AUDIO-VISUAL CULTURE IN TEXTBOOKS OF GERMAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A CROSSROADS BETWEEN MEDIA COMPETENCE AND SUBJECT-SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

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ABSTRACT. *Audio-Visual Culture in Textbooks of German as a Foreign Language: A Crossroads Between Media Competence and Subject-Specific Objectives.* Audio-visual media have become an intrinsic part of the school curriculum in many countries as a means of complementing teaching and learning processes and ensuring modern and effective teaching in various fields of study, including foreign languages. This study will explore references to audio-visual culture in three internationally available textbook sets for pubescent learners of German as a foreign language: *Deutsch.com*, *Direkt*, and *Ideen*. Audio-vision is used here to refer to audio-visual cultural properties and includes the product and its production, reception, and position within the context of the media culture of the country of origin. Methodologically, the study uses content analysis to examine individual references to audio-vision according to a) the frequency of occurrence at individual levels of language competency, b) the implication of the examined references to audio-visual material with objectives specific to the acquisition of a foreign language (vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading, speaking, intercultural education) and media literacy c) the attention paid to films, genres and other aspects of audio-vision, d) the connection between references to audio-vision and themes

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and topics discussed in a foreign language, e) the didactic function of the references, and f) their contribution to achieving media literacy goals (audio-visual/film literacy), providing a detailed description of the lessons in each of the studied textbook sets that make use of references to audio-visual material in their curricula.

Keywords: audio-visual literacy, audio-vision, German language, textbooks, foreign language teaching

REZUMAT. *Cultura audio-vizuală în manualele de germană ca limbă străină: la intersecția dintre competența media și obiective specifice subiectului.* Media audio-vizuale au devenit o parte intrinsecă a curriculumului școlar în multe țări, ca un complement al proceselor de predare și învățare, în scopul de a asigura o predare modernă și eficientă în diverse domenii, inclusiv în cel al limbilor străine. Studiul de față explorează referințe la cultura audio-vizuală în trei seturi de manuale disponibile la nivel internațional pentru adolescenții care învață limba germană ca limbă străină: *Deutsch.com*, *Direkt*, și *Ideen.* Audio-vizualul e înțeles aici ca referindu-se la caracteristici culturale audio-vizuale și include produsul și producția acestuia, recepția și poziția în contextul culturii media al țării de origine. Metodologic, studiul folosește analiza de conținut pentru a examina referințe individuale la audio-vizual în conformitate cu a) frecvența apariției la niveluri individuale de competență lingvistică, b) implicarea referințelor la material audio-vizual în obiectivele specifice achiziției unei limbi străine (vocabular, gramatică, ascultare, citire, vorbire, educație inter-culturală) și cunoștințe media, c) atenția acordată filmelor, genurilor și altor aspecte ale audio-vizualului, d) legătura dintre referințele la audio-vizual și temele și subiectele discutate în limab străină, e) funcția didactică a referințelor și f) contribuția lor la însușirea cunoștințelor media (cunoaștere audio-vizuală/ a filmului), oferind o descriere detaliată a lecțiilor în fiecare dintre seturile de manuale studiate care se referă la material audio-vizual în curriculumul lor.

Cuvinte-cheie: cunoaștere audio-vizuală, audio-vizual, limba germană, manuale, predarea limbilor străine

Introduction

Audio-visual materials have received considerable academic interest thanks to the recognition of their popular appeal. The entertainment value they offer and their ability to effortlessly reach wide audiences have motivated educators to consider all forms of audio-vision as an engaging tool for specific educational purposes, with film in particular seen as the most effective format.

While a recent article in the *Journal of English* shows that film has been used in school curricula since as early as 1913, film became more closely integrated into education in the 1950s, contributing to a more significant effort to implement audio-visual education methods which could mediate an authentic language experience (Thaler 2007, 11-12). However, it was not until the 1960s that film started to attract academic recognition as the first audio-visual medium worthy of study (Turner 2000, 194). This increased interest was encouraged further by the interest of social studies in the youth audience and the projection of their values on the big screen. Cinema and other audio-visual media also began to be more widely integrated into school curricula in this period to enhance the learning process in various disciplines, primarily due to the complexity of audio-visual language and its practical, vernacular, dramatic, narrative, and musical qualities (Monaco 2000) which offer audio-vision clear advantages as a widely accessible, far-reaching and attractive tool. Nonetheless, the efficiency of audio-visual material relies on the degree of relatability and identification between learners and the protagonists and their experiences, and the use of these tools in classrooms, especially with young learners, is therefore simultaneously attractive and challenging for educators.

