to other, perhaps contrary positions and arguments.*

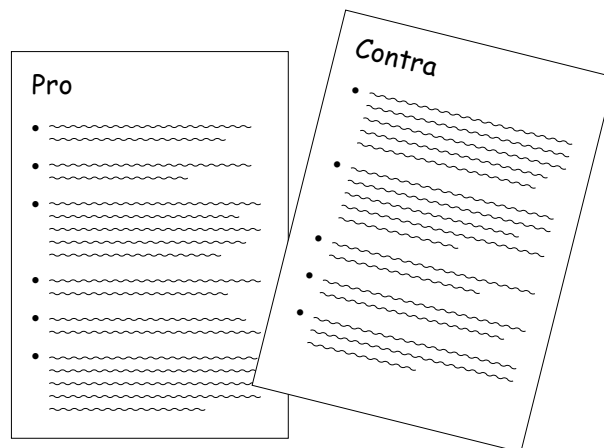
4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade

20–40 minutes



Procedure:

- The starting point is a statement, question, thesis or an assertion that must have a certain potential for discussion. The topic can either originate from the experiential world of the students (“Why do boys have more freedom than girls?”, “Why are many parents opposed to pets?”), or from a current political theme (“What do you think about the demand to limit the number of foreigners?”) or be related to the country of origin (“Where would you prefer to live in 20 years: here or in the country of your parents. Why?”). The discussion topic can be proposed by the instructor or, better yet, by the students..
- The discussion will be prepared in groups of two or three, depending on the theme, or it will be planned as a pro and contra debate from the beginning, whereby the students separate into two groups to prepare their arguments. The important thing is that all students consider their arguments and record them in key words, if possible.



- It would also be possible to insert an intermediate round, whereby language and sentence building blocks in the first language are collected (and tried out!). See chapter 1c in the introduction, as well as #10 and #12.
- For the discussion or debate per se, the previously agreed-upon discussion rules apply (see #9), which stipulate a particularly fair and democratic comportment.
- The discussion leadership role and possible other roles can be assumed by students. See also #14 and #15. It is particularly important to define the leadership roles for pro and contra discussions of controversial topics.
- Among the particularly important tasks of the discussion leadership is to ensure balanced speaking times and a balanced share of the conversation for the different parties and positions.
- Following the discussion, a short reflection and evaluation round should take place: What went well; what to we have to pay more attention to in the next round?

# 19

## Conducting educational discussions

### Goal

*Among the most intensive dialogical conversation forms are the educational talks between the instructor and individual students. It is here that the students also experience how to use their first language in a demanding and reflective context. They learn how to evaluate themselves and to reflect their learning, their progress as well as aspects where they still can improve.*

1<sup>st</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

5–25 minutes



### Hints:

- The framework for educational discussions in HLT comprises mostly two types of situations:
  1. Shorter educational talks that concern primarily a brief feedback about a specific task. This type can occur during class, e. g. parallel to students' quiet work assignments in class.
  2. More comprehensive educational discussions, which involve more of a fundamental status assessment. They require more time and should be conducted before or after class.
- Educational discussions should be conducted with every student at least once per semester. In practice, this often occurs in conjunction with a grade report. Equally valuable are also educational talks concerning a specific assignment (presentation, etc.).
- It is useful when the instructor and the students prepare themselves for the discussion. To this end, the students should receive concrete questions or assignments.
- In exceptional cases, educational talks can be conducted with two students simultaneously.
- Good information, suggestions and examples (in German) are available in the internet under the heading <Schulentwicklung nrw - Lerngespräche führen>.

### Procedure (Example):

- The starting point can be the instructor's request for an educational talk with the students concerning a specific task or generally about their progress and development needs. It can also result from the request of a child to discuss a certain task, problem, or progress with his/her teacher.
- Before more fundamental discussions, an appropriate and fitting timeframe should be determined to allow the conversation partners ample time for preparation.
- The educational discussion ends with a summary. Possibilities: a short protocol with agreements is drafted, or concrete goals for the next weeks or 3-4 months are agreed upon and recorded.

### Examples of questions to prepare for the educational discussion about a particular task:

- ▶ Please report: in what aspects did I succeed well in this assignment?
- ▶ What was difficult for me?
- ▶ Where do I have to improve?
- ▶ What can and will I do differently next time?



