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AN INVESTIGATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS AND APPROACHES USED BY SPANISH LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

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AN INVESTIGATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

AND APPROACHES USED BY SPANISH LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

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We recommend acceptance of this project report in partial fulfillment of the candidate's requirements for the degree of Masters of Education Professional Development.

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ABSTRACT

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This qualitative study investigated which methods and approaches instructors of Spanish as a foreign language have found to be most effective in producing student language learning. In order to research most successful methods and approaches, a population of high school Spanish teachers of La Crosse, Wisconsin was examined. Participants involved consisted of four Spanish language educators who teach various levels of learners. Through interview, observation, and survey, data was collected on the teachers' methods and approaches of instruction along with the beliefs underlying their pedagogy. The data was analyzed using a constant comparative analysis in order to identify trends found across the population studied. In all, the study could not prove one method or approach more effective than the other because of a small research population and broad research question. However, information gathered suggested that further attention can be turned to TPRS, as well as use of instruction that implements meaningful learning, fosters motivation, and accounts for learning differences.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A Multilingual Nation

In the course of the past twenty years, the United States has seen a notable influx in immigration, with many of those individuals coming from Mexico, China, and India (Monger, 2010). With this wave of immigration, some Americans still hold to English-only attitudes, while many are realizing the benefits of knowing a foreign language for communicative purposes, especially those who live in diverse cities. Additionally, globalization, which is the "process enabling financial and investment markets to operate internationally, largely as a result of deregulation and improved communications," is creating a desire for more communication between the U.S. and foreign nations (globalization, n.d.). In effect, our country is encouraging the learning of foreign languages for commercial purposes as well as military purposes (ed.gov, 2008).

In order to teach a foreign language effectively, educators must know how an individual acquires a second language, which requires insight into the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). According to Kramsch (2007), SLA research originated out of a need for better language instruction with the main question, "How does an individual acquire a second language, and what mechanisms make this skill possible?" Research on this subject is somewhat controversial because of the many theories surrounding how one obtains a second language.

The more contemporary wave of SLA, which came about during the 1950s and 1960s, would have explained second language acquisition through the lens of behaviorism (Pica, 2005; VanPatten, 2003). Behaviorism, a theory connected with B.F. Skinner, maintained that second language acquisition is a matter of habit-formation which occurs through repetition of behavior (Littlewood, 1984). Skinner's theory, applied to method, emphasizes active language learning through imitation, repetition and memorization of language forms (Stern, 1992).

Noam Chomsky challenged the beliefs of Skinner stating that repetition and memorization were insufficient by themselves to teach a second language (L2) to children (Pica, 2005). The core of Chomsky's work stressed language acquisition as a cognitive function, and the belief that all humans have the necessary tools needed for language learning already stored in the brain (Pica, 2005). Furthermore, Chomsky asserted that all languages share universal patterns and principles, a concept called universal grammar (UG). These universals should transfer from an individual's first language (L1) to the second language (L2) he or she is learning (Horwitz, 2008).

Although Chomsky's theory is still applied to second language teaching methods, it contains a couple of significant weaknesses. One shortcoming of the theory is lack of attention to social factors that influence language learning as language is viewed as an innate ability (Zimmerman, 1997). Also, many SLA researchers are unsure of how the process of L1 acquisition influences L2 acquisition as a first language is not learned in the same way as a second language (Horwitz, 2008). Seeing the theory as incomplete, Dell Hymes created the notion of communicative competence, which is the "internalized knowledge of the situational

appropriateness of language" (Hymes, 1972 as cited in Zimmerman, 1997, p. 12). His definition built on Chomsky's theory and took into account the effect of social and pragmatic factors surrounding second language learning (SLL). Not only were the internal mechanisms important for SLL, but also outside factors like the need for the language in the setting it was being taught, practicality of grammar being learned, and methods used to teach the L2.

Social context continued as the focal point of SLA research during the 1980s as psycholinguists examined what kind of environments were necessary for optimal language learning (Kramsch, 2007). Researchers looked at communicative methods which stressed input, relationships in the classroom, and development of useful fluency over accuracy (Zimmerman, 1997). More broadly, Fotos (2005) describes the following trends in SLA instruction since the 1980s as being cognitive approaches followed by communicative pedagogy, followed in turn by numerous affective approaches, and then by approaches rooted in commonly used language.

A reaction to communicative methods that did not emphasize form was the creation of other modes of instruction such as interaction-based and focus-on-form approaches (Fotos, 2005). The current direction of instruction in many foreign language classrooms appears to fall under the heading of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Brown, 2007) although a variety of methods and approaches can be seen implemented in many classrooms today depending on the context of the learning environment. Clearly, foreign language teaching methodology has changed and developed over time as research continues to emerge out of the field of SLA.

As a result of many theories about how one acquires a second language, various teaching methods and approaches have transpired. My research will focus on methods and approaches used in the context of the foreign language classroom. This review of literature contains a comprehensive list of methods and approaches that have either diminished in use, evolved, or remain in practice in the setting of adolescent and adult foreign language classrooms. Furthermore, I will examine factors that influence the foreign language learner, namely aptitude and motivation, as well as beliefs teachers hold in terms of target language use.

Statement of Problem

The problem in regards to language learning lies within the fact that no one can identify the exact mechanisms and strategies that allow L2 acquisition to occur. As a result, many second/foreign language teaching methods and approaches are founded on numerous L2 acquisition theories. For example, Stephen Krashen's theory, the comprehensible input hypothesis, states that language acquisition occurs when one receives comprehensible input through listening or reading (Krashen, 1985). Output, such as speaking and writing, are not necessary for initial stages of language acquisition. The production of language arises when the student is ready.

The theory was criticized for lack of evidence supporting the influence of receptive abilities on output competence (Skehan, 1998), and also for its rejection of methods based on cognitive processes (Pica, 2005). In response, researcher Merrill Swain (2005) proposed the output hypothesis, which maintained that producing the target language through speaking and writing were necessary for language learning

during beginning stages as well as later stages. As students produced language or output, they noticed their errors and looked for correct input.

While Krashen and Swain's hypotheses built theoretical foundations for many second language teaching approaches and methods including the Natural Approach, Total Physical Response (TPR), and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Bley-Vroman (1989) maintains that "second language learning often does not lead to success while first language learning, except in unusual cases, does" (as cited in Skehan, 1998, p.11). Because L2 learners, more specifically adolescent and adults are met with such a challenge, according to many SLA researchers, methods for optimal second language learning are still being developed (Dekeyser and Juffs, 2005).

During my experiences working with high school students in Spanish classrooms, I observed first-hand the difficulties that adult language learners confront. Some students struggled to a great extent, while others seemed to naturally acquire the language. I also noticed that during my Field I work, my Mentor Teacher used different methods and approaches to teach her students than what was used in my high school Spanish classroom. She used an inductive method called Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS), which matched vocabulary words to motions and connected to a story. This mode of instruction seemed to engage the students more than methods my high school teachers had taken when teaching Spanish. In contrast, my foreign language learning experience consisted of deductive methods such as translation and memorization of grammar forms. Rules and translations were given first, and examples followed. I completed drills in a workbook every day, while also building my language skills through literature and oral exercises.

After reflecting on my experience as a younger language learner and my observations as a pre-service teacher, I wondered whether or not certain types of instruction were more effective than others. Out of my inquiry, emerged my research question:

> Which foreign language methods and approaches have teachers found to be the most effective in producing student learning of Spanish in the classroom?

This study is pertinent to the field of foreign language education because Spanish teachers are constantly faced with the dilemma of how to best achieve language learning in their classrooms. Many students enroll in a foreign language for purposes such as gaining college credit, cross-cultural communication, or for future careers. While some students are self-motivated and enjoy learning languages, others find themselves in a constant battle to acquire the necessary skills for language proficiency. Consequently, teachers must use foreign language teaching methods/approaches that motivate students, and at the same time, effectively teach them. If students initially find success in the learning process, psychological theories confirm that they will be more likely to continue their efforts (Willingham, 2009). Therefore, educators face the important task of implementing the most successful foreign language teaching methods and approaches to foster student accomplishment.

Limitations

- One limitation of the study was the size of the population I investigated. I collected data from four teachers located in the School District of La Crosse, Wisconsin. I would have liked to have sent surveys to and

interviewed a larger population, but because of time constraints, was not able to do so.

- Additionally, my study lacked student input. Insight from the students' perspectives about which methods/approaches they perceived to most positively influence their learning of Spanish would have strengthened my study.
- Furthermore, my research question was very broad. A more specific question that compared and contrasted specific methods or approaches might have brought forth more definite results.

CHAPTER II

DEFINITIONS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions

Approach

"Theoretical positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings" (Brown, 2009, p.51).

Explicit Mode

The explicit mode of language learning includes the individual's knowledge of rules that govern the L2. Moreover, explicit learning is contingent on whether or not the learner obtains the grammar rules being taught (Reber, 1976 as cited in Weinert, 2005).

Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA)

Unlike second language acquisition use, FLA occurs inside a classroom and is not regularly used outside the classroom context. According to Pica (2005), SLA and FLA are similar in what questions they answer in regards to language acquisition study.

Implicit Mode

The implicit mode allows an individual to acquire knowledge without conscious awareness. Language is absorbed through the context in which the learner is present. According to Weinert (2009), the main characteristics of implicit language learning are the following: "passive, non-conscious, fast,

automatic, non-selective, information processing without metacognitive awareness" (p.244). Language learning through the implicit mode does not include knowledge of rules that govern linguistic input (Hulstijn, 2005).

Inductive and Deductive Language Learning

Deductive learning occurs when the learner is conscious of grammar rules underlying examples given. Inductive language learning consists of examples before rules; the learner draws conclusions about grammar rules through the patterns given. According to Hulstijn (2005) inductive and deductive learning are used to talk about language instruction and "are part of explicit instruction because the correct rule is always given at some point" (p.132).

Input

Input is "the linguistic forms (morphemes, words utterances) - streams of speech in the air-directed at the non-native speaker" (Long, 1983 as cited in Xu, 2010, p.127). In other words, input is written or spoken communication learners receive from the context in which they are learning the second language (VanPatten, 2003). A language learner needs sufficient input before he or she can produce it (Carrigan, 2009).

Method

This term refers to a "generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives" (Brown, 2007, p.51).

Output

Output is a term used to describe the product of the language acquisition device, or 'what the learner has learned' (Swain, 2005, p.471).

Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

"The creation of a linguistic system in the mind/brain of someone who speaks another language; this is different from second language acquisition use, that is the use of a second language for communicative purposes" (VanPatten, 2003, p.118).

Strategy

A variety of planned techniques and methods for achieving a task or solving a particular problem. Information is controlled and used to reach a goal. (Brown, 2007).

Technique

"Any wide variety of exercises, activities, or devices used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives" (Brown, 2007, p.51).

Literature Review

As the United States becomes more globally competitive and linguistically diverse, knowing a foreign language is increasingly advantageous. In effect, language instruction remains in high demand especially for languages such as Spanish, Chinese, and English as a second language (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2009). Additionally, the United States government is encouraging students to learn Russian, Japanese, Korean, Farsi and Arabic through federally funded efforts (Kelleher, 2006). It is evident the United States is moving toward becoming a more multi-lingual nation where speaking a second language is beneficial.

While many Americans strive to learn a growing variety of foreign languages, it appears that Spanish as a foreign language is becoming more of a priority for native English speakers as the highest amount of immigrants come from Mexico to the U.S. per year (Monger, 2010). To accommodate learners of Spanish as a foreign language, educators are challenged with the decision of how to best teach their students. Teachers and researchers in the field of SLA study how individuals learn and acquire second languages in order to form and evaluate effective teaching methods. Since the field of SLA immerged in the 1960s, theories investigated have been numerous (Pica, 2005). Older theories of how adult learners acquire a second language include an emphasis on habit formation, drill practice, and repetition, while more recent research examines the role of cognitive processes and communication within a meaningful context (Pica, 2005).

As a result of the numerous beliefs surrounding SLA, various teaching methods/approaches have transpired. Educators must develop informed beliefs about

SLA theory, and in turn, implement methods/approaches based on those beliefs. This leads to the question of which methods teachers find to be most effective based on their experience in the foreign language classroom? To begin this analysis, one must look at language acquisition theories and beliefs that current and past foreign language teaching methods are grounded in.

How the Brain Acquires the First Language

Because the brain is a highly intricate and complex organism, scientists are still unsure of the exact mechanisms that cause the brain to learn language. Although many uncertainties surround L1 achievement, children are found to easily succeed in L1 acquisition under normal developmental conditions (Aamondt & Wang, 2008; Philip, Mackey, Oliver, 2008; Weinert, 2009; Yang, 2006). Three main perspectives exist to explain the nature of child language acquisition. According to Brown (2007), they are the behaviorist, nativist, and functionalist approach. Of the three perspectives, the behaviorist approach is the most dated and emphasizes language as a product of stimuli. Reinforcement and repetition are needed for effective language learning.

This approach was challenged by nativist Noam Chomsky's theory of universal grammar (UG). He claimed that individuals are born with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which contains all the genetic mechanisms needed for language attainment; therefore, they do not need to learn language formally (Brown, 2007;Yang, 2006). In other words, language is an innate ability. Although the context in which language is acquired does influence the learner to a certain degree, advocates of UG minimize its importance.

Other researchers, such as Huttenlocher, follow a functionalist viewpoint of L1 acquisition, and therefore, stress the need for social interaction in language formation (Kotulak, 1996). Although she agrees children are born with an innate ability to obtain language, she found babies need an environment that encourages language input from adults. In her study, she observed that babies whose mothers talked to them frequently had a larger vocabulary than babies who did not. Huttenlocher explained that a baby's brain may be hard wired for language acquisition, but needs sufficient input from his or her environment to develop language (Kotulak, 1996).

The general viewpoint amongst researchers combines both Chomsky and Huttenlocher's theories to say that nature and nurture are essential elements of language learning to varying degrees. In other words, children have a unique ability to acquire language because of the way the brain works, but require social interaction to stimulate language development (Brown, 2007). For children who grow up in an environment that fosters language acquisition, a first language is achieved without much effort.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Children. How do children's amazing ability to acquire their first language influence how they learn a second language? Answers to this question can be explained by various theoretical constructs that are grounded in the three L1 perspectives mentioned previously. One of the most prominent explanations to the question posed is based on Noam Chomsky's nativist theory of UG. He asserts that a child's L1 abilities will transfer to his or her L2 learning experience either positively

or negatively (Horwitz, 2008). Researchers, such as Flynn (1983), Liceras (1983) and White (1985), support the Chomskyan view that "second language learners have access to universal principles – either indirectly, through the facts of their native language, or directly, in much the same way as do child first language learners" (as cited in Gass & Schachter, 1989, p. 5).

Moreover, research by Lightbown (1980) supports the L1 to L2 transfer through her study, which found that young English-speaking children learning French used L1 word order patterns to form more complex L2 questions (as cited in Nicholas & Lightbown, 2008). In contrast to Chomsky, Nicolas and Lightbown (2008) conclude that L1 transfer to L2 is not a general mechanism, but rather a source of information for circumstances in which the language being produced is more complex.

Another explanation of how a child's L1 relates to his or her L2 learning experience coincides with a functionalist viewpoint that a second language is acquired for communicative purposes, which involves comprehensible and meaningful input. Input is comprehensible when it is understood and meaningful as form is connected to function (VanPatten & Lee, 2003). Both characteristics of input are needed for communication in the L2 to occur.