The effective use of audio-visual material for educational purposes, either as a primary or secondary source, or as a tool that mediates the authenticity of a language, requires a complex approach that can clarify the mechanisms involved in the production of filmic experiences. Drawing attention to those mechanisms can help to develop essential media-literacy skills that might prevent the uncritical acceptance of viewed material. The cultural influence of film on the ways in which viewers understand represented realities, as well as the projection of specific perspectives, is a topic that is deserving of greater scrutiny. As a result, the demand for film-literacy/media-literacy, or "optical literacy" (Tulodziecki 2005, 17), has increased significantly among scholars who acknowledge the need to develop viewers' ability to recognize possible distortions of reality caused by ideologically colored methods of representation.

Nevertheless, audio-visual material still possesses considerable potential for the enhancement of learning processes, and their use as complementary tools in school curricula (Briley 2002; Pultorak 1992; Wineburg 2000) is both popular but also influential. As a primary or secondary source, audio-visual material has been used as a means of teaching history, social studies, literature and foreign languages (Marcus and Stoddard, 2007; Marcus et al. 2010; Blell et al. 2016; Kammerer and Maiwald 2021). The potential of the materials stems from the complex utilization of all of their aspects; both the viewing experience itself – the story, protagonists, conventions – and the extrafilmic experience, or the "film-as-event" effect (Elsaesser 2012, 273). These elements can extend the

filmic audio-visual experience beyond the immediate scope to connect with other aspects of film as an industry (advertising, fashion, toys, celebrities) (Elsaesser 2012, 272). Similarly, the complexity of film applications requires a conscious evaluation of the source itself and its accompanying aspects, because film can and should be used to encourage critical thinking skills by pointing out incorrect, ideologically colored or otherwise purposeful forms of representations or narratives that possess the potential to shape viewers understanding of presented realities.

Audio-vision can be used in the classroom in a variety of ways; as a primary source to provide an authentic language experience and thereby develop audio-visual comprehension (Surkamp 2017, 73-77); as a mediator of basic facts about target countries; as a historical artifact (Marcus 2010); or as a secondary source to complement other documents to provide a different perspective. This specific utilization of audio-vision is subject to strict genre differentiation and is therefore determined by the specifics of the fictionalized accounts which they present. It encourages subject-specific objectives, that is, developing language skills and intercultural competencies, but its defining quality is the representation of reality – a kind of asymptote to reality or a parallel experience that is forever dependent on reality – standing alongside reality or a simulacrum to reality through the subjective perspective of its interpreter/filmmaker (Andrew 1976, 138). Audio-visual materials clearly have the potential to contribute to the development of various intercultural and media competencies, but in order to implement effective film-based lessons, the educator must be aware of its highly fictionalizing character and be able to convey this to learners - "to distinguish fact from fiction, recognize multiple perspectives and missing perspectives, and evaluate [the product] as evidence" (Marcus et al. 2010, 9). Educators should also understand film's informative value and its contribution to the corpus of cultural and artistic production of specific countries in specific periods, projecting tendencies and attitudes of distinct societies. Cinema reveals the processes of national reconciliation with history and validates national narratives (e.g., Hollywood in the case of the USA) using formal (narrative) and informal (ideological) conventions. The demonstration of a national image inevitably entails the inclusion of the ideological principles of the official representation of a nation.

The use of audio-visual materials in the classroom thus facilitates perceptual and productive language competencies by triggering topics for discussions and popularizes cultural knowledge about different countries and societies. Again, depending on the genre and the level of accuracy with which the events, historical characters or periods are depicted, film contributes to how learners understand the subject matter. Accuracy, however, is not imperative and is often disregarded for the purposes of dramatization.

This study focuses on how references to audio-visual materials and culture can contribute to the teaching of language competencies and the development of language skills in a series of internationally available textbooks of German as a foreign language intended for secondary school students, based on communicative and post-communicative approach. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first attempt to determine the potential impact on audio-visual literacy and to explore the possible interaction between language and audio-visual literacy objectives in selected textbook sets. The decision to examine foreign language books stems from their potential to provide language-oriented education together with the dissemination of cultural characteristics, thus affecting the international learner's comprehension of the target language country. As has also been pointed out, this process of acquiring specific knowledge can benefit substantially from the use of references to audio-visual materials. Textbooks are a key tool used internationally to develop foreign language skills, and as such, their contribution to the language learning process is fundamental.

