



Reading Around Graded Readers



Extensive Reading World Congress 7
Corinna V. Goto, Mark Brierley, Miho Isobe

Reading Around Graded Readers

1. Let's read (Intro)
2. Looking for a **GOOD** book (Theory)
3. How about ... (Book analysis)
 - a. The Gruffalo
 - b. Guri & Gura
 - c. Abenteuer am Meer
 - d. So schön ist der Herbst
4. The next book (concluding remarks and remaining work)



Let's read

ER in German (or other second languages)

A0-A1

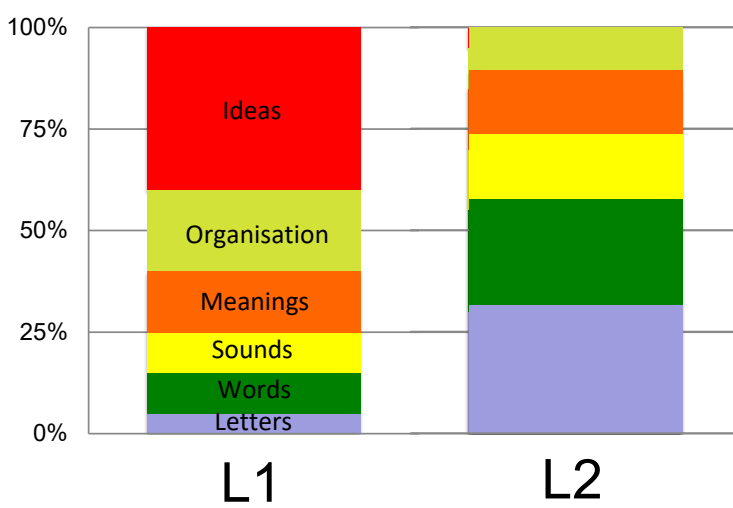
sentence comprehension

reading rate = rather slow

64 wmp (Gruffalo, maybe not rauding but study reading & too difficult)

need all processing power for semiotic & syntax $\Rightarrow$ easy context

Cognitive Load



Looking for a **GOOD** book

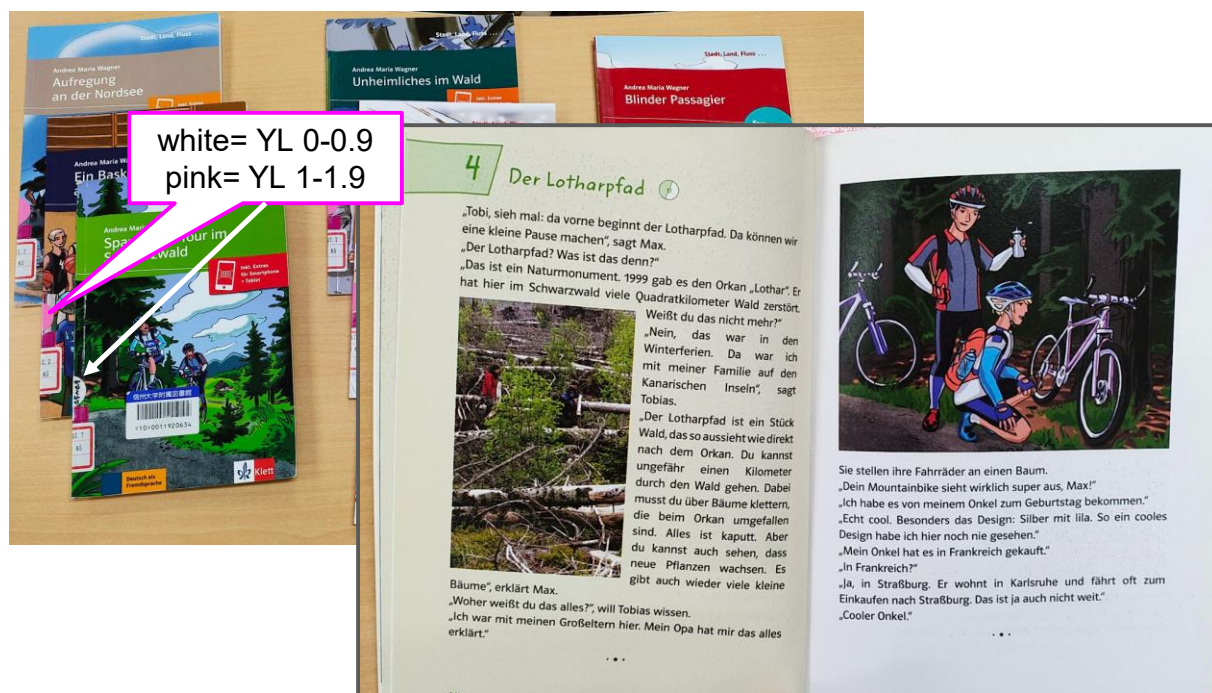
Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Zertifikate	Goethe – Zertifikat A1	Goethe – Zertifikat A2	Goethe – Zertifikat B1	Goethe – Zertifikat B2	Goethe – Zertifikat C1	Goethe – Zertifikat C2
ERSTE ELI-LEKTÜREN						
Niveau 1						
Niveau 2						
Niveau 3						
Niveau 4						
JUNGE ELI-LEKTÜREN						
Niveau 1						
Niveau 2						
Niveau 3						
ERWACHSENE ELI-LEKTÜREN						
Niveau 1						
Niveau 2						
Niveau 3						

eg.1: ELI publisher catalog, p.14

“first readers”: 25 titles (**A0: 8**, A1:10, A1.1: 4)

“young readers”: 19 titles (A1:3)

GR: 14 titles (A1:1)





Looking for a **GOOD** book

	Klett: Spannende Tour im Schwarzwald (GR)	Eli: Oma Fix und das gelbe Band (first reader)
LEVEL	A1 / YL 0.5-0.9 (?)	A0 / YL 0.5-0.9
words	3146	543
words/sentence	5.6	5.2
IU	717 ← complex story	130
av. IU length	4.4 words / IU	4.2 words / IU
1 sentence = 1 IU	59% ← complex story	84%

IU count by chatGPT

Looking for a **GOOD** book

- **book length!**

- 500 words or less (Jourdan-Ôtsuka, 2022 / length in general: Holster et al. 2017)

- **students interest**

- familiar & famous (fairy tales) originals, many

- **students recommendations**

- dialogue-based, easy/lowest level, **familiar/known**, few words/page or section, **pictured**, short/small

too difficult?

picture books or manga

How about ... (1)

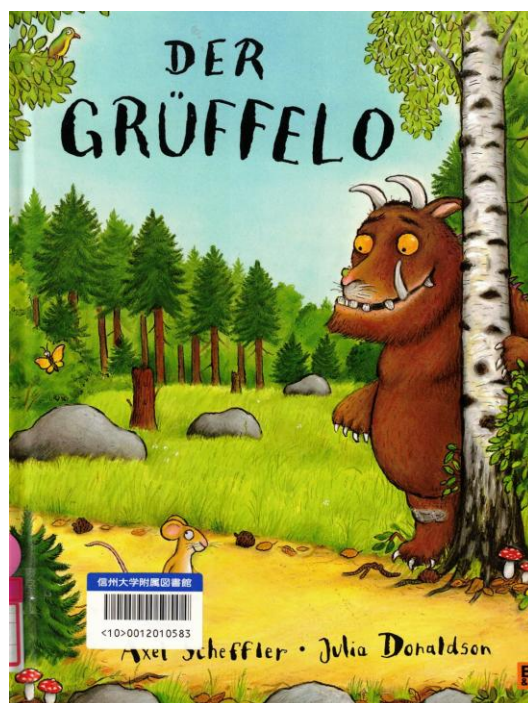
Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler

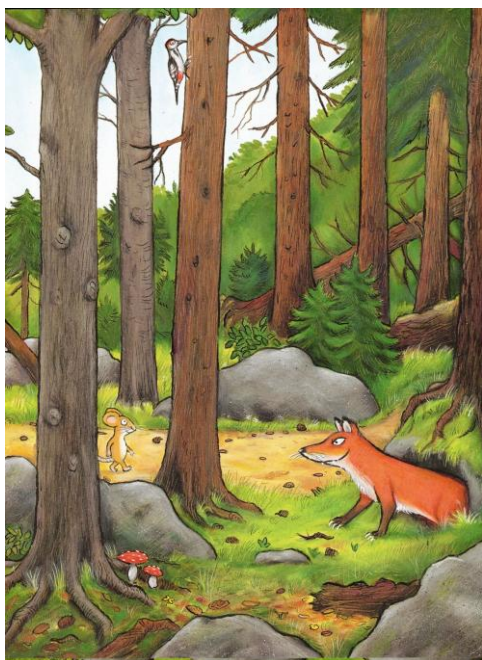
The Gruffalo 1999

17.7 million copies sold worldwide (2021)

translations: over 100 languages (and dialects)

German 1999 (Monika Osberghaus)





- international popularity
- rather unknown in Japan
- 700 words (doable in 30 min)

research 2022/2023

Objective:

To evaluate the difficulties and benefits of using authentic children's literature, for ER in German and English language classes.

