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ANNOTATED
INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION

Wie, bitte?

INTRODUCTORY GERMAN FOR PROFICIENCY

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Preface

Wie, bitte? was created for people who want to be proficient in everyday German – that is, to understand, speak and write the language in ordinary situations, and to acquire a practical knowledge of the cultures of the German-speaking countries. The very first chapters teach “survival” German – how to identify oneself, get food, find shelter, and arrange transportation. By the end of the book students should be able to support their opinions, pursue academic and occupational discussion, and explore the special features of the German-speaking countries that open up to those who can use the language reasonably well: the artistic and historical heritage, the cuisine, the landscape.

Our intent has been to eliminate any obstacles to achieving that goal. The textbook is shorter than most, for it focuses on the demonstration of useful language rather than the discussion of grammar. It is also filled with samples of genuine printed German, so that if students do indeed travel to a German-speaking country they will almost feel as if they’ve been there before. The *Wie, bitte?* Class Text is accompanied by a Workbook, or Study Text, and other materials, including tapes and computer software, that offer detailed tutorials in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Throughout *Wie, bitte?* we have striven not merely to present knowledge about German but rather to show *how* to gain such knowledge and practical facility.

Components of the Program

The **Class Text** is intended for intensive use in the proficiency-oriented classroom. After two preliminary chapters that present basic speech patterns and vocabulary, each chapter follows this organization: The first major theme of the chapter is presented in *Gespräche 1*, a set of model dialogs; then come *Struktur 1*, grammar patterns with brief comment; *Situationen 1*, an array of contextual communication tasks for pairs and groups of students; *Strategie – Kultur und Sprache*, cultural notes and useful advice on strategies for using language; *Gespräche 2*, presentation of the chapter’s second major theme; *Struktur 2*; and *Situationen 2*. Each chapter is chock full of a wide array of realia, authentic texts, and photographs. After the 26 regular lessons, there is an afterword that assesses a student’s progress and explores further possibilities for the study of German and travel in German-speaking countries, a special chapter on *Feste und Feiertage*, a visual dictionary (*Bildwörterbuch*), 40 pages of print realia, and a German-English glossary. The endpapers offer ready reference materials, including maps and charts, survival vocabulary, and basic grammatical patterns.

The **Instructor’s Annotated Edition** includes a discussion of teaching methods, a course outline, a chapter classroom time budget, chapter-by-chapter teaching tips, testing advice and sample tests, and an estimate of attainable proficiency levels. Marginal annotations throughout the text offer classroom exercises, advice about teaching technique, and brief cultural enrichments.

The **Study Text** is a **Workbook** intended for individual use primarily outside the classroom, but also useful in it. The volume contains: 1) an orientation, with advice on study methods; 2) chapter-by-chapter study materials; 3) a reference grammar, to whose various sections the student is directed by marginal annotations in the brief grammar presentations in the Class Text; 4) a collection of recyclable realia which parallels that in the Class Text; 5) "props" (facsimile currency, tickets, etc.) suitable for situation exercises; 6) English renditions of the Class Text dialogs; and 7) chapter-by-chapter vocabulary lists. The Study Text is an integral part of the package. It contains many resources that are ordinarily found in the main textbooks of conventional packages.

The **tape set** is divided into two parts: 1) renditions and expansions of the textbook dialogs; and 2) aural realia and cultural offerings, organized by theme and linguistic structure. These items are the material for homework exercises, for listening tests, and for cultural enrichment. The development of listening comprehension with taped materials is an integral part of the package.

The **Test Bank** contains: 1) materials for proficiency-oriented speaking, listening, reading, and writing tests; 2) answer keys for selected tests and for Study Text exercises; 3) a set of realia suitable for use in the tests provided in the manual, or else in exercises and tests that the teacher devises. A script for the tape program is included in this manual.

The **computer courseware** is optional for both student and teacher. It includes: 1) contextualized grammar exercises and listening, reading, and writing tutorials; 2) computerized versions of selected tests in the testing manual; 3) administrative programs intended to aid the teacher in record-keeping, test administration, and development of auxiliary materials. Supported computers are the IBM PC and compatibles, Apple IIe/gs, and the Macintosh; for the last there is special courseware with natural speech recorded digitally on the disks.

