INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CURRENT RESEARCH

Measuring Fluency Development In Content-Based Storytelling Elementary Spanish Instruction
by Barbara Anne Cartford, Janice Holter Kittok, and Karen Lichtman ................................. 2

Can Second Language Acquirers Reach High Levels Of Proficiency Through Self-Selected Reading? An Attempt To Confirm Nation’s (2014) Results
by Stephen Krashen and Beniko Mason ........ 10

The Incredible Frog-Boy is on the Loose Again (1): When Adult Second Language Acquirers Read the National Enquirer
by Kyung Sook Cho ........................................ 20

Center for Accelerated Language Acquisition (CALA) Test Scores: Another Look at the Value of Implicit Language Instruction through Comprehensible Input
by Brian Roberts, M.A.T. and Shelley Thomas, Ph.D. ................................................................. 24

Research Submission Stylesheet .................. 36
Advertising Guidelines .............................. 61

TEACHER TO TEACHER

The Sweetest Sounds: Learning Names and Asking Personalized Questions
by Darcy Pippins.................................................. 40

Very Narrow Listening
by Judith Dubois .............................................. 43

Using Second Language Acquisition Quotes with Students
by Diane Neubauer .............................................. 47

The Growth of Latin Programs with Comprehensible Input
by Robert Patrick, PhD ................................. 50

Make Any Student The Most Interesting Person In The Room
by Bryce Hedstrom ........................................... 55

Language Inclusion Lessons Using Comprehensible Input in a High School Setting
by Rebecca Moulton ........................................... 58

IJFLT: A free on-line, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to communicating research, articles and helpful information regarding language acquisition to support teachers as they endeavor to create fluent, multilingual students.
Measuring Fluency Development in Content-Based Storytelling Elementary Spanish Instruction

Barbara Anne Cartford, Janice Holter Kittok, and Karen Lichtman

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Abstract

Elementary students taught with Content-Based Storytelling showed significant gains in fluency in L2 Spanish, as measured by word count from timed writings.
**Introduction**

Elementary foreign language classes often fail to develop fluency and meaningful communicative skills in their students when the time allotted to language classes is minimal (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010). Children’s language skills grow quickly when they are immersed in the target language environment all day every day, but in a classroom, which could be described as a minimal input situation, children are slow to acquire fluency (Krashen, Scarcella, & Long, 1982). Given the limitations of classroom language learning, can elementary school children develop writing fluency in the target language?

This study was conducted by the first author, a Spanish teacher in the elementary grades of Wayzata Public Schools, a suburb of Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the United States. All students in this school district have Spanish instruction as part of their regular schedule during the fourth and fifth grades. They have class for 60 minutes once every five school days. This totals 35 hours of instruction per year.

The Content-Based Storytelling (CBS) curriculum used in the elementary program is centered on stories, which are either authentic stories from the target cultures (e.g. legends, folktales, etc.), or informational texts about people, places or events in the Spanish-speaking world (Kittok, 2005; 2014). Content-Based Storytelling combines Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and storytelling. CLIL is an increasingly popular combined language acquisition and content learning approach, developed in Europe in the 1990’s (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010). History, geography and biography lessons taught in the target language supplement the stories and build students’ global knowledge. The fictional stories, nonfiction stories and informational texts are adapted to the students’ language comprehension level. This way, students are progressively building knowledge of the target culture(s) as they develop linguistic proficiency. Later, when they have more advanced language proficiency, they will also have a considerable amount of background knowledge that will help them understand more complex authentic texts and discourse on cultural topics (Anderson & Pearson, 1984).

Content-Based Storytelling also draws from instructional strategies used in other comprehensible input methods. Total Physical Response (TPR; Asher, 2009) is frequently used to introduce vocabulary items, phrases, and sentences in command form. The primary interactive questioning technique is based on the “teacher talk” strategy (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) and the Question Ladder of leveled questions (Segal Cook, 1996). In addition, CBS draws on strategies from Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS; Ray & Seely, 2012): freewriting, comprehension checks using English, acting out a story using student actors, oral retelling of the story based on pictures; and rewriting the story.
The classroom teacher (the first author) wrote each unit using the principles and strategies of Content-Based Storytelling (Kittok, 2005; 2014). Units used in this study were:

1) La bandera de México (the story of the indigenous symbols used on the flag),
2) El secreto de la llama (The Llama’s Secret, a Peruvian legend),
3) La leyenda de yerba mate (The Yerba Mate Legend, an Argentinian legend),
4) El espíritu de Tío Fernando (The Spirit of Uncle Fernando, a Mexican Day of the Dead story),
5) La ratona que ladra (The Barking Mouse, a Cuban folktale),
6) Dorothy y Toto (Dorothy and Toto, a story based on the Wizard of Oz from the United States), and
7) Elián González (true story of a Cuban boy caught in an international custody battle between Cuba and the United States).

All 137 students of a fourth grade class participated in this study. These same students were followed through their fifth-grade year. Most students had had no prior language instruction. There were 20 students who had had private Spanish instruction since first grade. These students are mixed throughout all the class sections, not taught as a separate group.

Research Question

Given the minimal amount of instructional time typical in most elementary language programs, can fourth and fifth grade students receiving Content-Based Storytelling Instruction in Spanish develop writing fluency in the target language?

Procedure

Seven sets of writing samples were collected from the same students over the two academic years between October 2011 and March 2013: three in fourth grade, and four in fifth grade. The writing samples were timed writings. Students were directed to retell stories that had been taught in class. They were given exactly ten minutes to write as much as they could. This technique of measuring progress in writing fluency over time by comparing ten-minute freewrites is commonly used in TPRS (Ray & Seely, 2012). Spelling and grammatical accuracy were intentionally not graded during this activity. This encouraged students to focus on fluidity and meaning rather than focusing on form, freeing them to perform at their peak fluency.

Students were asked to write complete sentences and include as much detail as they could recall in the time given. They were not required to retell the whole story. Pictures of the story sequence were provided as memory prompts, and students were allowed to use
Spanish/English vocabulary lists as a reference if needed. If students did not know a Spanish word needed to complete a sentence, they were allowed to write an English word and then continue their thoughts, but English words were not included in the total word count.

The students were directed to put sentences together in their own way. No two writing samples are alike when this open-ended format is used. The stories are not memorized, because in class they are presented in multiple oral versions and one written version. Each written story retell is the culminating summative assessment of a unit; however, the writing is not graded. Students are motivated to see what they can do and how much they can improve their own performance from one story retell to the next. Writing samples were kept in student portfolio files. Students were asked to look at their collection of work and reflect on the process.

For each writing sample, the total Spanish word count was recorded for each student, and then an average was calculated for the whole group. The increase in word counts over time shows the learners’ fluency development. Fluent writers access a greater number of words and structures more efficiently and with less effort, indicating that their knowledge of the second language has become proceduralized (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001), or in other words acquired.

**Results**

Figure 1 shows the increase in the average number of Spanish words students wrote in ten minutes over the course of the two years. The students improved from 74 words in ten minutes on their first writing sample in fourth grade, to a high of 130 words in ten minutes on their second-to-last writing sample in fifth grade, ending with 99 words on their final writing sample.
A repeated-measures ANOVA shows that the students improved in their writing fluency significantly over time, $F(6,330) = 68.580$, $p < .01$. This is a very large effect size, $\eta^2_p = .555$. Within-subjects contrasts showed that their writing fluency was significantly higher when measured between the first sample and any other sample, even after a summer of not having Spanish class, $F(1,55) = 26-342$, all $p < .01$.

The maximum word count reached by a student with no other Spanish instruction was 196 words in ten minutes, by a fifth grade student on sample 6.

The final sample, sample 7, has a lower word count than samples 5 or 6. Less time was spent on presenting the story orally while students acted it out during this unit. The lower word count is likely due to this change from the common instructional process. Nevertheless, the word count for this sample is significantly higher than the initial writing sample.

The results show that elementary students can develop a measure of written fluency in the target language and that their fluency can improve, even in a program with minimal instructional time.

Apart from the quantitative data, study of the student writing provides many insights on the learners’ developing language skills. Elementary students in a program with minimal instructional time:
• can communicate the main story elements and many details.
• recall memorized phrases and can recombine language chunks to create original sentences.
• can write short, simple statements, such as *El condor vuela* ‘The condor flies,’ *El zorro corre rápido* ‘The fox runs fast,’ or *La familia come el pollo frito* ‘The family eats the fried chicken.’
• show initial acquisition of Spanish syntax, even in places where Spanish differs from English: *La llama no come* ‘The llama doesn’t eat;’ *Es un problema grande* ‘It’s a big problem.”
• make predictable errors such as omitting the verb: *El papá furioso* ‘The dad angry,’ or direct meaning instead of idiomatic expression, as in *Elián es seis* ‘Elián (literally) is six’ instead of the correct idiomatic usage, *Elián tiene seis años*, which means ‘Elián is six years old’ (literally, “Elian has six years”).
• improve grammatical accuracy over time even without direct grammar instruction—for example, a student used the English apostrophe + s construction in one story (mamá’s casa), and a month later used the correct Spanish *de* construction (la casa de mamá).

In their reflections for their writing portfolio files, students reported that they felt they had not only learned a lot of Spanish, they also learned a lot about Spanish-speaking cultures. They commented that they felt smart, learned more than they thought they could and that they enjoyed learning Spanish.

Discussion

Writing fluency is a tangible, quantifiable way to document progress in world language learning. Word count from timed writings shows objectively how much language has been acquired and how quickly a learner can access that language to write sentences that retell a story.

Students in the present study wrote between 7 and 13 words per minute in L2 Spanish on a series of timed writing samples. Even though no comparison group was used, existing data suggest that this level of writing fluency is remarkable, given the minimal amount of Spanish instruction these students had received. In another study, college students in their third or fifth semester of language study wrote about 11 words per minute in their second language, and 17 words per minute in their native language (albeit with a different writing task; Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001). The students in the present study performed, in L2 Spanish, close to grade-level expectations for writing in first language English in the same grade levels (Mirkin et al., 1981).
The gains in written language fluency in the present study are attributed to the instructional approach, Content-Based Storytelling. This method—characterized by teaching whole language, using 100% comprehensible input, maintaining a lowered affective filter, focusing on fluency rather than encouraging monitoring for accuracy, creating high levels of student engagement, scaffolding activities to maximize student success, and using content that is interesting and relevant to students—contributes to students’ ability to acquire language, process it, and use it to retell a story in a timed writing situation (Kittok, 2005; 2014; Krashen & Terrell, 1983.) For educators looking to develop students’ fluency and cultural content knowledge at the same time, Content-Based Storytelling is a promising approach.

REFERENCES


Appendix: Samples of student writing

Sample 1: La bandera de México (66 words)
La bandera de México tiene tres partes. La colores de la bandera de México are verde, blanco, y rojo. Azul, Amarillo, negro, y café aren’t en la bandera de México. Hay dos animales. Un águila y serpiente. No hay un tucan, pájaro carpintero, o un papagays. Un mediano águila. No grande o pequeño. La águila café. La águila es café. No verde, blanco, rojo, azul, amarillo, o negro.

Sample 7: Elián Gonzalez (112 words)
Can Second Language Acquirers Reach High Levels of Proficiency Through Self-Selected Reading? An Attempt to Confirm Nation's (2014) Results

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Abstract

An analysis done by Nation (2014) leads to the conclusion that readers in English as a foreign language can gain about one-half a point on the TOEIC test for every hour of independent English reading. A statistical analysis of progress made by seven adult acquirers of English living in Japan was performed to confirm this conclusion: All were intermediates, but there was considerable variation, with TOEIC scores ranging from 220 to 705. All engaged in self-selected reading, and took pre and post TOEIC tests. Hours spent reading was shown to be an excellent predictor of gains on the TOEIC, and the rate of improvement was shown to be nearly exactly the same as that reported by Nation.

Keywords: TOEIC, self-selected reading, graded readers, case histories

On the basis of a corpus analysis, Nation (2014) estimated that readers can move from elementary levels of vocabulary knowledge in a second language (knowledge of 2000 word families) to a very high level (knowledge of 9000 word families) after a total 1,223 hours of reading, about one hour a day over three years. Nation concluded that a "vocabulary size of 9,000 words or more is a sensible long-term goal for unassisted reading of unsimplified texts" as it will "provide coverage of over 98% of the running words in a wide range of texts" (p. 2).

