

Translations of the dialogues

Lektion 1

Das ist eine brillante Idee!

A studio at Deutsche Welle. The producer and the speakers are reading listeners' letters about the first three parts of this language course.

- Andreas: Are there any reactions to the language course?
Producer: Yes. We've received a lot of listeners' letters.
Dr. Thürmann: And what does it say in the letters?
Producer: I can't read them all out. That would take too long.
Hanna: Not all of them – but some. Please!
Frau Berger: Yes, I'm interested in them, too.
Producer: *(reluctantly)* All right.
Announcer: But please be brief.
Producer: Here's a letter from Mr. Card from America. Just a minute.
(leafs through letters, reads out loud) "I enjoy Andreas' adventures as a porter at the Hotel Europa."
Andreas: So do I.

Ex is only interested in hearing what has been written about her.

- Producer: *(leafs through letters)* And here's a letter from Angela from Colombia. She writes: "I'm so happy because I've studied the grammar. Now I understand the accusative. It was always ..."
Ex: *(Ex interrupts)* Grammar, grammar, accusative. That's boring! Don't the listeners write anything about me? What do the listeners think about me? That's what I want to know!
Producer: That's no problem, Ex. Here's a letter from England. There's something about you. *(reads out loud)* "The introduction of Ex is a brilliant idea."
Ex: *(angrily)* I don't understand that! What does that mean in German?
Producer: You are a brilliant idea!
Ex: Idea? How come I'm an idea? I'm me!

As many listeners have written in saying that they find Ex's voice difficult to understand, the team consider how they could change it.

- Producer: This is quite important. Many listeners write that they can't understand Ex very well.
Andreas: We can give her another voice.

Producer: Let's try! Ex, say something.
 Ex: On hearing the magic word I was supposed to leave the book and ...
 Producer: Okay! Stop! And once again, please.
 Ex: On hearing the magic word I was supposed to leave the book and ...
 Dr. Thürmann: Can't her voice just remain quite normal?
 Producer: No. Ex is a special person, she's an elf. So she needs to have a special voice.
 Ex: I think so, too!
 Producer: But that's a technical problem. We'll solve that later.

Lektion 2

Was möchten Sie machen?

Frau Berger has invited Andreas and Hanna to come to the Hotel Europa. She has made an important decision and wants to tell them about it.

Andreas: Listen, do you know why Frau Berger wants to speak to us?
 Hanna: No. No idea. But I know why I want to speak to her.
 Andreas: So do I!
 Frau Berger: *(enters)* I'm glad you've all come.
 Ex: *(quietly)* What does she mean "all"? She didn't ask me if I was coming ...
 Frau Berger: Ex, I heard what you said. I'm sorry, of course you're welcome, too! Well, I've made an important decision.
 Ex: *(quietly)* This is where it gets interesting. *(out loud)* So have I, Frau Berger.
 Hanna: I must tell you something.
 Frau Berger: Just a minute, Hanna. Just a minute.
 Hanna: But it's very important. *(bursts out with her news)* I'm going to get married. And I'd like to stop working.
 Frau Berger: Well, that is quite a surprise.
 Andreas: I can't work here any longer, either. I've finished my studies and I've already received a great offer of work.
 Hanna: What kind of work?
 Andreas: I have to compile reports on the federal states in eastern Germany.
 Frau Berger: Interesting. That's just where I want to go, too.
 Andreas: I beg your pardon?
 Hanna: What?

Frau Berger wants to leave Aachen and open up a new hotel in eastern Germany. But she doesn't know where.

Andreas: Frau Berger, now it's your turn. I'm interested to hear what you'd like to do.
 Frau Berger: It's quite simple. I've been in Aachen so long, I know the city and the people. Now I'd like to open a new hotel.

Hanna: And where?
 Frau Berger: Somewhere in eastern Germany – perhaps on the island of Rügen or in Leipzig or ...
 Andreas: In Leipzig? In Dr. Thürmann's home town?
 Frau Berger: I don't know if I want to move to a city again. I just need more time. I want to take time to look.
 Andreas: And you've got a travel guide to help you. You can travel around and look for a new hotel. I'll travel around and write reports.
 Ex: And me? Will you take me with you?
 Andreas: Of course!

Lektion 3

Brandenburg: Wasser, Sand und Kartoffeln

Andreas has compiled a report on the federal state of Brandenburg in eastern Germany.

Andreas: Probably you already know the Brandenburg Gate in the centre of Berlin. And Berlin lies in the centre of the state of Brandenburg, which we're going to introduce you to today. Join us on our trip through Brandenburg!

The state of Brandenburg will benefit from the fact that Berlin, the capital of Germany, lies at its heart.

Andreas: It's obvious that Brandenburg is profiting from Berlin, the capital of Germany. Berlin will become important again in political and economic terms – not only for Germany, but also for Europe.

In the 18th century King Frederick the Great (1712–1786) had a palace built in Potsdam, where he surrounded himself with artists and philosophers.

Andreas: Here we are in Potsdam, the capital of Brandenburg. There is a beautiful palace here. It's called *Sanssouci*, which in French means "carefree". The palace dates from the 18th century, and the time of King Frederick the Great. He loved the arts: philosophy, French literature, music. He almost always wrote in French. He invited Voltaire to his palace, played the flute and composed music, too. In short, it was a dream-like existence. Two hundred years later saw the advent of another "dream world" – the cinema. At Babelsberg, near Potsdam, there were big film studios. Here they produced many famous films.

Brandenburg relied heavily on agriculture. In the German Democratic Republic, farmers worked the land but they did not own it. After German unification in 1990, land which had been taken over by the state in 1947 was returned to private ownership.

