

Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik

Vital Statistics

Author(s): Barrack, Charles M. & Rubura, Horst M.

Copyright: 1986

Publisher: New York: Random House

No. of Pages: Pp. ii-372; Appendix A1-A34

Edition: Second

Title: *Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik*

Series: Other books in this series are a cultural reader and a literature reader:
Mosaik: Deutsche Kultur
Mosaik: Deutsche Literatur

Cost: *Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik* — Net \$15

Mosaik: Deutsche Kultur — Net \$10

Mosaik: Deutsche Literatur — Net \$10

Workbook/Laboratory Manual — Net \$16

An instructor's manual is included in the price of the textbook

brand new *Deutsch natürlich*; most of your students learned their German with textbooks like *First Year German*; and, a few of your students studied at a Goethe Institute during the summer and used *Deutsch activ*.

"Great!" you think and hope that all of your students will be well-served by *Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik*.

Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik is an integrated part of the Mosaik series which also includes *Deutsche Kultur* and *Deutsche Literatur*. *Grammatik* is the core of the series and can be used in combination or independently of the other two. Additional supportive materials include a workbook, a laboratory manual, an instructor's manual, and an audio tape program. The authors claim that, apart from its use as a classroom text, this grammar book can be successfully used by students independently of the teacher.

Subject

Imagine being a German instructor at a U.S. or Canadian college or university. You are planning your communication-based curriculum for second-year German students. Anticipating that they will need to "brush up" on their grammar and vocabulary after the summer break, you explore the market for supplementary materials which can be used in conjunction with an existing textbook.

Your search seems over; you have found *Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik* which not only seems to be what you have been looking for but also promises to be adequate for students from different language learning backgrounds.

This is important to you because you know that some of your students come from an avant-garde college where they used the

Structure

The table of contents is one of the book's strong points; it is very useful in helping the user locate a discrete grammar point for review. The titles of all 14 chapters evoke visions of learning about interesting cultural items such as "Schule und Beruf," "Kommunikation," "Politik," "Feste und Trachten," and "Handel und Wirtschaft," to mention a few.

The authors tried to arrange the grammatical exercises around the cultural topic of each chapter. Sometimes, this approach works very well as in the case of Chapter 2; at other times—as in Chapter 3—the relationship of cultural topic and surrounding exercises is not entirely clear and obvious.

The appendix of principal parts of strong

and irregular verbs, German-English/English-German vocabulary lists—along with an index of grammar terms—are all features of this text that both teachers and students will appreciate.

Each chapter is introduced by delineating the grammar items to be discussed, followed by “Wortschatz” which lists the new vocabulary with English translations. In addition, various exercises are given to practice the lexical items in a context. Succeedingly, each grammar point is defined and explained. The exercises following grammar point definition provide for application and practice of the grammatical forms.

In the “Rückblick” section—consisting of “Wiederholung” and “Gesamtwiederholung”—students are asked to translate from English into German.

Finally, “Anregungen zur Unterhaltung” encourages guided communication designed specifically for practicing the grammar points of a chapter.

Achievement of Stated Goals

Mosaik: Deutsche Grammatik achieves its main goals of grammar and vocabulary review—along with the introduction of new materials—to a great extent. For the achievement of some goals, however, a more thorough approach would have been advantageous.

It would have been beneficial to include, especially for second year students, the “progressive” form of the present tense—as in “Klaus telefonierte gerade”—and thereby familiarize students with the colloquial progressive—“Klaus ist gerade am telefonieren”—a form students are bound to encounter during a stay in Germany.

Additionally, the stress patterns for the varying uses of the present tense (p. 17) would have been helpful. Although helpful, the list of subordinate conjunctions (p. 19) is, unfortunately, incomplete. An entire collection of subordinate conjunctions is an indispensable tool for advanced learners.

In dealing with two-way prepositions (p. 130), the text treats them only superficially in the exercises. The verb pairs—sitzen, setzen; liegen, legen; stehen, stellen—must be brought to the attention of students. Since these are a common source of errors, it is insufficient to have them occur, as they do in this text, only in exercises.

The authors recommend this grammar book for the classroom as well as for students who wish to review independently of the teacher. I have reservations about students using this textbook on their own. Since no answer key to the exercises is provided, how do students find out if their answers are correct?

The authors must have been aware of this, since they caution that homework not be assigned before the grammar rules have been introduced by the teacher; it would seem that the book cannot always be used without teacher guidance.