Table 1 presents Nation's conclusions of the hours required to reach each level en route from a knowledge of 2000 word families to a knowledge of 9000 word families, as well as sample texts (from McQuillan, 2015).

Table 1. Cumulative hours of reading required for each 1000 word level (from Nation, 2014), with examples (McQuillan, 2015)
Table 1 presents a description of the subjects. Also included is the number of weeks subjects dedicated to self-selected reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Sample Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2K</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Graded readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3K</td>
<td>33/55</td>
<td>Graded readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4K</td>
<td>56/111</td>
<td>Boxcar Children, Sweet Valley Kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6K</td>
<td>167/390</td>
<td>Sweet Valley High, Twilight, John Grisham novels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7K</td>
<td>222/612</td>
<td>Tom Swift, The Master Spy (Gask)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8K</td>
<td>278/890</td>
<td>Zane Grey novels, Hunger Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9K</td>
<td>333/1223</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level: $K = 1000$ word families

Hours: Hours of reading required to reach each level/Cumulative hours

Texts: Texts that can be read comfortably at each level, assuming that readers need to already know 98% of the words in the text, from McQuillan (2015). McQuillan points out that "texts that can be read at 98% coverage at a given 1,000 word family level are used to help readers acquire words in the next 1,000 word level. For example, texts that can be read at 98% coverage at the 4,000 word family level are used to help the reader acquire the word families at the 5,000 word family level, and so forth."

The goal of this paper is to examine case histories of adult second language acquirers to determine if their progress matches Nation's conclusions.

The Case Histories

Mason (2011, 2013a, 2013b) has described progress made by adult acquirers of English as a foreign language living in Japan. All had completed or were enrolled in an EFL class with Professor Mason that focused on hearing stories in class and reading graded readers as homework. These dedicated adults were interested in continuing to improve in English after the class ended. Mason helped each acquirer engage in a self-selected independent reading program, with each reader reading only those books he or she wanted to read. Readers were asked to keep a log of what was read and the number of pages read, but were not asked to write summaries or book reports.

Three of the subjects were enrolled in Professor Mason's classes at the time they were engaged in independent reading outside of class. In these cases, time spent in class was included in the analysis as "listening" and graded readers read for the class were included as "reading." One subject was enrolled in a conversation class, and time in this class was included as "listening."

The duration of the individualized reading program varied, as did the books read, since they were selected by the subjects. Subjects ranged in age from 21 to 78 years old. Table 2 presents a description of the subjects. Also included is the number of weeks subjects dedicated to self-selected reading.
Table 2. Description of Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okada</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobayashi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashihara</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>156 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>28 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujita</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakano</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>162 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 presents examples of what the subjects read, as described in their logs.

Table 3. Reading choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Books for young adults (e.g. books by Judy Blume) and easy best sellers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okada</td>
<td>Books for young adults (e.g. books by Judy Blume) and easy best sellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobayashi</td>
<td>Graded readers and other books (e.g. The Giver, Harry Potter series, books by Judy Blume)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashihara</td>
<td>Graded readers and other books for young adults (e.g. Harry Potter), and bestsellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka</td>
<td>Graded readers and books for young adults (e.g. the Marvin Redpost series, books by Judy Blume and Louis Sachar) and young adult bestsellers (e.g. Twilight)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>Graded readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujita</td>
<td>Graded readers. Books for young adults (e.g. The Book Thief, Twilight, Smart Women, You Belong to Me)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakano</td>
<td>Graded readers and books for young adults (e.g. Anne of Green Gables, Super Fudge and other Judy Blume novels, The Giver, Every Living Thing by Herriot)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison of Table 3 with Table 1 shows that subjects read at various levels, including graded readers, books for young adults, and some books aimed at adult readers. McQuillan (2015) describes an optimal path, with texts at each level slightly harder than those at lower levels. We do not know if our subjects followed a similar path of gradually increased difficulty.

As noted above, several of our subjects were involved in listening to English as well as reading, as part of a story listening class they took with Professor Mason, another class, or from the radio (Table 4).

Table 4. Listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Conversation Class</th>
<th>Story Listening Class</th>
<th>NHK Radio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Several subjects engaged in direct English study on their own. This is described in Table 5.

Table 5. Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Vocabulary Study</th>
<th>TOEIC Test Preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okada</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobayashi</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashihara</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujita</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakano</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*50% of the time Mrs. Fujita spent on test preparation was listening, but this was categorized as "study" (see Table 6).
Note that "none" for listening does not preclude occasional movies, TV, and conversations in English. No records were kept for this kind of informal listening.

The TOEIC

Readers were also asked to take the TOEIC examination at times convenient for them before, during and after their reading program. The TOEIC (The Test of English for International Communications) consists of reading and listening subsections and is used world-wide as a test of English proficiency for adults. The following "TOEIC Conversion" table (from http://wie.ac.nz/toeicconversion.htm) relates TOEIC levels with real-world competence:

Table 6. TOEIC scores and real-world competence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Competence Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>905-990</td>
<td>International Professional Proficiency (Able to communicate effectively in any situation.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>785-900</td>
<td>Working Proficiency Plus (Able to satisfy most work requirements with</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
language that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>605-780</td>
<td>Limited Working Proficiency (Able to satisfy most social demands and limited work requirements.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>405-600</td>
<td>Elementary Proficiency Plus (Can initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy social demands.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>255-400</td>
<td>Elementary Proficiency (Speaker has functional, but limited proficiency. Able to maintain very simple face-to-face conversations on familiar topics.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-250</td>
<td>Basic Proficiency (Able to satisfy immediate survival needs.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From: The Waikato Institute of Education: [http://wie.ac.nz/toeicconversion.htm](http://wie.ac.nz/toeicconversion.htm)*

If we hypothesize that a vocabulary size of 9000 word families is roughly equivalent to a TOEIC score of between 905 and 990, following Nation's analysis it would take about 1223 hours of reading to reach the 950 TOEIC level. Assuming that students are able to begin independent reading (graded readers) at a TOEIC level of 250, this translates to 700 TOEIC points gained in 1223 hours, or .57 points per hour (700/1223).

The Japanese Ministry of Education is considering interpreting a 780 TOEIC score as equivalent to a perfect score on the Center English Test, a test high school students take before taking college entrance examinations ([http://www.sankei.com/life/news/131231/lifl312310010-n1.html](http://www.sankei.com/life/news/131231/lifl312310010-n1.html)). Assuming .57 points per hour, a beginning reader would need to gain 780-250 = 530 TOEIC points to reach this level, requiring a little less than 940 hours of reading, or about two and a half-years, assuming one hour a day of reading.

Table 7 presents statistics on readers' first TOEIC score (pretest), the amount gained, and their activities, including pages read, hours read (based on pages read), hours spent listening and hours spent in study.

We calculated "hours read" assuming a reading speed of 150 words per minute, typical of intermediate acquirers of English as a second language (see research survey in Table 4 in McQuillan and Krashen, 2008, which underestimates rates because they are based on assigned, not self-selected texts). Here, we make the undoubtedly incorrect assumption that readers' rates of improvement per hour will remain the same as they progress.

We made the conservative estimate that a typical book page contains 300 words: this gives a low estimate when calculating rate because the average book page has roughly 250 words ([http://www.the-efa.org/res/rates.php](http://www.the-efa.org/res/rates.php)) and graded readers typically have even fewer words per page.

At 300 words per page, and at 150 words per minute, a reader will take two minutes or .033 hours to read one page. Total hours of reading was thus estimated by multiplying pages read by .033.
Table 7. Descriptive data: hours read, listening, study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>pages</th>
<th>hrs read</th>
<th>hrs Listen</th>
<th>hrs Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okada</td>
<td>3841</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobayashi</td>
<td>5895</td>
<td>196.5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashihara</td>
<td>19723</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka</td>
<td>6456</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujita</td>
<td>10875</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakano</td>
<td>9267</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean</td>
<td>8123.6</td>
<td>268.5</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>101.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>6097</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>201.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our analysis considered predictors of gains on TOEIC scores. This was based on the test scores presented in Table 8. Pretest scores were included as controls.

Table 8. Pretest and gain scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>pre TOT</th>
<th>gain TOT</th>
<th>pre RC</th>
<th>gain RC</th>
<th>pre LC</th>
<th>gain LC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okada</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobayashi</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashihara</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujita</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakano</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean</td>
<td>494.9</td>
<td>166.4</td>
<td>222.1</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>272.9</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td>163.8</td>
<td>120.2</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>100.5</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOT = total test; RC = reading comprehension; LC = listening comprehension

The average gain per hour read was .62 (166.4/268.5), very close to Nation's estimate.

Predictors of Gains in Total TOEIC

Table 9 presents intercorrelations among the predictors. Higher pretest scores were related to lower gains, as is often the case. Hours spent reading was a very strong predictor of gains, while hours spent listening and in formal study were clearly unrelated to gains. Scores on the pretest, however, were clearly related to gains (r = -.63) and hours read (r = -.52), although the correlations fell just short of statistical significance.
Table 9. Correlations among predictors: total TOEIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>gains TOT</th>
<th>pre TOT</th>
<th>hrs read</th>
<th>hrs listen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre TOT</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hrs read</td>
<td>0.94*</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hrs listen</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hrs study</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pre TOT = pre-test, total TOEIC score
* = significant, .01 level, one-tail

The small sample size and incomplete data on study and listening time prevented us from performing a multiple regression analysis. (The sample size was, however, sufficient for a correlational analysis. A sample size of six is required a power value of .80 when \( r = .94 \), significant at the .01 level, one-tailed. see [https://www.statstodo.com/SSizCorr_Pgm.php#Multiple%20calculations%20for%20%20confidence%20interval%20estimation](https://www.statstodo.com/SSizCorr_Pgm.php#Multiple%20calculations%20for%20%20confidence%20interval%20estimation): A power value of .80 means that the researcher can be 80% confident of observing a real effect if it is present. A power level of .80 is considered to be acceptable.)

To control for the effect of the pretest, a partial correlation was performed. The relationship between hours read and gains on the TOEIC was still very high, \( r = .85 \) (\( p < .01 \), one tail). (Seven subjects are required to achieve a power level of .80 for this size correlation.)

Correlations between hours spent reading were also substantial for gains on each of the subtests, and correlations between gains and other predictors, as before, were not. Surprisingly, hours spent reading was more highly correlated with the listening subtest (\( r = .93, < .01 \), two tails) than with the reading subtest (\( r = .75 \)), and the correlations were not substantially affected when pretest scores were controlled. A larger sample (\( n=13 \)) is required, however, to achieve an acceptable level of statistical power for the correlation with listening comprehension.

Individual Variation

Table 10 presents the points gained on TOEIC per hour of reading for each subject. Note that there is some variability: some subjects made greater gains per hour than others. The variability is most likely related to what was read: Slower rates of improvement may be due to reading material that either was too easy or too hard. Some of this, of course, may be due to readers finding books they were very interested in and that they enjoyed, even though they may have been significantly above or below the reader's "reading level."
don't want to discourage this. (For an excellent example of an elementary school child who developed strategies for understanding Moby Dick, see Holt, 1967).

Table 10. Points gained per hour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>pts/hr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okada</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobayashi</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashihara</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujita</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakano</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Results

Hours spent reading was by far the best predictor of total TOEIC gains, as well as gains on both subtests. The average reader gained more than one-half point on the TOEIC for each hour read (mean = .62), nearly identical to our interpretation of the rate derived from Nation's analysis.

Caveats

The failure of hours spent listening to correlate positively with gains on the TOEIC should not be taken too seriously: Three readers did no listening at all, and one reader contributed most of the listening hours, a very skewed distribution. Also, we did not include informal listening, e.g. television and conversation.

As noted earlier, assumptions on rate of reading and average words per page were made that may not have been accurate. It needs to be pointed out, however, that our assumptions are conservative. We assumed that one page contained 300 words, probably an overestimate, and our estimate of reading rate was based on previous research that used assigned, not self-selected reading.

