

TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE STORYTELLING:
AN ANALYSIS AND APPLICATION

By

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The world is becoming an ever more interconnected community. Within this global village, there is a growing need for people to communicate with people in completely different parts of the world. A vital tool needed for this communication is the knowledge of foreign languages. Over the last century, there has been a great deal of debate over what methods present the most effective and appropriate means of aiding students in the acquisition of second language skills. This debate has led to the development of a surprisingly large and diverse array of teaching methods. This thesis examines one of the latest of this long series of methods that attempts to address the issue of second language teaching and learning. Created in the early 1990's by a High School Spanish teacher named Blaine Ray, "Total Physical Response Storytelling" incorporates aspects from a wide variety of foreign language teaching methods to create an innovative and effective means of training students in a second language, which, if employed exclusively, presents an important departure from the way languages are generally taught currently. However, like all other methods developed thus far, TPRS is not without flaws and these are also examined. This thesis analyzes TPRS by creating a dialogue between theories from the fields of linguistics,

language pedagogy and folklore, which is then discussed in light of insight gained through a practical application of the method.

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Introduction

Imagine you are living in a primitive tribal society. One day, a stranger appears in your village. Though he cannot speak your language, you can tell that he is lost and hungry, and since your tribe is a friendly one, it is decided that you will help this newcomer. As the tribe gathers around the fire in the evening to share food and stories, the stranger joins you. While he does not understand the words in the stories, he stills understands some of their meaning by the feeling that is instilled in them by the storyteller, through his body language and the reactions of his the listeners. At one point, the stranger is himself a subject of discussion, which he realizes since much attention is being paid to him.

As time goes on, the stranger becomes more of a part of the tribe and is increasingly involved with the daily existence of its members. As he works with the members of the tribe, they explain to him how to make their tools and perform other necessary tasks. As they explain these tasks to him, they also demonstrate them and he begins to learn the words for their actions. As he continues to work with you and your tribe, you teach him individual words and he overhears your conversations. He witnesses events that will be retold by the fireside in the evening, and often appears as a character in these stories himself. This helps him to slowly understand the stories more and more, and eventually he is able to tell his own stories to the tribe. He can finally explain to you where he comes from, how he makes his tools and who he is. He can use your tribe's language to tell his own story and he is no longer a stranger.

The anthropologist, Robin Dunbar, suggests in his book Grooming, Gossip and the Evolution of Language that language developed primarily as an instrument of social

cohesion. As the size of homo-sapien groups rose, they needed a better means of maintaining unity in their group than could be provided by the grooming rituals previously employed for this purpose. Whereas with grooming, a person could bond with only one person, with conversation, one could bond with an average of three other members of a group. Observing modern conversations, Dunbar found that “about two-thirds of conversation time is devoted to social topics” (123) These discussions covered topics like personal relationships, personal likes and dislikes, personal experience and the behavior of other people. If this is the primary use, and in fact the origin, of language, would it not follow that the sharing of social information might also be of particular importance when learning a second language, as it was for the stranger in our first story.

I, too, have experienced learning a language within the context of a foreign culture and looking back on my experience, much of the language I learned came from such sharing of social information. When I was 15, I spent a year living in France. I had only been studying French for one year and I could hardly communicate with my host family. Although I could not say much, they kept talking to me and to each other. We would gather around the dinner table in the evening, talk and watch TV. They would tell stories about their days, the TV would tell stories from the news, or retell the plotlines of sitcoms I had seen years earlier in the US. During my free time, I would often watch more stories on TV. Often they were stories I knew, from having seen them back home, and at other times I simply had to guess from the acting and my limited knowledge of the French language. Slowly, I became more comfortable hearing French. I began understanding more and more. After a month, it was time for me to start school at a French lyceum and I was amazed at how much I was able to understand and I could even say a little bit, too. Just as the stranger in the story above, I

learned French in the way that came most naturally to my situation, through interaction with people, and primarily by listening.

Last fall, I attended a foreign language conference with my father, a retired language teacher, in whose footsteps I am planning on following in my career. At the conference, he especially wanted me to watch a presentation on a new method of teaching languages called Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS), which would be demonstrated by its founder, Blaine Ray. When I watched the demonstration, I was amazed. In just two hours, Blaine was able to use a simple story to introduce at least 30 words along with the past, present and future tenses in Spanish. By the end of the presentation, I could understand all of the words and structures he had taught. Not only that, but the two hours were over before I knew it. I was so amazed that I told myself that it simply had to be too good to be true. He must have used some sort of tricks or at least it would not be realistic to maintain this kind of method in a classroom.

Still, I could not dismiss the idea. It reminded me of the way I had learned French, simply by listening. I was in the process of looking for a topic for my honors thesis and I was also thinking about applying for an internship to teach German. At some point, these two processes met. I came up with the idea that I would research TPRS and how it fits in with current theories of language and pedagogy and then try it out for myself to see how it worked in a real classroom. In this way, I could see if my doubts were justified. Although I did not achieve the same success in my implementation of TPRS as I had witnessed in the demonstration, based on my theoretical research, I believe that the method does have great potential, though it takes experience and training to use.

The Issue

The world is becoming an ever more interconnected community. Within this global village, there is a growing need for people to communicate with people in completely different parts of the world. A vital tool needed for this communication is the knowledge of foreign languages. Over the last century, there has been a great deal of debate over what methods present the most effective and appropriate means of aiding students in the acquisition of second language skills. This debate has led to the development of a surprisingly large and diverse array of teaching methods. This thesis will examine one of the latest of this long series of methods that attempts to address the issue of second language teaching and learning. Created in the early 1990's by a High School Spanish teacher named Blaine Ray, "Total Physical Response Storytelling" (TPRS) incorporates aspects from a wide variety of foreign language teaching methods to create an innovative and effective means of training students in a second language, which, if employed exclusively, presents an important departure from the way languages are generally taught currently. However, like all other methods developed thus far, TPRS is not without flaws and these will also be examined. This thesis will analyze TPRS by creating a discourse between theories from the fields of linguistics, language pedagogy and folklore, which will then be discussed in light of insight gained through a practical application of the method. This analysis will attempt to determine in which contexts TPRS can be employed most successfully and in which ways it can be improved.

As with all sciences, in linguistics and pedagogy there is always a discrepancy between theory and practice. They are imperfect reflections of each other. This thesis is divided into three parts in order to incorporate and synthesize the theoretical and pragmatic

arguments relevant to TPRS, while placing the method into a larger historical framework.

The first section provides a brief outline of the evolution of foreign language pedagogy in the US, in order to show how various previous methods have contributed to the development of TPRS. This section also describes claims, principles and techniques of Total Physical Response Storytelling. The second section consists of an analysis of TPRS according to the most recent linguistic theories from second language acquisition research and pedagogical theories from the predominant approach to contemporary language teaching, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This section also deals with issues pertaining to storytelling in general, in order to determine in which ways storytelling may provide a more effective means of instruction. It will be seen that although the current literature on TPRS is rather limited in its discussion of these theories, the method does in fact correspond with most of their implications. Finally, the third section consists of a discussion of my own application of TPR Storytelling in the classroom. The object of this section is to discover any practical problems and advantages of the method not discussed in the theories, as well as to reinforce those that are discussed. The conclusion will then synthesize the practical and theoretical aspects of my research to present the realistic flaws and merits of TPRS.

Section 1: Total Physical Response Storytelling and its Historical Context

A Brief History of Second Language Pedagogy in the United States

Both Total Physical Response Storytelling and its contemporary, Communicative Language Teaching, synthesize aspects and ideas from several other foreign language teaching methods which preceded them, though in different ways. The use of storytelling as a primary means of instruction provides a main contrast between TPRS and CLT. CLT is much less strictly defined and encourages the use of a variety of techniques for instruction, including the possibility of storytelling. Although the exclusive use of stories, at the expense of most other techniques, may seem monotonous, it can be argued that the most important language skills, such as the traditional categories of speaking, listening, reading and writing, can be taught and practiced effectively in this way and that variations within the stories themselves balance out the monotony of the storytelling technique itself. The stories provide the teacher with a medium in which to present new language items, be they lexical or grammatical, while at the same time offering learners a larger narrative framework to remember these structures by. The stories are also often created through a collaborative process involving both the teacher and the students, which gives students a degree of control over the class, encourages their creativity, and creates a more closely bound classroom community.

In order to fully understand TPRS, it must be seen in its historical context. Such a discussion allows one to see which techniques have proved successful in the past, as well as the problems previous methods have had to face. The author, H. Douglas Brown, describes the history of language teaching as a cyclical pattern by which an innovative method will break away from the predominant method of the time, taking with it some positive aspects of

the older model and abandoning the rest. Later, newer methods emerge, that repeat this cycle, picking up and abandoning aspects of the previous “new method,” while also incorporating some of those aspects of the older methods that had been abandoned previously and then adding more innovations (Brown 16-18). Points that exemplify this process are the instruction of grammar and the role of the target language in the classroom. Throughout the evolution of second language pedagogy both of these points have swung from one end of the spectrum to the other, with some methods, such as the Direct Method, requiring that nothing but the target language be spoken, while others, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, require that instruction be conducted entirely in the learners’ native language. On both the issue of grammar and target language use, it will be seen that TPRS, along with CLT, presents a compromise between the extremes of this spectrum. In fact, both TPRS and CLT take inspiration from all of the methods that will be described in the following section.

