

Awareness & Agency through Participatory Practices with a Focus on Rubrics

LLL Summer Stipend

DAAD Book Box

NYSAFLT Language Educator Journal

Engaging Students in the Assessment Process

Dr. Mona Eikel-Pohen
Assistant Teaching Professor German
German Program
Department of Languages,
Literatures, and Linguistics

meikelpo@syr.edu

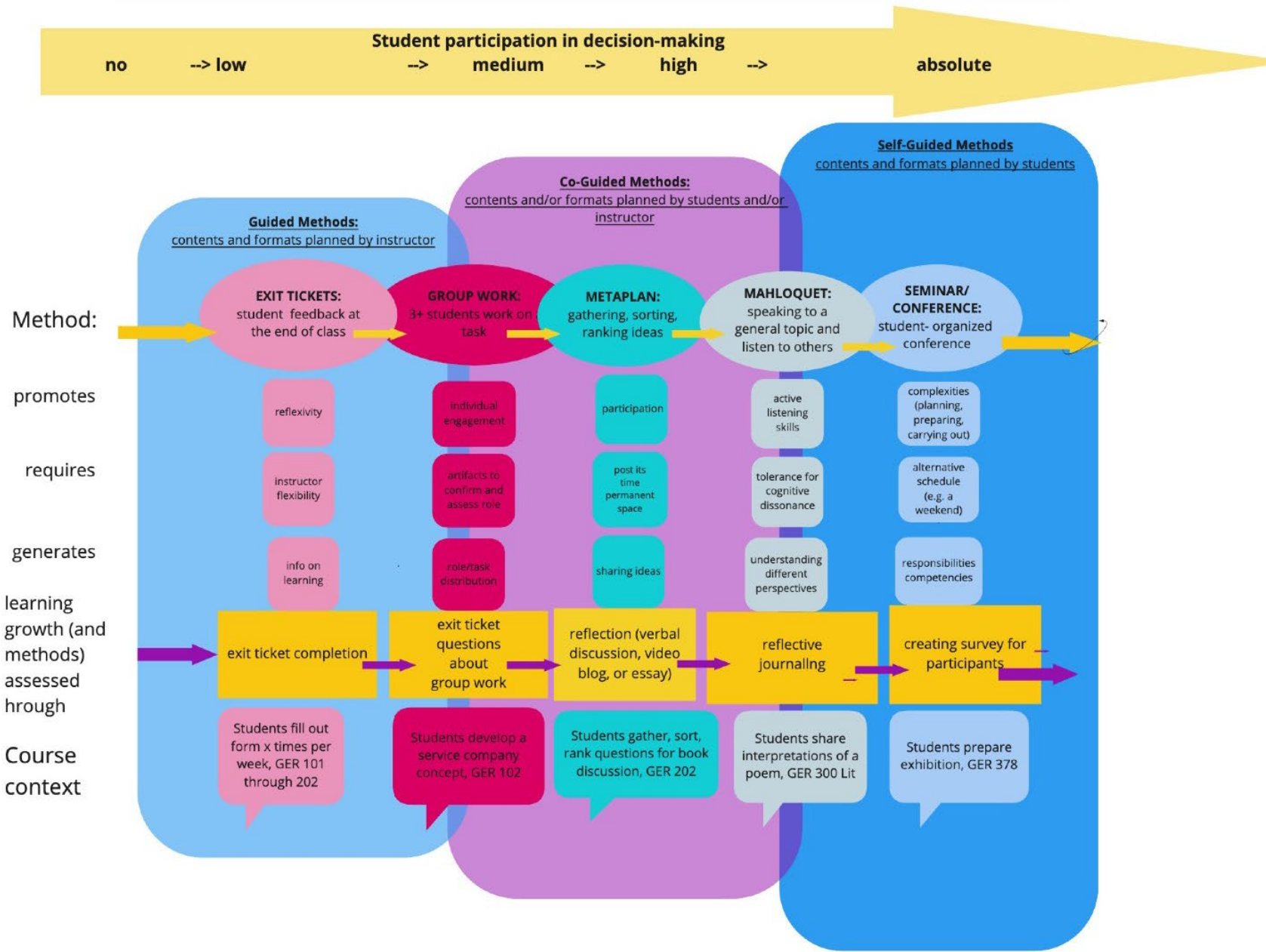


Why Student Agency?

