

# The Evolution of Foreign Language Pedagogy

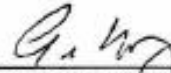
by  
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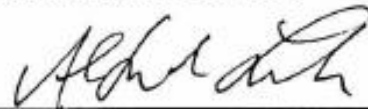
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## Abstract

*The Evolution of Pedagogy* is a research-based thesis that takes a chronological look at how foreign language teaching methods have developed in the past and how they are developing at present, as well as a consideration of possible future trends. The five methods that were selected represent major shifts in the evolution of foreign language teaching methods. Each is dissected into an introduction of the method, common principles and concepts, advantages, disadvantages, and a conclusion. The five interviews with Middle Tennessee State University faculty provide realistic insight into how these methods have manifested themselves in the lives of professionals. In addition to the chronological research of specialists and the interviews, there is a brief overview of current technological developments affecting foreign languages. This thesis ends with a deliberation on what the ideal future for foreign language pedagogy would look like.

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## Definition of Key Terms

- ACTFL - The American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages sets guidelines for assessing the proficiency of a foreign language speaker.
- Approach - A way of doing or thinking about something.
- Deductive - Presentation of a rule followed by examples in which the rule is applied.  
Learning
- Inductive - Examples from which the rule is to be inferred.  
Learning
- Linguistics - The scientific study of language and its structure.
- Methods - Particular form of procedure for accomplishing something.
- Native - Also known as a first language, is one that a person has been exposed to  
Language from birth.
- Pedagogy - The method and practice of teaching. [plural noun: pedagogies]
- Target - A foreign language that a person intends to learn.  
Language

## CHAPTER I

### The Past

#### GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD

To locate the beginning of modern methodologies in foreign language teaching, one must travel back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Between the 16<sup>th</sup> century and late 19<sup>th</sup> century, foreign language teaching focused mainly on the translation of texts in dead, or classical, languages, like Latin and Greek. In his thesis on the history of foreign language teaching methods, Muhammad Mahboob Ali writes that, “People were of the opinion that Latin and Greek languages were the repositories of ancient civilization and any effort made towards learning or teaching of these languages was considered laudable.”<sup>1</sup> The “Grammar-Translation Method” is so named because the foreign language is translated directly from the text, with instructions on common grammar rules, and the texts are then memorized for reciting. All the focus is on reading and writing, with little to no focus on speaking and pronunciation. Moving from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, European civilization developed and “the need for practical skills in the spoken language became more obvious with improved travel and communication.”<sup>2</sup> Foreign language teaching began to branch out to include more modern languages, like French and German. During this time, since the Grammar-Translation Method was used to teach the “so called superior or classical languages like Greek and Latin ... people imitated the same language teaching method for modern languages also.”<sup>3</sup> It would eventually be realized,

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<sup>1</sup> Ali, Muhammad Mahboob, “A historical review of foreign language teaching methods with particular reference to the teaching of grammar,” Durham University, 1995: 31, [etheses.dur.ac.uk/5094/1/5094\\_2547.PDF?UkUDh:CyT](https://theses.dur.ac.uk/5094/1/5094_2547.PDF?UkUDh:CyT).

<sup>2</sup> Howatt, A.P., and Richard Smith, “The History of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, from a British and European Perspective,” *Language & History*, vol. 57, no. 1, 17 Sept. 2014, pp. 77, *Taylor & Francis Online*, doi:10.1179/1759753614z.00000000030.

<sup>3</sup> Ali, 31.

however, that the methods used to translate the ancient texts would not be effective when teaching modern languages.

The concepts and principles that surround the Grammar-Translation Method are easy to recognize, as it is a very straightforward teaching method. The main goals of this method are “mental discipline and intellectual development.”<sup>4</sup> During those centuries, one was considered a superior intellectual if he studied Latin and Greek. Mental discipline was perceived as vital to the successful study of foreign languages. In the pursuit of translating an ancient text, the main foci were on reading, writing, and memorization. Because these texts were written in dead languages, there was no need to focus on speaking or pronunciation. As Gang Zhou and Xiaochun Niu explain, “Knowing and doing should be the two sides of language learning ... and Grammar-Translation Method emphasizes ‘knowing’ at the expense of ‘doing’.”<sup>5</sup> As texts or passages were introduced, the new grammar rules were explained, and the texts were translated and memorized. Due to the wide variety of literary resources, there was no set order to the presentation of new vocabulary or grammar rules; they were taught as the texts necessitated it. This means that the level of difficulty of the texts being used determine the pace of progression in the class. Another distinguishing aspect of this foreign language teaching method is the type of teacher-to-student interaction.

According to Diane Larsen-Freeman in her work *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*: “The teacher is the authority in the classroom. The students do as she says so

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<sup>4</sup> Richards, Jack C., and Theodore S. Rodgers, *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, Cambridge University Press, 1986: 3.

<sup>5</sup> Zhou, Gang, and Xiaochun Niu, “Approaches to Language Teaching and Learning,” *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, vol. 6, no. 4, July 2015, pp. 799, doi:dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0604.11.



that they can learn what she knows” and “Most of the interaction in the classroom is from the teacher to the students. There is little student-student interaction.”<sup>6</sup>

Every foreign language teaching method has its advantages and disadvantages. The Grammar-Translation Method did not last for centuries without having a few positive traits. With Latin and Greek being considered superior languages, and their study considered to increase mental discipline, the student faced high expectations. For that reason, the caliber of students who studied these languages was higher than that of the average person. In those times it was understood that, “Literary language is superior to spoken language,”<sup>7</sup> and the study of foreign texts helped students gain an appreciation for foreign literature. In his thesis, Ali examines a few advantages of the Grammar-Translation Method, “it can be taught to classes of any size. The teachers of language through the method can afford to be a bit second rate. Teachers with an imperfect knowledge of the language and no special teaching techniques can be successful in this, and it is an easy way of teaching cheaply and economically.”<sup>8</sup> The reason the teachers do not need to be able to speak the language is because that is not what they are teaching the students to do; they are simply providing the students with a text, explaining grammar rules, and letting the students do the rest. These advantages explain why, despite common perceptions about it, this method is still used in conjunction with other methods today.

A consideration of the disadvantages will help illuminate why the Grammar-Translation Method gradually evolved into new teaching methods. At that time, those

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<sup>6</sup> Larsen-Freeman, Diane, *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 2000: 17-18.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>8</sup> Ali, 33.

who opposed this method regarded it “as a cold and lifeless approach,”<sup>9</sup> and with the primary foci on reading and writing, the lack of speaking became a problem when communication between countries began developing due to increased trade and commerce. Those who were teaching the modern languages were mimicking the methods of those who taught the classic languages, but this did not work because people needed to be able to communicate with one another when using these modern foreign languages. When studying the texts, the goal was to understand the structure of the sentence, rather than its content. For students who were accustomed “to wanting to see language 'black-and-white',” this method neglected “to expose learners to ‘authentic varieties in a ‘functional context’.”<sup>10</sup> Another disadvantage was that the teachers remained unaffected by the high expectations of this method, while the students became frustrated or bored with the rigorous studies. All these disadvantages combined brought about the need for a more comprehensive approach to teaching a foreign language. Techniques that had worked for centuries with teaching the classic languages of Latin and Greek, were now inadequate to meeting the needs of a changing world.

The Grammar-Translation Method endured for centuries, and is, in part, still seen today in classrooms all over the world. This method could be effective when considering ancient texts or classical languages, but there were improvements that the development of trade and commerce between countries and continents necessitated. Some well-known figures saw the need for change in foreign language pedagogy and began to make adjustments. These men included Wilhelm Viëtor (1850-1918), philologist and linguist; Maximilian Berlitz (1852-1921), linguist and founder of the Berlitz Language Schools;

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>10</sup> Zhou and Niu, 799.

and Otto Jespersen (1860-1943), Danish linguist who specialized in English grammar.

All these men began to reform the way foreign languages were taught, and they brought on new, more effective methods during their time.

## **DIRECT METHOD**

The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw significant reforms in foreign language pedagogy. Leading into the turn of the century, countries were becoming more and more connected through commerce, ease of transportation, and increased interest in other cultures. These cultural developments created a demand for oral proficiency in foreign languages. Educators attempted to respond to this need with a familiar method, Grammar-Translation. However, the shortcomings of the Grammar-Translation method, specifically its lack of emphasis on verbal skills and inability to produce capable communicators, were gradually revealed as weaknesses. In response to those shortcomings, the Direct Method was introduced. The Direct Method, also referred to as the Natural Method, focuses on teaching a foreign language in a manner that is natural to the student. The researcher Pratiwi Lestari writes, “It teaches the second/foreign language in the same way as one learns one’s mother tongue. The language is taught through demonstration and conversation in context.”<sup>11</sup> Ali notes that the Direct Method first appeared in France and Germany before being officially recognized by those two countries and, eventually, Belgium as well.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Lestari, Pratiwi, “Direct Method as One of Language Teaching Approaches,” *WordPress*, 12 June 2011, novaekasari09.wordpress.com/2011/06/12/direct-method-as-one-of-language-teaching-approaches/.

<sup>12</sup> Ali, 94.

During that time, it was commonly believed that, in the same way one learned one's first language, a foreign language could be learned by listening and speaking solely in the target language. It is similar to an immersion technique in a few ways because it attempts to develop an environment where there is no use of the students' native language, and all communication and teaching exercises are done in the target language. Scholars adopted the following phrases as guidelines for the Direct Method: "Never translate: demonstrate; never explain: act; never imitate mistakes: correct them; never go too fast: keep the pace of the student."<sup>13</sup> The goal is to accustom the students to learning, speaking, and thinking in the target language without first having to translate it from their native language. The process of translating would slow down the entire learning process. The Direct Method, striving to compensate for the weaknesses of the Grammar-Translation method, does not directly teach grammar. Larsen-Freeman explains this principle, "Grammar is taught inductively; that is, the students are presented with examples and they figure out the rule or generalization from the examples. All grammar was to be taught inductively; the students learned it themselves through the exercises. An explicit grammar rule may never be given."<sup>14</sup> Learning to communicate and to think in the target language are the main foci of this method; it is not beneficial to focus on grammar and translation. Also, besides wanting to create a natural teaching method similar to that of learning a first language, this method does not teach grammar in the beginning because "it is unlikely to be able to explain the rules of the language at the beginning without any help of the native language."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 93.