Perhaps the oldest method of teaching foreign languages is the Grammar-Translation method. It was the predominant method of instruction until the end of the 19th century, when educators began to question its ability to teach all the skills necessary for language use. The Grammar-Translation method focused on using language for the purposes of understanding and translating classical texts. Instruction consisted of the presentation of grammatical rules and vocabulary items, with an emphasis on memorization and accuracy. Explanations were given in the students’ native language, as educators considered it most important that students understand the rules of the language, which could be most clearly explained in their native language. No instruction was given in either speaking or listening, which was reasonable since originally the method was used for Latin, a language which was rarely spoken anyway. However, as other languages, which did have significant populations of

speakers, started being taught using Grammar-Translation, it became increasingly clear that students needed instruction in oral, as well as written, language use. Although many areas today still use Grammar-Translation, by the end of the 19th century educators were beginning to design alternative ways of training people in the use of second languages. (Richard and Rodgers, 5-7)

In response to the inadequacies of the Grammar-Translation method, the methodological pendulum swung to the other extreme. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Direct Method emerged. It was based on the belief that second languages should be learned in a similar way to first languages, namely through “lots of oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammar rules” (Brown, 21). In Direct Method, instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language and students were expected to pick up vocabulary and grammar from this input. Thus, one can see how the Direct Method was a radical departure from Grammar-Translation, rejecting almost all of its fundamental principles and techniques. The Direct Method proved to be very successful in certain contexts, such as commercial schools where tuition-paying students were highly motivated and the resources existed to hire native or near-native speaking teachers. However, the mass of public schools in the United States could not afford such highly trained teachers and possessed much less motivated students who could easily become alienated by the flood of incomprehensible language that was being thrown at them. As a result, the Grammar-Translation method remained the most feasible method for the majority of institutions in the US (Richard and Rogers 11-13).

The next major innovation in foreign language teaching methodology came with the advent of the Second World War. Because of the war, the military had to train a large quantity of soldiers to speak foreign languages, and they had to do so quickly and neither Grammar Translation nor the Direct Method were suitable for this purpose. Thus, they developed their own method, incorporating the findings of behaviorist psychology, which emphasized conditioning through rewards and punishment, and structural linguists, which studied the structures and differences between various languages. The resulting method was first called the Army Method, though once it became widely used in schools after the war it was renamed the Audiolingual Method (ALM). ALM used extensive drilling as its main technique. Teachers would model phrases and dialogues and students would repeat them. Instruction consisted predominantly of target language use. Students were not taught grammar rules explicitly, but were expected to learn them inductively through the context in which certain structures appeared. Though grammar rules were not taught explicitly, drills presented grammatical structures in a set sequence according to the findings of structural linguistics as to which structures were most different from the students' native language, and should thus be the most difficult. This sequencing did not however match-up to the more natural order of acquisition of these structures, which was only discovered later. There was also a large emphasis in ALM on the production of error-free utterances, both in terms of pronunciation as well as grammar. ALM was quite successful for a while due to its advantages over Grammar-Translation and Direct Method. ALM teachers could also teach oral communication (a skill area neglected in the Grammar-Translation Method) without necessarily being completely fluent in the language they were teaching (a prerequisite for the use of the Direct Method). However, the monotony of ALM's drilling techniques proved to

be its primary drawback and as later research showed, not the most effective way to foster long-term acquisition of a second language. (Brown 22-24)

Aside from the method known as Cognitive Code Learning, which basically consisted of ALM with the addition of explicit grammar instruction, the next major shift in language teaching methodology came in the 1970's. This was an incredibly innovative period, which saw the appearance of a multitude of what Brown terms "designer methods" (24). Celce-Murcia further divides these methods into the categories of "Affective-Humanistic" and "Comprehension-based" approaches. Both categories represented a rejection of the tedious and often incomprehensible nature of ALM's drilling. The Affective-Humanistic approaches aimed at making the learner feel more comfortable in the learning environment, while the Comprehension-Based approaches emphasized the importance of giving learners a great deal of comprehensible exposure to the target language before they were asked to produce any language themselves (Celce-Murcia, 7-8). The two methods most relevant to a discussion of TPRS that emerged out of this period are classical Total Physical Response (TPR) and the Natural Approach. Both methods fit into both the Affective-Humanistic and Comprehension-based categories. These methods are important in the discussion of TPRS since they are directly claimed by Blaine Ray and his associates as the theoretical and methodological foundation of TPRS in the manual to TPRS, Fluency Through TPR Storytelling, (Ray & Seely, 2-3). Thus, these will be the only two of the designer methods that will be discussed.

Total Physical Response was developed in the 70's by the psychologist James Asher. This method teaches languages through commands that require, as the name implies, a "total physical response." Thus, the first day of class might consist of learning the correct responses

to the commands “Stand up,” “Sit down,” “Turn around,” and “Jump.” Notice that students only have to act out the commands and not actually give them (though this may happen later). This is because the initial focus of TPR is on the comprehension of language, not production. TPR also appeals to the kinesthetic learning style, by linking language to actions. This puts the language used into a meaningful context and thus helps students retain it longer (Asher). The effectiveness of TPR in teaching vocabulary quickly, painlessly and for long-term retention is virtually undisputed. However, Total Physical Response does have some serious limitations. It can become monotonous when employed exclusively. There is also only a certain set of vocabulary and grammar concepts that can be taught this way, namely commands and concrete objects (thus excluding discourse and abstract vocabulary) (Marsh, 24). These are concerns that TPR Storytelling attempts to address through its incorporation of stories, which permit a much wider range of vocabulary and alleviate some, though not all, of the monotony that can develop when TPR is used exclusively.

The other method that has greatly influenced TPR Storytelling, the Natural Approach, is more important for its theoretical underpinnings than any specific aspect of the method itself. This method was first laid out in the 1983 book The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom, by Stephan D. Krashen and Tracy D. Terrell. It was designed as an application of the theories of Krashen, a second language acquisition researcher. His ideas are centered around a system of five hypotheses about how humans acquire a second language. These hypotheses are contested by many in the field of second language acquisition because of their lack of concrete empirical evidence (Specific criticisms of Krashen’s theories will be discussed in the theoretical section). Despite criticisms, Krashen’s hypotheses form a unified system to explain how languages are acquired that is intuitive and

easy for non-linguists to grasp. These qualities make Krashen's theories attractive to educators, who do not have the opportunity to stay current with the most recent details of second language acquisition research, but still want a complete theoretical system. TPRS uses Krashen's ideas as its theoretical foundation, though as will be seen in the theoretical section of this thesis, TPRS in fact reflects aspects of more current theories as well.

Krashen's five hypotheses are as follows (Krashen & Terrell, 26-39):

1) Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis: This hypothesis claims that there exists a definite distinction between the processes of learning and acquisition of a second language. Learning refers to explicitly explained and consciously learned knowledge of the target language, such as grammar rules and memorized vocabulary items. Acquisition, on the other hand, refers to the unconscious process by which learners absorb both lexical and grammatical forms. Acquisition is what allows for fluent comprehension and production or a "feel" for the language. Acquisition in this sense is very similar to the way in which children learn their first language and according to Krashen should be the goal in a foreign language classroom.

2) Natural Order Hypothesis: This hypothesis states that there exists a general order by which learners *acquire* grammatical structures, regardless of the order that these structures are *learned*. These natural orders are well established through empirical data, which often focuses on the order of acquisition of structures such as verb tense and agreement, question formation, and negation (Cook, Chap. 2) The implication of this hypothesis, as interpreted by Krashen, is that grammar rules do not deserve much

explicit instruction, as they will be *acquired* in a set order, regardless of the order in which they are *learned/taught*.

3) Monitor Hypothesis: This hypothesis states that when producing a second language, a learner will rely primarily on the *acquired* system and then “monitor” his/her utterance for correctness based on the *learned* system. Krashen claims that in reality, this “monitoring” function is used only in situations where the speaker has enough time to focus on rules, for example while writing, whereas at all other times, production relies solely on the acquired system.

4) Input Hypothesis: This hypothesis states that in order to acquire a second language, learners need “comprehensible input.” This is language that is at or just one step beyond their current level of competence. As interpreted by proponents of TPRS, a foreign language class conducted solely in the target language, as is the case with Direct Method or ALM, violates this principle, because only small portion of the input is truly comprehensible (Ray & Seeley, 8-9).

5) Affective Filter Hypothesis: This final hypothesis claims that there exist several factors concerning a learner's attitude towards the target language and the atmosphere in which it is taught that will either aid or inhibit the acquisition of the target language.

By the late 1980's, after the wave of designer methods had hit foreign language education, the idea of using one method began to give way to a more general approach to language education called Communicative Language Learning (CLT). Instead of prescribing

set activities and techniques to be used in the language classroom, CLT lays out goals that should be achieved in the classroom. CLT is thus much more flexible in accommodating the wide variety of teaching contexts that exist. Brown calls CLT the “enlightened, eclectic approach” (40) because it rejects the notion of a singular correct method, in favor of a mixture of elements from different methods. Teachers are encouraged to use whatever techniques are most suitable for their particular context, as long as they help the learners to achieve CLT's ultimate goal, communicative competence. Communicative competence represents the ability to effectively and efficiently communicate in the target language and as a principle consists of a variety of subcategories that will be discussed later. Because its focus is on communication, not necessarily accuracy, CLT also deemphasizes the role of grammar instruction. Since its emergence in the late 80's, Communicative Language Teaching has become the dominant framework for foreign language teachers, and thus it is also the framework from which TPR Storytelling is considered in the theoretical section. (Brown 39-51).

Total Physical Response Storytelling was developed at the same time that CLT was rising to its current position of prominence (Marsh, 24). It contrasts with CLT in that instead of being an “enlighten, eclectic approach”, it is a self-sufficient method. It consists of a set theoretical foundation and specific techniques that are to be used exclusively. After the many shifts in language teaching methodology, many educators became disenchanted with the whole idea of using a singular method, as these continued to be discredited and replaced. Many preferred the tenets of Communicative Language Teaching which offer the teacher much more freedom in the selection of classroom activities and techniques (Brown, 39). However, this freedom also opens up the possibility of a less structured approach towards

teaching and learning, which strives towards the ambiguous goal of “communicative competence.” Though many may shy away from TPR Storytelling because of its resemblance to the failed methods of the past, it is important to give it just treatment and appreciation for the innovations it has brought to the field. Just as with all of its predecessors, TPRS is an attempt to advance language pedagogy, and is thus a step forward, not back.