The grammatical approach of this book is based on the traditional Latin grammar—which is often a somewhat restrictive approach. Only few North American teachers of German are experienced in the more recent method of teaching German grammar, namely, the concept of “Dependez-Verb-Grammatik,” which is considered—by those who use it—to be a more adequate pedagogical approach to the grammar of German. Textbooks such as *Deutsch aktiv* and *Themen* are based on the “Dependez-Verb-Grammatik” concept.

Exercises

Considerable effort on the part of the authors has made the drills and exercises in this textbook interesting to students. Through varying forms and practice of lexical items, the exercises provide opportunities for a creative use of the language. For this reason in particular, this text deserves high marks.

Layout

American students are very visually-oriented; yet, this text does not capitalize on

this fact. Even special grammar charts are not in eye-catching color, and photographs are in black and white.

A further disadvantage of this text is the unnecessary use of footnotes. In dealing with the dative verbs (pp. 71-73) for example, a set of 12 other "common" verbs requiring dative objects is listed in the footnote. One wonders if the verbs are so common, do they belong in a footnote? Other examples of this over-use of footnotes can be found on pp. 19, 22, and 122.

The items in the "Wortschatz" are not arranged as effectively as possible. Not only is the overall layout confusing, but it also does not allow for covering one side while memorizing the other.

Overall, the general structure of this text is "handy," that is to say, it is logically arranged and facilitates the use of this book as a reference tool.

Culture

With reference to culture, this book reinforces clichés about West Germany by providing a "touristy" picture of the country and its people.

For a native German under 40 years of age—who is not from Bavaria—it is impossible to believe the picture of the Federal Republic that emerges from the pages of this textbook or to accept it as representative.

Most of the photographs show famous buildings and landscapes which are indistinguishable from picture postcards and relegate the information to the level of typical tourist impressions.

The photograph on page 107, showing the narrow streets in the village of Pottenheim, tells the student that this is "moderner Verkehr." If students end up believing that the single lane traffic of Pottenheim is representative of modern traffic in Germany, the Autobahnkreuz Köln-Bonn would probably cure them of this impression, especially if they ever find themselves there in traffic trying to negotiate a turn.

On page 133 we see a picture of apprentices in the book binding business and the caption

"ein beliebtes Berufsziel." Such blanket generalizations can easily reinforce already existing stereotypes in American students.

On page 32 we find a more realistic piece of realia, namely, Professor Rabura's airplane ticket. It is certainly a good idea to include this type of authentic material, but can the authors justify selecting a ticket issued in English by an American travel agency?

In Chapter 8, entitled "Politik and Regierung," incorrect information appears: "There are five political parties in Germany" [sic]B (p. 231).

A delightful observation in this text is the consistent use of both male and female forms in the nouns—as in "der Bürgermeister, die Bürgermeisterin." Unfortunately, the derogatory term "Fräulein" sneaks in through the back door now and again (p. 292, 281).

In a nutshell, the selection of information—especially as depicted in the photographs—is too narrow and much too superficial. There is hardly a glimmer of cross-cultural awareness—something I find hard to believe since the co-author, Horst Rabura, is familiar with German culture in a much wider context; he is co-author of *Sprich mit uns*, a textbook for guest-workers' children in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Conclusion

I recommend this book for its exercises; however, I would improve the layout and eliminate all pictures. An effective German textbook neither creates nor reinforces a touristic picture of Germany nor a Deutschland aus der Mottenkiste.

J.E.T.T. Contributor Profile

Maria Egbert, a native of the Federal Republic of Germany, recently completed a graduate degree at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia. While working on her degree, she also taught beginning and intermediate German courses in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages.

Currently, she is completing a degree at the University of Bielefeld in West Germany and plans to return to the United States for doctoral work in linguistics. Persons wishing to write to Maria Egbert may do so at the following address: Maria Egbert, c/o J.E.T.T., 304C Moore College Building, Language Laboratories, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602.

Alles Gute! Basic German for Communication

Vital Statistics

Author(s): Briggs, Jeanine, & Crean, John E. Jr.

Copyright: 1986

Publisher: New York: Random House

No. of Pages: ix-403; Appendix A1-A40

Edition: Second

Title: *Alles Gute! Basic German for Communication*

Series: Other supportive materials with this text: Complimentary instructor's manual, laboratory manual, workbook

Cost: *Alles Gute! Basic German for Communication* — Net \$20 (includes instructor manual)
Laboratory Manual — Net \$8
Workbook — Net \$8

Alles Gute! Basic German for Communication—it is a promising title for a first-year textbook. Does it deliver what it seems to promise?