In this study, three globally distributed textbook sets of German as a foreign language, *Deutsch.com* (textbook Neuner 2008, 2009, 2011; workbook Vincente et al. 2009, Breitsameter 2010, 2012), *Ideen* (textbook Krenn and Puchta 2008, 2009, 2011; workbook Krenn and Puchta et al. 2010, 2011, Krenn and Puchta 2012), and *Direkt* (textbook with integrated workbook Motta 2008a, b) and *Direkt Neu 2* (Motta 2012), from the renowned publishers Hueber and Klett, will be analyzed. All three sets are based on the communicative (*Direkt*) or post-communicative approach (*Deutsch.com, Ideen*) and designed for pubescent learners, an aim which is reflected in the thematic content of individual lesson plans, the selected textual formats and in the arrangement of individual creative activities. All three sets start at the beginners' A1 level of the CEFR language competency scale and proceed towards the intermediate B1 level. Both the textbooks and workbooks which provide complementary exercises to the subject matter studied in the textbook will be examined in this study.

Any references to and about audio-visual productions, reception and also filmic and extra-filmic experiences – texts, audiotexts, exercises and pictures – found in the textbook sets will form the corpus of this study; the resulting corpus was examined using the methodology of content analysis. Each analyzed unit was considered based on its efficiency in developing language skills and its focus on grammar, vocabulary and also (inter)cultural and media learning. Within this framework, some units were analyzed more than once; for example, the text introducing the Berlinale International Film Festival was examined as a text fitting the categories of Reading, (Inter)Cultural and Media Learning. Alternatively, an exercise focused on the conjugation of the verb "fernsehen"/ to watch, was targeted only within the category of Grammar. The authors

determined whether references to audio-visual material are the subject matter which is at the center of attention in a lesson or they are used marginally, as in the case of the verb "fernsehen" / to watch.

Quantity of references in individual textbooks

The analysis of *Deutsch.com* identified 72 units with references to audio-vision; 35 in the A1 materials, 16 in the A2 materials and 21 in the B1 materials. A general prevalence of references to cinema culture were also identified in this set. References to audio-visual elements were found in 51 units in *Direkt*, 12 of which are aimed at A1 students, 2 for A2 students and 37 for B1 learners. In contrast to *Deutsch.com*, audio-visual references in *Direkt* are focused more on TV materials. A diametrical difference, both quantitative and qualitative, was observed in the analysis of the *Ideen* textbooks, which featured 211 audio-visual references; 53 in A1 books, 101 in the A2 materials and 57 in the B1 books. However, the majority of references to audio-visual materials in *Ideen* are focused on cinema, although TV production is also represented. *Ideen* is also the only set from the studied textbooks which includes references to videos streamed on the Internet. The references identified in *Ideen* also incorporated responses to audio-visual literacy to a greater degree than were identified in the other two sets. The following tables represent the identified impact of these references on the development of language skills, including the (inter)cultural education and audio-visual literacy responses.

Integrated Films, Forms and Genre

The selection of films that appear in the examined textbooks are primarily *feature films*. In *Deutsch.com* and *Ideen*, learners are also presented with animated films, while *Ideen* also introduces documentary films. All of the examined textbooks are internationally acknowledged with a worldwide distribution and this is reflected in the fact that most of the film-related activities refer to internationally successful German or Austrian film productions; one exception here is the *Ideen* textbook that also includes Hollywood classics such as *Casablanca* (USA 1942), *Ben Hur* (USA 1959), *West Side Story* (USA 1961), *Amadeus* (USA 1984) and *Schindler's List* (USA 1993). The authors of the books provide in-detail descriptions of individual films which are tailored to the intended audiences of younger learners, including those for films such as *Der ganz große Traum* (D 2011), *Die Welle* (D 2008), *Die weiße Rose* (D 1982), *Ein Freund von mir* (D 2006), *Lola rennt* (D 1998), *Sonnenallee* (D 1999) and *Sophie Scholl – Die letzten Tage* (D 2005). Officially approved textbooks are also required to follow state curricula,

and therefore *Ideen* and *Direkt* also include minor references to Slovak or Czechoslovak films such as *Three Marmots/Tri svište* (ČSSR 1979) and *Salt More than Gold/ Soľ nad zlato* (ČSSR 1982), and co-produced films such as *Music/Muzika* (SK/D 2007) and others filmed in the learner's home country; for example, *The Peacemaker* (USA 1997), *Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (D 1922) and *Dragonheart 2 & 3* (USA 2000, 2015). In terms of genres, a preference for dramas, young/adult (family) films, biopics, and sci-fi was observed in all three sets, with comedies also featuring in some isolated cases.