An example of language acquired for communication can be noted in how babies achieve language. According to Brown (2007), young children are not merely imitating words, but trying to negotiate meaning for communication. The same concept applies to children learning a second language. They acquire it for communicative purposes; therefore, memorization of forms disconnected to function

is not beneficial. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) explain that elementary and middle school teachers should make it a goal to form communicative language environments focused on meaning through high use of the target language, games, hands-on activities, role play, songs, stories, rhymes, group-work and content-related instruction.

Furthermore, children's L1 acquisition experience relates to their L2 experience in that processes are developed over time. For infants learning their L1, sounds are first used to communicate, followed by one-word responses, then by two to three word sentences referred to as telegraphic speech. By age three children can form complex sentences, and have sociocultural competence (Brown, 2007). Like L1 acquisition, L2 acquisition evolves. L2 processes include the achievement of lexicon, verb use, phonology, inflectional morphology, derivational morphology, particles, syntax, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse competence (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). For example, Lee and VanPatten (2003) explain that grammatical features, such as English negation, progress in phases. During each phase, it can be expected that certain errors will be made. As these mistakes occur and are corrected the implicit language learning system restructures, and the learner advances to the next phase of language acquisition.

Adults. Furthermore, is it reasonable to compare a child's L2 acquisition to an adult learner's L2 experience? Brown (2007) holds that comparisons can be made between child second language acquisition and adult second language acquisition as they both may obtain language using similar processes. For instance, both children and adults use first language ability to acquire a second language. According to one

theory, an individual's native tongue may either positively or negatively affect L2 learning depending on similarities or differences between the languages (Horwitz, 2008). For instance, a native English speaker learning Spanish experiences positive transfer when the target language vocabulary is very similar to the L1. Negative transfer occurs when an element of the learner's native language, such as word order, is not the same is the target language. Although transfer is one explanation for how adults acquire a second language, how it exactly occurs is unknown (VanPatten, 2003).

Moreover, adults, like children, require comprehensible and meaning-bearing input. This means the language brought into the developing system must be understood and also attach form to function (VanPatten, 2003). Without comprehension of input, language cannot be processed. Often times, meaningful connections are created when natural communication occurs. During conversational communication, input and output cycle as learners receive input aurally and then respond through output production, in this case speaking (VanPatten, 2003). Lack of comprehensible and meaningful input leads to surface level memorization of language, which is not retained if deeper connections are not made between the short and long-term memory.

Lastly, children and adults both acquire the L2 through stages with simple to more complex structures mastered over time (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). This idea can be seen in how language is acquired. For instance, the processability theory explains that language is obtained through an implicational hierarchy, which means a skill cannot be realized without the previous one being established. To illustrate, the ability

to form a subordinate clause procedure, develops after the acquisition of a category procedure (marking the past tense), which is not possible without lemma access (word retrieval) (VanPatten, 2003). This theory is one of the many that describes how L2 acquisition involves processes that proceed from simple to complex.

As similarities exist in how children and adults obtain a L2, such as the use of transfer, the need for comprehensible and meaningful input, and acquisition of language through stages, why does it take adults considerably longer to acquire a foreign tongue? A couple of popular explanations for the difference between child and adult language acquisition include brain based theories such as the critical period hypothesis, and the input theory.

Critical Period Hypothesis. The first of these theories, the critical period hypothesis, according to the assertions of neuroscience researchers Aamodt and Wang (2008) state that the prime ages for learning first or second languages range from birth to puberty. After that time period, second language acquisition becomes an especially challenging endeavor (Aamodt & Wang, 2008; Kotulak, 1996; VanPatten, 2003) as "ultimate attainment," or native like acquisition is unreachable (Ioup, 2005). Researchers are perplexed about what is the actual cause of the critical period. For instance, some investigators look at neurobiological considerations such as the loss of plasticity (Penfields & Roberts, 1959 as cited in Dimroth, 2008). According to Scovel (1969), the brain's plasticity before puberty enables children to acquire their L1 and L2 (as cited in Brown, 2007). Once the brain loses its plasticity, a second language is harder to acquire because it requires the brain to build new neural connections and split apart old ones (Katulak, 1996).

The critical theory hypothesis supports the idea that children learn better through implicit modes while adults learn languages through explicit instruction as concluded by Dekyser (2000) who found that certain Hungarian adults learning English used explicit learning instead of implicit. He concluded that adults lose the mental capacities for implicit induction of language (as cited in Brown, 2007). This conclusion supports the benefit of explicit grammar instruction for adult language learners. Other researchers maintain that insufficient evidence exists to support that adults learn second languages more successfully through explicit modes (Biaylstok as cited in Stern, 1992). Moreover, researchers Krashen and Terrell (1983) hold that explicitly taught language is less beneficial for language learners in comparison to meaningfully communicated language (as cited in Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004). For that reason, teaching methods like Total Physical Response (TPR), Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS), and other communicative teaching approaches, which do not explicitly present rules before examples, are used to instruct adults as well as children.

Input Hypothesis. The input hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1985) states that adults learn language differently for other reasons than a critical period. He claims there is not a critical language learning period that ends at puberty, but rather an internal mechanism called the affective filter that regulates how much input a learner receives into their language acquisition device (LAD) (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Krashen, 1985). If the affective filter is high, learners may be more anxious about language acquisition and not fully process the input. When the filter is low, the learner is relaxed, and has fewer inhibitions obtaining new vocabulary and grammar.

Krashen's hypothesis explains that children do not have a filter that keeps input from being further processed, or that it does not adversely affect their language acquisition (Bley-Vroman, 1989). As a result, children absorb language more easily than adult learners because they are less reticent to learn. This could be attributed to their not fully developed language ego, which is the identity an individual forms based on the language he or she speaks (Brown, 2007).

Questions that remain for Krashen's theory include identifying what exactly is a language filter, what are its characteristics, and how it can be built up or diminished. According to Bley-Vroman (1989), the input hypothesis lacks sufficient evidence to be considered practical although many foreign language educators agree that a classroom that is anxiety free is most beneficial to learners. Furthermore, researchers, such as Carrigan (2009), Gass (1997) and Vanpatten (2003), agree with the importance of exposure to meaningful input before output can be produced, which is another component of the input hypothesis.

Implications for the critical theory hypothesis and the input hypothesis include certain differences between the way children and adults learn second languages; therefore, foreign language educators who work with adults need to evaluate their teaching methods and approaches according to the way they believe adults learn second languages. This includes choosing methods and/or approaches that lower the affective filter, make use of meaningful input before output, and explicitly or implicitly teach grammar.

Other Factors that Affect L2 Acquisition

Aptitude. While age does influence the success of adult L2 acquisition, other factors such as aptitude and motivation, may heavily affect the learner. According to John Carroll, aptitude could explain why some students seem to have a knack for foreign language learning while others do not. He claimed an individual can have a specific talent or group of talents for L2 learning; and thus, created a test called the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) to measure a learner's likelihood of success in the L2 (Sparks, Patton, Ganschow, & Humbach, 2009). Research shows the MLAT to be the best predictor in SLA success because of research showing a strong correlation between language aptitude scores and academic performance in the L2 (Skehan, 2002 as cited in Sparks et al., 2009). Dekeyser and Juffs (2005) confirm the validity of Carroll's aptitude test as an indicator of success in the second language for adults and adolescents, although not for children.

Other researchers, such as Sáfár and Kormos (2008), determine the need to rethink Carroll's concept of language aptitude. They found research supporting the concept of language aptitude as a predictor of L2 success indefinite. For instance, Grigorenko et al. (2000) stated that "language aptitude is a form of developing expertise rather than an entity fixed at birth" (as cited in Sáfár & Kormos, 2009), while Harley and Hart (1997) concluded that language aptitude is no different amongst students having 12 years of foreign language compared to students with four years (as cited in Sáfár & Kormos, 2009). Evidence supporting the role of language aptitude is still unclear, although researchers find the need to further study its purpose through investigation of the working memory (Dekeyser & Juffs, 2005).

Motivation. Another factor which influences SLA is motivation. Although many definitions of motivation prevail, Oxford and Ehrman (1993) characterize it in the following way,

> The external or behavioral features of motivation include decision-making, persistence, and activity level. The learner decides to choose, to pay attention, to engage in one activity but not others; the learner persists over an extended time….and the learner maintains a high activity level (as cited in Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004, p.190).

Motivation, according to the definition above, includes a choice to engage and persist in learning. The choice to engage in SLA is strongly connected to communicative needs and attitudes towards the second language community according to Littlewood (1984). He states that for many people living in bilingual or multilingual settings, knowing a second language is normal and necessary to life's social demands. Also, linguistic minorities in Europe and the United States will have a higher motivation to learn the second language in order to function in the broader context in which they live. In contrast, Littlewood (1984) points out that an individual learning a foreign language, such as French in Great Britain, will have less motivation to learn it because it is not required for communication in his or her immediate surroundings**.** As illustrated by Littlewood, the degree of need for communication in the foreign language makes a difference in motivation to learn it.

Furthermore, Brown (2007), Ellis, (1985) and Littlewood (1984) mention the attitude individuals have toward the second language community is an indicator of their motivation to learn. If the individual likes the culture and identity to which the language is connected, he or she will be more likely to interact with that culture, and as a result, have a higher motivation to learn. In conclusion, motivation is shown to be

a relevant predictor of an individual's success learning the L2. Although some researchers, like VanPatten (2003), agree motivation is a predictor of second/foreign language success, it does not explain the process of acquisition or how it occurs.

Educators use their knowledge about what motivates students to learn language to implement effective instruction. In the foreign language classroom, students have been noted to be motivated by intrinsic factors such as personal interest in the material (Noels, 2003). Farley (2005) mentions the need for educators to pay attention to the particular interests of their students so they do not become disinterested in classroom activities. For language learning, it is important for L2 learners to stay engaged as they cannot adequately process form if they are not attending to meaning of input due to boredom (Farley, 2005). Foreign language educators have also assumed students are motivated by extrinsic factors, which may be some kind of tangible incentive or punishment. Noels (2003) comments that once the external factor is gone, the likelihood of the learner continuing in the task is minimal. For this reason, long-term learning goals must be accompanied by intrinsic motivation on the part of the language learner.

Research Question

After examining theories of first and second language acquisition of children and adults, along with factors that affect this process, it is clear numerous beliefs exist. For example, first language acquisition theories can be categorized by three main approaches, nativist, behaviorist, and functionalist (Brown, 2007). Out of each approach second language acquisition theories have been formed and developed by various linguists and researchers.

These theories explain how children and adults acquire second languages as well as compare and contrast their experiences. Furthermore, it has been proposed that aptitude and motivation play a crucial role in SLA as these two factors may predict success of a L2 learner. As theories of SLA are various, teachers must examine their beliefs about how students learn a second language, and match those beliefs to certain instructional methods or approaches. In turn, they will use those means to construct their pedagogy.

The desire of foreign language educators to create the most successful learning environment for their students prompts the question of which foreign language methods/approaches teachers have found to be most effective through their research and experience? Although most foreign language educators do not adhere to just one method or approach in their pure form, it is important to understand the most common types of foreign language instruction from the past several decades. Knowing why certain ways of teaching were or were not effective provides a background for investigation of the research question. A comprehensive list and analysis of teaching methods and approaches follow.

Methods and Approaches of Foreign Language Teaching

Grammar Translation Method. The oldest method of foreign language instruction developed some 4,000 years ago by the ancient Greeks is called the Grammar Translation Method or GTM (Savignon, 2005). This method is deductive in nature because language is taught through rules and examples that correspond to those rules (Finnochiaro, 1989). The focus of the GTM is the studying and memorizing of grammar rules and vocabulary as text is translated from the L1 to the

L2. In this way, teachers of the method hope the student's logical reasoning skills develop (Papalia, 1976). Although the process may be good for teaching grammar rules and developing a learner's reading and writing abilities, critics of the GTM found it does not build speaking or listening skills (Grittner, 1969; Papalia, 1976; Zimmerman, 1997).

The GTM remained a common second language teaching method up until the 1950s when linguistic researchers introduced L2 strategies which emphasized "oral methods and discourse level input" (Fotos, 2005, p.662). The role of verbal input in the GTM was limited, and therefore, the use of the method in its original form declined. Currently, the GTM has been combined with newer kinds of second language instruction such as CLT. Researchers, such as Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrel (1998) and Ellis (2002, 2003), maintain that both explanation of grammar forms and communicative activities aid in comprehension and practice of target grammar and vocabulary items (as cited in Fotos, 2005).

Direct Method. Because of evident weaknesses of the GTM, namely its lack of listening development and the memorization of outdated words, the Direct Method was created. This method was introduced to the U.S. at the end of the 19th century by German and French teachers Gottlieb Hesness and Lambert Sauveur (Fotos, 2005). Key characteristics of the new method, which differentiated it from the GTM, were its emphasis on the use of conversation and cultural knowledge to teach language, and use of the target language only (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). With the Direct Method, new language was acquired inductively through direct interaction as no language was translated (Papalia, 1976). Although the method was first used in language schools of

Hesness and Sauveur, it was not well-known until its implementation by Maximilian Berlitz who opened schools in Europe and the United States in 1878 (Fotos, 2005).

Teachers using the Direct Method in the past and today emphasize the use of questions and answers, along with visual aids, charades, use of opposites, and paraphrasing within a meaningful context (Grittner, 1967). Words taught are meant to be simple and useful. For example, vocabulary about clothing, school, and body are taught in classrooms that use the Direct Method (Howatt, 1984 as cited in Zimmerman, 1997). Educators who have used this strategy found it useful in environments where students with many different first languages are present (Grittner, 1967). It is also shown to be beneficial in developing listening and basic language skills (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005).

Although the Direct Method was popular for a period of time, many teachers realized the disadvantage of learners only using their target language in the classroom. For instance, students were not able to communicate authentically due to not knowing how to express themselves in the L2 (Stern, 1992). Another critique of the method, according to Flowerdew and Miller (2005), is that it inefficiently teaches more complex grammar rules to upper level learners. Grammar taught to students at advanced levels is more difficult, and therefore, would require more time to figure out rules if learning inductively. Consequently, direct translation would be more effective for teaching grammar to higher level learners.

In addition, Finocchiaro (1989) found that older learners tend to over focus on pronunciation of words instead of their meaning when using the Direct Method. They also became frustrated with not being able to use their L1. Although the use of the

Direct Method has fallen out of favor, it has served as a foundation for many other language teaching strategies that emphasize learning through communication (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005).

Audiolingual Method. The Audiolingual Method (ALM) is another popular inductive foreign language strategy which came forth during World War II (Zimmerman, 1997), and was founded in B.F. Skinner's belief that learning is an observable result of behaviors that become automatic (Papalia, 1976). Skinner's theory applied to the ALM emphasizes active language learning through imitation, repetition and memorization of language forms (Stern, 1992). In this way, language is acquired through the implicit mode, and thus, meant to become an automatic habit. Activities in a classroom in which the ALM are used include listening to short dialogues and then imitating them through drills (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Strategies involved in the ALM include the following: dialogue memorization, backward build-up, transformation drill, complete the dialogue, dictation, and chain drill (Keln, Sletten, & Petersen, 2005). Through repetitious drill practice language is learned implicitly as no rules are learned.

The ALM, although still in use, fell out of mainstream application during the 1950s due to opposition particularly from researchers like Noam Chomsky (Finocchiaro, 1989) and Freeman Twaddle. Chomsky who criticized Skinner's theory felt language was too complex to be learned by surface level memorization without knowledge of rules (Papalia, 1976). Additionally, Twaddle argued that knowledge of vocabulary is overvalued. As a result, learners know vocabulary, but do not know

how to form sentences outside of the short phrases they have memorized (Zimmerman, 1997).

Moreover, "research conducted from the 1990s has shown that traditional approaches to teaching grammar that involve the use of mechanical, meaningful and communicative drills do not foster acquisition in the way that practice with 'structured input' does" (VanPatten, 2003, p.84). Structured input involves activities that cause learners to notice and process language forms (Farley, 2003). Meaning is kept as a focus instead of learning for the sake of learning forms as with the ALM.

