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## *The Effect of Adding Supplementary Writing to an Extensive Reading Program*

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The last few decades have witnessed the publication of a considerable amount of empirical evidence supporting what Krashen has called “the power of reading” (Krashen, 2004). Studies show that reading itself leads to better reading, better vocabulary, better writing, and better control of grammar in both first and second languages. The impact of reading has been demonstrated in controlled studies of in-school reading (“sustained silent reading,” and “extensive reading”; see e.g. Elley and Mangubhai, 1983; Mason and Krashen, 1997), as well as in numerous case histories (e.g. Krashen, 1993; Cho and Krashen, 1994) and correlational studies of self-reported recreational reading (e.g. Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding, 1988).

While there is agreement that recreational reading is helpful, it can be asked whether reading should be

supplemented with other activities in order to produce the best results. Can recreational reading be enhanced by the use of supplementary activities? Can we, in other words, increase the power of reading? A wide range of supplementary activities are possible, but the supplement that appears to be the most popular is to include writing that is related to what has been read.

It may come as a surprise to many readers, but there is no evidence that writing alone increases language or literacy proficiency, that is, increasing the amount of writing done does not increase proficiency. Reviews of first language studies can be found in Krashen (2004). Tsang (1996) reported that Hong Kong middle and high school students who participated in an after-school extensive reading program lasting 24 weeks made better gains in writing than comparison students who did extra writing rather than reading. Not yet investigated, however, is whether a program integrating reading and writing will be more efficient and effective than reading alone.

It can be argued that writing alone is insufficient, that writing requires feedback on form, that is, correction, to be effective. Once again, the research is discouraging. Several reviews have concluded that the impact of correction is very limited: In many cases, there is

no impact at all on accuracy, and when an effect is present it is very modest and confined to situations in which students are heavily focused on form (Truscott, 1996; Krashen, 2002). Burger (1989) reported that adding an extra class on writing, which included correction of students' written errors, had no impact on gains in English proficiency on a variety of measures for adult students of ESL taking sheltered classes in Canada. Not yet investigated, however, is whether grammar correction on student written output can enhance the impact of reading.

It is important to continue to investigate the impact of output and grammar correction, despite the lack of supporting empirical evidence so far, and to continue to see under what conditions they might be effective. It is nearly an unquestioned assumption that "we learn to write by writing" and many students request correction of form (e.g. Cathcart and Olsen, 1976).

The goal of this study is thus to compare the impact of extensive reading with three kinds of supplementation: students writing summaries in their primary language (Japanese) of what they have read, a condition that relies only on reading for language development; students writing summaries in English, a test of the hypothesis that supplementation

using writing will enhance the power of reading, and students writing summaries in English, having their errors corrected, and rewriting the summaries. The rewriting condition was included because of claims that correction alone is insufficient: It has been claimed that students must also rewrite and incorporate the corrections in a subsequent version of their paper (Chandler, 2003). This third condition tests the hypothesis that additional writing plus grammar correction will enhance the power of reading.

Because of the possibility that error correction might have different effects on different measures, three different tests were used, including one that allowed a considerable amount of focus on form under conditions similar to those present during the treatment.

An interesting feature of the design was that it was possible to ensure that students were in agreement with each method of supplementation; those who wrote English summaries agreed that this was an effective plan, and those who had their errors corrected were unanimous in their desire to receive grammar correction. In a sense, this loaded the study for success, reducing the chance that a negative result was due to students' discomfort with the method used.

## METHOD

### Subjects

Participants in this study were 104 first-year female English majors in an extensive reading (ER) class at a junior college in Osaka, Japan. All were 18 or 19 years old and had six years of secondary education that included English as a foreign language classes that met three to four times per week. Their average scores on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) were 123.64 ( $SD = 35.19$ ) for the reading section and 153.62 ( $SD = 47.51$ ) for the listening section out of a possible score of 495 for each section. The TOEFL equivalent of the total score would be approximately 351- 371 (Axe & Belle, 2004). The extensive reading class was required for English majors.

### Treatments

All participants were enrolled in eight classes per week. Six out of the eight were identical; all focused on listening and speaking, all were taught in English by native speakers of English, and all used the same textbooks and the same audio tapes. Subjects also were enrolled in either a grammar or phonology class that was taught in Japanese. The eighth class was the Extensive Reading (ER) class which was held once a week.

ER students were asked to read 1,000 pages (about 250,000 words) from graded readers each semester. At the

beginning of the study, subjects read an orientation booklet written by the author and viewed a video that explained the program. Almost 100% of the students stated that they understood the significance of the program and would attempt to do the reading.

Most of the books used in the study were graded readers, books written especially for students acquiring English as a foreign or second language. A total of approximately 5000 books were made available to the students (five to ten copies of each title), and arranged according to reading level. The collection included all graded readers, from the lowest to the highest level, from the Heinemann ELT Graded Readers series, the Oxford Bookworm series, and the Longman Originals series. In addition, some books written for young adult native speakers were included (e.g. Anne Schraff's books, published by the Perfection Form Company). All participants started reading the beginning level graded readers (600 word level) and gradually moved up to higher level readers (1100, 1600, and 2200 word levels) and then to the books written for young adult native speakers.

Reading was done mostly at home. Students were required to keep a record of the reading they did outside of school, including the number of pages read,

and to submit a notebook every week in which they wrote a brief summary for each book they read. The normal procedure was to require that this summary be written in English. Students were instructed not to copy from the book they read, but to summarize the story in their own words. They also wrote their reflections on the content of what they read and wrote comments about their progress in reading in Japanese.

After two weeks, listening to stories was incorporated into the extensive reading class. Listening to stories provides comprehensible input for the development of overall language competence, including listening and vocabulary (Allen & Allen, 1985; Elley, 1989; Brett, Rothlein, & Hurley, 1996; Vivas, 1996). The classroom procedure and the stories were the same for all the classes.

The Extensive Reading classes formed themselves into three experimental groups in the following manner: A few weeks after the beginning of classes in April, the students in one class (henceforth class JSG, Japanese Summary Group) requested that they write their summaries in Japanese rather than English, because they felt that it was too difficult to write in English. Another class (henceforth class CORRECTION) requested that

their English summaries be corrected. Other classes did not request anything beyond the required work. A third class (henceforth class ESG, English Summary Group) was selected to be a third experimental group that would write their summaries in English. Class ESG was chosen because classes JSG, COR and ESG all met in the afternoon. Thus, the three groups were: (a) a group that read extensively and wrote book summaries in Japanese (JSG: Japanese Summary Group,  $n = 34$ ), (b) a group that read extensively and wrote book summaries in English (ESG: English Summary Group,  $n = 34$ ), and (c) a group that read extensively, wrote book summaries in English, received corrective feedback from a native speaker of English, rewrote the corrected summaries, and submitted the rewritten summary (Correction Group,  $n = 36$ ). Thus, participants in this study chose their treatment, and were not forced to do anything that they did not agree to do.

An experienced teacher, a native speaker of British English with a master's degree in Second Language Acquisition provided corrective feedback on the summaries written by the correction group. He had been at this junior college for over ten years. We agreed on the following points regarding the feedback. Following common practice, he would:

(a) concentrate on global errors that affect overall meaning and

organization,

(b) mark the error and sometimes supply the correct form, and sometimes not, using his own judgment as to whether it was necessary to provide the form,

(c) indicate when he did not understand the story line,

(d) note whether the story was coherent or complete,

(e) point out grammatical errors that he feels are necessary for the learner to pay attention to, but

(f) not correct every grammatical error.

Errors were corrected 25 times over three semesters for participants in the Correction group who submitted summaries.

## Reliability of

## Corrective Feedback

To investigate the consistency and the systematicity of the corrections, summaries written by first year female students at the same junior college ( $N$

= 29) who were not in this study were used. The students' English proficiency was assumed to be approximately the same as the participants in this study. The instructor was asked to correct their summaries as he had corrected those written by the participants in the study.

The students were first provided with several different graded readers at the 600 word level, which was considered to be easily within their reading

competence, and were asked to choose one to read. All consisted of a short story of about 2000 to 2500 words in length. Students read for about 15 to 20 minutes. They then wrote a summary of the story they read in English. Students had plenty of time to write the summary, about 90 minutes including the reading time. These conditions were thus similar to the conditions used in the actual study.

The instructor corrected the same papers twice, with the second grading occurring one month after the first. As shown in table 1, the instructor corrected fewer errors the first time (267) than in the second (470). The kinds of corrections

**TABLE 1.**  
**Types of Correction at**  
**Two Different Times**

	Dec. 1999	Jan. 2000
Types of correction	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
Spelling	77 (29%)	88 (19%)
Articles	48 (18%)	77 (16%)
Tense	48 (18%)	58 (12%)
Prepositions	21 (8%)	40 (9%)
Misuse of Words	16 (6%)	33 (7%)
Infinitive	16 (6%)	23 (5%)
Plural	8 (3%)	23 (5%)
Other grammar forms	33 (12%)	128 (27%)
Total	267 (100%)	470 (100%)

made, however, were very similar, confirming that correction was consistent (for additional details, see Mason, 2003).

## Measures

The measures used were a 100-item cloze test (test-retest reliability = .87), the reading section of the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) test (KR21 = .96), and the number of error free clauses made per 100 words in writing (inter-rater  $r = .90$ ). The same measures were used at the beginning and end of the study; the cloze passage used was identical, but an alternate form of the TOEIC was used, and the prompt (story) for the pre and post writing samples differed. The cloze-test was marked using approximate word scoring, and spelling errors were not counted as errors.

To generate a writing sample for the error-free clause calculation, students were asked to read a short story (about 2500 words in length), and write a summary in English. The pretest prompt was taken from a story at the 600-word level and the posttest prompt was from an ungraded text. The following is an excerpt from the ungraded text,

Poor little Lisa, how she cried! All she had left were the little red hood, and her pretty red shoes. She had given away all her other

things. She had even lost her basket! She must have forgotten to pick it up when the bear frightened her. As the shadows grew darker and darker in the big black forest, she tried hard to be brave and to keep on walking. The stars twinkled brightly in the black sky while the Old Man in the Moon smiled kindly down on her. Tired out, she sat down on a big stone to rest.

(“Little Lisa,” Nerman, 1955)

Students were asked how much time it took them to read the prompt after the post-test; the average was about 30 minutes, and analysis of variance revealed no significant difference among the three groups. Students were also asked how many pages they had read at the end of each semester, and how much time they had spent reading and writing English summaries.

At the end of the third semester, students were asked a) Do you think your writing ability improved? b) Did summary writing assignment hinder your reading? c) Did you sometimes copy from a book when you wrote a summary? d) How much did you copy (0%, 5%, 25%, 50% and 90%)? e) Should we continue

writing summaries in English? f) Was writing summaries in English more tiring than reading?

The research hypotheses for this study were that there would be no statistically significant differences among the groups on the mean score of the cloze posttest, the reading section of the TOEIC posttest, and on error free clauses per 100 words on the writing posttest. The alpha level was set at .01, as multiple ANOVAs were used for the analyses. Threats to validity such as maturation exist in longitudinal research, but this research was continued for three semesters because error correction feedback might need a long amount of time to have an effect on grammatical accuracy in writing (Franzen, 1995; Rod Ellis, personal communication, 1999).

## RESULTS

### Cloze Tests

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics. A one-way ANOVA showed that there was no significant difference among the groups on the pretest,  $F(2, 93) = 1.514$ ,  $p = .225$ . A tests (pretest/posttest) by

groups (three levels) repeated-measures two-way analysis of variance showed that there was a statistically significant difference within the participants,  $F(1, 91) = 359.274$ ,  $p = .000$ , indicating that all groups improved significantly across the pretest and the posttest. No statistically significant differences were found among the groups,  $F(2, 91) = 1.909$ ,  $p = .154$ . In addition, the interaction was not significant,  $F(2, 91) = .549$ ,  $p = .580$  (Table 3). (Sample sizes are slightly different for pre and

	Pretest	<i>n</i>	Posttest	<i>n</i>	Gain
Group	<i>M (SD)</i>		<i>M (SD)</i>		
JSG	30.63(7.70)	31	45.43(6.90)	32	14.80
ESG	28.42(8.07)	29	42.42(6.60)	33	14.00
Correction	27.00(8.56)	36	42.97(8.04)	36	15.97

JSG = Japanese summary group  
ESG = English summary group

post-tests because of student absences.) [As an additional check on whether summary

writing was related to increases in proficiency, a comparison was made between those in the Correction group who submitted the most summaries (6 to 8 the first semester and 4 to 8 the second;  $n = 10$ ) and those who submitted the least (none to 3 each semester,  $n = 8$ ). The more diligent students made better gains (15% increase in number of error-free clauses compared to a 5% gain)



**TABLE 3****Repeated-Measures Two-Way Analysis of Variance on the Cloze Test**

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	2	338.82	169.41	1.91	.15
Within	1	10351.37	10351.37	359.27	.00
Interaction	2	31.61	15.80	.55	.58
Total	5	10721.80			

but the 15% gain was nearly identical to the gain of the Japanese-summary group (13%) who wrote no summaries in English. Also, it is possible that those who wrote the most summaries also were more diligent in doing the reading. In addition, the fact remains that overall, the group writing no summaries in English (Japanese summary group) made the most progress.]

