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Man invented language to satisfy his deep need to complain. Lily Tomlin

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Free Voluntary Web-Surfing

by Stephen Krashen

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This paper presents a simple message: we are taking the wrong approach in our use of computers in language and literacy development. Also, the wrong way is the hard way; the right way is the easy way.

> **…the wrong way is the hard way; the right way is the easy way.**

This view is heavily influenced by the Comprehension Hypothesis: the claim that we acquire language and develop literacy when we understand messages. Wrong approaches assume the correctness of the rival hypothesis, the Skill-Building Hypothesis. Studies of the effectiveness of computer-aided instruction, in fact, typically compare two wrong approaches.

I will first mention some of the problems with current approaches, and then present a much simpler, easier-to-use alternative: free voluntary surfing – doing free voluntary reading on the internet, or using the internet to locate printed material of interest for free reading. Free voluntary surfing is rarely mentioned as a possible means of language development. Yet, it may have the best potential of all current "computer applications."

The Computer as Skill-Builder

Nearly all applications of the computer to language and literacy development in the early days of computer-aided instruction were based on the Skill-Building Hypothesis, the view that we learn language by first consciously learning about it (learning the rules), getting corrected (which helps use "refine" our conscious rules), and practicing the rules until they become "automatic." This tradition continues, despite the overwhelming evidence that skill-building results in very modest amounts of superficial knowledge about language that is difficult to apply to real language use (Krashen, 2003).

Inspection of articles published in journals devoted to computer-based instruction (CALICO and ReCALL; see Zhao, 2003 for a review) since their beginning reveals a nearly complete focus on skill-building, and the computer programs involved are generally quite complex. Studies typically deal with the effect of feedback on grammar and pronunciation (Vol. 20, 3, 2000 of CALICO is devoted entirely to error correction), various means of presenting and practicing vocabulary and grammar, and comparisons of doing traditional skill-building based instruction with and without the computer.

It is no surprise that some studies show that computer-aided approaches are better than non-computer approaches or that some kinds of computer-aided instruction work better than others, but when both conditions of a study involve skill-building, if skill-building is not the fundamental means by which we acquire language, the information is only of peripheral value.

There is also indirect evidence that this approach has not been useful, i.e. reports that money in schools invested in books is better spent in terms of achievement than money invested in technology (Krashen, 1995; Hurd, Dixon, and Oikham, 2005).

The Computer as a Source of Written Comprehensible Input

The Comprehension Hypothesis

The Comprehension Hypothesis claims that the process of comprehension and acquisition are closely related. Comprehension occurs when we make predictions about what we are going to read (or hear) and then

attend to enough of the text to confirm that our predictions are correct. Good readers do not examine all details of the text, just enough to have confidence that their predictions are right (Smith, 2004; Goodman, Flurkey, A., & J. Xu, 2003).

For acquisition to occur, the comprehended text needs to contain aspects of language that the acquirer has not yet acquired but is developmentally "ready" to acquire ("i+1"). I have hypothesized that given enough input, i + 1 is present automatically. We do not need to program texts to make sure the appropriate structures or vocabulary is present, nor is this a good idea (Krashen, 1985). When a prediction regarding a previously unknown vocabulary item is successful, we acquire some of the meaning of the word, and as we read and understand the word in subsequent contexts, we gradually build up the full meaning of the word and its grammatical properties.

Our predictions are based on our knowledge of the world, our knowledge of the language, and, in reading, our knowledge of the writing system. This view thus claims that more competence in any of these three sources will increase comprehension by making readers' predictions more accurate, and will thereby increase language acquisition. It also predicts that "easy" texts, texts that contain a high percentage of known language, and that are about content familiar to the reader (but with enough new information to stimulate interest) are optimal for language and literacy development, because readers can make better predictions. This prediction is consistent with conclusions that optimal vocabulary development takes place when texts are 95% or even more comprehensible (Laufer, 1992).

In summary: we acquire when we understand what we read or hear; we understand by confirming our predictions about the input and when the input contains new aspects of language we are "ready" to acquire. Acquisition happens gradually, and occurs best when texts are very comprehensible.

> **I now suspect that "interesting" is not enough: the input has to be compelling, so interesting that all attention is focused on the message and thoughts of anxiety do not even occur, so interesting that the acquirer "forgets" that the input is in another language.**

Acquisition via comprehensible input also happens subconsciously: while it is happening we are not aware that it is happening, and the competence developed this way is stored in the brain subconsciously.

For acquisition to take place optimally, the acquirer also needs to be "open" to the input: high anxiety, low self-esteem, and lack of motivation can lead to a high "affective filter": the acquirer may understand the input but it will not enter "the language acquisition device."

In previous publications, I have also hypothesized that input needs to be interesting for acquisition to take place optimally; high interest ensures that the acquirer will actually pay attention to the input. I now suspect that "interesting" is not enough: the input has to be compelling, so interesting that all attention is focused on the message and thoughts of anxiety do not even occur, so interesting that the acquirer "forgets" that the input is in another language.

A profound difference between the Comprehension Hypothesis and the Skill-Building Hypothesis is that in the former, aspects of language such as vocabulary and grammar are the result of acquisition, of receiving comprehensible input. For skill-building, mastery of

these aspects needs to precede language acquisition: we first "learn" grammar and vocabulary, then (someday) we can actually use them in comprehension and production. In this sense, the skill-building hypothesis is a delayed gratification hypothesis.

The Power of (Free Voluntary) Reading

There is a great deal of research showing that reading is an excellent source of comprehensible input, and the kind of reading that appears to help the most is the kind most consistent with the principles outlined above: reading that is easily comprehensible and compelling, reading that the reader selects, also known as "free voluntary reading" (Krashen, 2004), reading that is done with no "accountability," no testing, no book reports, but for its own sake, for pleasure.

The Computer as a Source of Comprehensible Texts

There have been some attempts to use the computer and the internet to supply comprehensible input. (I will not discuss aural comprehensible input here, but invite the reader to visit eslpod.com, which appears to be an excellent source of interesting aural English input for second language acquirers).

The internet offers many simplified texts in English. Only a small minority, however, have the potential of being genuinely interesting. But even when the texts are reasonable, they are often followed by a long parade of comprehension questions and exercises.

Of course, the internet also supplies authentic texts in English, and the selection is enormous. Nearly every acquirer can find something of interest. The question is how to make these texts comprehensible for second language acquirers.

Before proceeding we need to discuss one more aspect of the Comprehension Hypothesis and how it is applied: narrow reading.

> **Thus, most students have developed the same personal theories about language acquisition and literacy development that the curriculum reflects, i.e. the Skill-Building Hypothesis. They have little choice: in general, no alternative is presented to them.**

The Comprehension Hypothesis predicts that self-selected, narrow reading is optimal for language and literacy development. As described elsewhere (Krashen, 1981, 2004), narrow reading means focusing on one topic, author or genre, according to the reader's interests, and gradually expanding the range of what is read over time. It is the opposite of the "survey" approach.

Self-selection and narrow reading nearly guarantee interest and comprehensibility, because of greater background knowledge, which increases as readers read more, and greater knowledge of the language: each writer has favorite expressions and a distinctive style, and each topic has its own vocabulary and discourse. Thus narrow reading results in rapid acquisition of the "language" of the author or topic, and provides built-in review.

The evidence in favor of narrow reading is of two kinds. First, there is overwhelming evidence supporting free voluntary reading in general, evidence from case

histories, correlational studies, and studies of in-school sustained silent reading (Krashen, 2004). Also, studies specifically show that those who do narrow reading make excellent progress (Cho and Krashen, 1994, 1995a, 1995b), that better readers are typically narrow readers (Lamme, 1976), and that a substantial percentage of books that children enjoy are "series" books of some kind (Ujiie and Krashen, 2002, 2005).

It also appears to be the case that narrow readers gradually expand their reading interests (LaBrant, 1958); we need not fear that narrow readers will stay with one kind of reading forever.

Also, narrow reading does not result in the ability to read in only one area. Deep reading in any topic will provide exposure to a tremendous amount of syntax and vocabulary that is used in other topics.

Reading instruction for those beyond the initial stages, according to the Comprehension Hypothesis, is focused on helping readers find appropriate texts, and encouraging narrow reading.

Free Voluntary Surfing

The best use of the computer, given today's technology, may be the most straightforward: Free Voluntary Surfing, simply encouraging EFL students to wander through the internet and read what interests them, following their interests from site to site, and from site to print.

In this section, I present some evidence that FVS can, in fact, result in higher levels of literacy, that many EFL students already possess the necessary competence to do it, but do not. I then consider what might be holding them back and what we can do about it.

FVS and Language/Literacy Development

Evidence for the potential of the internet in EFL comes from Cho and Kim (2004), who reported that children in EFL classes in Korea that included reading interesting stories of their choice from the internet gained significantly more in English than comparisons did. This was not, however, genuine "surfing." The children read from selected websites, and the duration of the study was only 14 weeks, so the full potential of surfing was not realized.

> **Choose something genuinely interesting but not essential: in other words, don't use FVS, at least at first, to make you a better person.**

Jackson, von Eye, Biocca, Barbatsis, Zhao and Fitzgerald (2006) provided computers with internet access to 140 children (ages 10-18, but mostly between 12-14) from low-income families. Jackson et. al. reported that more internet use resulted in improved reading, as reflected by grades and standardized tests. The improvements were present after six months of internet use for test scores and after one year for grades. There was no impact on mathematics test scores, and the data did not support the hypothesis that better readers used the internet more; rather, internet use improved reading.