Another argument against the ALM is that no proof exists to show whether or not the method is any more or less effective in teaching a second language than the Grammar Translation Method. Although the ALM's effectiveness has not been confirmed according to research by Grittner (1967), results did reveal students were more interested in learning with ALM than with GTM. Additionally, studies showed that students learning with ALM had better listening and speaking skills, while students of the GTM had better reading and translation abilities (Fotos, 2005).

Silent Way. The Silent Way is a language learning and teaching strategy created by Caleb Gattegno in the 1950s (Young, 2000). Rather than acquiring new skills, Gattegno believed individuals already have language learning mechanisms in the brain that need to be realized; therefore, his approach emphasizes awareness (Stevick, 1980). In the Silent Way, the teacher holds a colored rod and makes an utterance in the target language such as "green rod," if he or she is holding a green rod. The teachers present the language various times and then wait for a student to produce the utterance. If the production of the language shows comprehension the

teacher signals other students to do the same. If production is incorrect, the teacher corrects mistakes with a silent gesture, and does not confirm right answers. In following lessons, the teacher presents other colored rods and added chunks of language involving the rod. For instance, the teacher might say "take the rod," or "give it to him." In subsequent lessons, colored charts which match letters with colors are used to further develop awareness of the language through dictation (Gattegno, 1983). Through dictation, the students connect the language to melody.

Although The Silent Way has been criticized for being "artificial" and "intimidating" because of its use of imitation and pressure on students to produce language (Gategno, 1983), it has lent itself to language instruction in which communication in the target language is the goal and means of achieving the goal. Trends in current foreign language classrooms emphasize more communicative approaches of language teaching (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Furthermore, the Silent Way models a teacher-directed, and at the same time, student-centered approach as the teacher guides individuals to become autonomous learners (Young 2000). Communicative language teaching approaches also place importance on the student to direct his or her own learning as the teacher performs as a facilitator.

Suggestopedia. Suggestopedia was developed by Bulgarian physician and psychotherapist, Georigi Lozanov, during the 1960s and 1970s and later was adapted for use in the United States by Allyn Prichard, Jean Taylor, and Owen Caskey (Bancroft, 1984). Suggestopedia is based on the following assumptions according to Stevick (1980): "(1) That learning involves the unconscious functions of the learner, as well as the conscious functions; and (2) that people can learn much faster than they

usually do, but (3) that learning is held back by various limitations" (p.230). Essentially, for this approach the learner's unconscious and conscious levels are connected as they are not impeded by physical or mental tension.

In the classroom, Suggestopedia entails physical and mental relaxation exercises as well as positive learning experience recall to create an affirmative learning environment (Bancroft, 1983). For example, a typical lesson includes four stages. The first stage, or the presentation, is used to get students into a relaxed mode. The second stage is called the "active-concert," which involves presentation of the material in a song, drama, reading, etc. The following stage is the "passive review." During this time, classical music is played, and lastly, students practice language through games, puzzles, etc. (BrainWareMap, 2008). Furthermore, the teacher creates a calm environment by making positive suggestions toward the students' learning and not calling attention to mistakes. In this way, language learners gain freedom from failure and their limitations (Stevick, 1980). Despite criticisms of Suggestopedia for being too teacher-centered, the approach has been valued for its emphasis on lowering the affective-filter.

Natural Approach. The Natural Approach (NA), created by Tracy Terrell in 1983, was influenced greatly by Krashen's assumption that adults acquire their L2 by subsuming it from a communicative environment in the same way as children (Brown, 2007). For example, learners produce their language in stages using the NA starting with yes or no responses, moving to one word answers from either-or questions, to lists, to use of two words together, to three words and/or short phrases, to more advanced stages of language production (Terrell, 1983). The main goal of the

NA is to acquire communicative skills used for everyday interactions. To develop these skills, the NA uses classroom interactions through conversations, comprehensible input, and a low-anxiety environment. In this way, input is comprehended first before language is produced for functional purposes.

The hallmarks of the approach include exclusive use of the target language and emphasis on maximum use of comprehensible input in the classroom (Vanpatten, 2003). In order to use comprehensible input, the teacher speaks the target language at a level the learners can understand, and then goes one step beyond their current ability level during lessons. The teacher uses various sources of input including games, commands, drama, and group work (Brown, 2007). It is important to note that the NA does not involve correction of errors in language production, nor reading or writing (Terrell, 1983). For this reason, the approach is used with young children who are not yet able to read and write proficiently as well as older children and adults.

In regards to the effectiveness of this teaching approach, Terrell (1983) maintains that the communicative approaches to language teaching such as the NA "generally produce results superior to any cognitive or habit-drill based approach" (p.269). Similarly, Krashen believes instruction that emphasizes communication causes a faster development of language skills in comparison to formal instruction (Ellis, 2005). Formal instruction refers to the teaching of language through knowledge of grammar rules. The NA is criticized for a lack of attention to grammar as language is acquired implicitly.

Cognitive Strategies. Unlike the Natural Approach, cognitive strategies place importance on explicit learning of language through knowledge of acquisition processes. These strategies emphasize language learning through focus on a process that goes beyond memorization and translation. Waters (2006) believes ESL should be taught through problem solving. He agrees with an L2 teaching framework based off of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, which includes the following process of language acquisition: memory, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Each step of the process builds on the previous and leads to more complex forms of thinking (Waters, 2006).

Research that confirms the benefits of cognitive strategies like those suggested by Waters can be supported by Goh's study (1998). Her research found Chinese students who used cognitive and metacognitive strategies to learn English had higher listening capabilities than students who did not. The cognitive abilities used by students in the study were the following: inferencing, elaboration, prediction, contextualization and fixation, and reconstruction. With these strategies students used incoming information with the help of pre-existing knowledge from the long-term memory to improve their L2 listening comprehension (Goh, 1998). For example, students made predictions about what they were going to hear after the topic or title of the text they were to listen to had been provided. They used their existing knowledge to better comprehend oral input. In effect, students used cognitive strategies to improve L2 listening skills.

Cognitive strategies are also beneficial for teaching reading of a second language. Eskey found "most current literature on the teaching of second language

reading is largely devoted to the teaching of such (cognitive) strategies" (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Nuttall, 1996; Urquhart & Weir, 1998; Day, 1993 as cited in Eskey, 2005, p.564). For instance, literature by Tang and Moore (1992) supports the use of cognitive strategies for building second language reading skills. In their research experiment, cognitive pre-reading activities were given to adult learners before they engaged in reading short non-fiction articles. The pre-reading activities included a discussion surrounding readers' predictions about the story based on the title translations of five frequently used words in the text. Results of the experiment showed readers did have higher comprehension rates when using cognitive strategies for reading, although skills were not maintained during the second trial of the experiment. Tang and Moore (1992) hope to develop better methods for language retention.

Although cognitive strategies are considered beneficial for students who use them to learn a L2, other researchers like VanPatten (2003) claim they only aid in the learning phase of the language and not the acquisition. He agrees with Krashen and makes the distinction between learning and acquisition. Learning signifies an understanding of rules and occurs in the explicit system while acquisition is outside of consciousness and takes place in the implicit system. VanPatten (2003) believes an individual can only become fluent through language stored and produced implicitly. On the other hand, explicit knowledge may allow individuals to detect characteristics of input they did not notice before. Other researchers are split on the roles of each mode concluding, "They may be distinct, non-interfaced parallel systems (Curren &

Keele, 1993) or they may apply serially (Hayes & Broadbent, 1988) with the implicit stage preceding the explicit" (as cited in Skehan, 1998, p.54).

Krashen disagrees all together with the effectiveness of cognitive approaches. He maintains that being overly conscious of grammar rules prohibits the learner's natural production of the L2 (Stern, 1992). Krashen's theory has still not been proven or disproven by empirical data according to researchers, although its implications are present in many foreign language classrooms where inductive methods such as the Natural Approach, Total Physical Response (TPR) are used.

Total Physical Response (TPR) & TPR Storytelling (TPRS). Currently, a popular foreign language teaching method is Total Physical Response or TPR, which was created by James Asher in 1977 (Brown, 2007). The TPR method mixes the Gouin Method, which uses actions followed by words connected to the action with the Direct Method, which introduces chunks of language in the target language (Finocchiaro, 1989). These methods have contributed to Stephen Krashen's acquisition theory, which stresses meaning over grammatical form (Fotos, 2005). In the case of TPR, students learn meanings of words through listening before they produce them through speech. For example, a typical TPR lesson introduces three to four new vocabulary words along with their actions. The teacher says the word with the action, and the students will mimic the action without saying the word. After much repetition of actions, students acquire the word's meaning and can verbally produce it (Ray & Seely, 1997).

The advantage of TPR is that teaching language skills, such as vocabulary and grammar, becomes interactive (Ray & Seely, 1997). For instance, TPR uses

kinesthetic hand movements to connect new words to meanings. Studies by various researchers have found this method to be more effective for vocabulary acquisition than traditional instructional methods (Wolfe & Jones, 1982; Thiele & Schneiber-Herziq, 1983 as cited in Lindstromberg & Boers, 2005). Moreover, a study by Lindstromberg and Boers (2005), showed enactment and mime-based instruction, which are main components of TPR, were beneficial in teaching both literal and metaphorical expressions. For the study, the researchers performed three experiments in which 21-22 year-old Dutch students learning English were introduced to 24 new vocabulary words with TPR, and then tested for language acquisition. For all three experiments, a control group and an experimental group were exposed to new vocabulary words. The control group acquired word meaning by reading each word's definition, whereas the experimental group acquired word meaning through nonverbal actions.

Results of the tests showed that physical demonstration of vocabulary whether it was a verb or expression lead to more efficient recall of second language meaning (Lindstromberg & Boers, 2005). Although TPR has shown positive results, one limitation includes a stronger benefit for students at beginning levels over students at more advanced stages of language proficiency. For this reason, Brown (2009) considers TPR to be more of a classroom activity instead of the sole method that a teacher uses to facilitate language acquisition.

During the 1980s by Blaine Ray built upon TPR and created the method TPRS, which involve elements of TPR and language acquired through storytelling. The method consists of vocabulary taught through TPR in the initial stages of the

lesson, and uses the vocabulary to tell a story in which students will actively engage. Initially, the students follow the story with hand motions for target vocabulary words. After much repetition of input, the students produce the story in the target language on their own. TPRS emphasizes the emergence of output when the learner is ready. In all, this method involves listening, watching, acting out the story, reading, writing, revising and rewriting (Cantoni, 1999).

Furthermore, this method has its foundation in Krashen's belief that optimum language acquisition occurs through a relaxed environment where the brain's LAD has a low affective filter (Krashen, 1985). Studies surrounding the use of TPRS have proven the method successful because students receive a sufficient amount of comprehensible input, students are active in learning, and they have fun. Although TPRS has been found to be an effective teaching method, concerns are that TPRS as used in its original version does not teach enough grammar or use enough reading (Davidheiser, 2002).

More recently TPRS has evolved into Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) which focuses on reading, writing and grammar. In this way, TPRS addresses one of the concerns previously cited by Davidheiser (2002) of not using enough reading to facilitate language acquisition. The first step of the updated TPRS requires establishing meaning of vocabulary that will be used for the lesson through translation. For the second step, the teacher "asks" a story. To do this, he or she introduces a mini-story that uses the pre-taught target vocabulary and then asks students questions about the story's details. During this phase, new details can be added to the mini-story by the students. The purpose of the mini-story from step two

is to prepare learners for the extended readings in step three. For this final step, an extended story with new vocabulary is read and discussed in a similar process as step two. To conclude the process, a parallel story is written by the teacher with guidance from the students. In sum, the current version of TPRS underscores the exercise of reading and writing to facilitate language acquisition (TPR Storytelling: Teaching).

Computer Based Language Learning.

Rosetta Stone. Although not traditionally used for foreign language instruction, computer-based language learning has emerged in classrooms around the globe since the age of computer technology. The term used to describe learning an L2 through computer technology is referred to as computer assisted language learning (CALL) (Chapelle, 2005). CALL pedagogy is different from other FLA methods because it can be used more as a "classroom material" than classroom teaching, thus, "the foundation of CALL is for learners to work with texts and on tasks that require them to attend to the meaning of the language" (Chapelle, 2005, p. 747).

One popular CALL program is Rosetta Stone. This program, created in 1992, uses a natural approach to create an immersion experience through computer-based technology. Rosetta Stone teaches vocabulary through images that clearly connect to the oral and written language, which makes input comprehensible (Rosetta Stone and general research). This learning software has been used in the home school context, the U.S. Army, and in some elementary and high schools. Furthermore, Rosetta Stone has taken the place of foreign language teachers due to major budget cuts in certain circumstances as in the state of New Jersey (Davis, 2010).

Vesselinov (2009), analyzed the effectiveness of Rosetta Stone for lower level Spanish language learners. In the study, 135 students using the program were tested by means of a well-known university placement test called the WebCAPE (Web-based Computer Adaptive Placement Exam). Results of the test showed a 95% confidence interval that 55 hours of Rosetta Stone instruction equal one semester of college language studies. Vesselinov (2009) recommends more hours of study needed for higher levels of Spanish. Other reviews of the program have confirmed positive results that stated the following about the program, "Rosetta Stone constitutes an effective tool for language learning" and "a worthwhile way to enhance classroom learning" (Erickson, 2004, p.1028).

Although positively reviewed, the program does have its downfalls. Opponents of Rosetta Stone argue that cultural characteristics of each language are de-emphasized (Gregory, 2009). Erikson (2004), agrees maintaining that the programs lack of "authentic culture" is a weakness. Additionally, Tim Ferris, creator of Rosetta Stone, finds another weakness of the software is that language is harder to learn without grammar explanations. He stated, "the idea that you can learn honorific speech in Japanese without English explanation, for example, is, to me, handicapping. Rosetta Stone's method is effective. But it shouldn't be positioned as perfect" (Gregory, 2009, p.2). In all, many have agreed with the benefits of Rosetta Stone because of its immersive-like instruction, but are not convinced of its effectiveness in grammar explanation and teaching of cultural competence.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Instruction.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) came out as a movement beginning in the

1970s that called for foreign language instruction through communication (Littlewood, 1981). Instead of the use of methods or approaches which focused only on the practice of language structure, the CLT "suggest that grammatical structures might better be subsumed under various functional categories" (Brown, 2007, p.242). In other words, communicative language teaching moved away from the practice of grammar structures to a focus on expression, negotiation and interpretation of meaning (Lee, 2000).

Although many forms of CLT exist, main characteristics include the following: classroom goals are focused on aspects of communicative competence, language techniques promote a pragmatic and functional use of language for communicative means, fluency and accuracy develop out of communication, and students use language productively and receptively within a natural environment (Brown, 2007).

A recent application of the CLT is called Task-Based Instruction, which emphasizes particular tasks that are carried out in a communicative learning environment. A task, according to Candlin (1987), Nunan (1989), and Long (1989) a task is an activity which "meaning is primary; there is some communication problem to solve; there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities; task completion has some priority; the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome" (as cited in Skehan, 1998, p. 95).

In other words, the task dictates what learners will do with the language (Ellis, 2005). The task-based teaching approach is grounded in three main beliefs. The first being that instruction needs to coincide with L2 acquisition processes, which

demonstrates that second language learners interact differently with linguistic data at various stages of development. Second, student engagement stems from reasonably challenging tasks, and third, tasks allow instructors to perceive learner needs and in turn accommodate them through their courses (Ellis, 2005).