# 20

## Philosophizing together

### Goal

*"Philosophizing with children" is popular in many West-European schools as a valuable approach for the development of language and thought. It invites children to follow questions that interest them, and for which there are mostly no definite answers. In terms of language, the children practice their competence for oral expression and absorbing and reflecting of information.*

1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade

15–30 minutes



Bibliographic reference:  
see various links in the internet  
under the heading "Philosophizing  
with children".

### Hints:

- The themes can be suggested by the instructor, but should originate from the students, if at all possible. It is useful to previously compile a selection of ideas (Prompt: "Consider and write down topics and questions that you would like to discuss and learn more about. They can also be very difficult questions!"). From this pool of questions, some will be selected with the class for discussion over the next few months.
- Appropriate topics for philosophizing are also found in areas where adults do not have a quick answer. Example: "Where do I come from?", "What makes a good friend?", "Who invented language?", "What happens after death?", "Why does racism exist?", "What does foreigner really mean"?
- The introduction to the discussion can also be prompted by a picture, a story, a book, or an artifact.

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### Procedure:

- The preferred seating arrangement is a circle.
- The philosophizing discussion can be conducted with the entire class or just one or two group levels, as long as the other students are engaged in working productively and independently for themselves.
- The instructor can moderate the discussion, or the function can be assumed by practiced capable students (similarly to other assumed roles, see #14). The important thing is that the instructor purposely refrains from interfering as much as possible so as not to constrain the students.
- It can be useful to remind the students prior to the conversation once more about the discussion rules (see #9) and particularly emphasize the rule not to laugh at anyone, to seriously consider everyone's contribution, as well as the rule that there are neither right nor wrong answers in philosophizing. This has to be made clear to all participants once more before the discussion.
- Central to philosophizing is the free expression, not the correct use of language, and corrections and interventions should be avoided as much as possible.

# 21

## Preparing for a survey or an interview

### Goal

Surveys and interviews are forms of information gathering. As such, they are of high value for HLT as well. They lead to authentic statements and "data", whose quality, however, strongly depends on the type of interview. Therefore, it is well worth the effort to consider the questions carefully. In doing so, the students learn at the same time to apply their first language in a new context and a more differentiated and reflective manner.

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

30–90 minutes



Materials:  
possibly an example of a survey or interview.

### Hint:

- A survey, as defined here, signifies interviews or polls, in which the answers to rather narrowly formulated questions (e. g. of 20 persons) are recorded and enumerated, such as the topic of TV consumption or resorts. In an interview, on the other hand, more open questions are asked, which lead to longer answers and reports. Interviews are mostly conducted with only one or a few persons because of their more elaborate analysis.
- The content of the interviews or surveys must be given. Generally, they are connected to current issues and topics discussed in class, for which people from one's own culture should be consulted for their expert opinions. Examples: interviews with our parents and grandparents about the topic «leisure time then and now» or "childhood then and now". – Phone interviews with friends and relatives about the topic "leisure activities here and in the country of origin". – Interviews with various people about the topic of "rights and roles of girls and boys".
- New possibilities and means for interviews and surveys which result from skype and cell phone technology, as well as e-mail, SMS and facebook for written surveys, absolutely should be used. These media allow students to interview people in the country of origin, and should definitely be used.

### Procedure:

- Before conducting their own interviews and surveys, the students must be introduced to the topic and the "methodology". The instructor should most likely be able to tie into students' pertinent experiences in regular classroom instruction (to be verified by polling the students or discussions with the teachers of mainstream education classes).
- As a possible introduction, the instructor models a practical example by asking a student about everyday themes and may deliberately pose good and less suitable questions. This may already be recorded with a recording device or a cell phone, so that the students can replay and review the questions and answers one more time.
- This experience is then analyzed and discussed and serves as an opportunity to develop the criteria for a good survey or interview. The students will have to observe these criteria in conducting their own surveys and interviews.
- The following steps are compiled in the conception of a survey (for an interview, see next page):

## Steps in the conception of a survey

- ▶ Determine the goals of the survey (what do we want to find out?).
- ▶ Find appropriate questions (two types of questions to differentiate):
  - *Decisional questions*: answer possibilities are dictated (thus easier to document and analyze). Example: "Do you prefer to speak German or English?". This type is characteristic for surveys.
  - *Open questions*: this type allows for several and longer answers. This generates a broader and more exciting spectrum of information, but its analysis is more challenging. Example: "In your view, what should we learn in school?". This type is frequently used for interviews.