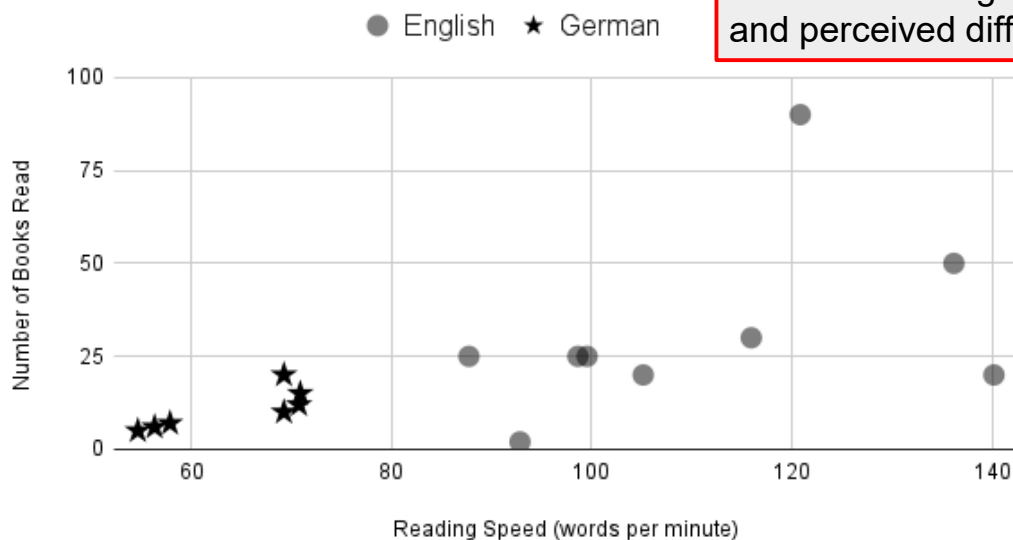
Die Maus spazierte im Wald umher.
Der Fuchs sah sie kommen und freute sich sehr.
»Hallo, kleine Maus, wohin geht die Reise?
Bei mir im Bau gibt's Götterspeise.«
»Schrecklich nett von dir, Fuchs, doch ich sag leider nein,
ich muss schon zu Mittag beim Gröffelo sein.«



»Beim Gröffelo? Sag, was ist das für ein Tier?«
»Den kennst du nicht? Dann beschreib ich ihn dir:

- English 1st yr & German 2nd yr University students
- Anonymous questionnaire on reading experience.
- Evaluated difficulty, unfamiliar words, and comprehension.
- Self timed reading followed by a questionnaire.

Reading Speed and Number of Books Read



Significant correlation between reading speed and perceived difficulty.

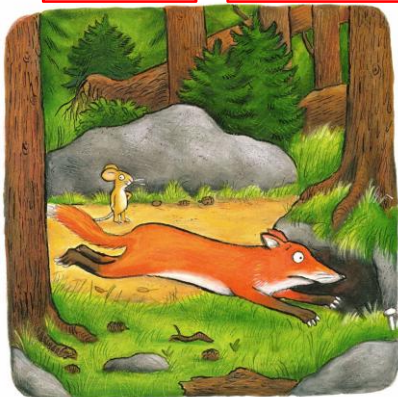
compound

»Fuchsspieß? Nein danke!« rief darauf der Fuchs.

Er grüßte zum Abschied und flüchtete flugs.

simple past

low-frequency



»Wie dumm von dem Fuchs! Er fürchtet sich so.
Dabei gibt's ihn doch gar nicht, den Grüffelo!«

reflexiv verb

Findings

- German readers found more words difficult compared to English readers.
- Low-frequency vocabulary and grammar structures challenging
- Illustrations, repetition, storyline flow helpful

Word frequency according to DWDS	DeReWo based rank	Words
≤ 316 per million (4)	≤ 1900	*jemand (A2), * <u>See</u> (A1)
≤ 32 per million (3)	≤ 10.000	*Abschied (B1), *o, *** <u>erstaunlich</u> , *Wesen, *fürchtet (B1), Gras (B1)
≤ 32 per million (3)	≤ 16.000	<u>Zunge</u> , ** <u>schrecklichen</u> (A2), floh (B1), Nest, <u>Pfad</u> , *schrein (B1)
≤ 32 per million (3)	≤ 26.000	<u>Ast</u> , vertragen, **** <u>verblüffend</u> , *gefürchtet (B1), *Nu
≤ 3 per million (2)	≤ 26.000	Rast, umher, flugs, <u>Hauer</u>
≤ 3 per million (2)	≤ 50.000	verzehrt, <u>Stacheln</u> , <u>Klauen</u> , *knackte
≤ 3 per million (2)	≤ 100.000	<u>kauen</u> , glitt, knurrt, bang, <u>feurig</u> , *zischen, *grässliche, <u>Warze</u> , *Zuckerguss
≤ .3 per million (1)	n.a.	<u>Tatze</u> , *Götterspeise, <u>knotig</u> , *Reißaus
≤ .03 per million (0)	n.a.	**waldein, *waldaus, *Lieblingsschmaus, *Schlangenpüree, **Fuchsspieß,

* The asterisks show the number of students who indicated this word was difficult. Words with an explanatory picture are underlined.

Lexical analysis

•English version:

6000 headword level for 98% coverage

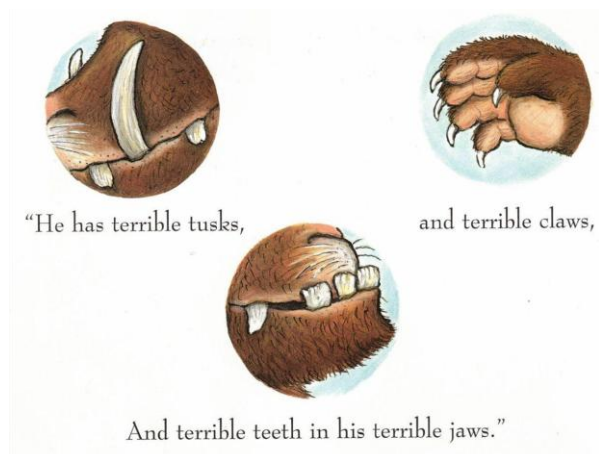
Very high repetition (30% head words appear once)

•German version:

Neologisms

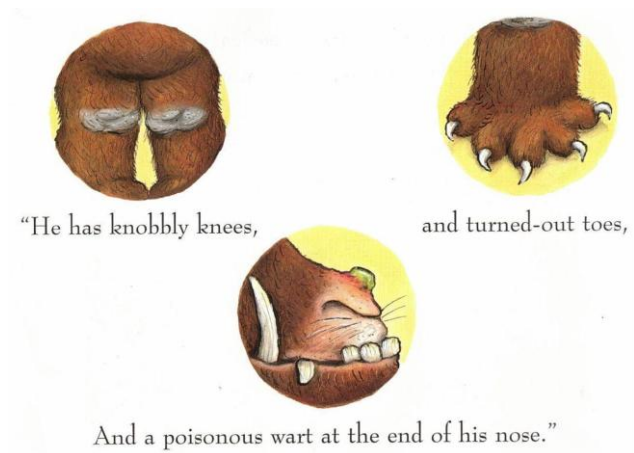
High repetition (46% appear once)

(cf. our paper 60% appear once)



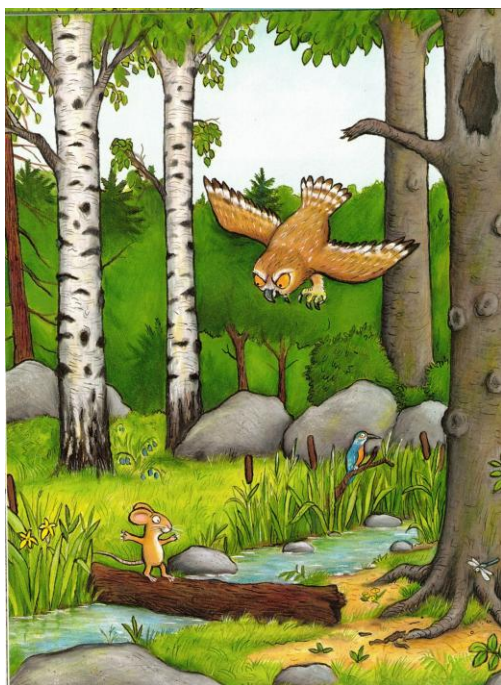
very low-frequency nouns
Hauer (tusks) / Klauen (claws)





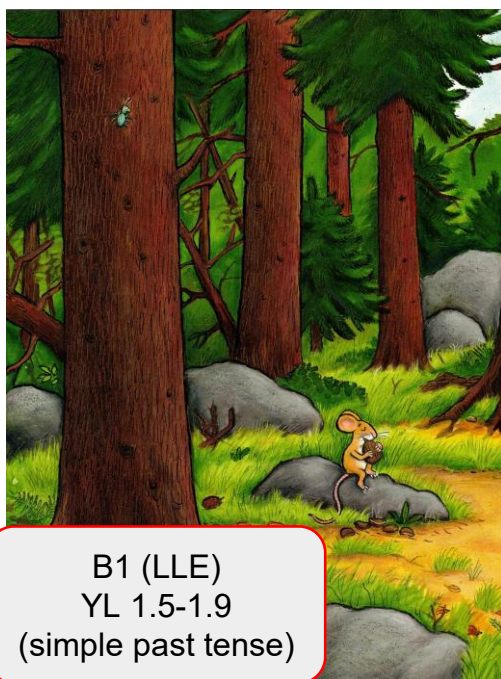
very low-frequency adjectives

knotig (knobbly) / grässlich
(hideous)



Level

- English version:
YL 1.5 (Tajimi Library)
CEFR A1-B1
- German version:
YL 1.5-1.9 (student)
CEFR B1



B1 (LLE)
YL 1.5-1.9
(simple past tense)

Insights

Authentic literature, despite vocabulary challenges, can be enjoyable with **visual aids** and **repetitive elements**.