**TOEIC**

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics. A one-way ANOVA showed that there was no statistically significant difference

among the groups on the TOEIC pretest,  $F(2, 94) = 1.82, p = .17$ . A tests (two tests) by groups (three levels) repeated-measures two-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference within the participants,  $F(1, 85) = 53.71, p = .00$ , showing that all groups gained, but there was no statistically significant difference among the groups,  $F(2, 85) = 2.25, p = .11$ , and the interaction was not significant.  $F(2, 85) = .20, p = .82$

**TABLE 4****Descriptive Statistics for the Reading Section of the TOEIC Pretest and Posttest**

Group	Pretest	<i>n</i>	Posttest	<i>n</i>	Gain
	<i>M (SD)</i>		<i>M (SD)</i>		
JSG	129.83(33.04)	30	163.50(38.03)	30	33.67
ESG	112.66(36.42)	30	146.83(43.77)	30	34.17
Correction	121.78(25.06)	28	162.32(53.99)	28	40.54

JSG = Japanese summary group ESG = English summary group

**TABLE 5**  
**Repeated-Measures Two-Way Analysis for Variance on the TOEIC**

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	2	9151.76	4574.88	2.25	.11
Within	1	57353.69	57353.69	53.71	.00
Interaction	2	420.08	210.04	.20	.82
Total	5	66925.58			

(Table 5).

### **Error Free Clause Test**

Table 6 presents descriptive statistics for the number of error free clauses written in 100 words.

**TABLE 6**  
**Descriptive Statistics for the Error Free Clause Ratio Data**

	Pretest	<i>n</i>	Posttest	<i>n</i>	Gain
Group	<i>M (SD)</i>		<i>M (SD)</i>		
JSG	8.95 (3.56)	34	12.19(2.67)	32	3.24
ESG	8.05 (4.25)	34	10.37(2.87)	33	2.32
Correction	9.62 (3.26)	36	11.30(1.87)	36	1.67

JSG = Japanese summary group

ESG = English summary group

A one-way ANOVA showed no statistically significant differences among the groups,  $F(2,101) = 1.58, p = .21$  on the number of error free clauses per 100 words on the pretest. A tests (pretest/posttest) by groups (three levels) repeated-measures ANOVA showed that there was a statistically significant difference within the participants ( $p = .00$ ), but no statistically significant difference among the groups ( $p = .05$ ) (Table 7). All groups improved to the same degree.

### **Time Spent Reading**

The participants reported approximately how much time they spent reading per week. The Japanese summary writing group spent the least amount of time reading books in English (Table 9), and the Correction group devoted the most time to

reading. This result is consistent with results regarding the number of pages read.

### **Time Spent Writing**

The English summary group reported that they spent about 2.2 hours per week the first and second semesters and 1.78 hours per week the third semester writing summaries. Participants in the Correction group reported that they spent about 2 hours per week the first and second semester and 2.53 hours per week the third semester doing the same task (Table 10). If their reports are accurate, multiplying the number of hours by the total number of weeks in the three semesters (45 weeks) means that both the English Summary and Correction groups spent about 100 hours writing and rewriting in English, while the Japanese summary writing group spent no time writing in English.

The Correction group spent a total of about 300 hours (297.51) reading and writing and the English summary group spent about 260 hours (259.98), while the Japanese summary group spent about 151 hours (150.750) reading and no time writing in English.

### **Efficiency per Hour**

Table 11 presents the relative efficiency of the three groups. In each case, the gain scores were divided by the number of total hours spent for English study. The JSG was about twice as efficient as the other two groups on all three

measures.

### **Response to Questions**

In response to the questions asked at the end of the study (Table 12), two-thirds of the participants in the Japanese summary and the Correction groups felt that they had improved in writing, and more than half of the participants in the English summary group also felt that they improved (Question 1). However, nearly half of the participants in both English summary group and Correction group felt that summary assignment in English hindered their reading (Question 2) and about half felt that it was more tiring than reading (Question 6). Furthermore, two-thirds of the participants in English and Correction groups said that they had copied from a book when they wrote a summary (Question 3), and a significant amount of the work written by the participants in both English summary and Correction groups was not their own (Question 4). Nevertheless, 65% of the participants from English summary and Correction groups believed that they should write summaries in English after reading (Question 5). It was observed that the rate of summary submission for the Correction group decreased from 60% to 30% towards the end of the study even though all students in the Correction group agreed to correct their papers and hand in revisions. The rate of summary submission for the other two groups also decreased about the same amount.

**TABLE 7**  
**.A Repeated-Measures Two-Way Analysis of Variance on the EFC per 100 words Ratio Data**

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	2	78.702	39.352	3.193	.05
Within	1	291.829	291.829	38.334	.00
Interaction	2	19.618	9.808	1.288	.28

### Pages Read

The groups read about the same number of pages during the first and second semesters, but in the third semester, the Correction group read more than the other groups (Table 8).

**TABLE 8**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Number of Pages Read**

Group		Semester			Total
		1st	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3rd	
<b>JSG</b>					
	<i>M</i>	965.09	591.67	663.53	2220.29
	<i>SD</i>	364.32	295.95	283.44	
	<i>n</i>	33	34	32	
<b>ESG</b>					
	<i>M</i>	912.86	459.76	871.84	2244.46
	<i>SD</i>	154.95	266.98	214.98	
	<i>n</i>	33	30	31	
<b>Correction</b>					
	<i>M</i>	954.06	572.42	941.14	2467.61
	<i>SD</i>	156.78	199.20	140.23	
	<i>n</i>	36	36	36	

JSG = Japanese summary group

ESG = English summary group

**TABLE 9****Descriptive Statistics for Hours Spent on Reading per Week and Total Hours**

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Total</i>
JSG	3.35	1.01	30	150.75
ESG	3.71	1.38	21	167.13
Correction	4.44	1.57	35	199.94

JSG = Japanese summary group

ESG = English summary group

**TABLE 10****Reported Hours Spent per Week Writing Summaries in English**

Group	Semester		
	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> ( <i>n</i> )	3 <sup>rd</sup> ( <i>n</i> )	Total
ESG	2.20 (20)	1.78	92.75 (45 weeks)
Correction	1.99 (35)	2.53	97.58 (45 weeks)

ESG = English summary group

**TABLE 11**  
**Efficiency per Hour**

Group	Cloze	TOEIC Reading	Error Free Clause
JSG (151 hours)	.098	.223	.021
ESG (260 hours)	.054	.131	.008
Correction (298 hours)	.054	.136	.006

**TABLE 12: Responses to the questions**

(1) Do you think your writing ability improved?

Group	Yes	No	I don't know	No Response	Total
JSG	25(74%)	9(26%)	-		34(100%)
ESG	22(58%)	11(29%)	-	5(13%)	38(100%)
Correction	25(74%)	7(21%)	-	2(5%)	34(100%)

(2) Did summary writing assignment hinder your reading?

Group	Yes	No	I don't know	No Response	Total
JSG	14(42%)	20(58%)	-		34(100%)
ESG	16(42%)	17(45%)	-	5(13%)	38(100%)
Correction	18(53%)	13(38%)	1(3%)	2(6%)	34(100%)

(3) Did you sometimes copy from a book when you wrote a summary?

Group	Yes	No	I don't know	No Response	Total
ESG	25(66%)	7(18%)	-	6(16%)	38(100%)
Correction	22(65%)	9(26%)	-	3(9%)	34(100%)

(4) How much did you copy?

Group	0%	5%	25%	50%	90%	No Response	Total
ESG		20(53%)	13(34%)	1(3%)	0	4(10%)	38(100%)
Correction	5(15%)	14(41%)	11(32%)	1(3%)	0	3(9%)	34(100%)

(5) Should we continue writing summaries in English?

Group	Yes	No	Total
ESG	24(63%)	14(37%)	38(100%)
Group	Yes	No	Total
ESG	24(63%)	14(37%)	38(100%)
Correction	22(65%)	12(35%)	34(100%)

(6) Was writing summaries in English more tiring than reading?

Group	Yes	No	No Response	Total
ESG	19(50%)	13(34%)	6(16%)	38(100%)
Correction	19(56%)	13(38%)	2(6%)	34(100%)

JSG = Japanese summary group    ESG = English summary group

## DISCUSSION

All three groups in this study improved significantly, but there were no significant differences among the groups in gains. The group that wrote summaries in Japanese, their first language, was the most efficient, making the greatest gains in terms of points gained for the time devoted to English.

As noted earlier, those who wrote English summaries said that they desired this kind of supplementation before the treatment began. When the treatment was over, most students in these groups still felt that summary writing was helpful (table 12). But a large percentage felt that writing summaries hindered their reading, that it was tiring, and about two-thirds of the English summary writers admitted that they sometimes copied part of their summary. All groups, including those who wrote summaries in Japanese, handed in fewer summaries as the treatment progressed.

These results do not definitely demonstrate that output and output plus correction are always ineffective. It is of course possible that there simply wasn't enough output or correction or that the means employed were not optimal.

It may be the case that output must be "comprehensible output" (Swain, 1985; but see Krashen, 2003), done in a way to encourage feedback on meaning. According to the Comprehensible Output hypothesis, output helps language ac-

quisition when listeners or readers fail to understand the message, forcing the language acquirer to try again, with an improved version. This kind of communicative pressure was not employed in this study.

It may be the case that the correction done needed to be more "selective, prioritized, and clear" (Ferris, 1999; but see Truscott, 1999), that is, focused on certain rules, with some corrections given higher priority, and done in a way that makes it obvious what the problem is and what needs to be done to repair the error. In this study, correction was, at times, confined to only pointing out that an error was made, and at other times included the correct form. Correction was quite consistent, but was not directed at certain points of grammar to the exclusion of other points.

What we can conclude, however, is that output in the form of summary writing, with and without the kind of correction usually provided in language classes, did not add to the power of reading.

Insisting that output must be accompanied by feedback on communicative success, and/or that error correction needs to be done in a precise manner is equivalent to saying that extraordinary efforts on the parts of students and teachers are necessary to improve on the power of reading, a conclusion that leaves unexplained the fact that so many have acquired significant amounts of language without them.

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# *Teachers' Voices in EFL Teacher Training: Reactions to a Sustained Silent Reading Experience*

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**Purpose of the study:** Because of the increased need for teachers of English as a foreign language in Korea, the Korean government has supported training programs designed to help subject matter teachers become EFL teachers. The goals of the training programs are to introduce elementary English teaching methods to motivate English language development in children and to improve the English language competence of the teachers themselves.

This paper is the second in a series in which I describe the impact of one activity done in a class on EFL reading in which teachers were provided with a sustained silent reading (SSR) experience. The goal of the activity was to expose teachers to the advantages of including free reading in their EFL classes.

**Participants:** The subjects were the same 86 elementary school teachers described in Cho and Krashen (2001). All had taken English as a foreign language classes, beginning at grade seven and lasting until college, and 36 of the teachers had previously taught EFL. Class discussion revealed that the teachers were, in general, enthusiastic about improving their English, but very few did any recreational reading in English.

**Procedures:** The study was a single reading experience that lasted for two hours. The subjects were divided into groups of four and each group was seated at a different reading table. Each group received about 80 books, which were placed in a basket on each table, and some books were displayed in front of the class. The reading materials included approximately 400 children's books, all written at elementary levels. The subjects were told that they could read whatever they wanted to read, and were not obligated to finish a book they had started. If a book was interesting, they were asked to recommend it to others in their group.

**Data Analyses:** Immediately after doing the reading, subjects were asked to fill out a questionnaire (in Korean). Questions probed reading habits, interest in reading, the impact of the reading experience, and the teachers' plans for using reading in the future. In addition, the teachers were asked to reflect on and write about their reactions to the reading time. These reflections were done as homework. All descriptive research data was collected from the retrospective essays written by the teachers after the two-hour free-reading experience. The data was organized by the themes most frequently cited by the teachers. The following quotations represent the tone of the reactions from the group.

## Results

### I. The reading experience itself resulted in an increase in interest in reading

As noted earlier, very few of the teachers had a recreational reading habit in English: 92% (79/86) said that they did not read in English for pleasure (see also Cho and Krashen, 2001).

The session was successful: Nearly all (95% or 82/86) said that they enjoyed the two-hour session, 98% (84/86) said that the reading experience motivated them to read more and 99% (85/86) said that they intended to implement an SSR program in their class if books and time were available (Cho and Krashen, 2001).

### II. Factors affecting interest in reading

**Previous EFL Reading Experiences:** Nearly all of the teachers said that their previous reading experiences in English were unpleasant, difficult and uninteresting ("When I was told that we would have a reading session, I felt as if a heavy load had been put on my mind"; translation into English from Korean by the author). Previous reading experiences in English consisted nearly entirely of less than exciting passages from EFL texts as well as difficult supplementary readers, and were always accompanied by a dictionary. The grammar-translation method had been used, and, as a result, the teachers had developed a negative attitude toward reading in English.

### Interesting and Comprehensible Texts:

In contrast to their previous reading experiences, the teachers said the SSR session was their first experience reading interesting and comprehensible books in English. After the reading session, dramatic changes in attitude toward English could be seen in nearly all of the teachers' reaction papers.

