



# NEWSLETTER NR. 2 (SOMMERSEMESTER 2017)

## Teil II des Interviews aus dem Newsletter

### A chat with ... Manuel Baur, one of the FSZ Swedish teachers

#### Where does your interest in the Swedish language lie?

I usually answer that some Vikings abandoned me here when I was a child! I love languages, and I had a somewhat romantic imagination of what Scandinavia must be like. The landscape is unbelievably beautiful up there. After secondary school, I went to Sweden, and my first impressions were quickly confirmed. Nordic mythology and Scandinavian music were also reasons why my interest in Scandinavia just kept growing. In the end, I opted to do Scandinavian Studies here in Tübingen.

#### What do you like about teaching?

I'm passionate about the Swedish language, and I think that it's an excellent opportunity to teach the culture as well. A bit of humour never goes amiss either, and Swedish can sound really quite funny to us Germans (for example 'läderlappen' = Batman).



#### What comes to mind when you compare the Swedish and German cultures?

In the Swedish culture consensus plays a significant role. Hierarchy is completely the other way around. You say 'du' (informal you) to each other regardless of whether you are the boss or a colleague. The work 'omtanke' means that you help each other, and that you should take care of the individual who needs the most help.

#### How do your students experience this new language?

The students learn the vocabulary ever so quickly, because many Swedish words originate from German (almost 35%). This has a lot to do with the hanseatic period. Back then many Low German words were introduced into the Swedish language. Both languages belong to the Germanic language family. Here are a few examples: vacker = schön (beautiful), dricker = trinken (to drink), dansar = tanzen (to dance), Blaubeere = blåbär (blueberries).

German sounds quite 'hard' in comparison to Swedish, which is quite a melodic language. Swedish is a tonal language like a few other Indo-European languages and many other non-Indo-European languages (bA:nan = Die (U-)Bahn vs banA:n – Banane).

Lots of students want to participate in the Erasmus exchange programme, and they choose Sweden because many courses are offered in English. Others have been to Sweden on holiday, and are now just as much in love with the country as I am. So, they would like to learn the language, and to find out more about the Swedish culture and the system there.

#### What do your students want the most?

They want to use the language as a tool to gain access to the culture. Sweden is a wonderful country, and through its language you can experience the country from a completely different perspective.

#### What is your favourite Swedish saying?

"If there's a place in your heart, there's a place for your behind". If you've given someone a place in your heart, this person is always welcome. For example, if you're quite squashed on the sofa, you'll still always find a little more space ... even if it then becomes somewhat uncomfortable!