- ▶ Consider already how the answers should be evaluated (counting, summarizing, commenting, etc.). This definitely requires the instructors advice.
- ▶ Also consider and clarify the form of the final presentation.
- ▶ Determine, how and where the questions and answers are administered (audio recording with recording device, cell phone, etc.; written summary). If the survey is conducted in pairs, student 1 can ask the questions, which student 2 records and documents.
- ▶ Consider an appropriate place for the survey (no distractions, no noise).
- ▶ Find appropriate people for the survey, inform them about the purpose and context of the survey, and ask for their participation.
- ▶ Conduct a trial run with 2–3 people, tweak questions if necessary.
- ▶ Implement the survey with other persons, always thanking the participants.
- ▶ Written analysis of the survey: how many persons answered certain questions? What have we learned (summarize the answers to individual questions)? Have we learned and experienced anything new? What was exciting or embarrassing?
- ▶ Presentation of the results according to the previously discussed guidelines (e.g. 10 minutes as a short presentation or with a poster).

**Additional points  
for the interview  
(more demanding  
than the survey)**

- The questions here should be as open and broadly formulated as possible to get the interviewee to talk. In order to get the interview conversation going, no questions should be posed that could be answered in a single word. It is better to ask questions as to how, what, where and when, and to follow up with more probing if something sounds exciting.
- The answers during the interview are written down or recorded as key words. A word-for-word written account is too laborious for longer interviews. Instead of a written text, well selected excerpts from audio recordings may be featured at the final presentation.





**Part III:  
Narrating and interpreting  
of experiences and stories**

# 22

## Preparing and practicing telling stories

### Goal

*The students acquire strategies and concrete tips for preparing and improving their oral storytelling abilities. The exercise (which should be repeated various times, of course) furthers their oral expression competence in the first language and contributes to the development of their lexical and syntactical repertoire.*

2<sup>nd</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> grade

20–45 minutes

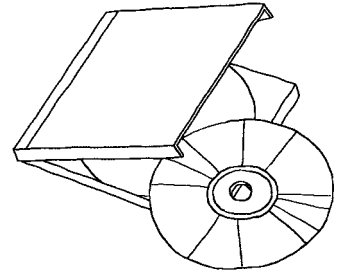


Procedure:

- The instructor tells the students a short story. S/he pays particular attention to implementing and emphasizing her storytelling tips (see next page). (Variant: the instructor first narrates the story in a dull, monotonous voice, and subsequently in a lively and vivid manner).
- The students listen attentively. The ensuing discussion centers around how to tell a story in a clear and interesting manner that captures the interest of the listeners. In doing so, the individual points should be practically put to the test as well.
- Collectively, the students arrange the points in form of a list “Tips for vivid story telling” (example: see below).
- For the practical application (maybe in a later lesson), the students imagine an episode or story which they would like to present in observation of the aforementioned tips. (Variant: in pairs; which allows for a dialog). See also #23 (Everyday stories), 24 (Telling personal stories) and 25 (Narrating creatively).
- It is also useful to write down key words for the main thread of the story as a short written preparation. Those who wish may write out the whole story and use this text as foundation for the subsequent practice.
- Questions and problems relating to language are discussed and clarified with the help of the instructor. The instructor may also provide good examples for varied sentence beginnings, etc.
- The students now begin to practice telling stories. For that purpose, they will select two tips each which they may want to keep especially in mind.
- If every child has practiced telling the story two to three times, s/he seeks out a partner to tell the story. The feedback received will contribute to further improve the presentation.
- The final presentation may take place before the entire class or within the stage group. The other students listen carefully and provide critical feedback, based on the adherence to the tips for telling stories.
- Aspects related to language should definitely also be part of the discussion: what was difficult in the first language; what (and how) would we need to learn additionally?

#### Hints:

- This exercise can be very challenging for more inhibited learners and those with weak competencies in the first language. The instructor or a student with well developed language skills should definitely offer assistance in such cases. However, these kinds of exercises are particularly instructive and helpful for weaker students; disappointing experiences must therefore be avoided with all means.
- To generate an additional motivation for storytelling, the class or group may decide to record the narrations and to make them available as CD or MP3 files. Moreover, if a common theme is selected (e.g. vacation adventures from the country of origin), it may result in a thematically coherent, attractive audio collection.
- See also #10 ("Preparing for a conversation"), which pursues similar goals in terms of communicative situations, as well as #25 (narrating creatively), #29 (practicing reading out loud) and #30 (preparing the presentation).