*"Truthfully, when I was informed of the two-hour reading session in English, I didn't have any expectations about it, thinking it would be just another boring two-hour class. But what a meaningful time it was! I developed a totally a new perspective towards reading education during the reading time. . . I realized how important real experience is, just like the old saying, "one experience can't compare with listening to a description a hundred times."*

*". . . I doubted if anything could be different from the English reading I did in school, so I was not enthusiastic about books. However, my thinking changed 360 degrees after I started reading . . . Above all, I was hooked on books without knowing the time was passing by. I can imagine that the children in my class would love these books. . . I saw so many different kinds of books. I started reading books one by one, but I was getting nervous about not being able to see all of the books in the time given to us, so I flipped through books to see as many as possible . . . There were so many good books, but I don't remember all of them because I read so many . . ."*

In contrast to their previous reading experiences with unmotivating texts, teachers reacted to reading texts as follow:

*"This is my first experience reading books in English. I chose books that looked interesting: Stone Soup, The Gingerbread Man, Danger, and Imogene's Antlers made me curious. Of course, not all the books that I read were interesting, some were boring, but most were well written with interesting facts and lessons for daily life. 'The Magic School Bus' was very interesting, and it showed me that I could acquire scientific terminology and knowledge easily through interesting settings, knowledge which might be hard to learn in a traditional way. 'I Like Me' was not just an English book. It made me think about myself. They were meaningful texts. I also learned about Monet's life and something about his art work through the 'Monet' book"*

**Access to Books.** The teachers had not had access to interesting books either in class or outside of class before the two-hour experience and they had not known that there were so many interesting books available in English. Teachers reported that were motivated to read by seeing such a wide variety of books in English:

*"Seeing all of those English books made me want to read right away, just to see what kinds of books they were. The books displayed on the tables stimulated my curiosity and immediate desire to read..."*

*"For the first time since I was born, I am really thankful that I was introduced to interesting books. I am very interested in reading now, and I learned what kinds of books are interesting; and I could sense the kinds of books my students would like to read."*

**Self-Selection:** The teachers self-selected their reading; nothing was required. The teachers told us that the fact that they could choose their own reading was a strong motivator and contributed to a relaxed atmosphere.

*"I was impressed by the free reading opportunity. We were not forced to read during a whole reading class. We moved around freely and there were no restrictions. The free-reading activity showed me that English reading should be a voluntary activity, . . . it should not be forced."*

*"There were books in a basket, and a variety of books were displayed in the classroom. During the two-hour SSR time, we could choose books that we wanted to read. It was the least stressful class among all the training classes that I have taken."*

*"In SSR, children don't have to be aware of what the other children are reading, and whether the books (that they are reading) are harder or easier. Rather, they select books at their own level and read comfortably without any stress or resistance. In doing SSR continuously, self-confidence will grow."*

### III. Benefits and New Understandings

**Language Acquisition Experience:** The reading experience gave the teachers an education on the linguistic benefits of free reading. Most of the teachers,

thanks to the SSR experience, came to the realization that language can be acquired naturally through reading, in contrast to the conscious learning and direct instruction that they had experienced in the past in EFL classes.

*“I think that I could acquire vocabulary, grammar, and structures through reading books without much effort, . . . while studying grammar makes me bored and makes me tired very easily.”*

*“Linguistic elements will be acquired in a natural way. Vocabulary can be acquired from reading, and you can increase your word power and knowledge of English structures and grammar from reading . . . But this is not conscious learning. This way you improve your language in a natural way.”*

The teachers began to realize that their students could acquire language through SSR without explicit explanation:

*“ . . . When students do SSR, we do not have to explain difficult grammar; instead, the students will acquire language because they are provided with a self-learning opportunity. In this way the teacher’s work load will be reduced.”*

Some teachers commented that conversational language could be improved through reading: “. . . I discovered conversational language that I could use from the books, . . . useful vocabulary and expressions, those that native speakers of English use, were in the books that I read during SSR.”

### **Lowered Anxiety and Increased Confidence:**

Fear, anxiety, and resistance to reading in English were reduced, and the teachers’ confidence in reading increased. The teachers anticipated positive reactions from their students if they were able to provide them with interesting books:

*“If children read interesting and easy books, they will have less fear of English than our generation had. For us, books in English were difficult and boring. If the children have less fear, they will learn more English.”*

*“This was the first SSR session that I had experienced. It was an interesting method of learning*

*English. It was especially important for me because I am not confident about teaching. It gave me a clear direction in English reading education and a feeling of confidence.”*

### **The Importance of a Print-rich Environment:**

Participants realized that a print-rich environment was an important factor in motivating reading:

*“While reading interesting and easy books that made me learn and think more, I realized I had had the wrong idea about reading in English, and regretted not having this kind of experience much earlier. Through this reading experience I learned a lot, and not only about language acquisition. I now understand the importance of the reading environment. I think that I can be a good teacher who can provide a better learning environment for my students by providing them with their own SSR experience.”*

This single SSR experience made most teachers rethink their view of EFL reading education:

*“I don’t want our children to follow the same path that we did. I want to provide an environment wherein they can learn English naturally while they are young. But it is difficult to do in practice. From this training program, I learned one good method: SSR. In SSR, I did lots of thinking that I hadn’t done before. I realized how important the language environment is. I didn’t think about it seriously before because I hadn’t experienced it. I am planning to use SSR with for my students, and I already feel excited about it; I would do it during the self-learning time every morning.”*

### **Implications**

The findings reveal that most of our teachers do not read for pleasure in English, because they have not had successful reading experiences with English and because of a lack of access to interesting reading material. The experience of doing self-selected reading for only two hours resulted in a substantial change in attitudes toward English reading, as well as the discovery of the value of reading in English.

Access to interesting and comprehensible books stimulated an interest in reading. Self-selected reading alleviated a great deal of the teachers’ anxiety, and gave them increased motivation and confidence in

English.

The teachers felt that language improvement could occur through reading easy and enjoyable texts. Our readers' conclusions were similar to those presented by Krashen (2004). As a result of their positive SSR experiences, the teachers became interested in reading and eager to implement free reading in their classes.

***The findings reveal that most of our teachers do not read for pleasure in English, because they have not had successful reading experiences with English and because of a lack of access to interesting reading material.***

This study suggests that simply providing a large variety of interesting books can motivate reading. It also confirms that an actual reading experience is an excellent way to help readers understand that reading itself contributes to language development.

Free reading may indeed be part of the solution to a problem faced world-wide. With the increasing spread of English as a lingua franca, and the recognized importance of English, there is considerable pressure to increase the number of qualified English teachers. Local teachers often lack sufficient confidence, and even those who are confident have difficulty maintaining their competence and developing it further. Free reading is a simple, pleasurable, and inexpensive way of helping less confident teachers reach a satisfactory level of competence. It provides a continuing source of language input, even when there is limited access to an English environment and native speakers.

Free reading also helps to solve a problem many teachers face: variation in student's English level. When students self-select, each reader automatically is reading at his or her level, as one of our teachers pointed out in this study.

It is remarkable that reading is used so little in EFL teaching, both in actual classes, and in teacher education. A single positive experience may not always be enough to stimulate a reading habit, but it certainly resulted in a deeper understanding and enthusiasm for reading in the teachers in this study. An obvious implication of these results is that more teachers

of foreign languages need to experience the pleasure of self-selected and interesting reading.

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# *Applying the Comprehension Hypothesis: Some Suggestions*

Stephen Krashen

Presented at 13th International Symposium and Book Fair on Language Teaching (English Teachers Association of the Republic of China), Taipei, Taiwan, November, 13, 2004.

This paper consists of three parts: (1) A brief review of the Comprehension Hypothesis; (2) How the Comprehension Hypothesis helps settle some seemingly never-ending controversies in the field; and (3) some ideas for application to the English as a foreign language situation.

## **THE COMPREHENSION HYPOTHESIS**

My goal in this paper is to discuss some possible pedagogical applications of the Comprehension Hypothesis, a hypothesis I consider to be the core of current language acquisition theory.

The Comprehension Hypothesis states that we acquire language when we understand messages, when we understand what people tell us and when we understand what we read.

The Comprehension Hypothesis also applies to literacy: Our reading ability, our ability to write in an acceptable writing style, our spelling ability, vocabulary knowledge, and our ability to handle complex syntax is the result of reading.

Until a few years ago, I referred to this hypothesis as the Input Hypothesis, a term I still consider to be acceptable. I have come to prefer Comprehension Hypothesis, because it more accurately reflects what the hypothesis says.

The Comprehension Hypothesis is not new with me. In the field of second language acquisition, James Asher and Harris Winitz discussed the importance of comprehension years before I did. In the field of read-

ing instruction, Kenneth Goodman and Frank Smith hypothesized that “we learn to read by reading,” “we learn to read by understanding what is on the page.” The Comprehension Hypothesis is not a wild idea, the result of staying up all night drinking cheap wine. It is, rather, conservative, an effort to make sense of and be consistent with a wide body of academic research. For a hypothesis to survive, it must be consistent with all the research: there can be no exceptions. I have argued that this has been exactly the case with respect to the Comprehension Hypothesis: It is consistent with research in several different fields and continues to be validated, and potential counterexamples have been easily dealt with. I will not review this research here; some of it has been presented at ETA meetings in the past (Krashen, 2002a) and in detail in several books (e.g. Krashen, 2002b).

The Comprehension Hypothesis is closely related to other hypotheses. The Comprehension Hypothesis refers to subconscious acquisition, not conscious learning. The result of providing acquirers with comprehensible input is the emergence of grammatical structure

***The Comprehension Hypothesis states that we acquire language when we understand messages, when we understand what people tell us and when we understand what we read.***

in a predictable order. A strong affective filter (e.g. high anxiety) will prevent input from reaching those parts of the brain that do language acquisition. Note that if we ignore the Comprehension Hypothesis, that is, provide students with incomprehensible input, and force early speaking, we will raise students Affective Filters.

The Monitor Hypothesis is also related. The Monitor Hypothesis claims that there are severe limits to the application of consciously learned grammatical rules: learners need to know the rule (a formidable constraint) learners need to be focused on form or thinking about correction, and they need to have time to apply the rules. The only time all three conditions are met for most people is when they take a grammar test; even so, when we examine the impact of grammar study on grammar test performance, it is very modest (Krashen, 2002b). This confirms that our competence comes from comprehension of messages, not grammar study.

## THE VALUE OF GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

The Comprehension Hypothesis claims that language acquisition does not happen when we learn and practice grammar rules. Language acquisition only happens when we understand messages. This has, of course, been questioned in recent years, as a stream of papers have appeared in the professional journals claiming that grammar instruction is helpful. I am pleased that these studies are being done: What was once an axiom is now a testable hypothesis.

In my reviews of these studies, I have concluded that they confirm the correctness of the Comprehension and Monitor Hypotheses: they show only that even after substantial grammar study, even very motivated students show only modest gains in accuracy, and these gains occur only on measures that encourage a focus on form. Truscott (1998) has arrived at very similar conclusions.

Some have interpreted this position as a claim that all grammar teaching is forbidden. Not so. There are two good reasons for including grammar in the EFL curriculum.

The first is for “language appreciation,” otherwise known as “linguistics.” Linguistics includes language universals, language change, dialects, etc. The second is to fill gaps left by incomplete acquisition and places in which idiolects differ from the prestige dialect. Society’s standards for accuracy, especially in writing, are 100%: We are not allowed “mistakes” in punctuation, spelling or grammar. One public error, in fact, can result in humiliation. Even well-read native speakers have gaps, places where their grammatical competence differs from accepted use.

Consciously learned rules can fill some of these gaps, which are typically in aspects of language that do not affect communication of messages. The place to use this knowledge is in the editing stage of the composing process, when appealing to conscious rules will not interfere with communication.

I recommend delaying the teaching of these rules until more advanced levels. I would first give acquisition a chance, and then use conscious knowledge to fill in some of the gaps. There is no sense teaching rules for Monitoring that will eventually be acquired.

Grammar, thus, is not excluded. It is, however, no longer the star player. It has only a supporting role.

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## CORRECTION

The correction controversy is closely related to the grammar controversy. As I understand it, correction helps us fine-tune and adjust our consciously learned grammar rules. In his review of the literature, Truscott (1996) has concluded that correction has no effect on grammatical accuracy; in a previous ETA paper, I also reviewed this research and came to similar conclusions: correction only seems to help when students are tested on tests in which the conditions for Monitor use appear to be met, e.g. a grammar test.

Another way of determining whether grammar correction is effective is to look at studies in which students are corrected on their writing and then are asked to rewrite

the same paper, taking the corrections into consideration. I have found four studies of this kind. In three studies, Fathman and Whalley (1990), Ashwell (2000), and Chandler (2003), subjects were fairly advanced students of EFL who had had considerable instruction in formal grammar, and who, we can assume, believed in conscious learning. In a fourth, Gascoigne (2004), subjects were first year university students in the US studying French. In these studies, the students had the advantage of having the corrections in front of them and had plenty of time. Because the paper was already written, students did not have to think about meaning at all but could focus on form, and they were graded on their grammatical accuracy. In these cases, correction was given the maximum chance to work; all conditions for the use of the conscious Monitor were met. Even under these optimal conditions, the impact of correction was very modest.

Subjects in Fathman and Whalley (1990) were intermediate ESL college students in the US. Students wrote compositions that described a series of pictures. We examine here two groups that were corrected: One group received correction only, the other correction plus feedback on content. Correction was limited to grammar, and consisted “solely of underlining all grammar errors (e.g. verb forms, tenses, articles, agreement). Thus students were told the location of their errors only and were not given information on the kinds of errors or shown the correct forms” (p. 182). Students wrote their compositions in class (they were given 30 minutes), the corrected versions were

returned “a few days later” (p. 182) and students were given 30 minutes to rewrite.

Students wrote approximately the same number of words on each version, about 220 words in the first draft and about 250 words in the corrected draft. As seen in table 1, they were able to correct only about

they made were in response to the corrections.