- Farmer: Apples, wonderful apples from the Havelland. Wouldn't you like a few apples?
Andreas: Yes, please (*bites into an apple*). It's true – they taste good. It's nice here – really idyllic.
Farmer: But the situation is anything but idyllic.
Andreas: Why?
Farmer: Many people in Brandenburg have always been farmers. When the German Democratic Republic existed, the state took care of us. The fields belonged to the state – there was no private ownership, but we farmers could live from our labour. Since 1990 the land has once again become privately owned. And the competition is stiff.

King Frederick the Great introduced the cultivation of potatoes, which at the time were still unknown in Europe.

- Andreas: And here we are already at the River Oder. Here, over 250 years ago, King Frederick the Great ordered the farmers to cultivate potatoes. He had to order them to do so because at that time nobody knew of potatoes. But before they could begin, they had to drain the land. That took six years.

In the 1950s an industrial city was built in eastern Brandenburg. It was a model city in the German Democratic Republic.

- Andreas: We've left the north of Brandenburg, the farmers, the water and potatoes and have now arrived in the east of the state. As almost everywhere in Brandenburg, the earth is very sandy. Eisenhüttenstadt is an industrial city, built on sand. It was decided that Brandenburg would not live entirely from agriculture, but that it would become industrialised. In the 1950s a new city was built, with steelworks and blocks of flats. Twelve thousand people worked here, and 50,000 lived here – until 1990. Today this industry has virtually no prospects for the future. Many people are now out of work.

Lektion 4

Herr von Ribbeck auf Ribbeck ...

Andreas tells Ex about a poem by the German writer Theodor Fontane who came from Brandenburg. Herr von Ribbeck was a landowner who lived in the 19th century. Every autumn he used to give the children in the village pears from his garden.

- Ex: And the people in Brandenburg? What are they like?
 Andreas: You know that there were always a lot of farmers in Brandenburg. They loved their land – and the people. And there is a famous story about one of the people.
- Ex: A story about elves?
 Andreas: No, Ex. It's the story of a man who particularly loved poor children. Every year in autumn he gave them pears from his pear tree. When he saw a little girl he said, "*Lütt Dirn, kumm man röwer, ick hebb 'ne Birn.*" (Little girl, come over here. I've got a pear for you.) When he saw a boy, he asked him, "*Junge, wiste 'ne Beer?*" (Little boy, do you want a pear?) He did that year in, year out. One day the old man felt that he would soon die. He thought of the children. Who would give them pears when he was dead?
- Ex: Why? Didn't he have any children?
 Andreas: Yes, Ex. He had a son. But he was very miserly. So the man had an idea ...

The old man wanted a pear to be buried with him. After a few years, a pear tree grew up over his grave.

- Andreas: Shortly before his death, the old man said, "When I die, bury a pear in my grave. And his wish was granted. The old man died and the children were very sad. Nobody gave them pears any more. Then suddenly, three years later, a small shoot appeared on the grave. And after many, many years a wonderful big pear tree grew up over the grave. Whenever a young boy comes by, the tree whispers, "*Junge wiste 'ne Beer?*" (Little boy, do you want a pear?) When a girl comes by, the tree whispers, "*Lütt Dirn, kumm man röwer, ick gew di 'ne Birn.*" (Little girl, come over here. I'll give you a pear.)
- Ex: Is that true?
 Andreas: It's a poem, Ex. And it's a true story.

Lektion 5

Das Gedicht wurde verboten

Andreas and Ex are in Ribbeck, where the von Ribbeck family lived. They want to see the pear tree which is described in Theodor Fontane's poem. (See Lesson 4) They meet a man from the village who tells them a lot about the history of the pear tree.

- Man: Here, next to the church, stood the old pear tree.
 Andreas: Stood? And where is it now?
 Man: It doesn't exist any more. Over 80 years ago it was destroyed in a storm. The son of old von Ribbeck had a steel ring put round the tree trunk and stood it in his castle. There it stood and was used as a giant ashtray! You can still see it today – in the *Zum Birnbaum* restaurant.

Andreas: (points to a tree) And what sort of tree is that?
 Man: We planted it – at night, secretly.
 Ex: Like the *Heinzelmännchen*?
 Man: I beg your pardon? *Heinzelmännchen*? No, we did it – a few people from the village.
 Andreas: And why secretly?

Then the man tells them about more recent history. During the era of the German Democratic Republic (1949–1990) Fontane's poem was banned. Any reminder of large landowners was considered undesirable in a socialist state.

Man: Well, listen! Socialism no longer had any use for junkers. You know the phrase: "*Junkerland in Bauernhand*"! (Junkers' lands in the hands of the farmers) The land was expropriated and given over to the farmers. Nothing was to serve as a reminder of the old times. Nothing was to be a reminder of old Ribbeck – not even a tree or a poem. The second tree was simply felled by Russian soldiers. And the poem by Fontane was banned. For 20 years there was no tree here. And then we planted one, right here, in exactly the right place, next to the church.
 Andreas: Why right? Is there a wrong place?
 Man: But of course! In 1990, after unification, they suddenly arrived, the politicians from the West, and planted a pear tree in memory of old Ribbeck. But in the wrong place.
 Ex: So that means there are now two trees?

Lektion 6

Nach der Wende

Andreas has recorded interviews with some people from the state of Brandenburg. He asked them what they felt about the "Wende". The German word "Wende" literally means "change" and refers to the period after the collapse of the East German regime in 1989, which paved the way for the unification of East and West Germany in 1990.

The first person he asks is a young man who is serving an apprenticeship as a bricklayer.

Andreas: What does the *Wende* mean to you?
 Karl: I can't say exactly what it means. Many of my friends left for the West. And although a lot of them have come back again, it's bit empty here. I myself am going to stay here for the time being. I'll complete my bricklaying apprenticeship. In one year I'll be finished – and then I'll take it from there.

The second person Andreas interviews is a young man who is enjoying the new-found freedom to travel.

Frank: It was just great! At last I can travel everywhere. Other countries have always interested me. I've been to Italy and Spain. Although I haven't got much money, I definitely want to go to Greece.