Nevertheless, this analysis provides a methodology that can be used for studies with more subjects and more details. Moreover, the finding that the amount of free reading was strongly related to gains in literacy and language development is highly consistent with many previous studies (McQuillan, 1998; Krashen, 2004; Sullivan and Brown, 2014).
Conclusions

Nation's results indicate that one hour a day of reading for about three years can result in knowledge of 9,000 word families, equivalent to a TOEIC score of 950. If this is correct, the TOEIC gains per hour achieved by our subjects are nearly identical to Nation's findings.

Our results thus confirm that improving language competence through reading is "feasible if texts at the appropriate level are available" (Nation, 2014, p. 14): An acquirer of English as a second language reader can move from a low TOEIC score (250) to a very high score (950) with three years of self-selected reading, averaging just an hour of reading per day.

Of great importance is that in the case studies our subjects selected their reading themselves. To obtain similar results, readers need access to a wide range of reading material that will allow them to follow the kind of pathway described by McQuillan (2015), choosing reading material of great interest to them at all levels.

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Acknowledgment: We thank Jeff McQuillan and Kenneth Smith for very helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.
About the Authors

Since 1975, Stephen Krashen's work has focused on the comprehension hypothesis, the idea that we acquire language and develop literacy when we understand messages. His recent papers can be found at http://www.sdkrashen.com.

Beniko Mason's previous studies have shown that free voluntary reading is an effective means for second language development, and also that they are more efficient than traditional classroom teaching practices, including TOEIC and TOEFL test preparation courses. Her publications can be found at http://www.benikomason.net.
The Incredible Frog-Boy is on the Loose Again (1): When Adult Second Language Acquirers Read the National Enquirer

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*School of Education  
University of Southern California (Emeritus)*

**Abstract**  
*Fifteen Korean-speaking adults in living in the United States and acquiring English as a second language were asked to read the National Enquirer for ten minutes a day for 20 days and record their reactions. Eight completed the 20 days and said they found the Enquirer to be comprehensible and enjoyable, and six subjects continued to read the Enquirer after the 20-day period. Light reading of this kind may make an important contribution to second language development.*

**Introduction**

There is substantial evidence that reading, especially free voluntary reading, makes a major contribution to the development of literacy-related aspects of first and second language competence. Reading, it has been argued, is the source of much of our competence in reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing style, grammar and in spelling (Krashen, 2004, 2011).

Light reading, such as comic books and magazines, appears to play an important role in developing higher levels of literacy. While light reading alone may not lead to high levels of attainment, it may serve as a bridge. Despite claims to the contrary (e.g. Wertham’s *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954), an attack on comic book reading), there is no evidence that light reading in the form of comic books is harmful, and several cases have been reported in which comic book reading served as a “conduit” to more serious reading (Krashen & Ujiie, 2005). There is, in addition, evidence that magazine reading can lead to increased proficiency for less advanced readers. Rucker (1982) reported that simply providing Junior high school students with high interest magazines resulted in substantial growth in CTBS reading scores.

Many people do not take advantage of light reading. In some cases, the problem is financial. In other cases, the problem is lack of knowledge. Acquirers simply do not know how helpful light reading can be in providing a transition to advanced competence. Our study is aimed at this second group, specifically adult second language acquirers who have access to light reading, can afford it, but do not utilize it.
Our study probed whether educated adult acquirers of English as a second language would accept light reading, what kinds of reading strategies they would utilize, and their subjective reactions to light reading. We choose a well-known English language newspaper, the *National Enquirer*, a tabloid that attempts to present extremely high-interest, entertaining, and short articles on topics that are familiar to many readers.

**Methodology**

**Subjects**

Fifteen (15) adult second language acquirers, all native speakers of Korean, were invited to participate in the study. Length of residence in the United States ranged from one to ten years. Thirteen of the subjects had studied English in Korea for six years, while two had studied English for ten years.

All subjects reported that their EFL classes had been traditional, that is, focused on form, with an emphasis on memorizing vocabulary and repetition exercises. All subjects reported that they had few English reading materials and spent little time doing pleasure reading in English. In addition, all subjects had a negative attitude toward reading in English because of their past unpleasant English reading experiences in class reading difficult short passages.

**Procedure**

Subjects were simply asked to read the *National Enquirer* for at least ten minutes a day for 20 days. They were also asked to keep a diary to record reactions to their reading. In addition, one of the authors (K.C.) conducted open-ended in formal interviews with the subjects and asked about reading strategies they used, comprehensibility of the reading, and how much they enjoyed the reading. Thirteen subjects were interviewed either in person or on the phone two days a week over three weeks, and two subjects were interviewed briefly every day of the project. Subjects were called one month after the completion of the study to see if they were reading the *Enquirer* on their own. Subjects had not been informed that this final interview would take place.

**Results**

Three subjects refused to read the Enquirer, stating that it was beneath their reading level (and, we speculate, possibly beneath their dignity). Of the remaining subjects, nine stayed with the daily reading for at least ten days and eight kept reading for all 20 days. Several of those not staying with the reading said they were too busy and tired after working or studying.
Reading Strategies

Eight of the nine who completed the 20 days of reading reported that they used what could be called "natural" reading strategies. They read only those stories that interested them, and used the dictionary only occasionally, often skipping words they did not understand. One subject, however, treated the Enquirer as if it was a textbook, reading all the stories in a given issue, regardless of whether she was interested in them, and looking up all unfamiliar words in the dictionary. After ten days of reading, this subject burned out and stopped reading, complaining of a headache.

Comprehensibility

The eight subjects who read selectively found the articles to be comprehensible, even though they contained some unfamiliar words. Evidence that the Enquirer was at the right level for one subject are these comments (written in Korean, translated by K. C.):

I read only one copy of the National Enquirer. There is a lot of American slang I don’t know. But I wanted to read something worthwhile, and I am interested in politics. So I switched to the LA Times. It was difficult to read. I had to look up words in the dictionary too often. If I didn't understand what I read, I analyzed the sentence structure, but most of the time this didn’t help me understand. Finally I gave up reading the LA Times, and I started reading the Enquirer again. It is interesting and I forget about grammar while I am reading.

Enjoyment

Six subjects became enthusiastic Enquirer readers, and were still reading the Enquirer one month after the study ended. One subject reported that she was so excited about an article on *Different Strokes* that she read it while stopping for a red light. Another reported that she seriously considered sending away for Zsa Zsa Gabor’s facial cream. Another reported that she stopped studying from her English conversation textbook and now reads the Enquirer regularly to improve her English.

Language Acquisition

No formal testing of English was done, but the eight who read for ten days all felt that they improved their English. Most frequently mentioned was vocabulary acquisition. One subject mentioned that she learned the words “mammography” and “vasectomy,” another mentioned “heart-attack” and “patriotism.”

Three subjects indicated that reading the Enquirer was useful for English conversation, and two others felt that the Enquirer gave them information that was
useful for life in America, one subject commenting: “After I read the Enquirer, I feel like I am living in America.”

Conclusions

Our study suggests that the National Enquirer may not be for everyone, but indicates that the Enquirer has been successful in publishing stories that are of interest to at least some non-native speakers of English. In addition, the Enquirer contains stories that intermediate ESL acquirers can understand.

If the Comprehension Hypothesis and the related Reading Hypothesis are correct, our results also suggest that reading material such as the Enquirer can be helpful in second language acquisition. Enquirer texts were clearly interesting and comprehensible, and contained some language that was unfamiliar to the readers, but that they could understand with the help of context.

For at least some acquirers, light reading of this sort may be a valuable bridge leading to the ability to read more difficult prose. Readers could move from the Enquirer to less demanding conventional newspapers, such as USA Today.

Notes

(1) Lyrics from "I read it in the Morning Star" by Weird Al Yankovic. The spirit of Elvis is in your living room. Your cat could be an extra-terrestrial. You can learn to live with stress. You can beat the IRS. The incredible frog-boy is on the loose again.

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Center for Accelerated Language Acquisition (CALA) Test Scores: Another Look at the Value of Implicit Language Instruction through Comprehensible Input


Brian Roberts, M.A.T. and Shelley Thomas, Ph.D.

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Shelley Thomas, Ph.D., is the founder and director of CALA and associate professor of French at Middle Tennessee State University. www.mtsu.edu/cala

Abstract

This study highlights data gathered from accelerated language courses offered by the Center for Accelerated Language Acquisition (CALA). CALA uses various comprehensible input tools without explicit grammar instruction. In 2006-2008, CALA administered the National Spanish Exam to Tennessee Department of Children’s Services (DCS) staff after a 5-day accelerated course (22.5 hours). On average, CALA/DCS participants had significantly higher scores per hour of instruction (1.25 points/hour) when compared to high school students with a year (~180 hours) of Spanish (0.20 points/hour). In 2013-2014, volunteers with no experience in the target language took the WebCAPE placement exam after the CALA Summer Language Institute (SLI) (10 days, 35 hours). On average, CALA/SLI participants scored as high as or higher than non-CALA students with 1-3 years of middle and/or high school instruction in the target language and were far superior in gains per hour. These results might encourage additional discussion about the power of implicit language instruction.

Of considerable interest to language teachers is the question of whether explicit or implicit instruction results in better second language (L2) learning. Explicit and implicit instruction have been defined by Norris and Ortega (2000) and those definitions later adopted by Spada and Tomita (2010) in their respective meta-analyses to answer this
question. According to their definitions, instruction is explicit if “rule explanation comprise[s] part of the instruction” or if “learners [are] directly asked to attend to particular forms and to try to arrive at metalinguistic generalizations on their own.” By contrast, instruction is implicit if “neither rule presentation nor directions to attend to particular forms were part of a treatment.”

Both of their analyses suggest that explicit instruction results in better L2 learning. According to Norris and Ortega (2000), “the current state of findings within this research domain suggests that treatments involving an explicit focus on the rule-governed nature of L2 structures are more effective than treatments that do not include such a focus.” Spada and Tomita (2010) further concluded that explicit instruction not only resulted in greater gains with both simple and complex features but it also resulted in longer gains as evidenced by delayed posttest results.

Both Norris and Ortega (2000) and Spada and Tomita (2010) note, however, that “the measurement of change induced by instruction is typically carried out on instruments that seem to favor more explicit types of treatments by calling on explicit memory-based performance” (Norris & Ortega, 2000). Krashen (2003) agrees that “consciously learned knowledge can be displayed on tests of consciously learned knowledge,” but these types of tests inadequately measure a learner’s subconscious knowledge of the language’s grammar. Distinguishing conscious “learning” from this subconscious “acquisition,” Krashen (2003) cites a number of studies that suggest that implicit language instruction appealing to the latter has a “robust advantage” over explicit language instruction appealing to the former (e.g., Hammond, 1988; Isik, 2000; Nicola, 1990; Nikolov & Krashen, 1997; and Winitz, 1996). With a focus on comprehensible input, implicit language instruction “can produce both accuracy and fluency” (Krashen, 2003).

The present study corroborates this assertion with test score data collected over a period of eight years (2006-2014) by the Center for Accelerated Language Acquisition (CALA), a language instruction and teacher training program situated in the Honors College at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). The Center uses implicit language instruction that employs a variety of comprehensible input (CI) tools to present high-frequency vocabulary and to foster meaningful context for communication without the use of explicit grammar explanations, memorization, or drills. The CI tools used to present this vocabulary and L2 grammar include Total Physical Response (TPR) and Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS)—as well interactive, hands-on activities such as group reading, instructor/participant conversation, comprehension questions, personal questions, songs, games, rituals, and other “brain-compatible” learning activities (see Jensen, 2003).
Data Sources: Partnerships and Participants

CALA/DCS
Between July 2006 and January 2008, the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services (DCS) partnered with CALA through the Tennessee Center for Child Welfare at MTSU to deliver Spanish training to its case management and administrative staff in its field offices throughout the state. The training program (henceforth referred to as “CALA/DCS”) featured 22.5 hours of language instruction and presupposed no prior knowledge of Spanish. A total of 325 participants, who ranged in age from 23 to 67, were tested using the National Spanish Exam (2002) at the conclusion of the 5-day course. As some (62.46%) reported having had at least one formal educational experience in Spanish during their lifetime, test scores have been separated (see Results).