Connection of references to audio-vision with topics

References to audio-visual materials focus on a variety of topics, among which the following are the most resonant:

Character description with a focus on identity vocabulary, such as names, surnames, professions, age, birth dates, is demonstrated in *Deutsch.com* L5 through the description of actors such as Daniel Brühl (Neuner 2008, 30) Charlie Chaplin, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy and Bruno Ganz (Vincente et al. 2009, 34, 74). The actress Julia Roberts is used for this purpose in *Direkt* L2 (Motta et al. 2008a, 14, 15, 18), while the intermediate level textbook of *Deutsch.com* provides a detailed description of Julia Jentsch in L19 (Neuner 2009, 10).

The *family* with a focus on vocabulary related to family members is developed though references to the mother-daughter relationship of Ingrid Bergman and Isabella Rossellini and the Douglas acting dynasty in *Ideen* L4 (Krenn and Puchta 2008, 34-35, 41; Krenn and Puchta et al. 2010, 38, 40).

The topic of *school* is introduced using the example of film-literacy objectives as an optional school subject in *Ideen* L6 (Krenn and Puchta 2008, 63), and the actual production of a film during an after-school activity features in *Deutsch.com* L25 (Neuner 2009, 50)

Friendship is presented in *Deutsch.com* L47 through well-known friendships formed between popular protagonists, such as E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial and young Elliot (USA 1982), Asterix and Obelix (Goscinny/Uderzo 1959-1977), and Karl and Hans from *Ein Freund von mir* (D 2006) (Neuner 2011, 93-95).

Role-models and heroes/heroines are introduced in *Deutsch.com* L25 through the comic characters Tim and Struppi (Remi 1929) and The Simpsons (Groening), although these examples are more likely to be known to contemporary young audiences as characters from animated films (Neuner 2011, 80). *Ideen* L19 acquaints learners with Sophie Scholl, the heroine of *Die Weiße Rose* (D 1982), and with James Dean and Marlen Dietrich presented as role-models of the classic Hollywood era (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 69-71; Krenn and Puchta et al. 2011, 102, 104-105).

Life in the past and present is a topic that encourages students to interview their grandparents and compare their free-time activities with their own. References to film appear here in the form of specific questions used to identify cinema-going activities (frequency, ticket price) and popular films from both periods (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 84-85).

The geography of Germany, Austria and Switzerland is a topic in *Ideen* that acquaints learners with interesting geographical and cultural sites of the target countries through locations used in James Bond films (*Goldfinger* – Furkapass; *Goldeneye* - Lago di Vogorno, Switzerland; Octopussy – the town of Chemnitz in the former NDR; *Quantum of Solace* – the opera festival in Austrian Bregenz). Another film mentioned in relation to the topic is *The Name of the Rose* (D/F/IT 1986) filmed in the German monastery, *Geschichten aus dem Wiener Wald* in the picturesque Wachau valley in Austria and *Nordwand* (D/AT/CH 2008) on the northern face of the Eiger in the Bern Alps (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 122-123). The workbook also uses thematically similar exercises to expand the students' vocabulary through references to locations in Slovakia presented in the cartoon *Three Marmots* (ČSSR 1979), *Salt More than Gold*/ Soľ nad zlato (ČSSR 1982), *The Peacemaker* (USA 1997), *Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (D 1922) and *Dragonheart 2 & 3* (USA 2000, 2015) (Krenn and Puchta et al. 2011, 190-191).

Culture and Events is presented using the example of the Berlinale International Film Festival in *Deutsch.com* L1 (Neuner 2008, 11) and *Direkt* L23 (Motta 2008b, 49). In addition to the festival, the textbooks also mention novels that served as the basis for screenplays of films such as *Der Vorleser* (Schlink 1995) (Neuner 2011, 39), *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (Brussig 1999) (Breitsameter et al. 2012, 40), *Crazy* (Lebert 1999) (Neuner 2009, 38).

Animals is introduced as a vocabulary topic using the film *Madagascar* (USA 2005) in *Deutsch.com* L30 (Neuner 2009, 50).