Jackson et. al. (2006) point out that "web pages are heavily text based" (p. 433), and suggest that it was self-motivated reading of these texts that was the cause of the gains in reading. de Haan and Huysmans (2004) reported, however, that for adolescents in the Netherlands, greater use of the internet is modestly positively correlated with use of print media (r = .31): those who used the internet more also read regular print more. In addition, Lee and Kuo (2002) reported that an increase in use of the internet over a one year period was associated with more newspaper reading (and less television) for secondary school students in Singapore: during this time, internet use increased from 73% to 87% of the sample (n = 817). A similar result has been reported for adults in Taiwan (Liu, Day, Sun and Wany, 2000).

Of course it is possible that this result is influenced by social class: more affluent people have more access to both computers and books. Despite this lack of control, it is possible that internet use does indeed lead to more reading off the computer, which in turn may be responsible for growth in reading.

(Jackson et al (2006) reported no relationship between non-internet use of the computer and amount of use of printed media (r = -.04); the positive relationship held only for the use of the internet. For adults in the US, however, more computer use in general is associated with time spent reading, even when controlled for social class. The relationship, however, is modest (Robinson and Godbey, 1997).)

A logical study would be to determine the existence of the relationships (regression coefficients) in the model presented in figure 1, controlling for poverty. Both reading from the internet and free voluntary reading stimulated by internet use may be directly related to reading achievement or the effect of internet use might be indirect, with only reading print media directly relating to reading achievement. (In the case of the low-income children studied in Jackson et. al., 2006, however, it is doubtful that they had much access to print media; see Neuman and Celano, 2001.)

Figure one: hypothesized relationships among internet use, free reading (use of print media), and reading achievement

Internet use → **Reading achievement**
↓
Free reading →
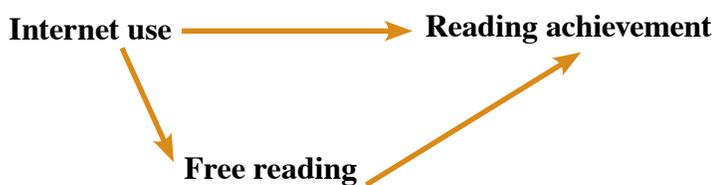
An obvious gap in the research, as Jackson and colleagues note, is that only "time on the internet" was considered as a predictor, with no attempt made to determine the impact of different kinds of internet use (e.g. blogs, reading the news, games, etc.). Nevertheless, the results of Jackson et. al. (2006) are consistent with the Comprehension Hypothesis.

The Popularity of the Internet and Web-Surfing

It has been widely reported that internet use is increasing in many countries, and that a significant number of people use the internet for free voluntary web-surfing. Horrigan (2006) reported a tremendous increase in internet use in the US, with estimated growth from 60 million in March, 2005 (30% of all adults) to 84 million one year later, in March, 2006 (42% of the adult population).

Two thirds of internet users admit that they engage in free voluntary surfing "at some time." Fallows (2006) concluded that "surfing for fun" is the second most popular online activity, behind using email. Similarly, Zhu and He (2002) reported that 52% of the 1007 Hong Kong residents they interviewed were connected to the internet at home, averaging 350 minutes per week on the net at home (and another 629 minutes at work). Interviewees said they spent an average of 104 minutes "searching for personal internet information," about 30% of the total home-use time.

The children studied in the Michigan State study clearly liked web-surfing: when asked what their main activity on the computer was, 33% said it was "web search" (Jackson, von Eye, Biocca, Barbatsis, Zhao, and Fitzgerald, 2005, p. 263).

A Reluctance to Surf in EFL?

A survey done of adults (over age 18) in Taiwan in 2000 (Liu, Day, Sun and Wany, 2000) reported that about 25% of those interviewed (488/2015) were internet-users. Most of this use, however, was on Chinese-language websites, with 84% of users' time on Taiwanese websites and about 6% on overseas Chinese websites. Liu et. al. cite a previous survey done by Yams (a search engine used in Taiwan) that found similar results. According to the Yams study, about 70% of the time spent on websites using other languages was with English language websites, and about 7% with Japanese language websites. We can thus estimate that only 7% of users' time on the internet involves English.

Of those using English websites, however, some are undoubtedly those with very high proficiency in English already. These results suggest that few people take advantage of the internet as a source of input in English as a second language.

In addition, use of FVS for helping language development is rarely mentioned in articles devoted to

case in print reading, but this should possibility be investigated.

The most obvious reason EFL students do not try FVS is that it is never mentioned in class, which is also the case for FVR. Thus, most students have developed the same personal theories about language acquisition and literacy development that the curriculum reflects, i.e. the Skill-Building Hypothesis. They have little choice: in general, no alternative is presented to them.

EFL students may also fear that authentic texts will be incomprehensible, unaware that narrow reading on familiar and compelling topics, and giving up on the belief that one has to know every word, will contribute to making these texts comprehensible and thereby contribute to language acquisition.

> **The best way, in my experience, to get a feel for narrow FVS is to try ourselves. The internet provides us with a unique opportunity to test the effects of narrow reading on oneself without expending a lot of effort in finding relevant and related reading material.**

The best way, in my experience, to get a feel for narrow FVS is to try ourselves. The internet provides us with a unique opportunity to test the effects of narrow reading on oneself without expending a lot of effort in finding relevant and related reading material.

pedagogy; when the internet is mentioned at all, the discussion is usually about helping students learn to use the computer – the target population we are talking about is already comfortable surfing the web in their first language – or finding specific information on the internet, as specified by the teacher (see e.g. articles in the "internet" section of http://iteslj.org/Lessons/)

I suspect that the reasons for the lack of use of FVS are similar to the reasons why free voluntary reading is underused. Instructors and those creating materials may be hesitant to include it because of a belief in the Skill-Building Hypothesis, the importance of knowing every word in a text, and a lack of faith in language acquisition. Another factor could be the fear that EFL web-surfers will stick with easy, familiar reading and never progress to harder material that will help them make progress. As noted above, this is not the

Let me suggest the following guidelines:

1. Do FVS in a language you are "intermediate" in, one in which you can read some authentic texts.

2. Start FVS by looking at google news, or websites on any topic you are interested in. It is, I think, crucial not to choose a topic that is professionally relevant, or even important to your life. If the reading is "serious" you may revert to intensive word-perfect reading. Choose something genuinely interesting but not

essential: in other words, don't use FVS, at least at first, to make you a better person.

3. Accept the fact that it will take you a while to find a topic, and it will take you a while to overcome the habit of not looking up words. The two problems will probably be solved at the same time: when you find an area that is really compelling, you will not be tempted to look up words. In fact, you will barely be aware that you are reading in another language. And that is when real language acquisition takes place.

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Conclusion

We should at least consider the most obvious, least expensive, and least complex application of the computer to language education, especially with those students who have already mastered the technical aspects of internet use. All we need to do is to encourage them to do something they already enjoy doing in their first language.

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Review articles claiming to show the virtues of grammar instruction have been a standard feature of the language teaching literature for some time now (e.g. Ellis, 2002; Harley, 1988; Long, 1983; Long & Robinson, 1998; Spada, 1997). The latest is a paper by Nassaji and Fotos (2004, henceforth NF). It has the somewhat broader aim of not only justifying grammar teaching but also reviewing the various forms that are currently available, but I will not be concerned with the latter, focusing instead on the more fundamental question of whether research supports the use of grammar teaching. NF argue that it does and that grammar instruction must be used. In responding to this claim, I will begin with their discussion of evidence regarding the value of grammar teaching and then consider three additional research areas that they offer as further justification for the practice. The conclusion in each case will be that no meaningful support has been provided for their position that grammar should be taught.

The Argument that Grammar Teaching Has Positive Effects

The primary question is whether grammar teaching is helpful. If it does have substantial benefits, this in itself will make a strong case for its use. If it does not, all the other arguments in its favor also lose their force. An argument that says "Grammar teaching doesn't work, but we should do it anyway, because…" would probably not be well received. NF do not give this question the central place it deserves, but they do consider it at some length. The discussion, however, shows a disturbingly uncritical attitude toward the research they claim as support for their position, especially in regard to the central issues of long-term effects and the validity of the tests used in the research. NF also neglect the very extensive evidence that goes against their claim.

Long-term Effects of Grammar Teaching
Teaching is not a success if it produces only short-term benefits, disappearing soon after the instruction is over. In general, the less durable the effects, the less successful the instruction has been. To the best of my knowledge, this point has never been in dispute; indeed, the importance of testing long-term effects has been widely recognized for some time now (e.g. Doughty, 1991; Krashen, 1992, 1993; Lightbown & Pienemann, 1993; Spada & Lightbown, 1993; White, 1991). So it is necessary to ask not only whether grammar teaching has beneficial effects but also how well any such effects hold up over time. But this fundamental question receives almost no attention in NF's review.

In general, the answer to the question is that beneficial effects do not hold up well at all. Several studies have found that significant contrasts on an immediate post-test disappear by the time a delayed post-test is done (Harley, 1989; Lightbown, Spada, & Wallace, 1980; Pienemann, 1989; White, 1991; for the results of follow-up testing for White's study, see Schwartz & Gubala-Ryzak, 1992; White, 1992). Similarly, Norris and Ortega (2000) found a substantial average drop in effects from immediate post-tests to delayed post-tests, despite the fact that the delay period was typically quite short. NF's only reference to this crucial issue is a passing mention of Norris and Ortega's conclusion that the effects of instruction

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[1] They muddy the waters by offering as a general conclusion the statement that "grammar feedback is necessary" (p. 137, emphasis added). Because feedback was only one small part of their discussion of grammar teaching, I will assume that this is simply a careless error and that they wish to make this claim for grammar teaching in general.

endured. They do not note that this conclusion was based mainly on non-communicative tests (see below), nor do they mention the large drops found after a delay period or the typically brief duration of the delay, and they say nothing of the evidence already noted that benefits found on immediate post-tests disappear by the time a delayed post-test is done.

