

***Increasing Communicative  
Effectiveness through History:***

# **An Intercultural Competence Perspective for German as a Foreign Language**

Valentina Concu & Jessica Rohr

Department of Linguistics

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

**PURDUE**  
LIBERAL ARTS

**THINK BROADLY.  
LEAD BOLDLY.**

# Outline

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Culture & History**
- 3. Culture in the Textbooks for GFL**
- 4. History in the Textbooks for GFL**
- 5. A Multimodal Approach**
- 6. Discussion**
- 7. Conclusions**

# Prelude

«We spent a couple days on the Holocaust and the Third Reich. I thought that it was interesting the **German book talked about blander topics such as the "World of Work"**, but those couple days on that harder topic will stick with me more and did much more to **enhance my understanding of the German language and its history. Learning about the Holocaust in German** is a far different experience than learning about in English. I thought Valentina did a good job and should continue to include this in her lesson plan.»

# Introduction

- Guiding Questions
  1. How do German textbooks introduce empathy within their culture and history sections?
  2. How can we support empathetic learning in our lesson plans?

# Introduction

Culture:

“The **beliefs and knowledge** which members of a social group share by virtue of their membership”

(Byram, 1997)

“Intercultural communication is **even more complex** than communication between people of the same culture.”

Bennett (1998)

“Culture in a way can be seen as a **permanent obstacle** for intercultural communication.”

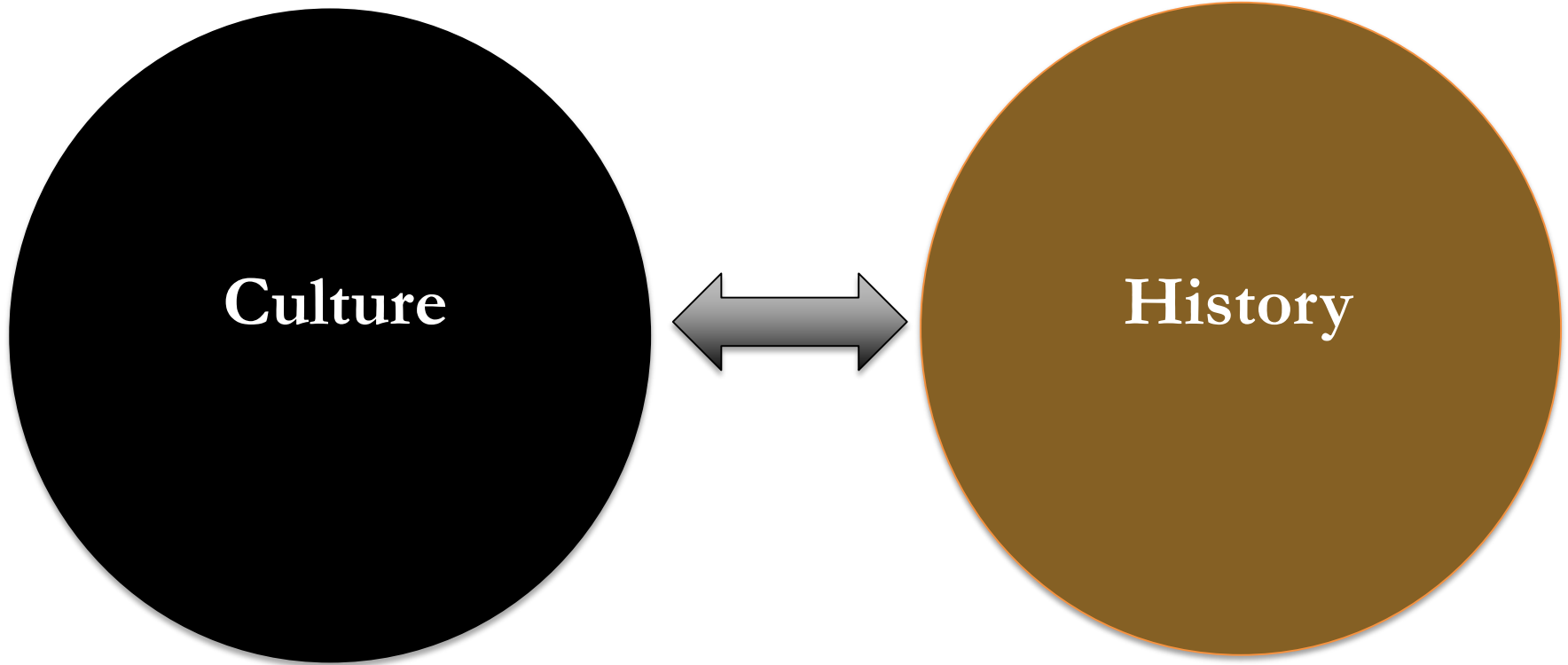
Bennett (1998)

# Introduction

“The contact and collision between two culturally different ways of doing something can only be overcome by **tolerance**, **empathy** and **compassion** and being willing and able to see **through someone else’s eyes.**”

(O’Neil, 2013)

# Culture & History



Intercultural competence is „the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with members of other cultures“