Andreas then talks to a young woman who has broken off her apprenticeship as a tailoress.

Marion: When the *Wende* came, I was in the middle of an apprenticeship as a tailoress. In the GDR that was a job with a future. And then mass-produced clothing came from the West and from Hong Kong and so on – cheap, off-the-peg clothing. How was I supposed to compete? So I went back to school and now I'm doing my *Abitur* (school-leaving certificate).

Next, Andreas interviews an engineer who decided to become self-employed. He is about 45 years of age.

Man: The *Wende* meant a change for me, too. I'm actually an engineer, then I was made unemployed, and then I opened up this photocopying shop here. There was a real gap in the market here. And now we're supposed to be learning about a market economy. It's quite hard. Although I work 12 to 14 hours a day, I'm satisfied. I'm also doing it for my children.

Finally, Andreas interviews a woman who is suffering from the effects of unemployment. She is in her late forties.

Woman: You're asking what the *Wende* meant for me? It had good and bad sides. For young people it's certainly good. They have more opportunities and at last they can state their opinions freely. But for us, especially for us women, the *Wende* wasn't good. Although we all used to work, a lot of women of my age can't find a new job.

Lektion 7

Eine multikulturelle Gesellschaft

Frau Berger and Andreas are looking round the Dutch Quarter in Potsdam which was built in the 18th century.

Frau Berger: Aren't they wonderful, these simple, old houses?
Andreas: I suppose you'd like to open a hotel here?
Frau Berger: Very much. This is the ideal place to open a hotel. Sanssouci Palace is just nearby and there are always a lot of tourists there.

Ex: And they would stay the night in your hotel?
 Frau Berger: Exactly. But when the houses are restored they are sure to be very expensive. Oh well, it's a nice dream – a lovely old house in the Dutch Quarter of Potsdam. But it's only a dream ...
 Andreas: (*quotes*) In my state everyone can live after his own fashion.
 Frau Berger: (*laughs*) Well, well. That's what Old Fritz said as a sign of tolerance. But that was over 250 years ago. Today it's no longer so easy to be tolerant ...
 Ex: Why not?

The three talk about immigrants to this part of Germany in the 18th century. They were very welcome and their own cultures were respected.

Andreas: Well, why shouldn't it be possible for people to live the way they like?
 Frau Berger: You know the answer! A lot of people died in the Thirty Years War. And afterwards immigrants were made welcome in order to repopulate the country.
 Andreas: Well, of course, I know that. And the people were well treated, their culture was respected. People were tolerant – it was really a multicultural society.
 Frau Berger: That's right. Many immigrants came here to live – Dutchmen, Italians, Jews, Huguenots. There were 20,000 Huguenots alone!
 Ex: Huguenots?
 Andreas: They were French, Ex. Old Fritz spoke French better than German ...
 Ex: (*insistently*) Who were the Huguenots?
 Andreas: They were Protestants. Their religion was banned in France at that time.
 Ex: Oh, that doesn't interest me. I'm hungry.
 Andreas: I'll buy you a meatball ...
 Ex: No, a curry sausage!

Lektion 8

Die UFA-Studios in Babelsberg

Andreas is reporting on the founding of the UFA film studios in Babelsberg.

Andreas: Well, music was very important in films back then, in the films made at the famous studios in Babelsberg. In 1917 the UFA film company was founded. The German government of the day invested a lot of money in the studios – and they had a good reason for doing so. The idea was to divert people's attention from unemployment and the war. That is why they made entertainment films with a lot of music. Many of the songs from these films are still well known today. For example the song *In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine*.

(At night nobody likes to be alone) from 1934. Let's hear it again.

But they wanted to do more than that back then. They also wanted to make good films so that German culture would become better known abroad. Fritz Lang, for example, succeeded in doing that in 1927 with his film *Metropolis*.

Silent films were followed by sound or talking films.

Andreas: *Metropolis* was a silent film. So that it wouldn't be too silent in the cinema, music was played to accompany the film. As one musician at the time said, "We also made music in Babelsberg. I was in the studios there and played music to inspire the actors."

Three years later, in 1930, that was no longer necessary. The talkies were born. The Nazis also took advantage of this development. They kept checks on the films and used the sound to make political propaganda. After 1949, in the German Democratic Republic, the studios in Babelsberg were state-owned. Since 1992 they have belonged to a Franco-German concern. It hopes that many films will be made there so that European films will again gain in importance.

Lektion 9 Eine "Kräuterhexe"

During a walk through the beautiful countryside along the River Havel, Ex and Andreas meet a woman who is gathering herbs.

Ex: What's that woman there doing?

Andreas: I think she's collecting herbs.

Ex: And what does she do with them?

Andreas: No idea. We can always ask her. (*goes up to the woman*)
Hello.

Woman: Hello.

Andreas: Nice weather, today.

Woman: Yes, it's good for collecting herbs. You can't do it when it's raining.

Andreas: (*horrified*) You're collecting stinging nettles. Doesn't that hurt?

Woman: (*laughs*) No. I'm wearing gloves!

Andreas: And what do you do with the nettles?

Woman: I make tea. Nettle tea. It's very healthy.

Andreas: (*sceptically*) I'll take your word for it ...

Woman: But nettle tea really does taste good and besides, it's a good medicine. Natural healing!

Andreas: Oh, yes. I've heard of that before.

The woman explains about the medicinal properties of nettles. Andreas remembers times in the past when women like her were burned as witches.

- Andreas: And how does that work – natural healing? I'd like to write an article about that.
- Woman: Of course, you have to know the herbs and their effect.
- Andreas: What effect do stinging nettles have?
- Woman: Well, you know that yourself. You said that they hurt, they sting.
- Ex: Stinging nettles sting. You should know that.
- Woman: Exactly! And in the case of rheumatism, for example, you should rub nettles into your skin. It does you good.
- Andreas: *(sceptically)* Hm ... Do you also collect other herbs?
- Woman: Yes, it's my hobby.
- Andreas: *(jokingly)* Aren't you living dangerously?
- Woman: How come?
- Andreas: In the past, women like you were burned as witches!
- Woman: Oh, that was a long time ago.
- Andreas: And what about the people here in the village?
- Woman: Some of them find me a bit funny, but nobody really bothers me. On the contrary, people affectionately call me the "herb witch".
- Ex: Great! You're a real witch? I'm an elf.
- Woman: I'll believe you.