What Exactly Does Grammar Teaching Contribute to Learning?

Perhaps the most important problem with NF's discussion is that they do not seriously address the most fundamental issue in this area. There has never been any disagreement over the ability of grammar teaching to improve learners' performance on formal grammar tests, which constitute the testing used in the great majority of the research (though even here success is far from certain; see below). The interesting question is whether it has more practical benefits; i.e., whether it helps performance on tests of communicative ability.

> The unfortunate fact is that second language learners have problems with accuracy. It does not matter what sort of instruction they have or have not received.

The importance of such tests has been widely recognized for some time now (e.g. Bachman, 1991; Brown, 1994; Ellis, 1990; Krashen, 1992, 1993; Lightbown & Pienemann, 1993; Skehan, 1988; Spada & Lightbown, 1993; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993a,b). And this concern has been justified by a number of studies that found dramatic differences in results as a reflection of the naturalness of the testing used (e.g. Frantzen, 1995; Kadia, 1988; Schumann, 1978a, 1978b; Terrell, Baycroft, & Perrone, 1987). Norris and Ortega's (2000) meta-analysis offers perhaps the clearest demonstration. Artificial grammar tests, which made up the great bulk of their studies, produced very impressive numbers, while results from the eight examples of more communicative testing were unimpressive and the modest results obtained from them were almost certainly an overestimation of the actual value of instruction, as they were artificially

inflated by several extraneous factors (Truscott, 2004).

Thus, one cannot argue for grammar teaching simply by noting that research has found it beneficial; the type of tests on which the benefits were found must be an integral part of any such discussion. At times NF seem to be aware of the distinction between different types of tests and the corresponding distinction between types of knowledge. They note arguments by Krashen (1999) and Truscott (1998) that grammar teaching is helpful only for a particular type of knowledge, which has limited value for actual language use. They even favorably present a lengthy quote from Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (2002) in which essentially the same distinction is drawn.

And yet in presenting their short list of studies that have found grammar teaching helpful, NF show no concern for this distinction, citing Doughty (1991) and Cadierno (1995) as unqualified evidence that grammar teaching works and Carroll and Swain (1993) as similar evidence for the value of grammatical feedback. None of these studies found benefits on any measures of communicative ability. Similarly, they present the findings of Norris and Ortega's (2000) survey as support for grammar teaching without noting the crucial role of test type in these findings, a point that Norris and Ortega stressed.

Later in the paper (p. 130), they briefly and indirectly return to this point, citing the claim by Ellis (2002) that grammar teaching improves students' performance on tests involving free production. This claim was based, first, on six of the eight studies in Norris and Ortega's (2002) survey that used such tests. These studies, again, actually suggest that grammar teaching has little (and perhaps no) value for the abilities measured by such tests. Ellis excluded two of them—Nagata (1997) because he decided (reasonably, I would say) that the measure was not very free, and Jourdenais et al. (1995) because he did not have access to it. He also added five more, published too late to be included in Norris and

Ortega's survey. It is worthwhile to consider, in some detail, the findings that Ellis presented as support for grammar teaching.

First, for two of the eleven studies (Salaberry, 1997; Williams & Evans, 1998), he concluded that no benefits were found. I will say nothing more about these cases, instead discussing each of the studies for which Ellis (2002) claimed positive effects for grammar teaching. For Lyster (1994), he stated that the benefits were on "formulaic" aspects of language; in other words this study found instruction helpful on a task comparable to the learning of a word or an idiom. For Long, Inagaki, and Ortega (1998), he made only very limited claims of short-term benefits and noted that no follow-up testing was done, with the implication that the study not only had very weak effects immediately after the treatment but produced no evidence at all of lasting benefits. The only comment I will add is that the study was done under idealized conditions involving one-on-one interaction between students and native speakers of the target language. As these conditions are too good to be duplicated in typical teaching, the weak results probably overestimate the value of the treatment under normal classroom conditions.

Harley (1989) found that her instructed students had only tiny advantages over the control group immediately after grammar teaching and that by the time of the delayed post-test these differences had disappeared, contrary to Ellis' (2002) description of the instruction as successful both immediately and after a delay period. Mackey (1999), also cited as evidence of the benefits of grammar instruction for communicative ability, did not specifically study grammar teaching but rather interaction, so possible explanations of her results include the improved input that occurs in interaction, the opportunities it provides for productive use of the language, and simply the process of interacting in itself. One cannot validly infer that attention to form was responsible.

Ellis reported positive results for Muranoi (2000) on immediate and (crucially) delayed post-tests, but in fact Muranoi did not report the results of his free production measure on the delayed post-test, presenting only a composite of these and the findings from artificial measures. So this study produced no evidence of lasting benefits for communicative ability. VanPatten and Sanz (1995) found benefits on a written test but not on the oral version, and these mixed benefits were only found immediately after the treatment; no follow-up testing was done. So this study yielded ambiguous findings for immediate effects and, again, provided no evidence of lasting benefits.

Day and Shapson (1991) obtained their positive results with testing that relied entirely on *suppliance in obligatory contexts*, a method that rewards students for blindly using the instructed form without any understanding of its proper use. This behavior is known to occur frequently with instructed learners (see Truscott, 1998, 2004; for related discussion, see Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991), so the analysis was strongly biased in favor of instructed students.

Doughty and Varela (1998) combined a more subtle (but no less important) version of this problem with teaching and testing conditions that made it clear to students in the experimental group (but not those in the control group) that the teacher was very concerned with the particular forms being tested. And they still found little benefit on written tests. The stronger findings they obtained for speaking seem quite surprising, as one would expect written accuracy to be easier to attain—until one looks at the way the testing was done. The oral and written tests used the same questions (which were also the questions used throughout the treatment), and the written version was done first. Thus, students prepared written versions of their answers, then had additional time to consider and rehearse these answers, and then presented them orally. And throughout this process the instructed students had every reason to believe that the teacher was especially interested in their use of the instructed form. In other words, the oral testing was not a measure of spontaneous production, and its results cannot be generalized beyond this very special context in which they were obtained. (For additional discussion of this study, see Truscott, 2005.)

Mackey and Philp (1998), studying the effects of interaction and grammatical feedback on learners' progress in the development of English wh-questions, used two methods of analyzing their free production

data. On one, neither of the two grammar groups showed any benefits. On the other, the authors claimed substantial benefits for one of these groups, but not the other. And the findings in fact offer little or no support for even the limited claim that attention to grammar helped one of the groups on one of the analyses.

One problem is that the gains made by the relatively successful group did not differ significantly from those made by a group that received no treatment (Krashen, 2002), a comparison that Mackey and Philp (1998) did not explicitly report. Perhaps more importantly, the claim of benefits for this one group was based on a very doubtful method of determining learners' gains. The measure was whether individual learners advanced in the series of stages typically passed through in the acquisition of wh-questions. Advancement was defined as using at least two instances of a higher-level form on at least two of the three post-tests—immediately after the treatment, one week later, and one month later. One problem with this type of measure has already been described. By looking only at whether learners used a form they were encouraged to use, and not considering overuse, it introduced a strong bias in favor of instructed learners.

Another, equally serious weakness involves the question of lasting effects. Mackey and Philp (1998) claimed that this measure was especially valuable because it showed the "sustained effects" of instruction. But the reality is very different. When the target form appears in production immediately after the treatment and one week later but then disappears by the time of the final post-test a month after the treatment, this is clear evidence that the effects were not sustained. But Mackey and Philp treated cases of this sort as evidence of success. They did not report the numbers, but their discussion makes it clear that of the seven students in this group who advanced, at least two and possibly as many as four showed this pattern of unsustained effects. A realistic assessment of the findings requires the removal of these subjects from the category of successful cases.

To summarize this extended discussion of Mackey and Philp (1998), even if the authors' conclusions are taken at face value, the implications regarding the

value of attention to form are quite negative. Both grammar groups failed on one analysis and only one of them made gains on the other. And the one case for which the authors claimed success actually produced very weak results, not differing significantly from those of a genuine control group—despite the fact that testing was biased in favor of positive results and clear cases of failure were counted as successes.

Overall, the set of studies reviewed by Ellis (2002) does not support claims that grammar teaching is helpful. Instead, the findings point to a very pessimistic conclusion about its value. And the discussion here has omitted some important biasing factors that probably made instructed learners look considerably better than they actually were in these studies (Truscott, 2004). The more general conclusion is that NF offer no credible evidence that the value of grammar instruction extends beyond the artificial grammar tests on which it is usually found. Available evidence strongly suggests that it has little or no value for learners' ability to use the language for communicative purposes.

Remaining Studies

The other studies that NF cite as representative of the evidence in favor of grammar teaching are Lightbown (1991) and Lightbown and Spada (1990). Both of these studies are best characterized as fishing expeditions; i.e., neither set out to test any specific hypothesis. Instead they looked for signs that *any* aspect of learners' knowledge might be related to grammar instruction they had received. This procedure is very useful as a means of establishing hypotheses to investigate, but it does not, in itself, allow any conclusions to be drawn about the effects of teaching. Lightbown and Spada, to their credit, recognized this point, concluding that their findings "can only be taken as suggestive of directions for future research" (p. 442).