Hypothesis

Socio-cultural content and illustrations in Manga and children's books aid comprehension and engagement.

How about ... (2)

Rieko Nakagawa & Yuriko Yamawaki

ぐりとぐら (1963)

First book in the series

2014: over 4 million copies sold

translated: 14 languages

German translation Clara Bracklo (2019)



Guri und Gura - lexis (word frequency & illutrations)

Word frequency according to DWDS	Words	underlined: picture <i>slanted underlined</i> : can be deciphered * mentioned by non-native reader
≤ 316 per million (4)	Stein (B1), stoßen (B1), überlegen (B1), wohl (B1), <u>golden</u> (B1)	
≤ 32 per million (3)	Deckel (B1), Eichel (B1), *Faust (B1), Korb (B1), <u>Mehl</u> (B1), Pfanne (B1), <u>Schulter</u> (B1), *Schüssel (B1), Träne (B1), *Teig (B2), Schale (B2), <u>abheben</u> (B1), anstrengen (B1), aufschlagen (B1), freudig (B1), glatt (B1), *großzügig (B1), hinzufügen (B1), nachdenken (B1), rollen (B1), währenddessen (B1), wieso (B1), zerbrechen (B1), zubereiten (B1), zurückkehren (B1), zusammentragen (B1), zustimmen (B1), klatschen (B2), <u>verrühren</u> (B2), <u>versammeln</u> (B2)	
≤ 3 per million (2)	Feuerstelle (B1), *Schürze (B1), Bettdecke (B2), <u>Eierkuchen</u> (B2), <u>Eierschale</u> (B2), *Spiegelei (B2), *Kastanie (B2), *Schneebesen, Autsch, *naschen (B1), beeilen (A2), *verschränken (B1), <u>zudecken</u> (B1), <u>zusammenschlagen</u> (B2), <u>riesengroß</u> (B2)	
≤ .3 per million (1)	<u>Feuerholz</u> (C), *Zündholz (B1), Omlett (B2), <u>Kochstelle</u> (C), <u>hervorkommen</u> (B2), herumspringen (C), hineingießen (C), <u>umbinden</u> (C)	
≤ .03 per million (0)	lecker (B1), *einfetten (C), *fluffig	



Oh, mitten auf dem Weg, liegt ein **riesengroßes** ...
(Oh, in the middle of the road lies a **gigantic** ...)

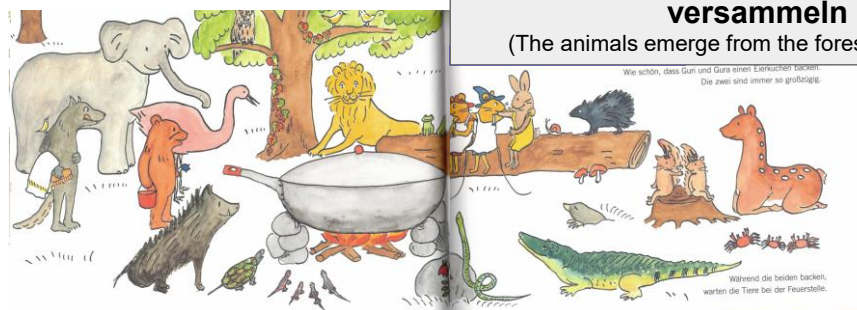
riesengroß (B2): low frequency adjective, compound
("riesen" + "groß")





Die Tiere **kommen** aus dem Wald **hervor** und **versammeln** sich.

(The animals emerge from the forest and gather together.)



hervorkommen (B2): verb with prefix / separable verb ("hervor" + "kommen")
versammeln (B2): verb used reflexiv

Guri und Gura - lexis (compounds)

- common, very "german"
- often using words, that the students (should) know
- nevertheless difficult for learners
- In this text (aiding): repetition of composita word (parts), creating semantic links

compound nouns	Eierkuchen (Ei + er + Kuchen) (x 2), Spiegelei (Spiegel + Ei), Feuerholz (Feuer + Holz), Eierschale (Ei + er + Schale), Kochstelle (x 2), Feuerstelle , Bettdecke , Zündholz
adjectival compound	riesengroß (riesen + groß), großzügig (groß + zügig)

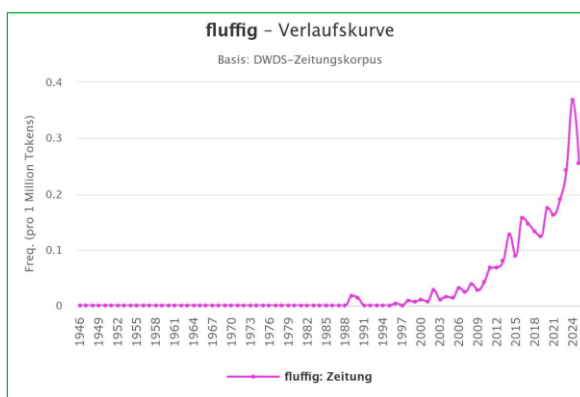
Guri und Gura - lexis (derivations)

Verbs with prefix:

- deduction using the meaning of word parts helpful in rare cases,
- confusing varieties for learners

adjectival derivation	<i>sonnig</i> (Sonne), <i>freudig</i> (Freude), <i>herrlich</i> (Herr), <i>golden</i> (Gold)
derivations with prefix	<i>abheben</i> , <i>aussehen</i> , <i>aufschlagen</i> , <i>verrühren</i> , <i>sich beeilen</i> , <i>sich versammeln</i> , <i>zubereiten</i> , <i>nachdenken</i> , <i>zusammenschlagen</i> , <i>zurückkehren</i> , <i>zusammentragen</i> , <i>umbinden</i> , <i>herumspringen</i> , <i>überlegen</i> , <i>hinzufügen</i> , <i>hineingießen</i> , <i>hervorkommen</i> , <i>erscheinen</i>

Guri und Gura - lexis (neologisms, “dying words”)



DWDS-Verlaufskurve für „Zündholz“, erstellt durch das Digitale Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache.
<https://www.dwds.de/r/plot?view=1&corpus=zeitungenxl&norm=date%2Bclass&smooth=spline&genres=0&grand=1&slice=1&prune=0&window=0&wbase=0&logavg=0&logscale=0&xrange=1946%3A2024&q1=Z%C3%BCndholz>, abgerufen am 2025/9/1.
 DWDS-Verlaufskurve für „fluffig“, erstellt durch das Digitale Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache.
<https://www.dwds.de/r/plot?view=1&corpus=zeitungenxl&norm=date%2Bclass&smooth=spline&genres=0&grand=1&slice=1&prune=0&window=0&wbase=0&logavg=0&logscale=0&xrange=1946%3A2025&q1=fluffig>, abgerufen am 2025/9/2.

Guri und Gura - lexis (plural)

Plural forms:

Maus - Mäuse, Hand - Hände, Rucksack - Rucksäcke

Arm - Arme, Stein - Steine (aus Steinen), Tier - Tiere

Auge - Augen, Schulter - Schultern, Schürze - Schürzen, Schneebesen - Schneebesen, Träne - Tränen



Guri und Gura - Grammar (superlative & relative clause)

- Schnell kehren Guri und Gura nach Hause zurück und tragen alles zusammen: die **größte** Pfanne, **die sie finden können**, [...]. (p.11)

Guri and Gura hurry home and gather everything together: the **largest** frying pan **they can find**,



Guri und Gura - Grammar (“zu” indefinite)

1) um zu + indefinite

“Dieses Ei ist zu groß, **um** es in unseren Korb **zu tun**”, sagt Guri. (p.8)

1) zu + indefinite

Guri beeilt sich, das Ei schnell in die Schüssel **zu füllen**, ... (p.16)



Guri und Gura - Grammar (auxiliary verbs)

1) modal verbs: **können, müssen, sollen** (A1)

2) **lassen** (let, A2)

- “So, **lass uns** ... “ (p.14) (let’s): rarely taught (imperative used as invitation)
- “fallen lassen / fallenlassen” (to drop something):
 - “Es ist zu glatt, da **lassen wir es** (=the egg) bestimmt **fallen**. (p.8)
 - es** = direct objective of “lassen” and works as subject of “fallen”
 - hypothetical sentence & not really aided by pictures



Guri und Gura - Grammar (exclamatory expressions)

exclamatory expressions: (B1/B2) & **omitting “es”**

„**Was für** ein großes Ei! **Sieht so aus**, als könnte man damit ein Spiegelei für eine ganze Party braten.“, freut sich Guri. (p.7)



Guri und Gura - Grammar (modal expressions)

Subjunctive (Konjunktiv II): wishes, dreams, unreal things - politeness (A2/B1)

„Mir wäre ein Eierkuchen lieber! (I would prefer a pancake.)