In the tradition of textbooks like *First Year German*, this is a text which adheres to the following organizing principle of textbook design: Take a grammatical item and create sentences containing as many examples of this item as possible.

Whereas *First Year German* appears to be arbitrarily-arranged, *Alles Gute!* is formally organized. Its 18 chapters—each consisting of “Wörter,” “Grammatik,” and “Kommunikation”—are framed by the “Einleitung” and the appendix. The appendix provides a list of German words translated into English (and

vice versa) and an index of grammatical terms.

Layout

With the exception of its impressively attractive cover, *Alles Gute!* is not very generous in providing the learner with an attractive, eye-catching, attention-grabbing visual layout.

For example, after “ploughing” through eight pages (pp. 45-52) of grammar explanations and exercises, the only visual relief the learner encounters is a small picture of an entrance ticket. When it comes to pictures of entrance tickets, one cannot help but wonder if collecting tickets is a hobby of one of the authors, since pictures of tickets substitute for actual pictures of the institutions to which they permit entrance throughout the book. This is not to say that the book has no photographs; it does, and some of them are up-to-date and appealing to the reader. What this reviewer questions is the reasoning behind when and where the photographs are used. Why use an illustration of a movie schedule? Why not a picture of the real thing (p. 295)? An actual photograph of a menu could have proved that an unusual menu—like the one shown in Chapter 8—really exists (p. 188).

Reinforcement of Stereotypes

After having reviewed *Alles Gute!*, this reviewer came to the sad conclusion that Germans may forever be thought of as nice, beer-drinking people (pp. 248, 255, 264, 269) dressed up in “Lederhosen” and “Dirndl.”

Perhaps, the reviewer should be grateful that the authors gave the stereotypical Germans something other than "Eisbein" and "Sauerkraut" to eat. At least, in *Alles Gute!* Germans eat "Sauerbraten" and "Wiener Schnitzel" (p. 254) once in a while.

Not only does reinforcement of stereotypes exist in *Alles Gute!*, but it is also consistent. Why, for example, did the authors choose "Gretchen" (p. 236) and "Liesl" (p. 223) for typical German names? Do they not epitomize the blond, long-hair-braided German girls of German stereotyping? Why reinforce the picture of a forever-underdeveloped Germany with textual materials like the following: "Im Winter ist es mir zu heiss in meinem Zimmer, aber zu kalt im Flur . . . Ich trage meinen Mantel, wenn ich das Telefon im Flur benutze." (p. 230)?

When the reviewer saw an entire chapter of *Alles Gute!* devoted to the roles of men and women, she was hopeful that, at least on this topic, the authors would guard against the reinforcement of old stereotypes; such hope proved to be nothing more than wishful thinking.

Indeed, the authors are very careful in always giving male and female nouns in the vocabulary; they do not, however, address the dubious connotations of "Fräulein" (p. 34); while very liberal in their perception of male and female roles in this particular chapter, the authors retain and reinforce stereotypes in other chapters. What else could and should Julia think of doing but of going "shopping" because she needs a "skirt," etc. (p. 164, Exercise H).

Structure

Unlike *First Year German*—which includes pronunciation exercises in the first six chapters—*Alles Gute!* stops with pronunciation after the "Einleitung"—an approach that once again raised the reviewer's hopes. Furthermore, the authors introduce the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) which is an excellent tool for describing sounds visually.

But why do they not refer back to the IPA in later chapters? Who is there to tell the student studying at home which of the three al- laphones of "e" is appropriate in the pronunciation of words like "Telefongespräch?" In such an instance, would not the IPA have been a helpful tool?

Unlike many textbooks, *Alles Gute!* begins with "Wörter." Right at the beginning of each chapter, students practice the words to be learned. The "Wortübungen" constitute an extension of the usage of the words given in the vocabulary list and compares favorably to what is called vocabulary development in *First Year German*. Words are classified according to common features (weak nouns in Chapter 5); differentiated semantically ("kennen," "wissen," "können" in Chapter 7); or explained in their syntactic context ("gern" in Chapter 2).

Presenting vocabulary at the very beginning of the chapter is a strategy the reviewer has found helpful in her classes as well; familiarizing students with new words before they occur in the text facilitates comprehension.