Lightbown (1991) studied a class in which the teacher spent a great deal of time training ESL students to use *be* rather than *have* in presentational sentences (e.g., *There is a boy* rather than *It has a boy*). These students did learn to use the form correctly in spontaneous communication, and of the ten students

interviewed a year later, seven or eight continued this correct use. This work led to an inconclusive debate between Krashen (1992, 1993) and Lightbown and Pienemann (1993) in regard to whether or not learners' competence was actually affected by the teaching. More important, perhaps, this is grammar at its simplest, scarcely different from learning a new word or idiom. Even if instruction were shown to be highly effective in this case, this finding would say little about the general value of grammar teaching. The researchers also looked at other, more clearly grammatical points emphasized by this teacher, but failed to find comparable effects. So even if Lightbown's findings represent a genuine success for form-focused instruction, the implications are very limited. This fishing expedition managed to catch only a single minnow.

Conclusions drawn from Lightbown and Spada (1990) are also limited by the lack of follow-up testing and the authors' reliance on measures of suppliance in obligatory contexts. A final (very important) limitation of both Lightbown (1991) and Lightbown and Spada (1990) is that neither included a control group: There was no comparison made with uninstructed learners. Thus, a claim that the findings show the value of grammar teaching relies on the assumption that students who had not received instruction on these aspects of grammar would not have made similar improvements over the course of the study. This assumption is unsupported and at least in the case of Lightbown (1991) is very questionable, as the period was a full year.

What about Studies that Found Grammar Teaching Unhelpful?

A final flaw in NF's review of the evidence is that they discuss only those studies that superficially support the use of grammar teaching. A great many studies have found it unhelpful (Clyne, 1985; Ellis, 1984; Eubank, 1987; Felix, 1981; Felix & Hahn, 1985; Frantzen, 1995; Harley, 1989; Kadia, 1988; Lightbown, 1983, 1985, 1987; Lightbown, Spada, & Wallace, 1980; Liou, 1989;[2] Nikolov & Krashen, 1997; Plann, 1977; Schumann, 1978a, 1978b; Sciarone & Meijer, 1995; Spada, 1986, 1987;[1] Terrell, Baycroft, & Perrone, 1987; Weinert, 1987; White, 1991;[3] for reviews, see Krashen, 1999, 2001, 2002; Truscott, 1998, 1999, 2004). This research, which points to the failure of grammar teaching, is not considered.

The same problem is found with NF's discussion of grammatical feedback. A great deal of evidence exists that it is at best unhelpful for learners' ability to use the language communicatively (Cohen & Robbins, 1976; DeKeyser, 1993; Fazio, 2001; Hendrickson, 1981; Kepner, 1991; Lightbown, 1983; Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986; Semke, 1984; Sheppard, 1992; Steinbach, Bereiter, Burtis, & Bertrand, as described by Carroll & Swain 1993; for reviews, see Krashen, 2001, 2002; Leki, 1990; Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2005). But none of these findings are mentioned by NF.

All research is of course subject to critical evaluation. Some of the negative findings on grammar teaching, for instance, did not involve communicative testing, though this possible criticism does not have great force here, as explicit grammar teaching that fails to improve learners' ability to pass formal grammar tests is not likely to improve their communicative ability either. But overall the evidence against grammar teaching is quite strong. Reviewers who wish to claim that research supports the use of grammar teaching and grammar correction must address these findings.

Other Arguments for Grammar Teaching

Most of NF's discussion of evidence for grammar teaching is part of a section called "Research Supporting Grammar Teaching", where it is presented as one of "four reasons for the reevaluation of grammar as a necessary component of language instruction" (p. 127). The other three reasons also constitute arguments for the use of grammar teaching and are therefore worthy of critical scrutiny.

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[2]Liou (1989) and Spada (1986, 1987) did large numbers of tests, which produced a few positive and a few negative results, with the great majority showing no significant effects. Such results are indicative of random data; i.e. they suggest that the instruction had no effect.

The Theoretical Need for Awareness of Form

The first of the other reasons is that theory indicates that awareness of grammar is necessary. The main support offered for this claim is the standard one, the work of Richard Schmidt (1990, 1993, 2001) on *noticing*. NF also refer to some related claims in support of noticing and very briefly mention an independent argument offered in favor of grammar instruction. All these claims are fundamentally flawed. Schmidt's position, in its strongest version, is that awareness of form is necessary for grammar acquisition. But he used the term "awareness" in a special, narrow sense. A major problem with NF's discussion is that they do not note this special, narrow sense. Schmidt's claims about the role of awareness were limited to a very simple conscious registration of items in the input, explicitly excluding awareness of rules, constructions, and form-meaning mappings. In regard to past tense, for example, the Noticing Hypothesis simply claims that learners must be aware that a form is present. It is silent on whether awareness that it is a past tense form plays any role in acquisition. Similarly, awareness that English questions are formed by moving wh-phrases to the front of a sentence has nothing to do with the hypothesis. Thus, even if one accepts Schmidt's position uncritically, this theoretical pillar can support only extremely limited versions of grammar instruction, namely those that do not aim at awareness of rules, constructions, or form-meaning mappings.

NF cite a few additional sources apparently as support for Schmidt's position. One of these, Tomlin and Villa (1994), in fact rejected the claim that awareness is necessary for acquisition of grammar. The others did support this claim, but the sort of awareness they supported was fundamentally different from Schmidt's noticing, as they focused on aspects of grammar that Schmidt explicitly excluded from his Noticing Hypothesis. NF do not note this theoretical conflict, or the crucial implications it has for their argument. Rutherford's (1987) support was in regard to the value of *consciousness raising*, but one should also note the cautions offered by Sharwood Smith (1991, 1993), the originator of the notion, that in fact it did not (or at least should not) involve claims about consciousness, despite the name.

Truscott (1998) pointed out a number of additional problems with the Noticing Hypothesis. The line between noticing and other forms of awareness (on which the hypothesis is silent) is virtually impossible to draw, except perhaps in entirely arbitrary ways. The hypothesis is not based on any coherent notion of the nature of language and is therefore largely uninterpretable; one cannot say, except arbitrarily, just what learners do and do not need to notice according to the Noticing Hypothesis. It is also unfalsifiable, a point more or less acknowledged by Schmidt (1995). It does not fit well with findings on grammar teaching or grammar correction. It is not supported by research or theory in cognitive psychology, despite the fact that Schmidt took such work as the inspiration and primary support for noticing. Perhaps the most telling point is that while the notion is presented as an insight drawn from research in cognitive psychology, the latter itself has no such concept. Noticing is used exclusively in second language acquisition; those whose theory and research it was built on have apparently not found any use for the concept.

> The defining characteristics of the problem are uncritical acceptance of claims favoring the dominant view and casual dismissal of opposing perspectives, without serious attention to what the proponents of these alternative views actually say or what evidence might support their position and thereby challenge the orthodoxy.

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[3]For long-term effects of this study, see Schwartz and Gubala-Ryzak (1992) and White (1992).

Interestingly, most of these points were made long ago in a paper that NF mention in passing (Truscott, 1998). But they do not address any of these criticisms or the strong implications they have for their argument, instead simply noting that the Noticing Hypothesis has been criticized. The apparent justification offered for this neglect is the observation that most people who write on the subject agree with Schmidt, a less than compelling response, especially given that it is a very superficial, even nominal type of agreement, as described above.

The other theoretical prop that NF offer, in passing, is the claim that learners cannot process form and meaning at the same time, and that awareness of form is therefore necessary. Interestingly, one argument used by Long (1991) in the original presentation and defense of focus on form was that it *is* possible to do both and that this is a reason why teachers *should* focus on form. NF attribute their claim to two sources, one of which (Tomasello, 1998) was apparently cited by mistake, as it contains nothing related to the argument they attribute to it.

In any case, the argument seems to be based on an implicit assumption that UG views of second language acquisition can be dismissed, as can Krashen's acquisition-learning distinction. In other words, the argument begs the question of whether grammar can be acquired in a largely automatic way. In these approaches, two largely independent types of learning are hypothesized, one that specifically deals with language learning and as a result is automatic and unconscious, the other reflecting more general learning processes and therefore occurring in a conscious and effortful manner. The automatic type is the one that is crucial for language acquisition. A demonstration that attention to meaning interferes with the secondary type of learning, which is in all likelihood what NF are referring to, has little relevance to the question of whether grammar can be acquired without attention to form, unless one rules out in advance some major approaches to SLA. As these are exactly the approaches that would challenge their claim, the argument is largely vacuous.

Developmental Sequences

The second reason given for supporting grammar teaching is the existence of developmental sequences, in particular Pienemann's (1984, 1989) Teachability Hypothesis, according to which effective teaching must coincide with learners' natural course of development. In the acquisition of particular aspects of grammar, learners pass through more or less predictable sequences. Instruction, the hypothesis claims, must be targeted at the individual learner's current stage in regard to that aspect of grammar. It is difficult to understand, though, how this can be seen as "research supporting grammar teaching" or as a reason for "reevaluation of grammar as a necessary component of language instruction" (p. 127).