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### Tips for narrating

- Speak loudly and clearly so that everyone understands you!
- Make deliberate use of your voice: loud and soft, threatening, friendly, sad, happy...
- Use your facial expression and gestures: scowl, make a tired or happy face, use body language appropriate for the action.
- Always resume eye contact with your public; also pose a question to the audience once in a while.
- Describe the persons and animals in your story precisely and vividly. What do they look like, what kind of an impression do they make?
- Describe the places of the action in your story precisely and vividly. What can you see, hear, smell, what is the atmosphere like?





# 23

## Everyday stories

### Goal

*Everyday storytelling concerns mainly the narration of a person's own adventures and experiences. This simple and low-threshold way of narrating a story does not require high standards of fantasy, but nevertheless contributes to the development of oral competences, structuring of text and listening.*

KiGa–9. Kl.

10–30 Min.



Procedure (choice of possibilities):

- In case the “ritualized” storytelling circle (see #17) is not used, the introduction to everyday stories may also originate from teacher input. For instance, the instructor may show a picture or begin by telling an episode, and the students then follow his/her example. To ensure that the students listen closely and that their stories remain connected, they should ask questions of each other and make reference to each other. (see also #12).
- Variant: the instructor or a child brings an artifact to class and tells something about it. This can be someone's favorite object, something from the country of origin, or a utilitarian, everyday object. It is best if students are previously told to (“bring something to class next week”).
- The introduction can also occur with a child's telling about an important event that will motivate the other students to tell about similar experiences.
- An upcoming school event, a religious or other festival can also serve as an introduction to everyday storytelling.

Comments:

- Everyday storytelling is a simple, informal manner of narration, but it should nevertheless be an appealing presentation (see tips for narrating #22).
- These kinds of conversations must not necessarily always involve the class as a whole. Short breaks or the drop-off time before classes start can also be used for storytelling purposes.

# 24

## Telling personal stories

### Goal

*By telling personal stories in a moderated educational context, the students learn to use their first language for the presentation of their experiences and for the expression of their feelings as well. At the same time, they hone their communicatively relevant competencies like listening comprehension, follow-up questions, and mutual references. Last but not least, telling personal stories furthers important social aspects, such as empathy and mutual understanding.*

2<sup>nd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

10–30 minutes



Materials:  
Possibly conversation cards  
(see examples)

### Hints:

- We are not going to focus on uncontrolled, spontaneous telling of personal adventures and experiences, etc. here, as this should have its place in school anyway. This can occur in directed situations, such as the storytelling circle (see #17) or also totally unplanned, if a problem, an important experience, or a happy event will need to be discussed.
- No child should be pressured to reveal personal feelings, adventures or experiences. Part of the nature and important characteristic of telling personal stories is its voluntariness. However, if a child remains silent for a longer period of time, the instructor should be concerned about the reasons and seek to remedy the situation.

### Procedure:

- As an introductory impulse for discussion situations that involve personal thoughts, experiences and feelings, the instructor may hand out conversation cards or write a question on the board, which is then discussed.  
Example:



- A suggestion from the students can serve equally well as an introductory impulse for the conversation.
- Pictures or photographs can also be very good prompts for personal conversations.
- It is also a good idea to collect suggestions (possibly anonymous ones) in an envelope as a prompt for personal conversation rounds.



- Before the discussions, students should be afforded a few minutes to collect their thoughts and reflections, as well as to note possible language problems. See also #10 (How to prepare for a conversation).
- Perhaps a short practice round is needed before the discussion, in order to:
  1. clarify language questions (e. g. terms in the first language),
  2. review sentence building blocks or language means, suggested by the instructor, which could be especially useful (phrases, such as “In my opinion ...”, “I find rather that ...”) and
  3. a reminder of important conversation rules, e. g. “I listen attentively”, “No one will be laughed at because of his/her opinion”, “I will not interrupt anyone” etc. (see #9).
- The discussion of the question can first occur in pairs or also directly involve a larger group (group level or entire class).

# 25 Narrating creatively

## Goal

*Surveys and interviews are forms of information acquisition that are also highly valuable for HLT. They lead to authentic statements and “data”; the quality of which, however, depends strongly on the nature of information gathering. It is therefore well worthwhile to carefully consider the questions. In doing so, the students also learn to apply their first language in a new context and in a differentiated and reflective manner.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

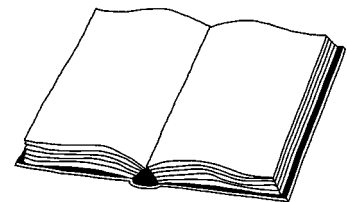
20–40 minutes



Materials:  
possibly choice of texts for the students  
(Fairy tales, fables, stories...).