Globalization in third-world countries (*Avatar*, USA 2009) is represented by an informative promotional video from the National Geographic Organization, *Survival International* and the documentary film *Darwin's Nightmare* (F/AT/BEL 2004) in *Ideen* L 32 (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 97; Krenn and Puchta 2011, 66-69, 75).

Food and food culture is introduced using *Jamie's School Dinners* and *Jamie's Kitchen* (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 50-51; Krenn and Puchta et al. 2011, 70-71).

Life in the past and present is also demonstrated using the reality show *Schwarzwaldhaus 1902*, in which the participants endure the simulated living conditions of a peasant family from early 20th century Schwarzwald (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 59-62; Krenn and Puchta et al. 2011, 84-89), and others.

Each set of books also includes at least one specific lesson or section in which audio-visual related material is used for educational purposes. Of greater significance to the purposes of this study, however, is the fact that references to audio-visual culture are introduced to learners as early as at the A1-A2 level, and the contribution of these elements to the learning process will be explored in detail later in the study.

Didactic function of film and the problem of representation

From a didactic point of view, texts, exercises, and activities that refer to audio-visual products fulfill a variety of functions, often with a complementary and *motivational character* (Ohm 2010; Kolečáni Lenčová 2012; Maier 1998). For example, descriptions of films or portraits of filmmakers can serve as an impetus to encourage language competencies with a strong focus on grammar and vocabulary development. These types of materials are often used to improve reading comprehension skills, but their potential to enhance students' language production (i.e., their speaking and writing skills) seems to be largely unfulfilled.

Individual references also use the strategy of representing model identities by presenting role-model protagonists, an approach which seems to be a significant aspect of the overall use of audio-visual materials in the learning process. The ability of contemporary viewers to identify with film characters, to relate to their experiences, and to recognize the protagonist's reality is one of the central attributes of film perception that refers to the cognitive processes employed when viewing a film. In order to achieve this effect, the presented cinematic reality needs to be "true both to our everyday perception of life and to our social situation" (Andrew 1976, 106), which in other words implies the mechanisms of cinematic constructions of reality, within which the focus on the cultural representation of identities plays an important role.

The analysis of such mechanisms reveals the meaning-making processes that suggest the potential social and political implications of the representation of favored model identities. The construction of identity is especially relevant in the representation of non-mainstream identities or of minority or alternative groups, whose portrayal in the media has long been framed by dominant norms and restricted by the exclusionary practices of hegemonical discourses. At the same time, an examination of the strategies of hegemonic discourses in the media is equally crucial. Understanding the application of a specific perspective presented in a specific film helps the viewer to understand the ideological implications of such a perspective; in other words, an awareness of this factor reveals the film's identity politics that can exert an influence on the viewer's understanding of the model identity. In respect to learning processes which

implement references to audio-visual materials, or, more specifically to film, model identities are proposed to young learners as a tool whereby they can achieve subject-specific foreign-language-development goals. But the degree to which references to such material encourage the awareness of identity construction processes and the extent to which they alert learners of this aspect of the utilized material has been largely overlooked despite the urgent need to promote critical thinking among young learners.

In the following analysis, individual textbook activities that make use of audio-visual references to achieve the development of language skills will be analyzed in order to identify potential indications towards practices of representation which may enhance learners' critical recognition of such material in addition to assisting language acquisition and mediating cultural experiences.

Didactic analysis of lessons with educational use of audio-vision
Deutsch.com

In *Deutsch.com* L25, students are presented with short texts about the origins of a school TV report, outlining the processes of pre-production, production and post-production. Students learn specific film-production related vocabulary such as "live", "filmen" "Kamera", "Kommentare zu den Videosequenzen sprechen" / voiceover, "Videomaterial kürzen und schneiden" / edit and cut video-material, "Videosequenz" / video sequence, "Moderation machen/einfügen" / comment, edit commentary, insert commentary, "auf Sendung sein" / to be on air. Grammatical exercises that complement this vocabulary include a focus on the modal verbs "können"/can and "möchten"/would like. The entire sequence concludes with an open activity which encourages students to create their own news report – again, this includes the entire creative process, from pre-production to the interview itself. Throughout the pre-production process, students are asked to consider the topic, camera view, introduce the interviewee, prepare the interview, and decide whether to shoot the report live on location or in the studio.