Selbst wenn wir von morgens bis Abends davon naschen würden, wäre immer noch jede Menge übrig“, überlegt Guri und Gura stimmt freudig zu. (p.7)

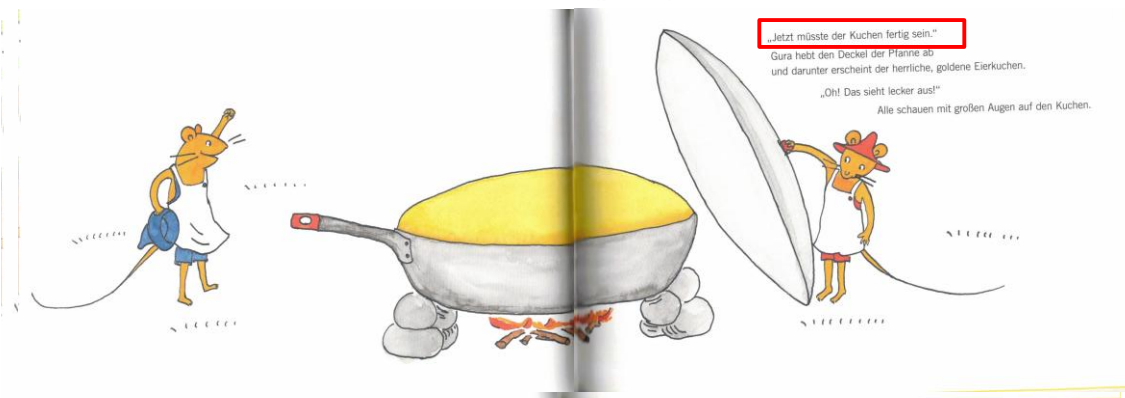
(Even if we snacked on it from morning to night, there would still be plenty)



Guri und Gura - Grammar (modal expressions)

Subjunctive (Konjunktiv II)

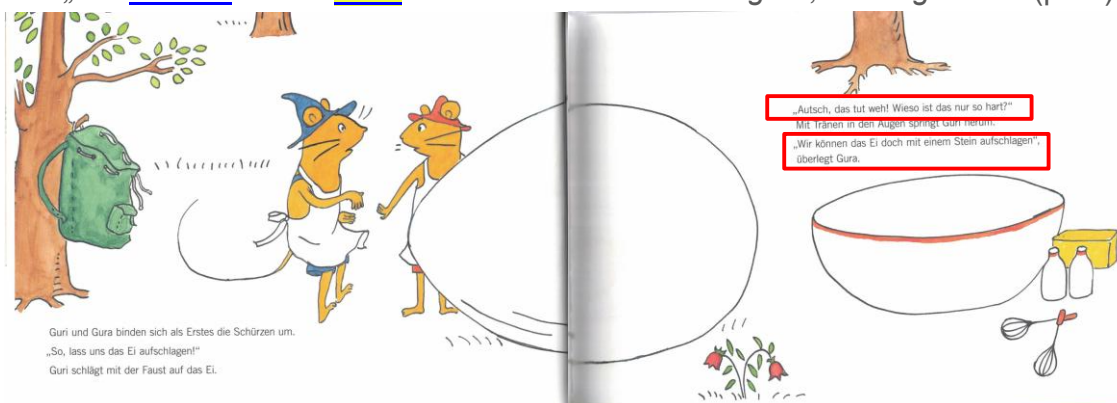
„Jetzt müsste der Kuchen fertig sein.“ (p.23) (Now the cake should be ready)



Guri und Gura - Grammar (modal expressions)

(modal auxiliary +) **modal particle**

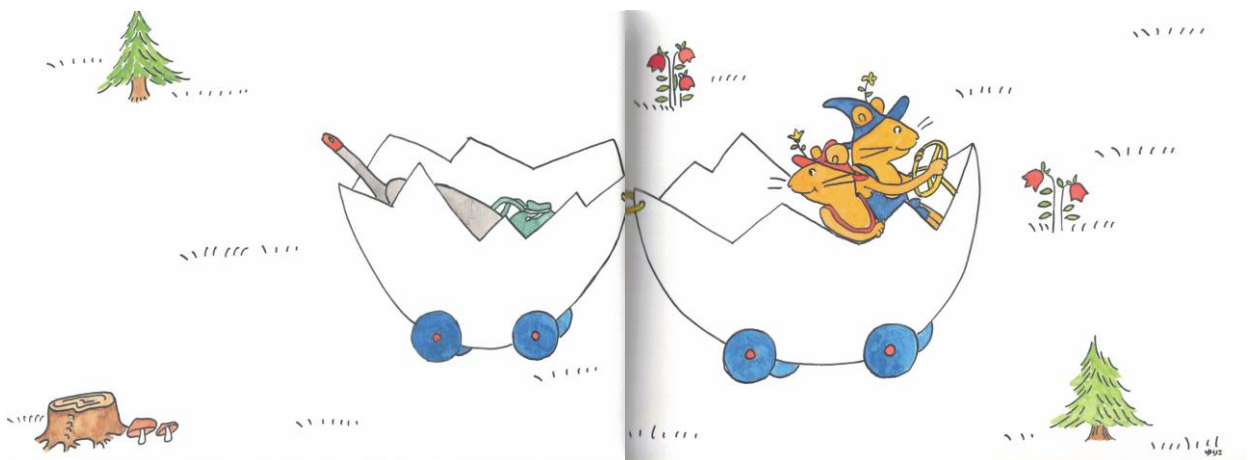
- “Autsch, das tut weh! Wieso ist das nur so hart?”
- „Wir können das Ei doch mit einem Stein aufschlagen“, überlegt Gura. (p.15)



Guri und Gura - Grammar (modal expressions)

modal particle

- Na, was haben Guri und Gura wohl aus dieser Schale gemacht? (p. 25)



Guri und Gura - summary

challenging words

- low frequency words
 - neologism
- compounds
 - reading strategies)
- derivation

aiding pictures



variety of challenging grammar

- relative clause
- exclamatory expressions
- “zu” infinitive
- auxiliary verbs
- modal expressions
 - subjunctive clause
 - modal particles

...

B1 (LLE)
YL 2.5-2.9 / 2.2
(present tense)

Guri und Gura - comment

「ぐりとぐら」はほとんどの大学生が知っていると思う。すごく有名な絵本というのもあるが、読んでなくとも見覚えがあったり、「ぐりとぐらのパンケーキのレシピ」で知ってる人も多い気がする。（フライパンいっぱい生地を流し込んで焼いた大きなパンケーキは「ぐりとぐらのパンケーキ」を作ったというだけでどんなものか伝わると思う）。子どもの頃から大人になるまで縁があった絵本なので、ドイツ語で読めるのは個人的には嬉しいと思った。

I imagine most university students know “Guri and Gura”. It’s a hugely famous picture book, but even if you haven’t read it, you might recognise it, or know it from “Guri and Gura’s Pancake Recipe”. (Just saying you made “Guri and Gura’s pancakes” – those huge pancakes made by pouring batter into a frying pan – conveys what they’re like). As it’s a picture book I’ve had a connection with from childhood into adulthood, I personally felt delighted to be able to read it in German.

Translated with DeepL.com

How about ... (3)

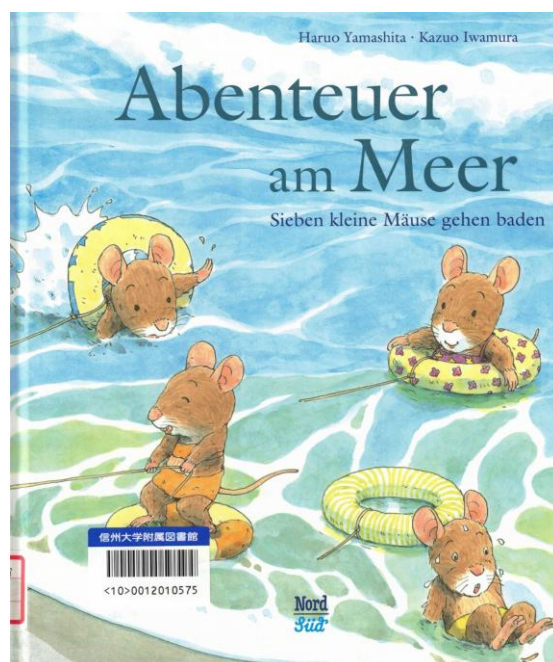
Haruo Yamashita, Kazuo Iwamura

ねずみのかいすいよく (1983)

second from series of 4 books

translations: English, French, Italian,
Spanish, Catalan, German*

German: Hana Christen (2012, 2022
4th edition)



Abenteuer am Meer - lexis (frequency)

underlined: picture
slanted underlined: can be deciphered
* mentioned by non-native reader

Word frequency according to DWDS	Words
≤ 316 per million (4)	glücklich (A1), angenehm (B1), <u>Kraft (B1)</u> , <u>Fahrt (B1)</u> , Sicherheit (B1), darin (B1), ziehen (A1), schmecken(A1), schlagen (A2), <u>retten (B1)</u> , eignen (B1)
≤ 32 per million (3)	Welle (B1), *Fels (B1), *Bucht (B1), *Schnur (B1), Picknick (B1), Ufer (B1), Strand (A2), Frosch (B1), Sommerferien (B1), *köstlich (B1), ängstlich (B1), besorgt (B1), mutig (B1), strahlend (B1), fröhlich (B1), durcheinander (B1), *surfen (A2), *basteln (A2), aufpassen (A2), einpacken (A2), <u>befestigen (B1)</u> , hauen (B1), schütteln (B1), wehen (B2), fischen (B2)
≤ 3 per million (2)	Badehose (B1), Aussichtsturm (B1), *Wasserski (B2), <u>Mittagsschlaf (B2)</u> , Brise (C), drüben (A2), übergücklich (B2), vergnügen (B1), *paddeln (B1), zusammenbinden (B2), *krauln (B2), <u>zurufen (B1)</u> , *Hurra! (B1)
≤ .3 per million (1)	* <u>Schwimmreifen (C)</u> , less very-low-frequency words
≤ .03 per million (0)	<u>Aussichtsfels</u> , *hau ruck, (Mäusekind, Mäusefamilie (C), Mäusegeschwister, Mäuseschule) reference-identical compounds