<sup>14</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 29.

<sup>15</sup> Ali, 102.

The concepts and principles of the Direct Method follow the theory that learning a foreign language is the same as learning a first language. As this method is centered around learning practical communication skills, it is considered less of an intellectual experience. The key principle is to teach exclusively in the target language and never to translate from the native language. Oral skills are the center of this method; if a student could speak and think spontaneously in the target language, then the foreign language is being taught properly according to this method. As explained above, grammar is taught inductively.<sup>16</sup> The role of the teacher and the student-teacher interactions in the educational process mark major differences between this method and the Grammar-Translation Method. According to Larsen-Freeman, “Although the teacher directs the class activities, the student role is less passive than in the Grammar-Translation Method. The teacher and the students are more like partners in the teaching/learning process ... Students converse with one another as well.”<sup>17</sup> This open forum encourages the students to interact, make mistakes, and recognize when a correction is needed. In the Direct Method, the teacher needs to be fluent in the target language and to be able to convey concepts and vocabulary through association with objects, actions, words, and phrases.<sup>18</sup> The teachers responsibility is to create an environment that allows for spontaneous, open communication, and the student’s responsibility is to interact. The question-answer format is the most common method of introducing and building upon the students’ understanding of the language.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 29.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

<sup>18</sup> Rivers, Wilga, *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills*, The University of Chicago Press, 1968: 18.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

While the Direct Method in its purest form only maintained popularity for approximately four decades, it still left its mark on how foreign languages are taught. Its strongest quality and the one that carried on into the future proved to be its emphasis on actual communication. Not focusing solely on grammar and translation gives the learner more mental freedom when learning. Proponents of the Direct Method argue that it “provided an exciting interesting way of learning the foreign language through activity. It proved to be successful in releasing students from the inhibitions all too often associated with speaking a foreign tongue.”<sup>20</sup> Any mistakes made are corrected with diplomacy, and the correct answers are praised. Lastly, by focusing on oral communication instead of translating literature, the Direct Method “involved the development of a methodology that made foreign languages accessible to the adult population generally, not only a classically educated elite.”<sup>21</sup>

In its effort to improve on the Grammar-Translation method by going to the opposite extreme and removing all study of grammar, the Direct Method developed a weakness. Focusing on teaching vocabulary through oral exercises and interactive activities seems to work for basic vocabulary and concepts, but as the students progress, the lack of direct grammar instruction and lack of emphasis on reading and writing begin to affect their ability to communicate properly. The intelligence and commitment of the students is an important consideration of the Direct Method as “it was the highly intelligent student with well-developed powers of induction who profited most from the method, which could be very discouraging and bewildering for the less talented.”<sup>22</sup> Other

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

<sup>21</sup> Howatt and Smith, 85.

<sup>22</sup> Rivers, 21.

major setbacks to this method are the various requirements of the teachers. To effectively teach using this method, the teacher needs to be “fluent in the language, and very resourceful, in order to make meaning clear in a variety of ways without resorting at any time to the use of the native language” and to have abundant energy because “the method made great demands on the energy of the teacher.”<sup>23</sup> Finding the ideal teacher who meets all of the necessary requirements is difficult, and those requirements need to be met for the students to be properly educated under this method. Moreover, the method is “not practicable if the number of students in the classroom exceeds certain levels ... because certain activities involved in the Direct Method are unlikely to be applicable to larger groups of learners.”<sup>24</sup> The final disadvantage of the Direct Method is its base assumption that a second language can be learnt in exactly the same way as a first because it is “unrealistic to believe that the conditions of native-language learning could be re-created in the classroom with adolescent students.”<sup>25</sup> There are, however, enough similarities between first and second language acquisition that educators of that time dove into this assumption head first.

Despite its shortcomings, as Lestari observes, “the Direct method did pave the way for more communicative, oral based approaches, and as such represented an important step forward in the history of language teaching.”<sup>26</sup> This shift away from the Grammar-Translation Method may not have been flawless, but it brought to light new ways to teach a foreign language and cleared the way for other, more effective reforms in

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Ali, 105.

<sup>25</sup> Rivers, 20.

<sup>26</sup> Lestari, 12 June 2011.

the future. Around 1920, the Direct Method ebbed, and the shifting cultures and technological advances manifested in the creation of the Audio-Lingual Method.

## **AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD**

The years following the decline of the Direct Method found researchers attempting to find the most effective combination of foreign language teaching methods. With the influx of foreigners entering the United States and the United States entering World War II, however, a need was created for a new language teaching method. According to Richards and Rodgers, the need was “to supply the U.S. government and military personnel with ... conversational proficiency in a variety of foreign languages.”<sup>27</sup> Beginner-level communicative proficiency for survival purposes had the United States government prioritizing a search for an efficient and effective foreign language teaching method. Charles C. Fries, director of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan, was the key contributor to what is today known as the Audio-Lingual Method.<sup>28</sup> The lifespan of the method was not extensive, from the 1940s to the 1960s, but it responded to a need at its time of creation. As Larsen-Freeman explains, “The Audio-Lingual Method, like the Direct Method ... is also an oral-based approach.”<sup>29</sup> The two share a few similarities: they are taught in the target language, avoid use of the native language, and prioritize listening and speaking over reading and writing. There are also fundamental differences between the two methods: the Audio-Lingual method is not as strict with demanding total absence of the native language and grammar instruction

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<sup>27</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 44.

<sup>28</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 35.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*



and “rather than emphasizing vocabulary acquisition through exposure to its use in situations, it drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns.”<sup>30</sup>

The foreign language teaching methods that preceded the Audio-Lingual Method were based in European countries and spread to other parts of the world. This method, however, was born in the United States. In addition to the World Wars bringing countries closer together or tearing them apart with the different alliances, technological developments, like radios and tapes, provided easier access to information about other countries. These technological advancements also affected the world of education. The creation of language labs played a vital role in the Audio-Lingual Method. According to Richards and Rodgers, “Tape recorders and audiovisual equipment often have central roles in an audiolingual course. A language laboratory ... provides the opportunity for further drill work and to receive controlled error-free practice of basic structures.”<sup>31</sup>

Due to his background in linguistics, Charles C. Fries developed the Audio-Lingual Method with a “strong theoretical base in linguistics and psychology.”<sup>32</sup> According to the behaviorist theory, “Language is a behavior not a mental phenomenon. It is learnt by a process of habit formation in which the main features are: imitation, reinforcement, repetition, and conditioning.”<sup>33</sup> All classrooms should follow the same order: presentation of a stimulus to be imitated, a response to the stimulus, reinforcement of the response, and habit formation.<sup>34</sup> Aural-Oral Method was the original name of this method, but it was changed because of its difficulty to vocalize. The meaning behind the

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 57.

<sup>32</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 35.

<sup>33</sup> Ali, 115.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

name, however, remained the same: listening and speaking is prevalent over everything else. Indeed, there are those in the world who are illiterate, but are able to communicate verbally. Thus, the order of importance when teaching a foreign language is listening, speaking, reading and writing.<sup>35</sup> All focus in the classroom is put on repetition of structures and patterns and on correct pronunciation. This is in contrast to other methods whose focus is on understanding the language or on translation. In her work *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills*, Wilga Rivers notes common slogans that surround the Audio-Lingual Method: “Language is speech, not writing; a language is a set of habits; teach the language, not about the language; and all languages are different.”<sup>36</sup> Forming good habits and developing muscle memory responses are the keys to language learning with this method.

The Audio-Lingual Method has a scientific background, and, consequently, adheres to a number of scientific theories about the appropriate principles and concepts for teaching a foreign language. As mentioned above, the most effective order of language presentation according to this method is believed to be listening, speaking, reading, and then writing. The common thought process is that “learners transfer from speech to writing more easily than the other way around,”<sup>37</sup> so the foreign language is presented to the students in spoken form before written form. Key concepts include language learning as habit formation, grammar taught inductively through drills, and responses reinforced.<sup>38</sup> If students respond appropriately, they receive positive reinforcement, whether from the teacher or from the language lab technology. If students

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 112.

<sup>36</sup> Rivers, 37.

<sup>37</sup> Ali, 127.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 130-132.

respond inappropriately, they receive negative reinforcement as mistakes are considered to be contagious. After observing a real classroom, Larsen-Freeman makes the following comments: “It is important to prevent learners from making errors. Errors lead to the formation of bad habits. When errors do occur, they should be immediately corrected by the teacher. Positive reinforcement helps the students to develop good habits.”<sup>39</sup> In the classroom, the teacher is in control and the student’s job is to imitate the teacher.<sup>40</sup> Students do not need to use any creativity or imagination to create what they are putting out, because they only have to imitate and reinforce in order to develop natural responses. The teacher makes use of visual aids, tapes, and language labs. Richards and Rodgers explain that “Dialogues and drills form the basis of audiolingual classroom practices ... and are used for repetition and memorization.”<sup>41</sup> All these concepts are successful for beginner language learners; however, the addition of more reading and writing as the students progress prove important.

In World War II, the soldiers fighting for the United States were at a disadvantage in their lack of linguistic skills, and the Audio-Lingual Method was able to provide them with basic communication skills quickly. Among its benefits, students can practice useful language from the very first class and it is easy to use with larger groups.<sup>42</sup> Also, demanding less of the students through drills and patterns, requires less of a mental strain, so students of all levels on intelligence are able to participate.<sup>43</sup> When the students are following the order of stimulus, response to stimulus, reinforcement, and

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<sup>39</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 43.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 45.

