STEP 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE STORY

Aims
- To introduce the theme of the workshop
- To elicit stereotyped perceptions of Berlin from the learners
- To plan the “route” for their virtual tour of the city

The group had already many occasions to meet and work together so there was no need for introducing each other. Thus the trainer directly proceeds to proposing a new theme for the following round of workshops. In brief, the task is to create a cartoon depicting a trip around Berlin, visiting sites worth exploring in the eyes of the participants. A projector is used to focus the group’s attention on the task and survey images from the Internet.

Each of the participants can propose his/her ideas based on the material from the Internet while the others are commenting the choices. This is a long brainstorming process, expected to be full of humorous exchanges and animated disputes, like in our initial workshop. The city or country to be visited has to be chosen properly to ensure sufficient knowledge base and a repertoire of attitudes among the group. In the case of a group of Polish adult learners Germany and the Germans are a rewarding choice, immediately igniting emotional response. Normally, the response would include sound knowledge as well as clichés and stereotyped perceptions.

At this stage the task should be clear to everybody – let us search for characteristic images for the creation of the cartoon and draft a general plot of the group moving from one site to another in their explorations of Berlin. This is a provisional scenario, which can be changed while working on the cartoon – new pathways are expected to emerge leading to new insights into the city.