One of the conditions in Chandler (2003) also appears to be a case of students’ rewriting the same paper after correction. In this study, students were taking advanced ESL classes at a music conservatory in the US, and all “had had quite a bit of training in English

**Table 1: Percent of errors corrected: Fathman & Whalley (1990)**

	Number of errors before	Number of errors after	improvement	% corrected
grammar	11	4.2	6.8	62
grammar + content	21.1	11.1	10	47

half of their errors.

Ashwell (2000) compared the effect of correction on form with comments on content to determine if there was an optimal order (which should come first). Here, I focus only on the effect of correction, ignoring whether correction came before or after comments on form. I focus specifically on two of the subconditions. In both, subjects wrote 500 word compositions outside of class, and errors were then corrected, with correctors spending 12 minutes on each paper. The correc-

tion was “indirect feedback,” that is, “underlining or circling grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors or “using cursors to indicate omissions” (p. 233). Students had a full week to return their revised papers. The assignment was part of regular classwork. In both conditions, students were able to correct only about one third of their errors (table 2).

grammer” (p. 272). Students had every reason to be careful: Accuracy in writing was a component of their grade in the class. Students had several days to make corrections. Students wrote about eight pages of text and received four different kinds of feedback. In the “correction” condition (“full correction” in table 3), students were provided with the correct form, in the “underline” condition only the location of errors was indicated, as in the previous two studies. In the “describe” condi-

**Table 2: Percent of errors corrected: Ashwell**

	% errors before	after	improvement	% corrected
content then form	24.1	15.8	8.3	34
form then content	21.3	13.6	7.7	36

tion, a margin note was written indicating the kind of error made in the line in which it was made (e.g. “punc”), but the precise location was not given. All abbreviations had previously been explained in class and students received a list of the abbreviations. Finally, in the underline/describe condition, both the kind of error made and its precise location were indicated. As indicated in table 3, with full correction students were able to correct nearly 90% of their errors. It should be noted, however, that all students had to do was copy the teacher’s correction. The other condi-

Students clearly paid attention to the corrections. For all conditions of the study, students acted on 75% of the formal corrections, and 88% of the formal changes

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**Table 3: Errors per 100 words: Chandler (2003)**

	before	after	improvement	% corrected
full correction	10.1	1.1	9	89%
underline / describe	10.1	3.1	7	69%
describe	10.1	4.9	5.2	52%
underline only	10.1	4.6	5.5	54%

tions produce results that are quite similar to what we have seen before.

In Gascoigne (2004), first semester university students of French were asked to write four compositions. Each essay was connected to a unit and was designed to help students practice those rules presented in the unit. Students were given two days to make corrections, and had access

to the textbook during this time. Correction of grammar errors included information about the location of the error and a description of the error, and sometimes the correct form was provided. Gascoigne only gives two examples: "Pay attention to verb endings" and "Don't forget agreement."

Gascoligne concluded that correction had a "profound effect": 88% of corrections were successful, 8% led to an incorrect change, and only 3% were ignored.

### Summary of Correction Studies

These studies represent the most optimal conditions for correction to work: All students were university-level and were able to understand grammar. All were motivated to do well, in some cases grades were at stake. All had plenty of time, from 30 minutes to one week to make corrections and all had access to their grammar texts. All they were asked to do was rewrite their own corrected essay. Thus, all conditions for Monitor use were met.

When students are told only where the error is, they can only correct from 1/3 to 1/2 of their errors. They get better when given more information, but even

when they are given the actual rule, and need only copy, they still miss 10% of the errors. This is hardly a compelling case for correction.

Ferris (2004) claims that successful editing of one's text in the short term is "likely a necessary, or at least helpful, step on the road to longer term improvement in accuracy" (p. 54). It is considered a given that students' accuracy improves when editing from one

draft to the next. The "big question," according to Ferris, is whether correction helps students improve over time. My conclusion is that we have not even provided a positive answer to the

"little question," whether correction under optimal conditions works even in the short-term.

### THE ROLE OF OUTPUT

The Comprehension Hypothesis claims that we acquire language by input, not by output, a claim that is supported by studies showing no increase in acquisition with more output (Krashen, 2002b). Studies show, however, consistent increases in acquisition with more input.

This does not mean that output should be forbidden. Oral output (speaking) invites aural input, via conversation. If you talk, somebody might answer back. The Comprehension Hypothesis predicts, however, that the contribution of conversation to language acquisition is what the other person says to you, not what you say to them.

Comprehensible input-based methods encourage speaking but do not force it. Students are not called on; rather, participation is voluntary.

*Our goal in foreign language pedagogy is to bring students to the point where they are autonomous acquirers, prepared to continue to improve on their own.*



Written output, in addition to its communicative value, makes a profound contribution to thinking. In short, writing makes you smarter. As we write, as we put our ideas on paper and revise them, we come up with better ideas. When it does not happen, when we have “writing blocks,” it is often because we are not using what is called “the composing process,” strategies for using writing to come up with new ideas. Strategies included in the composing process are planning (but having flexible plans), being willing to revise, delaying editing, rereading what one has written, and allowing periods of “incubation” for new ideas to emerge (see Krashen, 2002b).

Many EFL classes include the composing process, but it is not clear if this is necessary or will always be necessary. There is some evidence that at least aspects of the composing process transfer across languages (Lee and Krashen, 2002); it may only be necessary to expose students to these ideas in the first language.

### **OUR GOAL: AUTONOMOUS ACQUIRERS**

We don't need return business in the language education profession. Our goal in foreign language pedagogy is to bring students to the point where they are autonomous acquirers, prepared to continue to improve on their own.

In terms of the Comprehension Hypothesis, an “autonomous acquirer” has two characteristics:

- The autonomous acquirer has acquired enough of the second language so that at least some authentic input is comprehensible, enough to ensure progress and the ability to acquire still more language.
- The autonomous acquirer will understand the language acquisition process. The autonomous acquirer will know that progress comes from comprehensible input, not from grammar study and vocabulary lists, and will understand ways of making input more comprehensible (e.g. getting background information, avoiding obviously incomprehensible input).

An autonomous acquirer is not a perfect speaker of the second language, just good enough to continue to improve without us. This is, of course, the goal of all education; not to produce masters but to allow people to begin work in their profession and to continue to grow.

### **THE USE OF THE FIRST LANGUAGE**

The Comprehension Hypothesis helps us with the issue of whether and how to use the student's first

language in foreign language education. The Comprehension Hypothesis predicts that the first language helps when it is used to make input more comprehensible: This happens when we use the first language to provide background information. This could be in the form of short readings or explanations by the teacher before a complex topic is presented. Information provided in the first language can help the same way pictures and realia can help at the beginning level, as context that makes input more comprehensible.

The Comprehension Hypothesis predicts that first language use can hurt when it is used in ways that do not encourage comprehensible input. This happens when we translate and students have no need to attend to the second language input.

Research from the field of bilingual education is consistent with these predictions. In general, bilingual programs have been shown to be quite successful in helping language minority children acquire the majority language. In these programs, literacy is developed in the primary language, which transfers to the second language, and subject matter is taught in the primary language in early stages to provide background knowledge (Krashen, 1996a). One version of bilingual education, however, “concurrent translation,” in which teachers present the same message in both languages using sentence-by-sentence translation, has not been shown to be effective (Legarreta, 1979).

The Comprehension Hypothesis thus predicts that a quality education in the primary language is an excellent investment for later second language development.

### **AGE: WHY OLDER IS FASTER**

The Comprehension Hypothesis helps us understand why older children acquire more quickly than younger children, and why, in early stages, adults are faster than children: Older acquirers, thanks to their superior knowledge of the world, understand more of the input they hear and read.

### **NARROW INPUT**

The Comprehension Hypothesis predicts that language acquisition will proceed more rapidly if input is “narrow,” that is, if acquirers obtain a great deal of input in a narrow range of subjects and gradually expand. This contrasts with the usual idea of the “survey” in which

students are given a short exposure to a wide variety of topics. The “survey” only ensures incomprehensible input. Staying “narrow” allows the acquirer to take advantage of background knowledge built up through the input.

The idea of narrow input began with narrow reading (Krashen, 1981), the suggestion that language acquirers stick to one author or genre and gradually branch out. It is supported by findings showing that better readers in English as a first language tend to read more series books (Lamme, 1976), as well as reports of progress made by female adult second language acquirers who read extensively from the Sweet Valley High series, a series written for girls (Cho and Krashen, 1995, 1995a, 1995b).

In narrow listening (Krashen, 1996b), acquirers listen to recordings of several speakers talking about the same topic, a topic of interest to the

acquirer. Ideally, the acquirer records the tape him/herself, from friends who speak the language. Acquirers then listen to the tape as many times as desired. 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. Narrow listening is a low-tech, inexpensive way to obtain comprehensible input.

Dupuy (1999) reported a clear increase in comprehensibility with repeated hearings of narrow listening tapes for students of French as a foreign language. Students did not record the native speakers themselves but could choose the topics. Intermediate students improved from about half to nearly full comprehensibility after three to four listenings. Rodrigo and Krashen (1996) reported that students of Spanish as a foreign language were enthusiastic about narrow listening: 92% said the activity was very interesting and beneficial. Their subjects reported that selecting their own topics and their own speakers was more effective and interesting than hearing pre-selected tapes in a classroom situation.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR APPLICATION

I outline below a possible application of the Compre-

hension Hypothesis and related hypotheses to the EFL situation.

### Orientation

One component of EFL needs to be orientation, a brief explanation of language acquisition theory. As noted earlier, our goal is to develop independent, or autonomous acquirers. Knowing how language is acquired will help ensure that this will occur. It is also important to tell students something about the philosophy underlying our practice because the approach outlined here is radically different from traditional approaches; we need to justify our pedagogy to students and, in some cases, to their parents.

*It is also important to tell students something about the philosophy underlying our practice because the approach outlined here is radically different from traditional approaches; we need to justify our pedagogy to students and, in some cases, to their parents.*

Orientation can be done in the primary language fairly early in the EFL student’s language career and can be covered in more detail at advanced

levels in English. S.Y. Lee (1998) included an introduction to language acquisition in an English course at the university level, with excellent results.

### A Program

Instruction begins at around ages 8 to 10, when the child is old enough to take advantage of knowledge gained in the first language and young enough to profit from the advantages of beginning as a child.

The suggestions below take advantage of the L1 to accelerate second language acquisition, and at the same time encourage full development of the first language. This happens in two ways: First, EFL does not dominate the school day. What is proposed is not a full immersion program but is just one subject. There is plenty of time in school available for study in the primary language, building subject matter knowledge, promoting cognitive development, and developing literacy, including mastering the composing process. Second, use of the first language is built into the EFL program in places where it will be helpful to provide background knowledge.

The program aims to develop autonomous acquirers, those with enough competence to understand at least some authentic input as well as knowledge of language acquisition theory so they know what to do to improve

and what to expect.

The focus of the program is literature and culture of the English-speaking world, which today is nearly the entire world. The “English-speaking world” does not include only countries in which English is an official language, but includes all “Englishes.”

The focus on literature and culture has several advantages. In addition to being educationally justified for its own sake, literature and culture include aspects of history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and philosophy.

In addition, this focus does not “compete” with subject matter teaching in the first language; in fact, it complements it, creating an opportunity for comparative studies. It also can create lifelong pleasure readers in English, ensuring continuing progress.

The program described below covers elementary school all the way to the university level.

### **Stage 1: Natural Approach and Graded Readers**

Aural comprehensible input will be provided, as is done in Natural Approach (Krashen and Terrell, 1983), Total Physical Response (Asher, 2000), and Total Physical Response Storytelling (Ray and Seely, 1998) methodology. Activities can include games, dance, sports and projects. The best activities are those in which students are completely absorbed, in a sense forgetting that they are using another language (for suggestions, see Brown and Palmer, 1988).

Stage 1 also includes reading: At this level, students read very easy texts, such as graded readers, language experience texts (story dictated by student to teacher, teacher writes out story), and newspapers written for EFL students. The only criterion for texts is that they be compelling. They need not provide cultural information or “make you a better person.” Some reading can be done as sustained silent reading, as students become independent readers.

### **Level 2: Light Reading**

The focus of level 2 is “light” authentic reading, that is, comics, graphic novels, and easy sections of the newspapers, with continuing reading of graded readers and books specially adapted for second language acquirers.

Class discussion includes the cultural background of some assigned readings as well as readings done in small groups (literature circles). Background readings

are provided in the first language when appropriate, e.g. comparison to similar genres in the first language. Class also includes teachers reading to the class from level 2 reading material as a means of providing additional comprehensible input and stimulating interest in books.

Sustained silent reading (SSR) is provided, about ten minutes per day. Students can read anything in English they like (within reason), including graded readers and other reading material from level 1. They are not “accountable” for what they read during SSR.

Some orientation can be done at this level, in the students’ first language. This will consist of a brief introduction to language acquisition theory or “how language is acquired,” illustrated by case histories of successful and unsuccessful second language acquisition.

The formal study of grammar can begin here, with a focus on aspects of grammar that are useful for editing. Instruction will also include the use of a grammar handbook and the spellcheck function of the computer.

### **Level 3: Popular Literature**

Reading at level 3 focuses on contemporary and light popular literature, including some current best sellers, popular magazines, and viewing of “lighter” films. Class discussion focuses on current culture and how values are expressed in current popular literature, e.g. gender roles, humor, how films and novels comment on issues of the day, the role of “gossip” magazines and newspapers, etc. SSR continues, again allowing students to select their own reading, which can include reading at “lower levels.”