<sup>41</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 53.

<sup>42</sup> Rivers, 45.

<sup>43</sup> Ali, 144.

habit formation, the use of language labs was game changing. Ali explains “The advantage of the machine over the living person is sustained repetition...without fatigue or irritation. The machine can also record the student’s response which he can compare with the original.”<sup>44</sup> The Audio-Lingual Method made leaps in the way research into foreign language teaching methods was conducted. Elements of it can still be seen in classrooms today.

The Audio-Lingual Method, however, served as a temporary fix. It temporarily solved something that the United States saw as an area of weakness, and it brought science and technology to the world of foreign language learning, but the enthusiasm of the method did not last for long. There are several faults within this method that ultimately came to light and brought an end to its use. The most prominent fault was revealed near the end of the 1960s. Richards and Rodgers tell the story of how “MIT linguist Noam Chomsky rejected the structuralist approach to language description as well as the behaviorist theory of language learning.”<sup>45</sup> Chomsky’s criticism of the behaviorist theory, the cornerstone of the Audio-Lingual Method, put the final nail in the coffin of the Audio-Lingual Method. His writings in opposition to the method came out of nowhere, and “suddenly the whole audiolingual paradigm was called into question...this created a crisis in American language teaching circles.”<sup>46</sup> Even if the behaviorist theory had been factual, the goals of language learners were not being met, “Students were unable to transfer skills acquired ... to real communication outside the classroom, and many found the experience ... to be boring and unsatisfying.”<sup>47</sup> The

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, 134.

<sup>45</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 59.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 60.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 59.

feelings or imaginations of the students are never taken into consideration; they just act as machines. The teacher, or technology, has control of everything, exerting too much control to create an effective learning environment. Finally, the Audio-Lingual Method is considered a mechanical method.<sup>48</sup> Its focus on forms, patterns, and structures leaves much to be desired when looking at the importance of meaning and context within language learning.

Looking back, it is obvious that the Audio-Lingual Method's many flaws were the result of false theories and a rush to create a new foreign language teaching method. Its lack of focus on contextual language learning, mechanical classroom drills, and short-term results built up to the point that demanded prompt changes to the approach. Noam Chomsky held nothing back in his criticism of behaviorist theory. It is to the benefit of foreign language pedagogy, however, that he spoke up. There is always room for improvement, and the pitfalls of the Audio-Lingual Method served as a guide for future methods. Despite its faults, this method still offered a lot to future methods as many aspects of the method are still seen today, for example, "the order in which the language skills are introduced and the focus on accuracy through drill and practice in the basic structures and sentence patterns of the target language."<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ali, 148.

<sup>49</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 61.

## CHAPTER II

### The Present

#### COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

As Timothy Kibbe explains in his *History of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and its Use in the Classroom*, “Second language acquisition methods go through an almost cyclical cycle. The new method is first introduced as an improvement upon or reaction to an earlier method or approach. It is then analyzed and usually either accepted or rejected. If the new method is accepted it is applied, used and eventually criticized.”<sup>1</sup> Entering the 1970s, a new theory was developing called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), or the Communicative Approach. This approach differentiated itself from all the prior methods because it was more of a “theorized approach than a specifically defined method.”<sup>2</sup> As countries throughout the world continued developing and becoming increasingly interdependent, people began to see the necessity and benefits of learning a foreign language. There was also a need to teach English to foreigners entering the United States. When Noam Chomsky wrote his critique on the Audio-Lingual Method, he opened the door for the Communicative Approach. Following in his footsteps, “Dell Hymes and Sandra Savignon expanded upon the linguist competence theory originally introduced by Chomsky. Hymes was the first to write about the notion of communicative competence while he was expanding upon the narrow scope of Chomsky’s original ideas.”<sup>3</sup> In the subsequent years, considerable research was conducted, most notably by Dell Hymes(1927-2009), a sociolinguist and anthropologist;

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<sup>1</sup> Kibbe, Timothy, *The History of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Its Use in the Classroom*, United States Military Academy, 2017: 6, [www.usma.edu/cfe/Literature/Kibbe\\_17.pdf](http://www.usma.edu/cfe/Literature/Kibbe_17.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

Sandra Savignon(1938-), a professor of applied linguistics; and David Wilkins(1929-), a professor of linguistics. The Communicative Approach was developed, like all teaching methods, to improve upon perceived shortcomings of previous methods. Referring to the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method, Ali writes, “Pupils who came out of these classes were masters of structure or were like native speakers in terms of accent. The communicative potential of the language was mostly neglected in these methods ... The 'form' rather than 'meaning' dominated.”<sup>4</sup> In essence, the other methods focus on the “how” and not the “why”. With the theory of learning a second language like a first language and the behaviorist theory having been disproved, the Communicative Approach is considered a culmination of the best aspects of earlier methods.

Meaning and contextual understanding mark the cornerstones of the Communicative Approach. Larsen-Freeman articulates that educators of that time “noted that being able to communicate required more than mastering linguistic structures” and that “being able to communicate required more than linguistic competence; it required communicative competence.”<sup>5</sup> If a student knows how to form a grammatically correct sentence, but is not able to respond appropriately in context to a question or phrase, then the main purpose of learning a foreign language, to be able to communicate, is not being attained. Communicative competence is defined as “knowing when and how to say what to whom”<sup>6</sup> or “a better knowledge of how language is used with how it is structured.”<sup>7</sup> There is also a balance between fluency and accuracy. For example: “controlled and guided” writing emphasizes accuracy while “free and situational” writing emphasizes

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<sup>4</sup> Ali, 156.

<sup>5</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 121.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Ali, 163.

fluency.<sup>8</sup> Communication and interaction are the purpose of all activities in the classroom, and because there is no single authority on how to specifically incorporate this approach in the classrooms, teachers have quite a bit of flexibility. Researchers have long been trying to understand the complexities involved with learning a foreign language, and the Communicative Approach is like a one-size-fits-all response to those complexities.

More of a practice and less of a methodology, the Communicative Approach lacks a clear-cut list of guidelines, concepts, and principles. There are, however, some common practices that are applied in most cases. Looking back at the principles surrounding previous methods regarding translation, use of native language, and grammar practice, this approach approves of judicious use of all of them.<sup>9</sup> They are to be implemented only so far as they are necessary to further efficient interactions. Severe correction of errors, and memorization of passages are to be avoided. Larsen-Freeman asserts that “activities that are truly communicative have three features in common: information gap, choice, and feedback.” Information gap is “when one person in an exchange knows something the other person does not.”<sup>10</sup> All interactions need to be relatable to real events because there should be a communicative meaning behind every exchange. In the Communicative Approach, the roles of teacher and student differ from earlier methods. The teacher fulfills two main roles: facilitator and advisor, “The teacher facilitates communication in the classroom ... and establishes situations likely to promote communication. During the activities he acts as an adviser, answering students’ questions and monitoring their performance.”<sup>11</sup> The feelings of the students are taken more into consideration with this

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 183.

<sup>9</sup> Kibbe, 4

<sup>10</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 129.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 128.



approach as they are provided with the environment to express their opinions, personal experiences, and ideas.<sup>12</sup> As there is no text or syllabus guiding the teachers, they have the freedom to implement a variety of activities and materials that further the goal of developing the communicative abilities of the students.

The Communicative Approach allows for a lot of freedom to adapt to the different needs and environments found in the classroom, and that is one reason it is still a widely accepted approach today. It has faced critiques, but because the theory behind the approach is to form fit itself to the needs of the students, it has continued to evolve. An advantage of the Communicative Approach is the “notion of individual empowerment, where teachers and students were given the latitude to determine their own learning paths.”<sup>13</sup> It also encourages and allows students to communicate in the target language from the beginning, without fear of adverse feedback. Overall, the broad perspective of the Communicative Approach is perceived as a strength as well as a weakness: “This has led to flexibility in implementing CLT programs. It has also led to a growing critique of the inexactness of the approach.”<sup>14</sup>

If people are not provided with detailed instructions, they will improvise. Sometimes these improvisations are beneficial, and sometimes they are not. The words of teachers who advocate for using the Communicative Approach do not match their actions: “lesson plans that conformed to the communicative principles often only did so until teaching began. Many teachers then diverged ... to more traditional practices of repetition, grammar presentation and textbook practice.”<sup>15</sup> Common explanations for this

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 126.

<sup>13</sup> Kibbe, 2

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

are the inability to comprehend the Communicative Approach and the amount of time required to successfully implement it.<sup>16</sup> As seen before, this broad approach, lacking in specifics or exact instructions, is attractive and unattractive. The absence of grammar instruction and the emphasis on students interacting with other students lightens the teachers' obligations. The Communicative Approach continues to evolve with the times. However, because the principles of the Communicative Approach apply to all current theories of foreign language teaching, the need to communicate a foreign language structurally and functionally, it will remain a major theory in the realm of foreign language pedagogy.

## **TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE**

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, James J. Asher created what is today known as Total Physical Response (TPR). It is known throughout the world, and it is also one of the approaches to foreign language teaching that I have encountered here at Middle Tennessee State University. James Asher spent years researching every aspect of this method and in his book *Learning Another Language Through Actions*, he claims “that Total Physical Response is perhaps the most thoroughly researched idea in the entire field of language acquisition.”<sup>17</sup> Traces of previous methods can be found in TPR, but their theories were revised and adapted with the use of more modern scientific research and psychological theories. In all his writings, James Asher never labels TPR as a full

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Asher, James A, *Learning Another Language through Actions*, 6th ed., Sky Oakes Productions, 2003: 3-3.

pedagogical method, but he does insist that it is an effective language learning tool, commonly used in conjunction with other teaching techniques.