The main innovation of TPR Storytelling, as mentioned before, is its focus on storytelling. TPRS combines many of the techniques of Asher’s classical Total Physical Response, with the theories of language acquisition developed by Stephan Krashen. This mix is then applied through the process of storytelling. The goal of a TPRS lesson is to provide as much fully comprehensible input as possible (Ray & Seely, 9). Classical TPR is one of the few methods that can realistically achieve this kind of comprehensibility. When a teacher teaches a command, for instance, “Stand up”, he models it for the class, so that there is no question about what it means. Thus, when students hear the command, they will have an easy time following it and associate the action with the meaning of the command. As mentioned before, although classical TPR can provide a high degree of comprehensibility, it is limited in the types of words and syntactical structures that it can use. This is where the storytelling comes in. Instead of giving students commands, a TPRS teacher tells a story and uses individuals or groups of students as actors. Just as in classical TPR, the language is translated into real-life, observable actions which are acted out by the students. For example, instead of the command “Stand up”, the teacher may say a line from a story, such as, “The girl stands up”. The advantage of storytelling is that it allows for the use of much more realistic language and the inclusion of virtually any word or structure in a language. This increases the potential of the method tremendously.

As it represents its theoretical foundation, Total Physical Response Storytelling incorporates all of Krashen's five hypotheses. TPRS focuses on the acquisition of language rather than the learning of language by presenting items in a meaningful, observable way, rather than teaching vocabulary lists and grammatical rules. Through the use of stories, grammar and vocabulary items can be presented and repeated in a context that is both meaningful and comprehensible to the learners. In order to provide a structure for the language “monitor” system, the meanings of words and grammatical form are explicitly explained as they arise. New vocabulary is introduced before the story is told and grammatical explanations of new or difficult forms are interjected within the telling of the story itself, in the native language of the learners. In accordance with Krashen's Input Hypothesis TPRS places a heavy emphasis on the comprehensibility of the language used during the course of a lesson. As a TPRS teacher tells a story, s/he continuously checks for comprehension among students of lower ability. If something is not understood, s/he explains as many times as is necessary, until it is obvious that the students do in fact comprehend everything. Unfortunately, this may serve to bore students who have already grasped these concepts. Furthermore, through a variety of techniques a TPRS teacher will try to lower the “affective filter” of Krashen's fifth hypothesis. Lowering the affective filter consists of making students feel more comfortable in the classroom and in relation to the target language. There are two primary ways this is achieved in TPRS. First, the stories themselves are “bizarre, exaggerated and personalized” (Ray & Seely, 68), which leads students to be intrinsically interested in them. Second, students are not expected to produce any language until they have had plenty of exposure to it in a comprehensible setting. This means that learners should be more confident that what they are producing is actually correct, because

they will have had the opportunity to acquire a “feel” for the language first. Finally, TPRS deemphasizes grammar explanations, because according to Krashen’s “Natural Order Hypothesis” grammatical explanations have little or no effect on the order in which grammatical structures are in fact acquired. In the end, the goal of TPRS is virtually identical to that of CLT. It aims at producing confident and fluent speakers, who are able to produce accurate language automatically without excessive analysis and translation.

The Structure of a TPRS Classroom

TPR Storytelling divides its lessons into seven steps, each of which progress the learners to more challenging and meaningful uses of the target items of the day. The first step consists of introducing the target vocabulary of the day. In TPRS no more than 3-4 words are taught per day, though the goal is that those words are then mastered. During this step, the vocabulary words are taught through traditional TPR gestures, which the whole class practices. In the second step, the teacher assesses the students, by giving a series of TPR commands and observing the students to make sure they know the corresponding gestures. Once the teacher is confident that the students understand the new vocabulary, she can move on to the third and most important step of the lesson, the “Personalized Mini-Situation.” At this stage, the teacher tells a story, or describes several situations, using the target vocabulary of the day. S/he chooses students to be actors during the telling of the story, who then actively represent the story told by the teacher. By translating the language used by the teacher into actions, the actors help to ensure that it is comprehensible. This helps students to understand the language without necessarily having to translate it into their native language, thereby fostering more fluent comprehension. Another crucial aspect of this

phase consists of questioning by the teacher. The teacher will ask questions about the story. This serves several purposes such as checking for comprehension, providing students with more exposure to the target vocabulary and allowing students to add their own ideas to the storyline. While lower level or “barometer students” as Ray calls them are asked the comprehension questions, questions eliciting new plot details are addressed to the entire class, with the most creative answers being adopted into the plotline. After the story has been told with the student actor(s), the teacher can progress to the fourth step, which consists of the teacher retelling the story and asking more questions, while acting out the story him/herself. This step serves mainly to provide more repetitions of target words and gives the class an opportunity to change and elaborate on the story and allows the actors to view the story from the point of view of the audience. In the fifth step, students retell the story instead of the teacher. This can be done in a variety of ways, ranging from a single student retelling the whole story, to retelling in pairs, or having students take turns telling individual sections of the story. The final two steps of TPRS are not used until the second year and serve to introduce new grammatical points. In the sixth step, the teacher retells the story again, but from a different perspective. During the first telling, stories usually appear in the 3rd person, present tense (His name is Joe. He goes to Mexico. Etc.). During these retells, the teacher changes either the subject or the tense, which allows for the introduction of different verb conjugations and tenses (My name is Joe. I went to Mexico. Etc.). In the final step, students are asked to retell the story from the new perspective. Thus one can see that in the process of a TPRS lesson, students are flooded with comprehensible input and then progressively given more chances to use and modify the new words and stories they learn in a meaningful way.

(Ray & Seely)

TPRS also incorporates a weekly lesson plan, consisting of activities that are done before storytelling. These activities add variety to the class and allow for the practical application of much of the language learnt through storytelling. These activities include, class discussions, free-writing, a “Kindergarten Day,” and two days of in-class reading. Class discussions are held on Mondays and can cover any range of topics that students are able to discuss in the target language. This gives student the opportunity to use the language they have learned in order to speak about topics that are meaningful to them. Tuesdays and Fridays are reading days. Students read simple stories that contain at least 75% familiar vocabulary. Reading may be done independently, or as a class, with students translating the text into their native language rather than reading it directly in the target language. This helps to ensure that students actually comprehend what they are reading, instead of mechanically reading the words without understanding their meaning. In this context, TPRS adopts one of the oldest techniques for teaching foreign language from the Grammar-Translation Method, which focused predominantly on reading and translation. On Wednesdays, students are given a free-writing exercise. Students have five to ten minutes to write as much as they can in the target language. When grading these miniature essays the teacher does not focus on accuracy, but rather on the volume of comprehensible language produced. Aside from giving the students an opportunity to express themselves in the target language, this activity also provides the teacher with a means to assess the students’ general level of fluency. Thursday is “Kindergarten Day” in the prototypical TPRS classroom. For this, the teacher will select a colorfully illustrated children’s book and read it aloud to the class. The purpose of this activity is to provide students with more input in a comfortable setting and also to give the students a little break. It may however not be an appropriate activity for all age groups. By

combining this five-day lesson plan with storytelling, TPRS is able to address all the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. (Ray & Seely, 109-116)

TPR Storytelling lessons also evolve as the students gain proficiency in the target language. The first few weeks are spent introducing the students to the language through the use of classical TPR. As was mentioned earlier, TPR is extremely effective at the beginning of a learner's exposure to a new language. With classical TPR, there is much less pressure on the students, since they only have to learn to understand the language and do not have to produce it themselves (Ray & Seely 10-11). Once students have begun to feel comfortable in the new language, the TPR Storytelling begins. In the beginning, only the first five of the seven steps mentioned above are used. During this stage, the students are further developing their basic vocabulary and comfort level in the language. About half-way through the first year, students will begin to read simple stories, in addition to the ones told in class. In the second year, students begin telling stories from different perspectives in order to learn and practice different conjugations and tenses. After the second year, the focus of the lessons slowly shifts away from oral storytelling towards more reading and also explicit grammar instruction. At the high school level, this serves to further prepare students for their college language courses and AP tests. Thus, just as the daily lessons progress from easier activities to more challenging ones, in the long term, too, TPRS slowly transitions students from being able to complete simpler tasks to more difficult ones. (Ray & Seely)

The last important aspect of TPRS is its treatment of grammar. Whereas in a traditional foreign language classroom individual grammar points can be the subject of a lesson, in TPRS grammatical discussions are integrated into the stories. When a grammatical

structure arises in the process of storytelling, the teacher simply points it out to the students, explains it briefly and continues with the story. The same grammar point may be explained several times in the context of various different stories, or even the same story if needed (Ray & Seely, 117-140). For example, when introducing the past tense in German, the teacher may begin by simply pointing out over the course of several stories how the main verb of the sentence moves to the end of the sentence, while the auxiliary verb stays in the regular verb position (Er *hat* den Kuchen *gegessen* [He *has eaten* the cake or He *ate* the cake]). In later stories, or if questions arise, s/he might point out other specific characteristics of the past tense, such as of the form of the verb or when to use which auxiliary verb. In order to further challenge the more advanced students, it might be beneficial for TPRS teachers to always inform students where they can find more detailed descriptions of specific rules in their textbooks, so that they can study them on their own. This approach to grammar instruction differs drastically from traditional language courses where any particular grammatical form is usually explained only once, but in detail. This traditional approach to grammar means that if a student misses or simply does not understand a particular grammatical rule the first time it is taught, s/he must either seek individual help on the item or wait until it is reviewed, most likely during the next year. In TPRS on the other hand, students are constantly being made aware of the existence of specific grammatical structures in a multitude of meaningful contexts.