Grammar study at this level can expand to include some “linguistics,” i.e. language universals and language change.

I predict that many students will be “autonomous” by this time, able to understand a considerable amount of input outside the classroom. Additional study of English after this level could be made optional, and/or move in other directions, that is, more specific to different professions and interests.

### **Level 4: Contemporary Serious Literature.**

This level includes the heavier and more “serious” works of current interest published in English, as well as films, newspapers, and literary and philosophical magazines. The approach will at first be “narrow,”

focusing on the work of one author or genre, e.g. the works of Kurt Vonnegut, plays by Neil Simon. As before, SSR can include lighter reading. Only after students have experienced several authors or genres in depth will the “survey” be done.

This level, and the next, can be repeated several times, focusing on different authors and genres.

At this stage, language acquisition theory can be done in some detail, reading original works in English.

### **Level 5: The Classics**

Students are now ready for “the classics,” literature written in very different eras. To help ensure comprehensibility, the approach will be “narrow,” with a focus on one author or one genre, eg the romance, the historical novel of a certain period (eg World War I, the Depression). Background readings in English and in the first language will also help increase comprehensibility. As before, the “survey” will only be done after students have experienced several authors or genres in depth.

### **Level 6: Comparative Literature**

Comparative literature emphasizes universals: universal themes, universal plots, universal characters, universals of morality and ethics.

### **A Necessary Condition**

Such a program will work, of course, only if a large supply of interesting reading is available, a super-library filled with books, comics, magazines, films and tapes. This is not an impossible dream. In fact, it would cost a lot less than we currently invest in computers, computers of dubious value and that become obsolete within a year or two.

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# *Effects of Heritage Language Competence on Family Relationships Among Children of Immigrants in the United States*

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## **Abstract**

Research suggests that language shift to the dominant language is common among language minority groups. Thus, the present study examined the reasons that children of immigrants lose or maintain their heritage language (HL), as well as the role that HL plays in the family, among various language minority groups in the United States. Specifically, the study examined the ways in which HL competence affects individuals and their relationships with their own family and extended family members and explored the motivation for and challenges of developing or maintaining HL. The findings showed that those who developed their HL interacted better with their own parents, extended family members, and relatives and further indicated that ethnic minority individuals may benefit from HL development. The results also suggested that, regardless of one's language background, the language shift to the dominant language (i.e., English) is a common phenomenon among children of immigrants and, as such, maintaining HL is a difficult task. These findings are discussed and the implications for HL education are presented.

I have many problems speaking with relatives and friends of my parents. It's quite frustrating because I am not able to say what I want. (Joyce)

Knowing Korean has never imposed any problems or conflicts on me. It has been very useful as I was able to communicate with my parents and help other students who just emigrated from Korea. It has also allowed me to talk to other Korean adults who didn't know much English. (Adam)

A heritage language (HL) is the language associated with one's cultural background and spoken by immi-

grants, but not necessarily by their children. Abundant research findings (e.g., Cummins, 1982, 1989, 1996; Ianco-Worrall, 1972; Hakuta & Diaz, 1985) suggest that knowing more than one language can be advantageous in terms of linguistic and cognitive growth, as well as in better academic performance. Research also has shown that maintaining one's HL, in addition to the dominant language (i.e., being bilingual), is beneficial. In a study of second-generation Korean and Chinese high school students, S.K. Lee (2002) found that the students who adapted to the mainstream culture, while preserving their language and culture, had superior academic achievement levels compared to those who assimilated to the values and lifestyles of the dominant culture, without maintaining their HL and culture. Oketani (1997) found that, among second-generation Japanese Canadian, being educated and developing proficiency in Japanese was associated with higher English proficiency and better educational outcomes.

One's HL can be an important part of identity formation and can help one retain a strong ethnic identity and sense of group membership with one's own ethnic group (Cho, Cho, & Tse, 1997; Feuerverger, 1991; Tse, 1996). For example, competence with one's HL has a positive effect on social interactions and relationships with HL speakers. In Cho's (2000) study, those who had developed their HL had greater understanding and knowledge of cultural values, ethics, and manners, which further enhanced their interactions and relationships with HL speakers. Moreover, HL maintenance PLAYS a significant ROLE in forming ethnic identities, even for third-generation immigrants in England (Mills, 2001).

Yet, being bilingual (i.e., maintaining one's HL while acquiring the dominant language) is not a common phenomenon among immigrant children, particularly in the U.S. Maintaining or developing one's HL is an arduous task for many children of immigrants. The children of current immigrants lose their HL in a few generations, a finding that has been well documented. In a comprehensive examination of the use and maintenance of HLs in Los Angeles, Lopez (1997) concluded that HLs "are hardly maintained at all beyond the immigrant generation" (p. 139). Further, in a previous study, Lopez (1982) concluded that few second-generation immigrants can be described as bilingual. According to Fillmore (2000)'S observations "the loss

of the ethnic language occurred between the second and the third generations because second generation immigrants rarely used the ethnic language enough to impart it to their own children.

Research has consistently shown that HLs are typically not maintained or developed among ethnic minority groups. Many studies show that language minorities are learning English quickly and, at the same time, are losing their family language (Fillmore, 1991; Fishman, 1991; Hinton, 1999; Portes & Hao, 1998; Veltman, 1983). Veltman (2000), drawing on data from the 1976 Survey of Income and Education and on 1990 census data, found that immigrant groups, regardless of their origin, are learning English faster and, at the same time, losing their HL. He also examined language shifts among several ethnic groups and concluded that, in every group, the “rates of language shift to English are so high that all minority languages are routinely abandoned, depriving the United States of one type of human resource that it may be economically and politically desirable both to maintain and develop” (p. 58). Fillmore (1991), in her study of over 1100 families from a variety of language backgrounds (Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Khmer, and Vietnamese), found that children shift to English shortly after entering English language schools. In a large-scale study, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) found that knowledge of English was nearly universal among their second-generation sample and that the use and preference for English increases consistently over time.

Cross-generational language shift among immigrant groups has been documented in the United States. Hudson-Edwards and Bills (1980) found that the older generation considered themselves to be better in Spanish than English, but that their children rated themselves more highly in English. Rumbaut (1991), a sociologist, stated, “We are seeing this country become a language graveyard for the second generation,” with children and parents living under the same roof but unable to talk to one another. In an ongoing study of 5,300 immigrant families, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) found that 72% of youngsters surveyed indicated that English had become their primary language by the time they reached seventh grade, but that 94% of their parents spoke another language at home.

The language barrier separating parent and child may be particularly acute among Asians. According to

Portes and Rumbaut (2001), many young Asian immigrants suffer from lack of external support for their HL maintenance or development and, once they learn English, they tend to become exclusively English monolinguals. In contrast, over 70% of their parents use their HL at home. Similarly, Min (2000) reported that more than 90% of second-generation respondents reported that they spoke English fluently and used English almost exclusively with their Korean friends and even with their parents. Min emphasized the seeming conflicting finding that Korean adult immigrants reported that they used Korean almost always or more often than English to communicate with their children, suggesting the existence of a language barrier between the two generations. Cho (2001) reported several incidents that occurred in immigrant families who were having trouble communicating with one another as a result of the lack of a common language within a family.

This paper examines HL development and the effects of HL competence in the family among second-generation immigrants of various language minority groups in the U.S. In particular, this paper explores the motivation for and challenges of developing or maintaining HL among second generation immigrants of various language minority groups, and also investigates the ways in which HL competence affects individuals and their relationships with their immediate family and extended family members.

### **Methodology**

Twenty second-generation immigrant adults participated in in-depth semi-structured interviews. Of the informants, 15 (75%) were Korean-Americans and 5 (25%) had other ethnic backgrounds (i.e., Mexican, Afghanistan, Indian, and Vietnamese). The participants were either born in the United States or had emigrated from foreign countries before school age. As such, they all grew up and began their formal education in the United States. The ages of the participants were limited to adults between the ages of 18 and 34 (mean = 23.95 years old, SD = 3.72). All participants were native-like speakers of English. Fifteen of them stated that English was their dominant language, and the remainder stated that they were equally dominant both in English and their HL (i.e., bilingual).

An initial interview question guide was constructed to include questions regarding the affective consequences

of HL maintenance or loss in family interactions and relationships. The interview questions consisted of biographical and language proficiency items, language use in the family, attitude toward the HL and personal experiences using the HL in the family. Although the main questions were used to organize the interviews, the participants were encouraged to elaborate on their thoughts.

The informants were recruited on a voluntary basis through personal contacts.

All the interviews were conducted in English, tape recorded, and transcribed. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Extensive notes were taken from each recorded session. Based upon a thorough review of the notes and transcripts, the interviews were coded and analyzed according to steps outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990).

The design of the study involved a comparison of one group of participants who had “strong HL competence” to another group who had “weak or no HL competence,” in a self-assessed HL proficiency measure. These assessments were made by asking participants to rate their own levels of HL proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and overall skills on a Likert-type scale (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good). The “strong HL competence” group contained those who rated their HL skills as 4 or 5, and the “weak HL competence” group contained those who rated their skills as 1 or 2.

While each of the participants in the study presented a unique set of circumstances, much of the data clustered around similar themes: advantages and disadvantages of varying degrees of HL development. The role of HL competency in interactions and relationships with family members, including extended family members, were considered in the data analysis.

### **Limitations of the Study**

One main limitation of the study was that, because the sample used was a sample of convenience, there were only a few representatives of other minority groups (i.e., Mexican-American, Vietnamese-American, Afghanistan-American, Indian-American). Each group brings the uniqueness of its own culture and different circumstances and, as such the generalizability of the

results is primarily limited to Koreans. It should be noted, however, the Non-Korean American participants had experiences that were similar to those of the Korean Americans. Regardless of their ethnic background, all participants had a similar pattern in which HL competence affected individuals and their relationships with their immediate family and extended family members. A second limitation was that no attempt was made to measure how parents viewed the effect of HL competence of their children on family relationships; the parents were not contacted or interviewed. Although the parents’ perspectives are important to consider, in this initial examination, the researcher chose to concentrate only on the experiences and perceptions of the children of immigrants.

### **Results**

The results indicate that having developed one’s HL, in addition to English, has several advantages. Regardless of one’s language background, having strong HL competence was found to positively affect relationships with parents and extended family members. Despite the advantages of HL competence, maintaining or developing one’s HL was found to be a challenging task for members of language minority groups.

The results are presented in four categories: (1) the role of the HL within the immigrant family; (2) relationships with extended family members; (3) motivation for developing one’s HL; and (4) challenges HL development and maintenance.

#### **Role of the HL within the Immigrant Family**

In this section, the findings were presented in regard to the participants’ presentation of their family relationships in which their HL competency played an important role. As predicted, based on Fillmore’s (1981) study, and as seen in Cho and Krashen’s (1998) study, the data revealed the presence of conflicts due to the language gap within a family. As hypothesized, developing one’s HL, in addition to English proficiency, lead to better relationships with parents and relatives, especially if the HL was the only mean of communicating with one another. Specifically, having developed one’s HL positively affects relationships with parents and extended family members. HL competence as associated with advantages in family relationships



HL development has been shown to ensure strong parent-child communication and, at the same time, prevent alienation and delinquency, which can be caused by the lack of dialogue between the first and second generations. Sammy's case is an example of the consequences of having developed one's HL. Sammy was born in Korea and came to the U.S. when she was four and has developed her HL. She attributed her success in maintaining her HL to "brokering" (i.e., interpreting and translating) for her parents. In comparison, her sister came when she was two years old, but did not maintain her HL. Sammy stated that "speaking in Korean is extremely important to me, especially in my case, because I see barriers between my mom and my sister." Sammy described the conflict her sister was having with her parents, due to her sister's lack of HL skills.

We are different in levels of understanding in Korean and also communication-wise. Because she [my sister] is forgetting Korean, my parents and my sister are having a lot of conflict. One [conflict] is communication because my sister can't express herself fully. A lot of tension [between them]. I get what I want because I can explain myself, but a lot of time my sister can't get what she wants because of the language barrier, plus being 'Americanized.' She is very defensive since my parents don't really understand English. Sometimes, the way my sister responds to my mom makes my mom mad. It's because my sister can't express herself fully and she doesn't know any other way of saying it in Korean. I act like a moderator between them because they can't communicate with each other because of the language barrier.

Emily, a graduate student, provides a similar case in which a strong HL ability helped her to have a deeper relationship with her parents, especially her mother.

If I hadn't have developed my HL skills, I think we would have had a very limited [and] very surface level relationship. Because then we really wouldn't be able to share what is in our hearts, the deeper issues. They would understand only surface level, you know because I wouldn't be able to communicate with them. A lot of people that I know have that kind of relationship with their parents, which I don't have.

Knowing one's heritage language can provide the

freedom to express feelings and thoughts that result in better family relationships. Judy used Korean to engage in serious discussions with her family. When I am serious with my parents, like when I am trying to express myself, then I speak in Korean, even when I am trying to get through to my brother. My brother is studying in Korea right now in the international school, and when I talk to him over the phone and I want him to understand what I am getting it, then I speak in Korean.