Abenteuer am Meer - lexis (composita & derivation)

similar to Guri and Guri **many composita and verbs with prefix.**

topic specific lexis:

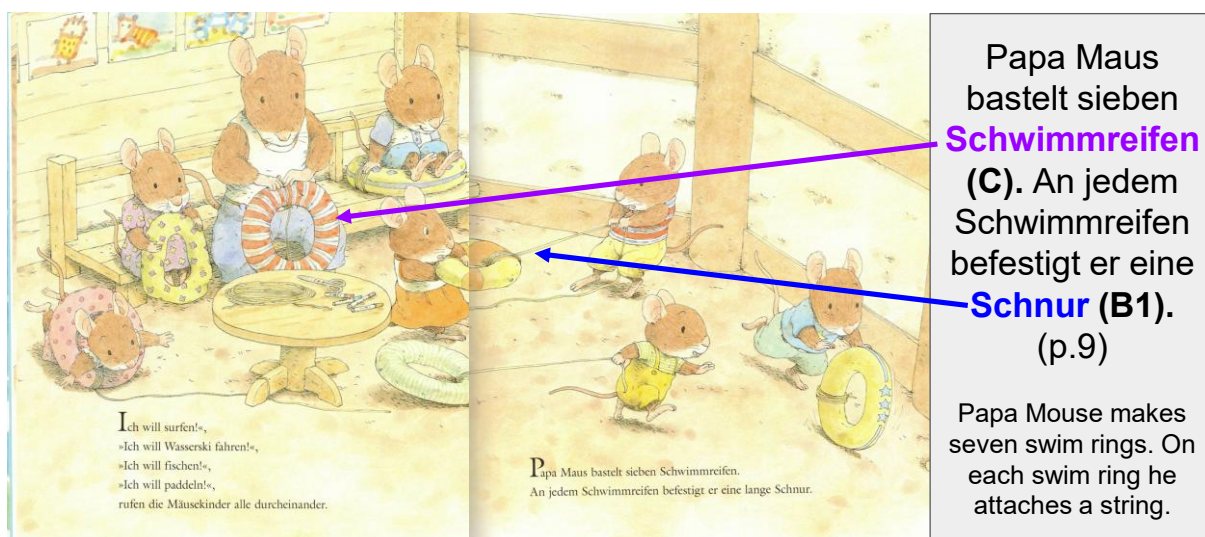
- Guri & Gura: cocking related
- Abenteuer am Meer: watersports / summer activity / (family) related

topic specific words

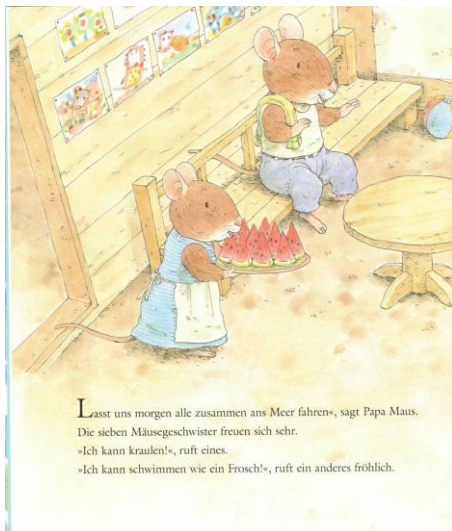
→ represented in pictures

nouns (seemingly) easier to decipher

Abenteuer am Meer - lexis (topic specific nouns)



Abenteuer am Meer - lexis (topic specific verbs)



Lasst uns morgen alle zusammen ans Meer fahren», sagt Papa Maus.
Die sieben Mäusegeschwister freuen sich sehr.
»Ich kann kraulen!«, ruft eines.
»Ich kann schwimmen wie ein Frosch!«, ruft ein anderes fröhlich.

“Ich kann **kraulen!**“, ruft eins. “Ich kann **schwimmen wie ein Frosch.**“ ruft ein anderes fröhlich. (p.6)

“I can crawl!”, one calls out. “I can swim like a frog!” another calls out cheerfully.

Abenteuer am Meer - difficult grammar

auxiliary verbs

- modal verbs (wollen, können, sollen)
- lassen: “Lasst uns ans Meer fahren.” (p. 6) “Lasst uns bald wieder ans Meer fahren.” (p. 36) - Let’s ... (imperative as prompt or proposal)

Imperative as prompt: “Kommt, wir suchen uns einen ruhigeren Ort”, “Kommt, wir wollen Pause machen”, “Komm schnell zurück, Papa! (p.15, p.19 & p.25)

“**zu**” **infinitive**: “Im Meer zu baden macht so viel Spaß!” (p.17) Das Wasser ist zu tief um darin stehen zu können. (p.27)

modal expressions:

- **Subanctive clause**: Hier würden Mama und Papa ... verlieren (p.12)
- **modal particle**: Papa kann doch nicht schwimmen. (p.27)

less than in
Guri & Gura

Abenteuer am Meer - grammar



Lasst uns morgen alle zusammen ans Meer fahren», sagt Papa Maus.
Die sieben Mäusegeschwister freuen sich sehr.
»Ich kann kralen!«, ruft eines.
»Ich kann schwimmen wie ein Froschl!«, ruft ein anderes fröhlich.

context sensitive words!

“Ich kann kralen!”, ruft **eins**. “Ich kann schwimmen wie ein Froschl.” ruft **ein anderes** fröhlich. (p.6)

“I can crawl!”, one calls out. “I can swim like a frog!” another calls out cheerfully.

Abenteuer am Meer - difficult grammar

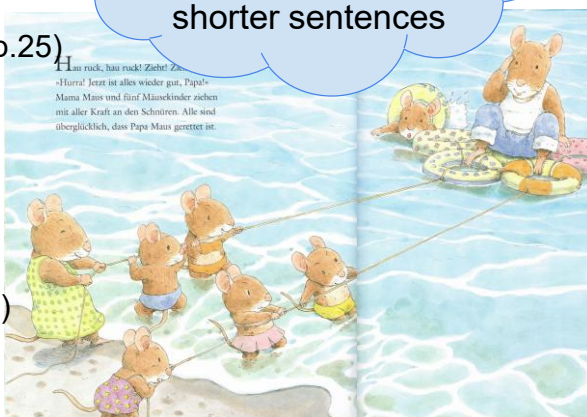
Exclamatory expressions

- Los geht die Fahrt ans Meer (p. 10)
- Oh nein! (p. 12) / Oh nein, seht mal! (p.25)
- Ich hab's! (p.31)
- Hurra! (p.34)
- So ein schöner Tag! (p.36)

Interjection (rarely taught)

- Hau ruck, hau ruck! Zieht! Zieht! (p.34)
(Heave ho! Heave ho! Pull! Pull!)

less narrator text
more “dialogs”:
⇒ more
exclamations,
shorter sentences



Hau ruck, hau ruck! Zieht! Zieht!
»Hurra! Jetzt ist alles wieder gut, Papas!«
Mama Maus und fünf Mäusekinder ziehen mit aller Kraft an den Schnüren. Alle sind überglücklich, dass Papa Maus gerettet ist.