Section 2:

Linguistics, Pedagogy and Folklore in relation to the TPRS classroom

The theories involved in a discussion of Total Physical Response Storytelling come from the domains of linguistics and language pedagogy, and with its emphasis on storytelling, folklore. There is an entire field of linguistics devoted to the mechanisms by which humans learn second languages or “Second Language Acquisition” (SLA). This field is still relatively young in comparison with most other sciences and there is a lack of consensus among researchers in the field as to which theories are correct. Language pedagogy, too, is a field that is difficult to analyze objectively, as it is extremely difficult to define what makes a “good language teacher”. Both SLA and language pedagogy remain rather difficult to study empirically as the objects of their disciplines contain too many variables that must be observed for too long to allow for effective and reliable studies. However, despite these limitations, both fields have developed useful insights into the nature of learning languages, and these can be applied to the discussion of TPRS. Although folklore generally deals with oral narratives told in the native language of one’s audience, this field does provide helpful insight into the nature and power of the storytelling event, as both a mean of entertainment and education. This section will analyze TPRS in light of the theories of these fields, in order to determine both what TPRS can learn from them, as well as what they can learn from TPRS.

Linguistic Theories and TPRS

One of the major problems of TPRS in terms of theory resides in the fact that its theoretical foundation, namely Krashen’s five hypotheses, is questioned by many researchers in the field of Second Language Acquisition. One researcher, Vivian Cook, says of Krashen’s theories:

They raise expectations by suggesting simply, plausible explanations for phenomena that many L2 (second language) users recognize; they provide immediate connections with the classroom. A simple set of propositions, each of which make sense about L2 learning and which cumulatively seem to fit together in a whole system, has great attractions. Part of the success of Krashen's model has been its sheer scope and inclusiveness. Yet evidence for these ideas is elusive. (Cook, 65)

Here, Cook expresses the essence of the dilemma surrounding Krashen's ideas. Though they may not be completely accurate on the basis of empirical findings, they are very intuitive and easy for non-linguists to understand. Also, just as Krashen's theories are difficult to prove, they are difficult to disprove. Thus as the rest of SLA research has progressed, Krashen's model has remained relatively static.

One criticism of Krashen's model that displays particular relevance to the practices of TPRS concerns the limitations of the Input Hypothesis. This hypothesis claims that learners acquire all aspects of a language through comprehensible input. In TPRS, this hypothesis is applied through its heavy emphasis on input, in the form of stories or reading, with much less focus on language production. However, many critics argue that input is not sufficient for language acquisition, and that learners need to also produce language in order to experiment with their interlanguage (their current stage of language proficiency). According to Swain's *Comprehensible Output Hypothesis*, input can be understood purely in terms of semantics and pragmatics, or the raw meaning of the utterance, without requiring any particular focus on syntax, or grammar. In order to gain an understanding of syntax, learners must use and experiment with the language in order to see which forms are comprehensible to other

speakers and which are not (Mitchell & Myles, 127). Although output may be an important factor in the development of a syntactic or grammatical understanding of the target language, it is not impossible that some syntactic structures could be learned through input, especially when this is accompanied by grammatical explanations, as is the focus of TPRS. Also, TPRS does not teach solely through input, though this is the primary means of instruction. TPRS students produce language output in the form of retells, free writes, discussions and answering questions during the stories. These exercises give students the ability to experiment with the language on their own, though they are not expected to do so for the entire class period.

Another researcher, Long, has combined Swain and Krashen's positions to formulate the *Interaction Hypothesis*, which basically states that acquisition arises from the negotiation for meaning that occurs during any language interaction, thus expressing the need for both language input and output. Negotiation can come in the form of *repetitions* (when a speaker repeats his/her own utterance), *confirmation checks* (when the listener repeats the speaker's utterance to insure it was understood correctly), *comprehension checks* (where the speaker attempts to determine whether or not the listener understood correctly) and *clarification requests* (when the listener asks for assistance in understanding the speaker's utterance) (Ibid. 128-9). During interaction, all aspects of the language become important, including syntax. If there is any major error or lack of comprehension in terms of word choice, pronunciation or grammar, it should lead to some kind of negotiation. Unfortunately, the realities of the classroom make it difficult to provide such interaction. The teacher is the only person truly proficient in the target language and especially at the earliest stages, when students are struggling too much with the language to interact with each other in any meaningful way.

However, in most settings interaction between the students is the primary mean by which the interaction hypothesis is applicable in a classroom. TPRS provides a medium for the teacher to interact with the class as a whole. The interaction created by TPRS incorporates both repetitions and comprehension checks. The stories told in a TPRS classroom are inherently repetitive and the teacher is supposed to constantly check for comprehension through the process of questioning. This provides a useful, though incomplete application of the Interaction Hypothesis. Despite this correlation, this theory is not discussed anywhere in the methodological literature on TPRS.

Another important criticism of Krashen's model challenges his distinction between acquisition and learning. Cook argues that there is no evidence that proves that learnt knowledge cannot be translated into acquired knowledge (64). Others argue that some explicit instruction actually aids in the acquisition process. Proponents of this view support the tactics of *consciousness-raising* and *input enhancement*, which can be achieved by any combination of grammatical explanations, enhanced emphasis on specific language points and/or negative feedback (Mitchell & Myles, 139). Once again, although research supporting this position is not cited in the TPRS literature, these techniques are employed in the method through the use of brief grammatical explanations and emphasis on particular grammatical points through repetitions. Also, when correcting students' writing samples, TPRS teachers should focus on a single type of error that seems particularly problematic and only correct instances of that error (Ray, Presentation, Nov. 2003). This way, students are able to focus on the most important error and "raise their consciousness" of it for future reference.

In terms of Second Language Acquisition Theory, TPR Storytelling gives most of the credit to the researcher Stephen Krashen, though his theories are now somewhat outdated. Although Krashen's theoretical system gives teachers a simple framework to work off of, in the end it compromises the strength of TPRS's theoretical foundation through its exclusiveness. This is unfortunate, since many of the actual practices of TPRS do actually correspond quite well with some of the more recent findings of Second Language Acquisition research and could even be seen as innovative and effective means of employing them in the classroom. It will be seen that TPRS is in a similar situation with regards to pedagogical theory. While it claims inspiration from classical TPR and Krashen's "Natural Approach," it disregards the important principles of contemporary Communicative Language Teaching, which it in fact incorporates in its own innovative way.

Communicative Language Teaching and TPR Storytelling

As Communicative Language Teaching has become the most widely accepted approach to language pedagogy, the practices of any new method should match up with this approach, unless it can provide a valid argument as to why it does not. In his book, Teaching by Principles (2001), H. Brown outlines twelve principles which should define language instruction in the context of CLT. Brown further sub-divides these principles into the categories of cognitive, affective and linguistic principles. These principles are meant to

guide the language teacher in the evaluation of various classroom activities. This section will examine TPRS in light of these principles and categories in order to determine where it stands in relation to the current state of theories of language pedagogy. It will be demonstrated that although TPRS literature does not discuss CLT explicitly, the method does in fact adhere to most of CLT's principles. However, in order for TPRS to gain legitimacy, it is important that the literature expresses these connections to CLT, as well as defends or changes its position in those cases where CLT principles and TPRS practices do not match up.

Cognitive Principles

Brown's category of "cognitive principles" includes factors that affect the way the brain processes language. The first of these principles, "automaticity" refers to the "feel" for a language that fluent speakers exhibit when they no longer have to think about what they are hearing or saying, but simply comprehend or produce it (Brown, 56). This is one of the main goals of TPRS. Students are exposed to a flood of input that is made comprehensible through a variety of means. This encourages students to simply understand the language as it comes, rather than stopping to translate every word into their native language. Students do translate in some activities, such as group reading, but here too, the emphasis lies more with a fluent, automatic translation than a literal, word-for-word translation. Regarding language production, in TPRS this usually comes in the form of a retelling of the day's story. Since TPRS focuses so much on varied repetitions of language forms in multiple contexts, the students will have already heard the given structures numerous times before they are asked to produce them. This means that they will not have to piece together their output from the

bottom-up, considering individual units of vocabulary and morphology, but can do so from the top down, by simply remembering expressions used in the course of a story or reading activity. Automaticity is further encouraged through free-writing exercises, which emphasize quantity of language produced rather than its quality. This encourages students to produce whatever language they can come up with automatically, since this will produce the greatest quantity of output. In reading, too, students are discouraged from using dictionaries, and should instead try to understand as much as possible from what they have learned already. Thus TPRS promotes automaticity in all four areas of language use.

The next cognitive principle, “meaningful learning,” is a process by which new information is “subsumed” into existing structures and memory systems, creating links between these various systems which foster better retention of the individual forms (Brown 56-7). The stories used in TPRS create these “structures and memory systems” that aid retention. Learning the stories is a somewhat separate process from learning the target language. Since the stories are acted out by students in the class, it is usually clear what is happening. The narration of the teacher describes the action in the target language, thereby imposing the language on to the story. When students try to remember certain language points, be they related to grammar or vocabulary, they always have the context of a highly personalized story to refer to. For example if one story contains the line “The boy was happy, because I found his cat” and another story says, “The boy was happy, because he won a million dollars,” students can easily remember the meaning of “The boy was happy, because” from the context and plot of the first story and then transpose that meaning onto new stories. This creates a powerful link between the language and its use and thus leads to “meaningful learning”.

The principle of “The Anticipation of Reward” may recall the days of behaviorism and the drilling associated with its corresponding method, ALM, however as Brown asserts, rewards, both long-term and short-term, still have their place in the foreign language classroom. It is important that learners receive both short-term rewards, such as praise or public recognition, and are made aware of the long-term advantages of learning a foreign language. This keeps them motivated and makes them feel like they are achieving something (Brown 57-58). TPRS incorporates a variety of rewards into instruction. First of all, it rewards creativity. Students are encouraged to take control of the stories, by giving names and characteristics to the story’s characters, settings and events. Creative responses are then seen in the story, where students see their own ideas played out. Additionally, students who act out the stories are generally complimented by the teacher and applauded by the class for their willingness to take on one of the most difficult roles in a TPRS classroom. Actors need to understand the teacher’s narrations and correctly act out the story. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for students to express themselves and show the class who they are. Finally, most teachers who use TPRS will argue that students are very successful in acquiring and using the target language and that this success provides a long-term reward in and of itself (Gross, 2002). Thus, TPRS rewards students by encouraging their creativity and instilling them with confidence.