Lektion 10

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Wasser und Werften

The first stage of Andreas' journey through Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania takes him to the Müritzsee (Lake Müritz), which is surrounded by a nature preservation area.

- Andreas: Did you hear that? You can hear rare birds here in this natural paradise. But not only birds are at home here. There are also other animals and rare plants. And there isn't another soul far and wide. It's perfectly still. We're in the south of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, on Lake Müritz. The lake is in the centre of a nature preservation area. Here you can really believe that in Mecklenburg time moves more slowly ...

Andreas travels on to the small town of Güstrow. The sculptor Ernst Barlach lived and worked here.

Andreas: We've moved on, from nature to culture, to Güstrow. It is one of the many small towns in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Güstrow became famous because of the sculptor Ernst Barlach. In Güstrow Cathedral there is a hanging sculpture of an angel – an angel of peace. The sculpture was melted down by the Nazis. Today a copy of the sculpture hangs in the cathedral.

Next, Andreas goes on to the coast of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, to Rostock. This is an old city that belonged to the Hanseatic League in the Middle Ages. The Hanseatic League was an association of merchants and towns which secured a trade monopoly and customs exemption on certain sea routes.

Andreas: Here we are in Rostock, a port in the north (of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania). Even today you can see that Rostock was once a flourishing city. From the 13th century on, Rostock belonged to the Hanseatic League. The Hanseatic League was an association of many towns. At that time, these towns had a trade monopoly and were therefore very rich. And of course in those days there were also many pirates, for example, Klaus Störtebecker ...

Until 1990 Rostock was the centre of the East German shipbuilding industry. Today this industry is in jeopardy – as it is in many countries.

Andreas: Up until the *Wende* (the political turnaround in East Germany), Rostock was the gateway to the world for the GDR, particularly to the north and to the east. Fifty-five thousand people worked in the shipyards. The shipbuilding industry is now threatened because other countries can build ships more cheaply. It is hoped, however, that Rostock will become the gateway to the south. And people are putting their hopes in tourism.

The last stage of Andreas' journey takes him to the Baltic island of Rügen, which is a tourist centre.

Andreas: Rügen is beautiful – which is why many tourists come here. Thousands of them have visited the famous chalk cliffs. And this is a cause of anxiety to many people on Rügen. They are afraid that too many hotels and wide roads will be built for the tourists. They want their island to remain beautiful in the future, too. Will they succeed?

Lektion 11

Die Insel Rügen

Andreas and Frau Berger are on the Baltic island of Rügen. They are talking to Herr Wulf, who is a member of a local pressure group set up to campaign against speculators who are building luxury hotels and destroying the environment.

- Andreas: You belong to the pressure group "Für Rügen" (Pro Rügen). This group won the European Environment Prize in 1992. Can you tell us what you do?
- Herr Wulf: Certainly. You have seen our island. It's beautiful, it has wonderful woods, long beaches. It has not yet been ruined. And we are campaigning to make sure that it remains so.
- Frau Berger: That would be nice!
- Andreas: Who are you fighting against?
- Herr Wulf: You see, many people here are unemployed. There is no industry and hardly any agriculture. People are putting their hopes in tourism.
- Frau Berger: Then tourism would be good for the island.
- Herr Wulf: Yes and no. There are some speculators. They are exploiting the situation to earn a lot of money. They want to build big hotels, golf courses and leisure parks. That destroys nature. That's what we're fighting against. We only want gentle tourism.

Herr Wulf tells them about plans to build a large shipbuilding yard – the Meyer-Werft – on Rügen.

- Andreas: What's happening with the Meyer wharf?
- Herr Wulf: Well, Meyer wanted to build a huge shipyard in the east of Rügen, right in front of the famous cliffs. A huge assembly yard for big ships, and then of course a wide road – a real industrial area.
- Andreas: But with new jobs, surely?
- Herr Wulf: Yes, that's right. Meyer promised 2,000 jobs. Promised, take note! And who would have got them? Not us, the people here on Rügen! Engineers from the West or the East – but not us people here! Besides, the docks would have destroyed nature: the water, plants, fish, trees – everything!
- Andreas: So the docks are not being built?
- Herr Wulf: No, they're not being built.
- Frau Berger: And what about tourism?
- Herr Wulf: Tourists – they'll come anyway. And they're welcome, too. But why build so many new hotels? We've got many old hotels ...
- Frau Berger: And they are supposed to be renovated?
- Herr Wulf: Yes. We'd be very pleased about that.

Lektion 12

Klaus Störtebeker

Andreas is still on the island of Rügen. It was from here that the pirate Klaus Störtebeker set off to sea in the 14th century. Andreas tries to think what it must have been like back then and imagines a conversation between Klaus Störtebeker and his captain.

- Andreas: I'm standing here on the cliffs of Rügen looking out to sea. I can see two ships – and I'm thinking of Klaus Störtebeker, the famous pirate. Listen! Couldn't those be voices from back then, from the year 1388?
- Captain: Hey, Klaus, look at that ship over there! It's magnificent, big and beautiful. A Hanseatic ship! We could use that.
- Klaus St.: You're right. We could make good use of that. (*calls out*) Off we go, men! We're going to capture it. Ship ahoy!

The Duke of Mecklenburg wanted to help his cousin, the King of Sweden, who had been taken prisoner by the Danish queen. He asked the pirates for help. They received letters of marque, which meant that they were given official permission to seize Danish ships.

