

LESSON NOTES

Upper Beginner S2 #1

Easy Ways to Practice German

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#1

DIALOGUE - GERMAN

MAIN

1. Frau Schneider : Guten Tag, Herr Martens!
2. Paul Martens : Guten Tag, Frau Schneider!
3. Frau Schneider : Wie war der Unterricht?
4. Paul Martens : Nicht schlecht. Ich lerne viel dazu. Ich finde es nur schade, dass wir nicht so viel Zeit haben, Deutsch zu üben. Es gibt zu viele in der Klasse.
5. Frau Schneider : Deutsch üben? Sie meinen Deutsch zu sprechen oder zu schreiben?
6. Paul Martens : Besonders sprechen.
7. Frau Schneider : Sie sind ja in Deutschland, also können Sie immer Deutsch sprechen.
8. Paul Martens : Ja, aber dann korrigiert mich niemand. Außerdem möchte ich die Sachen üben, die im Lehrbuch stehen.
9. Frau Schneider : Ich kann Sie gerne korrigieren. Aber... möchten Sie nicht ein Sprachtandem?
10. Paul Martens : Ein Sprachtandem? Was ist das?
11. Frau Schneider : Ein Sprachenaustausch. Sie könnten einen deutschen Partner suchen. Während Sie Ihr Deutsch verbessern, helfen Sie ihm, sein Englisch zu verbessern.
12. Paul Martens : Das klingt gut.

ENGLISH

1. Mrs. Schneider : Good day, Mr. Martens!
2. Paul Martens : Good day, Mrs. Schneider!
3. Mrs. Schneider : How was class?
4. Paul Martens : Not bad. I'm learning a lot of new stuff. I just find it unfortunate that we don't have much time to practice German. There are too many people in the class.
5. Mrs. Schneider : Practice German? You mean speaking German or writing?
6. Paul Martens : Particularly speaking.
7. Mrs. Schneider : Well, you are in Germany, so you can speak German all the time.
8. Paul Martens : Yes, but then nobody corrects me. Besides, I'd like to practice the things that are in the textbook.
9. Mrs. Schneider : I'll gladly correct you. But... don't you want a language tandem?
10. Paul Martens : A language tandem? What's that?
11. Mrs. Schneider : A language exchange. You can find a German partner. While you improve your German, you help him improve his English.
12. Paul Martens : That sounds good.

VOCABULARY

German	English	Class	Gender
Tandem	tandem; language exchange	noun; neuter, das	
niemand	nobody	pronoun	
Klasse	class	noun; feminine, die	
besonders / besonderer	especially; special	adjective	
Sache	thing	noun	feminine
meinen	to mean, to think	verb	
Lehrbuch	textbook	noun	neutral
Partner	partner	noun	masculine
schreiben	to write	verb	
stehen	to stand	verb	
Austausch	exchange, replacement	noun; masculine, der	
korrigieren	to correct	verb	
während	while, during	conjunction, preposition, adverb	
verbessern	to improve	verb	

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Unser Hund bellt alle Leute an, aber er beißt niemanden.</p> <p>Our dog barks at everybody, but he doesn't bite anyone.</p>	<p>Der Lehrer hat die Klasse unterrichtet.</p> <p>The teacher taught the class.</p>
<p>Dieses Stück ist etwas ganz Besonderes. Es ist viel älter als die anderen Stücke, die Sie hier sehen.</p> <p>This piece is something special. It is much older than the other pieces you can see here.</p>	<p>Die besten Rouladen kriegt man beim Fleischer. Sie machen immer besonders große, damit man danach vielleicht noch ein wenig Gehacktes kauft.</p> <p>You can buy the best roulades at a butcher. They always make especially big ones, so one might buy a bit of ground meat later.</p>
<p>Die Sachen in meinem Zimmer sehen chaotisch aus.</p> <p>The things in my room look chaotic.</p>	<p>Diese Sache macht mir Probleme.</p> <p>This thing is troublesome to me.</p>
<p>Das meinst du nicht ehrlich, oder?</p> <p>You don't seriously mean that, do you?</p>	<p>Im Laufe des Jahres werden wir das komplette Lehrbuch durchnehmen.</p> <p>During the year we will cover the entire textbook.</p>