CALA/SLI
After having taken two 5-day sessions of language (10 days, 35 hours of instruction) at the CALA 2013 and 2014 Summer Language Institutes (SLI) at MTSU, sixteen (16) participants volunteered to take the WebCAPE in Spanish, French, and German in the university’s Foreign Languages and Literatures Department. These participants ranged in age from 13 to 70 (12 of 16 reported their age: mean 37.6 and median 37.0 years) and represented a wide variety of educational backgrounds: current middle/high school and college students; adults with high school diplomas, bachelor’s, master’s, and/or doctoral degrees. None of the participant volunteers who took the test had any exposure whatsoever to the target language prior to receiving the 35 hours of CALA instruction.

The Classroom Setting

Vocabulary and Grammar
CALA’s core vocabulary set includes ~135 high-frequency words (excluding numbers 1-100): ~35 verbs (presented in present and past tense), ~45 nouns (representing the body, the family, the classroom, clothing, places, transportation, and other objects), ~20 adjectives (representing quality, quantity, color, and emotion), and ~35 other words (e.g., pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, articles). The only contact with the language occurs in the classroom (there is no “homework”), and the entirety of the classroom experience is devoted to interactive, hands-on activities that foster goal-oriented, meaningful communication both between the instructor and participants and also among participants. No time or attention is dedicated to memorization or discrete grammar exercises, and the only “error correction” results from frequent feedback received from continual exposure to comprehensible input in the target language.
Format
The format for the first four days involved ~2.0 hours of vocabulary processing through TPR and other CALA brain-compatible learning activities followed by ~2.5 hours of further processing of the day’s vocabulary set through a TPRS story. The final day consisted of review of the first four days followed by reading of and processing activities for the first chapter of Blaine Ray’s Pobre Ana. At the conclusion of the 22.5-hour CALA/DCS course, participants’ learning was measured using the National Spanish Exam (2002) (see Results below).

The CALA/SLI courses shared the same format in their early years (2003-2008) but, between 2008 and 2013, they evolved in light of participant feedback and research on brain-based pedagogy. By 2013, CALA had made the following changes to the CALA/SLI curriculum:

- Front-loaded most of the concrete vocabulary and TPRS expressions into the first two (2) days of the 5-day class, using an enormous amount of TPR, movement, and multisensory input (e.g., pictures, songs, games, and carefully structured meaningful and personalized verbal processing)
- Reduced the number of TPRS stories in one 5-day session from four (4) to two (2) stories
- Reduced the number of TPRS stories in the second 5-day session from two (2) to one (1)
- Added more processing activities associated with each TPRS story
- Reduced the 5-day class from 22.5 hours to 17.5 hours
- Tested participant learning after two (2) 5-day periods (35 hours of instruction) instead of just one (1) 5-day period (results below)

At the conclusion of the 35-hour CALA/SLI course, participants volunteered to take the WebCAPE placement exam to assess their learning (see Results below).

Results
National Spanish Exam (NSE) 2002: CALA/DCS
Published by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, the NSE (2002) is a 60-item multiple-choice test that assesses both listening comprehension and reading skills in Spanish. According to its publishing body, the mean score of high school students specially prepared to take Level 1 of the NSE after one year of instruction in Spanish (~180 hours) is 35.61 out of a possible 60 points.

After 5 days (22.5 hours) of instruction, participants in CALA/DCS Spanish earned an average of 28.16 (n = 325) on this test [24.34 (n = 122) for participants with no Spanish
experience whatsoever and 30.46 (n = 203) for participants who reported having had at least one formal educational experience in Spanish during their lifetime]. As seen in Table 1, when these scores are considered in terms of points per hour of instruction, CALA/DCS participants after 22.5 hours of instruction earned an average of 1.25 points/hour (1.08 points per hour for participants with no Spanish experience whatsoever) compared to high school students after ~180.0 hours of instruction who earned an average of 0.20 points/hour. An unpaired, two-tailed t-test compared these per/hour gains for the total CALA/DCS population and for the CALA/DCS group with no prior instruction in the language to those of the total high school population, and the higher CALA/DCS per/hour gains were statistically significant for both groups (p < 0.0001; see Table 2).

WebCAPE Computer-Adaptive Placement Exam: CALA/SLI

Background. Developed at Brigham Young University, the WebCAPE is a computer-adaptive placement test used at universities across the United States to determine the language course into which incoming students are best placed, given their abilities in the language.

Method. CALA participant volunteer scores on the WebCAPE were compared to those of MTSU students with 1-5 years of experience in the target language (Spanish, French, or German) in junior high and/or high school. As the demographic and language experience backgrounds of students taking the tests varied greatly (e.g., on factors such as length of study, having lived where the target language is spoken, family members speaking the language at home, etc.), the following conditions for the test taker (student) resulted in the exclusion of their associated test scores in order to create uniform comparison groups:

- Failure to complete background information (history with the target language)
- Presence of more than one (1) record of having taken the placement test
- Current enrollment in a class of the target language
- Use of the language in the home or by other family members
- Residence of more than six (6) months in a locale where the target language was spoken

These criteria applied, the present study considered at the mean score for all MTSU WebCAPE results taken at MTSU since May 2012: Spanish [n = 100 (the most recent 100 were selected)], French (n = 79), and German (n = 25).

Participant scores. As summarized in Table 3, all CALA/SLI participant volunteers tested out of at least one (1) semester and some even tested out of four (4)+ semesters of a college-level language class (no results were excluded, n = 16). As seen in Table 4, the mean score across all languages for the CALA/SLI participant volunteers who had only 35 hours of exposure [289.1 (n = 16)] exceeds those of non-
CALA students at MTSU who reported having had 1-3 years of instruction in the target language [mean scores of 249.3 (n = 17; not statistically significant), 207.0 (n = 55, statistically significant, p = 0.0014), and 286.9 (n = 59, not statistically significant), respectively; see Table 6].

Discussion

With their conclusions regarding the greater effectiveness of explicit language instruction, Norris and Ortega (2000) and Spada and Tomito (2010) offered these two conciliatory points, respectively: (1) “No particular sub-types of L2 instructional delivery have been the subject of systematic replication sufficient for drawing cumulative inferences about their relative effectiveness” and (2) “[The greater effectiveness of explicit instruction] may be because implicit instruction takes a longer time to be effective and none of the studies in this meta-analysis included more than 10 hr of instruction.” The present article’s description of 22.5- and 35-hour implicit language instructional programs speaks to these two points. Perhaps it will lead to continued research and discussion on the possible merits of various sub-types of implicit L2 instructional delivery.

The results of this study provide further support for Krashen’s “input/comprehension hypothesis” (2003). Without exposure to explicit instruction or learning about the language but, rather, implicit instruction with constant, meaningful, and varied comprehensible input, participants demonstrated their acquisition of the target language not only through impressive gains in their ability to engage in spontaneous communication in the target language during class, but also through their performance on the NSE and the WebCAPE (tests geared more toward assessing explicit language learning). As for the NSE, both CALA/DCS participant groups (all participants regardless of educational background and those never having had a formal educational experience Spanish) showed remarkable progress given the short time of instruction with greater per/hour gains than high school Spanish students nationally. As for the WebCAPE, CALA/SLI participants with no background in the target language who were taught exclusively with an abundance and variety of CI tools performed exceptionally well, showing that grammatical patterns can be successfully internalized in the absence of discrete grammatical explanations. The sample size included in this article (n = 16) is relatively small, so CALA intends to continue WebCAPE testing with more participants.

A few points should be made about the CALA results on the WebCAPE. Foremost, they should not be generalized to make any “implicit versus explicit” conclusions. The non-CALA students who took the test received 1-5 years of instruction prior to the test, but their methods of instruction are unknown, so their performance does not necessarily represent “the fruits of explicit language instruction.” Instead, these results simply indicate that implicit language instruction can yield gains superior to those produced by
explicit language instruction when assessed using “instruments that seem to favor more explicit types of treatments by calling on explicit memory-based performance” (Norris & Ortega, 2000). In addition, CALA mean scores on the WebCAPE were higher than those of non-CALA students with 1-3 years of instruction in the target language. The difference was statistically significant for those having received 2 years (p = 0.0014) but not for those having received 1 or 3 years of instruction (see Table 6). The mean scores of non-CALA participants were paradoxically lower for those having received 2 years of instruction than for those having received only 1 year of instruction. This was true both in the Spanish and French sub-groups (see Table 5). A larger sample size might have produced samples with mean scores that more closely matched expectation.

In the future, CALA intends to continue assessment of its implicit language training operation with both continued WebCAPE testing and also Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) testing of ACTFL standards with its SLI participants—to assess learning both immediately following a training session and also at various intervals after training to gauge retention and fluency in the longer-term.

REFERENCES


Nikolov, M. & Krashen, S. *Need we sacrifice accuracy for fluency?* System 25, 197-201.


Tables

**Table 1**

*A Comparison of CALA and Non-CALA (High School) Results on the National Spanish Exam*

Comparison of CALA/DCS participants to high school students after receiving 22.5 and ~180.0 hours of instruction in Spanish, respectively

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Hours of Instruction</th>
<th>Points/Hour of Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALA/DCS (total)</td>
<td>28.16</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALA/DCS (new*)</td>
<td>24.34</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>35.61</td>
<td>~180.0</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (new) denotes that participants in this group had no experience whatsoever in Spanish prior to CALA/DCS course

**Table 2**

*A Comparison of CALA and Non-CALA (High School) Results on the National Spanish Exam*

Unpaired, two-tailed t-test comparison of CALA and non-CALA results vis-à-vis points/hour of instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Points/Hour of Instruction</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALA/DCS (total)</td>
<td>28.16</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>269.30</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALA/DCS (new)</td>
<td>24.34</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>178.36</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>35.61</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>20,195</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 3**  
**CALA participant volunteer WebCAPE results, SLI 2013 and 2014**

CALA results after 35 hours of CALA instruction (no background in target language)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
<th>Tested out of</th>
<th>Placed into</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>2 semesters</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>2 semesters</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>4 semesters</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>2 semesters</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>4 semesters</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* At MTSU, students receiving scores over 360 are placed specially by the FLL Department Chair
Table 4
A comparison of CALA and non-CALA (MTSU) results on the WebCAPE (overall)

Mean WebCAPE scores and points/hour gain of CALA participant volunteers after 35 hours of instruction with those of MTSU (non-CALA) students with 1-5 years of instruction in the target language in junior high and/or high school (collectively represented as “HS”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Hours Instruction</th>
<th>Points/Hour of Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALA</td>
<td>289.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>249.3</td>
<td>~180</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 17)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1 year HS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>207.0</td>
<td>~360</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 55)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2 years HS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>286.9</td>
<td>~540</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 59)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3 years HS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>291.7</td>
<td>~720</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 49)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4 years HS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>336.5</td>
<td>~900</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n = 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(5 years HS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5
A comparison of CALA and non-CALA (MTSU) results on the WebCAPE (by language)

Mean WebCAPE scores of CALA participant volunteers after 35 hours of instruction with those of MTSU (non-CALA) students with 1-5 years of instruction in the target language (Spanish, French, and German) in junior high and/or high school (collectively represented as “HS”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Instruction</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALA 35</td>
<td>289.2</td>
<td>288.3</td>
<td>290.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 9)</td>
<td>(n = 4)</td>
<td>(n = 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA ~180</td>
<td>271.1</td>
<td>244.2</td>
<td>153.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 year HS)</td>
<td>(n = 10)</td>
<td>(n = 5)</td>
<td>(n = 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA ~360</td>
<td>207.6</td>
<td>177.3</td>
<td>248.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 years HS)</td>
<td>(n = 28)</td>
<td>(n = 16)</td>
<td>(n = 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA ~540</td>
<td>286.3</td>
<td>284.1</td>
<td>302.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 years HS)</td>
<td>(n = 26)</td>
<td>(n = 27)</td>
<td>(n = 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA ~720</td>
<td>258.1</td>
<td>310.8</td>
<td>419.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 years HS)</td>
<td>(n = 26)</td>
<td>(n = 19)</td>
<td>(n = 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA ~900</td>
<td>339.1</td>
<td>308.4</td>
<td>492.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 years HS)</td>
<td>(n = 10)</td>
<td>(n = 12)</td>
<td>(n = 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6
A comparison of CALA and non-CALA (MTSU) results on the WebCAPE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Hours of Instruction</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALA</td>
<td>289.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>59.04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>249.3</td>
<td>~180 (1 year HS)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>124.42</td>
<td>1.1616</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>207.0</td>
<td>~360 (2 years HS)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>93.35</td>
<td>3.3204</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.0014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CALA</td>
<td>286.9</td>
<td>~540 (3 years HS)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>87.47</td>
<td>0.0947</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Style Sheet for submissions to IJFLT

Please submit your articles to IJFLT as a Word or Word-compatible document and use the settings outlined below.