Regarding his learning theory, James Asher draws on three learning hypotheses: “There exists a specific innate bio-program for language learning, brain lateralization defines different learning functions in the left-right-brain hemispheres, and reduction of stress allows for successful learning.”<sup>18</sup> After extensive observation of the process of first language acquisition of children, an idea similar to that of the Direct Method developed, the idea that humans are biologically wired to learning languages. So, the theory behind TPR is that it should parallel the process of first language acquisition. As mentioned above, some of TPR’s theories seem familiar because they draw from concepts behind earlier methods, like the Direct Method. The Direct Method theorized that second language learning was the same as first language learning,<sup>19</sup> but the path it took to educating students was full of shortcomings. Beyond that, the period during which the Direct Method flourished did not allow for accurate, modern research to be conducted, leading to the shift into other methods. TPR approaches this parallel between first- and second-language learning from a different perspective, as Richards and Rodgers point out that “Asher’s emphasis was on developing comprehension skills before the learning is taught to speak.”<sup>20</sup> Therefore, as students listen and absorb the target language, they naturally begin to speak in the target language.

There is a no-judgement, stress-free environment when looking at how a child learns her or his first language, and that is how TPR is formatted. According to James

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<sup>18</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 90.

<sup>19</sup> Lestari.

<sup>20</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 87.

Asher, “Speech is like walking. Any attempt to force its appearance before the child is ready, is futile,”<sup>21</sup> so the students are never made to speak until they feel they are ready.<sup>22</sup> This concept, however, is not synonymous with the common notion found in foreign language teaching methods that one person can teach another to talk.<sup>23</sup> The combination of listening to the target language and responding with physical movement is expected to, over time, evolve into the students being able to speak, read, and write in the target language. TPR is primarily used to teach beginning levels of foreign languages, but, with skillful use of language-body interactions, it can be used to teach intermediate to upper levels. Proponents of TPR recommend using it in moderation so that the students do not become bored or disinterested,<sup>24</sup> which runs counter to a teaching method that involves getting up and moving around.

Brain lateralization research was a major component when creating TPR. James Asher began this research because “everywhere on earth in all languages throughout history, there is no instance of infants acquiring speaking before comprehension. Comprehension always comes first with speaking following perhaps a year later.”<sup>25</sup> Essentially, brain lateralization research looks at the two halves of the human brain and determines that the acts of listening and talking inhabit two different sides. James Asher conducted numerous experiments, resulting in the theory that, “The right hemisphere is mute but can express itself by listening to a command in the target language, and then performing the appropriate action. The left hemisphere can express itself by talking. The

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<sup>21</sup> Asher, 3-2.

<sup>22</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 114.

<sup>23</sup> Asher, 3-2.

<sup>24</sup> Asher, James J, “What Is TPR - Updated: Immersion and Dual Language,” *TPR Source*, Bert Segal Cook, 2001, [www.tprsource.com/asher.htm](http://www.tprsource.com/asher.htm).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

left is verbal while the right is non-verbal.”<sup>26</sup> As one of the three hypotheses of TPR, when learning a foreign language, the right brain is to come before the left brain. If students are asked to listen and then respond immediately, both sides of the brain are firing at the same time, and this can cause a mental overload in the student’s brains resulting in “slow-motion learning with short-term retention.”<sup>27</sup> This overload is one reason why students do not retain the foreign language or get frustrated with lack of progress.

The concepts and principles of TPR can manifest themselves in different ways in different classrooms, but the ideas behind them remain the same. In his article on the ABC’s of TPR, Francisco Cabello reports that “After about ten to twenty hours of understanding the target language through physical movements, students spontaneously begin to speak in the new language.”<sup>28</sup> Students are not forced to speak before they are ready, and when they do speak, accurate grammar is not expected.<sup>29</sup> It will develop with use over time. When an error is made, “teachers should be tolerant of them and only correct major errors.”<sup>30</sup> Regarding grammar instruction, it is not explicitly disregarded, but it is not a main teaching point either. Students learn the grammar on their own, deducing the structures from the exercises. Richards and Rodgers report that, in the classroom, the students “have the primary roles of listener and performer.”<sup>31</sup> It is their responsibility to follow the teacher, move around, and interact with both, the teacher and the other students. While students are not given the opportunity for original input

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<sup>26</sup> Asher, 2-24.

<sup>27</sup> Asher, 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Cabello, Francisco L, “The ABCs of The Total Physical Response,” *Tpr-World.com*, Sky Oaks Productions, Inc., 22 Nov. 2005: 2, [www.tpr-world.com/](http://www.tpr-world.com/).

<sup>29</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 112-113.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 115.

<sup>31</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 93.

regarding the content or activities, their feelings are taken into consideration through the process of letting them speak when ready. The teacher “is the director of all students’ behavior”<sup>32</sup> and “the teacher’s role is not so much to teach as to provide opportunities for learning.”<sup>33</sup> When teaching, the use of the imperative is the most influential aid they have because most grammatical structures and a wide variety of vocabulary can be taught using the imperative.<sup>34</sup> In the beginning, all activities in the classroom are to cause physical responses from the students. There is no textbook to follow the TPR process, and the teachers are responsible for bringing in all materials necessary for teaching the target language. Richards and Rodgers list the following as common TPR activities: “imperative drills, role plays, slide presentations, Simon Says, storytelling, and action songs.”<sup>35</sup> TPR storytelling is a useful exercise for introducing abstract or contextual vocabulary.<sup>36</sup> Role reversal, having the student become the teacher for a short time, is an effective way to transition students from listening to speaking.

TPR can still be found in classrooms all over the world, and it has endured for almost fifty years. It is not without its flaws, but James Asher designed it so that it could be adapted to different environments and cultures, responding to the needs of students. Furthermore, working in conjunction with other foreign language teaching methods allows for a custom-made classroom. TPR works with any knowledge level, age range, or classroom size. James Asher reports that he has “used TPR in classes as small as 3 and as large as 40. I have used it with kids as young as 3 and adults with equal success.”<sup>37</sup> In

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<sup>32</sup> Larsen-Freeman, 112-113.

<sup>33</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 94.

<sup>34</sup> Asher, 2-4.

<sup>35</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 92-93.

<sup>36</sup> CALA, “TPR and TPRS Overview,” Middle Tennessee State University, [www.mtsu.edu/cala/documents/tpr-s\\_overview.pdf](http://www.mtsu.edu/cala/documents/tpr-s_overview.pdf), 2.

<sup>37</sup> Asher, 3-83.

moderation, TPR is effective at creating an interest in students for learning a foreign language. A TPR classroom is commonly found appealing because of the importance placed on providing a stress-free environment where students do not have to feel self-conscious. TPR also has the ability to engage students who learn kinesthetically, relating to feeling and movement, as well as other unique learning preferences. In my own experiences with TPR, it has been very effective at developing long-term retention of a foreign language. There were action songs taught in class that I can still sing to remember different vocabulary or concepts. I felt free to interact with the teacher and with the other students, to make mistakes, and to ask questions because of the judgement-free environment the teachers had created.

As the games and activities typically found in TPR are made to resemble those used when learning a first language, a common misconception regarding TPR is that it is only for beginners or kids. Dr. Asher's research, however, has proven that concept wrong. While TPR is very effective during the beginning stages of language learning, as students' progress in their studies, skillful adaptation of TPR activities can effectively teach higher level structures and vocabulary.<sup>38</sup> At Middle Tennessee State University, I was taught with TPR from a beginner level through an upper-intermediate level of a foreign language, and I consider it to have been very effective. Another critique that TPR has faced is that it could be considered an uncomfortable method for students who are more introverted or more accustomed to traditional foreign language teaching methods. No method is perfect, and some methods are more fitted to different personalities than others. It is true that TPR can make students who are more reserved feel uncomfortable,

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<sup>38</sup> Asher, 2001.

but it has been proven that students have the capacity to open their minds and bodies to learning a foreign language.

Dr. Asher has spent his career creating, developing, and improving TPR. He does not claim that it is the only method that works, and he has provided thorough research to back up all his theories. Many professionals have become proponents of TPR, and advocates for the effectiveness of it. Dr. Shelly Thomas, an advocate for TPR here at Middle Tennessee State University, has conducted research herself in order to create the most beneficial, customized learning environment for her students and to train others in the methods of TPR. This method was the first foreign language teaching method I encountered, and I have retained a large portion of what I learned in the classes. As TPR is still used today, I cannot say how it will change in the future, but I have no doubt it will continue to endure.

## **INTERVIEWS WITH MTSU FACULTY**

### Interview A

**Interviewer:** Thank you for meeting with me today to discuss your thoughts on second-language pedagogy! My experiences have shaped my belief that a person's language plays a huge role in who they are. I have studied foreign languages for five years now, and I have seen all sorts of different methods used. Some professors prefer teaching with certain methods just as some students respond better to certain methods. There is no fail-safe way to teach a language.

For my Honors Thesis, I am researching how the past and present, as they relate to teaching a foreign language, are painting the future for foreign language teaching



methods. The world is constantly changing, and I am studying what those changes look like in the world of teaching a foreign language. I am here, interviewing you, because you have extensive experience and knowledge in teaching a foreign language, or you were recommended by my advisor. I can talk all day about what I think the future will look like for foreign language pedagogy, but you can provide first-hand experience of how different changes have affected the way you teach, and about what you think the future changes will look like. Everything you say will assist me with depicting the future of foreign language teaching methods. My first question is how have the developments of language teaching manifested themselves in your personal language teaching experience?