Focus on Form. Moreover task-based activities may implement form-focused instruction. Ellis (2001) describes two forms of this mode of instruction as either a planned or incidental learning activity that calls the learners' attention to a certain form of language (as cited in Williams, 2005). Planned focus on form involves the use of communicative tasks to draw attention to a specific form already selected by the teacher. Incidental form-focused instruction does not involve any special attention to a form (Alcón & Mayo, 2008). Various studies show the incidental acquisition of vocabulary and different grammatical forms through reading and listening (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Lee, 2002; Xu, 2010) Some key features of form-focused instruction include the following components: "an overall emphasis on the communication of meaning, a brief diversion from the emphasis on communication to focus on language as an object, a problem-based trigger for the diversion" (Williams, 2005, p.672).

Furthermore, VanPatten (2003) believes that focus on form should emphasize meaning and occur through a communicative activity. He explains that focusing on form through communication may involve recasts (the native speaker repeats the statement when the learner produces the language incorrectly), confirmation checks (native speaker asks the learner a question to confirm what he or she wants to say), and clarification checks (the native speaker asks direct questions about what the learner wants to communicate). The other main component of focus on form is its

occurrence through a comprehensive task which can be text enhancement or structured input (VanPatten, 2003).

Although some would hold that focus on form instruction may not be effective for beginning language learners as they are still decoding and expressing meaning, it may be more appropriate for learners with more developed language skills (VanPatten, 1996; Williams, 1999 as cited in Williams, 2005). Opponents of focus on form consider focusing on meaning a better alternative as attention to forms is time consuming and leaves out the use of context for interpreting meaning (Salaberry & Lafford, 2008). Research on how focus on form affects language intake remains under study as many investigations have either supported or criticized its effectiveness (Williams, 2005).

Processing Instruction. A more recent type of focus on form instruction called Processing Instruction (PI) has been investigated in regards to effectiveness on SLL. As described by Wong (2004) and Farley (2005), PI has three main characteristics. The first component is that learners are given explicit information about how a certain linguistic form or structure is used. The second characteristic is that the learners are informed about processing strategies that hinder them from correctly processing the target form. For instance, the teacher explicitly tells the students learning the French causative that a problem acquiring that form occurs from a different word order in comparison to English.

Lastly, PI involves structured input activities that are created to prevent students from using ineffective processing strategies in favor of more helpful ones. In general, this mode of instruction is designed to promote input becoming intake,

without producing the target language, therefore, activities involve a manipulation forms and structures in a way that is meaningful to the learner. In effect, learner processing strategies are matched by structured input (Wong, 2004)

Evidence that supports the use of PI over Traditional Instruction (TI), which consist of explicitly taught grammar followed by practice producing the language, was conducted by VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) on acquisition of the Spanish object pronouns (as cited in Wong, 2004). For this study, participants were placed into three groups, a PI group, a TI group, and a control group that did not receive any form of instruction. The first group was given explicit instruction on the target grammar form along with knowledge of ineffective strategies for learning the form, and structured input activities. The second group received traditional instruction of object pronouns, and the third group received no instruction. All three groups were tested on their ability to select pictures that matched what they heard.

Results showed that the PI group made more gains than the other two groups tested. The PI group also retained their gains as seen through the delayed posttest one month later. Although similar studies by Dekeyser and Sokalski (1996), Salaberry (1997), and Allen (2000) did not substantiate findings that PI was superior to TI, (as cited in Wong, 2005), much research confirms the effectiveness of this type of instruction (Farley, 2001a, Buck, 2000, VanPatten & Wong, 2003 as cited in Lee & VanPatten, 2003).

Teacher Beliefs on Target Language Use

Within all of the methods and approaches previously mentioned, choices are made on how much of the target language versus the student's L1 should be used.

According to recent research (Lafford, 2005; Lafford & Collentine, 2006; Segalowitz, Freed, Collentine, Lafford, Lazar, & Díaz-Campos, 2004 as cited in Lord, 2010), many educators are aware that total immersion in a study abroad setting is best for language acquisition. For this reason, the middle/high school foreign language educator has the difficult task of replicating an immersion-like classroom. Methods and approaches including the ALM, Direct Method, Natural Approach, TPR, TPRS, and various communicative approaches that emphasize target language-only have been implemented in hopes of generating this type of language learning environment.

Although some teachers take a target language only approach during instructional time, others have found that the sole use of the target language leads to confusion. A study by Thompson (2006), who examined attitudes of eight Spanish teachers at the university level, showed that seven out of eight instructors felt English was appropriate for administrative issues, six out of eight thought that English should be used to clarify information that students didn't understand, and half agreed that the L1 could be used for translation of vocabulary. When students were interviewed on their beliefs surrounding use of L1 in the classroom, they had responses similar to those of their teachers in regards to when it should be used.

A study by Rolin-ianziti and Brownlie (2002) also examined the use of native language in a university foreign language classroom. The study examined the native language used by four French teachers during a listening activity. Results showed that 48.62% of the target language was used for communicative purposes, namely classroom management (giving instructions, motivating students to speak in the target language, planning an exam/activity, giving objectives, giving feedback, checking

comprehension and handling materials). The students' native language was used 30.94% for translation, and 20.44% for metalinguistic purposes such as comments.

Conclusions of the research supported previous data on reasons for target language use in the foreign language classroom including translation, commenting on form, and classroom management. The study also concluded that native language use may depend on the circumstance and the type of activity being taught such as grammar, listening, reading, and writing. For example, higher amounts of native language use were reported for the grammar activity in comparison to the listening activity (Rolin-ianziti & Brownlie, 2002).

Chapter Summary

The main intent of this literature review was to provide background information of past and present foreign language teaching methods and approaches. Before these modes of instruction were described, the researcher discussed theories on how individuals acquire a L1 and a L2. Connections were made between how individuals acquire their L1 in comparison to their L2 (through the use of language transfer, comprehensible and meaning-bearing input, and stages of acquisition), and the difference between how a child acquires a L2 in comparison to an adult was examined.

Aptitude and motivation are two additional variables that influence the process of language learning. For instance, aptitude is believed to be one of the most significant predictors of success in SLL, although this theory has been widely criticized. Similarly, motivation is shown to be a relevant predictor of second language achievement. Intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivators contribute to this

phenomenon. Foreign language teachers must keep factors such as aptitude and motivation in mind when choosing their manner of instruction as these factors strongly affect how students learn language.

Through an investigation of theories and variables surrounding SLA, a foundation was laid for more current as well as traditional second language teaching methods and approaches. The following methods and approaches starting with the oldest to the newest were investigated by the researcher: GTM, Direct Method, ALM, Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Natural Approach, cognitive strategies, TPR, TPRS, CALL, CLT, Task-Based Instruction, focus on form, and Processing Instruction. As this literature review examined the latter methods and approaches, certain weaknesses and strengths emerged, which confirmed or denied effectiveness of each mode of instruction. These insights helped the investigator to gain a solid understanding of the topic of study selected. The following chapter explains how the research question was explored.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

For this study, the researcher used a three pronged method of information collection called data triangulation, which means that data was taken from various situations, places, and from different people (Bryman, n.d.). In this way, the researcher strengthened the study by confirming findings through different modes of data collection. Methods used to conduct this study were primarily qualitative as interview and observation were used to gather the majority of the data. A survey was also employed to receive information about the population under study; however, due to lack of respondents, the results were not reported in chapter four. The three methods of data gathering for the study will be further explained in this chapter.

This chapter also describes the population under study, instruments used for data collection, and the overall procedure. The population consisted of high school Spanish teachers from the School District of La Crosse. Four educators were interviewed and surveyed, while one of the participants interviewed was also observed. Instruments used for the study include an online survey program and an audio recorder. Finally, the procedure of the investigation began in the February of 2010 and ended in December of 2010.

Research Design

Interview

According to Mackey and Gass (2005), interviews are qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is characterized by data that is descriptive and focuses on a small

group of participants while quantitative research is aimed toward a larger population. The benefit of using a qualitative method to gather information such as an interview is that it allows the researcher to obtain data on trends that may not be easily observable. In this case, interviewees were asked about their beliefs and perceptions of the methods and approaches they typically use. Furthermore, interviews conducted for this study followed the format of a structured interview, which meant that all participants were asked the same questions. This enabled a comparison of responses across interviewees. Because of the small research population, the investigator used interviews as a major source of her data.

Another advantage of conducting interviews is the ability of the researcher to ask for additional data if necessary, especially when the interviewee goes off topic (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The third advantage of this mode of data collection is that participants may have been more comfortable with speaking in a conversational setting than writing responses on a computer. Through interviews, much data was obtained in a short amount of time as it was faster for respondents to share information through dialogue than if they would have had to write their responses. The researcher gained the most information conducting interviews in comparison to data gained through the questionnaire and field observation. The data was collected through an audio recorder and later transcribed.

Field Observation

A field observation was also used as a basis for the study. The researcher included notes collected from an intermediate level Spanish class, which was observed during the spring semester of 2010 during her Field I experience (See

Appendix E). The data contained field notes taken about methods the cooperating teacher used, along with observations of student reactions to the methods/approaches used. The observations can be classified as having low structure because the researcher did not use a checklist or rating scale, which would be considered high structured observation (Mackey & Gass, 2005). For a low structured observation, the investigator analyzes the field notes to find patterns of what is being examined.

Advantages of observations include a fuller understanding of the participants under study as the researcher watches them over time. This allows for deeper insight into the context of the persons under study (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Observations are most useful when combined with other forms of research based on the fact that they do not provide specific information on thoughts, attitudes and motivations of the research participants. For this reason, interviews and a survey were also conducted.

Survey

The third method of data collection was a survey. The survey was presented in the form of a questionnaire. Generally, surveys come in the form of a questionnaire and are designed to elicit responses about attitudes and opinions of participants involved regarding a certain topic (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The questionnaire consisted of questions investigating the teaching beliefs held by the researcher's target population (See Appendix C). While surveys are normally used for collecting data from large populations, this method of data collection served as a source of additional information as only three of the four interviewees completed the survey. Although results of the survey were not included in the researcher's results and analysis, they served as a guide in creation of relevant interview questions.

Participants

The population involved in the study included six high school Spanish teachers in the School District of La Crosse, WI. The individuals were contacted through e-mail with an invitation to take a survey in the form of a questionnaire. The e-mail also asked participants whether or not they were interested in an interview about their teaching methods and approaches (See Appendix D). The participants were allowed to take part in only the questionnaire or the interview if they wanted, although both modes of data collection were preferred. Four teachers responded to the e-mail agreeing to meet for an interview while the other two individuals did not reply. Out of the individuals who were interviewed, three were female and one was male. All teachers interviewed taught more than one level of Spanish, and had taught at least five years.

Instruments

In order to conduct this study, two main instruments were used to collect data. The first was an online computer program called Qualtrics. Primarily a username and password were created and then, a survey in the form of an eight-item questionnaire was developed. The first page of the questionnaire was informed consent, which gave participants the option of choosing whether or not they wanted to participate and also told them what they would be involved with and if there would be any potential risks. The page was put on a setting called Skip logic which meant that if the individual chose the "yes" option, he or she continued to further questions. If the individual chose "no," the survey was not accessed. For teachers who chose to continue with the questionnaire, eight questions were presented.

The second instrument used was an audio recorder, which was rented from the campus technology center. The recording device was set in the middle of the table during the interviews. The recorder allowed the interviewer and interviewee to sit a normal distance apart so that the conversation could occur in a natural setting in contrast to having to hold the device up the participant's mouth. The interviews ranged from 20 minutes to one hour long. After the interviews, which consisted of six questions (See Appendix F), were finished, audio clips from the recording device were downloaded on to a computer in a MP3 format, and then transcribed onto the computer. For transcriptions, interview names were coded by Mr. or Mrs. followed by a randomly chosen capitol letter.

Procedure

The first necessary step of the procedure was gaining IRB approval, which took one week to submit necessary documents and receive a response from the committee. After gaining permission from the IRB to conduct the research, permission from the School District of La Crosse was requested by submitting an application to the research and development committee. One week later, authorization was granted, and an invitation was sent out by e-mail to a population of six Spanish teachers at the two La Crosse public high schools. The e-mail asked if teachers would participate in a questionnaire and/or interview. As individuals responded, interviews were arranged in the respondent's respective place of work. Most of the interviews occurred after school or during the teacher's prep time. After completing interviews, the researcher transcribed the data and reported the results and analysis. Additionally, observation notes from the researcher's Field I teaching experience during the spring

semester of 2010 were included in the results. The teacher in the classroom in which the observation occurred was part of the research population. In all, the procedure spanned two semesters of college studies.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The structure of this chapter involves four portraits. Each is an illustration of the data collected through a case study as interview and observation were used to obtain data from a particular population of educators. Results shared in the portraits demonstrate insight into various categories pertaining to the research question. The data reported adheres to the following groupings: beliefs about how students learn a second language, methods and approaches or strategies the educators use to facilitate effective language learning in the Spanish as a foreign language classroom, and how teachers adapt instruction for struggling learners. Each data finding is followed by an analysis of the response. Additionally, this chapter is recorded in a narrative style format, which the researcher chose in order to present the information collected in a more natural and spontaneous manner.

Portrait of Mr. M

I entered the room of Mr. M and was greeted by a firm hand shake and a smile. As I looked around the rather large classroom it appeared neat and orderly as the desks were set in rows across the tile floor. The interviewee proceeded to walk across the room to retrieve a wooden chair for me, and placed it on the opposite side of his desk. I sat down and readied my recording device as we made small talk about the purpose of my research. After glancing at the poster of a giant Aztec symbol that was placed on the wall behind Mr. M's desk, I took a deep breath and began with the

interview, “So like I said, I want to interview you a little bit about your teaching methods. My first question is how do you believe students learn a second language?”

The interviewee began by commenting on the need for students to practice language through repetition confidently stating, “I think they learn it by practicing it, so the more repetition they get, the better off they are. I think they learn by making connections to what they already know” (Interview data B, p. 1, lines 10-11). These associations could be made through hearing random vocabulary from commercials, peers, or teachers. Mr. M’s assessment of how students learn language is consistent with research as repetition is needed for language learning, but must be connected to meaning (Brown, 2007; VanPatten, 2003). When associations of words and their functions are not made, language is not retained.

Mr. M went on to mention that connections could also be made on the affective level to cause student learning. The affective domain coincides with an individual’s attitudes, interests, motivation, etc… (Brown, 2007). He illustrated this belief by explaining how a colleague of his used a weather map activity in which students repeated and manipulated language forms as they gave a weather report. He felt that this activity caused a concrete retention of learning, especially when there was a link made to the affective domain. Activities that allow for emotional reactions aid in memory storage, although emotions are not necessary for learning to take place (Willingham, 2009). If students are having a fun time giving the weather report while they practice their language, they will be more likely to remember what they are learning than if they were disinterested in the topic.

Mr. M continued his beliefs on how students learn a second language by stating,

> I think they learn from constructing simple mastery of something and then expanding maybe into unfamiliar territory, something they don't have mastery of, and then it just kind of builds (Interview data, p.1, lines 14-16).

In other words, the students must master the basics before they can move on to learning more complex linguistic structures. For instance, Mr. M continued with a certainty in his voice stating, "I disagree with the way most books and curriculum is written. I wouldn't like for example do "me gusta"(I like). That's second semester because it's so goofy" (Interview data, p. 1, lines 38-43). He explained "me gusta" is confusing to students because they "may not even understand (the rule) in English" (Interview data B, p.1, line 42). The students must start with simple language forms and then build up to more complex linguistic forms. The complexity of forms could stem from the student's lack of understanding the rules in their first language, and therefore, a connection cannot be made to the second language.