Alles Gute! encourages students to work with cognates as well as the formation of compound nouns; this can be beneficial in that it can help students develop strategies for approaching unknown words (p. 126, p. 54). Some of the expressions, however, made the reviewer, a native German, ill at ease in her own language. The inclusion of dialectal expressions is appreciated, but not if the explanation follows pages later ("Fasnet," Chapter 7). Many young people in Germany prefer "Fete," since a "Party" often has more formal connotations (p. 35). "Studentenheim—instead of "Studentenwohnheim"—is a term which can evoke awkward feelings (p. 213).

As is often typical of beginning language textbooks, *Alles Gute!* makes grammar the center of the chapter and builds everything around it.

Typically, the authors begin with a dialogue filled with examples of the particular grammar point. Even before the new grammatical

structures have been explained, students already use them in "Variationen" of the dialogue. Dialogues containing as many dative verbs (p. 201) or modals (p. 114) as possible are awkward and result in sentences like "Worauf stellst du den Fernseher?" (p. 223)—a sentence that exists in order to use the *wo*-compound in a context where Germans would use "Wohin."

Not only is the language of the dialogues artificial and awkward, in *Alles Gute!* the dialogues are also generally without much information about cross-cultural differences.

For example, in the second dialogue of Chapter 8, there is the situation of a telephone call (p. 179). In America, people are accustomed to expect "Hello" or "Yes" when calling someone; in Germany, the person called answers with his or her first name. This difference is not addressed by the authors. The laconic "Jemand sagt: "Hello" is not very helpful to students. The closing phone call formulas "Auf Wiederhören" and "Tschüss"—which do not belong to the same register since one is more formal than the other—are not differentiated either. Without sensitization to cross-cultural and stylistic differences, how can students be successful in target language communication?

If the dialogues in *Alles Gute!* are awkward, the various charts are generally confusing. The nominative and accusative chart of the *der*-words (p. 128) conveys the impression that "der," "dieser," "jeder" are only used in the singular, whereas "mancher," "solcher," and "welcher" are always plural. The adjective chart (p. 264) while not as confusing, can be a source of frustration. Why not combine the weak and mixed adjective endings in one chart—instead of confusing students with two—since these only differ in three instances (nom.m., nom.n., and acc.n.)?

The use of the term "Kommunikation" in *Alles Gute!* is misleading. The main ingredient of "Kommunikation" is the "Lesetext" which is preceded by a "Vor dem Lesen" paragraph with useful strategies for approaching the text itself. The useful strategies, how-

ever, cannot make up for the poor quality of the "Lesetext" itself.

Except for two authentic texts (Chapters 14 and 18), the texts are as artificial as the dialogues of the grammar section. For example, the "Lesetext" of Chapter 3 conveys the thoughts of a girl upon her arrival in Germany. It seems most artificial and unreal that the girl, Laura—traveling with John—does not say anything to him in this rather exciting setting at the Frankfurt Airport. In Chapter 6, there is a text which is even called "Ein Gespräch," but it is not a conversation at all. The only indication that this is supposed to be a conversation are the names in front of each paragraph. Omitting the names leaves no doubt in anyone's mind that this is an informative discourse about German landscape and architecture endangered by air-pollution.

Strengths

The strengths of this textbook are apparent in its treatment of two topics, namely, geography and culture. By providing maps of the world (p. 580), Europe (p. 55), and the German-speaking countries (pp. 77, 80, 122), *Alles Gute!* provides students with the necessary reference tools to broaden their geographical horizons. I found it amusing to read in the introductory text to Chapter 8 "you're traveling through Europe and you've just arrived in a German-speaking city . . ." (p. 169). Imagine! German-speaking cities scattered all over Europe. What an impression to take with you.

Impressions notwithstanding, *Alles Gute!* gives useful information about the countries of Europe—including Lichtenstein (p. 138)—through photographs accompanied by captions.

Due to her own geographical bias, the reviewer asks herself why southern Germany is always overrepresented in comparison to northern Germany, and why the authors insist on leaving the impression that it is quite easy to come in contact with people in the German

Democratic Republic (DDR) (p. 129); it is not and never has been that easy.

The authors of *Alles Gute!* deserve high marks for including information on the so-called "little-c" culture in this text. These little differences in every day situations fascinate students, e.g., in Germany you do not hesitate to sit with strangers in a restaurant when all seats are taken; you are not automatically served a glass of water in a restaurant and so on. The conversion chart with different sizes for clothes (p. 152) and the differences in counting floors in a building—all these represent items of practical data for anyone going to Germany; they are useful inclusions in a good German language text.