In the interest of efficiency, articles that do not conform to these guidelines will be returned to the author for revision.

The Research and Teacher to Teacher sections have some different style requirements; please use the guidelines that apply to your submission. Please send all submissions to ijflteditor@gmail.com

ALL SUBMISSIONS Paper size: 8.5" x 11"

Margins: 1.5" left and right, 1.25" top and 1.5" bottom

Tabs: set at .25", .75" and 1.25"; every .5" thereafter as needed

Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt. for text, 10 pt. for abstract, footnotes, and references. If additional fonts are necessary, such as in the case of data display, please ensure that they will display correctly when the document is converted to PDF. If a fixed-width font is necessary for diagrams, use the Courier family.

Spacing: Sentences should be separated by one space. All lines should be single-spaced. Headers and footers: None. These will be added when your article is inserted into the journal. RESEARCH Article Sections:

1. Title and Abstract: The entire title should be aligned left. The first word of the title and subtitle and all proper nouns should be capitalized. The first line should contain the title and subtitle of the paper in 16 pt., followed by one blank line in 16 pt., followed by the author's name in 14 pt. The next line contains the author's affiliation (such as the university) in 12 pt. italics. Insert 2 blank lines immediately before the text of the abstract, which should be aligned at the third tab stop (1.25""). Use 10 pt. italics and use a maximum of 300 words. Insert 2 blank lines after the abstract in 12 pt.

2. Section headings: Should be separated by the previous section by 2 blank lines and from the section text by one blank line.

3. Paragraphs: The first line of paragraphs should NOT be indented. The main text of all paragraphs should be justified. Separate paragraphs with one blank line.

4. Examples: Should be in italics. Their glosses in running text should be in single quotes. For numbered examples, place the number in parentheses and tabbed once (0.25""). The rest of the text for that example should be aligned with its gloss using tabs rather than spaces. Use small caps for items like case markers and other
instances where items are not literally translated into English. The idiomatic gloss should be on the following line, in single quotes, and examples should be separated from the text and from other examples by one blank line. If there are multiple examples per example number, the lettered sub-examples should be one tab stop away from the example number. So, if the example is tabbed at 0.25, the sub-example(s) should be tabbed at 0.5. If the language variety needs to be made clear, it can be enclosed in parentheses and right aligned on the line directly above the example. For standard morpheme labels and glossing rules, please refer to the Leipzig Glossing Rules at [http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php](http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php).

5. Tables: Tables incorporated into the text must fit within the margins of the page. Ensure all borders of the table are printable so it will appear correctly in the PDF. Each table should be consecutively numbered and titled in italics directly below the table, with a period and 2 spaces between the table number and its title: Table X. Title of Table.

6. Figures: The term figure refers here to anything that is not text, an example, or a table. Figures must fit within the text boundaries and be properly labeled and numbered as tables must.

References, etc.:

1. Acknowledgements and previous versions: Should be indicated in an initial footnote appended to the end of the main title, using an asterisk (*).

2. Notes: The in-text notes should be consecutively numbered footnotes in 10 pt. Times New Roman. Footnotes should be placed at the end of sentences whenever possible. In-text references should come after the final sentence's punctuation.

3. In-text citations: If the name of the author is part of the sentence, enclose the year and any page numbers in parentheses. Smith (2012) Smith (2012:150-2) If the name is not part of the sentence, enclose the entire reference: (Smith 2012) (Smith 2012:150-2) If the work has multiple authors, use the ampersand: (Smith & White 2012) (Smith, Jones, & White 2012) A running quotation of 3 or more lines should be set off from the rest of the text by a tab and one blank line before and after. The citation should follow the last line after 2 spaces.

4. Reference section: Follows the final section of the article after 4 blank lines. The heading should be REFERENCES in 12 pt. small caps followed by one blank line. Each reference should follow the LSA's "A Unified Stylesheet for Linguistics" here: [http://linguistlist.org/pubs/tocs/JournalUnifiedStyleSheet2007.pdf](http://linguistlist.org/pubs/tocs/JournalUnifiedStyleSheet2007.pdf). References should be left aligned and in 10 pt. Times New Roman. If a reference wraps to multiple lines, the second and following lines should be indented to the first tab stop (0.25).

5. Appendices: These should follow the References section and one blank line. Heading should be APPENDICES using small caps, followed by a blank line. Each appendix should be in the following format: Appendix 1: "Title of Appendix 1" (Video, .avi format) [http://hdl.handle.net/XXX/XXX Appendix 2: "Title of
Appendix 2: (Audio, .wav format) http://hdl.handle.net/XXX/XXX Appendix 3: "Title of Appendix 3" (Additional data, .xls format) http://hdl.handle.net/XXX/XXX
If you have appendices, the editor will assign you permanent URLs.

6. Other: Quotes: "" for direct quotation. Either directional or straight quotes can be used as long as they are consistent. " for 'scare quotes' (keep to an absolute minimum) and quotations within quotations, as well as meta-language glosses. Unless the period is part of the quote, it should come after the final quotation mark. Hyphens and Dashes: Hyphens (-) are used for morphological boundaries and compounded words like 'hip-hop'. Em-dashes (—) are used for parentheticals—like this one—in the text. You may use either en-dashes (–) or hyphens (-) for page and year ranges, like 1996-7, or pages 203-327, but please be consistent and omit spaces between the dash and numbers.

Hyperlinks: Microsoft Word has the habit of turning typed-in http:// addresses into hyperlinks so they become blue and underlined. Please ensure that hyperlinks in your paper are clickable, are obviously links and are consistently blue throughout.

TEACHER TO TEACHER Articles
What do you do better than most other teachers? What do you do differently than other teachers? What do you do that other teachers would be able to adapt for themselves? Sharing those ideas is the purpose of the IJFLT Teacher to Teacher section. In general, submissions:
• Should be a teaching idea that is applicable in the classroom by other teachers
• Should be short.
• Should not assume that readers are familiar with terminology like TPRS or CI or the 5Cs.
• Should write for an international audience, showing that the technique could be applied to any language.
• Avoid using idiomatic expressions in English.
• Avoid using informal language. (It was so cool! Can you believe it?)
• Speak of your own experience and your own strategies and provide step-by-step instructions for teachers who might not be familiar with the background information. While this section is somewhat less formal than the Research section, please follow the guidelines above regarding font, page size, margins, tabs, spacing, and footnotes. Be sure to check the veracity and accuracy of that information carefully and then cite your source.
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by Barbara Anne Cartford, Janice Holter Kittok, and Karen Lichtman

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by Stephen Krashen and Beniko Mason

The Incredible Frog-Boy is on the Loose Again (1): When Adult Second Language Acquirers Read the National Enquirer
by Kyung Sook Cho

Center for Accelerated Language Acquisition (CALA) Test Scores: Another Look at the Value of Implicit Language Instruction through Comprehensible Input
by Brian Roberts, M.A.T. and Shelley Thomas, Ph.D.

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Teacher To Teacher

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by Darcy Pippins

Very Narrow Listening
by Judith Dubois

Using Second Language Acquisition Quotes with Students
by Diane Neubauer

The Growth of Latin Programs with Comprehensible Input
by Robert Patrick, PhD

Make Any Student The Most Interesting Person In The Room
by Bryce Hedstrom

Language Inclusion Lessons Using Comprehensible Input in a High School Setting
by Rebecca Moulton
The Sweetest Sounds: Learning Names and Asking Personalized Questions

Darcy Pippins

Spanish Teacher, Norman High School, Norman, Oklahoma. Pippins has taught K-5, Spanish 1 and 2 at the high school level and college levels, Spanish 3 and 4 and Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture for 18 years. She is a presenter on preparing students for advanced exams using comprehensible input methods and TPR Storytelling and teaches Spanish classes to adults. Darcy is the 2015 recipient of the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year award.

“Remember that a person’s name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language. Using a person’s name is crucial, especially when meeting those we don’t see very often. Respect and acceptance stem from simple acts such as remembering a person’s name and using it whenever appropriate.” Dale Carnegie

My goal as a Spanish teacher is to instill in my students a love of the language, the desire to take risks and create, to study abroad and become advocates for language learning. I’m going to be living next door to these students. They are our future. It is my job to expose them to the world outside of Norman, Oklahoma.

Although I love teaching novice learners, teaching intermediate Spanish is my passion. I have the advantage of teaching many of my students for 3 or more years consecutively.

The Importance of Learning Names

On the first day of class, rather than trying to convince my students to love the language, though, I learn their names. Learning names is like acquiring a second language. It takes lots of repetition. I greet them at the door on the first day and let them sit wherever they choose. When the bell rings, I introduce myself using CI, pictures, gestures, and props. Then I start introducing myself. I never look at the roster. When they tell me their name, I repeat it several times out loud and in my head. Then I move to another student way across the room. Once I ask 3–4 students, I go back and circle and repeat their names out loud. I make a point to say their
names as much as possible in that first hour. I repeat this process until I have heard everyone say their name out loud and I’ve repeated their names 6–8 times (most of my classes are 30–33 students). When I’m confident that I know everyone, I go down each row saying each of the names in order. Knowing my students is imperative. Having that rapport is pivotal. Without it, there is no trust, no respect, and no buy in. It is an art to interact with students and build their trust, be a friend, teacher, and mentor, and also stay in control.

**Personalized Questions and Answers**

Personalized Questions and Answers (PQA) will make their day. PQA is my favorite activity with novice and intermediate learners. Through PQA, I conjugate verbs, teach vocabulary, grammar, culture, interrogatives, past, present, and future tense, conditional, subjunctive, present perfect, and even pluperfect. The possibilities are endless. Through PQA, I can “ask a story,” “circle”, go off on tangents in the target language, get to know my students and build that rapport that is essential for language acquisition to occur. I use PQA for at least 15 minutes everyday with the students. On Mondays I PQA about weekend activities for sometimes the entire class. At the novice level, a great PQA question might be, “¿Qué comes?” (What do you eat?) or “¿Qué te gusta hacer?” (What do you like to do?). At the intermediate level, I might ask, “¿Qué comiste ayer?” (What did you eat yesterday?) or ¿Qué te gustaría hacer si no estuvieras en clase?” (What would you like to do if you weren’t in class?). Each student has the opportunity to answer the question and I write their responses on the white board as I go. This allows the students to see the response and see the pattern. For example at the novice level, in response to ¿Qué comes?, each student will say “Yo como…” (I eat…) Ultimately students will hear “Yo como” 20–30 times. Then I will change perspective and say, “Clase, Juan come panqueques.” (looking at Juan) “Juan, ¿comes panqueques?” “Clase, ¿quién come panqueques? Juan o la profesora?” “Clase, ¿comen panqueques Juan y la profesora?” “Sí, nosotros comemos panqueques.” (Class, Juan eats pancakes. Juan, do you eat pancakes? Class, who eats pancakes, Juan or the teacher? Class, do Juan and the teacher eat pancakes? Yes, we eat pancakes.) This of course could turn into a TPRS story about the teacher eating 27 blue pancakes at IHOP. When I get stuck I always go back to circling with the question words.

**Doing Your Research**

It is also very important to stay current on pop culture. Karen Rowan calls this “doing your research.” Know what the students are watching on Netflix, reading, what video games they are playing, what the latest colloquialisms are and where they like to hang out. If you have a student that is totally into anime, Google it and
learn all about it, so you can blow them away with your “with-...it-...ness.” If you hear them using a new term, ask them (in the target language of course) what the term means and figure out a way to say it in the language you are teaching. Over the years I’ve used, “paz afuera” (peace out), “apretado” (tight, like “Man have you heard the new Ludicrous album? That is tight.”), “Antes de cualquier persona” (BAE, the acronym for Before Anyone or Anything Else), “levanta el techo” (raise the roof), and my personal favorite, “que crujiente” (my version of “that’s awkward”). This makes PQA even more compelling. The students love using these “terms” to create their own wacky comments.