Although research does support the need for language to be learned from simple to complex (Lee & VanPatten, 2003), advocates of CLT approaches support the teaching of language to students as it is necessary for communication (Savignon & Berns, 1987). Moreover, Krashen believes communicative instruction over formal instruction causes faster development (Ellis, 2005 p.233). For this reason, students would benefit from learning "me gusta" if they needed it for conversation according to a communicative language teaching approach, which is a trend in many foreign language classrooms today.

Mr. M also mentioned the complexity of speaking in the classroom. He said, "I look at conversation being along this continuum of difficulty again" (Interview data, p.5, line, 4). When asking students to converse in the classroom, lower level students need more structure such as writing their responses before they say them while upper levels can hold conversations without any notes. Moreover, Mr. M commented that building speaking skills through repetition is not beneficial unless the phrases are in a functional context such as "Se me olvidó." (I forgot.) or "¿Me permite ir al baño?" (Can I go the bathroom?) Phrases learned in a meaningful context are more beneficial than phrases that are remembered just for the sake of memorization. In this case, rote learning occurs, which is ineffective in comparison to meaningful learning (Brown, 2007).

Research by Savignon (1972) supports the idea that language learned for communicative needs is more beneficial with regard to production abilities than language learned through drills such as the ALM, or language learned through cultural lessons (as cited in Lee & VanPatten, 2003). As Mr. M uses memorized phrases in a functional context, they will be more easily retained than if the phrases were memorized without direct application.

Furthermore, Mr. M emphasizes reading in his classroom as a means of language learning. He asserted that his students find it to be the most "valuable" skill for their language learning abilities. Mr. M described how he tries to get his lower level students engaged in the readings by giving them opportunities to question the content. For upper levels, Mr. M talked about how the stories interest students based on their context. According to Farley (2005), students will not engage in their

learning unless they are interested in the material. For this reason, this teacher uses texts, which he thinks will spark student engagement to promote learning. Texts, such as stories, can also provide students with a broader range of vocabulary (Willingham, 2009). In effect, implementation of reading in the foreign language classroom allows for more input of vocabulary along with an appealing context depending on the reading assigned.

Moving on to other beliefs underlying the interviewee's pedagogy, I asked Mr. M about how motivation influences the way he teaches. He retorted, "Different things motivate different kids." He explained, "Not all kids, unfortunately, are motivated by learning in itself so you have some kids who are very into rewards, and some kids are very into punishment" (Interview data, p.7, lines 286-289).

In other words, students who are not intrinsically motivated to learn may be prompted to learn through rewards or in an effort to avoid negative consequences such as low grades on quizzes. He continued by describing rewards that motivate his students including candy, folder, extra credit points, food, and interesting stories. He took a short breath and proudly stated, "One thing that I've been doing now for three years that has seriously motivated the kids has been competition" (Interview data B, p. 7, line 295). He went on to describe how competing for the best class average scores amongst his classes has decreased cheating. The students from one hour will not give correct answers to other students when asked because they don't want other classes to get ahead through better test scores. Mr. M also reported that the class average has increased test scores because students want their class to be the highest achieving for both bragging rights and the rewards earned for the top class.

In the case of Mr. M's class, it is clear that many of his students are motivated extrinsically to perform well in Spanish class through competition. While research shows that extrinsic forces only lead to the achievement of short-term goals, intrinsic motivation is more effective in the long run (Noels, 2003). Motivating students intrinsically occurs in the classroom through developing their "self-confidence and autonomy, personalizing the learning process, and increasing learners' goal-orientation" (Brown, 2007, p. 174). This can be a challenge in the foreign language classroom as many students desire to learn Spanish in early levels for short-term goals such as getting into colleges that require two years of language courses while having no intention to pursue their studies. In this case, the use of extrinsic motivators may be more practical for certain students.

As Mr. M shared his beliefs about how students learn a second language, I was also interested in which methods and approaches he used to facilitate second language learning. He bluntly stated that some teachers use TPR/TPRS, but "I don't" (Interview data B, p.2, line 63). However, Mr. M did explain that he uses activities that make use of visuals of culture and history when teaching grammar points such as the past tense. Visuals are helpful in foreign language learning as they provide another source of input for language learners, and a context for grammar. Visuals also aid in reinforcing the connection of language forms with their meanings, a process Lee and VanPatten (2003) refer to as binding.

Repetition through activities is another approach used in Mr. M's classroom. He mentioned using a game called the *Board Game* where students are given a word and have to translate it on the board, and he talked about using "kill and drill" with

vocabulary so that students who do not pick up the words through classroom activities are forced to memorize the words. Even though "kill and drill" activities do cause memorization, its use has been criticized by linguists such as Terrell (1983), creator of the Natural Approach. He maintains that communicative approaches to language teaching "generally produce results superior to any cognitive or habit-drill based approach" (p.269). While "kill and drill" has its place for short-term language learning goals, it must be built upon through other activities that use language for a functional purpose.

Furthermore, the interviewee described a shift in how much repetition is needed at different levels. He explained that lower level students will use higher amounts of repetition, but lower variation of vocabulary for speaking activities while for higher levels there is "less repetition but much higher variation because they (the students) can do that" (Interview data B, p.4, line 142). For example, he mentioned how students learning a grammar concept, such as an object pronoun , will first do lots of repetition through worksheets. Then, the form is reinforced through reading, writing, and listening until they can produce is on their own. This kind of scaffolding aligns with theories that show learning occurs in stages as a new skill builds upon previously stored information (Vygotsky, 1986 as cited in Cantoni, 1998). In terms of language acquisition, the same is true; ability to comprehend and produce language occurs in stages (Brown, 2007; Lee & VanPatten, 2003).

Mr. M also talked about using conversation to "get away from the fill in the blank and underline the verb type of thing" (Interview data B, p. 4, line 172-173). The conversations start out artificial at first as students read what they have written, but in

time are challenged to produce language without a guide in order to resemble "a normal human conversation" (Interview data B, p. 5, line 190). The teacher commented on the reluctance students have to converse, not necessarily because of the affective filter, but because they don't like that kind of activity. In turn, he gives students in lower levels a lot of wait time to think about their responses, and an activity called "charla groups" for Spanish V students. These groups are expected to have conversations on certain topics given to them by Mr. M., and communication is valued over accuracy.

Mr. M's use of "charla groups" allows students to practice output production freely, which is a component of CLT methods. Through conversation, communication develops fluency and accuracy over time as students practice language production and reception in a meaningful way (Brown, 2007). At first, lower levels students are often reticent to speak because they are not ready. This explains Mr. M's comment about students not liking speaking activities. Output production develops over time as more and more language is brought into the developing system. According to VanPatten (2003), students are often pushed to produce language before they are able; therefore, expectations of speaking abilities for beginning level students must be low. Mr. M's use of more structure and wait-time for lower level students is an appropriate accommodation until they are ready for the next stage in output production.

Additionally, Mr. M explained that he makes use of the student's native language in order to promote comprehension of lessons and generation of output. Unlike methods such as the Direct Method, and Natural Approach which emphasize

use of only the target language, Mr. H uses the students' first language to clarify instruction. He mentioned that students will not participate if they do not know what is going on. Studies show that exclusive use of target language can create confusion in the classroom, and therefore, the students' native language may be used for clarification of instructions or classroom management (Thompson, 2006; Rolin-ianziti & Brownley, 2002). Through use of English, Mr. H gives students in his class more opportunities to engage in their learning experience.

Another technique that Mr. M used to implement effective language instruction is reading stories that engage the students. He mentioned reading stories such as *Carnaval*, *Gemelas Rojas*, and *La Serie de Tormes* in his Spanish V class. According to Mr. M, there is more intrinsic interest for these stories because of their content, so students are captivated by them. When his students read a story, they will concentrate on that story for a few weeks, while a lower level might focus on a shorter reading for a day or 30 minutes. Certain teaching approaches such as incidental Focus on Form show language acquisition occurs as words appear frequently in texts (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Lee, 2002; Xu, 2010). No research yet shows whether certain forms of input such as reading are more effective than other forms of input such as listening, although research emphasizes the comprehensible input for language learning (Carrigan, 2009; VanPatten, 2003).

Lastly, I wanted Mr. M's opinion of why certain students struggle learning languages in his class, and if those difficulties linked to aptitude. He explained, "I mean unfortunately we have verbal linguistic intelligences…kind of the crux of the issue here" (Interview data B, p.8, lines 348-349). For this reason and not aptitude,

the interviewee explained that some students will acquire language more easily than others. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences holds that learners with a linguistic intelligence have "facility with words and language" (Willingham, 2009, p.124). Although this concept helps to explain why some students learn languages more easily than others, the theory has received much criticism because there could be more than eight intelligences and they are difficult to measure by a test.

Although Mr. M attributed learning differences to having a certain intelligence or not, he said he does not cater to those specific cognitive styles as the application of the theory would suggest. He commented that instead, "I do try to give them a variety and I do try to, there's a lot of recycling of stuff" (Interview data B, p. 8, line 353). Giving students a variety of activities benefits students in that it assists those with different learning preferences according to Brown (2007). Others who disagree with theories that attribute how students learn to a certain style, hold that varied instruction helps keep students focused on content (Willingham, 2009). Either way, providing numerous forms of input and repetition of materials in a meaningful context, is beneficial for language acquisition.

In regards to struggling students, Mr. M also mentioned how he uses students' interests to motivate them in their learning. He gave an illustration of a certain student who struggled with language and had parents that were not sure if she would be able to pass from Spanish II to Spanish III. He said, "she works hard, she does get it, but you have to make it click for her." To make the language "click" for this particular student, Mr. M talked about using the student's interests, such as her interest in

politics, to spur her on in language learning. He also mentioned accommodating other struggling learners through using their interests in culture. He replied,

> Some kids love reading books, some kids love working out of the textbook. Some kids love like more the cultural stuff, and if we had a Spanish cultures class that was taught, they'd be all over it…So, there's that, you try to engage the different learners by appealing to their interest (Interview data B, p. 9, lines 407-409).

Mr. H's use of culture as a means of drawing students into their learning experience is effective for many reasons. According to the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (1996), students are not considered to have mastered a language until they understand the cultural framework of that language (as cited in Peterson & Coltrane, 2003). Culture is an essential component of language learning as it is interesting to students and an integral part of language acquisition. Furthermore, Thanasoulas (2001) emphasizes the need for teachers to go beyond merely teaching cultural awareness, by fashioning cultural experiences. The kind of classroom in which this occurs involves promoting images in students' minds through visuals about the culture. Also, guest speakers who can talk about the target language community and discussion of social issues in the countries under study support creation of cultural understanding. Educators who do not strive to involve cultural experiences in their classroom leave students at a deficit in their language learning.

Furthermore, Mr. M commented on those who habitually struggle in the lower levels. For this reason, students who get D's or F's on quizzes have to be re-take them along with doing extra work to get more practice with the language. With a more matter of fact tone, Mr. M said that students who struggle will put more effort forth just so they don't have to do the extra work. In this case, it appears that individuals in

Mr. M's classroom are motivated to do better to avoid additional work. Because foreign language work is mentally taxing especially for struggling students, it makes sense that they are extrinsically motivated to avoid extra homework.

In conclusion, Mr. M uses a mixture of approaches and techniques to conduct his classes. Initially, it appeared that Mr. M had a strong emphasis on "kill and drill" strategies that resemble aspects of the GTM and the ALM. As these two methods have been criticized for their use of rote memorization, their primary use is not very effective. To make up for these flaws, Mr. M uses other strategies in conjunction with his "kill and drill" activities to create a meaningful learning experience. For example, vocabulary words are memorized then used for purposes of conversation, and also for reading activities. It appeared Mr. M used rote memorization as a basis for scaffolding.

Also, Mr. M showed great consideration for the affective domain. He talked about motivating students intrinsically through interesting readings, as well as extrinsically through competition and rewards such as candy, food, folders, and extra credit points. Both types of motivation are beneficial in the classroom, although extrinsic motivation only lasts as long as that outside force is present. Once it is removed, students must rely on intrinsic motivation to accomplish long-term language learning goals (Noel, 2009).

Lastly, Mr. M attributes difficulties that his struggling learners face not necessarily to lower aptitude, but rather to a lack of linguistic intelligence. This concept is part of Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which has gained considerable acceptance as well as criticism amongst scholars (Willingham, 2009).

While some researchers, such as Brown (2007), maintain that a varied instruction accommodates different learning styles, in contrast, Willingham (2009) holds that instructional variation is needed for refocusing students on content. Mr. M assists these learners by trying to use what interests them, such as culture, and by allowing them to retake quizzes. Because so many factors contribute to the reasons why learners struggle, a good place to begin for accommodating these students is to find out what engages them in their learning as Mr. M has done.

Portrait of Mrs. L

Walking into the classroom of Mrs. L, I felt welcome as she greeted me warmly and showed me where I could place my coat. I commented on how quiet the school was as students were busy at work. The classroom was medium-sized, with a chalkboard at the front of the room and a white board on the side. The walls were not overly crowded as decorations and poster were spaced out in an aesthetically pleasing way. Before the interview began, we chatted briefly about her background as a language teacher, which she shared with me freely as I set up the recording device. Once everything was ready, I began my inquiry by asking, "How do you believe students learn a second language?"

She responded,

> I think the best way to learn the second language is to have them hear it. Um, to have them listen to it even if they can't produce it yet, to have them learn it and to have them understand what the teacher is saying, and it could be something very simple, and also with a lot of visuals. That's the best way I think that students actually internalize it (Interview data C, p. 1, lines 12-15).

Mrs. L's belief about how students acquire a L2 aligns with research that asserts that input is necessary for language acquisition (Krashen, 1982; Long, 1990;

Gass, 1997, as cited in Brown, 2007). Input can be listening and reading and must be comprehended for connections to be made between language forms and their functions. Input is also required before output can be produced (Carrigan, 2009). If input students have to make output before they fully comprehend input, they will not have a solid retention of the language.

Furthermore, Mrs. L talked about the need for students to hear simple input along with seeing visuals. Use of simplified input is substantiated by research that shows students learn language in chunks, and also that they learn through scaffolding. Additionally, Mrs. N said that students learn a language through the use of visuals, which help bind language form to meaning (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). According to Jukes (2006), students are becoming faster visual processors. In other words, they can remember more information that they process through their visual cortex. Although it is unclear to what degree visuals aid in language learning, it is apparent that they do help students make meaningful associations between language and its meaning, which is necessary for input to be comprehensible. More research is needed to investigate how visual technology is affecting language learning.

Moreover, Mrs. L also mentioned that students have to listen to language even if they cannot yet produce it. Research shows that adult foreign language learners are able to understand more language than they can produce (Brown, 2007). For this reason, some language teaching styles such as TPR emphasize input before output. SLA scholars debate about when students should be pushed to generate output in initial learning phases as some learners may be speaking without understanding what they are saying (VanPatten, 2003). On the other hand, Swain (1985) holds that output

is a means of acquisition because it forces learners to attend to L2 input (as cited in Farley, 2005). Mrs. L shows a reliance on comprehensible input before output production.

Wanting to know more about the interviewee's beliefs on second language acquisition, I asked her what she thought about inductive versus deductive teaching methods. She replied that she is still trying to figure out which one works best, stating that "it is different for all students" because they learn in different ways (Interview data C, p.1, line 23). She noted that some students like to have rules explained to them while others prefer learning through context and examples.

In the field of SLA, it is still uncertain which type of thinking is superior, inductive or deductive; although both can be effective depending on the purpose of the lesson (Brown, 2007). Various studies have shown the advantages of inductive methods such as Focus on Meaning over grammatical form as with TPR (Fotos, 2005). Moreover, advocates of CLT favor the use of approaches that use inductive processes (Brown, 2007); however, criticisms of these approaches include their inefficiency in teaching more complex grammar rules to higher level students as it would require more time to figure them out (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005).