The hypothesis makes two empirical claims: (a) instruction for which a learner is not ready will not be helpful; and (b) instruction for which a learner is ready will be helpful. Support for (a) is very extensive, and the claim has generated little or no controversy. In contrast, support for (b) is quite limited, to put it mildly. (Tellingly, NF do not offer any evidence at all.) This point was made some time ago by Krashen (1993), and it remains true today. After more than twenty years of attention, this strong claim remains little more than a theoretical possibility.

Even if one accepts the claim that properly timed instruction can benefit learners in principle, it does not follow that such instruction has any value in practice. Very serious practical issues must also be considered, as noted by Ellis (1993). Teachers who would teach in accordance with developmental sequences must first acquire a thorough understanding of these sequences, a task made considerably more difficult by the still-limited knowledge available from the research. They must then constantly monitor the current stage of each of their students on each aspect of grammar they are interested in and adjust their teaching in a way that will accommodate each of them, a task complicated by the fact that research has found variation between groups of learners (Meisel, Clahsen, & Pienemann, 1981; Nicholas, 1985). It takes considerable imagination to believe that this sort of teaching is feasible. Thus, the existence of developmental sequences, far from supporting grammar teaching, is a strong reason to doubt the feasibility of the practice.

The Limits of Immersion

The third reason given in support of grammar teaching is the observed accuracy problems of immersion students, based mainly on findings from research in Canada. The students in these studies received very extensive input but fell far short of native accuracy in their production, implying (the argument goes) that attention to form is necessary. This argument has several flaws.

First, NF's description of these programs as lacking attention to form ("grammar is not addressed", p. 128) is not accurate; a great deal of time was spent on form in language arts classes. The argument made by those who studied these students (e.g. Snow, Met, & Genesee, 1989; Swain, 1996) is that the problem was a lack of integration between language teaching and content teaching. This claim is no less interesting than the "grammar is not addressed" claim, but it is important to keep the facts straight. A more significant problem with the immersion argument is that it disregards the acknowledged limits in the input received by immersion students and the fact that these students had limited opportunities for productive use of the L2 (e.g. Harley, 1993; Swain, 1985), especially for the interaction that is commonly seen as critical for acquisition. As long as these characteristics of the programs remain viable explanations for the observed accuracy problems, there is no basis for a conclusion that the absence of grammar teaching (or, more accurately, the lack of integration between grammar teaching and content teaching) is responsible.

Social explanations for the limits of immersion students' grammar are also quite plausible. It is no secret that young people tend to favor their peers over adult authority figures as models, including models for language use. This can be seen, for example, in the common phenomenon of immigrant children developing fully native ability despite the very non-native input they receive from their parents. In the immersion classroom, students receive native input from the teacher and non-native input from their peers. It is quite natural for them to dismiss the former as a desirable model. If this type of explanation is accurate, instruction in speaking the way the teacher speaks is unlikely to have more than a very superficial effect on

these students. Again, there is no basis for concluding that the presence or absence of grammar teaching has anything to do with the grammatical abilities of immersion students.

But the most fundamental problem with the immersion argument is that it is logically dependent on the claim that grammar teaching is beneficial. Without this assumption, a statement that grammar teaching is necessary is literally nonsense: It makes no sense to speak of the necessity of something that does not contribute to learning. NF, following standard practice in the field, do not note this dependence, instead presenting the necessity claim as an independent argument.

The unfortunate fact is that second language learners have problems with accuracy. It does not matter what sort of instruction they have or have not received; non-native achievement in grammar is simply the nature of the business. Given this clear fact, it makes no sense to identify one group of learners who have accuracy problems and then use these problems to argue against the type of instruction they have received. In particular, one cannot validly conclude that some other type of instruction (one involving grammar teaching) is necessary, as all evidence indicates that this other type will have the same problem. The real issue, again, is whether grammar teaching is helpful. Claims about the necessity of the practice simply add confusion and divert attention from this central question.

This confusion between the helpfulness of grammar teaching (the real issue) and the necessity of grammar teaching (a red herring) is common in the field and can be seen in the first section of NF's paper, "Arguments Against Grammar Teaching". There they present the skeptics' position (p. 127) as "learners do not require formal instruction to learn languages" and "formal instruction was seen to be unnecessary", when in fact the point was that grammar teaching is not helpful. They exemplify their point by quoting a statement from Schwartz (1993) that success comparable to that of L1 learners can *only* be achieved through input. This was not a claim that learners will achieve native-like abilities if given sufficient input, a position that Schwartz has rejected (see, for example, Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996). In fact, I am

not aware of anyone who would make such a claim. The skeptics' position, again, is simply that grammar teaching can only make very limited contributions. This position is not challenged by the observation that immersion students have significant accuracy problems. NF compound the confusion by quoting Schwartz's (1993) UG-based argument and then adding that claims similar to it "were also made in the context of Universal Grammar" (p. 127).

The confusion between "necessary" and "helpful" also appears in a subsequent section (p. 129). There they describe the views of Krashen and Truscott that grammar teaching has little value and then go on to say that "Other researchers have taken a more cautious approach, not questioning the *need* for explicit instruction..." (emphasis added). The criticisms they are describing have nothing to do with need or the lack of need; they are about whether grammar teaching is *helpful*. (NF do not explain, by the way, why they think it is more cautious to accept the claim that grammar teaching is necessary than it is to question that claim.)

Conclusion

NF cite a great many sources in support of their favorable view of grammar teaching. And they are certainly right that most researchers have presented their findings this way and that most reviewers have summarized the research in this way. They seem to take this near consensus in the mainstream literature as a strong indication that grammar teaching is indeed necessary and helpful. I would offer a different interpretation of this popular support for the practice. What it suggests is the most unhealthy of situations for a growing field—that in which a single, questionable view has become so dominant as to establish an artificial orthodoxy, imposing consent and stifling critical discussion. The defining characteristics of the problem are uncritical acceptance of claims

favoring the dominant view and casual dismissal of opposing perspectives, without serious attention to what the proponents of these alternative views actually say or what evidence might support their

> **What it suggests is the most unhealthy of situations for a growing field—that in which a single, questionable view has become so dominant as to establish an artificial orthodoxy, imposing consent and stifling critical discussion.**

position and thereby challenge the orthodoxy. These signs are clearly visible in NF's review paper.

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Is Intentional or Incidental Vocabulary Learning More Effective?

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There are two major issues in the study of vocabulary development in second language acquisition. The first is how to do it: the second is how to measure it.

It is widely accepted that reading is a powerful source of vocabulary development: Each time readers see an unfamiliar word in print while reading comprehensible text, they acquire at least some aspects of it's meaning. The increment is small, but given enough reading this can amount to considerable vocabulary development (Krashen, 1989; 2004). This process is subconscious: readers are focused on the meaning of the text, not on acquiring new vocabulary. It is, in other words, "incidental learning."

The question is whether reading is enough or whether reading needs to be supplemented by deliberate efforts to increase one's vocabulary. That is, whether "explicit" learning is required, or helpful.

Of course, there are a wide variety of approaches to "explicit" vocabulary instruction: when one fails, defenders of explicit vocabulary teaching can always claim that the wrong approach was used. It is crucial, however, to continue to examine the most obvious and most popular methods. One examined here is probably the most widely-used: simply require students to look up unfamiliar words they encounter and prepare for tests on these words.

A second issue is how vocabulary competence is measured. The range has been from simply asking subjects to indicate whether they have seen the word before, to determining whether they can actually use the word correctly. Does this make a difference in comparing differing approaches to vocabulary development? In this study, a simpler, more superficial approach is compared to one in which deeper word knowledge is probed.

Procedure

The 33 participants were all native speakers of Hungarian and were English majors in their first semester at University of Pécs. The students were randomly divided into two groups (A and B), each attending fourteen 90-minute weekly seminars of language practice during the semester.

Both groups received the same readings during the semester covering a wide selection of topics. Texts to be read at home ranged from authentic articles from Newsweek to short texts from textbooks. Assignments were approximately one to two pages per week. The term lasted ten weeks. Both groups also read a 235-page novel (Janice Galloway's The Trick Is to Keep Breathing). Students covered about twenty pages a week from the novel.

Class-time for both groups was dedicated to discussion of the content of the articles and the novel; there was no direct instruction on vocabulary or grammar.

Group A was instructed to look up, at home, all words unknown to them in the short texts and took weekly retention tests on the vocabulary of the texts. These regular tests consisted of a list of 20 English words that the instructor considered to be important in understanding the text and that, according to her experience, were likely unfamiliar to the students, and thus looked up. Students were asked to provide a definition and write a sentence illustrating a possible meaning of the word in English.

Group B read the same articles at home but did not take any of the vocabulary tests. They were not encouraged to use the dictionary. Although this study did not investigate strategy use, the possibility that the participants of this group also looked up a few words on their own for clarification of meaning cannot be excluded.

Thus, for words in the shorter texts, one group was intentionally focused on new vocabulary. The second group was not focused on the vocabulary in the texts.

Both groups were simply asked to read the novel at home. There was no special focus on vocabulary and no tests were given on words in the novel during the course of the treatment.

The Pre-test

Items from Test 2 of the fifty-item Goulden, Nation and Read (1990) tests were adapted for this purpose, using scoring categories from the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) developed by Wesche and Paribakht (cited in Read, 2000, p. 132). For each word, the subject checked one of the following categories:

All the extra work that the explicit learning group did was of very limited value…

1. I don't remember having seen this word before.
2. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
3. I have seen this word before, and I think it means: (provide synonym or translation)
4. I know this word. It means: (provide synonym or translation)
5. I can use this word in a sentence. (Write a sentence.)