**Participant A:** So, you've read up on the development of different methods?

**Interviewer:** Yes, I have.

**Participant A:** So, I learned French under a very much Audio-Lingual, not even, maybe more Grammar Translation Method. So that when I went to France, junior year abroad, I did not know what anybody was saying or what to say back for two weeks. It was a culture shock, a language shock. Because we just didn't talk, we translated, we listened, but we were listening to the teacher talk, about whatever literary text we were talking about. So, I did that in all grad school and I did two years in Paris. Then I was trained to teach, and I took three pedagogy courses. I was trained to teach under what they would call the Communicative Approach. Which then people started saying well "I'm more eclectic, I integrate methodologies from all different kinds" and so that was kind of the hip thing to say. I taught at a liberal arts college for twelve years before I got here, so I did a lot of just language teaching, and I would say that I have traditionally taught using a combination of the way I had been taught to teach, which was Communicative Approach

and Audio-Lingual Method. Because that's what I had learned by and so I knew how to teach that way. And then add in a healthy dose of things I learned on my own, what works and what doesn't. Now about three or four years ago, I was contacted by the Dean of the College of Education, who had been contacted by several Spanish students who had graduated from our program, made all A's, went and got jobs teaching, and couldn't pass the Praxis. So, they were having trouble. The dean contacted me to see what we could do to help I talked a lot with them and found out that the Praxis had changed. The Praxis is that test you take so you can get your license to teach in high school.

**Interviewer:** Okay

**Participant A:** A lot of people were, because the way the Praxis was structured had changed, having a hard time passing it. So, I said huh, what is going on here, and I went and took it myself. And I was shocked.

**Interviewer:** Did you pass it?

**Participant A:** Well, yeah, of course. But it was very different than what I expected. It was completely proficiency based. So, there might have been three or four of the 200 questions that asked me about a grammar point ... maybe. And it was all within context that they asked me about the grammar point. It was all functional. You know, listen to this recording of an African minister of health, or minister of economy, talking about the economy in Senegal, and answer the questions. So not only are you dealing with an authentic speaker, an authentic text, with an African accent. That was the listening part. The writing was something like a problem that you had to solve, so your hotel accommodations were not adequate, write an email to fix it. Real life situations. And there were several different writing scenarios. There was also "read these passages about

children who learn two languages, who were bilingual at home and then make an argument.” So, you had to write an argumentative answer. Okay, we do that now, but what I realized taking the Praxis was no wonder those students couldn’t pass, because we were not preparing them. Unless you’re a native speaker, or you’ve been abroad, you can’t perform those tests, you’re just not prepared. So, a Spanish teacher here at MTSU, and I started working together on this. A lot. Now he is really good about using, they call them task centered assignments, where you actually do something, with an end goal. But what I know is that most of us at the college level are still using a combination of Audio-Lingual Method, Grammar Translation Method, and a little bit of Communicative Approach in our classes. We have not moved on. So, a lot of the high schools have moved on, and certainly the license to get you to high school has moved on.

**Interviewer:** What would you consider as moving on?

**Participant A:** Moving on to proficiency. Because it used to make sense to use Audio-Lingual Method or Grammar Translation Method because a lot of people didn’t travel, I mean you really were just going to read a text. But now what people want out of language learning is to be able to go over to the country, and to perform. Right? And be able to function in a language. That’s what people want from language learning. Very different goals. But we at the college level, most of us have not changed. And probably, because most of us who are teaching were trained as literary scholars. Now I was doing some reading, because I was contacted by a former student who was asking me about a recent graduate for a job interview, and she was saying, “What is her exposure to proficiency-based teaching?” I was like “Oh, I haven’t heard that tag line, let me look it up.” Well actually it’s a high school thing, because, again, you see a separation at the scholar level

of pedagogy and at the practical, high school level. So, they're talking about proficiency-based teaching, but all the articles being published are talking about task based or silent way or TPR, whatever. So again, a pretty severe disconnect between high school and college, and between what's going in the classroom and how people are being taught.

Was that more than you needed to know?

**Interviewer:** No! Any info is helpful.

**Participant A:** So, my question is, do you know what ACTFL standards are? The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. It got together twenty or thirty years ago now and put together a description to assess different levels. So, you have a novice, intermediate, advanced, and superior, and each of those levels are separated into low, mid, and high. There are different things that the student should be able to do according to the level. Well if you look at novice, it says that what you should be able to do is use memorized phrases. That's what you learn to do in most beginner classes. And then you might shift it according to your needs. So, if according to ACTFL that's all we can do at the beginner level is memorize, that students produce memorized solutions in particular settings, because they know which setting to use, then why are we having them perform communicative tests?

**Interviewer:** That's a good question.

**Participant A:** So, I haven't had a chance to talk to my peers about this yet, but this is my burning question right now. I see yet another disconnect between what they tell us we should be doing and what the experts are expecting from a certain level. I see these divisions between the academy and the research and the practitioners. ACTFL is sort of a combination, an intermediary between the academics and the practitioners. A lot of

academics will go to the ACTFL, but a lot of high school teachers will go too. It's just sort of an intermediary that should be a place where we find answers. Those are just my questions. Aren't you glad to leave with more questions than you had before?

**Interviewer:** Honestly, it's helpful because it makes me think differently. My next question is, how have technological advances affected your experiences as a teacher?

**Participant A:** I have always been one to try and embrace technology. So, the first place they started using technology was in the language lab, where you would listen to stuff, but most of them were fake, someone reading a script. The great thing about technology today is that we can get podcasts and listen to the radio. I mean we can actually use real language in ways that we couldn't before. That's been fantastic. Same thing with reading passages. You just go online and find articles. So maybe this is one of the things that is driving the proficiency and task-based methodologies is that we can actually do it now, we have the technology. That said, it's great for proficiency-based activities. As for drilling grammar and things like that, I don't think it works at all because a lot of times our textbooks will have a bunch of grammar and things that go with it, and you pay an arm and a leg for it. The students will go and fill in the blank, it takes them two minutes to fill in an accent, and it will count it wrong if you don't get the right accent. So, the neural pathways that govern the ability to type are not the same as those used in knowledge retention. When you write things, you learn them, and it goes in to your brain, but when you type things it does not go into your brain.

**Interviewer:** Interesting, I hadn't heard that before.

**Participant A:** This is experiential, not research based. You can ask any language teacher and they'll tell you the same thing. But what language teachers like about those

things is that they're automatically graded, and it saves time. But it's not doing the student any good. And in fact, you can ask math teachers the same thing. They will tell you the same thing. There is a huge drive to get people to do online math problems, but a conscientious teacher will tell you that students do not do as well because there is something about the connection of the hand to the brain that is not being fired up when the keyboard is in the way. So, technology is great, but not to replace handwritten things.

**Interviewer:** You're saying in conjunction with?

**Participant A:** I'm saying for different purposes. So, in order to get authentic materials to use for proficiency-oriented activities, it's great. Working together harmoniously and they're not hurting each other.

**Interviewer:** Where do you see technology and language teaching going in the future? Do you think they'll develop together or separately?

**Participant A:** No, I think they will continue to develop together because it's a part of the world being accessible now. So, what I hope will happen is that text books will throw away all this garbage they've been producing. Other foreign language professors will tell you the same thing. And if I were to create my own material like another faculty at MTSU has, it would be more topical. My assignments would be like finding the latest news, and there is some cool stuff, there's news in slow French, have you ever seen that? You have to pay for it. It will basically read the news, read a news segment for you, and then break down the grammar, culture and vocabulary.

**Interviewer:** So, it puts it into practical application?

**Participant A:** Yes! I don't think it's quite authentic, the person is not speaking normally, so that's a little weird with it. So yes, I think we will continue with it, to use

technology and I just think if we get smarter about it and the textbooks will let us get rid of the baggage we've been hanging on to for so long. But there are still a whole lot of professors and high school teachers who are not ready to give that up. They love a good fill in the blank.

**Interviewer:** Because it's easier?

**Participant A:** I think it's because they are comfortable with it. And they feel like its testing the goal that they've set for the students which is to get the meaning of the word not necessarily the use of it.

Participant A reminisces on how reading French books and studying abroad in high school piqued her interest in learning a foreign language. Interviewer and participant discuss how the place of English in the world creates a resistance to learning a foreign language in America, and how the educational systems at every level are failing to encourage foreign language learning.

**Interviewer:** In your own words, why is language learning a valuable asset to have?

**Participant A:** Many, many studies show that people who know more than one language see cognitive improvements. So, basically, they're smarter. And more agile mentally and verbally. Of course, exposure to another culture teaches you more about your own culture and about yourself. So, I think that people who are exposed to another language and culture also tend to rate higher on emotional intelligence ratings just because they've learned to be adaptable. And that's one of the big factors in that rating.

**Interviewer:** So, pulling together everything we've discussed, where do you see the future of foreign language going? Do you see it going towards the more proficiency based?

**Participant A:** It's got to! We've got to get ourselves out of the 1950s and 1960s and move forward, and the really good high school teachers are leading the way. I think they are the ones that start at a young age and create the desire to learn a foreign language. I spend a lot of my energy and time thinking about 15th century manuscripts and poetry. And that is just not language development! So, we get distracted from those notions of language acquisition. Although there is a growing and very much in-demand specialty at the university level now which is pedagogy, when I was going through school twenty years ago, those positions were not even tenured. They were looked down on. Now we can't get enough of them. So, although there is usually one, we don't have an official pedagogy person here at MTSU. Because we can't hire anyone. We can't get anyone to come and stay. But I mean like a professor here at MTSU has redirected her focus to this and I think that's just as legitimate.

**Interviewer:** If you could create the ideal future for foreign language learning what would it look like?

**Participant A:** I imagine a classroom where...but the problem is that it takes so much time to prepare this for students, but where topical, proficiency-based activities are used as a platform for practice in the language and also as a basis for underlying grammatical and cultural notions. So, say from broadcasts that were put out yesterday or last week, we can use that text and practice our listening skills. Then turn around and use that for speaking, but also learn something about the distinction between passé and imparfait ...



not as a series of rules, but as a functional difference. What's the difference? How does it affect me? Because I think that is one thing that gets lost when we focus on grammar, we teach rules instead of the reason why the rules are there. When setting the different conjugations, you lose sight of when you hear it, you don't recognize it, and you don't know when to speak it because you just know how to conjugate it. The most maddening part of teaching that particular concept is that in most cases you could use either one, depending on what you want to say, what information you want to communicate.

**Interviewer:** What do you think about the different things like, have you heard about the ear pieces you can put in and it automatically translates a language as you hear it? It's a more advanced version of Google Translate. Do you see translators as a help or a crutch for language learners?

