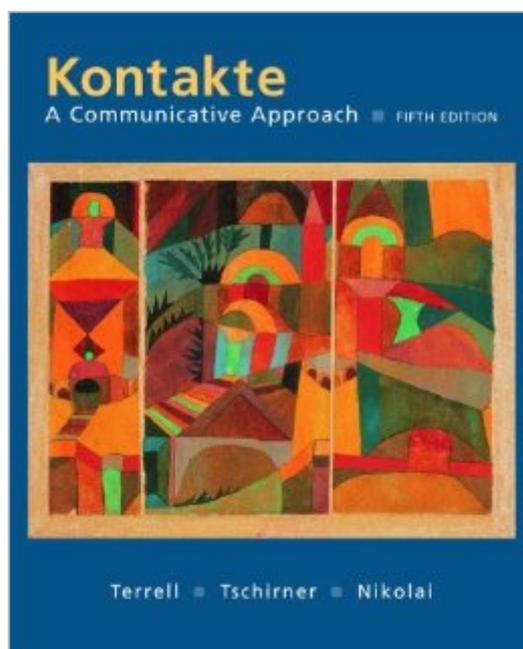


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Kontakte: A Communicative Approach (Student Edition)



Synopsis

This best-selling German text is based on and inspired by the Natural Approach, pioneered by Tracy D. Terrell. With it, students learn German through communicative contexts with an emphasis on the four skills as well as cultural competence, with grammar functioning as an aid to language learning, rather than as an end in itself. The abundance of interesting activities and readings in "Kontakte" ensure that students are exposed to rich language input, critical to language acquisition.

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a native German, I'm teaching German with this book for the second year at the University level. Neither me nor my students like this book - in fact, I consider it quite bad (I have taught with 3-4 other textbooks before, any of which was much better) : The "approach" is totally scattered, it tries to be so hip, while it's rather gimmicky with all its cute pictures and cartoons. Like a "lets get away from grammar"-kind of badge of honor, the book introduces a minimum of grammar, but in a confusing, incomplete, and at times faulty manner while expecting the student to "know" or understand lots of things that were never properly introduced. The students would be helpless without a teacher to untangle the mess for them. Also, the reading sections and vocabulary are rather inappropriate, containing words that are neither widely used nor easy to pronounce. This book hinders more than it helps the process of learning German in an enjoyable manner. I only use it to a bare minimum, just to stay on course with the units it introduces.

I'm a native speaker of German and have taught first year German with this book - I love it, and so did my students. I think the communicative approach works great, the book offers a multitude of topics for interaction and communication. It explains the basics of grammar and allows the student to learn by using the language, rather than by memorizing rules. It is, as I mentioned, a book for beginners (first year) and not appropriate for any other level, and it is a book to be used in a class setting, not for self studies. It will not work for other learning situations, but there are other books for those settings. I have learned Spanish with the "Dos Mundos" book from the same series and with the same approach and found it the most effective language learning I have ever experienced. Used in a classroom applying a "natural approach" to language learning, this book is wonderful and an extremely effective way of starting with a new language!

I learned first-year German with Kontakte and was generally pleased with it. There is a good amount of cultural context, and the design is lively enough to maintain visual interest. Do not buy Kontakte a self-teaching text or if you want a structural approach to language acquisition. For Kontakte to work at all, you absolutely must have a German speaker to lead you through speaking and conversation.

... Because I teach at a highly competitive University, the students tend to be intelligent and extremely diligent; they are, at the very least, capable of actively applying themselves to learning a language and using their rational faculties to understand grammatical patterns and apply them in the generation of original German sentences. The authors of Kontakte, however, seem to have little regard for this capacity of the brain. Instead, they think of learning a language as something purely passive; a process of osmosis, whereby, through the mere exposure to German utterances and their mindless repetition, students will magically gain a linguistic competence. Such an approach results only in tedium, disaffection, and resentment, and places a tremendous burden on the teachers, who are forced, if they wish to create any challenge for the students, to create their own material....

For this amount of money I expected much better book. Unfortunately I think that this is one of the worst books of this type. You can buy much better book for just a fraction of the price. The subjects are confusing and as they say "information-gap activities" are definitely not fun. You better know some German if you are planning to use this one. It is made of a quality material so I give it one star. This opinion is for the Fifth Edition.

This is a text I used when I was studying German at university, and I have found it generally well laid out book and easy to understand. Each in almost entirely written in German, and each has a theme with examples of of these themes in everyday life. The book is full of pictures, which I find conducive to learning. At the end of each chapter, there are explanations of how the grammar works, and a list of vocabulary relevant for the chapter. There are plenty of pictures. One review has mentioned that it is not a book for self teaching. I can not comment on this time about that at this stage, however I did have to end my course at university prematurely, and I intend to continue learning from this book. One thing this book does not address, is the new German spelling reforms.

This book set was used for my most recent German class. I found it helpful, but I was the only one in my class with any background in the language. Most of my classmates found it confusing. I wouldn't recommend it for someone just starting to learn German, but it's certainly a good "review" for speakers who need to brush up on their skills. Side note: the spoken examples on the cassette tape supplements are very fast, and have an odd accent, but are necessary to complete all work in the Arbeitsbuch.

This review is for the kindle edition. First of all, the the price when I bought it was actually more than getting it used. They have since lowered the price, which is more appropriate, although it irks me that I paid so much for it. I feel like I should be saving a lot more money for buying the kindle edition. Secondly, the pictures are mostly hard to see, and zooming in does not help since the quality is so low. This is very annoying because many of the vocabulary pages are pictures and you can barely see the words, and even then your not sure your seeing them right. The fact that the vocabulary pages are pictures make it impossible to look up the words using my German dictionary. I know this is a feature that is present in all kindle books, but the page numbers of the original book are not incorporated into the kindle book. When my Professor says to turn to a certain page which happens daily in German class, I am forced to wait for the students next to me to turn there and ask them what the page looks like and what it is next to, etc. so I can find it. I feel like page numbers is a feature long over due for kindles, especially since they have a lot of textbooks on kindle now. I am all around annoyed by this kindle edition. Buying this textbook as a kindle book was a huge mistake, and I would not recommend it to anyone. Just pay the little amount of extra money to get the hard copy.

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