- "empowers students to take themselves more seriously as learners, classmates, political players, and human beings overall. Students do experience more awareness and obtain more agency in the setting of higher education and are willing to take on more responsibility if given the opportunity to co-determine their activities and goals." (Eikel-Pohen, 2020)
- "Open-ended curricula [...] better promote creative thought, critical thinking, and student engagement" (Ross, 2012)
- Agentic engagement: "students proactively contribute to their own learning and instruction by, for instance, identifying problems they want to solve and coming up with their own ways of solving them." (Wagner, Cardetti, and Byram, 2019)
- Higher order thinking (Bloom's Taxonomy)
- Constructivism (Böss-Ostendorf, Senft, 2018)
- Neuroscience: declarative and procedural knowledge (Oakley, Rogowsky, Seynowski, 2021)

Participatory Practices in the Wider Context of Language and Literature Teaching and Assessment

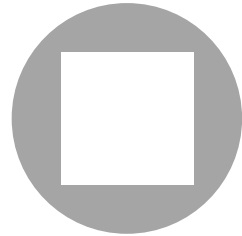
An overview with examples



Hypothesis: Students Can Foster Awareness and Agency in ...



COURSE CONTENTS



COURSE FORMATS



PERSONAL
LANGUAGE SKILLS



PROFESSIONAL
COMMUNICATION



POSITIONALITIES IN A
HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTION

Examples from the German Program

A. GER 101-GER 202 Participation Rubrics (since Fall 2020)

Students annotate given rubrics:

Instructor modifies according to feedback,
with transparent explanations

B. GER 202 (Spring 2022): Reading a novel over x weeks, structuring the x weeks with card survey and developing the unit with the students

C. GER 300 Contemp. Ger. Culture & Civilization (Spring 2019):

Students create a rubric for their final projects

D GER 5000 - IDEAL / DREAM COURSE (Spring 2026)

Students and instructor develop a course together

(e.g. GER 400 Spring 2026)

students research course materials, prepare, share, and discuss them

A. GER 101 to GER 202

Students

- read the rubrics
- critique the rubrics
- identify with the rubrics after revision
- engage more actively and less hesitantly

"Here is a rubric for participation.

Read it carefully and annotate it.

I will work your comments into a new version that we discuss at the beginning of the next lesson."

Rubrics:

+ Rubric 1: Engagement: Class participation and active engagement

%	Criteria: The student...
90-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates excellent preparation (vocabulary, grammar, texts) with initiative and questions.• Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement with instructor and/or fellow students• Contributes purposefully several times, works well in partner/group work ("Step up, step back!").• Asks questions whenever not understanding the topic at hand and indicates need for revision and repetition (this is a normal and good thing, this is how our brains function –strengthening the neurons' channels through mindful repetition!)• Is willing to take risks with new information and inquisitive.• Conducts self-corrections.• Compares their own culture to the German cultures when new cultural artefacts are presented.• Contributes in a significant way to ongoing discussions.• Responds thoughtfully (verbally and non-verbally) to other students' comments• Contributes to the cooperative class atmosphere through practicing active listening.• Critiques material that do not seem useful or meaningful in a polite manner and suggests alternative ways of (approaching) material.
80-89	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates preparation (vocabulary and grammar) but answers when asked and contributes to partner/group work.• Demonstrates ongoing active involvement with instructor and/or fellow students.• Contributes to class several times, works in partner/group work but disregards "Step up, step back!".• Occasionally asks questions when not understanding the topic at hand and/or indicates need for revision and repetition (this is a normal and good thing ...)• Overcomes hesitancy to take risks with new information.• Conducts self-correction after receiving some cues.• Compares their own culture to the German cultures when asked.• Contributes regularly to ongoing discussion.• Responds (non-verbally) to other students' comments• Contributes to a cooperative class atmosphere as an active listener.
65-79	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is prepared but does not show it actively.• Demonstrates occasional involvement.• Contributes once or twice to the lesson, works in partner/group work if cued.• Is unwilling to take risks• Self-corrects after being presented with correction.• Contributes sporadically to ongoing discussions.• Responds occasionally (non-)verbally to other students' comments.
60-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is unprepared. Demonstrate little involvement.• Hardly contributes during the lesson, or partner/group work.• Does not take risks.• Does not respond when correction is presented.• Is seldom other students' contributions.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unexcused absence.