My students leave my class with 55 minutes of compelling input in the target language, no homework (except to maybe read, text, tweet, and create in the TL), and a feeling of empowerment. I hear them leave my class and say to their friends, “Spanish is so easy, all we do in there is talk.” Make their day everyday and you will love your job, your students will love your class, and they will advocate for your program.

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Very Narrow Listening

Judith Dubois

Judith has lived in and taught English in France since 1984. She now promotes Comprehensible Input Methods for language teachers in Europe and organizes an annual conference in Agen, France. Her blog at http://tprs-witch.com has information about the conference.

Dr. Krashen recently posted an article entitled « The Case for Narrow Listening. » (http://sdkrashen.com/content/articles/the_case_for_narrow_listening.pdf) I was immediately intrigued because I often feel that we do not devote enough attention to listening, whereas it is obviously an important skill if we are expecting our students to acquire a language through comprehensible input.

The question is: how do we teach our students to listen? I know how the textbooks teach it. They have students listen to recordings that are largely incomprehensible and train them to guess at meanings. Many authors have made money by selling books that claim to prepare students for listening tests, such as TOEIC, TOEFL, Cambridge, etc. I haven’t been impressed by the results I’ve seen. Often all the “listening practice” does is convince the students that they are nowhere near the level they should be at after x years of English classes. They are told that to improve they need to practice more. As Michael Jordan once said, “If you practice something wrong, you get very good at doing it wrong.” When students do the practice, which is set up like the exam, they are stressed and their affective filters are very high.

Dr. Krashen describes Narrow Listening as follows: “In narrow listening, acquirers collect several brief tape-recordings of proficient speakers discussing a topic selected by the acquirer. Acquirers then listen to the tape as many times as they like, at their leisure. Repeated listening, interest in the topic, and familiar context help make the input comprehensible. Topics are gradually changed, which allows the acquirer to expand his or her competence comfortably.”

Dr. Krashen considers narrow listening to be mainly a strategy for independent learners, (personal correspondence) but that it could be adapted to the classroom. When I first began teaching in France my British colleague was using a video series for English learners put out by BBC called “Follow Me.” I convinced her to use something a little more modern the following year, but I did like the cloze exercises which accompanied some of the scenes. Students had a script with blanks and were asked to fill
in the missing words. Of course, the missing words were the vocabulary that had been introduced previously.

I wanted to use authentic films for my more advanced classes rather than videos specially made for language learners. In my opinion the films were highly compelling, whereas the videos were rarely interesting and often tacky. I used films with and without subtitles in English, my target language. I never used them with French subtitles, because, although I am fairly bilingual, I found that I could either listen to the English or read the French, but I could not do both simultaneously.

At first I modeled the activities I associated with the films after those that had been used with the BBC series. True/false questions, putting phrases in order, recognizing words and phrases and checking them off a list, etc. But I found that my students especially enjoyed the cloze exercises once I had made a major modification. I did not introduce a list of vocabulary before showing the students the scene we were working on. I did not expect them to recognize words that were new to them. The blanks had to be words that they were familiar with, words that I expected them to know; in short, high-frequency words that had already been acquired.

Over the years, I refined what I was doing, to make it more effective. When I discovered TPRS, I continued using cloze exercises, but introduced some new techniques such as Circling. (Asking yes / no / either / or questions that contain the target vocabulary). I often proceed as follows. I show the scene with no subtitles, and we discuss what they think is happening, what they think the characters are saying. Then I give them the script with blanks and the students listen again, focusing on new vocabulary, and after the second viewing, I explain any words that they don’t know. Step one of TPRS: establish meaning. If I consider the word high frequency or useful for the rest of the film, I dwell on it for a while and “Circle” it with some Personalized Questions and Answers (PQA). If not, they merely write the definition in the margin and we go on.

Then I ask students to put down their pens and we listen to just a few lines from the beginning of the scene. I stop the film after the first speech or the first part of a speech, and I ask them if they grasped the word or words in the blanks. Remember that the words will be things like house – man- because – after, etc.; words that I have chosen because I’m convinced they are familiar to my students. What I am asking them to do is to recognize familiar, high frequency words in the context of fairly rapid native speaker speech. This is far from easy and often we have to listen to the sound bite many times before they do recognize the missing words. Once one of the students recognizes the word, the others can then hear it. It fascinates me to see that many students have a false mental image of the sound of a word, which keeps them from recognizing it when they hear it. Once we have filled in all the blanks in the short bit of the scene I’ve played, I check for comprehension. If they are not certain about the meaning, we translate it. If there is an idiom that is not comprehensible, I will circle it and do some PQA.
Then we go on to the next few lines of dialog. It may take an hour to work our way through a three minute scene. I let them decide how often they want to listen and if I see that they are stuck, I apologize, saying that I chose the wrong word for the exercise, and give them a hint or, if necessary, give them the missing word. A word that seems absolutely transparent to me may be difficult for students to decode because of the actor’s pronunciation, a background noise, etc. When this happens, I always modify my exercise so that I don’t repeat the error. What I see in my students is complete engagement. Every student in the class is motivated to help the group find the missing words. They don’t want to stop and the entire class feels gratified when one student identifies a word that has been difficult for them. That student becomes a kind of hero, and I’ve often noticed that students who tend to get good marks on tests are not necessarily the best listeners. Weaker students often do the exercises with fewer preconceived ideas about what the word “should” be, and come up with answers that stump the star students. Once we have completed filling in the blanks and discussed the meaning and implications in the scene, I play it through one last time and the students listen with their scripts turned face down. There is a wonderful moment of catharsis. That may not be the right word, but it is what it feels like. I’ve had students say, “It’s magic. The first time we listened it was just a lot of noise. Now I understand everything they say.”

Of course, this exercise is rarely adaptable for beginners and can be discouraging if it is introduced too soon. But once students reach the Intermediate level, they enjoy doing this kind of activity and progress rapidly. I believe that the blanks and missing words are merely distracters. While the students are focused on understanding one word (that is already familiar to them) they are repeatedly hearing all the rest of the conversation, a conversation spoken at normal speed and which is comprehensible, because meaning has been established.

How does this kind of cloze listening exercise in class correspond to Dr. Krashen’s “Narrow Listening”?

He suggests using:

**“Brief tape recordings of proficient speakers”** The scenes I use are generally 2-5 minutes long. The speakers are professional actors.

**“A topic selected by the acquirer”**. I give the students a choice of films, explaining the subject matter and also the level of difficulty. Often they are well known films that the students have seen dubbed. I always accept their choice, but if we later discover that it’s not working, that the film is too difficult or not as interesting as they thought, we can drop it.

**“Repeated listening”** I play the sound bites as many times as the students want. So they are hearing them over and over and over, at their own request.
“Interest in the topic” The students chose the topic, the type of film. Talented actors, script writers and directors make the scene highly compelling.

“Familiar context” This is why I like to work on an entire film, following the plot from the beginning to the final scene. It may take many sessions, but the context becomes extremely familiar to the students.

“Topics are gradually changed, which allows the acquirer to expand his or her competence comfortably.” As the plot of the film develops, new characters, new situations and new conflicts are gradually introduced. The student’s ability to understand expands, relying on what has been acquired previously. There is a basic setting, a prison, a love story, a detective mystery, a western, etc. which becomes a familiar context in which new and surprising things happen.

For some time I have been trying to explain to other teachers what I do with films. I’ve called it “Beyond Movie Talk” or “Reading a Film.” Intermediate students are capable of listening to original sound tracks, if they have the right type of support and are not discouraged by more difficulty than they can handle. I believe that this kind of cloze exercise matches Dr. Krashen’s description of narrow listening. I could call it “Very Narrow Listening.”

NEW SPANISH BOOK!

Don Quijote, el último caballero is a novel for intermediate and advanced beginners in the Fluency Fast series of readers. It uses a vocabulary of fewer than 200 different Spanish words to tell a 1,400 word story in the present tense and the same story also in the past tense. It is repetitive and simple and uses many cognates to make the story comprehensible to adults and children. The stories are intentionally written to be acted out in class, but also to serve as independent reading in either the present or past tense.

Don Quijote, el último caballero is an amusing, ironic and - at the same time - tragic story. Don Quijote is an ordinary Spaniard with an extraordinary imagination who believes he must achieve great feats to honor a lady. He falls in love with a waitress that he considers to be the ideal lady. He and his companion Sancho Panza have adventures in which Don Quijote is always mistaken about what he finds along the way while Sancho sees what is really there. The story is based on Miguel de Cervantes’ The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha, published in the 17th Century. Many consider it to be the best book of fiction ever written.

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Using Second Language Acquisition Quotes with Students

Diane Neubauer
Mandarin Chinese teacher, Valor Christian High School, Colorado

As a world language teacher, I am seeking to be better informed about Second Language Acquisition (SLA) processes and research. I have also sought bite-sized ways to share that knowledge with my students. I have collected a variety of SLA quotes to that end. On most Fridays at the beginning of class, we read a quote about SLA and take a couple minutes for brief discussion. A student volunteer reads a quote aloud, and I open the floor for discussion by asking something like, “So, what do you think?” I affirm students who share their reflections, sometimes ask follow-up questions or point out some aspect of the quote, and guide the discussion to a close.

So far, I have allowed these two or three minutes in English because most of my students would not be able to discuss this kind of topic well in the language I teach, Mandarin Chinese. However, I have found the brief loss of time in the target language has been a very worthwhile exchange for the metacognition and reflection that occurs. In fact, I think that it renews their willingness to stay in the target language other times. The quotes remind them of our goals and means to developing fluency, which depends on comprehensible messages in the target language. However, the target language could be used for discussion, certainly among students with greater proficiency. With earlier levels, clever questioning by the teacher may allow for students to indicate points of agreement, disagreement, curiosity, or confusion about a quote. The teacher could clarify or ask follow-up questions in the target language at the level of student comprehension. I hope to try that approach in the future.

I originally began to share SLA quotes with my students during the first year I shifted to teaching only with Comprehensible Input (CI) methods. That first year, I had some significant pushback, especially from students who excelled at rote memory of vocabulary and from those who believed language class should revolve around competitive, output-based games. They (and some of their parents) were willing to tell me what I was doing with CI wasn’t what they expected. I used quotes to demonstrate that my teaching methods had support in wider circles. (That first year I also worked hard at improving my CI teaching, adapting and learning to pace better for my students – a story for a different article.)

I have introduced students from grade 5 through grade 12 to SLA topics through our brief talks. I have found that this approach has been beneficial in numerous ways:
- It builds students’ confidence that the sometimes-ambiguous process of language acquisition truly happens as we focus on the meaning, not the form, of the language;
- It builds students’ confidence that I am an informed professional;
- It improves classroom management and student engagement because they trust the process and me as a teacher more;
- It allows students to reflect on how their language abilities are developing and may further develop;
- It points out to students those behaviors and dispositions that will increase their likelihood of successful acquisition;
- It highlights that the goals of my classes are real life skills and “micro-fluency,” not merely grades or graduation requirements;
- It is a way to encourage students that acquiring another language is possible for regular people;
- By spreading out the quotes across the whole course, it avoids information overload at the beginning;
- And it helps highly analytical thinkers to know that “just” CI, which doesn’t always “feel like” learning, is in fact the most effective and precise means we have to instruct a language.

I have included quotes by a variety of researchers and language teachers. I have also shared information more directly about acquiring my target language, Mandarin Chinese. For example, I played the first minute of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg’s now well-known interview at Qinghua University and asked students to notice the audience’s response, which illustrated how much they loved even his not-very-pretty Mandarin. I hope to use more brief video quotes in the future, and more on Chinese character literacy development. However, anything that relates to or demonstrates the process of acquiring language is fair game to add to my file. I have found many quotes myself, but got a good start from a list gathered and shared by Eric Herman, Spanish teacher in Edgartown, Massachusetts.