### Procedure:

- As a possible introduction, the instructor tells a story, e. g. a fairy tale, a legend or another (not very long) story from the students’ heritage culture and literature. The instructor endeavors to create a vivid and lively presentation of the text, observing the tips for a lively presentation, suggested in #22.
- The students are then instructed to practice presenting a story in a similar fashion, either individually or in small groups. The instructor distributes appropriate texts (shorter ones for the weaker students and longer ones for the more advanced students).
- The most important criteria for a lively and vivid narration are gathered and reviewed one more time (see tips in #22); the students should adhere to them.
- The students practice to present their narration (for procedures, see #22).
- The individual narrations are then presented to the class as a whole.
- The exercise concludes with criteria-oriented discussion, as described in #22.



Variants:

- The instructor shows a picture or an artifact as a means of generating a discussion. The whole class then begins to invent a story whereby one student begins and another one continues the story, and so on. The story ends after everyone has contributed their part. The narrations should be rendered as expressively as possible in terms of voice control, gestures and mimicry. This variant is mostly suitable for small groups
- The instructor distributes cards with words about a topic. S/he begins a story with a sentence that contains the word on the card. A student continues the story with a word on his/her card, etc.
- For additional motivation, the narrative texts can be recorded, and made available as CDs or MP3 files.

# 26

## Quasi-real play, social role play

### Goal

*Contrary to the simple role play described in #8, the following type consists of more strongly shaped representations with more detailed guidelines. The aim is to strengthen the ability to argue, the deliberate and designed use of language and nonverbal means (gestures, mimicry) and the skills to present oneself in a convincing manner. Depending on the topic, these scenes also contribute to the expansion of speaking strategies and a theme-specific vocabulary.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

30–45 minutes



Materials:  
possibly a few props

Procedure:

- The instructor describes a situation that entails a certain potential for conflict or tension. Examples:
  - a) In school, two students quarrel because one of them inadvertently broke the other student's pencil.
  - b) In their spare time, two native children or adolescents mock two migrants.
  - c) While on vacation in her country of origin, a young girl is made fun of by two youths who live there.
  - d) Over dinner at home, a child asks for something that her parents absolutely do not want (e. g. get a dog, or go to the disco).
- Group or class discussions about how the students would react in this situation. Possible questions and prompts: How would you feel in this situation? What thoughts occur to you? How would you conduct yourself concretely? What kinds or realistic solutions are there?
- Perhaps include a round of discussions about language means, if needed. See "remarks" on the following page.
- Engage in a short discussion about which criteria should be observed in the individual presentations (e. g. plausibility of the solution; quality of the language; understandability, etc.). The criteria should be transparent and known by all students. For working with criteria matrices that are appropriate for this case, see chapter 3d in the introduction.



- The students are divided into groups (or they form groups of their own). They have 10–15 minutes to prepare their presentation. The presentation should take no more than 5–8 minutes.
- The groups dramatize their solutions. Following each presentation (or at the end of the exercise, if there are few groups) the other students provide the criteria-oriented feedback.

Variants:

- Instead of a narrative, a picture that portrays a suspenseful situation may also serve as an introduction and directive for the exercise.
- Other scenarios may, of course, also be suggested by the students.

Comments:

- Following the discussion and depending on the topic, it can be useful to add a review of language means which are needed for the corresponding scene. This can include topic-specific vocabulary or otherwise useful language means for argumentation purposes. See also 1c in the introduction.
- Suggestions that require a conflict resolution are particularly useful to further the social competence; see also volume 4 “Intercultural competences”, #1.5, 2.6, 4.7, 5.2, 5.5, 5.7 and 6.7.