In addition to vocabulary development, grammar, reading, and writing competencies, this sequence develops the comprehension of media constructions of reality as the exercises provide the opportunity for practical performance. Using smartphones and appropriate software, learners can create a short video that their educational institution can potentially use for promotional purposes on their website; therefore, learners can practice the formal aspects of film production, such as camerawork, editing, etc. The language exercise is interconnected with efficient creative skills that contribute to the development

of formal film-literacy competencies and make learners aware of the processes that construct a mediated reality.

Direkt

The earliest edition of the textbook (Motta et al. 2008 a, b, c) places a greater focus on TV production than the film industry. In the third part of the first edition of *Direkt 3*, the content of L22 is framed by a focus on the TV show, providing five texts aimed at developing reading comprehension skills, two texts for listening comprehension, seven grammatical exercises, one vocabulary development exercise, one speaking and one writing activity. The individual sections of the sequence are connected through the mediation of a 17-year-old protagonist. Learners follow his dream to participate in the TV program *Deutschland sucht den Superstar* and observe his dismissal as the grand finale. The exercise is strongly motivational, possibly due to the demanding nature of the didactic subject of the task, the hypothetical third conditional. The impact of global pop culture on values are also discussed, thematizing the challenging ethical and moral responsibilities and behavior that such challenges generate. This topic is addressed in the form of a reader's letter to a newspaper criticizing the effect of such TV shows which provide a platform for self-centered people who thus set trends for young audiences, and diminishing the value system instead of praising the professions of teachers. Students are asked to critically reflect on this topic, develop their own position on the argument and present their opinions with the help of the effective design of the related exercises (Motta et al. 2008b, 18-25, 132, 135-136, 145).

The textbook focuses on cinema culture in L23, titled Events, which aims to improve learners' B1 level language competencies through a relatively extensive text about the Berlin International Film Festival – Berlinale. In a series of related activities, students are asked to read a text about the festival which offers a concise account of the festival's history and emphasizes its prestigious position as one of the three most critically acclaimed festivals in Europe along with Cannes and Venice. It also presents a selection of filmmakers whose films were presented at the Berlinale, including Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Michelangelo Antonioni, Ingmar Bergman, and Roman Polanski. Given the general lack of knowledge about cinematic history, this text would also require additional commentary from the teacher in order to improve students' knowledge.

Remaining activities and exercises in the textbook are focused on the introduction of specific vocabulary, such as "das Drehbuch" / screenplay, "Schnitt" / cut, and individual steps of the filmmaking process. Their short descriptions such as "Locations aussuchen" / location scouting, "Rollen verteilen" / task distribution,

"die Szenen zusammenschneiden" / editing/montage, are used to introduce the passive voice. Subsequent exercises also reflect film vocabulary and concentrate on the use of the past participle. The textbook uses the topic of the popularity and fame of actors and actresses in a somewhat superficial way, applying dialogues aimed at practicing of speaking skills (Motta et al. 2008b, 30, 31, 34, 35, 147). Students here are provided with activities aimed at acquiring related phraseology and other tools to advance the discussion; however, this sequence lacks the interest that would motivate students to express their opinions and critical observations, instead leading them to work only with fixed phrases and lexical constructions.

Ideen

The *Ideen* textbook focused on beginners features a section, L8, which is entirely devoted to TV production. The lesson uses screenshots from American TV series which are popular in the Germanophone environment (for example, *The Flintstones*, *The Bold and the Beautiful*, *Malcolm in the Middle*, *The Nanny*, *X-Files*, and *Married with Children*), and students are asked to connect the American title with a German equivalent. The accompanying text "Fernsehklone" / TV-clones, stimulates learners to consider the impact of TV on their understanding of reality within a different cultural context. With respect to the text that follows the TV program format, students are provided with specific vocabulary that can help them to describe a TV show, and also introduces the modal verb "dürfen" / may.

The topic of the lesson, "Der Krimi fängt gleich an!" / The crime series is about to start!, is introduced using visual material and only mentions films through the reference to the system of recommended age ratings applied to popular films in Germany. In addition to blockbusters such as *Saving Private Ryan* (USA 1998), *Jurassic Park* (USA 1993), and the *Harry Potter* series of films (UK/USA 2001-2011), the lesson also mentions a more intellectual film directed by Michael Haneke based on Elfriede Jelinek's novel *Die Klavierspielerin* / *The Piano Teacher* (AT/D/F/PL 2001).

