

# Planning and organizing language lessons tailored to the needs of...hospitality and tourism

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# Why're we talking about this?

*...Buying and selling a train ticket in a railway station and buying and selling an opal in a duty free shop...are very different...*

*[there re] serious mismatches between the authors of commercially published language teaching materials and language use in the real world...*

Michael H. Long

(University of Maryland, USA)

This is about how to cook a flavourful vegetable soup...



<https://www.chefkoch.de/magazin/artikel/2217,0/Chefkoch/Gemuesesuppe-kochen-von-der-Gemuesebruehe-bis-zur-fertigen-Suppe.html>

# (1) Needs analysis: Relevant aspects that have an influence on the character of communication (in professional contexts):

- the needs of the **market**, the branch, the company →  
certain standards are setting the benchmark for (communication-) quality in different professional fields...
- the individual needs of the **customers** →  
expectations guarantee that the customer feels himself/herself well (informed, respected, cherished, cared for, comfortable, secure), those expectations are based mostly on own experiences and observations. Language and Communication skills have also an important influence on the communication...

# (1) Needs analysis: Relevant aspects that have an influence on the character of communication (in professional contexts):

- the **employee/learner** →

his position, his language/communication-foreknowledge, his aims, his motivation/attitude towards his work/(singular), towards customers (as representants of cultural groups); his language and communication skills, his individual learning ability/preconditions of learning: his speed of processing informations (oral/written), his short-term-memory..., his personal charisma, self-image/-perception...

- the **current situation/circumstances** →

place, time, persons, aims, actions, disruptive factors...

## (2) Sales principles meet foreign language teaching principles

### **Need satisfaction approach:**

- A salesperson should seek to understand the prospect's stated (express) and unstated (tacit) needs (f.e. through probing questions and careful listening...)

### **Language teaching approach:**

- Teachers (of languages for special purposes) should seek to understand the language and communication requirements of the market and correlate them with the personal needs of the employees/learners to fulfill these requirements in an effective, motivated way and for a long time → competence

# That means that...

...teachers should outside the classroom (reflect about the possibility to)...

- inform themselves about the specific occupational requirements (e.g. in *job advertisements*), compare learning materials available in the market also in different languages
- make own observations and take notes at the point of work
- participate in empirical research (as *participant observation*, *unstructured interviews*, *questionnaires* → *triangulation*)
- stay in touch with their (former) students to be informed about (changing) communication standards in the field, about their experiences, to invite them (and other guests of the branch) into their language lessons, to initiate common projects (e.g. to produce together a video about the perfect behaviour towards a unhappy customer at a reception, a portrait of the profession as a waiter – for a magazine...



# That means furthermore that...

...teachers should inside the classroom answer to the didactic key questions...

- **Who?** Age? Any professional (foreign language) experience/in which field? On which stage of language knowledge? What kind of motivation? Cultural background? How many learners...?
- **Why?** For actual purposes – to learn ahead...?
- **When/how often?** Regularly/once, twice a week...?
- **Where?** Classroom/place of work/at home...?
- **What?** Specialist contents lexical, grammatical structures, communication skills (writing, reading, listening, speaking) – to what extent, in which progression...?
- **How?** Classroom lessons with exercise books, working in groups, projects, with the help of which media, by mobile applications...?

# That means also that...

...teachers should inside the classroom...

- offer/create needs-relevant, interest catching (and maintaining) contents, tasks and exercises
- change levels and channels of representation, repetition in different ways
- plan the lessons that way, that language and communication requirements are slightly above the current language ability → controlled challenge  
→ portionated learning
- monitor, accompany and assist the language in use/the learner by offering certain tools and strategies to solve the tasks → scaffolding

(3) Contents: Create a matrix of possible/relevant places and situations where/how to get into contact with customers/tourists...by

→ Looking for relevant sectors and sub-sectors

Sectors	Sub-sectors
Advertising and marketing	...
Travel and transportation	International, national, local travel, airlines, ships, boats, trains, coaches, buses, taxis...
Accommodation	Hotels (different types and categories), pensiones, private houses...
Information	...
Food service	...
Recreation and entertainment	...
Shopping	...

(3) Contents: Create a matrix of possible/relevant places and situations where/how to get into contact with customers/tourists...by...

→ Looking for groups of workplaces and sub-groups

Occupational fields/place of work	Sub-groups
Airport	Passanger Service Assistent, Security Officer,
Railway station	Customer Service Assistent, Sales Station Host
Hotel	Concierge, Event Planner, Executive Chief, Head of Marketing, General Manager, Houesekeeper, Porter, Waiter, Waitress...
Museum/Archiological site	Visitor Service Manager , Security Officer...
Restaurant/Bar	Barceeper, Sommelier, Food&Beverage Associate...
...	...