Mrs. L also revealed beliefs related to what makes her instruction effective. She replied,

> Well, I think engagement is the key. Um… where they are able to do some type of activity where they're doing using more than one skill at a time. They are listening and speaking, or they're listening and writing. Listening and moving, I don't think that the moving part is really a skill, but as long as they're engaged in a couple of different ways at the same time. I think that's the most effective (Interview data C, p. 2, lines 71-75).

Mrs. L's comment reveals her belief that students need to be doing more than one skill at a time, or simultaneously in order to be occupied in their learning. This gives students practice cycling between input and output, which is necessary for the developing linguistic system to grow (VanPatten, 2003). Also, perhaps Mrs. L's assertion suggests the need to engage today's student with a variety of stimuli. As students are inundated with technology, studies show students are becoming more accustomed to multi-tasking (Jukes, 2006). This may change how educators adapt instruction as students are highly influenced by multimedia.

During the interview, I also asked Mrs. L about her beliefs on native language use versus target language use. She replied that on average she uses 75% of the target language for instruction, with more target language as levels increase. She commented that she does use the student's native language if a student is struggling or if she is checking for comprehension of a reading. Research by Thompson (2006), and Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) confirm the use of educators using the students' L1 in the classroom to aid in clarification.

Although using more target language in the classroom is superior for giving a maximum amount of input, research shows L1 use may not interfere with language learning in the beginning of an individual's language learning experience (VanPatten, 2003). Instead, the target language helps students in their acquisition experience if they can understand instructional tasks better as a result. As the learners grow more and more in their language skills, use of the native language should minimize.

Moving on to the next interview question, I asked about which methods and approaches Mrs. L uses to facilitate language learning in her classroom. She

responded by talking about her use of TPR because while a student may not understand the vocabulary, "he or she will be able to see the action you are doing, so I do use the Total Physical Response, um not exclusively though" (Interview data C, p. 1, line 36-37). Studies on TPR have shown that using the use of movements to learn vocabulary makes language learning interactive (Ray & Seely, 1997). This approach is shown to be effective on memory retention of words and verbal expressions (Lindstromberg and Boers, 2005). While TPR has been proven beneficial in the memorization of vocabulary, it has received criticism for a lack of grammar and reading development. This may be the reason Mrs. L does not use the method exclusively.

Furthermore, Mrs. L's instructional choices were consistent with her belief that "students learn in many different ways." For instance, along with kinesthetics, she uses visuals such as flashcards with pictures, translations, conversation, and readings (Interview data C, pp.1-3). In this way, Mrs. L strives to accommodate a variety of learning styles. Research by Jukes (2006) maintains that the majority of students are visual or kinesthetic learners over audio or text-based, and that digital bombardment is causing students to have better visual memories than before. Although it is widely believed that students possess different learning styles, such as visual, audio and kinesthetic, Willingham (2009) refutes the claim that certain types of learners acquire knowledge more easily when taught in their style. Willingham (2009) does comment on the benefit of variation in lessons stating that change refocuses students.

Other researchers, such as Brown (2007), support the view that numerous learning styles exist in L2 learners, and can be accommodated through teaching students metacognitive (i.e. self-evaluation), cognitive (i.e. imagery) and socio-affective (i.e. questions for clarification) strategies. In the context of the foreign language classroom it is unclear whether or not accommodating learning styles affects the process of language acquisition, although Strategy Based Instruction may help students notice input more efficiently (VanPatten, 2003). More study is needed to directly connect learning styles and language acquisition.

As the interview finished her thought, I glanced at my remaining questions. I said, "How do you accommodate struggling learners through your teaching methods?" She replied,

> I think visuals are helpful, so I do try to do more with flash cards and pictures. Also, sometimes it's very fun to do group activities, but sometimes I do individual activities because students that do struggle are a little embarrassed to make mistakes in a group…I might do it individually first, and then have them do it as a group, maybe just modify it a bit in the group (Interview data C, p. 3, line 125-131).

The use of visuals, which Mrs. L mentioned, helps make meaningful connections between language and its function (VanPatten, 2003). Providing extra opportunities to make those associations is one way to accommodate the struggling student. Moreover, Mrs. L's comment about individual and group work showed her consideration of the students' affective domain. It is common that adult language learners are embarrassed to make mistakes because they already have a fully formed language ego (Brown, 2007). This language ego defends the language learner's identity, which is threatened when taking on a new identity namely that of a second language learner. In this case, it is beneficial to create a learning environment in

which anxiety is lowered (Krashen, 1985) as Mrs. L does through using a variety of individual and group work.

In conclusion, after interviewing Mrs. L, certain points are worth noting. For instance, the beliefs underlying this educator's pedagogy aligned with research on how individuals learn language. For example, learners need input before output when learning a language (Carrigan, 2009), and visuals aid in language acquisition as meanings of words are "anchored" to the memory (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). For this reason, Mrs. L uses an approach such as TPRS and other activities that promote the use of visuals to teach language to her students. In addition, Mrs. L's belief that students learn in "many different ways" was confirmed by her instructional approaches as she mentioned integrating different modalities for her instruction. Although it is unclear whether or not certain students learn language better through different modes of input, it is apparent that comprehensible input is highly important in language acquisition regardless of the form in which it is presented.

Mrs. L's comments on engagement being key to how students learn also merit further investigation in the realm of foreign language pedagogy. How to engage students in the technology age seems to be ever evolving as students are becoming highly skilled in visual processing, according to current research in the field of neuro-informatics (Jukes, 2006). Future methods, approaches, and teaching strategies will need to take into account the growing reliance on technology in order to accommodate today's learners.

Portrait of Mrs. N

Peering into the office of modern languages I said, “Excuse me, is Mrs. N here?” In a cheery tone, a brown haired woman replied, “Yes, I’m here! It’s so nice to meet you. Let’s go over to my classroom.” She directed me to a small table and sat down next to me. Feeling comfortable, I pushed the button on the recorder, and we began the interview. I asked, “So how do you believe students learn a second language?” Smiling Mrs. N replied, “Alright, um for students learning a second language I guess I know what works and doesn’t work having taught for years now. You know rote kill and drill type of lessons do not work” (Interview data A, p.1, lines 6-7). She continued by explaining how the district sets up the curriculum in thematic units that she has to follow. Consequently, certain vocabulary and grammar have to be taught for those units. Mrs. N commented on her consideration of the curriculum when constructing lessons along with teaching phrases useful for communication stating “you’ve got to have useful phrases that go with both (vocabulary and grammar)” (Interview data A, p.1, lines 15-16).

This answer revealed the interviewee’s belief that language learned in her class should be functional in terms of communication. Instead of rote learning, through “kill and drill,” which consists of surface level memorization and production of forms, language learned in a functional context is meaningful to the learner. According to Brown (2007), meaningful learning is more effective in language acquisition than rote learning. VanPatten (2003) also states that drills do not contain enough input for students to actually acquire meaning of language.

To conclude her answer, Mrs. N paused and said,

> Basically in a nut shell…the teacher's best practice are going to determine whether they actually learn it or not…. If you are passionate they get passionate about it. If you're blah about it, they will be blah about it, so you have to be motivated to motivate them (Interview data A, p.1, lines 36-37).

The belief that Mrs. N shared reveals her opinion that the teacher's instructional style has a significant role in student learning. Although research does not support changes in the processes of language acquisition through certain methods and approaches, language acquisition can be quickened or hindered depending on types of teaching methods that are used in the classroom (VanPatten, 2003). For example, methods which use a lot of comprehensible input are going to cause a faster acquisition process that those that do not.

Also, Mrs. N's comment illustrates her beliefs about the role of motivation in the classroom. She makes a strong connection between her actions as a motivator, which includes her belief that she must be passionate about the content in order for students to be. In the realm of SLA, motivation is recognized as an important factor in second language acquisition; although how exactly teachers can motivate their students, remains largely unsupported by empirical data (Noels, 2003).

Although no direct research makes the connection between what teachers can use to motivate their students to learn, research supports the importance of intrinsic over extrinsic motivation (Maslow, 1970; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988 as cited in Brown, 2007). Noel (2003) found that students who are extrinsically motivated in their language learning will not continue once that source of motivation is gone. In effect, a teacher who can get students to learn for intrinsic rewards can positively affect student motivation to achieve long-term language learning

endeavors. Mrs. N appears to be a teacher who motivates her students intrinsically by sparking their interest in Spanish language and culture.

Furthermore, the interviewee made indirect reference to her belief that a connection of new information to the students' prior knowledge is needed for language learning. She explained that when reading a novel such as *Como Agua para Chocolate* (*Like Water for Chocolate*) the students have to have background knowledge; "they're more vested that way" (Interview data A, p.4, line 161). By "vested" the interviewee meant that students are more connected to what they are reading when they have background knowledge. Furthermore, in reference to vocabulary learning, Mrs. N reiterated the need to make personal connections to the students' lives such as associations between their culture and the target language's culture.

The idea that students need to connect background knowledge to new information they are obtaining aligns with psychological theories about how individuals learn. For instance, Willingham (2009) talks about how memory retention occurs when new facts, which enter the working memory, are connected to information stored in the long-term memory. When these kinds of connections are made, a person's ability to remember is improved.

Next, Mrs. N alluded to her beliefs on native language use in the class for a discussion on a novel they were reading. She explained,

> I know there are people that are die-hard Español everything every minute of the hour. I understand where they are coming from, you want as much input in Spanish as possible, but times like that you wouldn't get anything out of them (Interview data A, p. 4-5, lines 136-138).

The reason for such strong opinions surrounding target language use in the classroom comes from the point of view that the more input during instruction time, the better, as input is needed for language acquisition (Carrigan, 2009; Gass, 1997; Krashen, 1985; Vanpatten, 2003). However, many foreign language learning classrooms do use the students' native language, as it is helpful in clarification of certain tasks. VanPatten (2003) says that if the students' L1 is used as a source of clarification in initial learning stages, individuals will not be adversely affected. In the case of Mrs. N's activity, her use of the students' native language depended on the objective of the lesson. Because the objective was that of understanding the novel's content and not the language, she allowed them to speak English. If Mrs. N had a linguistic goal in mind, the discussion would have needed to be less complex. As VanPatten (2003) suggests, a language learning task may be too complex if students have to rely on their L1.

After talking about beliefs underlying Mrs. N's pedagogy, I wanted to see how her approaches and methods related to her viewpoints; therefore, I asked about which approaches or methods she used to conduct her classes. She explained that she uses TPR to teach vocabulary stating "for most of the just vocab I do like to do just TPR actions, using a lot of pictures" (Interview data A, p.1, lines 11-12). She also commented on her use of TPRS if she has the right materials. According to research, TPR is more effective for vocabulary acquisition than traditional instructional methods (Wolfe & Jones, 1982; Thiele & Schneiber-Herziq, 1983 as cited in Lindstromberg & Boers, 2005). This is because TPR places an emphasis on comprehensible input, which is aided by hand movements and visuals. This activity

also involves meaningful repetition of vocabulary, which gives learners practice with the language.

Shortcomings of the approach and its storytelling variation include a lack of grammar teaching and reading (Davidheiser, 2002). Although the use of many foreign language teaching methods and approaches dissipate because of their deficiencies, the creator of TPRS, Blaine Ray has attempted to accommodate weaknesses of the method through turning Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) into Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS). In this way, more reading is involved. Reading is beneficial for language learners as it is another form of input and provides learners with more vocabulary depending on the content. Although maybe a passing trend, TPR and TPRS appear to be approaches that are worth utilizing in the foreign language learning classroom as they are engaging and effective.

Besides TPR and TPRS, Mrs. N talked about the use of "yo puedo" (I can) sheets. The vocabulary on the sheets are "very specific, situational based, task-based, that they have to perform those skills in writing and they have to also say them" (Interview data A, p. 1, lines 25-27). This kind of assignment is used to reinforce language presented through her instruction by making students perform their knowledge of the vocabulary. To do this, Mrs. N mentioned that the learners in her class have to memorize the phrases.

Memorization and recitation of functional phrases mirrors approaches such as the ALM, which was criticized for the use of surface level memorization without explicit teaching of grammar (Papalia, 1976). Mrs. N, however, did mention students making connections between the phrases and their functional context when a

particular student's parents commented on their child's ability to order food all in Spanish at a restaurant. The advantages of memorized phrases may be stronger speaking skills, which can be seen through a study that compared the ALM with the GTM and showed that the ALM learners had better speaking and listening skills (Fotos, 2005). As long as phrases on Mrs. N's "yo puedo" sheets can be applied to a functional context, they are beneficial to use as a vocabulary learning activity.

Another teaching strategy Mrs. N touched on that relates to her belief that students learn language through connection to their prior knowledge, is her use of the learner's personal experiences. She commented in regards to a food unit, "so I've found that if I can connect in whatever way to real life, real life, whether it's their own life, whether it's the restaurant life. But culture always has to be part of it" (Interview data A, p. 2 lines 52-54). For instance, she mentioned having students compare and contrast Christmas in the U.S. to Christmas in Latin America. For another reading activity, she explained her instruction in the following way:

> "Think about a time," I even turned off the lights, "Think about a time when you were a child when grandma was in the kitchen, maybe aunt was in the kitchen, maybe mom or dad was in the kitchen. Think of food that was maybe made at Christmas time or Halloween. Can you smell it right now, can you taste it right now?…. Do you believe that people can cook with love?".....You know so I just made them connect to this novel through those wild and crazy things (Interview data A, p. 2, lines 168-176).

Mrs. N's use of the student's personal information and culture to aid in language learning is a part of a meaningful learning experience. Meaningful learning, also referred to as subsumption, occurs when new information is attached to established knowledge (Brown, 2007). This educator's approach to reading also revealed her consideration of the affective domain. For instance, she talked about

turning off the lights and having students imagine the smells of cooking. In this way, an emotional reaction is produced in learners that may aid in retaining information as emotions are shown to help with memory retention (Willingham, 2009).

After getting a broad sense of Mrs. N's teaching methodology and style, I asked her how she accommodated struggling learners in her class. The first thing she mentioned was the use of resource time for extra help. In that way, she said she could catch the students who struggle. She continued her response by stating, "I will do as much in my power to vary, vary my methods" (Interview data A, p. 4, line 140). To illustrate, she explained that students have exams where they have to draw vocabulary. Also, certain days the students will work with the kinesthetic modality as they move around a lot. Mrs. N enthusiastically described a class where students waved their arms up and down as if they were on a roller coaster in order to practice pronouncing accents in the conditional tense. Through varied instruction, Mrs. N tries to accommodate the struggling students who "just have a difficult time connecting to languages" because of lower aptitude and students whose learning is adversely affected by a negative home environment (Interview data A, p.3, lines 128-129).

Mrs. N's response revealed her assumption that variations in student learning occur because of differences in aptitude or social context of the student. These variations make it harder for certain individuals to learn in comparison to others. In order to support the struggling student, Mrs. N talked about how she varies her methods as much as possible by catering to different learning modalities such as visual, audio, and kinesthetic. The same analysis is merited here as with the other interviewees. Studies have yet to show substantial evidence on how matching

learning styles and teaching styles affect processes involved in language acquisition according to VanPatten (2003). Although using different modalities helps students to process and manipulate explicit knowledge, studies are needed to show connections to learning styles and their effect on the implicit system, which is where language acquisition occurs.

In conclusion, Mrs. N's beliefs showed a holistic approach to language learning in which she strives to create a meaningful learning experience for her students. For instance, this educator's main beliefs surrounding how her students learn language were that it needs to be presented in a meaningful context, be connected to the individual's background knowledge, and that it include a high amount of comprehensible input. All of these beliefs line up with research on how a second language is learned (Brown, 2007). As a result, her approaches and strategies are likely to be successful in creating an effective language learning experience. Furthermore, Mrs. N's beliefs regarding accommodating the struggling student through one-on-one assistance and by using a variation of input may give those individuals more opportunities to construct meaningful connections between form and function.