Responses in categories 1 and 2 were scored as "zero," and responses in categories 3, 4 and 5 were scored as "one" if the synonym, translation or sentence provided was correct, zero if it was not.

The Post-test

The fifty-item post-test (Appendix) contained 42 words, all of which appeared in the weekly word tests taken by group A, from the short texts read during the semester. In addition, eight words were chosen from the novel, which was unexpected, for both groups.

The post-test format was similar to the pre-test format, except that an additional category was added to include information about the context of the words (item 4 below). Students were allowed to choose option 4 in addition to option 3, 5 and 6. Thus, students chose from among the following categories:

1. I don't remember having seen this word before.
2. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
3. I have seen this word before, and I think it means: (provide synonym or translation)
4. If the word is familiar to you, can you identify where you learned it? (indicate context)
5. I know this word. It means: (provide synonym or translation)
6. I can use this word in a sentence. (Write a sentence.)

The post-test was scored in two ways. First, as was done in the pre-test, only scores of zero and one were awarded, with responses 1 and 2 receiving zero and 3, 5 and 6 receiving a score of one if the synonym, translation, or sentence provided was correct, zero if it was not.

A second analysis provided more detail. A response in category 1 was scored as zero (word not familiar at all).

Subjects earned a score of one (word familiar but meaning not known), if they chose category 2, or chose category 3 or 5 but provided an incorrect meaning.

Subjects earned a score of two (word familiar and subjects recognizes where it occurred, i.e. context known, but meaning not known) if they chose category 4 and identified the context correctly, but chose either 1 or got the meaning wrong when choosing other options.

Subjects earned a score of three (subject knows meaning of the word) if they chose category 3 or 5 and provided a correct synonym or translation.

Subjects earned a score of four (subject knows meaning and can identify context where word occurred) if they chose category 3 or 5, getting the meaning right, and category 4, providing the correct context.

Subjects earned a score of five (subject knows meaning, can use word in a sentence) if they chose category five and correctly supplied the meaning and an appropriate sentence or chose category six and wrote an acceptable sentence but not the right context.

Subjects earned a score of six (subject knows meaning, can use word in a sentence, and can identify context) if they chose category 6 or categories 4 and 5, supplying all components correctly.

> **…simply assigning dictionary searches in preparation for quizzes is not an efficient way to improve vocabulary knowledge.**

The pre-test was given before the first class session, and the post-test was given immediately after the last class session.

RESULTS

There were no significant differences between the groups on the pre-test (group A mean = 11.7, sd = 2.5; group B mean = 11.9, sd = 3.2; t = .754, df = 31). Similar results were obtained when only the students who took the post-test were included (see below) (A = 11.9, sd = 3.5; B = 12.1, sd = 4.4, t = .183, df = 28).

The post-test was taken by 30 of the original 33 subjects, 15 in each group. Data loss occurred with item 47, so only 49 out of the original 50 items were analysed (41 of the 42 items from the texts).

The two methods of scoring produced nearly identical results (table 1).

Table 1: Results of Vocabulary Tests

TEXTS

	A (intentional)	B (incidental)
Method 1		
mean	14.2 (35%)	10.7 (26%)
sd	5.3	7.8
Method 2		
mean	82.6 (34%)	69.1 (29%)
sd	26.9	29.9

NOVEL

	A (intentional)	B (incidental)
Method 1		
mean	1.6 (20%)	2.6 (33%)
sd	1.4	1.8
Method 2		
mean	11.5 (24%)	15.4 (32%)
sd	5.2	7.5

sd = standard deviation; Perfect score, method 1: text = 41, novel = 8; Method 2: text = 246, novel = 48

The intentional group did somewhat better on the 41 words that were taken from the texts, but the difference between the groups fell short of significance (for method one, t = 1.46, p = .16 (two tail), for method two, t = 1.30, p = .20).

The incidental group, however, tended to do better on the eight words selected from the novels (for method one, t = 1.69, p = .10, for method two, t = 1.65, p = .11).

Discussion

This study attempted to compare intentional and incidental vocabulary learning and aimed to determine whether deliberate preparation for regular vocabulary retention tests is more efficient in a fourteen-week study than incidental vocabulary learning as a by-product of reading only. An intentional learning

group was asked to look up unfamiliar words in short articles and prepare for regular vocabulary tests. The incidental group read the same articles with no special focus on vocabulary. Both groups read a novel over the semester, and neither group did any vocabulary study based on words in the novel.

Pre-tests were administered to the two participating groups before treatment to estimate their initial vocabulary size. A post-test then measured the rate of vocabulary learning after treatment. Two scoring methods were used: The first gave subjects full credit when they were able to provide a synonym. The second gave more credit when subjects were able to identify the context in which the word was used and when they could use the word correctly in a sentence.

The two scoring procedures produced similar results: There were only small differences between the groups. The intentional group was slightly better in retention of words contained in readings of short articles, but the difference fell short of statistical significance. The incidental group was slightly better on words that neither group studied that were included in the novel.

The results of this study are consistent with the hypothesis that vocabulary can be "acquired" from reading alone (Krashen, 1989), and it also suggests that vocabulary study of the kind these students did does not add much. All the extra work that the explicit learning group did was of very limited value: the incidental learning group did nearly as well on the words in the articles, without any special attention paid to the words or extra study. In other words, they did nearly as well with less work, consistent with claims that direct study of vocabulary is not efficient (Mason and Krashen, 2004).

Of course, we do not know for sure whether all students in the intentional learning group did their assignments, and actually looked up all unfamiliar words. A conservative interpretation of the results is that simply assigning dictionary searches in preparation for quizzes is not an efficient way to improve vocabulary knowledge. Tighter control of student behavior, with monitoring of whether students did the work, may (or may not) result in greater gains.

Not considered here was the role of affect. It has been confirmed that students enjoy reading if the texts available are interesting and comprehensible (Krashen, 2004). It is unlikely that students are enthusiastic about vocabulary study. If so, this suggests that reading and other forms of comprehensible input are a better bet for long-term vocabulary development.
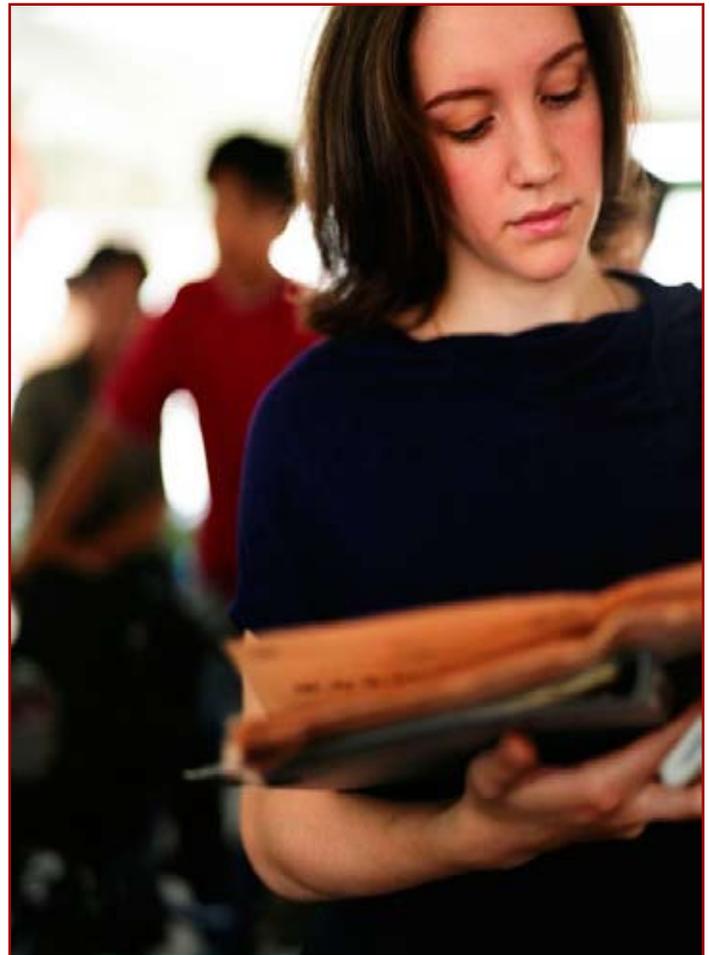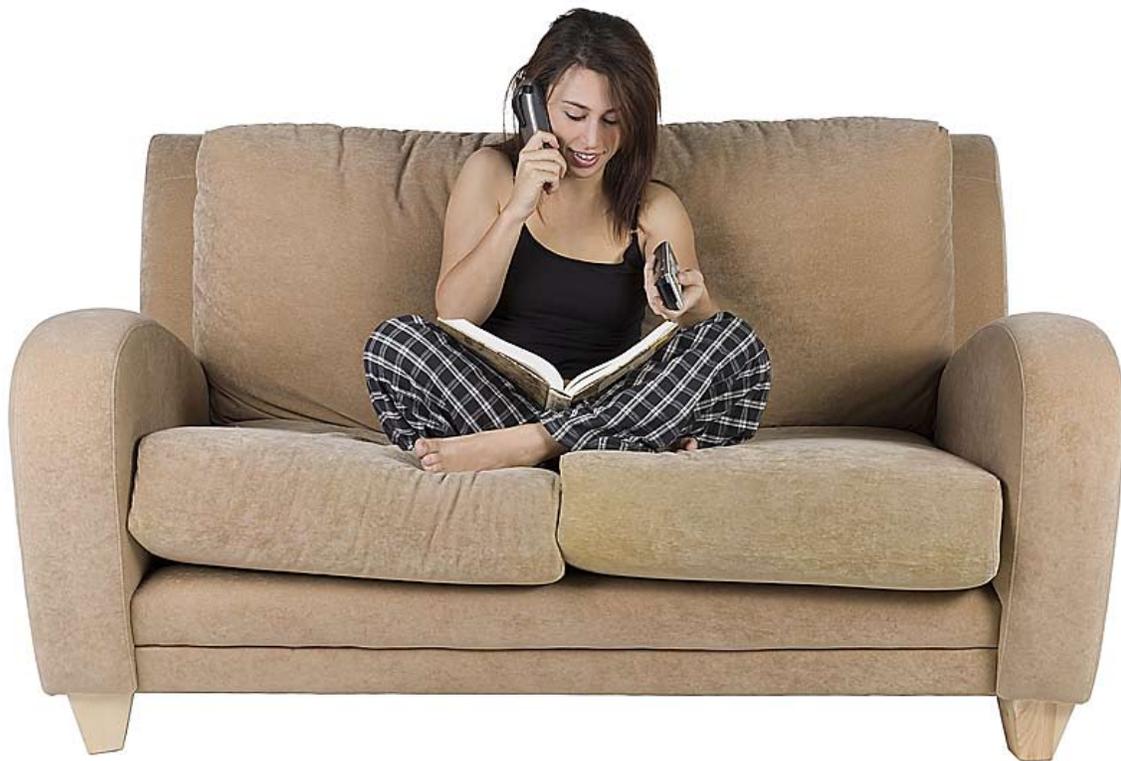
Appendix