## 27 Fictitious playing, dramatization of texts

### Goal

*The dramatization of scenes from a text supports textual understanding, contributes to the enlivening of reading sequences, and promotes the development and extension of students’ lexical and syntactic repertoire. The dramatization of texts is a valuable medium for HLT, particularly in terms of learning the written and standard language. For other targeted areas, see also #8, 26 and 28.*

2<sup>nd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

20–30 minutes



Materials:  
possibly a few props

Procedure:

- As point of departure serves a text that is suitable for dramatization or a story, respectively, which can either be read by the students themselves or read out loud or told by the instructor. Naturally, the text can also be a picture book.
- Following an appropriate scene (in which as many persons as possible appear) or at a particularly exciting point in the story, the instructor interrupts the readings. The students are then instructed to re-enact the scene in smaller groups, or to imagine and stage a continuation of the scene.
- Clear guidelines are issued: 5–10 minutes preparation time, stagings maximum 5 minutes. The criteria that apply for the ensuring assessment are similarly defined (see #26; it would be good to use a criteria matrix which also includes language aspects).
- The students are divided into groups or form their own groups. They have 5–10 minutes to prepare their presentation. The performance should last at most 5 minutes.
- The groups act out their solutions. After each presentation (or at the end, if there are just a few groups) the other students provide the criteria-oriented feedback.

Variants:

- Depending on the text, an individual scene may be assigned to each group. Finally, the various scenes are strung together in sequence and presented as a cohesive stage play.
- Finger puppets or shadow play with an overhead projector may also be suitable for fictitious playing and dramatization of texts.

Comments:

- Important language means may also be noted on the board and discussed in order to provide students with the necessary vocabulary before the assignment is issued; see also the hints in #26.
- Depending on the text, it may also be necessary that one student assume a role as narrator, in addition to the actual student actors.
- Actors speak to a large audience. The importance of a clear pronunciation for this exercise must therefore be especially emphasized to the students. This is undoubtedly one of the criteria that the student audience will consider during the performance.

# 28 School theater

## Goal

*Performing in school theater furthers and strengthens the competences in self-presentation, free performance, use of gestures, mimicry, theatrical and elaborated language as well as the expansion of one's lexical and syntactical repertoire in the first language. The acquired competences (see #8 and #27) will be compounded here and come into their own in the motivating framework of larger stagings.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

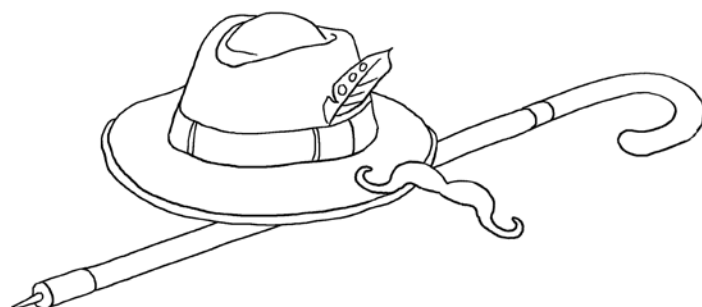
180 minutes



Materials:  
props.

Procedure:

- A script for the play is written together with the students, or an existing story will be adapted into a scripted dialog for the theater (both variants being extremely instructive writing projects). It is also possible to stage an already existing ready-made template.
- Next comes the rehearsing of individual scenes. This includes pronunciation exercises and working with body language, mimicry and gestures will be discussed and tried out.
- Props are acquired, the performance is planned (requiring a room, programs, invitations, refreshments, etc.).



- The scenes are rehearsed one by one, so that the students gain confidence and the instructor can gradually withdraw.
  - Important in this learning process is that the students again and again provide each other with feedback, based on the criteria and relevant observation points that were previously established.
  - The scenes are then sequenced and put together little by little, until finally the completed play emerges.
  - The staging should take place within an appropriate framework, e.g. in the context of a parents' evening with invitations, programs and refreshments.
- 

Comments:

- It may be possible that the various age groups that comprise an HLT class, each practice their own play, so that at the final event, perhaps three short pieces or sketches can be performed.
- To get students accustomed to acting and performing on stage, it is best to first begin with short pieces and then gradually raise the expectations.

**Part IV:**  
**Presenting and lecturing**



# 29

## Practicing reading out loud and reciting

### Goal

*The practice of reading out loud and reciting (mostly by heart), just like narrating creatively (#25), emphasizes and encourages the deliberate use of oral expression. Additionally, it promotes the expansion of vocabulary and the knowledge of expanded syntactical possibilities and literary aspects.*

2<sup>nd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

10–20 minutes



Materials:  
appropriate texts in terms  
of age and length.

### Hints:

- The proposal is well suited for HLT, as the different groups in terms of age and proficiency can practice with level-appropriate, different texts. This way, all groups work toward the same goal, but at different levels of expectation.
- There are close connections between reading out loud and the suggestions referenced in volume “Promoting reading in the first language”, see particularly #1 and 10.