- Captain: Klaus, have you heard the news? War between Denmark and Sweden!
- Klaus St.: Tell me more!
- Captain: The Mecklenburgers want everyone to fight against Denmark. Us pirates, too! We are to receive letters of marque from the Mecklenburgers. We should take the opportunity.
- Klaus St.: And how?
- Captain: We'll bring food to Stockholm. We'll be safe in the harbours of Rostock und Wismar!
- Klaus St.: Have you heard what the other pirates are doing?
- Captain: They're going along with it!
- Klaus St.: You're right! This war is our chance. We'll become rich and powerful. So, off to Stockholm!

This "contract" with the pirates existed for many years but eventually the other towns in the Hanseatic League opposed it because the pirates were becoming direct trade competitors.

- Captain: Klaus Störtebeker, I have bad news.
- Klaus St.: Speak, Wigbald!
- Captain: The war between Mecklenburg and Denmark is over. The Hanseatic towns have forced Mecklenburg to end the war.
- Klaus St.: What about our letter of marque?
- Captain: That's all over! This could mean the end of us. We ought to consider what do.
- Klaus St.: Klaus Störtebeker doesn't give up! Never! For ten years I've been a pirate – and I'm going to stay one!

Lektion 13

Ein Ruderverein

Andreas and Frau Berger visit a rowing club on one of the many lakes in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

Frau Berger: Look, now they're coming back. Oh, I'd like to row again.
Andreas: You? Row?
Frau Berger: Yes. I used to be in a rowing club. It was very nice.
Andreas: *(jokingly)* Oh, I didn't know that you were so sporty!
Frau Berger: *(sings a famous rowing song)*

The young members of the rowing club arrive at the landing stage.

Andreas: You've just come from a training session?
Girl: Yes.
Frau Berger: How often do you train a week?
Girl: Two to three times.
Andreas: Do you do any other sports?
Girl: But of course! We jog, play volleyball and handball and we do a lot of other things together besides. We go hiking, we go to the swimming pool – or we just get together and chat. We're a real club!

The girl tells Andreas and Frau Berger how conditions for sport have changed since the collapse of East Germany.

Frau Berger: Do you also take part in competitions?
Girl: We'd like to do that more often. But it costs a lot of money. In the GDR that was all organised by the state.
Andreas: And what's it like now?
Girl: Now we have to pay for almost everything ourselves – the electricity, the boathouse, new boats – and we also have to pay for the competitions.
Frau Berger: And how do you do that?
Girl: We pay a fee.
Andreas: A membership fee?
Girl: Yes. And our parents give us money. Without them it wouldn't work. This year we were only able to take part in one competition. But we were super. And we're proud of that!

Lektion 14

Wohnen im Plattenbau

Andreas is in Rostock and is describing a typical housing estate that was built during the era of the German Democratic Republic.

- Ex: Phew, it's cold and windy here.
- Andreas: Well, today we're at a really cold place. You can be glad that you're sitting at home by your radios. We're at a high-rise development in Rostock. You have to imagine a large estate. Wherever I look, there's nothing but blocks of flats. And they all look the same: flat-fronted, straight and high – sometimes 21 storeys high! The houses are made of concrete slabs, one slab up against the next. Which is why they call this *Plattenbau*. (literally: houses made of concrete slabs) Well, now I'm standing in a gap between the blocks. I'm going to wait until someone comes by. I'm in luck, here comes someone.

A woman who lives on the estate tells Andreas about the living conditions there.

- Andreas: Excuse me, have you got a moment?
- Frau Beimer: Yes, I have. What's this about?
- Andreas: How long have you been living here?
- Frau Beimer: We've been here for 20 years.
- Andreas: And do you feel at home here?
- Frau Beimer: In the past we did. You could always hear everything through the walls, but we were glad to have a flat at all. We lived for a long time in an old building. You know, with a shared lavatory on the landing and stove heating. It was great when we got a new flat with proper heating.
- Andreas: And what's it like now?
- Frau Beimer: Well, since the *Wende* (the turnaround in East Germany) everything has changed. Rents have got more expensive. We have to pay four times as much. Heating and electricity are on top of that. And then, can you see the rubbish there? In the past there was a caretaker here. He lived here and took care of everything. No, it's not nice here any more. I'd liked to move away – but where to?

Lektion 15

Sachsen: Musik und Industrie

Andreas is in Leipzig, a city with a long tradition of music. Here he traces the footsteps of the composer Johann Sebastian Bach.

Andreas : *(speaks over the music)* Music by Johann Sebastian Bach.
Johann Sebastian Bach was a great musician ...

Today I'm at St. Thomas' Church (*Thomaskirche*) in Leipzig. Johann Sebastian Bach led the church choir here for 27 years, from 1723 until his death. And even today there are many reminders of Bach. Every week you can hear his music in St. Thomas' Church. And you can visit his grave – or the large Bach memorial in front of the church. There was a long tradition of music in the Bach family, and Johann Sebastian Bach carried it on. He had a lot of children – eleven sons and nine daughters!

Some of his sons were also famous musicians. And to distinguish between the many musicians in the Bach family, they are always referred to by their Christian names.

Andreas is reporting on Chemnitz, a centre of industry in the state of Saxony.

Andreas: Here I am in Chemnitz, a centre of industry in Saxony. Here they make industrial machines. All sorts of machines – agriculture machinery, locomotives and railway wagons. Even bicycles are built here ... And there's the chemical industry here, too. It's important for employment, but the air is bad. You can smell the industrial emissions. I'm going to travel on from here, to a small town ...

Andreas continues his journey to the small town of Freiberg, where silver was mined as early as the 12th century.

Andreas: Silver was found here as long ago as the 12th century and it made Freiberg and Saxony very rich. So rich that they built a cathedral in Freiberg. And in Freiberg Cathedral there is a very famous organ.
The city was rich but the workers were not. Silver mining was very hard work and it was badly paid. Many miners had to look for additional work.