Hopeful, even stimulated by the beautiful cover depicting Emil Nolde's "Red and Yellow Sunflowers," this reviewer opened *Alles Gute! Basic German for Communication*. During the review, however, it became readily apparent that this book follows the old, familiar patterns: Grammar once again is the

magic force determining the progression and organization of the book.

As is usually the case with textbooks in which grammar determines organization and substance, the dialogues are awkward, stilted, and artificial.

In obvious and subtle ways, this text reinforces stereotypes of Germany and its people; yet, in its treatment of geography and "little-c" culture, it is an exemplary text.

My question to the authors of foreign language texts remains: Must a language text always be just a textbook; can it not be both instructive and fun to read?

J.E.T.T. Contributor Profile

Angelika Lindemann, a native of West Germany, taught beginning and intermediate German courses in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages at the University of Georgia where she also worked on an advanced degree.

Currently, she teaches at Clark College and the Goethe Institute in Atlanta, Georgia. Persons wishing to write to her may do so at the following address: Angelika Lindemann, c/o J.E.T.T., 304C Moore College, Language Laboratories, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602.

Rightwriter

Vital Statistics

Courseware Name: *Rightwriter*

Application: Writing analysis program; utility
Rightwriter 104 program to be
used in conjunction with word
processor

Instruction: Manual with demo program

Vendor: Decisionware Inc.
2033 Wood Street
Suite 218
Sarasota, FL 33577
(813) 952-9211

Cost: \$95.00

Copy Policy: Copy/Personal use only

Equipment: IBM-PC compatibles

PC Memory: Minimum 192K

Prerequisites: PC-DOS or MS-DOS 1.1 or
higher/dual diskette drive/1
diskette and hard drive

Rightwriter by Decisionware is a utility program rather than a standard instructional program. It is designed to be used—along with commonly-used word processors—to analyze writing style and check for simple errors in spelling and usage.

For the user already familiar with PC-style microcomputers, *Rightwriter* is relatively easy to use. It conveniently inserts comments into any specified text file for easy review; a new output file is created which can be typed to screen or printed out through the standard command of the word processor.

The documentation provided with *Rightwriter* is simple, straightforward, and provides relevant information on how to integrate it along side of the user's own word processing program.

While only three or four simple commands provide feedback on a given text file, the

necessity of having to go back and forth between the word processing program and *Rightwriter*—in order to run analysis, read comments, make changes, or get print-outs—can be a frustrating complication.

Rightwriter's PC-based program reviews a text for spelling, diction, sentence structure, active-passive voice, and such things as "weak phrases" and "ambiguous wording." An overall summary provides an index of readability in terms of "strength," descriptive, and jargon, together with specific recommendations on the structure of sentences.

Since it is nowhere evident in the *Rightwriter* documentation who set the writing standards or how those standards are statistically calculated, the reviewer had no idea for whom the writing standards are most appropriate: students, business or technical writers, lay persons, or academic writers? The program could be useful to all, but without more information and understanding of the technical standards used, it is difficult for anyone to judge the appropriateness of the feedback it gives.

With no idea for whom *Rightwriter* is most appropriate or who set the writing standards in it, the reviewer used the following method to judge the nature of the feedback *Rightwriter* provides in its analysis of textual materials: Familiar with *Writer's Workbench*, the UNIX-based program developed several years ago by AT&T for its writers, the reviewer input the same text file for analysis by *Rightwriter* and *Writer's Workbench*.

The intent was not to compare the two programs. *Writer's Workbench*, designed to run on a mini-computer and *Rightwriter*, designed to run on a PC, are not comparable in terms of power and complexity of analysis. However,

both programs should detect similar problems in writing and suggest solutions.

Comparing the two analyses revealed perplexing differences.

The *Writer's Workbench* analysis indicated that the text had a good mix of sentence types; the *Rightwriter* analysis, on the other hand, recommended improving the mix of sentences by replacing compound and compound-complex sentences with simple sentences—what the text needed was more simple sentences.

Statistics provided by *Writer's Workbench* on the same text, however, indicated that 52% of the sentences were simple, 26% complex, 16% compound, and 6% compound-complex.

The issue here is not whether any text automatically improves and benefits when complex sentences are replaced by simple sentences; the issue is that the writing standards of *Writer's Workbench* are different than the standards of *Rightwriter*. By one program's

standards the text had a good mix of sentences; by the other, it did not and needed more simple sentences.

Users of *Rightwriter*—or any writing analysis program—need to know by what standards their writing is being judged in order to understand the nature of the program's feedback.