### Procedure:

- The instructor informs the students about the goal: reading out loud or reciting a poem as expressively as possible. In the end, all students will present their texts, maybe as part of a festival and possibly with an audio recording.
- What does “reading out loud expressively” really mean? This relates closely to the approach in #22 (good/bad example, formulating criteria, based on insights). The presented “narrating-tips” in #22 can easily be modified to tips for reading out loud and reciting (see list on the following page).
- The instructor distributes appropriate, rather short texts. (If the exercise involves various group levels, they must have at least one text each to work with). If one text each could be made available for pairs of students, this variety would render the ensuing reciprocal reading out loud more interesting.
- The students read the text silently and individually. They mark unclear words and phrases, as well as words that are difficult to pronounce. This is followed by a discussion of uncertainties and, perhaps, details about the author or poet.
- The students select three criteria for reading out loud to which they are going to pay particular attention.
- The students read the text out loud on three successive weekdays.
- They also practice in pairs or small groups and provide feedback to each other (Questions: “What turned out well in reading out loud?”, “What can still be improved?”).
- Finally, the students read their texts out loud or recite, either to the whole class, or perhaps at an event, such as a parents’ evening or a festival. An audio recording (CD, MP3) could be made.

Variants:

- The students can select their own text, either from materials at home, or from books and texts provided by the instructor.
- Students can record their readings and recitations while practicing on their own. Listening to their recordings helps them to assess and improve their pronunciation and flow of reading.



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### **Tips for reading out loud and reciting**

- Speak loudly and clearly, so that all can understand you!
- Don't read too fast, but not too slow either. Make pauses.
- Mind the punctuation marks, emphasize the sentences accordingly!
- Use your voice deliberately, loudly and softly, menacingly, friendly, sadly, happily...
- Include mimicry as well: scowl, make a happy face, move your body to match the action.
- Don't hide your face behind the text. Always make eye contact with your audience.

# 30

## Preparing a presentation

### Goal

*In making short presentations, the student learn to coordinate content, language and dramatic aspects. The teaching suggestion demonstrates how the students can prepare themselves most of all linguistically for the presentation and how to optimize it by following a list of tips.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

30–45 minutes



### Hints:

- In mainstream education classes, short presentations are usually already practiced in the lower levels; in HLT this is also possible and useful from the 3rd/4th grade on if the students are appropriately supported.
- See topic “Presentation” as well as #31 and the student materials M14 in the volume “Mediation of learning strategies and techniques in HLT” (= volume 5 of this series). This material is dedicated to the topic “preparing and giving a presentation” and also includes content-related aspects (information gathering, etc.).
- The above referenced time requirements apply only to the third point in the process (sequence for illustration purposes of the criteria for a good presentation).

### Procedure:

- Each child selects a topic for his/her presentation (e. g. “my hobby”, “from the life of my grandparents”, “my dream job” etc.). As a variant: the presentation in pairs. The presentations should last 5–10 minutes.
- The students begin with the planning of the assignments and collecting information. See also the referenced materials M14 in the volume “learning strategies and techniques for HLT” (which must be simplified for younger students).
- The students make notes of language-related problems (vocabulary, etc.) with support of the instructor.
- In addition to the referenced tips in M14.7 for the oral practice of the presentation, a sequence is conducted collectively in class. It proceeds along the sample pattern, as referenced in #22 and #29 (good/bad examples serving as basis for the criteria for a good presentation which the students compile. See list below. If the students can rely on the tips for the narration and reading out loud (#22 and #29, respectively), it simplifies their work, of course.
- It is possible to assemble in a special sequence essential vocabulary and sentence building blocks for individual parts of the presentation (see #31).
- The students choose 2–3 presentation tips to which they want to pay special attention. They practice the presentations individually, in pairs or in small groups, and provide each other with feedback (Question: “What turned out well with the presentation?”, “What aspects can still be improved?”).
- Finally, the presentation is given before the whole class or group level, followed by a discussion and assessment, also taking into account the content and quality of the presentation. The latter also considers the adherence to the tips for the presentation.

wrong



correct



### Tips for presenting:

- Speak loudly and clearly so that everyone can understand you!
- Don't read too fast, but not too slow either. Make pauses.
- Do not read the text, speak freely or use note cards with key words.
- If possible, show one or several pictures or an artifact related to the topic for visualization.
- Use your voice deliberately, loudly and softly; excitingly, questioningly...
- Also use your mimicry and gestures; change your facial expressions and your posture to match your presentation.
- Always maintain good eye contact with your audience.
- Include your audience by posing questions during the presentation or asking for opinions at the end.

