**G-7 Alternative Oral**

This oral requires several native speakers of German. In my case I called around and asked for volunteers. I networked through our PTO, local colleges, the local Army base and even a local German restaurant. If you are fortunate enough to have a handful of German speakers that can give 20 minutes of their time, this oral turns out to be much better than the standard one.

The basic idea is doing a simulation of a market place. I have a bunch of plastic food that our school has ordered from various toy companies. We also have a large bag of plastic Euro coins that we got from an overseas toy company. In our school we have set up the library with various tables representing different booths: Fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, breads, etc. I have a native speaker running each of the booths.

Students have only two requirements:

1. They have to buy an item from each booth.
2. They have to keep talking in German with each other until the 20 minutes is finished. In other words, they can’t hurry through and buy the items and then go mute.

If students make mistakes with the German, it’s okay. As long as they communicate with the native speakers, that is the idea. The native speakers don’t know what vocabulary my students know, so it turns out to be very authentic.

The advantages to this alternative oral are obvious:

1. Students are doing a more or less authentic roll-play. Much more real world.
2. The orals are all done in 20 minutes. The standard oral usually takes 2 class periods.
3. Students really enjoy it and feel a sense of accomplishment, that they can really buy items in Germany.

I have enjoyed this oral much more than the standard one. Some years I actually have some rolls or perhaps a Christkindlmarkt with real food (Brötchen from a local German bakery or Lebkuchen from a local German restaurant). That adds a special touch, but can also take away from the speaking somewhat. It depends on the class. It’s not perfect, but I think much better than the traditional oral. Give it a try and tell me how it goes!