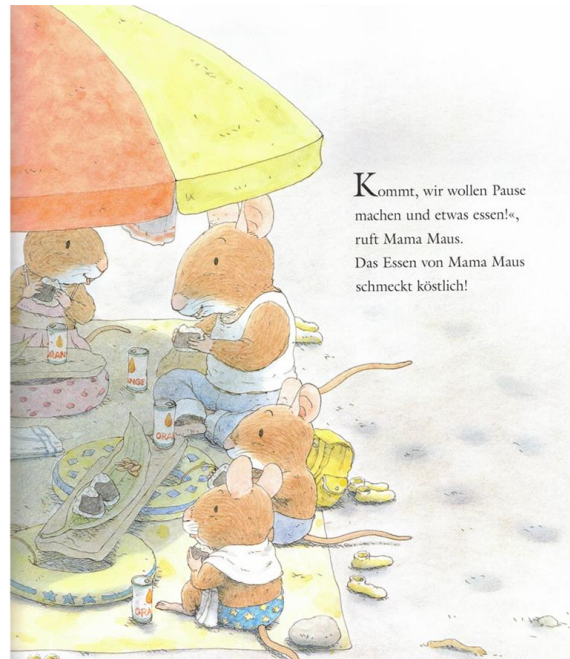
Abenteuer am Meer

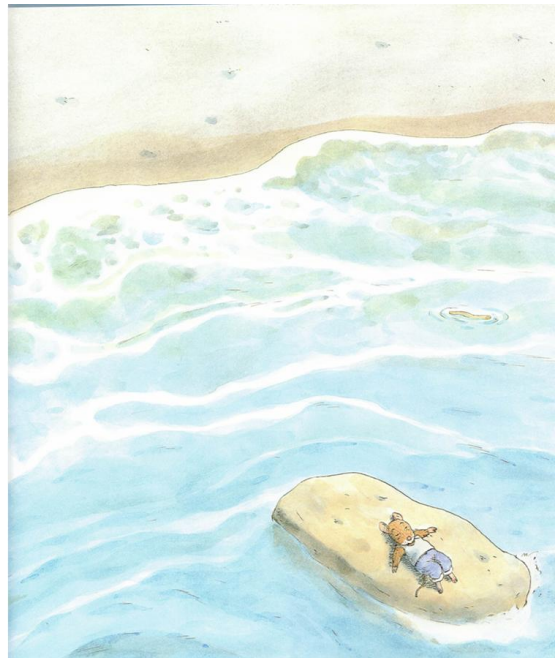
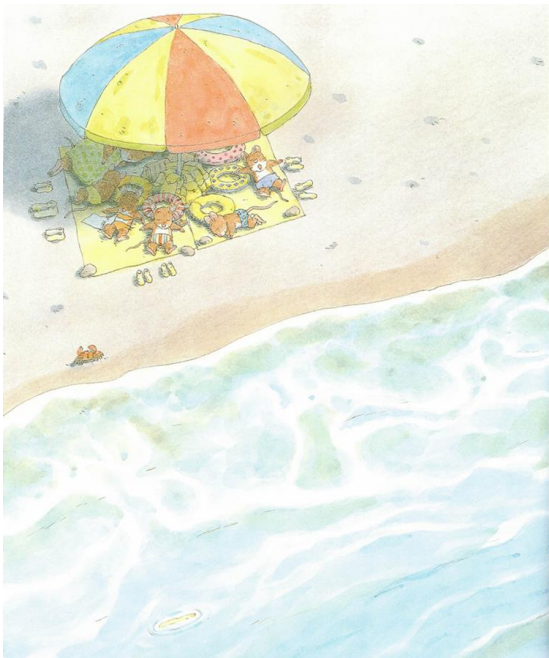
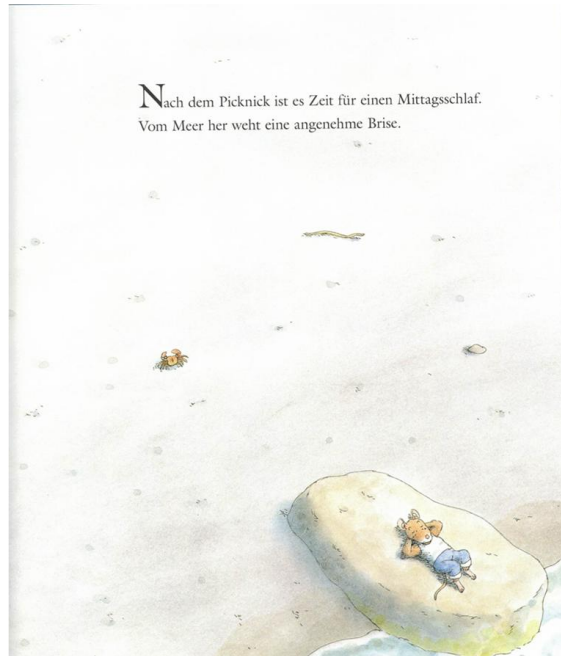
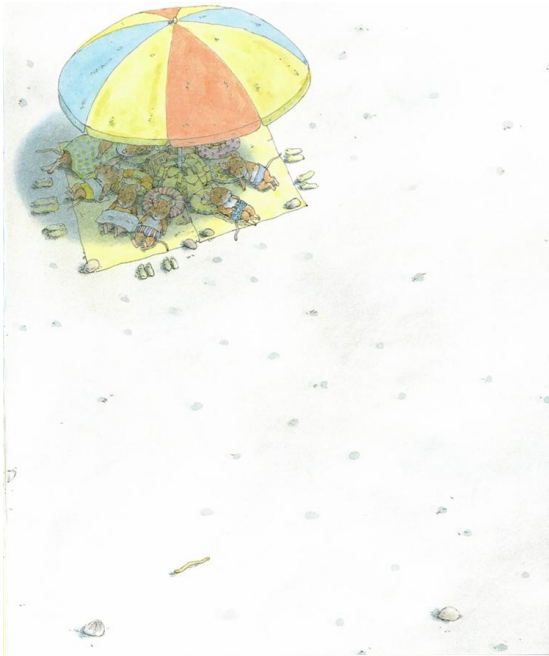
Story with a **distinctive & almost “textless” climax**

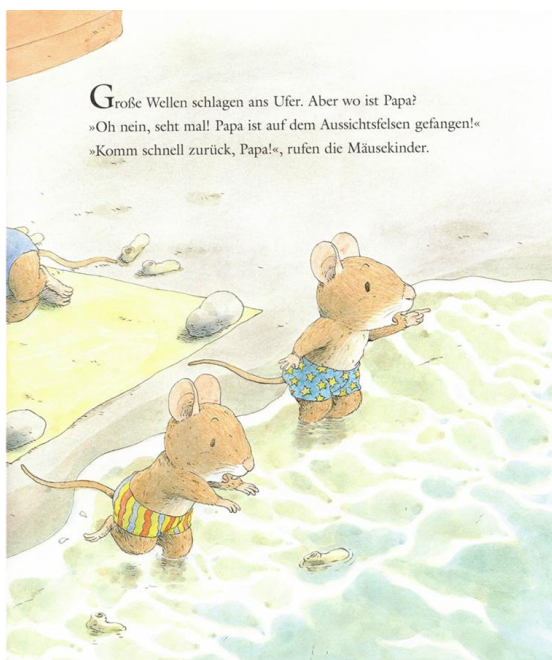
comment from “test reader”

お父さんが取り残された状況、救助シーンは、絵のおかげで何が起きているかをはっきりイメージすることができた。ドイツ語も具体的なイメージとともに読解できるので、文字だけの時よりも深く理解できるのではないか。

The rescue scene depicting the father being left behind was **vividly brought to life through the illustrations, allowing me to clearly visualize what was happening**. Reading German alongside concrete images also enables **deeper comprehension than text alone**.







Abenteuer am Meer - summary

challenging words

- **fewer** very low frequency words
- compounds
 - reference-identical
- derivation

easier &
aiding pictures



challenging grammar

- exclamatory expressions
- “zu” infinitive
- auxiliary verbs (**easier**)
- modal expressions
 - subjunctive clause
 - modal particles
- Adverb, comparative, context sensitive words

A2 (LLE)
YL 1.5-1.9 / 1.8
(present tense,
short sentences)

How about ... (4)

Kazuo Iwamura

まっかなせーたー (1984)

third from series of 6 books

published in 9 foreign countries

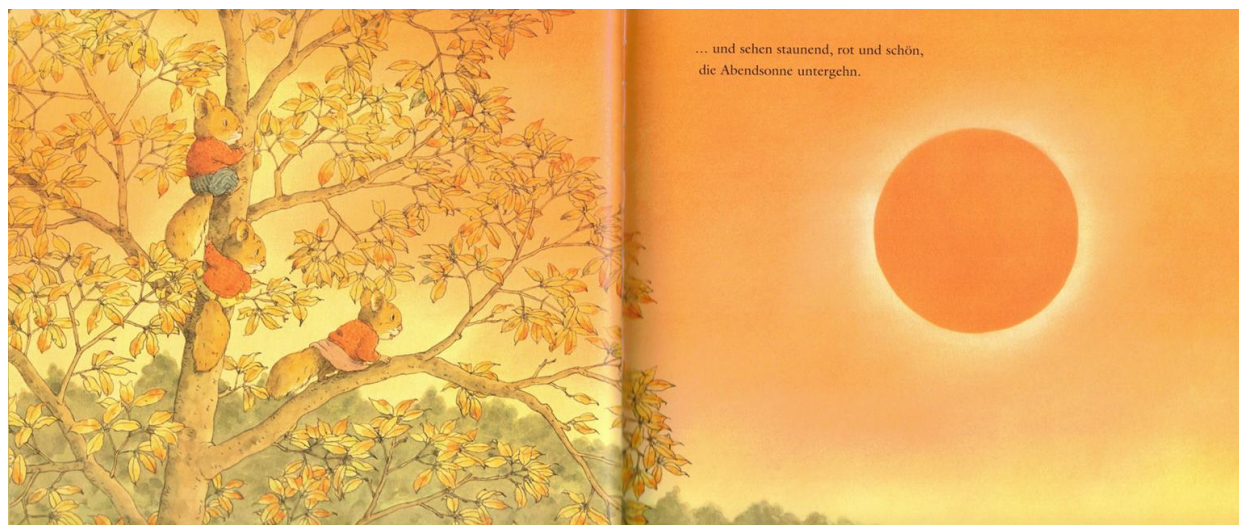
German: Rose Pflock (2009, 2025
13th edition) - all rhymes



So schön ist der Herbst - lexis (frequency)