“Intrinsic motivation” is closely tied to principle of “anticipation of reward.” According to Brown, “intrinsic motivation” occurs when “behavior stems from needs, wants and desires within oneself” (59). In their purest form such “needs, wants and desires” would occur in a real-world context, where a person is using language to achieve some meaningful goal. In TPRS, similar “needs, wants and desires” can be evoked through the stories

themselves. Just as a person watching a foreign television show might feel a desire to understand the dialogue, a student who watches a TPRS story being acted out will almost automatically listen to the speech of the teacher. The student will want to know more about what is going on and the only source of this knowledge is the language produced by the instructor. In order to increase this effect, the stories are supposed to be “bizarre, exaggerated and personalized” (Ray & Seely). TPRS stories are thus intrinsically interesting and entertaining, which motivates student to engage in them.

The last of Brown’s “cognitive principle,” “Strategic investment,” is one area where one might find fault in TPRS. This principle states that a learner’s own “investment” in the language learning process is an essential aspect of language learning. Because different people have different learning styles, each student’s “investment” may come in a different form. Brown suggested that teachers use “a variety of techniques [to] at least partially ensure that you will ‘reach’ a maximum number of students.” (60) TPRS is fairly monotonous in its choice of techniques, which is probably its greatest shortcoming. The focus of TPRS is the comprehension and production of stories, in both oral and written form. Some variety is added by the “Five-Day Lesson Plan” which provides a different introductory activity every day of the week; however, the focus of these activities always remains on storytelling. With its focus on inductive learning, TPRS may alienate those students with a more critical, rule-based style of learning.

In response to such criticism, some have tried to frame TPRS within Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, including Mark Webster in his 2003 Master’s Thesis on TPRS. This theory claims that humans have at least 8 different types of

intelligence and that different people will display greater aptitude in some intelligences and less in others. The intelligences are as follows: Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalistic (Gardner, 8-9). In his brief online article, Dr. Thomas Armstrong outlines how TPRS teaches the various intelligences. Several of the examples are very clearly connected to particular intelligences. The storytelling, along with its portrayal by student actors, caters to the needs of students with strong linguistic, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic and interpersonal learning styles. TPRS encourages the use of songs as mnemonic devices, which would benefit more musically oriented learners (Webster, 25). The personalization inherent in the stories is supposed to foster the use intrapersonal or introspective intelligence, though this is less apparent. Armstrong also claims that naturalistic intelligences are used in TPRS, because the stories often involve animals and exotic places. However, the animals in the stories are often acting in very unnatural ways, and the places are usually rather unrealistic. Finally, he claims the logical-mathematical intelligence will be stimulated by the “use of numbers in stories and grammatical patterns.” (Armstrong) Although TPRS does use brief grammar explanations in the course of stories, these are likely to be too shallow for learners using their logical-mathematical intelligence. In light of Gardner’s theories, one of the major drawbacks to TPRS is that it may not fully cater to the needs of all students in a language classroom, especially if it is implemented exclusively. Of course, it would be challenging to find any method that completely and equally satisfies all of the intelligence.

The “affective principles” describe classroom factors that effect students’ anxiety and their attitude towards the target language. The “Language Ego” is the first of these principles. It states that students will adopt a second ego when learning a foreign language which “can easily create within the learner a sense of fragility, defensiveness, and a raising of inhibitions.” (Brown, 61) TPRS uses the “Language Ego” to its advantage. Students are given fictitious and positive names such as “Princess” or “Handsome guy” in the target language. Thus when students are called on, or act in front of the class, it is acknowledged that they are different people than they are outside of the classroom. This allows them to feel more comfortable and makes it easier for them to adopt the roles they are given in the classroom.

Brown says the “Self-Confidence” principle could be referred to as the “I can do it!” principle (62). This principle claims that if learners believe that they can accomplish the tasks set before them, they have a greater chance of actually accomplishing them. In order to achieve this, the teacher should assure students of his/her confidence in them and should sequence activities from easier to more difficult ones. TPRS definitely incorporates the latter idea, while the former is something teachers are always encouraged to do, though it is not a set aspect of any particular method. In a TPRS lesson sequencing is very important. First, the key terms for the story of the day are introduced, along with their respective TPR gestures. These are then practiced until all students know and understand them. Then, the story is told using a student actor, who uses both the new gestures of the day and those previously learned. The teacher will ask questions as the story progresses, but these too will start with easier yes/no questions and then move up to more open ended questions. It is not until after the story has been told with the actor and then retold by the teacher that the students are

asked to produce the new words. At this point they are asked to retell the story as best they can. In later stages of TPRS, students are next asked to retell the story from a different point of view or in a different tense. This, however is only after they have had plenty of exposure to these forms. (Ray, 67-84) By sequencing activities from easiest to most difficult and making sure the entire class is following, TPRS ensures that learners will be able to complete the tasks before them and thus promotes self-confidence in learners.

The “Risk-Taking” principle states that “Successful language learners [should] attempt to produce and to interpret language that is a bit beyond their absolute certainty” (63) and thus a successful foreign language curriculum will encourage learners to take such risks. This principle is actually close to Krashen’s “Input Hypothesis,” which states that learners need a level of input just past the level of their current proficiency (Krashen, 33). TPRS encourages risk-taking in many ways. First, students can volunteer to act out the stories which requires them to comprehend and perform the new vocabulary of the day, which will always be a little beyond their level. Students are also encouraged to fill in the details of the stories with their own ideas, which promotes student output. This gives them a chance to experiment with the target language at whichever level they feel the most comfortable. As mentioned earlier, many second language researchers view this sort of experimentation as vital to the acquisition process. For example, in response to the question “Where does the boy go next?” students could answer anything, ranging from “Brazil” to “the restaurant on the corner” to “the house of the girl who gave him the flower.” Finally, in the retelling phase of a TPRS lesson, students are encouraged to elaborate and change the story however they like. This gives learners a further opportunity to personalize the stories and to experiment with language forms that may not have been covered in the lesson. The focus of many of

these forms of risk taking is student creativity, not necessarily 100% correct language use, which helps to further reduce the fear of making mistakes and ameliorates the affective atmosphere of the classroom.

The final principle in Brown “affective” category does not apply to TPRS as well as the others. “The Language-Culture Connection” principle states that language and culture are intrinsically connected and that instruction in the culture of the target language should be incorporated into the foreign language classroom (Brown, 64). In the methodological layout of TPRS, the main focus is on language acquisition. Culture is not discussed. However, TPRS does not rule out the instruction of culture. For example, as part of the “Five-Day Lesson Plan,” one day is devoted to discussion. This discussion can take any form the teacher and students wish. Thus this is one time when culture could be discussed. Culture may also be incorporated into the stories. However, in the literature the main goal is to make them “bizarre, exaggerated and personalized,” rather than culturally accurate. The reading portion of the TPRS curriculum is the most likely place where cultural instruction might take place. This would also correspond with TPRS’s focus of inductive learning, as cultural concepts would not have to be explained explicitly, but could rather be discovered by the students in the context of their reading. With its emphasis on stories, TPRS teachers could also incorporate simplified plots from the literary canon of the target language. The literature on TPRS does not discuss the topic of culture much, although the structure of the method could allow for the inclusion of cultural instruction in the context of several of TPRS’ techniques. At present such instruction remains the responsibility of the teacher’s initiative, but this is one area which the method should strive to include into its larger framework.

Linguistic Principles

The category of “linguistic principles” deals with issues that arise for learners from the nature of language itself. The “Native Language Effect” principle states that a learner’s native language will have both interfering and facilitating effects which the language teacher should take into account (65). TPRS exploits the facilitating aspects of the native language quite successfully whenever possible. Stories often include cognates (words that are the same in both the learners native language and the target language) that allow students increased comprehensibility, while embellishing the stories. As for the interfering effects of the native language, during the telling of a TPRS story, the teacher will use an abundance of grammatically correct forms in a comprehensible way. Thus students are exposed to the correct structures repeatedly. This differs drastically from classrooms which are much more learner-centered, where students will hear much more speech from their peers, who inevitably will make mistakes. In this way, TPRS closely resembles the experience of living abroad, where the learner has only correct native utterances to learn from, unless of course s/he is taking courses with other non-native speakers. No method so far has come up with an effective means of counteracting the native language effect, but through its use of cognates and its abundance of grammatically correct input, TPRS has found ways of using this effect to its advantage.

Along the lines of the “Native Language Effect” is the principle of the “Interlanguage” which states that there is a general, natural order in which learners will acquire a language, regardless of the order its structures are taught. This principle closely

resembles Krashen's "Natural Order Hypothesis." According to this principle, at each stage of development, learners will possess their own "interlanguage," which consists of their personal understanding of the target language and will naturally contain errors. For the most part, it can be assumed that with enough exposure and practice in the language these errors will eventually correct themselves. However, teachers should search out specific, systematic errors in both individual learners' interlanguage, as well as in the general performance of the class. By raising students' awareness of these errors, the teacher helps students to progress to the next phase of interlanguage development more quickly (Brown, 67-8). TPRS incorporates this principle as well. Learners are first asked to comprehend the target language holistically, which places less emphasis on a correct understanding of grammatical forms. Whenever specific, difficult syntactic or lexical forms occur, they are briefly explained, so that learners get repetitive exposure to the important differences between their native language and the target language. When students do produce language, in oral or written form, it is judged on comprehensibility, not necessarily accuracy. In writing samples, a teacher may decide to focus on one mistake that occurs repeatedly, but will not point out every error. Thus when students review the work that they have done, they see what specific language forms they need to focus on in the development of their own unique interlanguage. By accepting the notion of a natural order of acquisition, TPRS places less pressure on the interlanguage to be accurate beyond its current potential. This helps to further lower the affective barriers in the classroom and promote self-confidence in the learner.