## **affective**

low ethnocentrism  
impartiality  
openness  
empathy

## **effectiveness**

social adaptability  
professional adaptability  
general contentment

## **cognitive**

cultural awareness  
self-awareness  
cultural knowledge

## **appropriateness**

knowing the cultural rules of the host country  
recognition of the feelings of the „others“  
realistic expectations

## **related to behaviour**

respect  
flexibility  
communication skills  
tolerance of ambiguity

(Müller & Gelbrich, 2004)

“The contact and collision between two culturally different ways of doing something can only be overcome by **tolerance**, **empathy** and **compassion** and being willing and able to see **through someone else’s eyes.**”

## Beginner level

1. Deutsch heute (1984)
2. Alles klar (1996)
3. Wie geht's? (2000)
4. Kontakte (2003)
5. Vorsprung (2013)

## Intermediate level

1. Fokus Deutsch (2000)
2. Stationen (2008)
3. Kaleidoskop (2016)

# Culture in GFL-Textbooks – Beginner Level

**Deutsch heute** (1984):

***Culture Note:*** Family; Transportation; Postal system; University; Holidays, Food; German TV; German cinema, Immigrants; (*Du* vs *Sie*; Dialects, History of German)



**Alles klar** (1996)

***Kulturelles:*** The Metric System; Trains, Hostel, Universities; Grocery Shopping



**Wie geht's?** (2000)

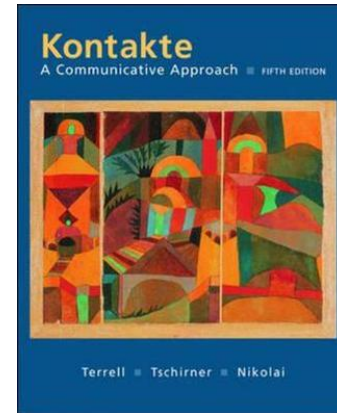
**Culture:** Weather; Table Manners; Christmas; Architecture; Apartment sharing; Women in Germany and Gender Bias; Animals; Coffee; Trains and Cars.



# Culture in GFL-Textbooks – Beginner Level

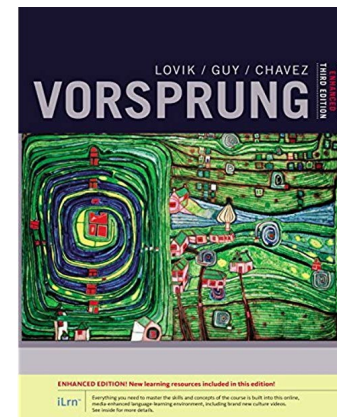
**Kontakte** (2003):

***Culture:*** Work Schedules; Euro; IDs; German Products; Internships; Health Insurance; Weather and Climate; School year; Art



**Vorpsrung** (2013)

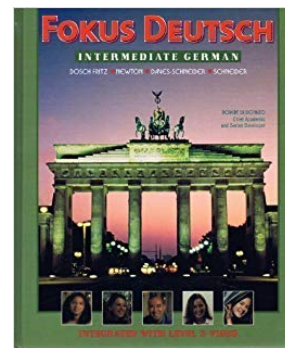
***Brennpunkt Kultur:*** Weather; Table Manners; Christmas; Apartment sharing; Women in Germany; Gender Bias; Animals; Coffee; Trains and Cars; Architecture



# Culture in GFL-Textbooks – Intermediate Level

**Fokus Deutsch** (2000):

**Kulturprojekt.** School; Work; University; Female Politicians; Nature; Free time, ; German TV; German cinema, Immigrants; (*Du* vs *Sie*; Dialects, History of German)



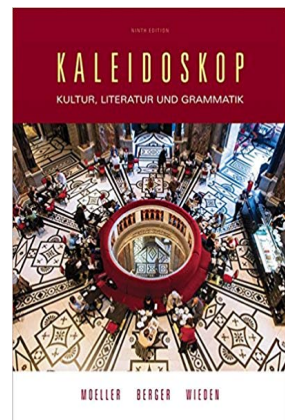
**Stationen** (2008)

**Kultur.** The Metric System; Trains, Hostel, Universities; Grocery Shopping;



**Kaleidoskop** (2016)

**Culture:** Weather; Table Manners; Christmas; Architecture; Apartment sharing; Women in Germany and Gender Bias; Animals; Coffee; Trains and Cars.