Word frequency according to DWDS	Words
≤ 316 per million (4)	fest (B1), wohl (B1), ziemlich (B1), grad, <u>Aussicht</u> (B1), Überraschung (B1), bevor (B1), <u>schauen</u> (B1), überraschen (B1), verraten (B1)
≤ 32 per million (3)	erschrocken (B1), friedlich (B1), geheimnisvoll (B1), reif (B1), satt (B1), <u>staunend</u> , na (B1) Abenteuer (B1), Magen (A2), <u>Bär</u> (B1), Eichel (B1), Frucht (B1), <u>Hut</u> (B1), Masche (B1), <u>Schein</u> (B1), Ärmel (B2), Ast (B2), <u>Beere</u> (B2), Busch (B2), Schal (B2), <u>Wolle</u> (B1), <u>Papa</u> (B1), jedermann (B1), <u>untergehen</u> , träumen (A2), bescheren (B1), brennen (B1), einsammeln (B1), glücken (B1), <u>gucken</u> (B1), klettern (B1), verschlafen (B1), verstecken (B1), verwandeln (B1), <u>stricken</u> (B2)
≤ 3 per million (2)	<u>Eichhorn</u> (B1), Pulli (B1), Schreck (B1), Wonne (B1), <u>Abendsonne</u> (B2), <u>Bettchen</u> , <u>anhaben</u> (B1), entzücken (B1), haltmachen (B2), piepen (B2), schlummern (B2), verschlucken (B2) glühen, stillstehen, tüchtig (B1), <u>ärmellos</u> (B2), sonderbar (B2),
≤ .3 per million (1)	<u>Beerenstrauch</u> (C), Blätterkleid (C), <u>Vogelschar</u> (C), verfressen (C),
≤ .03 per million (0)	Pilzfamilie, Rest <u>chen</u> , West <u>chen</u>
no data available	Kleiner (B2), Mäul <u>chen</u> (C), Fliegen, Flügelschlagen, Täss <u>chen</u> , (vor) Kurzem (C)

underlined: picture
slanted underlined: can be deciphered
 * mentioned by non-native reader



... and watch in amazement as the red and beautiful evening sun sets.

So schön ist der Herbst - lexis (diminutives, colloquial)

less composita than *Guri and Guri* and *Abenteuer am Meer*.

diminutives: Bettchen, Westchen, Restchen, Mäulchen (Maul), Tässchen (Tasse)

colloquial reduction: Heute → Heut, gehen → gehn, sehen → sehn, stehen → stehn, untergehen → untergehn, (ich) gehe → geh, dieses → dies, dauert es → dauert's

topic specific lexis:

- Guri & Gura: cocking related
- Abenteuer am Meer: watersports / summer activity / (family) related
- So schön ist der Herbst: nature (animals, plants) / autumn related

topic specific words

→ represented in pictures

So schön ist der Herbst - difficult grammar

less than the other texts

- **auxiliary verbs** (no "lassen" only modal verbs)
- **Imperative** as prompt
- **"zu" infinitive**
- **subordinate clause**
- **comparison: wie / so wie** "Schaut mal die Pilzfamilie hier, wie Papa, Mama und wie wir!" (p.11) "Und grad so rot sind ihre Hüte wie unsre Pullis." (p.11)
- **Subjunctive clause (2x)**
- **modal particle (1x)**
- **exclamatory expressions (4x)**
- **Interjections (1x):** Hm...

Look at this mushroom family here,
just like Dad, Mom, and us!
And their caps are just as red
as our sweaters! My goodness!
In autumn, everyone seems to
put on something in red colour!



So schön ist der Herbst - rhyme

rhyme form

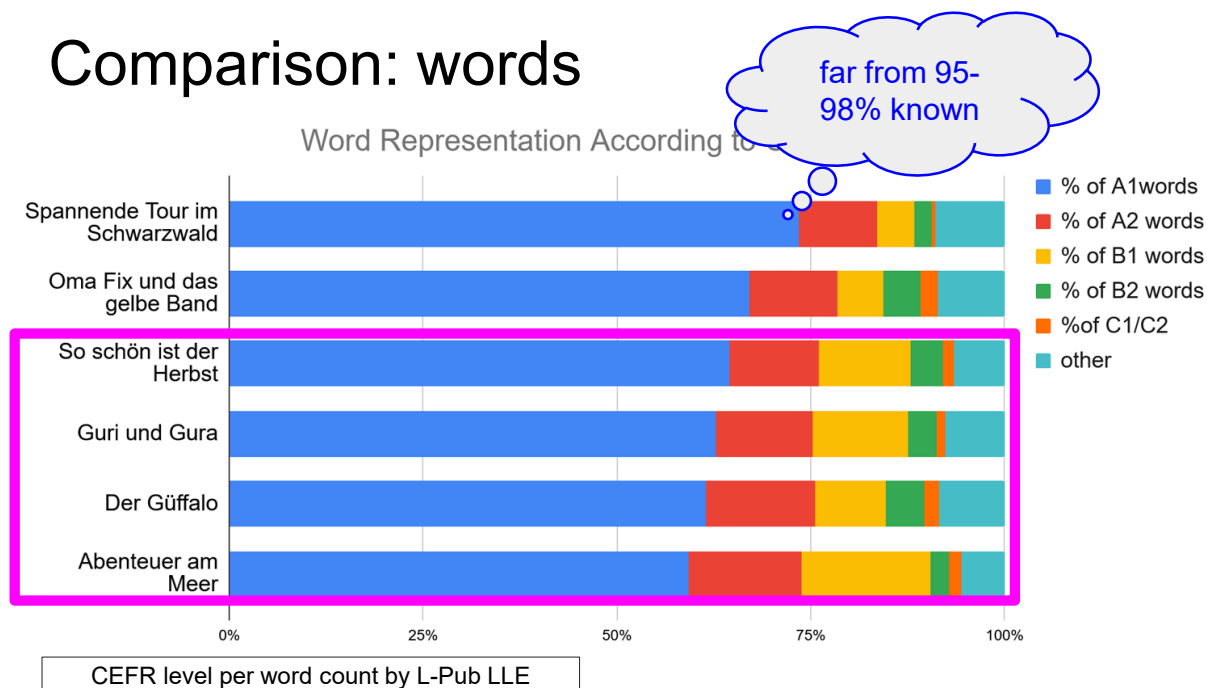
- melody (positive impact - native children)

this text ⇒ “unfamiliar / unusual” word order

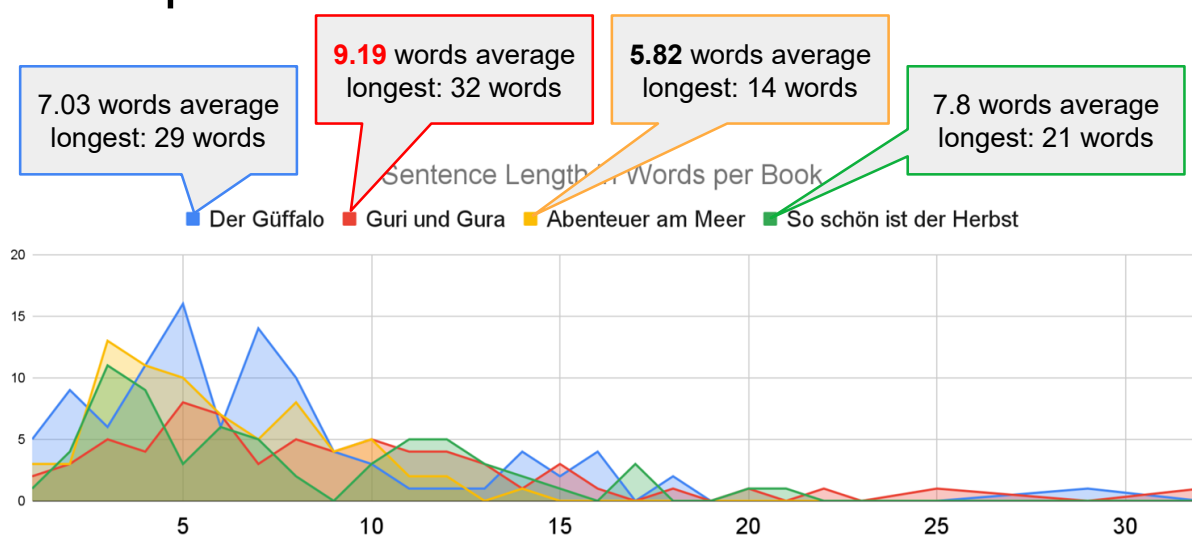
- *Die Eltern aber schlummern nicht,*
- *die halbe Nacht noch brennt das Licht.* (p.5) [Das Licht brennt noch die halbe Nacht.](#)
- more difficult or not = ?
- influence on writing = ?