Lektion 16

Umweltprobleme

Dr. Thürmann has returned to his home town of Leipzig and is devoting his time to alternative medicine. Andreas and Ex visit him at his house.

Dr. Thürmann: Hello, Herr Schäfer.

Andreas: Hello, Dr. Thürmann.

Dr. Thürmann: Well, who would have believed it?

Ex: What?
 Dr. Thürmann: Hello, Ex, you're here, too?
 Ex: Of course!
 Dr. Thürmann: Well, who would have thought that we would meet up here one day? Here in Leipzig, my home town.
 Andreas: I'm very glad to be here. How are you?
 Dr. Thürmann: Fine, thank you. You remember, no doubt, that I've given up my practice in Berlin.
 Andreas: Yes. You told me that. And what are you doing now?
 Ex: He probably wants to make me visible!
 Dr. Thürmann: Maybe, Ex, who knows? No, seriously, I'm writing articles about alternative medicine.

Andreas has done some research on alternative medicine and has brought a few magazines along for Dr. Thürmann.

Andreas: You once asked me if I could do some research on alternative medicine. I've been finding out a bit about it.
 Ex: We've even spoken to a "herb witch".
 Dr. Thürmann: Really?
 Andreas: Well ... Here you are, I've brought you some magazines.
 Dr. Thürmann: *(leafs through them, reads the headings)* "Health through Herbs", "Pills – Herbs – Therapies", "Germany's Ratings in Environment Test". That's exactly what I've been looking for – something about the environment.
 Andreas: I can well imagine it! Everywhere here smells of industrial emissions and sulphur ...
 Ex: Pooh! Stink!
 Dr. Thürmann: Here in the east there are really serious environment problems. The air is polluted, as is the ground, and the water. There's still a lot to be done.
 Andreas: I must tell you something. I've conducted some interesting interviews about that.

Lektion 17

Ein Spaziergang durch Leipzig

Dr. Thürmann shows Andreas round Leipzig, his home town. First they go to St. Nicholas' Church (Nikolaikirche).

Andreas: Do they still have prayers for peace here?
 Ex: Can't you read? It says it there: Every Monday at 5pm, prayers for peace.
 Dr. Thürmann: Yes, this tradition still exists, although not as many people come now. This tradition has existed for a long time, not just since 1989.

Andreas: Even during the era of the GDR people gathered here.
Dr. Thürmann: Yes, since 1981. They met here to pray and to hold discussions.
Andreas: And in 1989 these meetings became more political. People took to the streets to demonstrate for more rights. But that's well known.

They talk about the university building, which towers up above the other buildings in the centre of the town. The architecture of the building is intended to suggest an open book.

Ex: What's that huge building?
Andreas: That's the university. They couldn't have built it any higher ...
Dr. Thürmann: That's our "wisdom tooth"! Take a good look. The building is supposed to suggest an open book.
Andreas: Well, I don't see it.
Ex: Neither do I!
Dr. Thürmann: Well, you need to use a lot of imagination.
Andreas: The building really isn't beautiful, but where else does a university tower up above all other buildings? That's what I like.

The three go to the "Auerbachs Keller" pub. It's famous because a scene in Goethe's "Faust" takes place here. Inside, some people are singing loudly.

Dr. Thürmann: Oh, no. Must that be? Can't they sing more quietly?

Lektion 18

Porzellan – das weiße Gold

During a visit to Meissen, where the famous porcelain is manufactured, Frau Berger tells Andreas about how porcelain was invented. The alchemist Friedrich Böttger maintained that he could make gold.

Frau Berger: Do you know the story about how porcelain was invented here in Meissen?
Andreas: No. But it interests me.
Frau Berger: The story that I'm going to tell you is true. About 300 years ago, a man called Friedrich Böttger lived here. He had a hobby that a lot of people had at the time. He devoted his time to alchemy.
Andreas: And the alchemists had one aim. They wanted to make gold.
Frau Berger: Exactly. But Friedrich Böttger maintained – and he said so out loud – that he could do that. And that was his misfortune.
Andreas: Why his misfortune?
Frau Berger: Because the King of Prussia, who heard about this, wanted this gold at all costs.

Friedrich Böttger was taken prisoner and although he didn't find pure gold, he found a recipe for making porcelain ...

- Frau Berger: Böttger became afraid. He was persecuted and fled to Saxony, to protect himself. It was his misfortune.
- Andreas: What happened to him there?
- Frau Berger: The Elector of Saxony imprisoned him in his castle. There Böttger was supposed to make gold. But that was impossible. And so he was told to at least make "white gold", as they called porcelain in those days. The Elector of Saxony, who admired Chinese tableware, was determined to know how these dishes were produced. Böttger was held prisoner for a whole year, then he discovered the secret. In January 1710 the Elector of Saxony registered a patent throughout Europe – a patent for the manufacture of porcelain.
- Ex: A blessing in disguise. (Literally: fortune in misfortune)

Lektion 19

Sachsen-Anhalt: Natur – Industrie – Religion

Andreas is hiking on the Brocken, the highest peak in the Harz Mountains. From 1952–1989 the mountain was a restricted area in the German Democratic Republic and was therefore not accessible to the public.

- Andreas: As you know, the Germans like hiking. And so do I. That's why I've come to the Harz Mountains to climb the Brocken, at long last. This area, in the middle of the Harz, was divided by the inter-German border. From 1952 until the end of 1989 you couldn't climb the Brocken – it was all sealed off. But those times are now over.

Andreas travels on to Bitterfeld, the centre of the chemical industry. This area was always rich in natural resources.

- Andreas: Now I'm travelling from Halle to Bitterfeld. The earth here is very rich. As long ago as the Middle Ages salt was mined in Halle. Later, brown coal was mined, too. And today? Although the car windows are closed, the air here smells bad. Still 15 kilometres to go to Bitterfeld, but you can already smell the chemical emissions. The area in and around Bitterfeld was the centre of the East German chemical industry – plastics, fertilisers, rubber and other materials were manufactured here. During the era of the GDR, 300,000 people worked here. By 1992 it was only 80,000. But the chemical industry is to stay here.