### **Weak HL competence as associated with disadvantages in family relationships**

The findings of this study are similar to those described in Cho and Krashen's (1998) study, which found that not having developed one's HL negatively affects the relationship with one's parents. In this study, while a basic exchange of words was possible, immigrant children reported having a difficult time opening up and sharing their emotions or engaging in dialogue with their parents. Joyce explained, "it's hard to open up my emotions with my parents, so we always have to use symbols, body language . . ." As a consequence of not having the tools needed to communicate with their parents, for some, the amount of communication between parent and child has diminished and sometimes has led to unnecessary arguments.

Caroline reported, "When speaking with my parents, sometimes I am unable to communicate. I have a language deficiency. Many arguments and explanations are cut short because I lack the language ability." Another respondent, Andrew, reported that "due to my lack of vocabulary in Korean, I tend to have a difficult time communicating with my parents. Sometimes it results in unnecessary arguments which could have been resolved quickly."

Finally, Harris stated,

It is frustrating when I'm speaking with my parents and we can't fully comprehend what we're trying to say to each other. I hate it when I eat dinner with my parents and they always carry on their own conversation that I can only half understand. Yet, they complain that we don't eat as a family enough. I hate having something to say, but not being able to say it.

D. Cho (2001) describes several cases similar to those presented here in which various immigrant

families have trouble communicating with one another. He asserts that there is a new family dynamic emerging in this country—"a generation of children growing up almost strangers to their parents" (p. A01). Kang (1996) also found a similar pattern in the Korean community. "Communication is difficult because they [parents] lack a common language with which they and their children can express themselves fluently" (p. A12). Kang reported that one parent stated a desire for an interpreter when she talked to her children.

#### Relationships with Extended Family Members

In keeping with this pattern of findings, some of the participants in the "weak HL" group stated that being fluent in the HL would have helped in their relationships with their extended family members, especially their grandparents. Regardless of language, in comparison to those who have developed one's HL, the "weak HL" group had more problems with their relatives. Sally stated, "It is this language barrier that separates and distances the Korean American youth from communicating with their elders. Furthermore, elders often times look down upon the Korean American youth who do not speak well."

Jessica shared the frustration she experiences in her relationship with her grandmother.

The situation in which I most desperately want to speak Korean is when I am with my grandmother. Although we manage to express ourselves through simple words, I can't help but feel completely frustrated when it comes to talking with my grandmother. I want to ask her so many things: how things were, what has changed, what has not and such. I want to ask about our family history and world history. I want to talk to her instead of just 'parroting' phrases my mother tells me to say.

Samantha realized the need to be able to speak Korean when her grandfather passed away.

My grandfather died three years ago from a stroke in a nursing home in L.A. But his death did not affect me very much because I was not very close to him. I attribute this fact to being a second generation Korean American who hardly knew how to speak Korean. The language barrier was raised and it was very high. I look back at my childhood and remember just saying hello and good-bye to my Korean relatives, including my grandfather and that was all. Without a common language, people can never grow closer to each other. During the reception after the funeral, I began to realize what a treasure I had lost by not knowing my

grandfather because of the language barrier. I want to communicate better with the people I love.

Similarly, Caroline felt the importance of developing her HL when she visited Korea.

During my trip to Korea last summer, I learned a valuable lesson. I realized how important it was for me to learn Korean, not just to ask for directions, but to understand my other family members in Korea. For two months, it was so frustrating not being able to communicate with people who were supposed to be my family. That was when I decided that I needed to learn Korean; I can't expect my relatives to learn English! I have the opportunity and privilege to know both.

Ajai, who was proficient in Gujarati before he started school, had lost his HL skills. He feels more comfortable speaking in English with his parents. Additionally, he was unable to communicate with his parent's friends and relatives in India. "I wish I could talk to my grandmother more." He also explained that this pattern is not uncommon among his friends. He stated, "A lot of my friends at the temple are just like me [not being able to communicate with their grandparents due to the language gap] . . . similar experiences [As a solution] I sometimes just don't say anything."

#### Motivation for Developing One's HL

One way of indirectly determining the role of HL competence in family relationships was to investigate the reasons that second generation immigrants want to improve their HL skills. Consistently, many respondents stated that they needed to enhance their HL skills for more meaningful relationship with their relatives and, especially, with their parents. Yuri, an elementary school teacher who maintained her Korean language, stated, "It [HL] is important to me that I would try my best to maintain and develop it because that's my only communication with my mom, who only speaks Korean; she doesn't speak any English." Another interviewee, Eun Ae, stated her reason for taking a HL class. "I enrolled in a class to improve my Korean because there are people important to me that I want to communicate with—my family, parents, relatives, community people. That is the reason why I took a Korean class while studying at Harvard University.

Eun Ae wished that she could read a Korean newspaper and written materials because "it will make me more aware of what kinds of news my parents get and be more aware of their perceptions." Young, who rates her Korean proficiency as "poor," explained that I want

to be able to communicate with my parents more. I usually speak to my parents with simple terms such as 'I'm hungry,' 'What is for dinner,' etc. I feel that I'll have a better relationship with my parents if I at least converse with them.

Sandra stated,

"My parents never really forced me to learn Korean. They just encouraged me to learn it for my benefit. Now that I am in college, I realize the importance of learning Korean not just for educational purposes, but for my parents' sake as well. I'm glad that I can communicate with my parents in our native language."

A U.S.-born respondent, Sally, echoed these sentiments. "I feel handicapped not being able to speak Korean with my parents, relatives, and whoever else." Caroline commented that she felt "uneasy" at home because "my parents do not totally understand me when I speak English." She added, "I want to be able to express myself in Korean to those who are close to me and part of my family. Because my parents' generation is more comfortable with Korean, [I] believe it is up to me to learn Korean to be able to strengthen my relationships with my parents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives."

Joyce also has a language barrier in her family. As a result, she noted, "I rarely speak to my grandparents, and my father and I don't get along because of this barrier." These respondents see their limitations in the HL as obstacles to communicating with members of their family and limiting the extent of their relationships with members of the community. Many of the respondents recognized the importance of HL development and the impact of HL loss at an older age. Bian, a Vietnamese-American, stated, "I realize now that I have lost part of my parent's culture—especially when I have trouble communicating with another Vietnamese person, I realize the loss." Similarly, Melai, an Afghanistan teacher, stated, "I wish I had some education in my native language. I do speak Afghan, but I am not able to read or write in my mother tongue, which is a very unfortunate consequence that I have to endure. I have enough proficiency to communicate among my elders and peers, but I wish I could do more."

### **Challenges of HL Development and Maintenance**

Despite the benefits of being fluent in one's HL and the participants' recognition of this and willingness to

learn HL during the later stage of their lives, the findings show that developing and maintaining the HL is very difficult. Castonguay (1976) stated that during an individual's childhood the language of the parents determines the language that a person uses. However, when the individual goes to school, enters the labor market, and gets married, he or she becomes more exposed to the dominant language spoken outside the home and is more likely to adopt it as his or her language. Our findings support Castonguay's contention in that the most salient characteristic of the participants was that they reported being more fluent and felt more comfortable speaking in English. Recall that fifteen of the 20 participants stated that English was their dominant language and the remainder stated that they were equally dominant in both English and their HL.

It appears to be the case that our society fosters "English dominant" individuals for two main reasons: limited HL input and opportunity to use the HL, as well as lack of support for HL development or bilingualism. Because the HL is spoken only or primarily at home, as children grow and their interaction with HL speakers diminishes, their access to and the need for HL maintenance remain limited to the home, resulting in less HL acquisition. For an example, Ajay, who is 18 years old and was proficient in Gujarati before he started school, has lost his HL and states that he feels more comfortable speaking in English. "They [parents] speak to me in Gujarati and English mixed. I usually respond in English. I'm better at expressing myself in English. My speech [in Gujarati] is very choppy."

Despite the fact that several participants reported living in an HL-rich environment at home (i.e., communicating almost exclusively in their HL at home) and attending HL schools, this did not prevent them from experiencing HL loss. A good example is Bian, who is a 27-year-old Vietnamese-American, who lived in the ethnic enclave of "Little Saigon." She was exposed to her HL through the HL community, attended HL weekend school for 10 years, and her parents forced her and her siblings to use the HL at home. Overall, she had more access to her HL than the other participants. Nevertheless, she reported being limited in HL competence. "While growing up, my parents tried to restrict the use of English at home. It didn't last very long; we always found ways around my parents' rules, but it caused conflict .... Maybe we should have

taken my parents' rules more seriously." She further states, "Sometimes, conversations with my parents are a little strained. It's difficult to explain something to your parents when you don't know what the word is in Vietnamese. My parents sometimes experience the same with me."

Another obstacle to HL development is the lack of support, in our society, for such development or for bilingualism, that is, there is a societal push for English only. Tse (2001) described a pattern of immigrant languages across language groups that has been documented in a number of studies. In her book, she cites the powerful pull of English, parental and school misconceptions about language learning, and community and peer influences as barriers to HL development. Our findings show similar challenges in developing and maintaining one's HL.

Valuing that language ability brought from one's home country is important to further enhance HL skills. The participants, however, recounted how teachers and peers devalued and dismissed their HL ability because they considered it substandard. The peers' and teachers' negative reactions toward non-native speakers in class hindered these speakers' HL acquisition. Luisa, an English-dominant Mexican-American adult, experienced both ridicule for her inadequacies in the HL and her lack of competence in English: "It's hard because they correct you or laugh at you when you don't speak in English." Another participant, Nelai, an Afghani-American, had a similar school experience in which she felt forced to reject her HL and to gain English quickly. "When I began school, my first teacher made me feel ashamed because I did not speak the [English] language. She laughed instead of comforting me."

In addition to the assimilative pressure from the environment, parental misconceptions about language learning are another challenge in developing one's HL. The push for English among some language minority parents was so strong that some parents insisted on using English with their children even though English was not their first or even best language. Still, parents need to recognize that there are excellent reasons to support HL development. Joyce described an incident in which her mother's attempt not to use the HL at home created an uncomfortable situation.

At a point, she [my mom] tried to talk in English. She said, 'only speak to me in English,' and my brother and I had a terrible time because it was so uncomfort-

able because it was culturally awkward for us to talk to our mother in English. And then, she couldn't communicate with us. We just said 'Hello, how are you . . . ' you know, that kind of thing.

In summary, as shown in research related to language minority groups, language shift to the dominant language is apparent in the second-generation language minority groups studied in this research. Similar to Cho and Krashen's (1998) study, which showed the negative consequences of HL loss among second generation Korean Americans, the present study found the same negative consequences for a variety of language minority groups. When the HL was the only means of communication between parents and children, the shift to English, and away from the HL, was a source of intergenerational conflicts.

Fillmore (1991) has asked, "What happens to familial relations when the language children give up happens to be the only language that parents speak? What is lost when children and parents cannot communicate easily to one another?" (pp. 342-343). Our findings show that those who developed their HL interacted better with their parents, extended family members, and relatives, indicating that ethnic minority individuals may benefit from HL development. The widespread notions that language minority groups resist learning English or that their acquisition is retarded by efforts to maintain their HL are contradicted by the evidence on language shift and the results of this study. A great deal of research confirms that maintaining or developing the HL does not hinder English acquisition (Krashen, 1996). The current study reveals that, regardless of one's language background, language shift to the dominant language (i.e., English) is a common phenomenon among language minority adults. The limited HL input and the absence of societal recognition of the importance of maintaining their HL, as revealed in Lee's (2002) study, were the most significant factors in our participants' lack of motivation to maintain their HL.

Understanding the contributing factors and the effects of HL loss or maintenance to the language learning and acculturation process are vital if educators are to better serve rapidly growing immigrant populations. It is imperative to encourage language minority students to maintain their HL and, as part of this encouragement, to allow other students to observe different cultures and customs. Teachers also need to

support parents to encourage the development of their children's HLs because such development can lead to better interactions within the family and the community, as well as promote a better understanding of and pride in one's culture and heritage.

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# TEACHER TO TEACHER

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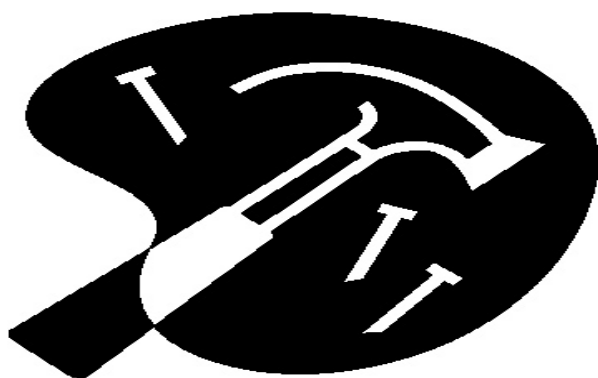
## *How Fred Jones: Tools for Teaching works for me*

by Shaeron Moorhead

All our class days will be 100% comprehensible input. But in the students' minds, some days are more fun than others. With Jones' method, students must earn "fun" days. Examples of these days might be learning or review games, lesson related movies or videos, or even group activities. Jones is emphatic about enforcing the rules given to students. Spend extra time at the beginning going over the rules and answering any questions anyone has. Anytime a teacher is lenient with a rule, he or she is actually teaching the

### Classroom Management Strategies

Basic	Bonus Preferred Activity Time
Allow 3 to 5 minute settle in time. 3 to 5 pts. earned for compliance. Weekly possible 15 pts. Applicable to Preferred Activity Time. +15	1. 100% seated +1 2. 100% on time +1 3. 100% all have supplies +1 4. 100 % no talking +1 5. 100% hurry-up bonus +1
15 + 10 = 25	



class that begging or manipulating the teacher into doing whatever it is they want or don't want is effective, making the rules worthless. If an individual student is still not compliant, he might have to be removed from the "herd" and talked with privately in the hall. The teacher may have to work a great deal with him where-

by if he can behave for 10 minutes, he receives a +1 in the Bonus PAT column. It is actually being given to the entire class. Just say a “quiet” thank you to him and when the class asks about it, make him a hero by saying that he earned the entire class that extra bonus point. The teacher can possibly change a child from a troublemaker into an eager-to-please student. Transition time will be monitored by setting a timer. 2 minutes is probably ample transition time. If they seem to be not finishing or if using a timer doesn’t seem appropriate, hold a hand up with 5 fingers and gradually decrease the number of fingers until you show a fist. This is a good “be quiet” signal without requiring yelling.