**Participant A:** Yes, I guess a crutch, but maybe even a starting place. Although I think that translators can very quickly become worse than a crutch, they're misleading. You can get an incorrect translation. We speak in metaphors and other idiosyncratic illocutions all the time that usually don't translate into a different culture. So, you have to have a real person to negotiate that difference. A direct translation would make no sense. Now the more common translators have learned to incorporate that. But then what if you're using it literally and so it can't make that distinction? So, I think that not only your word a crutch is maybe right, but at the next level maybe deceptive, leading you down the wrong path.

**Interviewer:** I feel sometimes the professors help make those a crutch for students by not giving/allowing enough time to complete all our assignments without a translator.

**Participant A:** So, this is the part that I didn't actually talk about but that is a huge part of the change from the different methods. So, like I said, most of us were trained with the Audio-Lingual Method and Grammar Translation Method. So, in that, particularly Grammar Translation Method, accuracy is of utmost importance. Now in the Communicative Approach they told us not to get so uptight about errors, but we were all trained that every error matters. They take off a point if you miss an accent mark that has no meaning. So, with the Communicative Approach of proficiency, the task-based ACTFL always says allow the errors, but we as teachers don't allow the errors. So, we are not even being faithful to the program, the pedagogy, that we say we are embracing. The fact you just hit on it is that students get stressed out about the being absolute correct. You shouldn't feel that way in a language class. It should be okay to make mistakes. But we like a fill in the blank and count if it's wrong.

**Interviewer:** Any other points you thought of along the way?

**Participant A:** No, but I'm glad you brought that up about the grading because I think that is really important.

**Interviewer:** I have had many different language teachers and they all just teach so differently. I mean none of them are bad at all, it's just the way they teach is so different and you have to adapt to how they teach to pass the class. I'm trying to decide whether technological advances are actually helping or hurting us in learning the language.

**Participant A:** Isn't it similar to something like a calculator? It's not dissimilar from that. A calculator is a great tool if you know how to use it, but it sure can get you into trouble if you don't! You're just not going to get the right answer. If you can't remember the verb for 'to jump up', but you know how to conjugate, then it's really useful. The

problem is, with most Americans anyways, is we don't think very analytically about language because we haven't learned any foreign languages. We don't realize that we're using figurative language and then we will put figurative language into the translator and that's messed up. So, the problem is more on the user.

**Interviewer:** So, technology is not bad in and of itself, it's how it's used.

**Participant A:** Good purposes and bad.

**Interviewer:** Thank you so much for your time and input, it is invaluable to my research!

### Interview B

*[My introduction remarks were identical to those in Interview A]*

**Interviewer:** How is technology affecting learning, either in research or in languages or with any other experiences you have?

**Participant B:** Yeah, I haven't actually done any specific research on that, but I can speak on my observation of students and what my son has used which is this Duolingo program that's online. He used that for multiple languages.

**Interviewer:** Was he successful with it?

**Participant B:** I think so, I mean he picked up a working level. He was taking courses for like a language institute type thing at the campus he was at, but then he was supplementing that with the technology. So that's what I've noticed. It was a really good way to learn it. I agree it's a good application.

**Interviewer:** Will you explain to me a little bit about the project you and a Japanese language professor here at MTSU just completed?

**Participant B:** So, when I teach research methods, basic research methods or advanced research methods, these are undergraduate courses so, we want our students to actually

do a research project. What that means is collecting data. First, they have to propose a project idea and come up with a hypothesis and go through what is called the IRB, which you know all about. So, you do all that, but most of our students haven't had much research experience if any. So, I realized when I was teaching that course it's like "I don't understand what you're saying", I might say to a student or they might say to me, "It's like we are speaking different languages." So, we took that and basically ran with that idea. So, there are very much parallels to learn a functional vocabulary for a foreign language, you have to know the context to use it correctly. You can't just memorize words, you have to actually put them into practice. We do the same thing when we are learning about research. We talk about what is counterbalancing and why it is called that. So, we illustrate it. There is a lot of that in vocabulary, kind of like drill and practice stuff. But it comes in like presentations, it comes in the lecture component when I teach that. But a lot of it is thinking about learning this new behavior, but you have to communicate it, so, our students present to class. They will present at conferences and stuff like that, and you have to speak it fluently. So, we capitalize on that idea, moving to proficiency or fluency is very similar. So, what we are trying to push in the article is this is a really good way to actually teach this concept in the sense that the students will understand that you are basically learning a foreign language. So, it takes a lot of practice and understanding of the relative context and vocabulary. It's basically like that. You kind of look for parallels. She talked about how the various practices for teaching, like Japanese, but in general for foreign languages, what the guidelines are for the national organization, I forget what it's called, and then we would look for parallels. There are a lot, and Japanese is a little bit different because it has different styles. There's the

honorific style, it's kind of like a formal style you would do in a public setting, but then there is a different kind of style when you talk. And there's parallels with that. The parallels are, like in psychology you have to learn how to write in what's called APA style, American Psychological Association. It's a common writing style across the other disciplines, but it's like all these rules, and so it's very parallel to learning rules of a language you really haven't practiced before. There is a lot of practice involved and trying it out. Anyways we tried to think of all the possible parallels and made the argument that this is a good way to teach research.

**Interviewer:** Would you say that when you are teaching them and explaining it as a foreign language, do you start with explaining to them what the different vocabulary means and then having them put that into practice? Or do you have them learn the vocabulary through doing different projects?

**Participant B:** For me, I introduce that early on in the semester, so you are basically going to be learning a different language here, just a like foreign language. I will say that even though it's not literally learning a foreign language, there is a lot of stuff you don't know what I'm talking about, you don't know what that word means. So, when we introduce a concept, there's a concept called "between subjects' manipulation". That means you're in one group and something happens to you, and I'm in another group I get something different so the manipulation, the thing that the researchers doing, differs between the subjects or participants. So, this is why we call it "between subjects' manipulation". I take that as language approach because I had some background. I took a foreign language and minored in that as an undergraduate. So, I can see some of those connections and I stress that and then during the semester, when the students actually

present their ideas, sometimes I will say stuff like “I don’t understand what you’re saying”, as if I were speaking to someone who speaks a different language. Or like, “can you explain what you mean by that?”. I’m joking around with the students sometimes saying that, “you sound like a native research speaker” or “you’re know speaking fluently.” You can go to conferences and talk to other researches and they can tell that you have experience in research, we can tell, I can tell. If you started talking about your research experiences, it would be like, if I’m a native speaker of a language and you’ve learned it as a second language, you can usually tell that, right? You can see that. It’s the same thing with research. We can tell who a non-native is, there’s really no real native research speakers, but a new to the language speaker, because they’re using vocabulary words wrong or they’re putting sentences together that aren’t the way that a native speaker or experienced speaker would do that. So, there’s a lot of that kind of stuff.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that this is a new concept?

**Participant B:** Yes. We are hoping so because we haven’t seen anything like that in literature, so we submitted it to a teaching psychology journal, where I hope it will be published. You know we are still waiting on the reviews on it, but I think it will get a good reception. When we try to publish something like this we will often ask local colleagues to review it, so I asked a couple of research methods teachers. Both of them thought that it was a really good idea and an interesting concept, so now we hope that the real reviews of the journal will get accepted. So, there is that process.

**Interviewer:** Yes, I actually had one of the professors I interviewed yesterday, she’s a foreign language professor. She paralleled foreign language learning with math. Math is a

foreign language, and a calculator is for math as Google Translate is for a foreign language.

**Participant B:** Yes, that's very interesting.

**Interviewer:** I really enjoyed hearing about all these different parallels, as it's something I hadn't thought about, because I am not a research method expert or a math expert. But it's interesting to see how people relate it to other things.

**Participant B:** Yes, that's what we were trying to do, and it was very interesting for me to work with a language professor and teaching that. I would just try and say, "I tried to do this in class" and then she would be able to find examples. You know we do that too, we can do it this way and we can pull that together. It is kind of an interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary venture.

Interviewer and Participant B discuss how a student who has studied a foreign language before might be able to relate more easily to the concept of learning research methods as learning a foreign language.

**Interviewer:** If you could create the ideal future for students learning research methods language in classes, what would your ideal classroom situation look like? What would you consider the best environment for students to learn?

**Participant B:** For me, because it's a practiced skill, because there are statistics involved, there is picking measures, there is reading the literature and understanding it and all that, there are all these different multi-component skills. You learn by doing, so, the ideal for me is that we are actually going to do a project. We are going to do it from the beginning,

and then, in the process, you are learning that language. A different thought, it's not exactly what you're asking, but we alluded to this in our paper; Is it possible to teach little kids to learn to speak research? That would be the ideal because then what would happen as you go through your education is that you are really fluent in research and you can really understand what you are learning about all these different scientific disciplines and stuff. But we didn't find any evidence of that, and we are not sure. I don't think you can teach a little kid to speak research because it's like, they won't know what you're talking about! I think in middle school there is some effort in that, and certainly in high school you could do that by emphasizing the language part of that. So, we talked a little about that, how you would go about doing that, and again it's by getting experience and then learning. It's essential that you learn the vocabulary just like it is with the language, right? Because without that, you can kind of trudge along and figure out where the bathroom is, or sort of what the signs say if you're in that culture, but you can't really thrive. So, it's a similar kind of thing. The deal is you have to learn the vocabulary and you have to know what this means, because then, if you are talking to me about your study and you don't know how to describe it, I don't know what you're talking about. So, I guess it's that. It's not really a direct answer to your question but ... it's complicated. I think that both of us agreed in the paper on thinking of it that way, thinking of it as proficiency or fluency with speaking research. It's not just speaking, it's also writing, reading, and things like that. Understanding research, what's the best way to do that? Think of it like a different language. If we tell people that, they might actually be like, "I don't like other languages, I've never learned another language." They might think this is going to be really difficult and challenging, but people who have had experience, they



might that it's okay. You know, I understand that we haven't actually tested this, and we can look to see if this really helped at all that we described this as learning a different language.