List of words	I. I don't remember having seen this word before ✓	II. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means ✓	III. I have seen this word before, and I **think** it means: (synonym or translation)	IV. If the word is familiar to you, can you identify where you learnt it? (context)	V. I **know** this word. It means: (synonym or translation)	VI. I can use this word in a sentence. (Write a sentence.) If you do this section, please also do Section V.
1. affidavit						
2. alleged						
3. bid						
4. caitiff						
5. comeuppance						
6. delicacy						
7. desperation						
8. dime-store						
9. dimly						
10. dungeon						
11. echelons						
12. efficacious						
13. elusive						
14. go bankrupt						
15. hard-liner						
16. hookah						

List of words	I. I don't remember having seen this word before ✓	II. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means ✓	III. I have seen this word before, and I **think** it means: (synonym or translation)	IV. If the word is familiar to you, can you identify where you learnt it? (context)	V. I **know** this word. It means: (synonym or translation)	V. I can use this word in a sentence. (Write a sentence.) If you do this section, please also do Section V.
17. immense						
18. inclination						
19. kaboosh						
20. limelight						
21. meritocracy						
22. miffed						
23. naturalized						
24. nightingale						
25. numb						
26. persecution						
27. pixel						
28. preview						
29. prospective						
30. rafting						
31. rave						
32. recurring						
33. repulsive						

List of words	I. I don't remember having seen this word before ✓	II. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means ✓	III. I have seen this word before, and I **think** it means: (synonym or translation)	IV. If the word is familiar to you, can you identify where you learnt it? (context)	V. I **know** this word. It means: (synonym or translation)	V. I can use this word in a sentence. (Write a sentence.) If you do this section, please also do Section V.
34. smack						
35. spooks						
36. surrender						
37. to confide						
38. to drown						
39. to flee						
40. to muse on						
41. to ponder						
42. to reveal						
43. to strive						
44. to thwart						
45. to trigger						
46. torrent						
48. ultimate						
49. wee						
50. yearn						

RESEARCH PAPER
SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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(4) References and tables can be done in any of the following styles: APA, Chicago, or MLA.

(5) Biographical information of approximately 25 words, including name, title, university or affiliation, location, and area of expertise. A photo is requested, but optional.

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TEACHER TO TEACHER

How to Think Like Leonardo da Vinci: Seven Steps to Genius Every Day

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Curiosità
An insatiable curious approach to life and an unrelenting quest for continuous learning. (p.9)

Learn a New Language (p. 70-73)

Learning a new language is a popular ideal hobby and a wonderful way to cultivate Curiosità. Like Leonardo, you can learn a new language at any age. We all know that babies are the best learners. Their openness, energy, and playfulness allow them to learn languages with ease. A baby raised in a home where three languages are spoken will learn all three without difficulty. The good news is that if you re willing to adopt key aspects of the baby's learning strategy, you can progress with similar ease and delight. And as an adult, you can take advantage of resources that can help you learn even faster than a baby.

Let's say, for example, that you wanted to learn la bella lingua (the beautiful language): Italian. Here are a few tips for accelerating your language learning:

* Be willing to make a lot of mistakes. Bambinos do not worry about looking cool or instantly achieving perfect pronunciation and grammar; they just dive in and speak. Your progress in learning will correlate directly with your willingness to play and embrace feelings of unfamiliarity and foolishness.

* Have you ever noticed how babies will find a word or phrase and repeat it over and over? Do the same: repetition is the simplest secret of recall.
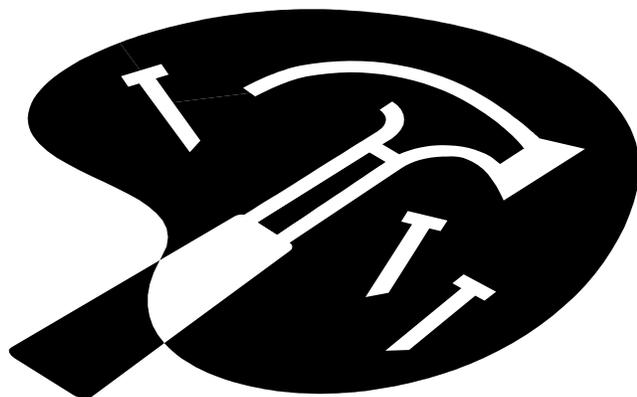
• If possible, start your learning process with an "immersion course" Just as a rocket needs most of its energy to launch and fly out of your atmosphere, you will get the most out of your learning if you launch your efforts with a concentrated program. Your "intensive" with "jump-start" your brain circuitry to start rewiring for your new language.

• If you can't find a formal immersion course, then create your own by listening to audiocassettes, watching Italian-language movies with subtitles, learning the lyrics of great Italian songs like "Rondini al Nido" and "Santa Lucia," singing along to Pavarotti recordings, sitting in Italian espresso bars and just listening to people talking, and going to real Italian restaurants and ordering in the native tongue. If you tell the waiter than you are trying to learn the language and ask for help, you will usually get a free Italian lesson, even better service, and sometimes extra antipasto!

• Learn words and phrases related to areas of passionate interest. Many language programs are a bit boring because they focus on necessary but mundane matters such as "Where is the station?" and "Here is my passport." In addition to these every day matters, aim to learn the language of romance, sex, poetry, art, fine food, and wine.

• Put Italian translation Post-it notes on everything in your house.

• Most important, open yourself to the feeling of the language and culture. When you speak, pretend you are Italian (I recommend Marcello Mastroianni or Sophia Loren, for starters). Adopt the expressive gestures and facial expressions that go with the language; you will have more fun and learn much faster.

by Karen Rowan

I. How to Organize and Promote Your Own TPRS® Coaching Workshop: Simple Directions for Beginning Hosts

"Coaching" as it related to TPR Storytelling®, invented by Blaine Ray, was originally proposed as a TPRS® training method at the National TPRS® conference in Oklahoma in 2001. I have continued to develop the techniques, believing coaching to be a far more effective training method that traditional workshops, but as coaching became contagious and more and more teachers realized they could coach each other to better techniques, I began to have more resources with which to work. "Drop Coaching" is the practice of creating more coaches by "paying forward" coaching. This book is a collaborative effort by seven experienced, well-trained, expert TPRS® teachers who spent 12 months hosting coaching workshops, sharing feedback and honing the directions in order to produce instructions on not just how to coach, but how to coach other teachers to become coaches. The goal is to provide training to isolated teachers in small towns, to teachers who can't afford to attend multiple workshops and to teachers who want to become trainers. An excerpt from the book, a chapter on setting up your own coaching workshop and simple instructions for what to coach, is included below. The entire book at can be downloaded at www.tprstories.com/coaching.htm.

STEP 1: Secure a location such as a school classroom, a church meeting room or your living room.

STEP 2: Fill out the contact form at www.tprstories.com with the date, location and contact information and it will be posted for free at www.tprstories.com/coaching.htm. Coaching and mentoring get-togethers are organized by TPRS® teachers. Other TPRS® teachers from the vicinity are welcome to attend. Previous attendance at TPRS® workshops is recommended.

> **"I still need some more help on coaching. That is your strength. So maybe we can write out the coaching rules or how to coach for us novices. I love coaching. It is by far your one great, great contribution to TPRS. It is so great that no one can underestimate the great impact it is and will have on the lives of teachers. I just want to get more comfortable coaching. I am a true believer."** *Blaine Ray 12/14/04*

STEP 3: Send the information to the moretprs listserv (subscription info at the bottom of the page), your local TPRS® listserv if there is one, and to your state foreign language association listserv.

STEP 4: Set up a structure for your schedule. A recommended schedule for a Saturday coaching workshop is included below.

STEP 5: Post posters around the room and download and copy a TPR Stories Peer-coaching Feedback Form. (This form is not intended to be use for evaluative purposes. It should be used by an observer familiar with TPRS® . The observer will need a watch or stopwatch. The teacher being observed should use the form to perform an informal self-evaluation of the content of the class). (These are not necessary, but help maintain a structure if you don't have a better idea for how to run it.)

