

GER310 Seminar in Comparative Culture

3rd and 4th quarters, Junior

Instructor	ISOZAKI KOTARO
Style of Class	Seminar
Number of Credits	2
Day and Period	To be advised

Course Description

We will read the German-language script of Doris Dörrie's film *Kirschblüten/Hanami*, with reference to video materials. The theme of this film is a German man's trip to Japan and his encounters with Japanese culture, which makes it an extremely interesting source material for comparing German and Japanese culture. Moreover, since the text is a script, I believe that it is an effective means of learning everyday German conversation by reading the characters' spoken words. The course will focus on reading the script, but the content will be supplemented as needed with viewings of video materials.

Course Objectives

Students will

- (1) learn to understand German sentence structures and conversational expressions, acquiring something near an intermediate level of language ability
- (2) deepen their understanding of the ways of German society and learn how outsiders view the ways of Japanese society by reading a text that compares the two cultures
- (3) experience active and cooperative learning by taking responsibility for reading and translating a specific part of the text

Expected Outcomes

- By being exposed to conversational expressions through the script and video, students will be able to learn contemporary German as it is used in real life
- Through exposure to a foreigner's view of Japanese culture and the associated clichés, students will increase their awareness of the problems of comparative cultural theory.
- By improving their skills in German, a language closely related to English, students will become human resources capable of success in the international community

Prerequisites

German I and II or The World of the German Language I and II; with concurrent enrollment in German III, IV recommended.

Class Materials

The course materials will be handed out in class, so there is no particular designated textbook. The following are the designated reference books, but other reference works for particular assignments may be presented on an ad hoc basis.

- (a) Dörrie, Doris, *Kirschblüten/Hanami: Ein Filmbuch*. Zürich: Diogenes, 2008.
- (b) Hamamoto Takashi and Takahashi Ken, *Gendai doitsu wo shiru tame no 62 shou* (Sixty-two Chapters for Understanding Contemporary Germany), Akashi Shoten, 2013.
- (c) Kobatake Hiroshi, supervising editor, *Doitsujin ga Nihonjin ni yoku kiku 100 no shitsumon* (One Hundred Questions that Germans Often Ask Japanese People), Sanshusha, 2009.

Course Method

This course will basically be conducted in a seminar format. Students will prepare by reading the German text. When they have understood it, they will present what they have learned during the class session, and the instructor will explain the content and grammar as necessary. A final exam will be administered at the end of term to assess the level of understanding that the students have achieved.

Evaluation/Assessment

Effort

Attitude toward class participation: In specific terms, students will be asked each time how well they understood the text that was assigned as preparation for the next class, so they will be partly evaluated based on those efforts.

Final exam

The final exam will cover the German texts and reference materials that were dealt with in class and will test the students' German language ability.

Grading

30% Class participation
70% Final exam

Course Schedule

Week 1: Orientation, a brief description of theories of comparative German and Japanese culture, and an introduction to Doris Dörrie's *Hanami*.

Week 2: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (1)

Week 3: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (2)

Week 4: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (3)

Week 5: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (4)

Week 6: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (5)

Week 7: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (6)

Week 8: Summary of the first half: supplementary information on the grammar and content, discussion of the content of the first half

Week 9: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (7)

Week 10: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (8)

Week 11: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (9)

Week 12: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (10)

Week 13: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (11)

Week 14: Reading *Hanami*, explanation of the text and grammar, supplementation of the content with video (12)

Week 15: Overall summary: supplementary information on the grammar and content, discussion of the content of the second half, confirming the range of the final exam

Preparation and Follow-up

(1) Read the text(s) for each class ahead of time and clarify any points you don't understand (preparation).

(2) After class, carefully read the texts we discussed in class and make sure that you now understand everything that was unclear. Improve your understanding of the handouts and the reference materials (follow-up).