Double the actual bonus time earned. When classes earn 25 – 30 total points, they have earned a PAT day of class. So, bring on the games, etc.

I am using a stand-up chart on the long counter in my room to track the points earned per class. Each day all 5 periods will have their marking space on the first sheet. Each class’s points will be visible so there will be a development of a healthy competition among the classes. Bonus points will be subtracted if necessary. As my excellent teacher Dale Crum says, “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.” Even if a class does not get the PAT day at the first chance, they are going to have another chance the very next day. They will be putting the pressure on the “wayward” student so that they can have their “preferred” activity.

There will probably be times when more discipline will be needed, but this seems to be a good way to help the students develop into highly effective students. Reading the book *Tools for Teaching* is highly recommended!!

*Shaeron Moorhead has taught Spanish for 21 years. She is a TPRS teacher in Richardson Independent School District in Dallas, Texas.*

*Fred Jones Classroom Management Trainings are presented by Denver-area, Fred Jones certified Spanish teacher Dale Crum. [Morningdog@aol.com](mailto:Morningdog@aol.com)*

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## CONCERNED ABOUT TOO MANY CARBS IN YOUR DIET?

For those of you who watch what you eat, here’s the final word on nutrition and health. It’s a relief to know the truth after all those conflicting medical studies.

1. The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
2. The Mexicans eat a lot of fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
3. The Chinese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
4. The Italians drink excessive amounts of red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
5. The Germans drink a lot of beers and eat lots of sausages and fats and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.

### CONCLUSION:

Eat and drink what you like. Speaking English is apparently what kills you.



# ***NOTHING MOTIVATES LIKE SUCCESS***

by Susan Gross

I would like to share something that is off the topic of TPR Storytelling but ON topic for teaching in general. One statement that has made me a better teacher (even before TPR Storytelling) is this: NOTHING MOTIVATES LIKE SUCCESS.

One reason I was drawn to TPR Storytelling was that it gave students a chance to demonstrate that they were successful every single day. When I first began TPR Storytelling, I was blown away at the eager speech and fluent language usage of my students. Their speaking and their comprehension and their writing were so dramatically better than anything that I had ever experienced that I praised the kids to the heavens every day. I couldn't believe how GOOD they were!

I had extremely eager students during those years. My students were so confident that they spoke French all of the time. After high school teachers and college teachers observed my classes and told me how wonderful my students were, I told them that they were as good as high school students and college students. My students were excited and proud of their French.

Now (after several years of TPR Storytelling) I expect so much that I am disappointed half of the time. Kids are EXPERTS at reading the minds of adults and they can sense that I am just ho-hum about their performance. To tell the truth, they probably speak, read, understand and write even better than the "early years" kids, but I just expect it. I know what they are capable of so I am no longer surprised. The effect is subtle. Even though my students are extremely good in French by anybody's standards, they are not brimming over with pride and enthusiasm.

So this week when we went back to school after winter break, I tried to focus on their incredible progress. Boy, do they respond to compliments. What a natural

human trait that is; how could I have forgotten? A student in 8th period came up to me right in the middle of class and said, "You are a really cute teacher!" I have no idea what that meant exactly (I am 54 years

***One reason I was drawn to TPR Storytelling was that it gave students a chance to demonstrate that they were successful every single day.***

old, so NOT CUTE to a 13-yr old girl) but I do know it was a compliment. But I digress. ;-)

Be aware that in order to be effective, praise must be honest, specific and sincere. Saying, "You guys are so good." is not praise. It is not specific so it sounds hollow. The way to get a product from your praise is to make it specific. "I have visited high school French II classes where nobody could retell a story like you just did." This is an example of specific praise. When kids hear that kind of praise, they know exactly what they are good at and they feel pride.

OK, so I want kids to pay attention. My 2nd period 7th grade kids are slow and dull. I went around the room asking each kid a different question (name, age, date, weather, days, months, numbers, rote stuff like that) At the end, I complimented them. It went something like this:

"You guys are amazing. I know full well that when I call on one kid the rest of you can easily just daydream or write

notes or fiddle with a pencil. Do you know what top-notch students do during class? They mentally answer every single question. While another kid is answering, the top-notch kid is sending the answer by ESP! At the end of class, the top-notch kid is exhausted because it feels like I taught only him and made him carry the burden of the whole class. The top-notch kid walks out of class thinking 'I wish that woman would give me a break!' when in actuality I may never have called on him all period. When you guys came in last fall from elementary school, you did not have the maturity for that kind of

***Be aware that in order to be effective, praise must be honest, specific and sincere.***

concentration for a full class period. Most of you did it today. I want you to know that even high school kids find it difficult to control themselves that perfectly. You guys are gonna be the best students in the world if you keep this up. I am so proud of you.”

During the second semester I explained how to pay attention, what body posture produces the best learning, how to listen with 50%, 75% and 100% of their attention, how to be a good teacher for their partners, why I loved it when they showed enthusiasm, what they did that helped me be a more effective teacher. Each of these lessons was delivered with sincere, honest, SPECIFIC compliments to one, two, or a group of the students in that class.

The discipline in that class improved. Their behavior improved. Their belief in themselves was something to watch for the rest of that school year. I retired in May of that year and the second period kids were as good as the other periods by the end of the year. I know for sure that my encouragement made the difference.

Most students don't even know what they should do with their minds. They don't know what “pay attention” means. They don't understand the significance of posture in learning. It is my experience that they appreciate learning how to learn, learning how to pay attention, learning WHAT to listen for, learning about meta-cognitive skills. They can't just guess or figure out why “paying attention” is important. Neither can they guess or figure out HOW to do this thing called “paying attention.” We have to tell them how to do it.

And if we tell them with a compliment, well, nothing motivates like success!

*Susan Gross is a retired French teacher and a TPRS presenter and author in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Originally written in January of 2002. Reprinted with permission.*

***Most students don't even know what they should do with their minds. They don't know what “pay attention” means.***

Prepublication sales of the next Harry Potter book are gigantic (*J. K. Rowling finishes sixth Potter book*,” Washington Post, December 21). Amazon has already had over a million orders, even though the book will not be published for seven months. This should put to rest any suggestion that children are no longer interested in reading, and that we need to give them pizza, gold stars, or money to entice them to read.

— Stephen Krashen



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# How I Differentiated with TPRS

by Catherine Leon

1. After each story, I would do 2-3 review stories to review the more difficult vocabulary in the chapter. Before I would do the review stories, students took a test on the material. If they scored an A- or higher, they could choose to do an independent project rather than the review story. Sometimes students chose to continue with the review stories and didn't want to do the projects. It was really important to tell classes that there was going to be no name-calling in terms of the groups (the dumb group vs. the smart group). We called them the review group and the project group. I told them that students sometimes were in the review group because of absences or they were having a bad week or whatever, not because of intelligence. In addition, the groups were fluid. When were done with the first review story, the review group could re-take the chapter test and if they scored an A- or higher, they could move into the project group. Students felt that they had more control over what they could do.

2. The projects were an option—some students chose not to do them but wanted to do the review stories. It was nice to have students who felt they had a choice in being there. Students who did the projects received a rubric, a list of projects to choose from (with a range of multiple intelligences), and a daily goal sheet. They worked in the hall or in the media center. If they misbehaved, they lost the privilege of working in the project group and joined the review group. At the end of the week, they presented the projects to the class so everyone could benefit from what they had learned. To get full credit they couldn't use notes, had to have several props, they had to use their own words, had to cite legitimate sources (which was the only thing they turned in), their presentation had to be well-organized and easy to follow, and if they collaborated with peers--they had to work well in a group together. There was no group grade because inevitably one person does work while others coast. So they had to figure out who would do what and divide it equitably. They had to keep a daily goal sheet

which stated what they were going to work on the following day. And they couldn't write something like "work on project." If they did, then they couldn't go in the hall until they wrote something more specific. The projects were worth the same number of points as everything the review group worked on in class. And many of the students presented items that have to do with culture, which I felt I lacked in teaching. So they helped me cover one of the standards. Grading was a snap because I graded as they presented. And they had to turn in a self evaluation using the rubric right after they present their project. About 80% of the time, they were quite accurate. I try to make differentiation as little work as possible for me. Once I set up the general guidelines, I used the same handouts over and over for every chapter. Sometimes I would tweak the project list if certain holidays were coming up.

3. In terms of the review group, a couple interesting things happened. First of all, students were more motivated to learn the vocabulary in the first place. They said "if I had known I was going to be able to work on a project, I would have paid more attention." So it increased their motivation. The students who were doing the review stories confessed that they liked that they had more of a chance to answer my questions because the "smart" ones weren't there to answer for them. They felt more comfortable asking questions and I was able to slow down more for them. (My classes have about 30 students). Because I recycle the vocabulary so much in storytelling and reading, students seemed to retain the material even though they were reviewing with the rest of the class.

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**Choose from the following activities as an option to reviewing the story. Be prepared to present it to the class. You can work individually or in a group (maximum 3 people)**

1. Read the extended reading story and draw what happens. Create an overhead of your drawings or draw them on large poster boards to present to the class. In addition, choose one of the following:

- a. Write a different ending to the story (in Spanish)
- b. Add details to the story to make it more funny or bizarre (in Spanish)
- c. Translate the story out loud and tape-record your translation (to English)
- d. Choose 3 different songs that could accompany the story. Tape-record 1 minute of each song and after each song, tape-record yourself explaining why this song is appropriate for the story (in English or Spanish)
- e. Create a 2-minute skit based on the story. You can videotape your skit and present it to the class.

2. Holiday Research: Tell who, where, when, why and how it is celebrated.

- February 27th: Dominican Independence Day
- February: Carnaval
- March 21st: Birth of Benito Juárez

3. Hispanic Singer Research: Thalia, Shakira, Gloria Estefan, Carlos Santana, Maná, Oxomatli. Tell the class the background of the group or singer. Select three 30-second samples of their most famous songs to play for the class. Include what music or artists influenced them.

4. Hispanic Artist Research: Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera. Create color overhead transparencies of their most famous works and present it to the class.

5. Hispanic Athlete Research:

- a. Soccer: Diego Maradona (Argentina), Ronaldo (Spain), Carlos Valderama (Colombia)
- b. Baseball: Luis Aparicio (Venezuela), Rod Carew

(Panama), Sammy Sosa (Dominican Republic), Fernando Valenzuela (Mexico)

6. Research Traditional Clothing of a Spanish-speaking country.

7. Dance Research: Investigate the origins of any of the following dances. Teach the class how to dance or bring in a guest that can show the class how to dance:

- the cha-cha-cha
- the conga
- the cumbia (Mexico)

8. Spanish Teacher for a Day: Choose 3 vocabulary words or phrases that you would like to teach the class. Create gestures associated with the vocabulary, write a story with the vocabulary, and create questions to ask the class to help them learn your story.

9. Host Guest Speaker: Bring in a guest speaker from our Hispanic community in town. Compile a list of questions generated by students in our class for the guest speaker. Afterwards, write a note thanking him or her for coming to our class.

10. Panama Canal Research: Summarize the creation of the Panama Canal. On a poster board, draw a diagram of the canal. label the locks, Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Gatun Lake, etc.

11. Word Research: Examine the origins of the words Latino(a) and Hispanic

12. Food Research: Investigate the origins of chocolate

13. Movie Research: Watch one of the following movies and create a brochure to promote it: El Norte, La Bella del Alhambra, The Mambo Kings, Missing, Romero

14. Book Research: Read any of the following books and choose one of the following projects:

- a. Talk to the Author: Write a letter to the author explaining to him or her why you think he or she wrote the book and what he or she was trying to show through the book. Be sure to explain what you got out of the book. If the author is still alive, send the letter to the author via the publisher of the book. This is NOT a research paper where you report what other people have said about the book. It needs to be your

own ideas. Taking other people's ideas will result in a zero.

b. Answering Machine Message: Answering machine messages have gotten more and more creative over the years, reflecting the interests and quirks of the owner. Select 5 characters from the novel you have just read and create an answering machine message from each of them. Pay particular attention to enunciation and tone.