The last of the linguistic principles is "Communicative Competence." This can be best summed up as the notion that the goal of foreign language instruction for students to be able to effectively use the skills they learned in the classroom in spontaneous, real-world

situations. Beyond this definition, opinions may vary. For the most part, it can be supported that students in a TPRS classroom achieve communicative competence, due to the massive exposure they receive to the language. However, one aspect of communicative competence that is often emphasized in CLT is the ability to perform various language “functions,” such as ordering a meal or asking for directions. TPRS does not address these functions directly. The vocabulary and structures needed to perform them may be covered in the course of instruction and the functions may be carried out in the course of certain stories. However, the instruction of individual functions is by no means a primary focus of TPRS. The question arises however, how important are functions in reality? The majority of social interaction consists of the exchange of social information (Dunbar, 123), which most often occurs in some form of narration or story. These language forms can often be translated into functions as well. Consider the narrative statement “I’d like to be an astronaut.” as it compares to the functional statement “I’d like a ham sandwich.” Thus even though functions are not explicitly taught in TPRS, student may still be able to perform them with the language that they do know. Some functions could be intentionally incorporated into TPRS stories through the use of dialogue. For example to teach students how to make a polite request, one might include a line such as “He said, ‘Could you please pass the salt?’” However, this may be too much of a stretch, when more direct techniques could be used to explain the same point.

Total Physical Response Storytelling corresponds closely with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. Only in the cases of certain principles does TPRS deviate from CLT. In the case of “Strategic Investment,” TPRS does encourage a wide range of learning styles, though not all of them. TPRS leave has the potential to include instruction that would satisfy the “Language-Culture Connection” but does not explicitly prescribe it. As

for “Communicative Competence,” although TPRS does not address the issue of functions specifically, it does create speakers that are confident in their language skills and are thus more likely to be able to carry out fluent interaction. Still, the instruction of functions may prove to be an important barrier for TPRS. Just as classical TPR was limited in the grammatical and lexical items it could introduce; TPRS is limited in the type of discourse competence it can teach. Though TPRS students may become skilled in basic social interaction in the target language, they may lack the skills needed to accomplish practical tasks in the target culture, due to their lack of both cultural sensitivity and functional language competencies. In most other instances, TPRS provides an effective way of using CLT principles and engaging learners. Even if CLT teachers do not wish to adopt TPRS as their sole method of instruction, many of its techniques could still prove to be effective additions to a CLT based curriculum.

Folklore and TPRS

Since storytelling presents the most distinctive innovation in TPRS, it is valuable to analyze it in terms of folklore, which focuses specifically on this art form. A discussion of the nature of storytelling can help to explain why it presents such a powerful means of instruction. As has been mentioned before, at least two-thirds of our linguistic interaction consists of the sharing of social information and this is most often achieved through stories. We can tell stories about events that happened to us and events we witnessed. We can retell

stories that we have heard before. We can tell stories about movies, parties, classes, relationships, restaurants, politics or just about any subject. One person's story will lead into another person's and by sharing these stories we grow closer to one another, learn about the world around us and establish our identities. The anthropologist/folklorist Megan Biesele even proposes that storytelling represents "the expressive heart of human communication systems in all cultures" (Berch & Heckler, 12). In a foreign language classroom, filled with strange sounds and foreign culture, storytelling can thus provide an appeal to a universal human interest.

In the domain of folklore, just as was the case with linguistics and pedagogy, TPRS fit in with many of the current trends without either realizing or acknowledging it. In fact, over the past 20 years, storytelling has experienced a kind of renaissance in the US. This is evidenced by the publishing of countless books on how to write and tell stories, the appearance of storytelling festivals and an increased interest in using stories in education (Stone, 621-3). One storyteller in this new tradition, Jack Zipes, who is also a professor of German at the University of Minnesota, has been visiting schools for the past twenty years, both telling stories and teaching children how to tell their own stories. He sees storytelling as a powerful means of building communities both inside and outside schools. For Zipes, learning to tell stories can help children understand and interpret their own experiences (Zipes, 2, 6-7). These are important goals in TPRS as well, which aims at building a supportive classroom community through the telling of personalized stories.

Stories are in fact a very important and powerful aspect of a child's development. In her essay on conversational narratives of ten to twelve year olds, Janet Maybin explains how

children use stories to “learn and try out cultural values” (131). By telling about their experience, children need to take on the voices of the different characters in the story, which requires some understanding of the motives for their actions. The reactions of the child’s audience will also “influence their sense of selfhood and their power to affect others” (130). This idea of the story as a means of emotional development is incorporated in TPRS through the personalization of the stories with activities and events from students own lives (Ray & Seely, 15). Class discussions, free-writes and retellings, also give students further means to express themselves freely both to the teacher and to the class. Thus in a TPRS classroom, stories help to build a supportive learning community.

Another researcher, Brian W. Sturm, sees storylistening as a powerful phenomenon as well. He claims that “the most profound and influential characteristic of storytelling [is] its power to entrance those who listen” (15). He even goes as far as to claim that stories can bring about an altered-state of consciousness if the conditions are correct. Sturm describes several factors that can help to either trigger or inhibit such a “trance experience.” These include:

the storytelling style, the activation of the listener’s memories, the listeners feeling of safety or comfort, the story content, the storytellers ability, the storyteller’s involvement in the story, the listener’s expectations being met, the listener’s occupation or training, the sense of rapport between the listener and the storyteller, the novelty or familiarity of the story, rhythm, humor, and recency (22).

These principles demonstrate how intricate the art of storytelling really is and although they are intended for professional storytellers speaking to an audience that presumably understands their language, they may prove useful for TPRS teachers as well.

Of these principles, Sturm notes that telling style, comfort, rhythm and humor can also serve as distractions to storylistening (23). They are therefore extremely important for TPRS teachers to consider, since many of these areas are particularly inclined to form a distraction in a foreign language classroom. TPRS stories are supposed to be told in a style that is “bizarre, exaggerated, and personalized.” Although this may be successful sometimes, it may be better for the teacher to experiment with various styles in order to find one that work both for him/her and the class, instead of adopting a prescribed style. The issue of comfort may also play a significant role in a TPRS classroom. Students may feel uncomfortable using a foreign language for communication, which may detract from the effect of the story. As mentioned before, TPRS does try to take many affective factors into consideration; however this general discomfort with foreign languages needs to be kept in mind by teachers. The rhythm of the story may also prove a difficult factor for TPRS teachers to manage when telling a story. Being limited in the amount of vocabulary available to them, TPRS stories are by their very nature short and simple. Despite these limitations, the teacher can embellish the stories through the process of questioning, which serves to both add to the story and to reiterate previously mentioned plot information. There needs to be an adequate balance of new plot information and the different types of questions in order to maintain a proper rhythm. Without such a rhythm, the storylisteners/students are likely to get distracted. Finally, teachers need to be careful not to try too hard to be humorous. Humor is an important aspect of TPRS, but if used excessively, or if it is too “bizarre [or] exaggerated”

students are likely to begin focusing more on the teacher's bad jokes than the story and even less on the language. Thus, there are several issues of style that a TPRS teacher needs to take into consideration when presenting a TPRS story in class.

The fact that storytelling is an art form seems to be largely overlooked in the literature on TPRS, which views storytelling purely as a pedagogical tool. Of course storytelling can be used as a tool, but in order to do so effectively, one must understand its art. TPRS prescribes various techniques to help teachers tell stories more effectively, but it omits any discussion of the underlying principles of storytelling as discussed above. Stories are a powerful medium which help people discover themselves and others. Sturm describes the many factors that go into making a good storytelling, not least of which is its content. The TPRS mantra of "bizarre, exaggerated and personalized" may make for fun and entertaining stories occasionally, but with such a powerful art form at one's disposal, should one not focus on using it to teach students about themselves and each other, rather than just to get a laugh? TPRS attempts this to a degree by encouraging personalization of the stories, but teachers may want to consider endowing the stories they create with some deeper meaning as well. Perhaps it is unrealistic to expect teachers in a real classroom environment to be master storytellers as well, but this is nevertheless a goal for TPRS teachers to strive for.

Section 3: The Practical Application of TPRS

Although pedagogical and linguistic theories can be of great use to foreign language educators, in the end, these theories need to be applied in real-life classroom situations. After having read much of the theory concerning TPR Storytelling, I had the opportunity to experiment with the method during an internship created by my advisor, Professor Dorothee Ostmeier, and her associate, Professor Susan Anderson, from the Department of Germanic Languages and Literature. During this internship, I taught German language and culture to a class of 27 sixth grade students at Spencer's Butte Middle School in Eugene, Oregon. The lessons were given in the context of a 9 week world languages course taught by Ms. Faye Creed, in which the students studied a wide variety of languages. My three week session, consisted of 15 classes, lasting 45 minutes each. At the end of the session, the students took a quiz and filled out evaluations in which they could express their impressions of the course. This internship helped me to further develop my ideas about TPRS and clarified some important issues concerning the application of TRPS in the classroom which will be discussed in this section.

The daily lessons were all usually structured in a similar fashion. First, we would do a warm-up activity, during which I would talk to individual students in German. These conversations usually consisted of a greeting, introductions and a few questions. As the session progressed, they also got longer as the students learned more vocabulary. Next, I would discuss the cultural topic of the day, in English. These included topics such as geography, education, sports and food. Students were encouraged to share whatever they might already know about Germany and they often asked questions. After the cultural discussions, I would tell the story of the day. Because, I spent much of my time on the previous two activities and because of the beginning-level of my students, I was not able to complete all of the steps of TPRS. Usually, I would introduce the words, select actors and proceed directly with the story. Instead of having the students retell the story, I used a technique that I saw during a demonstration of TPRS by its founder Blaine Ray. I put an alternate version of the story on the overhead and had the students translate it. The idea behind this was to delay the students' production of the language and instead have them focus on comprehension first. If there was time left at the end of class, we would play a game involving German in order to relax and further practice the language.