# GFL-Textbooks - Culture

<b>affective</b>	<b>effectiveness</b>
low ethnocentrism	social adaptability
impartiality	professional adaptability
openness	general contentment
empathy	
<b>cognitive</b>	<b>appropriateness</b>
cultural awareness	knowing the cultural rules of the host country
self-awareness	recognition of the feelings of the „others“
cultural knowledge	realistic expectations
<b>related to behaviour</b>	
respect	
flexibility	
communication skills	
tolerance of ambiguity	

(Müller & Gelbrich, 2004)

# History in GFL-Textbooks – Beginner Level

Deutsch heute (1984):

*History:* DDR



Alles klar (1996)

*History:* None



Wie geht's? (2000)

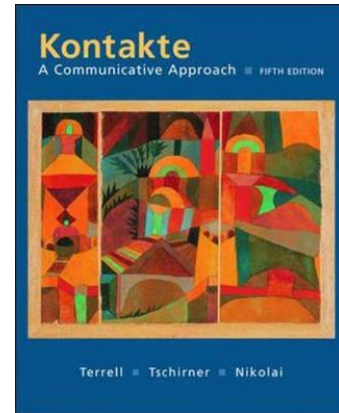
*History:* None



# History in GFL-Textbooks – Beginner Level

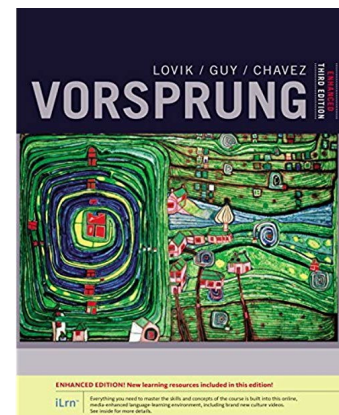
**Kontakte** (2003):

*History:* Hannah Arendt



**Vorpsrung** (2013)

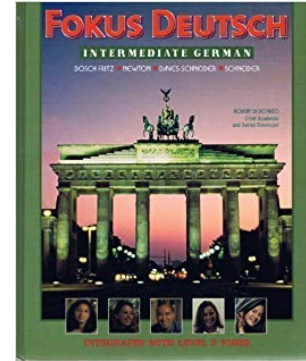
*History:* History of Germany – Nazi Zeit and Holocaust



# History in GFL-Textbooks – Intermediate Level

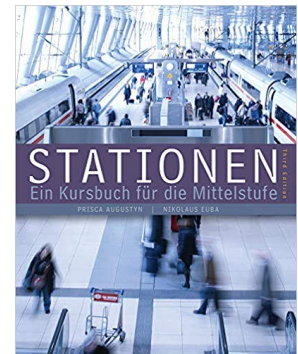
Fokus Deutsch (2000):

*History:* DDR



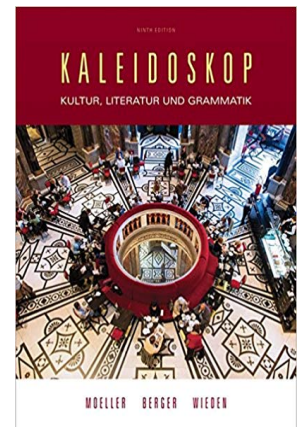
Stationen (2008)

*History:* The Germans about their history (patriotisms)



Kaleidoskop (2016)

*History:* DDR



# GFL-Textbooks - History

<b>affective</b>	<b>effectiveness</b>
low ethnocentrism	social adaptability
impartiality	professional adaptability
openness	general contentment
empathy	
<b>cognitive</b>	<b>appropriateness</b>
cultural awareness	knowing the cultural rules of the host country
self-awareness	recognition of the feelings of the „others“
cultural knowledge	realistic expectations
<b>related to behaviour</b>	
respect	
flexibility	
communication skills	
tolerance of ambiguity	

(Müller & Gelbrich, 2004)

# The “Unspoken” German History



# Holocaust Education in Germany vs. USA

Germany	USA
Grade 3 or 4 in history class	12 states mandate Holocaust education in schools
Literature covered in German classes	Never Again Education Act
Other classes	
Visit concentration camp around age 16	
Visit memorials	

# ICC for GFL

Intercultural competence is „the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with members of other cultures“

## **affective**

low ethnocentrism  
impartiality

### **empathy**

## **cognitive**

cultural awareness  
self-awareness  
cultural knowledge

## **effectiveness**

social adaptability  
professional adaptability  
general contentment

## **appropriateness**

knowing the cultural rules of the host country  
recognition of the feelings of the „others“  
realistic expectations

## **related to behaviour**

respect  
flexibility  
communication skills  
tolerance of ambiguity

The ability to see **through someone else's eyes**/  
Recognition of the feelings of the others

# 1. Us vs. Them

Nazis auf der Flucht

## Exodus der Massenmörder

Tausende Nazis verkrochen sich nach Kriegsende in die entlegensten Winkel der Welt. Oft half die katholische Kirche bei der Flucht. Manchmal nutzten sogar US-Agenten die "Rattenlinie", um Kriegsverbrecher in Sicherheit zu bringen.



## 2. Empathy



#Rammstein #Deutschland #duhastvielgeweint  
Rammstein - Deutschland (Official Video)

“Deutschland, meine Liebe kann ich dir nicht geben”  
*Germany, I can't give my love to you*

## 2. Empathy

“And today, in the year 2014, if someone comes to the central square in Bayreuth, impersonating Hitler, and if that is tolerated by the general public, then I have to say, that is bad for Germany. And if it were up to me, I would have you chased off.”



Look who's back Er Ist Wieder Da Hitler the artist sketches Germans

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5w4BvqaX-Q>

# Conclusions

- Textbook evaluation
- Multi modal lesson plans
- What could we do next?

**Thank you for your attention!**  
**Danke für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit**