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TEACHING WORLD LANGUAGE AS A PUSH-IN CLASS WITH TEACHING PROFICIENCY THROUGH READING AND STORYTELLING

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TEACHING WORLD LANGUAGE AS A PUSH-IN CLASS WITH TEACHING
PROFICIENCY THROUGH READING AND STORYTELLING

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching.

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TEACHING WORLD LANGUAGE AS A PUSH-IN WITH TPRS

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In the following chapter, I will discuss my own personal adventures of being a world language student and later my journey of being a world language teacher. I have learned and taught Spanish language in a variety of environments including homeroom push-in, specialist, and immersion, all which were learned and taught with a variety of teaching methods. Each method brought a set of benefits to the learner and teacher, however, I settled on one method that I highly enjoyed as both a teacher and a learner. In this chapter, I'll first describe my adventure as a learner of Spanish and what ultimately brought me to become an educator of this widely spoken language. I'll then present my purpose and topic question for this capstone project.

My World Language Experience as a Learner

I always believed that one day world languages would bounce off my tongue the way I heard them on Spanish telenovelas. I wanted to be a secret agent and listen in on the private discussions of all languages. I liked Japanese, Arabic, French, Mandarin, Portuguese, and the list goes on. I thought and still do believe that languages unlock the secrets to a more interesting world. It was quite interesting to hear a heated argument between characters in a Spanish telenovela. It sounded delightful to the oblivious English monolinguals that I was. I knew by the character's paralinguistics that it was nothing to smile over, and I couldn't help but enjoy it. How I began learning Spanish was a decision

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I made for how practical it was more than the way I liked the sound of it. Practical in the sense that many people were living and moving to the Midwest that spoke it. That was also the only world language offered at my public school at the time. I was excited to be in my first Spanish class in middle school in hopes I'd no longer be monolingual. I liked the words and being able to decode text, as a secret agent would. My dreams of spying on people eventually transformed into a desire to connect with people in the place I lived and explore new cultures. Some of my memories of learning Spanish do include heightened levels of anxiety. Memorizing vocabulary lists and grammar rules were daunting. I failed many tests, even an entire quarter of Spanish in High School, but I was determined to keep studying in hopes that it would eventually stick.

In college, I was very interested in Latin American politics, but not being fluent in Spanish seemed to be a very large fault of mine in this area of study, especially among my peers and professors from Latin America. I wondered, why was fluency unattained after taking so many years of the language? I could read novels and write essays at an advanced level. I understood most of the grammar tenses and when to use them, but when it came to speaking and responding to questions, I struggled immensely. I was rather unmotivated when most of my peers spoke with ease, but many had come from Spanish immersion programs or had been exposed to it within their families. Some just had more natural talent and excelled in world languages. I liked all of my instructors, but their techniques didn't seem to be as effective with my learning style when compared to an immersion setting, which is what I eventually opted for after graduation on the advice of a Spanish professor.

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I took a job teaching English in Spain and remained there for three years. Being surrounded by the sounds with context was what advanced me in the language, but it was overload for my brain. I was mentally exhausted every day and I was wishing I could contribute more to the conversations of my co-workers in the teacher's lounge or during work dinners. Finally, I started to find success. I learned the most by touring food markets. They not only had labels on the products I desired, but I would hear the same phrases spoken over and over. "Give me (#) much of (food item)...You're welcome." Dealing with the emotional side of language could also trip me up. It was uncomfortable for me to say "You're welcome," instead of, "Thank you," but Spaniards argued, "Why would you thank anybody for taking your money?" What wasn't uncomfortable was the repetition of common and useful phrases. I would confidently jump into line when I heard the phrase enough times to order. I felt validated when the cashier smiled and the transaction was completed. In the beginning, that meant I'd need to adjust my diet according to the customer in front of me. I once left the market with an octopus. Another time, I spent half my paycheck on cheese. I eventually learned how to say half pound/media libra which was easier on my pocketbook. The most success I had was when I began working with young children. Children taught me more Spanish than any adult, teacher, or peer. Children made simple claims. They were also dramatic and caught everyone's attention. Once at the park, I recalled a dialogue between a child and their father...

"¡Quiero la pelota grande! ¡No quiero la pequeña! ¡Quiero la pelota grande y azul! La amarilla noooo. (I want the big ball. I don't want the small one. I want the big

blue ball. Nooooo, not the yellow one).” I understood the children and I was able to mimic what they said easily. They were so visual and always pointing out desired items. I decided the complex sentences would come later. And much much later, I would learn that this was the very practice that is at the foundation of a comprehensible input strategy called, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), which is claimed to be a natural and effective methodology to acquire a language.

My World Language Experience as a Teacher

Upon my return to Minnesota, the job hunt began. There were many opportunities in the field of education, especially since I knew Spanish and was finally able to speak it pretty well. I prepared for the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examination to be licensed to teach Spanish. During the exam, the content assessment lasted about four hours and tested my reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. There were multiple choice questions written for example, “What is the popular socialist Cuban newspaper called? A, B, C, or D.” My voice was recorded where I needed to describe my daily schedule or talk about a celebration I had experienced for two minutes. When the test was over, I looked at the non-Spanish speaker administering it with a sheepish face. He looked back at me sheepishly. It was over. Several weeks after that, I was approved by the state to teach K-12 Spanish. I began teaching Spanish at a public elementary school. Teachers dropped their Kindergarten through fifth grade classes off for a 55 minute Spanish class once every six days. I was given some textbooks, but in the end opted to create many of my own lessons. Managing behavior was difficult as relationships were hard to form in the short amount of time I saw students. There was a great mix of native and non-native

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Spanish speakers in each class, however it made differentiation a nearly impossible challenge as one group was being constantly under or over challenged. I didn't feel that my students were retaining much Spanish in the low frequency of times I was seeing them. One day, a language expert arrived at the school by the name of Jannice Kittok. She asked if I had a few minutes and we disappeared into the mailroom. She asked if I knew what TPRS was. I said, "I know TPR (total physical response), but not the S." She said, "That's for storytelling! Allow me to demonstrate." We sat down and she showed me a map of the U.S. and Mexico, each country painted in either blue or red. She started asking me a series of repetitive questions revolving around the location of Mexico. I was completely engaged and at one point, she stopped to reflect with me. I was fascinated by her circling of questions around the content. I loved everything about the technique. It was basic, it didn't involve a high knowledge of vocabulary and we were able to converse in the target language for extended periods of time without drawn out explanations of how structures worked. She also noted that we had been speaking in the target language for ten minutes and I hardly noticed the time pass. I wanted to repeat this lesson to my students. I knew they would love to engage in this type of class. She offered me a business card and her trainings were offered in the Summer for an outstanding rate for the recent graduate student that I was. I was so intrigued, but I was also hesitant probably because I lacked the encouragement and this was not the first time I was marketed to to pay for specialized training. It would take several more years of trial and error before TPRS would reappear in my life to its fullest. I ultimately decided not to return to the school because I didn't feel successful. I would later find out the district I was working

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for had considerable world language teacher turnover. I was hired the next Fall by a high school and taught various levels of Spanish for two years. It was some of the most demanding and stressful work I have ever done. I was putting in 70 or 80 hours per week. Besides creating each lesson, I had homework and worksheets waiting to be graded and scantron quizzes with their names missing piling up on my desk. Each quarter, I passed my observations with flying colors, but still, I did not feel successful. Students were engaged with the topics and loved to learn about culture, but I was struggling to get them to speak. They wanted to feel that they were doing well, but I didn't believe I was preparing them for real world experience. They may have become good readers and writers, and the students with a good working memory would be very successful, but the majority would forget everything they learned after a few weeks. I reached out to my team and they all approved of my topics and techniques, so I was stumped. The other more apparent and startling observations were the demographics of the upper level Spanish classes. The Spanish 1 classes were made up of a majority of African American and other minority students which also reflects my current setting where I teach. By level 4, the majority were white and the International Baccalaureate courses were almost entirely white even though the student population was very diverse. This trend continued in other Advanced Placement (AP) and IB courses and continues today (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Why was this happening?

I ended up leaving world language teaching for a brief amount of time, frustrated and exhausted. I returned to my university to find another path in education and explored new and inspiring teaching opportunities. I considered being a homeroom teacher in K-6

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elementary as I found significant value in the cognitively guided instruction approach to math methods taught at Hamline. I highly enjoyed my experiences in elementary education and found many of the methods to be effective and inspiring for students. During a job hunt, I was sought out by a school very close to my home teaching Spanish. I was very hesitant, but I decided to just check it out since it was in the community I lived in. When I toured the school, I was delighted by its unique Spanish program that was heavily supported by families and the administration that implemented it. Spanish language was taught to all grade levels Pre-K through fifth grade, with 20-40 minutes classes given several times per week. It followed a push-in model and was to be a co-taught where one teacher delivers content and the other was there for learner support. Native Spanish speakers also were given advanced support in their heritage learning with a bilingual assistant. It appeared to have all of the moving parts that I had always dreamed of having and anticipated would make for an effective world language program. I accepted the position and it was to no surprise that I found more success in my teaching. The frequency of times, especially with Kindergarten whom I visit three times per week, was where I saw most progress. The other very important piece is that the homeroom teacher was present with us and modeling how to be a language learner. The teacher could also monitor their class and observe some of their focal students as they progressed in other subjects and with other teachers. Having such intertwining strategies at work has been the best model I've ever seen in an elementary world language program. Another captivating aspect of the Spanish program was that it had been taught by a teacher that heavily embraced TPRS. The district would eventually cover the fee for my first

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professional TPRS training. Many professional development meetings had also been dedicated to the practice of co-teaching. It is being argued that teachers need to start changing their methods and discover what works better for their increasingly diverse student populations. Of many methods used to teach world languages, TPRS has many special qualities that may be more inclusive to diverse communities.

My Purpose and Topic Question

I propose to roll out a world language program that would be used in an elementary school that focuses on delivering content through comprehensible input strategies, in this case Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) via push-in method (co-teaching). What are the key characteristics of a program that embraces TPRS methodology in a co-teaching environment? I'm interested in highlighting all of the components that make up a successful program. I will take special interest in exploring co-teaching practices, push-in courses, and any other factors that may contribute to this program. Since I teach Spanish as a push-in class, multiple times per week in a co-teaching environment, I would like to discuss some of my own personal findings as well as where there is room for improvement. This project speaks to an audience of educators and administrators who would be interested in implementing a world language program in their elementary school.

As I have evolved as both a student and teacher of Spanish world language so too have I seen the methods of instruction evolve around me. As instructors continue to deal with the challenges of teaching, any new strategy to increase student engagement is something that resonates with me personally. As I can personally vouch for

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comprehensible input strategies such as TPRS, I've also been able to experience a variety of school environments, including Spanish immersion, Spanish as a specialist, and Spanish as a push-in. I will attempt to compile data and research that has been collected to prove that methodology combined with school environment can contribute to a viable, adaptable world language program.

The next step in my project is compiling a review of literature. This literature review will include articles, case-studies, and journals that have been written on the findings of TPRS methods. I will simultaneously give attention to what research says about co-teaching and push-in models in a classroom setting; all to which contribute to the unique world language program I am going to dedicate this project to. When doing TPRS research, the names Blaine Ray and Steven Krashen are often at the forefront. They helped develop the method and published an abundance of literature for anyone interested in the practice. TPRS is a relatively new methodology (emerging in the late 1980's), and considerable research has recently come out highlighting some modern findings. Combining the findings of TPRS and co-teaching will prepare the reader to understand several key components that make up the framework for this project, which is rolling out a world language program that would be used in an elementary school that focuses on TPRS and co-teaching methodologies.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

According to Ball and Forzani (2009), improvements in student learning in the U.S. require substantial changes in how we prepare and support language teachers. Each teacher is guided by a set of goals to be achieved on a state, district, and/or autonomous level, depending on the educational setting. The world language standards are derived from the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2019). ACTFL wrote the nationally recognized core practices for world language teachers to follow in order to teach students to be proficient in a world language by teaching to a set of five interrelated goals (See Table 1). Students in the district where this project takes place can seek a seal of biliteracy, which presents opportunities for language and cultural understanding and other avenues to expand cultural awareness and scope for global experience.

ACTFL is trying to change how teachers teach world languages in order to promote best practices and retain and expand world language programs across the U.S. In 2010, it encouraged teachers to use the target language at least 90% of the time during classroom instruction. To achieve this goal, teachers would have to create an immersion-like environment for students to listen, speak, read, and write in the target language. Immersion was arguably the most effective world language model because it gave students enough instruction that allowed them to attain high proficiency (Pufahl and Rhodes, 2011). Key concepts in any current language programs include higher

expectations for learners, integrated and problem-based curricula, greater emphasis on collaborative work, and innovative uses of technology. Core practices include: Creating comprehensible language, creating contexts for comprehension, and creating comprehensible interactions (ACTFL, 2019). There are many styles of teaching to achieve these goals, however, some methods have been proven to be more effective than others.

If we are to improve our world language programs, it's important to take a look at the history and evolution of world language methodologies. It's important to study the community of working professionals that have documented where they found student success in language learning. Working together and combining tips and techniques over the generations will continue to advance our world language methodologies.

The Evolution of World Language Teaching Methods

There is a long history of language methods developed by linguistic professionals which can be found in many universities' language teacher education programs. Howatt and Smith (2014) summarize historical developments of methodologies throughout the past 250 years. They organized them based on time period, all reflecting a USA-centric perspective and are heavily present in many world language programs today.

Firstly documented in Howatt and Smith's (2014) study was the Grammar-Translation method, first knowingly labelled in the early 1800s. The learner translated to and from the target language and also relied on extensive memorization of vocabulary and grammar rules. Educators at that time realized the need for a system of world language learning and this is the earliest to have been documented.

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Later came Reform methods. Each reform method successively built upon the previous method. These methods put the target language at the forefront of lessons and involved intensive question-and-answer oral work. This was seen by educators as more practical and allowed for real world experiences within the classroom. Grammar was also not a main focus. The most noteworthy reform methods are as follows: The Natural Method, The Direct Method, and the Audio-Lingual Method (Howatt and Smith, 2014).

In the 1870s, Lambert Sauveur helped develop The Natural Method, which was based on conversation and relied upon the capacity of the teacher to demonstrate the significance of new words through object classes, images, mime, and context (Howatt and Smith, 2014).

Using the Direct Method, educators only give instruction in the target language and the learner is not allowed to use their mother tongue for translation. This method is currently found in language immersion settings depicting the use of the target language in a variety of subjects, including math, science, literacy, and other subjects thus consistently presenting opportunities for interaction (Howatt and Smith, 2014).

Many educators adopted the use of the Audio-Lingual Method, which relied on acquiring language through drills of dialogues for each situation a learner may encounter, first focusing on what is heard before being exposed to its written form (Howatt and Smith, 2014). Several factors influenced the development of this method. The Linguistic Society of America began documenting indigenous languages in the USA, which were primarily available through observation only. Secondly, it was theorized that all behaviour, including language, was learned through repetition with positive and negative

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reinforcement. Thirdly, the outbreak of World War II created a need to post service people around the world with multilingual communication skills. The thought was to extend the phonetic examples of the language, in view of the investigations of auxiliary etymologists, into the brains of the students such that made their reactions programmed and "habitual."

Following initial reform methods the Communicative language teaching movement emerged which included Task-based language learning and started getting more attention in the 1980s. Efforts, similar to The Natural Approach, aimed to create real-world communication. Learning focused on student-centered interests where the learner must complete a task based on the language they have already acquired (Howatt and Smith, 2014).

Linguistic expert and Professor Stephen Krashen continued to further develop The Natural Approach and Communicative Language Teaching, which recognized the similarities between learning the first and second languages. To further refine this method, there were no corrections of mistakes and the learner was exposed only to language that was comprehensible to them. They documented that real language acquisition occurred only when students understood messages (Krashen and Terrell, 1988). They stated that learners acquire language when they obtain comprehensible input, which meant they understood what was heard and read in another language. The goal was for students to understand the language outside the classroom in real world circumstances. The acquirer could then utilize both the real world and the classroom for progress. Krashen's theory of language acquisition included five hypotheses:

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- Acquisition versus Learning,
- Monitor,
- Natural Order,
- Input, and
- Affective Filter

These hypotheses will later be explained since several of them directly relate to student engagement.

Blaine Ray eventually combined Dr. James Asher's Total Physical Response (TPR) method with Krashen's theory of language acquisition to develop Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS). This methodology was seen as a grassroots movement among a community of world language teachers who have claimed its popular appeal is due to its ability to reach more students. With the help of many educators, TPRS was more recently renamed Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling as reading and speaking take on more dominant roles than Total Physical Response (Ray & Seely, 2015).

Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling Review

Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), developed by Blaine Ray with the help of many language educators, is a method that a teacher can use to incorporate the current ACTFL core practices. The method relies heavily on comprehensible input, in other words, that students understand messages being communicated to them. In this method, a teacher can give direct instruction in the target language for 90% of the time using a three-step structure: establish meaning, ask a story,

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read and discuss. To begin, the instructor “establishes meaning” by reviewing the target vocabulary and structure of the instruction. This can involve direct translation, outlines of terms and concepts, and visuals. In this step, the instructor should limit the amount of grammatical features and vocabulary, as the goal is introduction rather than retention. It is then time to “ask a story,” where the instructor works from a framework to introduce a narrative to the students.

“...Students [have] the opportunity to utilize the vocabulary they acquire through TPR in the form of a story. In most cases the stories are personalized and comical in order to capture students’ attention and sustain their interest.” Campbell, 2016 p.7. While the instructor retains control of the content, students are able to contribute elements of language and increase their involvement with the story. Finally, the lessons end with a chance to “read and discuss.” Once the story is completed, students read and translate the story they have helped create. While the language is based on oral storytelling, this step allows them to understand that grammar is tied to meaning rather than asking them to memorize grammar rules by rote. It also checks students’ understanding of the story by asking them to translate the story.

Since its initial implementation, TPRS has been guided by several principles and practices, which are found in Krashen’s previously mentioned language hypothesis. The theory of Language Acquisition was that we acquire language in only one way; when we understand messages. It also occurred at a subconscious level and the learner was generally unaware of the process. Language acquisition may be blocked if the person was

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experiencing high levels of stress, which led to disengagement and raising of a person's affective filter, which blocked comprehensible input (Baker, 2017).

Davidheiser (2002) restated Blaine Ray's techniques of using TPRS, a guide for its intended daily use, and a case study of their own students. An important order of steps were documented for teachers to follow, such as establishing meaning of vocabulary, personalizing questions and creating a personalized story. There were further explained techniques such as circling questions, comprehension checks, and the use of pop-up grammar. They also wrote reasons for its success as there was a tremendous increase in the use of the method by world language teachers. TPRS gained popularity as the method was said to have reinvigorated several German programs that were lacking in student engagement and causing teacher burn-out. Davidheiser noted that even with all of the repetition that TPRS used, there was plenty of room for variety, creativity, and humor, which engaged students in each lesson. Their students even began speaking during week one of the classes and they were naturally ready to do so.

TPRS is a method that serves not only young children, but adult learners as well. Braunstein (2006) researched adult Latino students in an English Language Learning class to investigate their expectations of a traditional language classroom and the affective emotional reactions to Total Physical Response and TPRS methods. They found an overwhelming positive attitude towards the TPRS methods despite their expectations of the class. Most students reported feelings of interest, happiness, and enthusiasm. Students also reported that the class helped them in listening comprehension. Regardless of the students' learning preferences, they indisputably reacted well to the methodology.

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Braunstein highlighted that it may be beneficial to have an open discussion about expectations of learning methods after the class is over in order to gain more popularity of TPRS methods.

Armstrong (2008) found through administering surveys and post comprehension data when using TPRS methods in an English Language Learning environment, Spanish speaking elementary students remembered 75% of Spanish vocabulary when using exclusive target language. Armstrong also incorporated the use of sign language and individualizing instruction for their students.

Spangler (2009) did action research on the effects of two world language methodologies, Communicative Language Teaching and TPRS, on beginning-level students' achievement, fluency, and anxiety. Spangler used measurements that were based on Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, which was crafted after doing research on how anxiety affects students' ability to retain world language. Independent sample tests were used to analyze scores from a non-equivalent group design. A statistically higher level of speaking fluency was observed in the group using the TPRS methodology. This study contributed to positive social change by providing evidence on the effectiveness of the TPRS instruction for (1) promoting speaking skills among students, (2) guiding teachers' efforts at promoting speaking skills, and (3) it contributes to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language's goal of improving world language instruction.

Beal (2011) studied self-reported ratings of anxiety, receptive skills, academic achievement, and continued world language enrollment. Results indicated that there were

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no significant differences in anxiety levels in using the TPRS method compared to a traditional grammar heavy approach in a high school setting, however, the results suggested that there were larger advantages of using TPRS with elementary and middle school students. This study has not been supported or substantiated by further research and most studies have found that low anxiety levels are key to language acquisition, which TPRS aims to provide.

Foster (2011) used action research to test three different methods in a high school beginner Spanish class. Students were separated into groups and taught a sentence structure that contained both a subject and a verb. One group was taught with TPRS while the other was taught with Processing Inquisition (PI). Students taught with TPRS made the greatest gains in written fluency when compared to PI. Foster also noted that TPRS method is attractive compared to processed instruction because it encourages creativity from both the teacher and students while stories unfold resulting in an entertaining experience.

Muzzamil (2011) conducted a study of freshmen students at the University of Kanjuruhan in Malang which aimed at investigating achievement between the use of TPRS in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and the absence of TPRS to develop learners' speaking performance. The study found the students in the experimental group, which used TPRS, performed similarly in listening, reading, and writing, however, they performed significantly higher in their speaking abilities.

A study from Susan (2013) concluded that TPRS is likely to improve students' comprehension, especially in listening. TPRS gave advantages to both the teacher and

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students as students were engaged in the target language. It was evident by the following elements: students could guess the meaning of words in the story and improve their vocabulary. Students also considered TPRS as a good, fun, stress free technique and led to increased understanding of compelling curricula.

Based on the findings of Ketevan (2019), preschool students showed achievement in lexical competence when TPRS was used in English world language classes in Turkey. The study separated males and females and documented achievement in both groups. Achievement was found to be equal in both groups of students when compared to the control groups that used the traditional audio-lingual method.

Pippins and Krashen (2016) wanted to find out how students taught with TPRS fared with students taught by traditional methods that were enrolled in advanced placement (AP) courses and took the AP exam. They used one group of thirteen students at Norman High School and compared them to the national average. Their research took into account poverty levels, using free and reduced lunch rates which were roughly 47% at Norman with a 51% national average. Students at Norman scored identical in the AP exam, with 84.6% of Norman students scoring a 3 or higher. This proved that TPRS methods were just as effective in preparing students for the AP exam.

Campbell (2016) researched teacher perceptions of fostering engagement using the TPRS method. "It is imperative for educators to view student engagement holistically," stated Campbell (2016). In the findings of their research, they quoted what one participant teacher observed while delivering world language via TPRS.

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Anonymous shares the belief that the repetitive nature of TPRS promotes student engagement and language retention, but [he] also discussed how he felt like his students would benefit from the point of reference the TPRS method provided. He also discussed how the method drew students into learning and fostered active engagement. (Campbell, 2016, p. 64)

Several other participant teachers also found similar results in their teaching with TPRS and highlighted the positive impact it had on student engagement and achievement.

As previously mentioned, Krashen found that language acquisition may be blocked if the person was experiencing high levels of stress which led to disengagement and raising of a person's affective filter, which blocked comprehensible input. According to Baker (2017), the principles and practices of TPRS aimed to promote the most effective and natural learning environment for students to pick up a language effortlessly. Acquisition occurred on a subconscious level and the learner remained generally unaware of the process.

"It is imperative for educators to view student engagement holistically," stated Campbell (2016, p.15). They researched teacher perceptions of fostering engagement using the TPRS method.

Anonymous shares the belief that the repetitive nature of TPRS promotes student engagement and language retention, but [he] also discussed how he felt like his students would benefit from the point of reference the TPRS method provided. He also discussed how the method drew students into learning and fostered active engagement. (Campbell, 2016, p. 64)

There is a history of developing language acquisition theories and TPRS has become increasingly popular among many classrooms due to its success and positive response from students and educators. While there has been research to show that TPRS methods have been roughly equal in retention levels, the research also suggests that student anxiety can be demonstrably lower when using TPRS. With the strong link between lower anxiety and improved retention, TPRS can be an especially effective methodology with all language students. Materials and TPRS support among the community is also widely available online to educators seeking to refine their practices.

Co-teaching and Push-In

Although there is little to no research on how TPRS impacts students' engagement in a co-teaching environment, there is substantial evidence of the benefits of introducing co-teaching to a language pedagogy. Because this project observes a co-teaching environment, it's important to note what research says about this increasingly popular trend.

Co-teaching was implemented with mainstream students receiving special education services in order to give them a higher chance of success than they had been experiencing in pull-out classes. Rather than take students out of the normal environment to receive specialized lessons, students remain in their regular classroom group while the educators manage the course load. The student's presence can have an overall positive effect on the class as a whole (Friend & Cook, 2010).

Kenneth Tobin (2005) found that there are several facets of co-teaching. In one scenario a high school science class was observed where two teachers gave content

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instruction to small groups. They also gave instruction together from the front of the classroom. Tobin found that co-teaching required a good deal of planning and noted that teachers needed to be flexible, but more importantly they needed to trust each other. In the same vein as Tobin, administrations that want to implement co-teaching may have co-teachers attend workshops to learn how to use different co-teaching methods; parallel teaching, team teaching, and small group instruction (American Psychological Association, 2018). Co-teaching also develops trust with students and families which leads to some educators expanding their roles to cover duties such as mentoring general education teachers in special English Language Learning practices and family collaboration (Allington 2013).

In co-teaching language, Jacobson (2015) wrote about the importance of pedagogy. They stated that there may be two teachers responding to student errors using different approaches. The imbalance of oral response may run the risk of stigmatizing language learners, so teachers needed to be aware of and agree on best practices before lesson delivery and making corrections. TPRS pedagogy aims to decrease anxiety levels of students by minimizing student corrections and instead praise speaking participation.

Twark (2018) noted that there are benefits to apprentice teaching with undergraduates in German language classes. Apprentices worked alongside a licensed teacher as they needed mentoring in managing a class as well as achieving language and culture proficiency. They were able to assume the role of a co-teacher as they engaged students in content while another teacher was present. This study is relevant as there may

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be an apprentice teacher from Amity Institute present at the school who will be an understudy.

Even though the research on co-teaching with TPRS is slim, the benefits of co-teaching have been shown in multiple studies. Co-teaching opens up the possibility of a variety of teaching styles which are simply not possible with only one educator, especially in a subject with as many facets and as much nuance as world language learning. Introducing TPRS to an existing co-teaching environment simply adds another tool to effectively engage with students.

Research on both TPRS and Co-teaching are essential as they will be included in the world language program that I'll be discussing. Both pedagogies have had many positive accounts which has been reflected in this literature review. It's essential to know the history of world language teaching methodologies and it would be a misconception to say teaching world language has been revolutionized. It's simply a fine tuning of what we already knew, and where we ought to keep striving to improve. What is clear from the literature review is the following:

- TPRS and Co-teaching are two methodologies that have a wealth of research available to readers.
- Research concludes that TPRS positively affects student engagement.
- Co-teaching has many different forms and can look different in a variety of settings that positively enrich classroom environments.
- Information on co-teaching world language is not abundant thus making my project topic unique.

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Chapter three will describe in detail a world language program that could be offered in an elementary school for those interested in implementing or modifying an existing program. This world language program is unique in that it depends on two essential components, those being co-teaching and using comprehensible input methodologies, such as TPRS, working in unison to provide a highly effective and positive world language experience for students. Chapter three will provide an overview, and then get into the details of how this program would exactly look for anyone interested in rolling out such a program.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

One cannot deny the many cognitive benefits of learning languages. It has been concluded that people who speak multiple languages have improved memory, problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, enhanced concentration, ability to multitask, and better listening skills. As the world becomes increasingly globalized, multilingualism is a skill that is more useful than ever before. Besides intellectual benefits, the opportunities for career success by being able to coordinate international manufacturing, shipping, and labor outsourcing give multilingual job applicants a distinct competitive edge in an ever-increasingly competitive job market. I propose to roll out a world language program that would be used in an elementary school that focuses on delivering content through comprehensible input strategies, in this case Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) via push-in method (co-teaching).

To give a child a world language experience, many options can provide an array of language experiences like everyday schooling, extra curricular, or private tutoring. If educators want to give everyone's child a world language experience, there too are various educational settings each with a defined set of goals. Some families opt to send their students to language immersion schools, which have gained significant popularity in recent decades. In fact, with immersion being so popular, enrollment in the urban area has declined as families leave to enroll their students in Spanish and Chinese immersion schools. But what if immersion is not an available option? Another popular model has

been to offer world language as a specialist, meaning teachers bring their students to world language in a separate classroom on a rotating schedule, as they would bring them to art or physical education while they take their prep. While this option fits in with standard practices for students at the high school and college levels, younger students tend to have more subjects taught by their homeroom teacher in the same classroom.

Although each setting has its pros and cons, I'm going to discuss another option for world language that has been rolled out in a few elementary schools in the midwest. This program deserves more attention due to its success in retaining educator and family support. It's called world language as a push-in enrichment class. In order to make clear expectations on how it works best, I've reviewed what literature says about the essential components of such a program. In this project, I'm going to discuss a world language approach that I would use at an elementary school based on all of the research that has been done on best practices.

This project will discuss the details of implementing such a program in an elementary school. First, I'll be discussing the TPRS methodology used to teach world language as an alternative to more currently widespread models. Then, I'll be describing the mechanics of teaching a push-in class and how to implement the best model with attention to co-teaching and class frequency. This project may be of interest to an audience of educators, administrators, and anyone that is interested in implementing a world language program into their elementary school.

TPRS Methodology Within This Program

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The first component is following a methodology called Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling, henceforth referred to as TPRS. In order to engage both students and their language-learning teachers, world language teachers are being encouraged by the district and many like-minded educators to distance ourselves from traditional grammar-heavy approaches for the underwhelming results that they have achieved, especially in the ability to have real life conversations. This is where TPRS shines. Creating a classroom environment that provides enormous amounts of Comprehensible Input (CI) is the main goal to acquire a new language. If we pay attention to the TPRS findings of Krashen and Ray (2015), its daily use can provide a comprehensible atmosphere that students can effectively engage in. Another goal for the class is for the world language teacher to speak in the target language for about 90% of the time. That may sound overwhelming, but it's very attainable when following TPRS recommendations that have been proven to give students a great experience.

TPRS could be argued to be a continuation of humankind's oldest learning method: story-telling. Before written language was created, stories were used to preserve history, pass along messages, and create meaning. What still holds true in modern society is that elementary students continue to learn the components of storytelling in their core curriculum. TPRS fits under the umbrella of comprehensible input strategies and what better way to continue the practice of core curriculum skills while acquiring yet another language. It not only especially resonates with English language learners, but all learners. Through storytelling, students are able to use skills they are already developing in their core classes, such as character identification, setting, perspective, conflict, and resolution.

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To be a great storyteller sometimes involves theatrics, improvisation, and embellishment to pull the audience in. All of these elements are encouraged and engage students in the stories. A prop as simple as a sun hat works wonders. Who will be the lucky chosen student to hold the prop? It's so exciting! This way the teacher and their students are able to create a real-life situation in their very own classroom. The use of improvisation also works wonders at including student voice.

In order to create comprehensible input the content should not only be understandable to students, but also hold their interest. According to Blaine Ray and other TPRS advocates, there are three main components of TPRS. In part one, the teacher introduces several words or structures in the target language. The teacher establishes meaning through gestures, interpretation, and games. Students are then given an outline of a situation or story and the teacher goes through a series of questioning techniques to provide personalized, interesting, and comprehensive details to the story. The Circling of Questions is a technique that most closely resembles the Audio-Lingual Method as it involves taking several words or structures and repeating them over and over until students can understand and respond appropriately. When done right, this can be very effective. It should not only be repetitive, but compelling.

Circling done when there is no targeted structure, when the questions are truly interesting, and "forced speech" is not demanded, is a powerful means of providing comprehensible input. When it is done right, students are not aware it is happening, and focus only on the message (Krashen 2015).

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To demonstrate, here is an example of an interaction using this technique: The teacher chooses a student who is holding a prop, such as a water bottle or thermo, and asks, “In the morning, do you drink water or coffee?” --Coffee. “Do you drink coffee with cream or no cream?” --With cream. Class, point to the student that drinks coffee. Does the student drink coffee or water? The whole class is invited to participate in this small practice to keep them engaged. The teacher goes to another student with a water bottle. “In the morning, do you drink water or coffee?” --Water. Do you drink water with cream or no cream.” This is sure to spark some reaction. One must include some bizarre details to hold student interest. “Class, what does the first student drink in the morning?” “What does the second student drink in the morning,” And the circling can go on and on until students’ faces become tired or disinterested. Again, if students do not understand what is being communicated, they will disengage. They must be given repeated opportunities to participate. Some students will only be able to respond to “yes” and “no” questions whereas advancing students will be able to provide responses to the open-ended “How?” and “Why?” questions and provide interpretation. This is the perfect recipe for differentiation. It is essential to create a safe and inclusive environment that invites all language abilities.

Comprehension-based classes warmly encourage student speaking, but do not force output, and never require students to speak using aspects of language they have not yet acquired (Krashen 2015).

Having a knowledge of questioning techniques is essential and can be attained through books and workshops. There are also many demonstration videos available

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online. Another component, sometimes referred to as read and discuss, takes place to check for comprehension. This is also a time that grammar may be discussed as it is linked to the meaning instead of a rule. Know that these components may or may not follow order, depending on the questions and engagement of the students.

Within the major components of TPRS, there are many contributions that have been evolving over the past few decades that specialize a TPRS experience. One contribution to TPRS is called, “Pop-up Grammar,” wherein a student may ask a question related to grammar. It is important to hear student voices and answer their questions. The question should be answered swiftly and then the class should move on as to not be distracted by the analysis of language. In an elementary setting, these questions may not arise as often as they do in secondary learning.

Another contribution is reading. TPRS heavily embraces pleasure reading. Teachers are currently working together to create an abundance of “easy-readers” in order to supply classrooms with age appropriate and culturally relevant material. Student created stories may help to fill this void and should be included in the activities.

In conclusion, teaching world language using TPRS offers a compelling alternative model to teachers and learners. It is unlike most world language programs offered to students in the Midwest. Implementing such a program could create support by a community’s families and educators who might not otherwise have access to a full immersion program. This gives families an option for their students to take a world language in a society that has an ever-growing need for multilingualism while relieving them from the burden of paying for a private program or the potential stress of removing

the student from a more traditional learning environment. This program demonstrates the set of necessary components that work simultaneously to deliver a unique world language program in an elementary school.

Push-In World Language Model

The program is referred to as world language as a “push-in” class. That means world language takes the form of a mobile classroom where a licensed world language teacher arrives to each room to give instruction. Homeroom teachers may find this very convenient as they lose little to no teaching time due to transitioning and transporting students through the halls to another classroom. It also eliminates the possibility of disrupting other classrooms with hallway movement. It’s expected that the world language teacher arrives on-time during their scheduled visit and also exits accordingly when the time ends. The homeroom teacher remains in the classroom with their students and assumes the role of a co-teacher. Although there are many different models of co-teaching, this program follows the one-teach one-assists model. The reason being is that not all homeroom teachers may have world language content/pedagogy knowledge. Sharing content may also require special preparation time between the world language and homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher (co-teacher) assumes the role of a world language learner. There are a number of reasons why the co-teacher remains in the classroom. Most importantly, especially for elementary aged children, a great trust has already been established with their homeroom teacher. They have had many opportunities to develop rapport at a much faster rate than a specialist or visiting teacher does. They have a better understanding of their students’ individual needs and can aide in the

continuance of their established learning environment. They also are the key adult between the student and their family, which is important for students that need that extra behavioral reminder (this could be reworded as something positive). The co-teacher models how to be a student, for example how to raise their hand, how to ask a question, how to listen to others, etc. They may even be able to show a connection to other content areas in core curriculum. When students see their homeroom teacher engaged in world language, it encourages them to act accordingly as they are a highly influential role model. The co-teacher also assumes the role to prevent and manage distractions from the content, such as answering phone calls, helping incoming students or visitors, or managing other requests and even water and bathroom use.

Push-In With High Frequency

World language is not a prep period for homeroom teachers as the classes are delivered to students at a high frequency for short periods, twice or three times per week for 20-40 minutes, depending on the grade level of students. Their assistant role is also essential to create a supportive atmosphere that embraces world language. With increased world language frequency throughout shorter periods of time, it is noted that students retain more content and stay engaged throughout the duration of the class, thus creating a positive experience. Scheduling, especially in a mid-sized to large elementary school may be an extra challenge if not organized early on as this will be a year-long course. Keeping a world language routine is as important as keeping a routine in literacy or math.

I'll be presenting the information gathered in this project to an audience of educators, administrators, and anyone else interested in implementing a world language

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program into an elementary school. This project speaks to the many factors required to roll out an effective program. It's important that schools adhere to what studies say about world language pedagogy and co-teaching expectations so that everybody is on the same page. Too much flexibility in the program may cause confusion in the expectations for co-teachers and, in turn, their students. Shifting to this model not only enriches the world language teaching experience, but it offers an innovative experience that can invigorate the content-delivery process.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusions and Reflections

Teaching world language as a push-in class is a wonderful option for educators looking to implement a world language program into their elementary school. Embracing the comprehensible input philosophy, specifically a TPRS methodology for young learners, is an effective way to engage students and give them a positive world language experience. Firstly I'll discuss my findings on the history of methodologies, what literature was most useful when gathering information on TPRS, and my reflections. Then I'll move on to the different models of school environments where world language is delivered and what options are available to families. I'll go forward to discuss some of the limitations of my project, where I could use it in the future, and how it benefits my profession.

Reflections on Methodologies

There is a vast documentation of the history of the methodologies used to teach world language for the past century. It was interesting to learn about this history, especially about how political and social events in the US may have influenced the way language was taught, for example during WWII which emphasized the memorization of specific phrases by use of drills and rote to be potentially used in battle. Educators started to break away from memorization and focused on task-based learning, which proved to be more practical in daily use which eventually led to more natural approaches (including TPRS). That makes sense and I can attest to these findings. In my personal life, I learned

best through natural approaches which led to eventual fluency. Practically I can say living in an urban city, I use Spanish daily even though it is not spoken in my family. I've benefited from learning the language both socially and economically as well as had the door opened to twenty other countries. Through this very tumultuous journey to become fluent, I completely understand the need to embrace comprehensible input strategies such as TPRS to contribute to more positive language learning experiences for people wanting to learn another language. It's important that educators have an open-mind to adopting new strategies. Even though research may prove such strategies effective, it takes personal responsibility to practice those strategies and make space for a new curriculum.

Krashen and Ray (2015) have taken much of the credit for TPRS, especially with the abundance of literature and professional development opportunities and it was not without the help of many perhaps unpublished educators that have contributed to the most current and best practices of world language teaching. It was also useful to review research that collected data on the effectiveness of this methodology when compared to other methodologies, especially when comparing test scores. Not that test scores matter to me, but this is an evidence-based fact that I've had to argue in my own teaching in the face of skeptical co-workers and administrators. With the support of these studies, and fortunately the world language department head who also embraces this type of teaching, I've been able to confidently continue with the CI philosophy and implement TPRS curriculum in my teaching.

What is interesting to me is that these are not yet as widely used as one would hope, at least in my experience. It's been only a decade since I graduated from a very

reputable university and yet comprehensible input strategies were just a small part of the curriculum and only offered as advice rather than best practice. After being in the teaching field for several years, the multitude of studies I researched on best practice fortunately ran parallel with what some districts are now encouraging. Still, it is up to the teacher's discretion as to what style they will opt for. Because the district does not widely design world language curriculum for its educators, most design their own, which takes years in the making and has provided many positive experiences for their students. To make a switch and re-write your curriculum requires many hours per week. After making the switch or for new teachers beginning their own practice, it's wonderful to see that student engagement is positively affected when using current best practice, which embraces TPRS. This I've found to be true after observing as well as being employed in many different settings.

Reflections on School Environment

Exploring the learning environment in schools has been equally important as are the methodologies used to teach students. Even in one of the largest school districts in the state, immersion is not widely available and educators have needed to find other ways to effectively deliver world language programs. Push-in enrichment courses are definitely on the rise, at least that is the current attitude in my place of employment because of what research has encouraged (Friend & Cook, 2010). English Language Learning has taken a similar role, i.e. co-teaching, as it provides a more inclusive environment. I believe the same can be done with world language. Such a program has had some trial practice in a few schools in a district in which I'm currently employed as a world language teacher.

Once adopted, the schools to which I'm referring to have preserved this unique program for years because of the approval ratings from families, students, and teachers. At schools where world language is taught on a rotating prep schedule, there have been a number of issues including inability to get very deep into content and also issues of behavior management. TPRS is sophisticated and nearly impossible to deliver if the teacher is overly occupied with behavior management.

I think it's important to note that world language is unlike other prep providing classes, such as Physical Education, Art, Dance, Music, etc. These specialist classes are very hands-on, independent, often with large spaces and heavily stocked closets with materials and manipulatives. World language often is dependent on the style of the teacher and what is available, so historically and still today, there are textbooks and workbooks usually available, and more recently online curriculums, but these resources are not up to date and have not proven to be very effective. World language is a mental exercise that relies on listening skills. It may incorporate physical response, but it's not a very independent course. When children learn their first language, they are exposed to many sounds and visuals before they even gain an ability to respond. Such as with learning an additional language, listening and mimicking sounds is what students will be naturally provoked to practice. It's incredibly important that they can hear what the world language teacher is saying in a calm, quiet, and focused environment to ease the stress of hearing the sounds being spoken. This is why it is most effectively taught within their classroom where the same skills are being reinforced during literacy blocks.

Project Limitations

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In order to support a world language program, a strong family and community influence usually needs to be available. With many world language programs being cut from schools in the midst of budget crises, this program is not going to be easy to sell. It may require special funding as it is an enrichment class. In the case of schools that have IB status, they must teach world language as it is a requirement, but even gaining IB status usually requires special grants. Finding licensed world language teachers is another point of contention. Many have opted for a more stable position in an immersion or high school setting.

Such a program has had some trial practice in a few schools in a district in which I'm currently employed as a world language teacher. Once adopted, those two schools have preserved this program for years because of approval ratings from families, students, and teachers. At schools where world language is taught on a rotating prep schedule, there have been a number of issues including inability to get very deep into content and also issues of behavior management. TPRS is almost impossible to implement as the teacher is busy with too much behavior management. World language is unlike other prep providing classes, such as Physical Education, Art, Dance, Music, etc. Such classes are very hands-on, independent, with largely stocked classrooms. World language often is dependent on the style of the teacher and what is available. Historically and still today, there are textbooks and workbooks usually available, or perhaps an online curriculum like Rosetta Stone. World language is a mental exercise that relies on cognitive thinking skills. It may incorporate physical response and dancing and acting is

always a wonderful element that can be added, but it is not at the base of learning language.

Future of the Project

If I were to expand on this project in the future, it would explore ways in which students contribute to the curriculum of world language. Final activities in TPRS units often include writing your own story or chapter. It would be interesting to publish their works and share them with educators internationally to create a global environment. Student-written material often speaks to their current interests in a world of quickly evolving trends and culture.

This project could also be presented as a professional development presentation to the staff in an elementary school. The administration may have implemented this model, however I think it's important to explain to all staff in detail what the details of the program are in order to reach maximum effectiveness.

Conclusion

After doing an extensive literature review, it is internationally acclaimed that implementing the methodologies and school environment discussed throughout this project are best practices. As the current educational system continues to face challenges from budgetary concerns, staffing, and student engagement, it is more important than ever to effectively engage students and inspire interest from the community. I believe a world language model that embraces the combination of TPRS methods with push-in teaching represents the best way world language education can meet those challenges. Since my own switch to these methods, I have experienced some of the most successful

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ongoing interactions in my career, and I hope to educate and support other teachers in adapting this system into their classrooms to raise the next generation of multilingual students. With the continued adoption of these methods I am confident that their efficacy will only be reinforced.

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Appendix

World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2019).



WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES

GOAL AREAS	STANDARDS		
<p>COMMUNICATION Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes</p>	<p>Interpersonal Communication: Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.</p>	<p>Interpretive Communication: Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.</p>	<p>Presentational Communication: Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.</p>
<p>CULTURES Interact with cultural competence and understanding</p>	<p>Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.</p>		<p>Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.</p>
<p>CONNECTIONS Connect with other disciplines and acquire information and diverse perspectives in order to use the language to function in academic and career-related situations</p>	<p>Making Connections: Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.</p>		<p>Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives: Learners access and evaluate information and diverse perspectives that are available through the language and its cultures.</p>
<p>COMPARISONS Develop insight into the nature of language and culture in order to interact with cultural competence</p>	<p>Language Comparisons: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.</p>		<p>Cultural Comparisons: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.</p>
<p>COMMUNITIES Communicate and interact with cultural competence in order to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world</p>	<p>School and Global Communities: Learners use the language both within and beyond the classroom to interact and collaborate in their community and the globalized world.</p>		<p>Lifelong Learning: Learners set goals and reflect on their progress in using languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and advancement.</p>