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Level: German 102

Objective:

After this lesson students will be able to:

- Extract information from a description of a guided sightseeing tour
- Name Berlin sights they are interested in
- Write a proposal/use arguments as to why to take a specific guided sightseeing tour
- Use conjunctions and subjunctions (in a general sense)

Work that has been done already:

Students already learned about different sights in Berlin (vocabulary and also what these sights are). They also learned about conjunctions and subjunctions and the respective word order in sentences.

Pre-Task Phase:

During the pre-task phase, the class as a whole is to name a few sights in Berlin, and also explain what exactly it is that there is to see. There will be a selection of sights in Berlin on a PowerPoint presentation in order to help students remember what they have learned already. The teacher assists and ensures students provide correct information. If students use subjunctions or conjunctions, the teacher repeats what the students have said and puts emphasis on the relevant terms, and/or corrects the terms and sentence structure while doing so. Conjunctions and subjunctions can be collected on the board. This should not take longer than 5 minutes.

Now, the teacher tells the student about the upcoming task and hands out the worksheets.

During-Task Phase:

The teacher will present the general setup of the task with the help of a PowerPoint slide. Students are prompted by the slide and also by the teacher to pair up with a person they have not worked with yet (it's almost the end of the semester.) This task can be performed by all students. The questions and the reading texts are fairly easy. The writing can be mastered by students of different language levels as well. The finished product might vary in quality, but that is perfectly fine. One student can read the setup aloud. The teacher should walk around but not correct the students unless they obviously misunderstood the task/what they have to do. Before students begin to work, the instructor gives them a total time limit of about 35 minutes. The teacher has to make sure students move on to the next part of the task on time. They have 3 minutes to come up with important sights and to bring them into a hierarchical order, 17 minutes to read the texts and answer the questions, 5 minutes to agree on pros and cons of each tour, and another 12 minutes to write their proposal.

Each group will now read their proposal to the class. After every group has done so, the class will openly vote for the most interesting tour. After this vote, the class will also vote on which group presented the winning tour the best/most interestingly.

Post-Task Phase:

In the post-task phase students have a clear outcome which are the proposals they have written. All of them will be read aloud in class. The teacher can point out common problems either at the end of the lesson or at the beginning of the next class period.

A possible homework is to follow up on Berlin sights and the idea of guided tours and to have students write up a presentation (as if they were a tour guide presenting these sights to German students from the United States) of two of their favorite sights in Berlin. These presentations could be collected and

made into a Berlin travel guide for each one of the students.

Write Up:

The part that will be graded is the proposal. In particular if the information in the proposal matches the information provided in the tour descriptions and also the (correct) use of conjunctions, subjunctions, and word order. There will only be one grade per pair, no individual grades. The teacher can point out logical flaws in their argumentation and also provide feedback regarding the use of sub- and conjunctions. Common mistakes can be addressed during the next class period.

This task promotes learning because it fulfills Rod Ellis definition of a task: The primary focus lies on meaning (deciding which sights are interesting, which tour is suitable for the students' class and class mates, how can other students be convinced etc.), it has a gap (students need to see if the sights they identified as important are part of the individual tours), the students need to use their own resources, in other words their own language, vocabulary, and understanding of sub- and conjunctions including word order, and the task has a clearly defined, non-linguistic outcome which are the finished proposals that can be presented in class, and potentially the travel guide.

The larger outcome of the task is not only that students learn about Berlin, sights and guided tours, and about conjunctions and subjunctions but this task will also help them to become better readers and to pay attention to details and they will also help them to learn how to argue and structure texts and arguments. This task teaches not only grammar and vocabulary, critical reading and writing/arguing skills but, at the same time, German culture. Furthermore, it will show them that language learning is not just the study of grammar but that it can actually be used in real live situations.