Some quotes that have prompted great discussion and reflection:
- “We acquire language when we understand messages, when we understand what people tell us and when we understand what we read.” Stephen Krashen
- “Language acquisition is a subconscious process; while it is happening we are not aware that it is happening, and the competence developed this way is stored in the brain subconsciously.” Stephen Krashen
- “The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers. The next best way is read extensively in it.” Christine Nuttall, Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language
• “Learning is most successful when it involves only a limited amount of stress, when students are relaxed and confident and enjoying their learning; but the use of correction encourages exactly the opposite condition.” John Truscott.

• …the structures we learn in a language class are the bones in your body; vocabulary is the muscle mass. Without the bones, you can pack on as much meat as you want, but you will never be able to walk. Haiyun Lu

• Reading aloud [to children] is the foundation for literacy development. It is the single most important activity for reading success (Neuman, Copple, and Bredekamp 2000).

I encourage others to collect and share quotes with your students, too!

REFERENCES


The Growth of Latin Programs with Comprehensible Input

Robert Patrick, PhD

Robert Patrick, a National Board Certified Latin teacher, teaches in the Gwinnett County Public School system in metro Atlanta. He has been teaching Latin and sometimes Greek for 27 years in private and public schools in Alabama and Georgia. He currently serves as the Chair of the World Languages department at Parkview High School. He is a frequent presenter on comprehension-based language teaching methods and their application to teaching Latin.

He has recently published an intermediate level novella, Itinera Petri: Flammae Ducant (The Journeys of Peter: Let the Flames Lead). The novella of 4600 words uses 330 distinct vocabulary and limits the verbs to the 50 Most Important Verbs list. It is available on Amazon.

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/069254416X?keywords=itinera%20petri&qid=1445343183&ref_=sr_1_1&sr=8-1

Latin teachers for a little over the last 100 years have worked hard to convince themselves and others that Latin was “different” and “special” and was “not like other languages.” We have done so to our near demise.

You can’t really speak Latin, can you?
Can you actually have dinner conversation in Latin?
Don’t Latin classes just pore over boring Latin texts? Recite conjugated verbs in order? What could be compelling about that?
How could you write anything worth publishing—you don’t have any native speakers, do you?

The MLA 2012 report just released reports that ALL language enrollments have dropped and that they have hit Latin the hardest second only to Ancient Greek. We can no longer afford to teach Latin as usual if we wish to remain a viable language for our students.

The SALVI organization has been conducting, for the last 19 years, an event known as “Rusticatio” in which Latin teachers and other Latin enthusiasts come together at the Claymont Estate (Charles Town, WV and locations in CA as well) for a week of total immersion living, studying, cooking, eating and playing Latine tantum (in Latin only).

Confronted with the realities of dropping enrollments, and knowing my own positive experiences with Comprehensible Input, two years ago, I collaborated on beginning a new program known as
Pedagogy-Rusticatio in which Latin teachers train in methods that fall under the umbrella of Comprehensible Input. Jason Fritze and I co-led that first event.

This year, SALVI made the decision to redirect their Pedagogy-Rusticatio applicants to the National TPRS Conference, (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling) in Reston, Virginia outside of Washington, D.C. Lending SALVI’s own program and influence, Latin teachers began signing up for NTPRS 2015. Three Latin teachers from SALVI presented five different sessions at NTPRS: *Detoxing from the Textbook; Speak Comprehensibly from Day One* (Keith Toda), *Three Lesson Plans with Compelling Comprehensible Input; Legere et Loqui: How to Generate Latin Conversations from Any Text* (Justin Slocum Bailey), and *Report from the Field: CI Latin From Start to Finish, and What About AP?* (Bob Patrick). Three years ago, there were three Latin teachers at NTPRS (Las Vegas), then only one in Dallas, 2013. In 2014 there were four at iFLT (The International Forum on Language Teaching – also a CI methods teacher training) and one at NTPRS. And then, this year—46 at NTPRS, Reston, Virginia.

Why would 46 Latin teachers register for and fully participate in the 2015 NTPRS conference recently convened in Reston, VA? Why would these same 46 teachers make reservations for an immersion dinner (known as Cena Latina)?

This is not a new phenomenon. Some of us have been involved in CI approaches for as long as 15 years. In the last five years, that number has reaching what some might call a tipping point. I created the largest Latin teacher listserv, Latin Best Practices, in 2006 with John Piazza (Latin teacher, Berkley High School, Berkley, CA). Today, LBP has over 1300 members with the vast majority of its activity devoted to sharing Comprehensible Input activities, successes, difficulties and innovations. Teachers on the listserv have worked collaboratively together to define the “fifty most important verbs” from which many are redesigning how they approach their work, and a CI resource blog where members stockpile “how-to’s”, links to CI blogs and other resources. In addition to the annual Pedagogy-Rusticatio sessions offered by SALVI in West Virginia, CI Latin teachers and one CI French teacher in Georgia’s largest school system, Gwinnett County Public Schools (Rachel Ash, Miriam Patrick, Bob Patrick, Keith Toda and Lauren Watson) have created an annual CI Training Workshop fully sponsored by the school system with stipends paid to all teachers who take the 20 hour training. Initially 40 teachers from all languages participated, and this past summer of 2015 there were 60 participants. This training is now an annual part of the GCPS continuing education offerings.

There are some things that we want our modern language colleagues to know about us.

- We do speak Latin, and it doesn’t matter that there are no native speakers. There have been, continuously, speakers of Latin living in the world for the last 2500 years without any gaps. Those of us who speak Latin have learned from others who speak Latin, and we have done it without the support that comes to most language learners. All of us were taught Latin with a grammar translation approach. We have had to go against the professional grain to find speakers of Latin and learn from them. We have had to create our own immersion experiences at significant cost of both dollars and untold volunteer hours. There is nothing that one cannot talk about in Latin. Just like any other language, vocabulary is created when there is a need for it, and there is a long-standing tradition in
Latin for how that is done. If you can talk about it in Mandarin or Spanish, we can talk about it in Latin.

- Latin is a highly inflected language, and so our experience is probably more like CI teachers of Russian, German, Japanese or Polish than Spanish or French even though Spanish and French are Latinate languages. Each of our nouns have 30 different possible endings, for example, and some of us are noticing that most of them tend to be acquired later than other items of the language.

- While we have 2000 years of literature of every genre, we have few comprehensible, compelling, graded readers for our novice and intermediate students. Most of us are writing such materials on the fly, sharing them with each other and doing the best we can, but it’s never enough. We love embedded readings (which I first learned from Lauri Clarcq) and began teaching to other teachers at various conferences (both Latin and modern language teachers). We are creating embedded readings from all eras of the Latin literature, but that is time consuming. We are doing it, and sharing it, but there is never enough. Most recently, a small cadre of us created embedded readings of the entire AP Latin syllabus. Add to this that most of us are the only Latin teachers in our buildings, as are many teachers of less commonly taught languages, and the work load becomes overwhelming. We are in public schools, private schools, and charter schools. We teach elementary, middle and high school students. A few of our number even teach at the university level, but that is a realm where CI in Latin, like CI modern language, is still moving slowly.

- We deeply value what you are doing in your CI classrooms, and we want to learn from you. We are doing some significant work, too, and we want to share that with you. We want to find our way into the heart and activities of this community and make good contributions to it.

So, we know that people find it hard to believe that we are doing the work of Comprehensible Input, that those of us doing it are experiencing not only a new kind of joy in teaching but expanding programs.

At the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year the Latin program in my school (Parkview High School, metro Atlanta) will have 600 students in 5 levels. In 2005 when I took over the then very traditional program, there were 130 students in 4 levels. Using nothing but CI approaches over the last 10 years, the program has increased by over 400% and has shifted from a fairly academically elite program to a program that more closely resembles the demographic of our entire school population. I am now joined by three other CI Latin teachers for a total of four. Latin has become the second largest language in our school, which offers French, German, Latin and Spanish. Many of us are experiencing the pains of growth, of changing perceptions about Latin, and are doing the difficult work of convincing administrators and our own colleagues that CI work is powerful and that it matters for our students and the future of Latin in our culture. As a foreign language department chair, I am enjoying the privilege of encouraging CI work in my entire department among all languages.

The reader might wonder why anyone should bother with Latin in the first place. It’s a dead language, right? I will offer a very practical reason and suggest a framework within which to understand it. There is no profession that any student in any school will go into—whether a student wants to “do hair” or do surgery—in which the professional language is not almost
entirely Latinate. The professional English that is used for tools, processes, chemical, systems, relationships, organization and philosophical understanding (business models, mission statements, etc.) are all created from Latinate English. In fact, we know that the more educated one’s English is the more Latin based it is, reaching a 75% saturation level. We used to assume that students headed for medicine and law should take Latin for these reasons, but the same holds true for the hair stylist, the auto-mechanic, the retail salesperson, those in janitorial services, financial planners, plumbers et al. There is no profession in this country where this is not the case. Latin students have a jump start to understanding the verbiage that they will encounter in their higher education, skills training and professional work.

Professional vocabulary, though a very practical reason for studying Latin, is really a subset of a much larger reason that we must ensure the health of Latin programs. There is no language in existence that connects all of the dots of culture in Western Civilization, as does Latin. Latin students begin to have insight into all seven of the components of culture (family/social organization, customs, religion, language, literature and art, government and economic systems) simply because they are studying Latin. This is true for cultures expressed in Western Civilization as expressed in Europe, parts of North Africa, and in all of the Americas. Students living in the western part of the world have a right to access the connection that Latin makes to the entire fabric of culture. While each language does some of that in their respective cultures, no language does that like Latin does for the entirety of the West.

Why bother speaking Latin? Any teacher who has even begun to grasp Comprehensible Input knows the answer: all kinds of students can acquire the language when we deliver understandable messages in the target language, and we deliver those messages in two ways: by speaking and by reading. If Latin really matters for a fully engaged life in the West, then we have to teach it in a way that all kinds of learners can acquire it. Otherwise, it becomes a relic that our elders reminisce about and a language that offers help to no one.

46 Latin teachers did, indeed, show up at NTPRS 2015. NTPRS 2016 is in Reno. Latin teachers are already talking about being there. If Latin is a “dead language”, CI is resurrecting it.

**RESOURCES**

SALVI—The North American Institute of Living Latin Studies [www.latin.org](http://www.latin.org)

Latin Best Practices—A listserv with 1300 members sharing best practices with each other [https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/latin-bestpractices/info](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/latin-bestpractices/info)

Teaching Classical Languages—The peer reviewed, online journal of the Classical Association of Midwest and Southern States. [This Spring 2015 issue](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/latin-bestpractices/info) is devoted entirely to “oral Latin” articles including those that focus on CI methods. Bob’s article, [Making Sense of CI in the Latin Classroom](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/latin-bestpractices/info).

ACL 2015 CI Presentations—Presentations offered at the American Classical League 2015
Institute all of which focused on CI methods. Five presenters offered 7 workshops totaling 12 hours of instruction. https://aclreadingplus2015.wordpress.com/

AP Latin readings recreated with embedded readings—
http://lapis.practomime.com/index.php/698 created largely by the work of Caroline Miklosovic, Kevin Ballestrini (whose group hosts the works and makes them available to all), and Bob Patrick.

**Blogs:**

Latin Best Practices CI Resources
https://latinbestpracticescir.wordpress.com/

Rachel Ash and Miriam Patrick—Pomegranate Beginnings
http://pomegranatebeginnings.blogspot.com/

Justin Slocum Bailey—Indwelling Language
http://indwellinglanguage.com/blog/

Lance Piantaggini—Magister P
http://magisterp.com/

Keith Toda—Todally Comprehensible Latin
http://todallycomprehensiblelatin.blogspot.com/

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Make Any Student The Most Interesting Person In The Room
Bryce Hedstrom

Bryce Hedstrom teaches Spanish at Roosevelt High School in Johnstown, Colorado. He writes TCI/TPRS teaching materials and is a workshop presenter. More information may be found on his website, brycehedstrom.com

Teachers are expected to be the focus of any classroom activity by default. We often don’t know how to step back and take a supportive role, and students do not know how to let out their personalities. How can we make our students the focus in our classes? Kids are interested in one another and they want to learn about each others’ lives, but we often get things backwards—we talk about pop stars or we talk about ourselves and then we try to get students interested. If we follow the tips below, we can discover what is fascinating about most any student; we can make what is interesting in him or her bloom. Here are 7 ways to make any student the most interesting person in your classroom.