**Interviewer:** Should you have like two classes and do one this way and the other another way, like a comparison?

**Participant B:** Yes, you're thinking like a researcher there. But no, we haven't done that yet and that might be a next step.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any other questions or comments?

Participant B relates his experiences with translation technology, and how its relative accuracy has been useful when his research has crossed lingual boundaries. Participant B also considers the idea that having access to translation technology might encourage those who do not know a foreign language to travel abroad.

**Interviewer:** That's all the questions I had.

**Participant B:** I realize I wasn't exactly relevant to your topic.

**Interviewer:** I think it's good to have different perspectives. Thank you for your time and for sharing your perspective!

### Interview C

*[My introduction remarks were identical to those in Interview A]*

**Interviewer:** How have the developments of language teaching manifested themselves in your teaching experience?

Participant C was taught under the Grammar-Translation Method. Since then she has conducted research and created her own curriculum for brain-based foreign language teaching with TPR.

**Interviewer:** What's your opinion on technology in language learning?

**Participant C:** I've seen what it can do in my son's life. He will watch or do a gamer thing in French and come back with all this French. If the person is engaged, they'll get it, but it has to be comprehensible.

**Interviewer:** How so?

**Participant C:** They have to know what they're saying, or they can't play the game. And see because he went to France with me, he knew a lot of French already. So, he took what French he knew, and you know they're buying and selling stuff, so he could see the name of the thing, and it was made comprehensible by the visuals. So, what I think, and I've already talked to some people in technology, you know in a class when we are doing TPR, what if somebody watched a video where little people, you know they're hearing <<la classe se lève, la classe s'assied>> and they're seeing little people do it. That I think is the next thing, because I mean Duolingo is okay, but there are no visuals directing people. So, I feel that is obviously the next level. If somebody could just do virtual reality of a TPR phase, people get about 150 vocabulary words, and then do the TPRS stage where they watch people acting out these things! I've had people come up to me who saw my class on TV and say that they have learned just by watching it. And the camera men that recorded us said that, every once in a while, they would forget to record because they were engaged in learning a language. So, I think that the next level is this, but I've talked

to people in the IT world and it would cost millions of dollars, so I don't think that it's going to happen. But I believe that engaging all the senses and doing it in a video format would be fantastic. Shy of that, what I proposed when I first learned about TPR and TPRS was having, you know how science people have labs, and they do experiments and stuff like that? If we had a house that we could go into and learn all the kitchen vocabulary or all the living room vocabulary. We could make different places, we could be learning first hand both the vocabulary and the verbs that go along with that stuff. It's especially effective with cooking.

**Interviewer:** That's interesting. I can't believe they would think it would be so expensive though when there is so much technology out there already.

**Participant C:** Oh! I think it could totally be done for free. These kinds of things get done at universities among colleagues and for the longest time, I mean that's the way CALA developed. I had some graduate students who got trained by me that said, "Wow this is awesome!" and I said, "Well let's make some lesson plans, let's do this, let's do that." We all did it for free and it got done.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that all of Google Translate cripples or is a crutch for people?

**Participant C:** I feel it's like any tool if you misuse it, it's not very good. If you use it properly, it can help.

**Interviewer:** I've kind of received that same answer from everyone. I'm probably guilty of it too if I'm rushed, and I have an assignment, I might use the translator to do it. So, obviously the quality isn't as good. I also think that professors play a role in the use of translators. I've heard from other students who have had bad experiences with language

professors who don't allow room to make mistakes. The students are afraid to do it themselves for fear of receiving a bad grade for simple mistakes.

**Participant C:** I believe you just learn from your own life, like any bad example. You just don't do that. Don't do that when you're a teacher. And we've talked about the virtues of trial and error, you know that. You know about the two rats that are caught up in your brains, you remember that? A lot of teachers don't know about brain research and that's not their fault, they just weren't trained that way. I had to take off teaching for three years, I did the three years here and there, but that was like three years of training with a guy that was an expert in the brain. Not everyone has time to do that.

Participant C discusses how to overcome the natural fear people have towards learning a foreign language by creating an environment where students feel successful and develop a positive attitude towards foreign language learning. She also explains various successes she has had with introducing a foreign language using TPR to those who hadn't before considered learning a foreign language.

**Interviewer:** That's all of my questions; do you have any other questions or comments?

**Participant C:** Let's get humans together having fun and at the end of the class they'd say, "Oh it's the end of the summer, summer camp is over, we'll miss you guys!" You know what I mean? Make it fun for them! The conference this year at the Tennessee Foreign Language Group, is completely focused on how to give comprehensible input. Which is what TPR and TPRS are all about. So, they're coming up, they're going to get there, but there was nobody there to teach us older people how to do TPR and TPRS.

Following textbooks is an institutionalized thing that I see slowly dropping away in high schools. When they write me, they are looking for people who are trained in TPR and TPRS saying “Have you trained anyone lately? Because we just want them.” So, it’s changing. I was just invited to do a professional development class, and they wanted to do all TPR and TPRS. They wanted to give a workshop and said they were going to invite four or five other private schools that want to do the same thing. So, I see it happening, more so, and this makes sense, in the private schools that have fewer students and they can have a little bit more freedom because they’re not tied as much to the textbook. But public schools are afraid to let go of that, and it’s such a double-edged sword because a textbook was not written by people who knew anything about the brain. It was written to get the most stuff in there and handed to somebody that isn’t trained. It’s like handing a kid a manual on how to ride a bike, and then expecting the kid to ride it! But I feel sure things are going to change because your generation won’t tolerate this, because you will change things.

**Interviewer:** Well thank you for your time and for answering my questions!

#### Interview D

*[My introduction remarks were identical to those in Interview A]*

**Interviewer:** In your experience, how have the developments of foreign language teaching manifested themselves?

**Participant D:** Well, I started teaching in 2001 and I was basically using the whiteboard. Since then there have been more technology tools available and become popular, you know like PowerPoint; I use that a lot, that one is getting a little old though. Other types of tools that have come about that I’ve used are things like websites that allow you to do

polls of opinions of students in class to get instantaneous feedback about different topics. They can be used in different ways. Of course, since then there's been more development of online courses in foreign languages and things like that.

**Interviewer:** Of the teaching methods you've experienced, has there been one that you have used more often than others?

**Participant D:** When I first started teaching, I was teaching in high school and it was very grammar focused. All the teachers seemed to use a lot of English in class, and I could definitely see the influence of some grammar translation techniques because of a lot of the things that other teachers shared with me "do this in class" or "have the students translate these things". After I did my master's degree and PhD, I learned more about how people learn languages, and the method that has been most influential for me is Processing Instruction. Processing Instruction and structured input/output. So basically, it kind of comes from the perspective that getting input in terms of what you're hearing and understanding in the language, or reading and understanding, are kind of like gasoline that helps the car go, helps the students actually build up their new language system. Whereas previous methods kind of jump straight to output, like present a new grammar point and then have the students produce it, this method wants to start with input and have them process things they're hearing and reading for meaning so their minds are drawn to focus on the different language forms and connect the form with meaning. So, it begins there and then only after it's been absorbed into their linguistic system, then ask them to start producing the language so it's more natural, so you're not putting the cart before the horse. They go from the perspective that the best environment for learning a language is one that provides input and interaction. So, a lot of input and then

opportunities for the students to use the language in an interactive way. That's been probably the most influential on me.

**Interviewer:** How have the different technological advances affected you?

**Participant D:** I think overall, they've been positive. I think as long as they're used in a way that gives the students using the language input or output opportunities to interact with the language. I think it's been positive. I don't think people should just use a new technology tool for the sake of using it because they want to incorporate technology, but as long as it is supporting the goal of getting the students practice using the language, I think it's good. I think the coming about of a lot of focus on developing online courses has sometimes been negative. For example, the Spanish section of the school I was at before was kind of forced to develop what they call hybrid courses by changing the courses that normally met three days a week, and they were told to eliminate one day a week and put it online somehow. Since the instructors would only be having their classes two times a week instead of three a week, they could teach another class. So, the goal had nothing to do with improving the language learning of students, it was about reducing cost and offloading more work on people. So, I think that sometimes universities have been going down those paths because the majority of their budget goes to faculty salaries and they're under lots of pressure from the local government to reduce their budgets and that's where they have to cut, so they're trying to find ways to do that. I thought that was a very negative kind of use of technology. And I think the danger of some of the online courses is that they are marketed to students as a way that's very convenient. You can do the work whenever you want, you don't have a set schedule, and if you work all day, then you can take the Spanish class from 10 PM to 2 AM, or whenever you want to. Because

of that, they're often developed in a way where the communication is very limited, and when there is communication between students and the language, it's done in an asynchronous kind of way where someone will post information and other students will post a response. So, there's not as much opportunity for face-to-face use of the language. And, depending on how the online courses are developed, I think it can often weaken the amount of input and output the students are given, and that sometime is reduced to just doing mechanical grammar activities online and not getting to the place where they're using it in a communicative way. So, it presents a challenge about how to go about those online courses in a way that provides opportunities. It can be done you know, it's just it would require an online type of course where students, at least part of the time, are meeting together through some kind of tool that allow synchronous communication, like Skype or similar kind of technology tools. Another problem is that you run into technology issues, compatibility issues, different browsers, or one student may not have a camera or microphone, and it makes it a lot more difficult to actually achieve what you're trying to do. So, it's a good goal, but hard to actually do online.

**Interviewer:** Where do you see technology and language teaching going in the future?

**Participant D:** I think we will continue to see more online courses. I think it's a place where universities are going, and you'll see more of that. Hopefully we'll continue to see lots more improvements in the tools that are available where the courses don't become something where it's just a focus on learning some vocabulary, filling in the blanks, conjugating verbs, and filling in the blanks of the verb conjugations. In other words, it needs to have a lot of face to face communication, and actually, you know, get the



interaction that students need to practice using different language skills. I think that'll be a challenge and an opportunity that develops in the next decades.