Goals of the Program

For as long as anyone now alive can remember, Americans have been notoriously unfamiliar with languages other than English. In addition, we have been either unapologetic about our monolingual culture, or at least convinced that we as individuals do not have the right linguistic stuff to learn other languages. However, the economic, political, and social requirements of a global community of human beings underscore the necessity for reform in our attitude toward meeting other cultures on their own ground. As a nation we are finally beginning to reward those whose intercultural skills are based in a practical, functional knowledge of other languages. The impulse for fluency in other cultural settings springs in part from economic necessity, and also from the observations that we do not know our own culture well until we are familiar with another; that our horizons are limited only by the languages at our command; and that speaking only one language is like observing the world through one eye. For language is an expression of a cultural system, a means by which people organize the reality they observe. As such it is the key to understanding any culture, including one's own.

Fortunately, this is a very good time to be studying another language – and we must say that it is also a very exciting time to be teaching other languages. In recent years there has been a national call for language instruction that is first and foremost practical – stressing the need to survive and then thrive in a foreign culture – and that presents language as something living, genuine, and above all worth learning.

When ordinary people are asked why they want to learn a foreign language, the typical answer is something like, "I really want to be able to *use* the language. I want to speak to the people there, and I want to understand them." Language teachers, too, pride themselves on their own practical facility in communication, and dream of classes filled with fluent students who could successfully enter another society and thus be a credit to their own. All too often, though, students who have "taken" a foreign language bitterly tell how they were "took:" "I had two years of it, and even right afterwards I couldn't even order a meal." Almost everyone would like to be able to *speak* (or read, or write, or just understand) a foreign language, but many people regard *learning* a foreign language to be a mystery, and *studying* a foreign language to be a matter of boring memorization of vocabulary lists and grammar charts. The image of the monolingual speaker of English, whether the helpless tourist or the damaging "Ugly American," is well known. And yet there are – and always have been – classrooms in which foreign languages are well taught and learned.

Wie, bitte? was written with these classrooms in mind. It was also written with a careful eye to what we know today about second-language acquisition – what linguistic features and contexts are important as we move from the beginning level to the more advanced. It is our aim to teach students what they will need to know as mature adults functioning within a German-speaking culture. It is not our intention to teach everything there is to know about the German language, for that would be impossible in one year.

In writing *Wie, bitte?* we have heeded carefully the guidelines for proficiency in all skill areas established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in conjunction with the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The ACTFL/ETS Guidelines, carefully adapted from performance criteria used for decades in the Foreign Service, show what we do with language within what cultural context and with what degree of accuracy. They also reflect our progress as we learn other languages. At the *Novice* level we learn the basics: numbers, colors, family members, the date and year, telling time – in other words, "survival" vocabulary. As we progress to the *Intermediate* level, the level at which we begin to create with language, we learn how to *describe* the things closest to our lives: our families, our home towns, and so on. We learn how to ask and give directions, arrange transportation, make social plans, and deal with the necessities of food and lodging. At the *Advanced* level we are acquiring the ability not just to describe, but to *narrate*, and with relation to past, present, and future time. Advanced speakers can talk in some depth about vacation plans, movie and book plots, their employment or daily routine, and similar topics that require the ability to speak in paragraphs, not just sentences. At the *Superior* level – a level students probably won't reach unless they have a good native gift for learning language and spend a substantial time abroad – we move with considerable ease in the language: The grammar and syntax are solid, the vocabulary is broad and varied, and we are able to hypothesize, to support our opinions, and to deal successfully with a broad range of topics from abortion to trade policy, tax amnesty, genetic research, and the ethics of political campaigns.

In spite of its decidedly practical orientation, *Wie bitte?* is not a phrase book for travelers – although we anticipate that students might want to take it along when they travel abroad. Contrary to typical quick-fix translation guides, *Wie, bitte?* stresses the importance of grammar, the skeleton that holds the linguistic body together and is absolutely central to effective communication. In doing so, the text program establishes a firm structural and lexical base for intermediate

and advanced courses. The Class Text and Study Text are also full of exercises in listening, reading, speaking, and writing; of these the speaking exercises in particular are conceived for pairs of students, since the use of language implies involvement with others. Above all else, *Wie, bitte?* teaches strategy – the ability to be creative with language skills, to make linguistic facility at each level of proficiency serve the individual to the greatest extent possible in a wide range of contexts.

It should be clear by now that the learner is at the center of this book and at the center of the course in which it is used. Students cannot survive as passive observers of text and course, but must be ready to involve themselves in class activities as they may never have done before. The teacher's most valuable contribution to class will be not as a lecturer, but as a creative and productive helper as the students progress individually toward ever greater linguistic competence through group practice.

We have thoroughly enjoyed writing *Wie, bitte?*, and we trust that our pleasure in this project is evident. We are convinced that this new approach to language learning will be both challenging and fulfilling for both teachers and students, and we hope that both will continue for years to reap the harvest of the coming months' activities.

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