Here, one can already see some of the problems of a practical application of TPRS. In this particular context, I could only use a limited amount of TPRS for instruction. Because the course was supposed to include a significant amount of culture, as well as language, at least ten minutes of every class period was devoted to culture, leaving only 35 minutes for other language instruction. Also, in a class of absolute beginners, I felt that it was necessary to teach them the basic vocabulary for greetings and simple conversations, which could not easily be done in the context of TPRS. In order to achieve this, I had to devote another 10

minutes to the warm-up activity that focused on these skills. This modification exemplifies the limitations of TPRS in the instruction of functions, as discussed earlier. Finally, I was advised by Ms. Creed that, in the context of a sixth grade class, it was wise to keep the activities short and varied in order to maintain the attention of the students. Therefore, the first challenge I faced was not being able to use TPRS as much as is prescribed due to my particular context and goals. This is likely to be the case in other contexts as well.

Limitations may be set on teachers by administrators in the form of a prescribed curriculum or textbook, or simply by the nature of their learners.

The nature of one's students is another important factor in one's choice of method or approach. In TPRS the goal is for everyone to succeed (Ray & Seely, 75), which means that it tends to teach towards the lower level students. This is achieved through constant repetition of a limited set of target words for the day (usually about three) and only brief grammatical explanations. The stories should also be entertaining enough to make class fun. This helps to make the class seem easier and less stressful. Unfortunately, some more advanced students may become bored with such a slow pace and the monotony of the repetitions. In my class, many of the most active and successful students were the ones that Ms. Creed had told me were the slowest. One of them had been getting C's and D's in his other classes and ended up with the one of the highest grades on the final quiz. On the other hand, some of the more advanced students would get bored with the lessons and stop paying attention and start distracting other students. Though they still did well on the quiz, they created a discipline problem that detracted from the lessons as a whole. Thus an important issue to address is how TPRS could be altered to still challenge the more advanced students, without leaving the others behind in the process. In a post of the "MoreTPRS" internet

newsgroup (# 50151), Ray suggests that teachers should mix in more advanced structures and questions to challenge the advance students, while still focusing on the comprehension of the lower level students. He also suggests challenging them with more advanced reading material. In the end however, these still do not seem to overcome the problem of the monotony of the stories' repetitions and advanced or additional reading material may make advance students feel like they are simply being given more work, instead of adequate attention.

One further problem that I encountered using TPRS was attention. It was difficult to make sure that everyone was paying attention, while still telling the story, managing the student actors and questioning students on the story. With longer stories especially, some students would get bored and distracted. Asking questions about the story provided the primary means by which I tried to bring students back into the activity. However, this aspect of TPRS is meant to check comprehension and provide repetitions of the day's vocabulary and not as a disciplinary tool. When used as such, questioning detracted from the lesson in that students were usually caught off guard, making them more uncomfortable and slowing down the pace of the class. Ideally, the stories themselves would be interesting enough to engage students. Ray suggests that the key to maintaining interest is personalization of the story, which means giving students control over it. I tried to incorporate this as much as possible, but there were only a few points that I could let the students decide, such as the names of characters, because of their limited vocabulary. I was also nervous about giving students too much control over the story, because I thought it could take the story in a direction that did not focus on the target words as much. The problem with attention may have also stemmed from the age group that I was working with and/or my own inexperience

using the method and as a teacher. Also as was mentioned in the discussion of storytelling as an art form, there are several factors that contribute to effective storytelling, and it is likely that in my own inexperience, I was not able to take all of these into consideration.

This brings up the next challenge facing a teacher interested in using TPRS, training. Before I began teaching my class, I had seen demonstrations of the method by its founder, Blaine Ray, and I had read his book on how to practice the method. During demonstrations by experienced TPRS users, both live and on video, I was always impressed by how much I was able to learn so easily. The experienced TPRS teachers that I have seen were able to at least overcome the obstacle of a lack of attention mentioned above. Generally, their lessons moved much quicker than mine. They included more questioning, more student participation and more interesting stories than I was able to write. Many of these advantages probably simply come from experience, though it is important to note that the classes in both demonstrations were smaller than mine, with older (high school) students.

Although class size and age may be beyond the control of the teacher, there are several means available to teachers interested in using TPRS to help them improve their technique. Aside from Ray and Seely's book describing TPRS, there are also workshops and a substantial online community of TPRS practitioners. The workshops, in which an experienced TPRS teacher explains and demonstrates the method, generally last for 2-5 days and cost between \$250-350 depending on their length. There are also reduced rates for teachers paying out of their own pockets. During the summer of 2004, 23 of these workshops will take place around the country, allowing teachers to be trained during their vacations (www.blaineraytprs.com). In addition to the workshops, there are numerous web pages to

support TPRS teachers, as well as a Yahoo! Group dedicated solely to TPRS. The Yahoo! Group, "MoreTPRS," is particularly interesting, as it allows the entire TPRS community to communicate with each other, to share ideas and ask for advice. Currently, there are 1863 members of this online community, and over 50,000 messages posted on it. This wealth of ideas and communication has helped TPRS be very dynamic in its evolution, while providing a supportive network for those just starting to use it.

The final issue that arose out of my experience using TPRS was the amount of energy it required. This came in both the form of creativity outside the classroom and sheer involvement inside the classroom. I had to write my own stories that had to be creative and entertaining enough to maintain the students' interests. This may be becoming less of an issue, as TPRS becomes more widespread and teachers can begin sharing their stories with each other. However, in class I had to be constantly active as well. Either, I was leading the warm-up activity or the cultural discussion, or I was telling/directing the story. Luckily for me, I only had to teach one class per day. Had I taught many more, I may not have been able to keep up the same pace throughout the day. The question of energy may also boil down to an issue of experience. As one gets more familiar with TPRS it is likely to become easier and consume less physical and mental energy. Until this point though, the question of energy may serve to frustrate teachers experimenting with TPRS full-time, when they have the option of working off of prefabricated textbook materials instead, which require much less planning and active involvement in the class.

Other than these issues, I would say that my application of TPRS was successful. The evaluations from the students were overwhelmingly positive. More than half of the class

expressed interest in taking German in the future (proponents of TPRS claim that it fosters higher retention rates). Most of the students also thought that the lessons were fun and easy, though two of them said they were hard. When asked to rank the six primary activities (Stories, Games, Warm-up, Culture, Writing and Quizzes), the stories generally ranked in the top three, with games being the predominant favorite. In terms of the quiz, the students did very well, though admittedly it was designed for the students to demonstrate what they knew, not necessarily to discover what they did not know. There was an only one language question that was consistently missed by about half of the class. It asked students to translate the sentence “Sie will mit einen Elefanten Tennis spielen (She wants to play tennis with an elephant),” which is a complex sentence for such an early stage of a language class. All together, the students scored an average of 42 out of 45 on the language section and did well on both the cultural and extra-credit portion of the quiz as well.

Conclusion

Total Physical Response Storytelling synthesizes a long tradition of foreign language teaching methodologies, linguistic research and the art of storytelling to create an innovative, effective and fun way of learning a new language. In many cases it has been demonstrated that TPRS corresponds with current trends in language pedagogy, linguistics and folklore research without necessarily realizing or acknowledging these important connections. As TPRS continues to grow, it will be necessary for it to adopt these theories into its methodological framework in order to gain greater legitimacy, as well as to improve the method itself. It is also likely that TPRS will increasingly become an object of study for these fields, which have a great deal to gain from it.

With its innovative practices which fit into the current communicative framework, TPRS presents a feasible alternative to the way languages are currently taught, though it is important for teachers to consider their particular context when deciding whether to use TPRS or not. TPRS has been employed most successfully in the secondary school environment, where student are often required to take a language. In such a setting, where motivation is usually lacking, a method such as TPRS which presents language in an entertaining way may help to motivate students. With younger students, especially, TPRS's de-emphasis of explicit grammar instruction may prove more fitting for the needs of such learners. However, when dealing with increasingly older students, particularly at the

university level, TPRS may move too slowly, be too repetitive and lacking in formal grammatical instruction to appeal to more academically orientated students. It is sometimes noted that with a vocabulary of the 2000 most frequent words in a language, a learner can understand about 80% of the language s/he come into contact with (Decarrico, 286). With class five times a week, over four years, learning 3-5 words per day, a TPRS student should learn around 2000 words, and learn them well due to the focus on repetition in TPRS. If this is accomplished at the high school level, it would mean that students can enter the university with well developed fluency, which can then be expanded. For students beginning their language study in the university though, the goal is to produce learners who can process language well beyond those 2000 basic words. Thus if TPRS were employed at the university, it would have to be either accelerated or augmented with other techniques in order to provide students with the language skills necessary for academic purposes. This is not to say that TPRS could not be used intermittently at this level in order to practice listening comprehension, which is its specialty, or to emphasize particular vocabulary items. Aside from the question of age-groups, teachers need to reflect on their own personal style when considering TPRS. It is a method that requires the teacher to be very active in directing the action of the class. One needs to be energetic, creative and funny to successfully employ TPRS. Thus, TPRS is not universally applicable, though there are contexts where it fits quite well.

In terms of culture, although this does not need to be taught explicitly, it should be included in any foreign language classroom. Stories can take place in the country where the target language is spoken, with characters traveling to various important locations in that country. The literature of the target language could be summarized and adapted in order to be

told in the context of a TPRS story. For example, Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis" could be simplified to: "A man wakes up. He discovers he is a beetle. He cannot get out of bed. His mother knocks on the door. He cannot open the door because he is a beetle and he cannot get out of bed. His sister knocks on the door. Etc." In this way, culturally important stories could be told, which also have a deeper human meaning than simply being "bizarre, exaggerated and personalized," though this may be the case, too. TPRS stories could further be used to tell the history of the country. Story and history are closely related and in many languages are even expressed with the same word (ex. Geschichte, histoire). The stories should also be used to expose students to the day to day culture of the country of interest. The characters in the story should not simply act in "bizarre" ways, but in culturally and ethically appropriate ways. Learning a foreign language consists not only of learning how to communicate with people from another part of the world, but also of how to interact with them. Knowledge of the target culture and history is vital for the latter and therefore needs to be more actively included in the framework of TPRS.