A1 (LLE)
YL ?
(present tense)

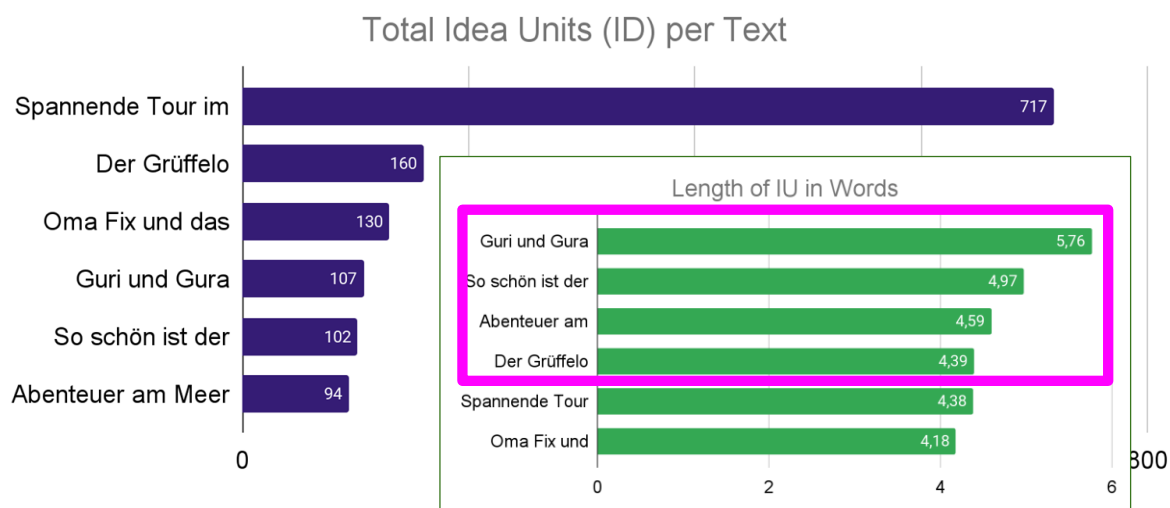
Comparison: words



Comparison: sentences



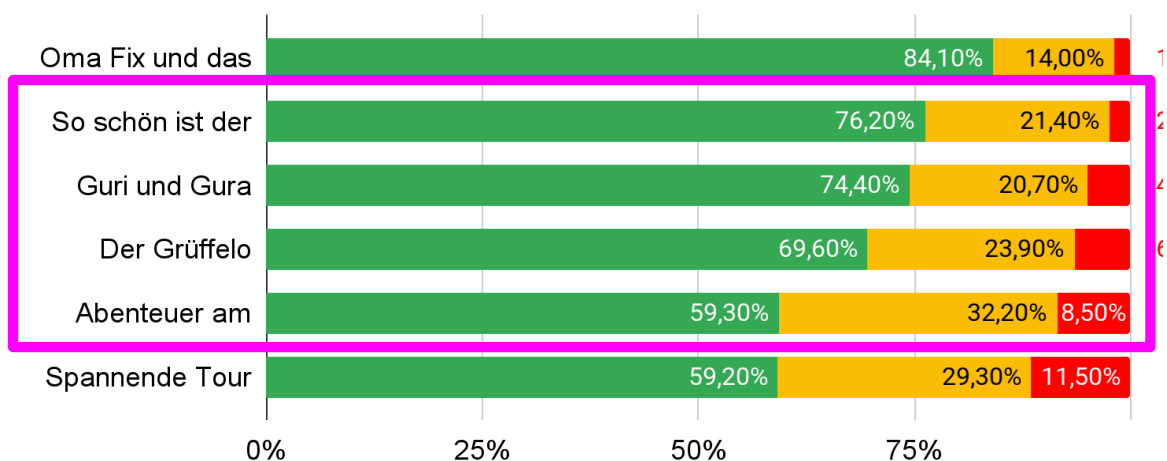
Comparison: Idea Units



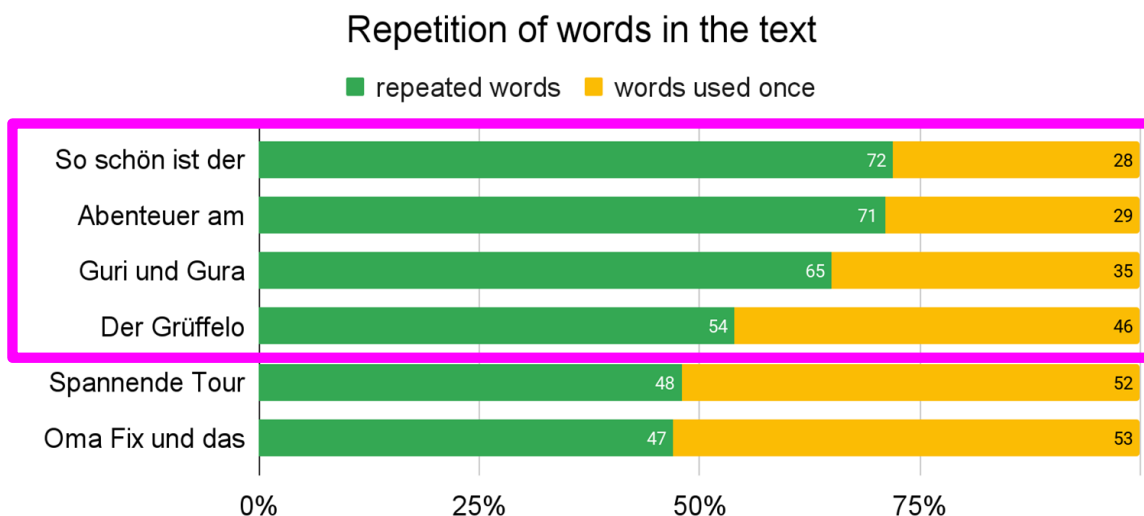
Comparison: Idea Units

Idea Units per Sentence

■ 1 sentence = 1 IU ■ 1 sentence = 2 IU ■ 1 sentence = 3 IU



Comparison: repetition



Comparison: calculated CEFR levels

	reasons	CEFR	words explained by illustrations	CEFR
Der Grüffelo	simple past tense, sentence length (7,03)	B1	19-41% of B1	B1
Guri und Gura	variety of tenses, B1 vocab., sentence length	B1	37-49% of B1	A2
Abenteuer am Meer	lots of B1 vocab.	A2	51-57% of B1	A1
So schön ist der Herbst	B1 vocab. but short sentences	A1	29-37% of B1	A1

LLE Einstufung Entscheidungsbaum				
Wieviel % der Verben sind: (Indikativ Präsens, Infinitiv und Imperativ)?	Wörter sind B1?	Was ist die durchschnittliche Satzlänge (Wörter pro Satz)?	GeR Stufe	
≤75	≥15	≥16	C2	
		14-16	C1	
		11-14	B2	
	10-15	<11	B1	
		≥16	C2	
		14-16	C1	
75-85	≥15	12-14	B2	
		5-12	B1	
		<5	A2	
	10-15	>17	C2	
		15-17	C1	
		13-15	B2	
≥85	≥15	8-13	B1	
		<8	A2	
		≥17	B2	
	10-15	12-17	B1	
		7-12	A2	
		<7	A1	
≥85	≥15	>16	C2	
		14-16	C1	
		11-14	B2	
	10-15	6-11	B1	
		<6	A2	
		>18	C2	
≥85	≥15	16-18	C1	
		14-16	B2	
		11-14	B1	
	10-15	8-11	A1	
		≥8	A1	
		>13	B1	
≥85	≤10	9-13	A2	
		<9	A1	

Conclusion

1) the shorter the better

word: long composita hard to decipher

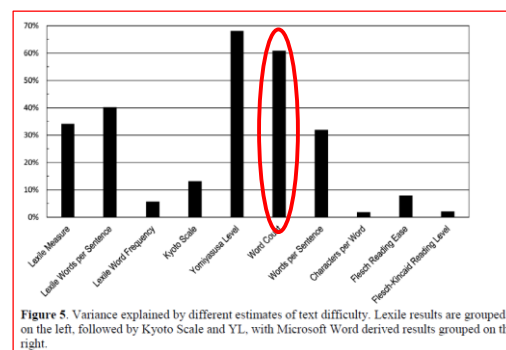
IU: less processing power needed

sentence: less IU / easier

book: word count = indicator for difficulty (Holster et al. 2017, p.236-237)

motivational - psychological

"I can do this" vs. *"Oh my god, ..."*



Conclusion

2) pictures are crucial

explain → reduce unknown vocabulary ⇒ **one CEFR level down**

check the pictures!

in general adjectives, adverbs, verbs harder to decipher

grammar points almost impossible

Conclusion

3) repetition of words

YL & repetition: no relation visible.

- YL needs verification

CEFR & repetition: the more repetition the lower CEFR (for the picture books)

- coincidence?

Comparison: CEFR vs.YL

	CEFR	YL	CEFR-YL*	CEFR
Der Gruffelo	B1	1.5-1.9	A1-A2 (Kyoto 2-3)	B1
? Guri und Gura	B1	2.5-2.9 / 2.2	A2-B1 (Kyoto 5)	A2
Abenteuer am Meer	A2	1.5-1.9	A1-A2 (Kyoto 2-3)	A1
So schön ist der Herbst	A1	0-0.9	(Kyoto Starter - 1)	A1
YL to CEFR estimate according to https://erfoundation.org/mreaderadmin/setting-student-levels/				

follow up: grammar

How much does **simple past** tense matter?

Gruffalo not mentioned explicitly

ignored or overlooked?

not unknown after all?

“Guri and Gura” vs. “The Gruffalo” (past tense⇒B1, but YL 1.5-1.9)

Other factors: font size? supporting illustrations? other tenses / grammar structures

follow up - familiarity

student **questionnaire** (not if pictures helped but)

do the pictures or the drawing style feel familiar (Y/N)

were the illustrations appealing (range)

how easy was it to draw context clues from the illustrations (were the pictures easy to decipher)

how much information did you get through the pictures (% from pictures % from text)

how much information did you get through previous knowledge of the story (%)

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Thank you for your attention!

We are looking forward to your questions and comments.