Waste produced by the chemical industry has polluted the area.

Andreas: The air here is bad. But not only the air. The ground is polluted, too. Polluted by waste. They just left it lying here. The fruit and vegetables, for example, that were grown here, were contaminated. The people could no longer eat them. Even the rivers and lakes are polluted – and people became ill. In the last few years the air has improved and the water is clearer. But it will still be a long time before people can lead healthy lives here.

In 1983, to mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, a sword was melted down in Wittenberg. It was a symbolic act in the name of peace. An eye-witness reports.

Today we're celebrating the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther: 3,000 young people are gathered here outside the Luther Church. In the middle of the crowd there is a coal fire. A blacksmith from Wittenberg is now going into the middle of the crowd, to the fire. He has a sword in his hand, he's holding it up high. Now he's putting the sword into the fire. The sword is glowing. The smith hammers the iron.

A woman says: "Everybody needs his bread and his wine. There must be peace without war. Beat swords into ploughshares."

Lektion 20 "Der Brocken ist ein Deutscher" (Heine)

Frau Berger and Andreas want to go together to the Brocken. They remember the poet Heinrich Heine, who compared the German character to this mountain.

Andreas: Ex, d'you know what a "*harter Brocken*" is? (This means 'a hard nut to crack', but here it is also a play on words referring to the name of the mountain.)

Ex: No.

Andreas: It's a complicated thing (to explain) ...

Frau Berger: The *Brocken* is a hard nut to crack. I'm not going up it on foot!

Andreas: Why not?

Frau Berger: Don't you know Goethe's *Faust*? Not even Mephisto wanted to go up the Brocken on foot. He wanted to go up the Brocken on a witch's broomstick.

Andreas: And do you know what Heine said?

Frau Berger: Yes! "The Brocken is a German."

Ex: What did he mean by that?

Andreas: He meant that the Brocken is as thorough as the Germans, as tolerant as the Germans, but also as romantic and crazy as them.

Frau Berger: And since I'm not crazy, I'm going to take the Brocken railway. Are you coming with me?

Andreas: Of course. I've already been up it on foot.

The driver of the Brocken railway shows them the Witches' Place where the witches dance on Walpurgis night, the night between the 30th April and the 1st May.

Driver: All aboard! All aboard! We're leaving. "I want to climb up into the mountains", as Heinrich Heine said. You have it easier than Heine. You don't have to go on foot. And it's more comfortable to take our railway than to go on foot. And now comes the Witches' Meeting Place. You know that on the 1st May the witches meet here and dance. That's the way it was in Goethe's day. And it's still the case today.

Lektion 21

Kohle – das schwarze Gold

Andreas is visiting an area in eastern Germany which has been destroyed by brown coal mining.

Andreas: Have you ever been on the moon? No? Neither have I. But this landscape here must be what it's like on the moon. For kilometres around there is not a tree in sight, not a house, nothing, just a moon landscape. If I weren't seeing it with my own eyes, I wouldn't believe it. Where am I? I'm in an area where brown coal has been mined for over 300 years – without any consideration for the people living here or for nature.

Andreas speaks to an old woman. She lives in a village where nearly all the people earned a living from brown coal mining.

Andreas: The village is empty. Only a few people still live here. But they want to stay.

Old woman: Well, I'm an old woman. I've been here all my life and I want to stay here.

Andreas: Have you always lived here?

Old woman: Lived and worked! My father worked for the MIBRAG works. My husband worked there, so did my sons and so did I.

Andreas: What did you do?

Old woman: Everything – like the men! If you in the West had known how we worked here, we women, too! But we were proud of the works, and of the work we did.

Andreas: Coal is also known as "black gold". But it has destroyed the environment, it has destroyed your health.

Old woman: You're right there. But it's so easily said! What are we supposed to do? That's how we earned our money. There was nothing else.

The village is in danger of becoming a ghost town because of the collapse of the brown coal industry.

Andreas: Brown coal has eaten away the villages, one after the other.
Old woman: And now we're next. My sons have left already. Oh, if my husband were still alive! He would stay here, too! I'm an old woman. I'm going to stay here until I die.

Lektion 22

Thüringen: Das grüne Herz

Andreas is in the south of Thuringia, on a well-known hiking path in the Thuringian Forest.

Andreas: Here I am in the middle of the Thuringian Forest – on a hiking trail in the green heart of Germany. It's 168 kilometres long! A lot of people go hiking here. And when they're hungry, they can go to a kiosk and buy a genuine Thuringian fried sausage.

Goethe composed a famous poem on this hiking trail.

Andreas: In the old days it was much more peaceful here. So peaceful that Goethe even thought of eternal peace – death. Listen to the poem that Goethe composed on this hiking trail in 1780.

Throughout most of its history Thuringia has been a politically fragmented region. But, as Andreas reports, this has had advantages.

Andreas: Thuringia is a small state. Throughout its history it has always been fragmented. This had one great advantage: the many small provinces (that made up Thuringia) had too few people to engage in war. And because the princes (who ruled the provinces) could not engage in war, they did something worthwhile. They collected paintings and books, they brought musicians into the state and built theatres. In the 18th century many famous painters, musicians and poets, such as Schiller and Goethe, lived in the two cities of Jena and Weimar.

Andreas visits a glass museum.

Andreas: I'm in a museum for glassware and I feel quite strange. Do you know all the things you can make from glass? Bottles, of course, and glasses, jewellery – and also eyes ... Glass has been made here for over 450 years. First of all bottles, then jewellery and dolls' eyes – but also artificial eyes for humans ... One hundred years ago, they used to work far into the night – 15 hours a day, even on Sundays. Today the workload is lighter.