Naturwissenschaftslehrbuch science textbook	Bitte schlagt Seite zehn (10) in eurem Lehrbuch auf. Please open your textbook to page ten.
blaues Lehrbuch blue textbook	Der Lehrer hat etwas sehr interessantes aus dem Lehrbuch vorgelesen. The teacher read something very interesting out of the textbook.
Geschäftspartner business partner	Sein Geschäftspartner war gleichzeitig sein bester Freund. His business partner was also his best friend.
Der Unternehmer trifft sich mit seinem Geschäftspartner. The entrepreneur is meeting with a business partner.	Ich möchte mich gerne mit der Familie meines Partners auf ihrer Sprache unterhalten. "I want to speak to my partner's family in their language."
Du schreibst gerade im Schlafzimmer. You are writing in the bedroom.	Ich schreibe eine Postkarte. I am writing a post card.
Ich stehe am Fenster und warte auf dich. I'm standing by the window and I'm waiting for you.	Ich werde während meiner Sommerferien zum Strand gehen. I will go to the beach during my summer vacation.
Während meiner Mittagspause lese ich Zeitung. I read the newspaper during my lunch break.	Einige Sozialarbeiter brauchen selbst Hilfe, um die Dinge zu verarbeiten, die sie während der Arbeit erleben. Some social workers need help themselves to handle the things they experience during their work.
Pass auf, dass du während deiner Rast keinen Rost ansetzt. Be careful not to grow any rust while you rest.	Du hast deine Sprachkenntnisse in der Zeit stark verbessern können. You were able to greatly improve your language knowledge in that time.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

1. dazu = in addition to that; about that. „Ich lerne viel dazu“ (I learn much new stuff). „Dazu kann ich nichts sagen“ (I can't say anything about that).
2. Dann korrigiert mich niemand. = Then nobody corrects me. (unusual word order)
3. im Lehrbuch stehen = to 'stand' in the textbook = to be written in the textbook.
4. I'm not sure if you noticed, but we saw both „Sprach-“ and „Sprachen-“ as a prefix in this lesson. This is one of the annoying things about German compound nouns – there is no good reason for it to be „Sprachtandem“ but „Sprachenaustausch“?

GRAMMAR

The focus of this lesson is zu

Sie helfen ihm, sein Englisch zu verbessern.

"You help him to improve his English."

A lot of times when English uses the infinitive in a sentence, German uses the preposition „zu“. For example:

1. Wir haben nicht viel Zeit, Deutsch zu üben. - We don't have much time to practise German.
2. Ich habe keine Lust, nach Hause zu gehen. - I am not in the mood to go home.

The rule for these cases is to place the „zu“ immediately in front of the verb. This means that when you have two verbs piled up at the end of your subclause, the „zu“ is placed in the middle: „schlafen zu gehen“ (to go to sleep). And when you have a splitting verb, the „zu“ is inserted between the prefix and the verb stem! For example: „mitzukommen“ (to come along), „abzugeben“ (to hand (sth.) over), „wegzugehen“ (to go away) and so on.

„zu“ is essential when making a subclause with „um“. „um“ always requires a „zu“ somewhere later in the phrase. Here are some examples of such phrases;

Ich komme nach Deutschland, um Deutsch zu lernen. = I come to Germany in order to learn German.
Es ist zu kalt, um rauszugehen. = It is too cold to go out.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Practising German wherever you are

If you aren't in Germany, that is no excuse not to practise German. Here are some things you can do.

1. Get a language exchange partner. If you are in a major city or in a university town, there are bound to be some Germans, Austrians or Swiss people that you could practise with.
2. Go to German language meet-ups. This is where German expats as well as German language enthusiasts get together to speak German and exchange stories.
3. Surf the German internet. You can use a browser plugin to automatically give you translations whenever you hover over an unknown word, so you don't need to keep a dictionary open. At the beginning, German blogs are a good choice. If you follow the news closely, German news sites might also interest you, because you'll be able to understand a lot from context. Deutsche Welle offers news in particularly simple German. They also have slow news podcasts.
4. Watch some German movies with subtitles. Having German subtitles will really increase the amount of learning you get out of a movie. You could also watch German TV. If there is none locally, look online, various German TV stations offer at least some of their program online.
5. Get some German books from the library or from an online bookstore. Stay away from the classics, those are hard even for Germans. The easiest are bilingual books, that is books that have German and English side-by-side, or books that you have already read in English.

Do you have more suggestions? Let us know in the comments.