Furthermore, TPRS needs to learn more from the professional storytelling community. Storytelling is an art which is even more difficult when it is employed in a foreign language. This difficulty does not mean however that it is appropriate to use stories simply for utilitarian purposes, without regard for their aesthetic value. The TPRS mantra of "bizarre, exaggerated and personalized" stories grossly underestimates the intricacy of this art form. TPRS teachers need training in how to write and present stories that are both entertaining and educational. When organizing training workshops, the TPRS community may want to consider inviting professional storytellers to give presentations. Of course not

every foreign language teacher can be expected to be a master storyteller, but they can learn from them.

TPRS is not perfect, but has a great deal of potential. As the successor to classical TPR, its foundation consists of one of the most effective methods of teaching vocabulary yet designed. TPRS overcomes many of the barriers faced by TPR's focus on commands by incorporating of the universal human art of storytelling, though it is still limited in the discourse structures it can teach. TPRS is continuing to grow and as it does it is likely to improve. The TPRS community needs to realize and address the issues raised in this thesis in order to continue to innovate. As its ideas are incorporated into mainstream language teaching practices, it is likely that foreign language classes will become much more enjoyable and effective for all involved.

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Appendix A: Sample Lesson Plans

Monday, March 1st

Objective: Introduce self and Germany. Teach first story + vocab: Es gibt; heist; spielt and introduce close cognates Maus; Elefant; Guitare; Rockmusik; Haus

Materials: Worksheets (Cognate/Story), Overheads (Guidewords/Cognates/Map(?))

Procedures:

Introduction: Introduce self - German heritage, time spent in Germany, France, Russia; Thesis; Introduce Germany: Map of Europe/Germany and German speaking countries; Ask if any one has German heritage, knows anything else about Germany. (10-15 min)

Cognate Worksheet:

Teacher reads the word in German and asks individual students for guesses on what words mean (each student may do 1-3 at a time, depending on their difficulty). Students should write the definitions next to the words. Students do not need to worry about remembering words. This is only an exercise to show the similarities between German and English. (10 min)

Story #1:

Es gibt eine *Maus*. Sie heisst _____

Es gibt einen *Elefanten*. Er heisst _____

Die Maus spielt *Guitare*.

Der Elefant spielt *Trompete*.

Die Maus *und* der Elefant spielen *Rockmusik*.

Sie spielen in einer *Rockgruppe*.

Die Rockgruppe heisst "Maus *im Haus*"

(15 min)

Short Retell: Without actors (3 min) (Can be skipped)

Hand-out: Written version of story (maybe with some alterations/ additions (cognate animals/instruments) Students will take turns translating sentences for the class. The teacher will help and give hints whenever necessary. This should be a low stress, easy exercise. (Point out that nouns (thing-words) are capitalized, students don't need to worry about this to much though, since they will only be reading for now) (5-10)

Results: Studnets can now understand 15 words in German

Tuesday, March 2nd

Objectives: Familiarize students with the way Germany looks. Teach Story #2.

Materials: Picture books of Germany, Worksheets (Picture; Story), Overhead (Guide words; Map (?))

Procedures:

Geography: Pass out picture worksheets and books. Students are to look through the books and note their favorite and strangest places/pictures in each. Switch every three minutes or so. (15 min) The favorite pictures will be presented the next day in a power point slide show.

Story #2

Es gibt ein Maedchen. Sie heisst Supergirl.

Sie spricht *Spanisch*.

Sie spricht *Franzoesisch*.

Sie spricht Deutsch.

Es gibt einen Jungen.

Der Junge heisst Jimbo der One-man-band

Er spielt Guitare

Er spielt *Saxophone*.

Er *singt*.

Er *tanz!*

Er spielt in eine Rockgruppe mit die Maus und der Elefant.

Die Rockgruppe heisst "Maus im Haus"

(20 min)

Teacher retell: (5 min) (Can be omitted)

Hand-out: Longer version of the story. Students translate with teacher's help. (5-10 min)

Wednesday, March 3rd

Objectives: Discuss differences between American and German cities/geography. Further familiarize students with German cities. Teach Story #3

Materials: Picture book of Germany, hand-outs and overheads (Story, outline map of Germany, greetings), ball

Procedures:

1) Practice Greetings (use ball). (5-10 min)

2) Teach geography: Make map/ show pictures of corresponding German cities

3) Story #3

Es gibt ein Junge/Maedchen

E/S heisst _____

Er wohnt in Eugene.

Er spricht _____

Er spielt _____ (Instruments/Sports)

Es regnet in Eugene.

Es ist kalt.

Er geht nach Mexico.

Der *Praesident* von Mexico wohnt in Mexico.

Er spricht Spanisch mit den Praesident von Mexico.

Es ist sehr kalt in Mexico.

Es schneit in Mexico.

Er geht zuruck nach Eugene.

Er spricht Englisch.

Es ist sonnig in Eugene.

Es ist *warm* in Eugene.

Er geht zu Spencer's Butte Mittel Schule.

Er spricht Spanisch mit Faye.

(15-20)

4) Student's read story/translate. (5-10 min)

5) Game: Flyswatter. (Any remaining time)

Results: Students now know about 35 German words

Thursday, March 4th

Objectives: Introduce German school system. Teach Story #4, introduce numbers.

Materials: German class schedule, Story hand-out

Procedures:

What are American schools like?

Elementary School 1-5

Middle School 6-8

High School 9-12

College

-Go to school from 8 to 3 (Ask student for his/her schedule)

-Do you get to choose any of your classes? Which ones?

-What happens when a teacher is gone?

-How much vacation do you get?

-How many days a week do you have to go to class?

-What are German Schools like?

Elementary School 1-4

Hauptschule 5-10 Realschule 5-10 Gymnasium (5-13)

->Job ->Technical School ->University

- *You have a set group that you always have class with and you are usually with the same class for your entire education in a school.*
- *Often you get to go on extended fieldtrips called "Klassenfahrten" with your class.*
- *School goes for different amounts of time everyday of the week. (show example schedule)*
- *You have a little less choice in what classes you take (for example foreign languages), though you usually get at least one elective.*
- *When a teacher is gone, usually class is cancelled!*
- *You get a lot of vacation during the year, but less during the summer.*
- *Sometimes you have to go to school on Saturdays ☺*

Introduce Numbers:

Teachers counts out-loud and on fingers up to ten, once by himself. Then students repeat after teacher. Object is to give students an idea about what numbers sound like. They don't need to memorize. (Numbers will be used in the story and through questioning during the story, always showing the number with fingers.)

Story #4

Es gibt eine Rockgruppe

In der Rockgruppe, gibt es funf Spieler.

Es gibt ein ____ Er spielt _____ (Ein Elefant, Eine Maus, eine *Giraffe*, ein *Tiger*)

Es gibt ein ____ Sie spielt _____ (Guitare, Bass, Trommel, Trompete, *Akkordion*)

Es gibt ein ____ Sie spielt _____

Es gibt eine Katze. Sie sprich Deutsch. Sie spricht auch Englisch. Sie singt.

Es gibt ein Känguruh. Das Känguruh tanzt. Es heisst Mr. Fabulous!

Die Rockgruppe wohnt in Eugene.

Sie spielen Musik in Eugene.

Die Katze ist Deutsche.

Sie will nach Deutschland gehen.

Es ist (kalt/warm) in Eugene.

Es (ist sonnig/schneit/regnet) in Eugene.

Die Rockgruppe geht nach Deutschland

____ will nach ____ gehen (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

____ geht nach _____ (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

Es (ist sonnig/schneit/regnet) in (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

Die Rockgruppe geht nach Deutschland

____ will nach ____ gehen (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

____ geht nach _____ (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

Es (ist sonnig/schneit/regnet) in (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

____ spielt ____ in (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien)

Teacher Retell

Students read/ translate

Friday, March 5th

Objectives: Review and relax.

Materials: German school supplies, hand out, music and stereo

Procedures:

Pass around materials from sixth grade in Germany. Ask students how these materials are similar to those they use, how are they different. (5-10)

Story #5 - Review

Es gibt einen Jungen. Er heisst _____

Er wohnt in (Deutschland/ Oesterreich). Er wohnt in (Muenchen, Hamburg, Berlin, Koeln, Wien). Er ist Deutscher.

Er studiert an der Realschule. Er studiert Englisch.

Er spielt _____.

Es regnet in _____. Es ist kalt in _____

Er will nach Amerika gehen.

Er will nach (Oregon, Texas, New York, Californien, Alaska, Hawaii) gehen.

Er geht nach _____.

In _____ ist es sonnig.

Es ist sehr warm.

In _____ gibt es ein Maedchen. Sie heisst _____

Sie wohnt in _____ (Eugene/Corvallis, New York/Buffalo, L.A./San. Fransisco, Anchorage/Fairbanks, Maui/Oahu).

Sie spielt _____. Sie spielt in einer Rockgruppe.

Sie spricht Spanisch.

Er spricht Englisch mit dem Maedchen.

Er will in der Rockgruppe spielen.

Der Junge und das Maedchen spielen in der Rockgruppe.

Der Junge spielt _____ und das Maedchen spielt _____

Der Junge singt und das Maedchen tanzt.

(15-20 min)

Teacher retells (5 min)

Reading/translation (5-10 min)

Students retell: Students turn over the hand-out. Each student retells one or two sentences. The story does not have to be exactly the same as the first time. (10 min)

End class period with free-time. Put on German hip-hop music. (3 min)