But the beautiful state of Thuringia also has its dark side.

Andreas: But a shadow lies over the beautiful state of Thuringia. Since 1946 large amounts of uranium have been mined in the east of Thuringia, along the border with Saxony. Admittedly, no more uranium has been mined there since 1990, but the radioactive waste is still there. And it is still endangering the people and the environment.

Lektion 23

Der Mythos von Barbarossa

Andreas suggests going to Barbarossa's cave.

Andreas: Come on, Ex, we're going to Barbarossa's cave.
Ex: Oh, great – a cave. The *Heinzelmännchen* live in a cave, too.
Andreas: But Barbarossa is no longer alive. He's been dead for over 800 years.
Ex: But the *Heinzelmännchen* haven't! Why's he called Barbarossa?
Andreas: That isn't his real name. He was Emperor Frederick I, but the Italians called him Barbarossa.
Ex: And what does Barbarossa mean?
Andreas: Red beard. Because Barbarossa had a red beard.
Ex: And the Germans?
Andreas: They didn't care about the red beard. They loved their emperor. Many didn't even want to believe that he had died. They believed that he was still alive. And they said that he was only sleeping – down there in his cave, and that at some time he would return.
Ex: When exactly?

Andreas tells the saga of Barbarossa.

Andreas: Emperor Barbarossa died suddenly. But nobody wanted to believe that he was really dead. And so a myth grew up – a myth that many still believe today. Emperor Barbarossa still sleeps – deep down in his cave. His red beard has grown and goes twice round the stone table. Outside ravens fly round the mountain. Once every hundred years the emperor sends out a dwarf from his cave. He has to check that the ravens are still flying round the mountain. And when the dwarf returns and says that the ravens are still flying round the mountain, the emperor sleeps for another hundred years. But one day Barbarossa – who has been awaited so long – will return. And everything will be as it was in former times.

Lektion 24 Luther auf der Wartburg

Andreas imagines how Luther was taken to the safety of Wartburg castle.

Andreas: It's the year 1521. Martin Luther, who is being sought by the pope and the emperor, has to flee. In the middle of his journey through the Thuringian Forest his coach is waylaid. "Halt! Stop! This is a hold up! Get out!" call the three men. "Help! What do you want from me? I have no money", cries Martin Luther. "Come with us – or you are a dead man!" the men reply and pull Luther out of the coach. "Where are you taking me?" Luther asks and is told: "We are sent by a friend of yours. We are taking you to the Wartburg. You will be safer there. From now on you are a simple junker. Your name is no longer Martin, but Jörg. So, Junker Jörg, come!" So Luther was taken to the Wartburg, where he remained in hiding for one year.

During a tour of the Wartburg, the guide tells visitors the story of a special inkstain.

Frau: This is Luther's room. And this is the desk where Luther worked. As you know, it was here that he translated the New Testament. It took him only one year, only one year! Of course he had problems, too. No, not with the translation, but with the devil. The devil, who was not at all pleased with this work, annoyed Luther. And in order to drive away the devil, Luther took his inkwell and threw it at the devil. Unfortunately the inkwell did not hit the devil. It hit the wall. Here you can still see the stain on the wall.

Ex: Still the old stain?

Andreas: Pst, Ex. No, of course not. The stain was repainted specially for tourists.

Lektion 25 Die Blaue Blume

The "blue flower" plays an important role in a novel by the German Romantic writer Novalis. It is a symbol of the search for one's own identity.

Andreas: Would you like to go in search of a blue flower with us today? I'm talking about a particular blue flower – *the* blue flower. Perhaps you have heard of it before? It plays an important role in a novel written during the Romantic period. The name of the novel by Novalis, a Romantic writer, is *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. The main character in the novel has a dream. Heinrich dreams of the blue flower – and after this dream he begins to search for the blue flower.

Dr. Thürmann sees a connection between Novalis' preoccupation with the blue flower and mining.

- Andreas: After his dream Heinrich tried to find the blue flower. He looked everywhere, he travelled far and wide, he even went deep down inside a mountain ...
- Dr. Thürmann: And that's exactly what interests me – the mountain.
- Andreas: Why?
- Dr. Thürmann: Novalis studied mining. So he knew the mountains and their interiors. Now, listen carefully. One particular place in the mountain where there are ore deposits is known as "*Eiserner Hut*" (literally: iron hat) Does anything occur to you?
- Andreas: Hm, no.
- Dr. Thürmann: Think of the name of a flower!
- Ex: "Eisenhut!" (This is play on words as the name of the flower – in English, monkshood – literally means "iron hat".)
- Dr. Thürmann: Exactly! "Eisenhut!" A blue flower, a flower with blue petals. How do you know that, Ex?
- Ex: (*makes a sound as if she is clearing her throat*)

Lektion 26

Ein Zauberwort

Dr. Thürmann wonders whether he could make Ex visible with the help of monkshood, a poisonous plant. (The German name for monkshood is "Eisenhut".)

- Dr. Thürmann: Do you know that monkshood is a very poisonous plant? You can make a deadly poison from monkshood. (*thinks to himself*) And if you dilute the poison, perhaps it can also bring someone back to life, and then perhaps it can also make someone visible ...
- Ex: He wants to make me visible. I knew it all along. But I don't want that. No, never. It's not a disease, being invisible!
- Dr. Thürmann: All right, Ex. We're not doing any experiments.
- Andreas: No, no way! No experiments with my Ex!

Frau Berger would like to know why Ex came to Andreas.

- Frau Berger: Ex, I'm interested to know why you came to Andreas.
- Ex: Because he said the magic word.
- Andreas: I beg your pardon? I said the magic word? How did you know that, Ex?
- Ex: From the *Heinzelmännchen* ...
- Andreas: So you did meet them?

Ex : Yes, one of them.
Andreas: And what is the magic word?
Ex: I don't know!

The magic word that Andreas said without knowing is: sowieso (obviously).