3) Contents: Create a matrix of possible/relevant places and situations where/how to get into contact with customers/tourists...

→ Looking for frequent linguistic-communicative actions in specific workplaces/situations, typical text types and discourse modes and grammatical/lexical structures used

Linguistic/ Communicative Action	Workplace/Situation	Text type/discourse mode/Register	Important Structures (gr/I)
Information Description Instruction Explanation	<u>Reception</u> : Guest asks: How to find the room, to the restaurant, the mini- bar, the remote control...	Oral description formal	Directions, Prepositions
Counseling	<u>Information Center</u> : Recommendation: Better to go by taxi than by bus, ist more...	E-Mail- response formal	Comparative degree
Negotiating	<u>Meeting Travel-Operator- Hotel Manager</u> : Haggle about the price...	Telefone/Skype conversation informal	Conditional clauses
Processing a complaint	...	...	Phrases: We re sorry...

(3) Contents: Create a matrix of possible/relevant places and situations where/how to get into contact with tourists...

→ Looking for more specific „constellations“, e.g. the specific cognitive/emotional constitution of a customer in a range between:

*The guest is prepared for the stay, interested in details, equipped with knowledge about the place and intercultural experiences...*

*The guest knows nothing about the place, has no concrete plans, decides about the most activities spontaneously...*



*The guest is open-minded, active, communicative and friendly...*

*The guest is concentrated on him-/herself, passive, not communicative, mostly unhappy and unfriendly...*



(3) Contents: Create a matrix of possible/relevant places and situations where/how to get into contact with tourists...

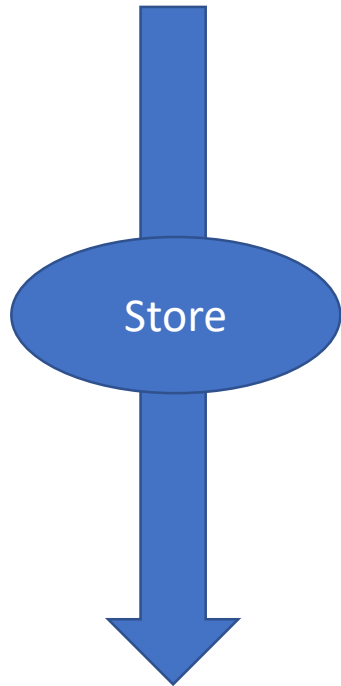
→ Looking for some nice or critical incidents etc.



<http://nanu-wittlich.de/baustelle/>  
<https://www.moneyunder30.com/start-a-business-with-no-money>  
<http://www.rednoteensemble.com/event/noisy-nights-2019-call-for-scores/>

# (4) Methods: Instruments and the idea behind

*Discover*



Store

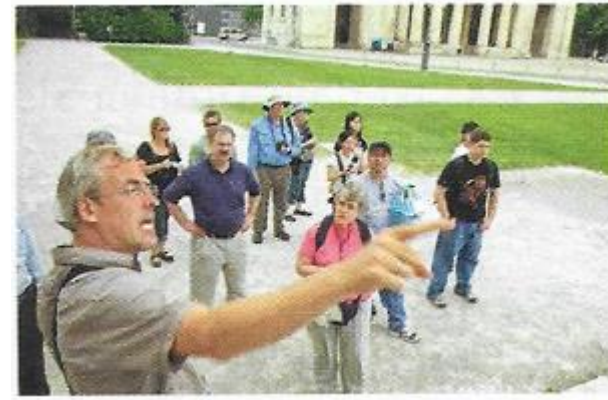
*Automatically use*

- Give an motivating impulse (written, acustic, visual)
- Let see/hear the structure, let try to understand it
- Let refind the structure in another context, text type, discourse mode, medium, let compare the structure with other ones
- Let exercise the structure with the help of diffrent types of exercises
- Let use the structure as part of a (free) task (e.g. in a role play, scenario)
- Give lingustic support if needed (e.g. explain the use of diffrent registers etc.)
- Come back to the structures later, integrate the structure into a network of new contents, new functions, meanings



# (5) Practice examples

→ Workshop



## (6) Key conclusions to be drawn

Planning and organizing language lessons tailored to the needs of hospitality and tourism and also to the needs of learners require two main things of a teacher:

1. to be non-stop open for a more or less systematic, empirical approach to actually used linguistic and communicative forms in the different workplaces of the field;
2. to adapt the methodical portfolio to the principle „ability to act“: acting means to be active in the use of the already learnt contents and structures, acting means to make experiences by using the knowledge and structures actively, to get a (verbal/non-verbal) feedback about the use, a chance to reflect about it and finally the motivation to autonomous use in every new situation. These are the precondition to be „competent“ in the use of a language.

Thank you for your attention 😊