# 31

## Giving a lecture: example “short presentation”

### Goal

*This teaching suggestion substantiates some of the points raised in #30 with a simple example. It aims to further the competences of acquiring, processing and presenting information. The linguistic goal is an appealing presentation in terms of word choice, speech rate, tone of voice, gestures and facial expressions, that encourages interested, careful listening.*

4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> grade

45–60 minutes



Materials:  
artifacts from the culture of origin  
(or pictures of objects).

### Hints:

- It is best to distribute this exercise over a period of two weeks: introduction and clarifying of the presentation in the first week, presenting the speeches in the second one. It is the students' assignment to find an appropriate object and to prepare a presentation of 5-10 minutes in length.
- If computers are available, the presentation may of course be supported with Powerpoint or Prezi.
- It goes without saying that the competences acquired through this exercise will benefit students in further presentations in HLT or regular curriculum classes.

### Procedure:

- The instructor informs the students (whole class or group level) about the project: to give short presentations about an artifact or a personality from their culture of origin (e. g. an item of clothing, a culinary specialty, a souvenir from vacation, a picture of a building, painting, or a person...). The instructor then models the assignment in providing the students with a short sample presentation of (5–10 minutes). In doing so, s/he may also deliberately violate some of the criteria, e. g., speaking too softly or in a monotonous voices.
- Based on the instructor's sample presentation, the students enumerate (or repeat) the tips for a successful oral presentation. See #30, list of relevant tips.
- As another form of help, the instructor discusses with the class how to structure a successful presentation and provides and elaborates the language means or sentence building blocks in the first language for individual parts of the presentation:
  - greeting, introduction and explanation of the procedure. Example: "Welcome to my presentation about XY. First, I want to tell you something about A, then B..."
  - present three to four sub-themes in an illustrative manner, always declaring the transitions ("So much about this point. We're now proceeding to the next sub-theme, namely...").
  - a conclusion, in which the introduction is once more referenced and/ or the most important points are summarized. Provide an opportunity to clarify questions. Thank the audience for their attention. ("I have told you something about XY. I hope that you understood most of all... Are there any questions? Thank you very much for your attention.")
- As a memory aid, the students receive a sheet of paper with the most important tips (see #30), or perhaps a more simplified copy of the materials in M14 of the volume "Learning strategies and techniques for HLT"

- Time permitting, the students should already begin to think about their object for discussion and to outline the presentation in form of a mind-map. Assignment for next week: prepare and practice the short presentation of 5–10 minutes length.
- In the following week, the presentations are given with subsequent discussions in terms of quality of content, language, and adherence to the established tips for presentations.

# 32

## For evaluation: flashlight

### Goal

*The students familiarize themselves with a simple procedure for learning evaluation, which is suitable for any situation (following a discussion, a recitation, a presentation, etc.). In order to apply the procedure, students must have carefully listened and learned to summarize their thoughts succinctly and concisely in at most two sentences.*

1<sup>st</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

5–10 minutes



References:  
Ernst & Ruthemann 2003,  
p. 51 (see bibliography).

### Hint:

- The use of the flashlight is well suited to conclude a learning content or lesson sequence. Owing to its brevity, it has the advantage that all students get a chance to speak and reflect their learning. However, the flashlight does not replace more comprehensive criteria-oriented forms of discussion and learning evaluation. See chapter 3d in the introduction.

### Procedure:

- Pursuant to a lesson, a presentation, a discussion, etc., each student summarizes in at most two sentences what s/he particularly liked (what s/he thought was very good and/or where s/he finds potential for improvement. (The questions have to be modified, depending on the event to be assessed.) The feedback should be phrased in the I-form, see also #13 “providing feedback”.
- The instructor concludes the flashlight round with an evaluation of 1–2 sentences on her own or a short summary of the student contributions.

### Comments:

- Sentence building blocks can help the students with converting their thoughts into sentences. Example: (“The highlight of this ... was for me ...”, “I had difficulties with ...”. “I was bothered by ...”)

### Variant:

- Sentence gifts: each student pays a one-sentence compliment to a selected classmate or a learning partner (e. g. on the occasion of this person’s birthday). This method must be practiced as well. Finding and expressing genuine compliments as well as accepting them is not easy for many students.

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**Comments, experiences, further ideas:**



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