Mrs. N also revealed a strong consideration of the affective domain. She talked about her influence on student motivation saying that you need to be passionate in order to motivate your students to learn. In addition, she creates emotional experiences to help students acquire knowledge as the students use movement in the classroom to remember vocabulary and pronunciation. Emotional reactions were also conjured as students connected their personal lives to themes in

the novel they read. Mrs. N allowed for use of the students' native language to make these links. Although use of native language in the classroom detracts from student exposure to target language, research does show that emotions may help the brain construct strong links between the short-term and long-term memory (Willingham, 2009); therefore, creating these kinds of experiences may be beneficial in remembering story content. As long as these activities spur students on in their language learning without compromising a rich amount of input, they may motivate some to achieve their language learning goals.

Portrait of Mrs. W

Heading to the offices of modern languages I was met by my interviewee who greeted me by name and then asked me how my semester was going. We made small talk as we walked to the library for the interview. Shortly after sitting down a student approached Mrs. W to ask for help on an assignment, which she kindly told him she would help him with after the interview. We talked briefly about my research as she expressed her interest in hearing about my findings. Then, I readied my materials and began with my first question, "How do you believe students learn a second language?"

She responded without hesitation,

> Ok, well I guess my philosophy would kind of be based in Krashen's Natural Approach. A person learns language through meaningful input and understanding what's been spoken and then over time, is able to you know output so it's kind of a modeling of first language acquisition (Interview data D, p. 1, lines 6-9).

Mrs. W continued by mentioning the need for language to be taught in chunks, through repetition, and that motions help with retention. She ended her

answer by emphasizing the need for input before output stating that "with adult learners which high school students are we kind of rush to output right away when their brains aren't ready to handle it because they need more reps before they produce (language)" (Interview data D, p. 1, lines 29-31).

An analysis of Mrs. W's beliefs on how her students learn language lines up with research on Krashen's input hypothesis, which emphasizes the need for comprehensible input a step above the student's current language level so that students are adequately challenged while still able to understand the language. Once the student receives enough input, he or she will be able to generate it (Krashen, 1985; Brown, 2007). Additionally, Mrs. W's statement about the need for learnable chunks of language also relates to research that confirms that people learn and remember language when it is taught in small amounts (Pettito, 2003 as cited in Rosetta Stone and General Research). Furthermore, language is more easily comprehended when it is presented in a simplified manner such as the use of shorter sentences or repetition of words (VanPatten, 2003). In this way, the working memory is not over-worked, and the learners are less likely to become beleaguered with information.

Furthermore, Mrs. W showed her knowledge of research as her philosophy of language learning includes the belief that second language acquisition is a similar to that of L1 acquisition. VanPatten (2003) states that L2 acquisition is like L1 acquisition in that they both need communicative input. Furthermore, both processes occur in stages, and both follow their own developmental path. Although there are similarities in L1 and L2 acquisition, VanPatten (2003) does point out differences in

that acquisition of an L2 in comparison to an L1 can involve many variables while L1 acquisition is occurs more or less in a uniform matter. Also, the implicit system of the L2 is rarely fully developed while that of the L1 is. The assumption that students learn their L2 like their L1 is the belief that underlies many communicative language teaching practices (Brown, 2007).

Another belief that emerged surrounding the interviewee's teaching methods and approaches was that "different methods can be used for different purposes" (Interview data D, p.2, line 109). She explained by saying that when she teaches grammar, some kids want to know the rules, but she may just teach examples instead of rules. For more complicated rules, Mrs. W gives rules. This shows this educator's consideration for inductive and deductive learning processes. A debate remains in regards to which mode of learning is more beneficial for language learners as Brown (2007) states that foreign language classrooms rely too much on deductive reasoning. He maintains that L1 and L2 acquisition is largely an inductive process, and therefore, should be used more often in the classroom.

Interested in what Mrs. W had to say about the role of motivation on her methods and approaches, I asked, "How does what motivates students to learn influence your choice of methods?" She answered by saying that students are motivated when they see "learning is not such a be-labored task," and also that they are "motivated sometimes by competition" (Interview data D, p. 4, lines 150-151). The first of these two comments can be substantiated by Willingham (2009) who maintains that learning can be enjoyable when it leads to success, but leads to frustration when the working memory is overloaded.

The other belief that Mrs. W mentioned that influences her teaching strategies is that students are motivated by competition. For this reason, the students played games that involved competition for vocabulary review. A prize was sometimes given to the winners such as stickers (Field Observation data, p.1). In this way, students were extrinsically motivated. She also mentioned that she extrinsically rewarded her students with paper Euros for participation, but noticed that motivation died out after the novelty of the incentives wore off. Other students, she noted, appear to "have that intrinsic motivation" (Interview data D, p.4, line 163). According to Maslow (1970) intrinsic motivation is greater than extrinsic because it helps people accomplish their ultimate goal of self-actualization (as cited in Brown, 2007). Mrs. W noticed what research has shown, which is that ultimately extrinsic rewards do not lead to achievement of long-term goals, although they may help students reach short-term learning objectives.

After analyzing Mrs. W's beliefs surrounding language acquisition and teaching, I wanted to know if her use of approaches and methods was consistent with her beliefs. I asked her which methods and approaches she found to be most effective in her classroom. One of the main approaches that she mentioned, and that I also observed her use in the classroom was TPRS. This approach was founded on Asher's belief that language is learned in the way children learn their first language with input before output production (Brown, 2009). TPRS uses repetition of vocabulary in sets of three or four new words per lesson along with hand motions to create a solid learning experience in which the input is comprehensible. Moreover, the vocabulary is presented in a storytelling format, which was Blaine Ray's addition to Asher's

TPR. In this way, reading skills are developed, which was not previously included in TPR (Ray & Seely, 1997).

Mrs. W's beliefs on how students learn language directly align with the method of TPRS in that it is founded on comprehensible input before output, repetition in a meaningful context, a lower affective filter and language learned in chunks. This method has been shown to be beneficial in language acquisition through various studies (Ray & Seely, 1997;Wolfe & Jones, 1982; Thiele & Schneiber-Herziq, 1983 as cited in Lindstromberg & Boers, 2005). Mrs. W's use of TPRS appears to be promising in producing student acquisition of Spanish as it is supported by SLA theory and a growing body of research.

Another teaching strategy that I saw used in Mrs. W's classroom was the activation of prior knowledge before activities such as reading and TPRS. For instance, during the myths and storytelling unit, students reviewed Spanish cognates before doing the reading. Then, they read the story and answered comprehension questions (Field Observation, p.3). I also saw this pattern of activating prior knowledge when Mrs. W did TPRS with the students. They were first asked questions that related to their personal lives with new vocabulary, and then the story was presented after connections were made. This structure allows for input to become comprehensible as students understand new vocabulary before it appears in either the reading or listening activity. Mrs. W's uses an effective cognitive strategy as it allows for connections to be made between the long-term and short-term memory which leads to memory retention (Willingham, 2009).

Furthermore, Mrs. W uses certain techniques when teaching grammar. For instance, as she introduced the imperfect tense, the students were given various examples through stories for the period of about one week before she explained rules (Field Observation data, p.2). Through inductive grammar presentation and the use of TPRS in the classroom, Mrs. W encouraged the use of inductive thinking by her students. I also noticed that Mrs. W used deductive as well as inductive instruction through activities with translation of stories, and translation review games such as *Matamoscas (Flykiller).* Brown (2007) confirms the effectiveness of both forms or modes of thinking depending on the objectives of lessons and on the contexts of the learning environment.

Besides inductive and deductive grammar instruction, Mrs. W talked about her use of conversation in the classroom. She said that students are,

> telling stories, either retelling something already told by using pictures to tell stories, or another technique I use is called timed writing where I might put 8-10 vocabulary words on a board and they might have to be able to tell a story using 4 or 5 of those, or I might use a picture that relates to some of those vocabulary and with the TPRS method (Interview data D, p. 2, lines 61-65).

I also observed that Mrs. W used an activity called "anuncios" (announcements) to begin many of her upper level classes. For this exercise, students would talk about things that were going on that day in the target language. Mrs. W commented that with upper levels she has students do more spontaneous conversation, while with lower level students, conversation is more structured.

Although the majority of speaking activities that Mrs. W mentioned do not generate natural conversation as advocates of CLT emphasize, they do give students practice producing output. As students speak, they notice errors in the output and are

drawn back to sources of input for corrections. In this way, the developing system of the language learner grows (VanPatten, 2003). The other conversation activity Mrs. W talked about called “anuncios” aligns more with the goals of CLT in that it gives students experience generating conversation that is meaningful because they are talking about situations that connect to their social context. Whether communication in Mrs. W’s classroom is always spontaneous for her lower level language learners or not, it coincides with Lee and VanPatten's (2003) comment that acquisition is a result of communication and not habit formation. Mrs. W’s use of conversation gives students practice drawing connections between form and function.

Finally, I was interested in how Mrs. W adapted instruction for her struggling learners. She commented on her use of TPRS, which she explained her students in special education liked because “it’s brain-friendly” and is full of comprehensible input. She noticed that students with special needs could learn the words and communicate with them as her other students could even if they still have difficulties with writing. Mrs. W commented that TPRS is “brain-friendly” because students learn vocabulary in sets of three or four, which is easier for the brain to process. The method also is based on scaffolding because students are connecting prior knowledge to new vocabulary with the help of visuals and hand movements (Cantoni, 1999). In view of Mrs. W’s experiences, perhaps more research is needed to show the effects of TPRS on language acquisition of students with learning difficulties as it could benefit the struggling learner.

Mrs. W also explained how talking about learning helps the struggling students. To illustrate, she said,

> Sometimes I will talk to them about how it(language learning) really requires being brave…and I talk to them about mistakes because it's natural that one will make mistakes and I do show them through my teaching methods or my comments about their work that I'm not counting up the number of mistakes you made. I am more concerned with the breakdown in communication (Interview data D, p. 5, lines 212-216).

This statement shows Mrs. W's knowledge that students are impeded in their language learning because of the fear of making mistakes. Because anxiety caused by the fear of making errors is a considerable detriment to many students, Mrs. W de-emphasizes them. This shows her consideration of Krashen's hypothesis, which stresses lowering the affective filter through creating a relaxed language learning environment in which students are not corrected for every mistake they make. Various methods and approaches, such as Suggestopedia, the Natural Approach, TPR, and TPRS, operate on the assumption that a lower affective filter is necessary for language acquisition (Brown, 2007; Stevick, 1980; and Terrell, 1983). Although Bley-Vroman (1989) points out weaknesses of Krashen's theory such as a lack of evidence surrounding how exactly one strengthens or lowers the affective filter, a learning environment that is low in anxiety can benefit all learners. For this reason, Mrs. W focuses on fluid communication over errors.

Throughout my observation of Mrs. W's class and my interview with her, I found her teaching beliefs and methods/approaches of language teaching and learning to be solidly based on research. Her beliefs about how her students learn are characterized by Krashen's input hypothesis emphasizing input before output and a lower affective filter. For this reason, one of the main teaching methods she uses is TPRS. Research shows TPRS to be interactive (Ray & Seely, 1997) and effective in teaching a second language (Lindstromberg & Boers, 2005).

Mrs. W also shares the belief that students learn their second language similar to the way they learned their first, which is a communicative and inductive process. As a result, she uses methods and approaches that activate inductive reasoning such as the grammar lessons where she gives examples before rules, and her use of TPRS and "anuncios." Furthermore, Mrs. W demonstrated use of deductive instruction through games that made use of grammar translation, as well as the use of cognitive strategies to aid in reading comprehension. Research supports the effectiveness of both inductive and deductive modes of learning depending on the purposes of the activities (Brown, 2007). While many educators make primary use of deductive instruction, Mrs. W uses a mixture of both to make for a mentally engaging learning experience.

Lastly, Mrs. W talked about how her instruction accommodates the struggling learners. She talked about her use of TPRS as it gives comprehensible input, and repetition in a meaningful context. The method also benefits students who are impeded in their language learning by writing and reading, as TPRS focuses more on listening and speaking. Moreover, she touched on how she assists learners who struggle because of fear of making mistakes through lowering the affective filter. To do this, Mrs. W does not focus on student errors, but rather on their ability to communicate.

Summary of Results

In all, certain trends were found when comparing data collected from all four Spanish teachers. The patterns of data are the following: 1) teacher beliefs about how students learn a second language, 2) instructional elements such as methods,

approaches, strategies, techniques, meaningful learning, use of motivation, and native language that were used to create a successful learning environment, and 3) how struggling learners are accommodated through instruction.

Viewpoints on how Students Learn a Second Language

Differing Beliefs. The first pattern found in the data pertained to how teachers believe students learn a second language. Teacher revealed many different beliefs about how individuals learn a second language including repetition, attending to visuals, listening, connection to background knowledge and culture, use of transfer, input before output, and application of functional language. The research population had a proper grasp of how learners in their classrooms acquire language in that their beliefs align with SLA theory. Given that the educators interviewed have varying beliefs about how students learn a second language, they use different methods and approaches to accommodate their learners. This was apparent in each teacher's description of his or her methodology.

Learning Variation. Moreover, the teachers revealed their beliefs that students vary in their abilities and preferences for how they learn languages. For instance, Mrs. W explained that some students prefer deductive or inductive reasoning when learning grammar, and that they learn through visuals. Mr. M talked about the fact that students either have or do not have "linguistic intelligence." Mrs. N explained that aptitude may cause difficulty connecting to languages or that home life adversely affects some learners. Lastly, Mrs. L talked about how students learn in different ways, which connects to learning style theories.

Because of differing beliefs about how students learn a second language, educators implement a variety of methods and approaches in their classrooms. They also integrate various strategies to create an effective learning experience. The participants investigated used a mixture of approaches such as grammar translation, cognitive strategies, TPRS, and CLT along with other techniques and strategies. As illustrated by SLA research and this study, teachers choose instruction based on SLA theory, and also on the context in which they are teaching.

Instructional Elements used to Foster Effective Learning

TPR and TPRS. In terms of which methods and approaches the teachers under study used in their classrooms to create an effective learning environment, TPR or TPRS surfaced in three of the four interviews. These teaching methods are considered to be more of a classroom activity according to Brown (2007) when not used as the sole method of instruction as in the case of the research population. Although studies do confirm the effectiveness of TPRS, it has gained its popularity more through word-of-mouth (Marsh, 1997 as cited in Cantoni, 1999). The interviewees using TPR and TPRS provide their students with comprehensible input, along with a lower affective filter when using these methods of instruction. Also, one of the interviewees commented on the benefits of using TPRS with the struggling learners because it gives students rich amounts of comprehensible input.

Meaningful Learning. The next salient trend regarding methods and approaches was the use of meaningful learning to make an effective educational experience. Meaningful learning environments are ones in which language forms are connected to their function in contrast to rote learning where forms are memorized

apart from meaning. The interviewees made their instruction significant by connecting to their students' interests, learning preferences, and prior knowledge. Although data revealed certain educators interviewed did use rote memorization of vocabulary or phrases, which is not effective in long-term language retention, the forms were used to lay a foundation for subsequent activities such as reading novels or communication in a functional context.

Additionally, to create a meaningful and learning experience the teachers under study used conversation to promote practice with input and output. For lower level students more guidance was given for creating conversation in the form of visuals or written prompts. Lower level students also were generally not expected to produce as much language as more advanced learners as mentioned by Mr. M. and Mrs. L. Speaking activities for upper levels individuals followed more of the CLT approaches, as language was generated for more natural conversation. As speaking develops in phases, conversation becomes more genuine as students practice communicating.