II. Suggested Schedule

9-9:30 am introductions, make a list of goals, review the rules

9:30 am Decide on ONE coach who will facilitate the get-together. (Or if it is a large group, split the group and have more than one coach, but only one per group at a time.) Practice the following skills in order. When each person has practiced one skill, move on to the next skill.

a) circling (in order)

b) circling (out of order)

c) parking on all of the question words

d) Parking on one question word

Last half hour to an hour OR over lunch: Open discussion, questions, general support

III. Rules for a Successful Coaching Workshop

The biggest enemy of a successful coaching session is open-ended discussion. There is great value in discussion, so be sure to set aside structured time for unstructured discussion, but an entire day of valuable

> I know I would love to see this kind of coaching session available at all conferences, workshops, but also at the local level, similar to the ones Teri and Meg have already set up. I have learnt most by participating in coaching sessions, whether I was coaching or being coached and I would love to see others have the same opportunity. I also think that although Blaine, Susie, Karen, Jason et. al. are fantastic presenters there are many teachers who cannot make it to a workshop. To be able to offer coaching sessions where we can support each other, would allow other teachers to feel confident to use TPRS. To have a safe place to practice the skills before trying it out in the classroom, will also support teachers.
> *Jo Newman, Irvine, California*

discussion will not leave any time for coaching. As the facilitator, remember that lecturing and discussion will not yield long term results in the classroom whereas "practice by doing" and "teaching others what you have learned" leads to nearly a 90% retention rate of the information. As the facilitator, it's your job to gently keep the group on task so that they have a high quality experience that will impact their classrooms. Through trial and error we have learned that if everyone agrees to follow the following rules, all of the participants will feel safe and the coaching workshop will be PROFOUNDLY more effective.

RULES:
1. There is only one coach.
2. Do not correct the language accuracy of another teacher.
3. No discussion.

4. BE students… not teachers. [BE the pacesetter (barometer) student if you don't know the language.]
5. NO out-of-bounds…. The word being taught and cognates only. (Not in the classroom, just in the coaching workshop.)
6. Hard-stop vs. slow stop

Explanations:
1. There is only one coach. Don't help the teacher while she's teaching. Instead, play the role of the student. It's too intimidating to the teacher to have several people coaching her simultaneously.
2. Our language abilities vary but in this group creating an environment of extreme safety and trust is the most important component of a successful coaching workshop.
3. Designate discussion periods once everyone has had a turn, but comments during the coaching session will dissolve into discussion groups very quickly.
4. The teacher will begin by identifying the pacesetter (barometer) student in the group for the language he teaches and then will check in with the pacesetter (barometer).
5. With so many languages in such a short period of time we are not trying to learn the languages, we are trying to practice the method. Stray words in many languages divert our attention from practicing. In your classroom, however, staying in-bounds includes all of the words it can be presumed they already know from previous instruction, expanding our base.
6. This is only necessary when multiple groups are run simultaneously. Since after several turns they will not stay in synch, any instructions you might give may cause an interruption. Distinguish between - "everybody pause so I can explain one thing and then you can start again" interruptions and "you have one more minute to wrap up this turn before we go on to the next activity or take a break" kind of interruptions.

> **My coaching session was fabulous last Tuesday, Aug 15. It was 8 experienced TPRS® teachers who said it was the missing piece of the puzzle. They learned so very much. I can't wait to do more. One woman is an incredible TPRS® teacher. I may have her inspired to go to Denver and to become a mentor/coach herself.**
> *Teri Weichart in Ohio*

IV. Roles or jobs for each participant during coaching sessions

Pacesetter (barometer)
Rep tally-er
Teacher
Coach

Explanation:
The pacesetter (barometer) gives the teacher a sign every time he or she doesn't understand a word or the teacher is speaking too quickly. It is the pacesetters job to keep the teacher speaking slowly by giving slow down signs and stop signs the way a student would. A beginning pace should be "The boy (count 1...2...) wants (count 1...2...) to eat (count 1... 2...) a hamburger."

The "rep tallier" counts the number of times the "teacher" repeats the target structure.

The teacher stands in front of the group, teaches the target structure in his target language and asks questions of the "class" for about 3 minutes, staying focused on the pacesetter student.

There is only one coach. The coach is the only person who gives feedback to the teacher either during or after the coaching session. A good coach rarely speaks, but coaches by pointing to the poster if the teacher gets lost or confused. A good coach focuses on one thing at a time. Feedback is limited to the one thing. Pace is the first and most important skill and should be established before any other skills are emphasized. The job can be rotated so that the coach gets to practice, too, but only one person can coach at a time. If the teacher gets too much coaching, she will, absolutely guaranteed, sit down. Once she sits down, the coaching session will turn into a discussion.

V. Exercises

A. CIRCLING IN ORDER (combine subject and object to have practice asking 9 continuous question / statements resulting in 13 reps. Each teacher takes one turn and then passes to the next teacher. At the end of each turn the rep tallier reports on the number of reps and the pacesetter reports if the pace was too fast and if words were incomprehensible.)

Make a statement (in the target language)
Bob wants to buy a hamburger.

1. CIRCLE THE SUBJECT

Rep 1	Positive statement	Bob wants to buy a hamburger
Rep 2	? with a yes answer	Does Bob want to buy a hamburger?
Rep 3-4	Either/or Question	Does Bob want to buy a hamburger or does John want to buy a hamburger?
Rep 5	? with a no answer	Does John want to buy a hamburger?
Reps 6-7	Restate the negative and restate the positive	No, John doesn't want to buy a hamburger, Bob wants to buy a hamburger.

2. CIRCLE THE OBJECT

Rep 8	? with a yes answer	Does Bob want to buy a hamburger?
Reps 9-10	Either/or Question	Does Bob want to buy a hamburger or does he want to buy chocolate?
Rep 11	? with a no answer	Does Bob want to buy chocolate?
Reps 12-13	Restate the negative and restate the positive	No, Bob doesn't want to buy chocolate, Bob wants to buy a hamburger.

Other practice structures:
Subjects
Verb structures (Wants to buy, Wants to eat, Wants to find, Forgot to pay)
Objects that are cognates in the target language (Hamburger, Chocolate, Elephant, Pizza, Camera, Baby)
Person's name in the group

(Hint: Don't change the practice structure until everyone has exhausted all of the exercises UNLESS all of the teachers in the group teach the same language and the group wants some variety.)

When each participant has taken a turn, start over with circling out of order.

B. CIRCLING (out of order)

Teacher changes the order of the kind of question while circling, but does not add question words yet.

When each participant has taken a turn, start over with parking on all of the question words.

C. PARKING ON ALL OF THE QUESTION WORDS

Parking Poster

WHO?
WHAT?
WHERE?
WHEN?
WHICH?
HOW?
HOW MUCH?
HOW MANY?
WHY?

Exercise:

Who wants to buy a hamburger?

What does Bob want to buy?

Where does Bob want to buy a hamburger?

When does Bob want to buy a hamburger?

Which hamburger does Bob want to buy?

How does Bob want to buy a hamburger?

How much does Bob want to buy a hamburger?

How many hamburgers does Bob want to buy?

Why does Bob want to buy a hamburger?

You revolutionized how we teach and coach new TPRS® teachers. You've found a way to flatten the steep learning curve of TPRS®. I am the "barometer TPRS® teacher." I have been to soooooooooooo many workshops and two national conferences. I've heard you and Blaine and Susie. I've been coached by Kristy Placido and Julie Baird and you. I've explained and championed TPRS® to hundreds of teachers. I read the list faithfully and try everything that sits well with me. I've read 10 books in the last 6 weeks on Second Language Acquisition. And my students were still just "good enough." BUT, NOW, I think I've finally got it, because of the Saturday morning session in the basement of the Burlington Sheraton Vermont. I can't wait to get back into my classroom to give it a try, to see if I can make great advances in my classroom.
Teri Weichart in Ohio

When each participant has taken a turn, start over with parking on one question word.

D.PARKING ON ONE QUESTION WORD

Why does Bob want to buy a hamburger?

Why?

Why?

Why?

Why?

Coach the "teacher" to continue asking the students "But... WHY?" until the answers they give begin to create interesting information that could POTEN-TIALLY turn into a storyline. Once the storyline is evident, the "teacher's" turn is over.

When each participant has taken a turn, start over with a new structure and combine all 4 techniques. Be cautious not to make two statements in a row. Focus on a constant stream of questions and a high number of reps.

E. Combine A-D. Teacher continues using the target structure.

VI. Discussion

Leave time at the end for questions, discussing issues, discussing the coaching format and making suggestions for subsequent meetings.

> **It doesn't matter how many wonderful speakers, fabulous Fluency classes, and great conferences we have if at the end of it we come back not really knowing how to teach this method. I have watched teachers crash and burn and not understand why, all because they think they understand but really don't. The problem that we have is that when we're really good at it, the teaching style looks effortless. It is really hard to convince a new teacher that they're going too slow, they're not repeating enough, etc, if they don't see how it works through coaching. That's why I want to be part of any new idea you have--any forum for helpful discussion.**
> *Meg Villanueva*

One more reason to check out You Tube:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRXjsmxpUE4

Grey's Anatomy clips in Spanish.

The sum of human wisdom is not contained in any one language, and no single language is capable of expressing all forms and degrees of human comprehension. -Ezra Pound, poet (1885-1972)

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.

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