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My German Experience

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My German Experience

I took a German class in college as an elective. I chose German because I liked the way it sounded better than Spanish. The class was held twice a week for two hours per day for 16 weeks.

I displayed some characteristics of adult learners while trying to learn German. I was certainly autonomous by being responsible for studying and doing the homework. My goal was to satisfy an elective while trying to pick up some tidbits of the language. I enjoyed watching German films and wanted to learn more about the language. The instructor showed the class respect by treating us as adults, but failed to provide relevancy for studying German. German wasn’t in demand and I realized that continuing to study German wasn’t going to add some deep meaning to my life or further my education. Although I had most of the characteristics of adult learners, I lacked relevancy which was the most important factor for me.

The classroom where I attempted to learn German was more modern than traditional. The textbook and the tests were the focus in receiving a passing grade as in traditional classrooms, but the instructor used modern teaching techniques by encouraging participation and group activities. The instructor called on students and thereby facilitated learning through practicing pronunciation and forming phrases. He also had a TV in the room and showed us popular German movies. It was a student centered classroom with active participation by the students due to its small class size.

My German teacher was a very effective teacher. He was a native speaker so he knew the subject matter well, but he also had many years of experience of teaching German to beginners and knew what worked and what didn’t. The class was well organized with a combination of lecture and group activities. His good sense of humor lightened the mood of the class and his honesty and sincerity showed through his funny anecdotes of his childhood in Germany. The instructor was really enthusiastic about sharing his love of German with students and it clearly resonated with the class.

I would categorize my German teacher’s style as an enabler. He clearly had a wealth of knowledge about the subject matter, but due to his experience he didn’t over rely on lecturing and explaining like an explainer. His people skills made students feel welcome and comfortable in his class through funny stories of his childhood and teaching experiences. Pre-prepared 2 to 3 person scenarios at the bank, the market, and etc., helped students to understand through active participation. He chimed in when things were going really bad, but generally asked other students to help when someone needed help. Learning was fun because he used traditional lectures to teach fundamentals but reinforced the lessons by encouraging students to be autonomous through fun group activities.

I enjoyed going to my German class especially on film days. It was nice to relax and enjoy a film during school hours. I failed to continue on because speaking German was not high on the priority list for my career.