The textbook then returns to German TV shows such as the cult crime show *Tatort*, the medical drama *In aller Freundschaft*, the main evening news broadcast on Channel 1 of ARD broadcast with the title *Die Tagesschau* and the sports news on Channel 2 of ZDF *Das aktuelle Sportstudio*. The TV programs in the textbook also includes the political talk show *Anne Will*, the quiz *Sag die Wahrheit*, a show similar to the American *To Tell the Truth*, a documentary and an animated film. Learners are asked to connect individual descriptions of characters to the TV show in which they appear, present similar programs for young audiences which are popular in their home countries, and comment on

their own preferences and their parents' opinions on these shows. This section thus develops vocabulary and interconnects knowledge about the target country (Germany) with speaking competencies.

To conclude the lesson, students are asked to write a short text for their school magazine about their favorite TV shows. This is also complemented by a simple text that popularizes the negative implications of watching TV, accompanied by an audio version (Krenn and Puchta 2008, 75-81). The workbook includes additional exercises that develop reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar skills. The final text introduces "*Fernsehen in Deutschlands Familien*" / *TV Watching in German Families* with information and statistics presenting the realities of the audio-visual reception in Germany. The follow-up activity encourages students to write a similar text focusing on their own family (Krenn and Puchta et al. 2010, 88-94, 97). In addition to lexical units from the specific vocabulary corpus reflecting the context of audio-visual culture, the lesson also provides basic information about TV production in Germany and places it within the context of global pop-culture, thereby expanding students' knowledge about the culture of the target country. In other terms, the exercise can be said to assert the cognitive aspect of intercultural competencies. Simultaneously, students learn to reflect on their perceptions of TV programs and, albeit in a limited way, verbalize their own opinions in the target language.

At the A2 level, the topic of film is addressed in L21, with the entire section dedicated to the topic. Thematized vocabulary is applied to film genres and forms of films, such as "Spielfilm" / feature film, "Liebesfilm" / love story / melodrama, "Kostümfilm" / period drama, etc., together with evaluating adjectives used in film reviews and in regular film-related speech, such as "originell" / original, "hervorragend" / fantastic, "einige Szenen waren peinlich" / some scenes were awkward, "die Handlung war kompliziert und unlogisch" / the plot was complicated and illogical, "das Ende war ein bisschen sentimental aber so romantisch" / the ending was a bit sentimental, but so romantic, "die Schauspieler waren prima" / the actors were excellent, "ein aufregender Action-Film mit" / exciting action-film with, "eine spannende Geschichte" / suspenseful plot, "ein lustiger Film für die ganze Familie" / entertaining film for the whole family etc. Furthermore, students also learn about professions related to the film industry ("Kameramann/-frau" / camera operator, "Regisseur*in" / director, "Drehbuchautor*in" / screenwriter, "Maskenbildner*in" / make-up artist, "Sounddesigner*in" / sound engineer, "Synchronsprecher*in" / dubbing artist, "Stuntman/-frau" / stuntman or stuntwoman and the description of their responsibilities, such as "das richtige Licht bei den Dreharbeiten machen" / to create suitable lighting on the scene, "die Filmaufnahmen machen" / to shoot a scene, "gefährliche Szenen spielen" / to perform dangerous acts, "die Musik und den Ton für den Film mischen" / to mix the musical score for the film.

This vocabulary is connected with the reality of film production – lighting, music score, sound – offering an overview of the elements of film production and reception that are often overlooked by general viewers. The lesson also provides a variety of texts developing reading comprehension related to film – film recommendations from the Internet, extensive film reviews, interviews with a dubbing actor, excerpts from film dialogues, discussions with cinemagoers, and a magazine interview with a stuntman. Students not only learn information about film production but can also appreciate that a film is the outcome of a process determined by various influences, the product of a collective effort. Simultaneously, they can acquire language skills which allow them to verbalize their subjective viewing experiences. It should also be mentioned that the descriptions and examples of the process of film distribution are largely determined by the period in which the textbook was published, primarily in terms of the references to DVDs, the school video-store, and cinemas rather than more contemporary platforms such as streaming services and online services that are popular among modern audiences.

This section also includes two films that are examined in greater detail, Tom Tykwer's iconic *Lola rennt* (D 1998) and the young adult film *Die Welle* (D 2008). Exercises related to both of the films focus primarily on the development of reading and speaking skills through reviews and related activities performed in pair. In the first text, critics celebrate Tykwer's film for its depiction of the cultural context of the 1990s and its assertion of the continued capability of the German film industry to produce original, experimental films that could appeal to an international audience. The textbook includes a favorable review pointing out that the structure of the film consists of three different versions of the same story. The review does not make it explicit that the film can be interpreted as a meditation on fate and accident; nonetheless, it suggests the power of detail by emphasizing how changing details in the plot of the story generates alternative endings. Other formal aspects that contribute to the experimental character of the film remain undeveloped, but the review also recognizes actors' performances and international learners are thus acquainted with German actors, actresses, and the director (Franka Potente, Moritz Bleibtreu, Tom Tykwer).