- Allende, Isabel, *The House of Spirits*  
Alvarez, Julia, *How the García Girls Lost Their Accent*  
Anaya, Rudolfo, *Bless Me Ultima*  
Augenbraum, Harold and Ilan Stavans (editors), *Growing up Latino: Memoirs and Stories*  
Cervantes, Miguel *Don Quixote*  
Cruz, Amgie, *Soledad*  
Díaz, Junot, *Drown*  
García, Cristina, *Dreaming in Cuban*  
García-Aguilera, Carolina, *Bloody Secrets*  
García Marquez, Gabriel, *Love in the Time of Cholera*  
Chavez, Linda, *Out of the Barrio*  
Galarza, Ernesto, *Barrio Boy*  
Hijuelos, Oscar, *Our House in the Last World*  
Means Ybarra, Ricardo, *The Brotherhood of the Dolphins*  
McCulloch, David, *The Path Between the Seas*  
Mohr, Nicholasa, *In Nueva York*  
Menchú, Rigoberta, I, *Rigoberta Menchú; An Indian Woman of Guatemala*  
Piri, Thomas, *Going Under*  
Rodriguez, Richard, *A Hunger for Memory*  
Suárez, Virgil, *Going Under*  
Thomas, Piri, *Down These Mean Streets*  
Torres, Edwin, *Q & A*

15. Current Events: Create a newspaper summarizing the economic struggle and corruption in either Mexico City or Guatemala City. Go to the following site for National Public Radio and listen to the portrait of one of the two cities:

<http://discover.npr.org/features/feature.jhtml?wfId=1779057>

<http://discover.npr.org/features/feature.jhtml?wfId=1779057>

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Name:

Hour:

Turn in at the end of class every day. 15 points per day

Topic:

What I need to accomplish on:

---

(tomorrow's date):

# Oral Presentation Rubric

Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Delivery	Doesn't use notes. Maintains eye contact with class, not just one or two people. Voice can be heard by entire audience.	Uses notes occasionally. Maintains eye contact with class, not just one or two people. Voice can be heard by entire audience.	Uses notes often. Maintains eye contact with just one or two people. Voice can be heard by part of audience.	Reads from notes. Doesn't maintain eye contact. Voice cannot be heard by entire audience.
Resources	Uses credible print or electronic resources AND a bibliography is available.	Uses mostly credible print or electronic resources AND a bibliography is available.	Uses some credible print or electronic resources AND a bibliography is available.	Uses print or electronic resources that are not credible OR a bibliography is not available.
Collaboration with Peers	Almost always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together.	Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Does not cause "waves" in the group.	Often listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member	Rarely listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member.
Props	Student uses several props (could include costume) that show considerable work/creativity and which make the presentation better.	Student uses 1 prop that shows considerable work/creativity and which make the presentation better.	Student uses 1 prop which makes the presentation better.	The student uses no props OR the props chosen detract from the presentation.

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# *Preparing for AP exams from Level 1 with TPRS*

By Alison Eustice, Amy O'Connor and Karen Rowan,  
The Colorado Springs School, Colorado Springs,  
Colorado

## **Foundations of the CSS foreign language program**

Blaine Ray taught at Stockdale High School in Bakersfield, CA. The school district had four high schools. His TPRS program boasted more passing scores than the other three high schools combined. Several of the students passed the AP exam after only two years. His primary goal was to recruit and retain students. Although most AP teachers weed all but the best students out of their AP classes, Ray wanted to create a methodology that would allow all students to take and pass the AP exam. Ray created Teaching Reading Through Reading and Storytelling, formerly known as Total Physical Response Storytelling, in an effort to create a methodology that would begin preparing students for the AP Spanish Language exam from Level 1. He integrated portions of the exam, such as re-telling stories from pictures, 20-second responses and free writing, into the lowest levels of the program.

It has been four years since this methodology was first implemented at CSS. The sixth grade students who were first exposed to it in the fall of 2000 are now freshmen. Those students could take the AP exam as early as the spring of 2006.

## **Expectations of students on the AP foreign language exams (In May 2004)**

1. Comprehend full-page reading passages and respond to multiple choice questions.
2. Comprehend five continuous minutes of native speech and respond to multiple choice questions
3. Tell a story from an unfamiliar illustration and speak for 20 seconds in response to five questions by a native speaker.
4. Write a 200-word, five-paragraph, timed essay
5. Accurately produce verb forms on a fill-in-the-blank exercise and answer multiple-choice questions

on a grammar section.

6. Demonstrate a broad range of vocabulary in each proficiency area above.

The rubrics for the writing and speaking section address ability to be understood by a native speaker, not grammatical accuracy. The grammar section accounts for less than 15% of the AP French exam and next year will be removed entirely from the AP Spanish exam.

The AP Spanish Literature exam asks for three analytical essays on the poems and books on the AP Literature list. Grammatical accuracy is not taken into account in the grading process.

The following is a break-down, by level, of what our students do to prepare for AP. In each level, numbers one through six correspond to the expectations listed previously.

## **Preparation of CSS students for the AP exam beginning in Level 1:**

### **Level 1**

1. Read full-page reading selections / Four beginning novels (approximately forty pages each, 400-word vocabulary) (Step 3)
2. Listen to comprehensible input in class for at least thirty-five minutes each day in stories and questions (Steps 1 & 2)
3. Tell stories from pictures / Student re-tell of stories
4. Write 100-word, free-writing assignments in seven minutes and write a story for homework
5. Pop-up grammar and pop-up meaning in every story / Invention stories / Changing perspective / Grammar songs / Advanced grammatical structures in stories
6. Approximately 200 permanently-internalized active vocabulary words through TPR and 200 through TPRS (6th- grade) / Approximately 700 permanently-internalized active vocabulary words in Level 1/ Passive vocabulary acquisition through reading.

### **Level 2**

1. Read full-page reading selections / Four intermediate novels (approximately sixty pages each, 800-word vocabulary) (Step 3)

2. Listen to comprehensible input in class for at least thirty-five minutes each day in stories and questions (Steps 1 & 2)
3. Tell stories from pictures / Student re-tell of stories / Twenty-second responses (Using describe, convince or explain)
4. Write 100-word, free-writing assignments in six minutes and write a story for homework
5. Pop-up grammar and pop-up meaning in every story / Invention stories / Changing perspective / Grammar songs / Advanced grammatical structures in stories
6. Approximately 500 permanently-internalized active vocabulary words (not including various forms and tenses) / Passive vocabulary acquisition through reading

### Level 3

1. Read full-page reading selections / Three adolescent novels (approximately 100 pages+ each, standard vocabulary), selections from the AP Literature list (Step 3)
2. Listen to comprehensible input in class for at least thirty-five minutes each day in stories and questions (Steps 1 & 2)
3. Tell stories from pictures / Student re-tell of stories / Twenty-second responses (Using describe, convince or explain)
4. Write 100-word, free writing assignments in five minutes / Write essays and stories
5. Pop-up grammar and pop-up meaning in every story / Invention stories / Changing perspective / Grammar songs
6. Approximately 300 permanently-internalized active vocabulary words and structures / Passive vocabulary acquisition through reading

### Level 4

1. Read full-page reading selections / Authentic novels, short stories, poems, Selections from the AP Literature list (Step 3)
2. Listen to comprehensible input in class for at least thirty-five minutes each day in stories, discussions and questions (Steps 1 & 2)
3. Tell stories from pictures / Student re-tell of stories / twenty-second responses (Using describe, convince or explain)
4. Write 100 word free writing assignments in

five minutes / Write essays

5. Pop-up grammar and pop-up meaning in every story / Invention stories / Changing perspective / Grammar songs /
6. Approximately 300 permanently-internalized active vocabulary words and structures / Passive vocabulary acquisition through reading

### AP Language and Literature

1. Read full-page reading selections / Selections from the AP literature list (Step 3)
2. Listen to comprehensible input in discussion and stories (Steps 1, 2 & 3)
3. Tell stories from pictures / Student discussion of stories / Twenty-second responses (Using describe, convince or explain)
4. Write 100-word, free writing assignments in five minutes / Write AP practice essays
5. Pop-up grammar and pop-up meaning in every story / Invention stories / Change perspective / Grammar songs / Direct grammar instruction and AP practice exercises
6. Active vocabulary acquisition from AP vocabulary list / Passive vocabulary acquisition through reading



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# Summary of preparation prior to an AP class

## Preparation for the AP literature selections prior to the AP Literature class

### Reading:

1. Full-page reading selections (Step 3)
2. Four beginning novels (approximately fifty pages each, 400-word vocabulary) (Step 3)
3. Four intermediate novels (approximately sixty pages each, 800+ word vocabulary) (Step 3)
4. Three adolescent novels (approximately 100 pages+ each, standard vocabulary) (Step 3)
5. Selections from the AP Literature list (Step 3)

## Preparation for the listening section of the AP Language exam prior to the AP class

### Listening to:

1. Listen to comprehensible input in class for at least thirty-five minutes each day in stories and questions (Steps 1, 2 & 3)
2. Level-appropriate books read aloud
3. Songs

## Preparation for the speaking section of the AP Language exam prior to the AP class

### Listening to a correct pronunciation of:

1. comprehensible input in class for at least thirty-five minutes each day in stories and questions (Steps 1, 2 and 3)
2. Level-appropriate books read aloud
3. Songs

### Speaking practice through:

1. Telling stories from pictures
2. Student re-tell of stories
3. Twenty-second responses (Using describe, convince or explain)
4. Answering questions (Steps 1 and 2) and participating in discussions (Step 3)

## Preparation for the writing section of the AP Language exam prior to the AP class:

1. Write once a week each year until all students reach a fluency rate of 100 words in five minutes
2. Write essays beginning in the second semester of Level 3
3. Write the class story for homework

## Preparation for grammatical accuracy on the AP Language exam prior to the AP class:

1. Pop-up grammar and pop-up meaning in every story
2. Invention stories
3. Changing perspective
4. Grammar songs
5. Advanced grammatical structures in stories

## Preparation for vocabulary acquisition prior to the AP class:

1. Approximately 200 permanently internalized vocabulary words through TPR
2. Approximately 1,800 permanently internalized vocabulary words through TPRS
3. Approximately 10,000 words added to passive vocabulary

**Note:** Download “The 3 Steps of TPRS” at [BlaineRayTPRS.com](http://BlaineRayTPRS.com).

*Allison Eustice and Amy O'Connor teach Spanish at The Colorado Springs School in Colorado Springs Colorado. Amy O'Connor is the current Spanish Advanced Placement teacher. Karen Rowan is the former AP Spanish teacher and taught at CSS from 2000-2004.*

# TPR Storytelling Advanced Techniques

by Blaine Ray

Teachers who have been practicing TPRS (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling, formerly known as Total Physical Response Storytelling) for a while, often find themselves seeking ways to spice up their lessons. The following is a brief overview of some of the advanced techniques we are using to increase student interest. The following techniques were developed through practice by TPRS teachers all over the country.

## Playing the game

Students need to be taught to “play the game.” Students quickly learn “the rules.” Their level of concern increases simply because the only way to participate in the lesson and have their answers included as facts in the story is to out-think and out-maneuver both the other students and the teacher by contributing the most unexpected answers.

## Reacting to student responses

Student interest is increased by getting them to compete for unexpected answers. This competition is the key to both student interest and spoken fluency. Teachers ask for information, and then react. If a student replies with an answer that is totally unexpected, the teacher gets excited and says, “correct!” (in the target language). Expected, foreseeable, predictable answers receive the reply, “ridiculous!” (in the target language.) Give students special attention when they come up with “home run” type answers. Clap or walk over to them and shake their hands. These small gestures build great rapport among the teacher and the students.

## Believability

In the same way that there is no distinction between the real and the magical in Magic Realism, the teacher sells the students on the idea that she really believes both the real and the magical components of the story. That means she acts like all of the story is real. If there is a magic duck that flies to New York in 3 seconds, she will act like this is normal. The teacher

vehemently convinces any students who express doubts. That is part of the game.

## Specificity

Another part of the game is to make sure the details are as specific as possible. That means, for example, that if the story has food in it, the teacher will ask questions to make food more specific. He will ask what kind of food and how much of it there is. He will ask how much the food cost and where it was purchased. Each new idea or fact is a new detail in the story and adds interest. Since the students are contributing the answers to each question, they are more and more invested in “their” story.

## Maintaining control

Clearly there is a chance that the teacher could be stuck helplessly standing by as the story spins wildly out of control. Two techniques that keep the story on track when the suggestions become too unrelated to the vocabulary and structures in the lesson plan are, “It’s my story!” and “That’s another story” (in the target language). Practice using them occasionally to rapidly bring the story back into focus with humor.

Our goals are to drastically reduce attrition in foreign language programs, to help more students become fluent in a second language and, most of all, to do what is best for teachers. Teachers who find these advanced techniques helpful should try to incorporate only one at a time. Students will gradually become more and more excited about their class and each time a new strategy is introduced the teacher is able to surprise the students by pulling yet another rabbit out of the hat.

*Blaine Ray is the inventor of TPR Storytelling. He is a TPRS presenter, author and retired Spanish teacher living in Bakersfield, California.*

Found a helpful link or interesting web site that should be shared with other teachers? Have an idea for an article or something that works in your classroom? Want to let teachers know about upcoming state language conferences, workshops or trainings? Send us an email, [IJFLT@TPRStories.com](mailto:IJFLT@TPRStories.com).

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# Links and Resources

## Download Free Question Word Posters in:

French

<http://www.tprstories.com/Question%20Words%20French1.doc>

German

<http://www.tprstories.com/Question%20Words%20German.doc>

Spanish

<http://www.tprstories.com/Question%20Words%20Spanish.doc>

or

English

<http://www.tprstories.com/Question%20Words%20English.doc>

To submit articles for review, send them by attachment to [IJFLT@TPRStories.com](mailto:IJFLT@TPRStories.com)

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## Upcoming Conferences

Central States

Columbus Ohio

March 10-12, 2005

<http://www.centralstates.cc>

The Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers

Denver, Colorado

February 24-26, 2005

<http://www.ccfilt.org>

National TPRS Conference

Kansas City, MO

July 16-22, 2005

<http://www.tprstories.com/ntprs>

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