Native Language. Another pattern that came forth in regards to instruction was the use of the students' native language either to clarify instruction or to make connections between Hispanic culture and the students' culture. Although students receive more input in classrooms in which target language only is used, the educators interviewed along with various others justify the use of L1 during instruction. As commented on in the analysis native language use may not hinder the learning experience of individuals if it is used to make classroom instruction more clear.

Eventually, instructors should phase out use of the target language as students develop their linguistic abilities.

Motivation. The role of motivation in choice of teaching approaches was also referred to by each interviewee. All of the educators mentioned that they did consider how to motivate their students when planning and implementing their instruction. Two of the teachers, Mr. M and Mrs. W, referred to their use of competition as a way to motivate students. Mr. M also explained his use of students' interests to get them involved in their learning. Mrs. L talked about student motivation stemming from engagement in multiple forms of input/output, and Mrs. N commented on her role as motivator. Lastly, Mrs. W connected motivation to the learner's ability to succeed in language learning. As students are not always motivated to learn Spanish for various reasons, the teachers under study took this into account when planning their instruction as seen through their use of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. In the long run, educators who foster a sense of intrinsic motivation in their students will develop life-long language learners.

Interestingly, none of the teachers mentioned the use of technology to motivate students in their classes. As students are increasingly influenced by the information age, it would not be unrealistic to say that younger learners of the 21st century rely on multimedia more and more to receive information. It is reasonable to predict that foreign language instruction will increasingly integrate the use of technology as society advances in this way.

Accommodating Struggling Learners

With regard to adapting instruction for learners with difficulties, the instructors commented on different strategies to help these kinds of students. For instance, Mr. M talked about using a student's interests to help the struggling learner along with the use of incentives, and repetition. Mrs. L talked about supporting students with difficulties through the use of visuals and lowering the affective filter. Mrs. N talked about accommodating struggling learners through one-on-one help and also through varying her methods. Lastly, Mrs. W indicated that she implements TPRS and creates a low-anxiety environment to aid the struggling students in her class. To summarize, the interviewees commented on use of students' interests, TPRS, repetition, presentation of grammar through different modes of input, and one-on-one tutoring to adapt to a variety of abilities and learning styles in their classrooms.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the question of which methods and approaches teachers have found to be most effective in student learning could not be answered directly from the study. As the research question was too broad, specific inquiry about a particular method or approach could have yielded more conclusive results. Also, with such a small research population generalizations cannot be made; however, the following insights and recommendations may be gleaned from the data in regard to how to create a successful learning experience for students in the Spanish as a foreign language classroom.

Meaningful Learning

All teachers under study strive to create meaningful learning experiences for their students through connecting to the students' backgrounds and using language for functional purposes. Although many teachers are aware of the importance of associating language forms to their meanings in a communicative context for students, methods and approaches that use rote memorization could still be traced to the classrooms under study. This could be for various reasons. One, teachers may use methods and approaches that were used when they learned language. Two, as district-wide curriculum dictates what vocabulary must be taught, educators need to cover those concepts because students will need them for foreign language placement tests for college. Although language educators are under constraints to teach a variety of vocabulary in a certain amount of time, students benefit most when language is

connected in some way to a functional and communicative context as was revealed by the research population through various means. This remains a challenge as teachers attempt to construct lessons that provide those connections between form and function within the four walls of the classroom.

TPRS

With regard to which methods and approaches were found to be effective, the use of TPRS by the population under study appears to be a trend that merits further research. While TPRS has proven itself beneficial to student language learning in many classrooms, it still has its shortcomings in its original version such as a lack of efficiency in teaching reading and grammar to upper level students. The new version of TPRS includes more attention to reading and writing. Further research is needed to show whether or not the latest development of TPRS is superior to other methods of foreign language instruction. Also, studies on how the method accommodates the struggling learner may be valuable in classrooms in which students vary in their language abilities as it focuses on meaningful repetition and comprehensible input.

Motivating Students of the 21st Century

Lastly, data collected revealed the research population's beliefs on how to motivate students through their instruction. Teachers commented on using cultural content, competition, rewards, various forms of input, personal success, and their own influence to motivate their students. Interestingly, none of the teachers under study shared their thoughts on how technology motivates students in their learning. Although, it is assumed that the research population integrates technology in their instruction to varying degrees, teachers may find they are incorporating it more and

more in their methods and approaches to accommodate the technologically literate student.

Differentiated Language Instruction

Another insight brought forth through the study involves teacher beliefs as to why students are more or less skilled at language learning. As interviewees mentioned numerous viewpoints regarding these differences such as lack of a linguistic intelligence, differences in aptitude, differences in learning styles, and external factors (home life), finding ways to accommodate the struggling student through different methods and approaches remains a challenge. As a result, educators must assess each of their learners' needs and strive to differentiate instruction based on their knowledge of second language acquisition. Further research is needed to connect learning differences and their effect on SLA processes. Once these associations are made, more specific strategies to adapt instruction for struggling students will emerge.

Further Study

While this study has examined many beliefs and modes of instruction in teaching Spanish as a foreign language, additional research on the following topics may shed more light on best teaching practices:

- Superiority of inductive vs. deductive teaching methods/approaches
- Effects of technology on second language learning
- Learning styles and their connection to SLA processes
- The effectiveness of TPRS for struggling students

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

To: Cassandra Woodard

From: Bart Van Voorhis, Coordinator
Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the
Protection of Human Subjects

Date: November 4, 2010

Re: **RESEARCH PROTOCOL SUBMITTED TO IRB**

The IRB Executive Committee has reviewed your proposed research project entitled: ***"An Evaluation of Teaching Methods used by Secondary Spanish Teachers."***

The Committee has determined that your research protocol will not place human subjects at risk. **The protocol has been approved under expedited review procedures, and declared exempt from further review in accordance with 45CFR46, 46.110(a)(b).** Also, a waiver of signed consent has been granted in accordance with **46.117(c)(1)(2).** IRB records should be retained for at least 3 years after completion of the project.

Since you are not seeking federal funding for this research, the review process is complete and you may proceed with your project.

Good luck with your project.

cc: IRB File
Gary Willhite, Faculty Advisor

Graduate Studies and Research & Sponsored Program
220 Morris Hall, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
1725 State Street, La Crosse, WI 54601
Phone (608)785-8124 and (608) 785-8007
An affirmative action/equal opportunity employer

APPENDIX B

THESIS COMMITTEE REQUEST FORM

ME-PD THESIS COMMITTEE REQUEST FORM

Student Name:	**Cassandra Woodard**		
ID Number:	**879512048**		
Tentative Thesis Title:	**Inductive vs Deductive Second Language Teaching Methods**		
Registration	**Please choose one:** **EFN 799** **√ C-I 799**	**No. of Credits:** **4**	**Semester:** **SU 2010**

The following faculty members have agreed to serve on my Thesis Committee:

CHAIR Name:	Gary L. Willhite, Ph.D.	
Department:	Educational Studies	
Signature:	Gary Lwillhite	Date: 13 May 2010

MEMBER Name:	Rita Chen	
Department:	Educational Studies	
Signature:		Date: June 16, 2010
MEMBER Name:	Jean Hindson	
Department:	Modern Languages	
Signature:	Jean M. Hindson	Date: June 28, 2010
MEMBER Name:		
Department:		
Signature:		Date:

APPROVAL:

Gary Lwillhite
ME-PD Director — Date: 14 July 2010

DES Chair — Date

Associate Dean, CLS — Date

Office Use Only:
Student Registered by: _____ Date: _____

CC: Thesis Chair, ME-PD Director, CLS Associate Dean, Academic Advisor, Student ME-PD File

Master of Education – Professional Development 268 Morris Hall

Rev 1/08

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT & SURVEY

Graduate Research on Teaching Methods of Spanish Teachers in La Crosse

I have been informed of the following information pertaining to my participation in this research:

Purpose and Procedure:

- The purpose of this study is to evaluate teaching methods/approaches used by Spanish secondary teachers in La Crosse.
- My participation involves completing a brief survey about my teaching methods, which will be delivered to me through e-mail.
- The survey will be completed online and take approximately 10 minutes to complete.
- If I so choose, I will e-mail the investigator to set up an appointment for an interview about my teaching methods.
- I realize I can choose to participate in either the survey or the interview if I cannot do both.
- If I am interested in participating in the interview, it will take place at my school and take at the most 30 minutes.

Potential Risks:

- I do not foresee any potential risks participating in this study.

Rights & Confidentiality:

- My participation is voluntary.
- I can withdraw from the study at any time for any reason without penalty.
- All information will kept confidential through the use of number codes. My data will not be linked with personally identifiable information.

Possible Benefits:

- Possible benefits include gaining knowledge for professional development.

Questions regarding this research can be directed to the principle investigator Cassy Woodard (woodard.cass@uwlax.edu). Questions regarding the protection of human subjects may be addressed to the UW-La Crosse Institutional Board of Review for the Protection of Human Subjects, (608-785-8124 or irb@uwlax.edu).

Do you consent to participate in this research?
Yes
No

Survey

1. What level(s) of Spanish do you teach? Choose all that apply.
a. I b. II c. III d. IV e. V

How big is your class?

a. 5-10 b. 10-15 c. 15-20 d. 20-25 e. 25+

2. How many years have you taught high school level Spanish?
a. less than 3 b. 5-10 c. 10-15 d. 15+ years

3. Please comment on foreign language methods/approaches you use to teach Spanish in your classroom? Please describe these methods/approaches.

4. Which statement(s) best describes your teaching methods/approaches?

- When teaching grammar, I present examples before rules. In this way, students figure out rules inductively.
- When teaching grammar, I teach rules followed by examples of the rules. Students practice grammar through various structured activities.
- My methods/approaches focus on the communication between students as a means of language acquisition.
- I use computer programs to facilitate language learning and acquisition.
- My methods/approaches aim to lower student anxiety about foreign language acquisition.
- I teach my students cognitive strategies to aid in language learning.
- I use hand movements to teacher vocabulary and/or grammar.
- Almost all of my instruction is in the target language in order to allow for a high amount of language input.

4. Please comment on foreign language methods/approaches you use to teach Spanish in your classroom? Please describe these methods/approaches.

5. In your opinion, what affects student motivation to learn Spanish?

6. On a scale of 1-5, how strong is the role of aptitude on student language learning?

APPENDIX D

INVITATION E-MAIL TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear (teacher's name),

My name is Cassy Woodard, a Spanish education major from UW-L. I am contacting you in regards to an exciting opportunity to be a part of my research. As a graduate student, I am working on a thesis on the topic of Spanish language teaching methods/approaches.

So far, I have completed a field experience at Logan high school in a Spanish classroom, taught basic Spanish through the UW-L program, Upward Bound, and am now in the midst of my second field experience teaching Spanish at North Woods Elementary. Through my experiences, I have gained insight into how children and high school students learn/acquire a second language and which methods foster that learning.

For my research, I want to further investigate and evaluate methods or approaches of Spanish foreign language teaching at the secondary level in La Crosse.

I would very much appreciate your valuable input and experiences as a foreign language teacher. If you would like to participate in my research I request two things: one, that you take five to ten minutes to fill out a brief questionnaire, and two, that you contact me through e-mail if you are interested in participating in an interview about your teaching methods. You can choose to only participate in the survey although an interview would be greatly appreciated. The interviews can be conducted at times that are most convenient for you. I hope to complete them by the end of December. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

Cassandra Woodard
MEPD student UW-L
Woodard.cass@uwlax.edu
262-527-0574

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE SURVEY
https://uwlacrosse.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_08JHPpgj713P204" \t "_blank"
https://uwlacrosse.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_08JHPpgj713P204

P.S. Your response to the survey will be appreciated by the end of November. Thank you.

APPENDIX E

FIELD NOTES

Field I Notes

Lesson Observations:
- The teacher uses a variety of materials to create input such as:
- TPRS
- Listening
- Reading
- Games
- Questions w/vocab

- Unfamiliar vocabulary is reviewed before listening and reading activities

TPRS lesson Observations:
- students are introduced to new vocabulary through questions using the target words
- The teacher asks various students questions related to their lives.
- The students are introduced to a mini-story that makes use of the target vocabulary words.
- A few students act out the story, while other students watching do hand movements for the target vocabulary when they hear it.
- Then students go through and translate the transcription of the story
- Lastly, the students answer comprehension questions about it. Not too much translating here.
- The teacher ends the lesson by asking students to show the movements that go with the vocabulary.

Students were asked what motivates them to learn. Answers included the following:
- wanting to go to a good college
- wanting to be successful
- Knowing it will help someone some day
- To get a good job
- When it's enjoyable
- When the teacher really likes what they teach
- When it is something that personally interests me, like history
- When it's not 100% full time lectures or work time

Lesson Observation:
The students play the pyramid game to review vocabulary. There are four groups. The two fasted groups to write the correct word on the board get a point. If you get the translation of the word wrong, it is erased. The first team to complete the pyramid gets a point. The winning team got stickers as a prize.

TPRS lesson observations:
The teacher does another TPRS lesson, but uses pictures to illustrate the new vocabulary words instead of students acting. The process of the lesson is still the same as before, but students experience the story through pictures instead of drama. At the end of the story, students answer comprehension questions and are informally assessed on their knowledge of the words. Most of the students seem to have caught on to the new words.
- The following day of class, students review hand movements for previous TPR lessons.

Lesson Observation:
The students listen to a song called "El Costo de Vida." They first look at the vocabulary of the song and then listen to it. The song talks about serious social issues in Latin America. The students seem interested. Later the students learn to dance Meringue for a cultural connection. The students had fun with this activity.

Lesson Observations:
When students are asked questions and they do not know what a word means, the teacher explains it in other ways.

Lesson Observations:
- When introducing a new unit, the teacher talks about objectives and expectations. She also gives each unit a name.
- The teacher gives students a list of vocabulary that will appear during the unit
- To introduce practice the preterite tense, students talk about what they did over the weekend.
- The students also listen to a song to help them remember the irregular preterite tense
- Students are not given homework in the form of a workbook. Some days they have to write a paragraph about a certain theme. The paragraph gets graded.

Lesson Observations:
- To learn the imperfect, students have a legends, myths, and stories unit
- The students are introduced to the imperfect tense through examples first and explanation of rules later.
- The students spend about a week with stories that use the imperfect. After they are familiar with its use, the teacher asks them what they notice about the verb structure. It was difficult for students to identify how the imperfect is formed.
- Students read a legend and have to make predictions before they read. Then they talk about what actually happened

Lesson Observations:
- The students are given a project to write their own story using the imperfect tense.

- They are given an evaluation sheet for their story that includes the following components: vocabulary, creativity, accuracy, pronunciation, visuals, organization. In total the project is out of 90 points.
- The students are also given a guided outline sheet to help them in developing their stories.

Lesson Observations:
- The students do a cloze activity. They are given lyrics to a song and they have to fill in the correct words when they hear the song.
- The students do a review game called "Matamoscas."
- The students are engaged.

Lesson Observations:
- The students do an information gap activity.

Lesson observations:
- The students read a legend from a book of Mexican legends called "El Leon y el Grillo"
- First the students review cognates of vocabulary in the story
- The teacher also reviews adverbs with the students.
- The students are asked if they can recognize adverbs in English. Then they are introduced to the formation of adverbs in Spanish. Examples follow.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions:

How do you believe students learn a second language?

What methods/approaches do you use to facilitate second language learning?

What method/approach have you experienced works best in your classroom?

How does knowledge of what motivates students to learn influence your choice of methods?

Do you consider students' levels of aptitude when choosing your methods?

How do you accommodate struggling learners through your teaching methods/approaches?