Die Welle relates a story from the school environment and examines the probability of the return of totalitarian regimes in contemporary society using manipulation as the main tool. Students are offered a review of the film which focuses on the plot and behavior of individual protagonists during a school experiment, highlighting the performance of Jürgen Vogel in the role of a manipulative teacher. The review also considers the issue of the violence in the film (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 88-97; Krenn and Puchta, et al. 2011, 130-143). The activity is complemented with grammatical exercises to practice the

declension of adjectives and conjunctives (Krenn and Puchta 2009, 90-96) and the accompanying workbook continues with the development of language skills by including a total of eighteen autonomous activities focused on developing grammar skills (Krenn and Puchta et al. 2011, 130-141).

In conclusion, *Ideen* offers a creative means of processing references to audio-visual materials, placing a particular focus on cinema, and efficiently connects the topic with subject-specific achievements which reflect the A2 level of language competencies of its intended students while simultaneously advancing film literacy skills. Detailed comparisons with traditional school curricula include general but efficient vocabulary which covers various aspects of film culture – from film production through the filmic experience to students' individual film preferences.

Conclusion

Audio-vision is a universal medium that can help visual learners to acquire various skills and competencies. In the foreign language classroom, these types of material have proven to be a highly efficient tool for mediating authentic language experiences. Cinema also promotes the cultural recognition of a target country, functions as a social barometer projecting social values and tendencies communicated by expressive artistic means. As a tool, film can explore important issues and place them within the context of the contemporary world.

The textbooks analyzed in this study use references to audio-visual materials or individual films which primarily relate to the plot, protagonists, settings or extra-filmic realities such as national experience, culture and show business, but the wide range of topics that connect subject-specific goals with audio-visual culture suggests that the authors of the textbooks are aware of the significance of the appeal of audio-visual materials among young learners and implies that these media formats have replaced traditional, text-based media as the primary means of obtaining entertainment and information (Anders et al., 2019). The associations with cinema and cinematography can thus significantly enhance interest in selected topics among young learners, and the activities analyzed in this study demonstrate both the creativity of the authors of the textbooks and the not insubstantial potential of audio-visual culture in supporting the fulfilment of didactic goals connecting media culture with almost any of the everyday topics discussed in the studied textbooks. Nonetheless, it is important to note that cinema, the primary format of audio-visual material which appears in the textbooks, is not presented as a system of formal and informal conventions with its own specific language or as an ideological phenomenon with an endless capacity for the generation of alternative realities.

Similarly, cinema's mechanisms for the representation of model-identities are not described in any of the studied references

Another issue revealed by the analysis is the fact that while the analyzed textbook sets indicate that their authors are aware of the educational potential of audio-visual material, the mediation of aspects of audio-visual culture to encourage learning processes involves challenges related to the transformation of the visual form into a textual format, a step which necessarily implies reductions resulting from the textual and spatial limitations of the textbook. As a result, learners are not presented with actual audio-visual material, only with their references or references to their by-products. From the perspective of media pedagogy, reductions of this kind are not ideal, but from a subjective-specific didactic point of view those limitations can be anticipated. The primary goal of foreign language education is, ultimately the advancement of language competencies rather than media literacy. References to media culture primarily function as a motivational tool which is typically incorporated into activities that develop grammatical, vocabulary or reading comprehension skills which contribute to the thematic aspect of the activity, and it is this effect that the authors of the textbooks aim to achieve in the use of references to internationally known media products, a requirement generated by the general-to-specific didactic principle. Although references to audio-vision are somewhat marginal, each textbook includes at least one lesson or section which is focused on audio-visual responses or, more specifically, developing audio-visual literacy skills among students. The most substantial and efficiently used references to audio-visual material with respect to their didactic function were observed in the case of the *Ideen* set. It can thus be concluded that the latest versions of textbook sets more aptly reflect the current demand for cultural knowledge and incorporate audio-visual education as a relevant accompanying outcome that contributes to the advancement of general media-literacy skills among young learners.

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