Neither *Rightwriter* nor any writing analysis program alone will make a person a writer, let alone a better writer. Users will need to examine *Rightwriter's* capabilities and implement them in conjunction with specific writing objectives. Used creatively and judiciously, *Rightwriter* has the potential of improving writing skills.

J.E.T.T. Contributor Profile

Robin E. Lawrason is an instructional designer, teacher, and director of the media learning center at Temple University. The media center which he directs serves all faculty with media and computer resources for teaching and provides a large audio cassette learning laboratory for faculty involved in the teaching of foreign languages and English as a Second Language.

MPO's VHS-984 Portable Video System

Vital Statistics

Name: Portable video presentation system

Model: VHS-984

Vendor: MPO Videotronics

619 W. 54th Street
New York, New York 10019
(212) 708-0550

2580 Turquoise Circle
Newbury Park
California 91390
(805) 499-8513

640 North La Salle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 527-3680

With the introduction of the VHS-984 video system, MPO Videotronics has made video viewing and recording extremely portable and reasonably affordable.

Consisting of a JVC BR-1600U video cassette recorder (VCR) and a TMK 793C color TV/monitor, the VHS-984 can be taken anywhere the user may want to take it. In part this is made possible by the unit's size (15" × 10½" × 13½") and its weight of only 22 pounds. The fact that it can be powered by any one of three different power sources further enhances its portability; it can run on 110V AC, 12V auto current, or from a rechargeable battery pack. To add to its versatility and convenience, the VHS-984 comes with wired remote control and an array of various connecting cables.

Overall, the unit is designed so that even a person with no knowledge about audio-visual (AV) equipment can operate it. MPO provides its own set of instructions for the 984 as

well as the manufacturer's instructions for the VCR and the TV/monitor. All three sets of instructions are well-written and include helpful illustrations.

The two major components of the system, namely, the JVC BR-1600U VCR and the TMK 793 color TV/monitor, are housed in a grey and black plastic housing; looking at each component in this system, the user will find some pleasant surprises.

The JVC BR-1600U is a state-of-the art, portable 4-head VCR with features and functions found only on "bigger" machines. Among these features are shuttle search, reverse play, an audio dub, and lead crystal diode (LCD) counter with built-in memory. Every function button on the VCR is well-labeled with both words and pictograms; all buttons are touch-activated.

The BR-1600U will play video home system (VHS) cassettes at all speeds, but will record on them in standard play (SP) and extended play (EP) modes only.

Recordings made with this unit were of very good quality when played back through the TMK 793C TV/monitor. By using a 10-pin plug, the unit can record from an external source such as a video camera or the TMK 793C TV/monitor. This constitutes the system's only major design flaw: although the BR-1600U plays the tape back through the TMK 793C, it is unable to record directly from it; in order to record directly from the TMK 793C, the provided cables must be used and hooked up. This task may be somewhat confusing at first, but—as with all things—it

becomes easier the more one does it; the instructions are helpful at this point.

The other half of the VHS-984, the TMK 793C color TV/monitor, provides the viewer with a sharp, clear, 9-inch (measured diagonally) picture. The TMK can serve as monitor for the VCR or it can be hooked up to an external antenna or cable to receive television broadcasts. Its electronic tuner allows the user to tune in channels 1-13 VHF and 14-83 UHF. Channels 2-13 are pre-set; 14-83 must be set manually. Directions provided are easy-to-follow and illustrated.

All the control buttons are located on the front of the machine behind a latch cover that conceals them when not needed. The only drawback here is the latch door itself; its plastic-hinge construction does not fare well under repeated use and can break off very easily.

On the whole, the MPO-984 is a useful piece of equipment for individual or small-group viewing. It can be particularly useful

for teachers who pre-view videotapes in order to determine lesson suitability; with the MPO-984, it is not necessary to make arrangements for special viewing facilities or "lug around" full-size equipment from classroom to classroom.

Learning laboratories, media centers, instructional resources centers, and even individual college departments may find it useful to have several units on hand for faculty and teaching assistants.

With the MPO-984, it is possible to play videotapes wherever one chooses, even in the great outdoors.

J.E.T.T. Contributor Profile

Paul M. VanWicklen, a native New Yorker, is currently completing his M.Ed. in foreign language education at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia. While working on his degree, he also taught German in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages. Readers wishing to write to him may do so at the following address: Paul M. VanWicklen, c/o J.E.T.T., 304C Moore College Building, Language Laboratories, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602.