1. Don’t be bored yourself. The best offense is a good defense, so the first way to keep things interesting for your students is to not allow yourself to be bored. That may mean keeping it short. The Hippocratic Oath for teachers should be something like: “First do no harm … to the image of your student.” When we talk to students, we need to be positive and be brief. If we seem bored, students become bored. We teachers can be terrible at this. We’re tired. We’ve done this before. We think that just because we have done this activity in 5 other classes today, we need to keep on talking and talking until we hit the fascinating sweet spot like last time. But the number 1 tip for never boring anyone comes from Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s advice for speech-making: “Be sincere; be brief; be seated.” To keep from being bored we need to: a) be truly interested, b) not go on too long, and c) stop before the magic ends.

Stay upbeat, stay on the point and keep looking in the student’s eyes. It is very hard for a student not to respond to that kind of attention. You become engaging company to the interviewee and, therefore, to the rest of the class. Make the interview go as long as the mojo lasts. A good tip here is to ask yourself, “Is the still student responding with his eyes?” If not, perhaps it is time to end the interview and go on to the next student. You can always come back to that student again later. Maybe they are just having a bad day, or maybe he needs to see if he can trust you. He may open up later. Maybe not, and that’s OK.

2. Be a good listener.
The most interesting people are good listeners. Too often, we teachers feel as if we have to be the main speaker in the room. But what if our goal were to get the students talking about themselves? People love to talk about themselves, but there are not nearly enough good listeners. Become one. When people talk about themselves, it gives them as much pleasure as eating or getting paid. You can connect with students by getting them to talk about themselves. The people we like to talk to the most are often those that say the least.

3. Talk about that student’s interests.
Every student is interested in something. Find it. Blaine Ray mentions that reading the book How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie changed his life as a teacher. Talking about the interests of our students comes straight from that book. If you have not had success connecting with students in the past, this is the best piece of advice there is. You do not have to struggle and guess what might be interesting to students. You don’t have to do research on youth culture. You do not have to spend days watching popular movies or videos. You don’t have to act wild and crazy. You just have to find out what is interesting to them by asking.

Ask about their interests, recent life events, or hobbies, and then follow up with questions. With this basic information you have a good start on connecting with them. If you know a little bit in general about a subject, you can use that knowledge to guide your questions. You may not know the exact musician they are raving about, but you have been to a concert that enthralled you. You may not be familiar with the movie star they idolize, but you have been inspired by great performances. Use that commonality of feeling to drive the conversations with your students. Allow them to talk about what they love and watch the interest grow.

4. Pull stories out of students by modeling with your own stories—a little bit.
Students like stories about people more than vague cultural vignettes. They like drama and gossip—the stuff of reality TV—as do most adults. We all find human behavior fascinating, so think of short stories about people, rather than things. Use stories where you watched or experienced something noteworthy happen, not ones where you made the amazing event happen. Tell stories from your own life where you saw something amazing happen.

When comedians or actors appear on talk shows, they do not spontaneously talk about what they have done in the last week. They have stories prepared. They have rehearsed. It is a planned performance that is not supposed to look like a performance. You need to learn to do the same thing. Pick 3 good stories from your own life experience and practice telling them until you have the timing down. Tell them to co-workers, members at the gym, at parties, at ball games, while volunteering—anywhere and everywhere until you can tell your stories smoothly. Then you can use those to prime the pump and get your students to think of similar stories about themselves.
5. Create excitement with your voice and actions. 
Your tone of voice and body language communicate much of what you say to your 
students. By some estimates, words account for only 7% of the total message. If we 
depend only on the words, we are muted. So use laughter and drama. Use sweeping 
gestures. Don’t just depend on the words; use your all of the tools at your disposal. For a 
lay description of why this is important, see Reading Magic by Mem Fox; for the 
scholarly version, see the classic 1967 study by Mehrabian & Ferris for more on the 
immense effect of voice tone on communication.

6. Talk about interesting places that students mention. 
Do not allow the mention of an interesting place flash by in a student answer. Stop and 
ask about it. Get them to describe it and then follow up with questions. The emotion of 
the place will carry over to the rest of the class. People find musicians and actors 
captivating because they take us where we have never been through their music and the 
emotions portrayed in their acting. This phenomenon is known as the misattribution of 
emotions—we associate good feelings with a person because our emotions are stimulated 
by an experience. We identify with the musicians in a band because of the lyrics and the 
feeling of the music. We think good thoughts about an actor because he appeared in a 
film that moved us. We can take advantage of this and have our students feel good about 
one another and about us by taking them to interesting places in their minds in our classes 
through the stories told by their peers.

7. There is something interesting about every student—find it. 
This is the most important idea here. We have already talked about focusing on what is 
interesting TO a student; now focus on what is interesting ABOUT the student. There are 
seeds of greatness in every student—seeds that our students may not even be aware of. 
We just have to water them and let them spring forth. Don Quixote treated those with 
whom he came in contact as royalty, and they sometimes rose to the occasion. If you 
want your students to act like interesting people, treat them like interesting people. The 
terview process gives each student that chance. We are not just trying to make a good 
impression on the students, but to bring out the best in them—this is much more 
rewarding that merely trying to make ourselves look good or following a script in a 
textbook.

It is okay to talk about yourself occasionally, too. You may be the most interesting person 
that your students know—you have travelled, you speak other languages, you have had 
fascinating experiences with exotic people in different cultures. You probably have great 
life experiences and stories. Feel free to share those once in a while, but don’t hog the 
spotlight. Wait until students ask about you.
Language Inclusion Lessons Using Comprehensible Input in a High School Setting

Rebecca Moulton

Rebecca (Becky) Moulton has been teaching Spanish for 20 years at Northwest High School in Jackson, Michigan. She has been teaching with TPRS/CI since 1999. She earned a BA from Alma College in Alma, MI and an MA in Common Learnings in Curriculum from Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, MI. Contact Becky on Twitter: @SraMoulton

For the past several years, my upper level students have been teaching Spanish to students in the Mild Intelligence Impairment Program (MIIP) using Comprehensible Input (CI) combined with music, movement, dance, and other hands-on learning activities. This once a week program, developed in collaboration with the lead teacher in the MIIP, continues to benefit both groups of students in a variety of ways. The experience is valuable for both groups of students as it builds relationships, a sense of a unified high school community, and enriches our learning environment.

Background Information and Development of the Program
Several years ago I was approached by one of the Special Education (SPED) teachers to offer some Spanish lessons to her students. (In the past our language students had gone to the elementary school to teach Spanish to 4th graders but changes in the daily schedule and having to drive to another campus eliminated that program.) I introduced the idea to my Spanish 4/5 students and most students wanted to take part. That year I had a full class of 30 students so I offered it as an optional activity. I stayed in class with the remaining students who had a separate assignment while the student “teachers” went to the SPED classroom. Since then, I have had smaller classes and now all students take part in the activity. This is a preferable set up because I can observe the lessons, offer help as needed, and coach my student “teachers” when we return to class.

I prefer to offer this teaching opportunity to my Spanish 4/5 students. These students are 11th and 12th graders who generally have the confidence and ability to lead a lesson. At my school, there is typically one class of Spanish 4/5, which eliminates the situation of having one class of your multiple sections losing instructional time. One year I did the program with only one of the two sections of Spanish 3. At times it was a challenge to maintain the same schedule due to the time allotted for both planning and the actual lesson.

The Spanish 4/5 students have acquired Spanish in regular classes taught via Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling ® (TPRS) and CI methods throughout their
language career at the middle school and high school. My students plan and teach the weekly lessons and draw on their experience as students in beginning classes. Each year when I introduce the program, the SPED teacher comes to my room to talk about her students (in a general way) and offers advice and guidance to the Spanish 4/5 students. Later, my students and I discuss what helped them learn when they were in their beginning classes. Student “teachers” brainstorm strategies that they will use in their lessons. The lessons focus on small amounts of vocabulary, repetition, modeling, gestures, visual images, and both group and paired practice. The student “teachers” develop lessons that are not only developmentally appropriate but are fun, lighthearted, and comfortable for the students with intellectual impairments.

**Organization and Planning**
My Spanish 4/5 class is typically scheduled for the first hour of the day, which meshes nicely with the time available in the MIIP classroom. Initially, my students walked down to the MIIP classroom to present the lessons, but now we frequently alternate classroom locations. The weekly lessons, which supplement the MIIP core curriculum, occur during their “morning meeting” or “advisory time”. The two groups typically spend 25-35 minutes together once a week with some time allotted for students to pair up in smaller groups for guided practice. This helps reinforce the lesson while cultivating new friendships. It is helpful to have the upper level language students pair up with students with intellectual impairments to allow for a comfort level if one of the language students is absent.

Over the years, the “target vocabulary” is usually focused on words and phrases relevant to functional living skills and daily learning words. Students have learned days of the week, greetings, mealtime words, body parts, and words related to school. One year when the students in the MIIP class were reading the book “Rocket Boys”, we taught several words related to the novel. The SPED teacher and the para-educators label items in their classroom in Spanish. I share interactive white board slides with vocabulary and matching games, etc. for the students to review and play during the week. We have used a variety of songs, chants, and music that feature the target vocabulary.

Two language students volunteer to lead the class for each lesson. They review the previous vocabulary and then present the new words with physical gestures and images on the interactive white board. The rest of the students sit or stand with their partners and also model the gestures. Playing games such as holding up a “YES” or “NO” (in the target language) to respond to verbal prompts and various matching activities on the white board are fun and allow students to get up and interact with the language students.

Early in the year, the student “teachers” and their students pair up to make a large name tent on cardstock. This serves as a review practice and is revisited throughout the year to add more information. The students work together to write their name on one side and also draw some of the students’ favorite things (color, animal, food, vehicle, etc.) on the
other side. The students’ personalities come out during this time and they are excited to learn the words in Spanish for their favorite things. Activities are modified based on student’s abilities. For example, a student who uses an iPad as an augmentation device for communication used it for her Spanish vocabulary as well.

This program has been an amazing experience for both groups of students. In our district we have been implementing the Nurtured Heart Approach® philosophy and these types of collaboration and inclusion activities help to develop a positive appreciation for diversity within the school setting and beyond. In addition, my students have become more patient with others and have developed a better understanding of the learning (and teaching) process. If you are interested in implementing a similar program, here are some suggestions.

**Implementation Basics**

1. Approach your Special Education teacher(s) and administration to introduce the program
2. Coordinate with your Guidance Office to arrange your upper level class during a time that works with the SPED teacher’s class schedule
3. Work with the SPED teacher to decide on what vocabulary to begin with and prepare an overall plan for the year (and be flexible with it)
4. Continue to collaborate with the SPED teacher to share feedback and support their curriculum
5. Schedule a time for your SPED teacher to offer guidance to the language students and discuss accommodations/modifications
6. Prepare your language students for teaching (discuss CI and appropriate teaching techniques) and continue to coach them throughout the year
7. Allow time within each week to plan for the next lesson including any materials and props
8. Allow time immediately after the lesson for student “teachers” to debrief, make notes, and share successes and challenges
9. Provide SPED teacher and para-educators with the weekly lesson information and share interactive white board activities, music, etc.
10. Send an email to the office staff to tell them where you and your class will be and put a note on the door for late comers
11. Plan a celebration at the end of the year
12. Share your success by publicizing via school newsletters, etc.
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Isabel is a precocious 9-year-old girl who is always getting herself into trouble while on a trip to Paris with her mom. The book focuses on the 300 highest frequency words in French, but the book has a total of 2500 words. Students of French rapidly understand the book because it uses a high number of cognates and recycles important vocabulary.

Donna Tatum-Johns translated Las Aventuras de Isabela from the Spanish and also consulted with many native speakers and French teachers to arrive at the best translation. The book contains a glossary and a cultural glossary of places in Paris that Isabel visits. The book is set in Paris and the book reflects the French culture that surrounds her.

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