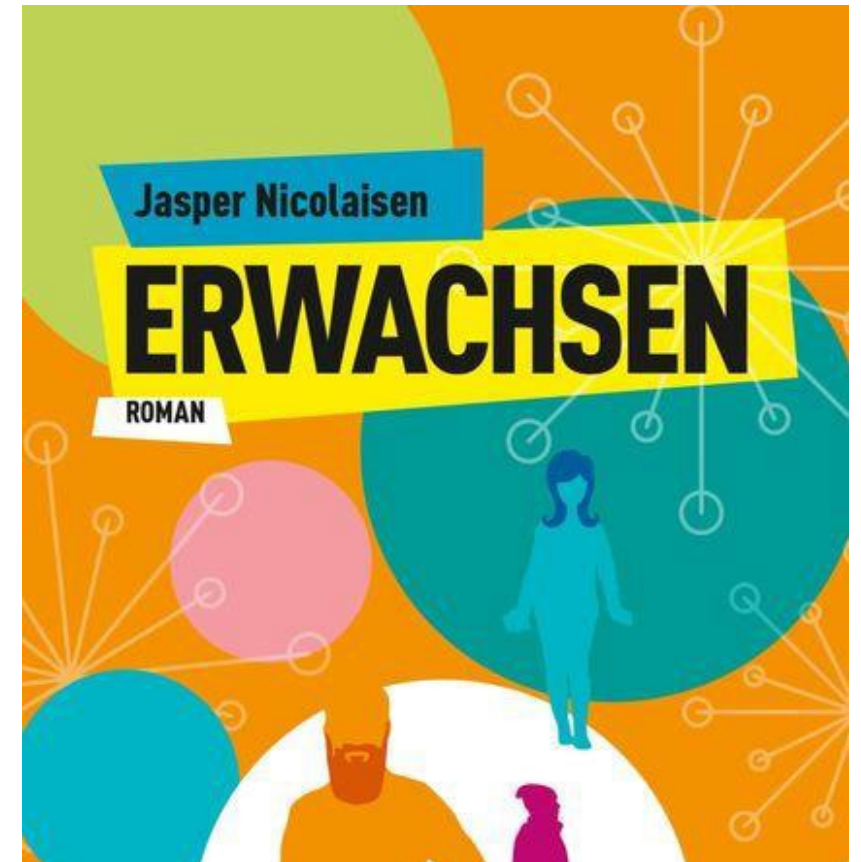
B. GER 202: Jasper Nicolaisen: Erwachsen

Students

- a) read the novel at home in weeks 1-7
- b) Students fill note cards with questions and comments
- c) Students share note cards
- d) Students position notecards on a "lesson roadmap"
- e) Instructor (and students) add dates and goals
- f) Discussion about assessment (reading questions, reading journal)

→ Course uses the "lesson roadmap" for weeks 8-13/14

→ Jasper Nicolaisen reading April 12, 2022



C. GER 300

Contemp. German

Culture & Civilization

Students created the rubrics for their final assignment:

A presentation with comparisons between a German novel about refugees in Berlin (*Gehen, ging, gegangen*, Erpenbeck, 2015) with a documentary **The Invisibles*, Kahlmeyer, 2014) about four refugees in Eisenhüttenstadt, Germany.

Students

1. discuss engaging finals formats: test, paper, presentation; podcasts, products etc.)
What is your ideal final?
2. identify relevant grading elements
How can we guarantee different projects and products are graded fairly and meet the standards of a GER 300 class?
3. negotiate percentage distributions
Which elements are more relevant than others, and why? Why grading anyway?
4. conduct the work and are graded with rubrics
5. (should) reflect on the processes, procedures, and products.
What did you do? What did you learn? What surprised you? How will this benefit you in the future?

In their project presentation, the student is able to The student...	No/not yet.	Yes, but with numerous mistakes that limit understanding the project substantially.	Yes, but with mistakes that limit understanding the project in parts.	Yes, and with few and minor mistakes that do not limit understanding the project.	Yes, fully/successfully.
1. employ the chosen format adequately to convey the project's contents.	0	5	7	9	10
2. work on three elements in the comparison between the novel and the documentary:					
• genre;	0	5	7	9	10
• date and time of production	0	10	14	18	20
• connections to the German history since 1945;	0	5	7	9	10
• critical analysis of the refugees' depiction;					
• well-founded opinion.					
3. show that they are able to relate the depicted situation on the situation in the country of their own origin.	0	5	7	9	10
4. reflect, written or orally, what they learned this semester:					
• contents (German history since 1945);	0	1	3	4	5
• Formats (e.g. podcasting, film) and methods (analysis, cri. thinking);	0	1	3	4	5
• language.	0	5	7	9	10
5. demonstrate their ability to express themselves in German on the CEFR level B2/C1 (written & spoken).	0	3	7	9	10
6. engage actively in the final presentations through Q&A, comments, or feedback.	0	5	7	9	10
Grade					

Hypothesis revisited:

Students can foster awareness for & agency

- in course contents
by transforming/choosing assessment formats and adding to/choosing/determining contents
- in their language skills
by using the target language and various of its functions (debate, plea etc.) in real life scenarios
- with communication **by negotiating real-life values**
- & reflect on their and others' positionality in a higher education institution
by exploring the limits of their and others' agencies
- at all learning levels through **annotating and feedback that is taken seriously, and co-/ or re-creating evaluation rubrics**
(co-creating more and more elements of their syllabi)

Where do we go from here?

1. What hinders you from co-creating syllabi or projects with your students?

2. What can/could you do within your means and range?

3. What would be your ideal/dream
x assessment format (and rubric)?
x syllabus and schedule?
x course?

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Thank you!

Dr. Mona Eikel-Pohen

Assistant Teaching Professor of German

334 H.B. Crouse Hall

Syracuse University

meikelpo@syr.edu