**Interviewer:** In your experiences with applications like Google Translate or Spanish Dictionary, how much of a help or a crutch do you think they are for students? Also, how do you think professors' grading methods affect a student's tendency to use online translators?

**Participant D:** I think that online translators were already around back in 2001 when I started, and once in a while I would get a paper, or something turned in where someone had obviously used something like that. As I recall, it used to be a lot worse at translating, like it would give strange errors, but they seem to have gotten a lot better in recent years. Sometimes, I still get a paper turned in from someone where something is off; I know how the student writes with errors as expected, and this has no errors and lots of grammar points that I know the student hasn't learned yet. So, I think every once in a while, students turn to that because they're rushed, or they don't want to do it or whatever. I try, when I give composition assignments outside of class, to emphasize that it's going to be graded at what your level is, explain what I'm expecting, and that errors are a natural, important part of language learning. It doesn't have to be perfect as long as it's at your level, and I'm going to give you feedback on the mistakes you make. Then you're going to correct your mistakes, and that's a good way to learn. With that, I usually get work that students have actually done themselves. It's just every once in a while, I get something obviously translated. So, I think the online dictionaries have been good, but using the online translators is bad because it kind of subverts the whole purpose of writing. I know they can write in English and hit a button to translate, but it is a waste of their time, so I

just try to impress that on them. I've tried having them write the first draft in class, but there's all kind of time restraints and that can take up too much class time, so it's an ongoing problem. Often you get a composition and you can't really prove they used a translator. In the past, you could tell the difference because it would give this awful translation and you could type in something in English to a translator and it would give you the same messed up translation. But they've gotten better now. So, I think how a lot of professors get around that is to have the students do at least part of the first draft in class and to make sure they're doing other writing in class. And there's always questions on the exams. A lot of times I will have them do conversations with a partner or in a group, and afterwards they will have to write about what they found out about their classmates so that you know they're doing some writing practice in class. Really, I've gotten what's obviously work that they've done because it's full of errors, and that's what I expect. The students will get to correct it and improve it. You just have to express to the students to think about little kids when they're learning a language, it's full of errors, and everything they say has errors, but it's just a natural part of learning. You go back and hear the correct way, and slowly you learn the language.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any other questions or comments?

**Participant D:** Not that I can think of. Good luck with your thesis.

**Interviewer:** Thank you! And thank you for your time.

#### Interview E

*[My introduction remarks were identical to those in Interview A]*

**Interviewer:** In your experiences with foreign languages and linguistics, how have the different methods developed over time?

**Participant E:** So, I guess my original methods were all in Greece. The way the English is taught in Greece, there's a textbook but it's not just grammar. It's a textbook that included vocabulary and communicative context, and for French it was the same thing. I don't know who created the textbooks, but I remember there was the traditional start with a dialogue, you memorize the dialogue in the chapter, and then the dialogue has structures and words that were covered in the chapter to teach grammar and vocabulary. Then, as far as the exercises were concerned, it would be practice of the new grammatical concept, kind of fill in the blank type of things, not much translation though. When I came here, I was studying Russian at the University level. I went through all the levels, and at the advanced level we were doing translation, but at the early levels we were not. So, even when we were translating in our heads and being like "Okay, I have to write this essay, so I'll write it in English then translate it into Russian" the professors usually discouraged that practice. They said to try to think in Russian. They said to do your best and to stay away from writing it in English and looking it up in a dictionary because you're going to create awkwardly structured sentences. The pressure was to stick to the vocabulary you know and to write within the vocabulary you know. The translation came when we were very, very advanced, and there we would translate both English into Russian and Russian into English. But that wasn't until the highest level of Russian. So, in Greece that was pretty much it. In my Advanced English classes in high school they were being taught as content courses. I remember taking a course in introductory psychology where the textbook was in English, and so we were building a vocabulary, even though the teacher was not a psychology instructor, but an English instructor. The topic was not psychology as much as let's learn these terms and vocabulary and talk about

what's in the text without really addressing psychology as a field. So, one year was that, one year was histories where we each got to pick a historical figure and create a biography that we presented on. And a third year of advanced English was catastrophes and disasters.

**Interviewer:** This was all in high school?

**Participant E:** Yes, I arrived in the States with very advanced English. It was incredible, I didn't realize how lucky I was. When I met other foreign students here, I realized how much more advanced my English was. Yeah, catastrophes and disasters was a whole year course. Oh, and I remember the first one. It was a four-year sequence, and the first one was food for thought. Now that I think back I guess that was the assumption, that you have the grammar skills, now you just need to build your vocabulary that is specific to different topics that you might talk about. So, yeah, it was like content courses in English even though I was in a Greek school. Only the advanced students could register for that, and for me it counted as social science courses in addition to my foreign language courses. It worked out really well, and I still remember all my courses, all my presentations, things like that. When I came here and started freshman year, I started my Russian learning at the university level. And this was in the 80's. The way that was taught was a ton of memorization, so we were memorizing passages and passages of Russian literature. I still can recite them, and I rely on what I remember from those to pull structures and be like "Oh yeah, that's how you do this". So, at least at university, the professor we had was very Russian; she came from Russia, she was like "This is how we do it in Russia, and this is what we're going to do here." Some students just hated it because not everyone is good at memorizing big chunks of text. But I came from Greece

and this is how they taught us in school. Not only with the foreign language, but the regular content as well. So, when I grew up in Greece in elementary school this was the system. You have a textbook and your lesson was to study that chapter which really meant memorize the chapter. Then the way the teacher graded us was by calling random kids up and we would stand in front of the class. She would say for the first kid to go and you would have to recite the chapter. When she decided you knew it well enough or what grade she would give you, then the next kid picked it up from the next word and kept going. I was so used to that method of teaching. So, when I came to this country and was learning Russian I was like "Oh, I know all about how to do this", and that's how I learned Russian.

**Interviewer:** Was that your first experience with Russian?

**Participant E:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Did they teach you anything about how to pronounce the language?

**Participant E:** Yes, we met every day and one day would be the textbook, the next day was vocabulary, the next day was grammar, the next day was recitation, and the last day was an in-class quiz or test. The next week we did it all over again. I remember even when we did the textbook it was a ton of repeat after me. I felt like the class was just a chorus class because when we were not reciting what we had memorized, we were all as a group repeating structures. It was all meant to memorize it and make it automatic. Everybody was speaking Russian from the beginning even when we didn't know exactly what we were saying. And then, as we built up, there would be longer interactions that we had to memorize. But I remember it felt like a chorus class because we were just saying stuff in Russian the whole time even if we didn't know what it was. I mean it must

have worked because within four years I was at the advanced level. But I did come at it with the ability to memorize. So that was my experience there.

**Interviewer:** How have technological advances affected you in your experiences with foreign languages?

**Participant E:** I would say that the main ways that they've done that is by making corpora available.

**Interviewer:** What is that?

**Participant E:** Like corpus, a corpus of language texts is electronic access to any word in a language that you want to see in context. So, I use both the British Corpus for British English and the Contemporary Corpus of American English, and it's just really a collection of articles, literature, journalism pieces, and even now I think they've added TV shows and radio shows. It's all just digitized text that you can then search very quickly for any English word you want to see how the native speakers use. So, I think that the key to going from intermediate knowledge of a language to advance is learning the structural context and the communicative context where a given word can be used appropriately because otherwise you just learned these synonyms, but you don't know when to use which one. So, you know that stimulate is like stir, but you can't say "I'm stimulating the soup." The whole point is that there's no true complete synonymy. So, that's the piece that makes you more native in your use of the language is knowing in which context the appropriate word fits. That's what makes your use of the language precise. For me, that precision has been really helped by not trying to guess and learn by mistake, but to just simply search online and figure out how people use this word. You can do that by Google Search, and you can also do it by using corpora. There's also now

this wonderful electronic dictionary called WordNet. It's actually what's been used to tag all the texts that are now online for us to Google Search. It started in the 80's as a project to map the lexicon in a native speaker's mind, and it was done by a group of psychologists. So, their thinking was that we don't actually carry definitions in our head, what we carry is just a network of words and we know how words are related. So, they were thinking that when you give people association tasks you know you say "cat" and they would respond "dog" very quickly. Why is that? As opposed to saying "cat" and responding "feline, an animal with...", they immediately give you some associated word. That's what got them thinking, well it seems like the lexicon in the human brain is not organized in terms of definitions like a dictionary, but it's actually organized as a network of words. So, if it's a network of words, let's try to map what that would look like. That's how WordNet came about. It started as a project of how we can come close to mapping what the human lexicon looks like. And then of course once computer science came about they realized, "Oh, we can use that information now for English." For all the synonymous words there are hypernyms and hyponyms, like to jog is a way to run, so jogging is associated with running. Then they tag each word based on its associations, then you can tag a text and find the associated words. And now what's happening across the world is for other languages to be able to have as rich a situation as we have for English. When Google-searching, you need a corpus of texts, then create a WordNet, and then you use it to tag other texts. So, those kinds of resources are exceptional for advanced language learning to the extent that they exist in the language you're learning. Then definitely for oral practice and listening comprehension now we can just play all kinds of things on YouTube. Like that was not something we had when I was a kid or

even in college. So, for listening comprehension we would still go to those language labs and put on headphones, listen to a tape, and have no visuals to help. I think there is a huge improvement now, I mean lots of people are learning languages on their own now. You couldn't do that back then, even if you were excited, you were still stuck waiting for that teacher to come teach you something. Because I was one who loved languages, and if I were learning it now, I would've learned so many more languages. Because that was my passion, I remember fighting with my family just to get me into an English class, and there was this old lady was coming to the house. Imagine now if I had the internet ...

Interviewer and Participant E consider how varying perspectives and tendencies create the cultural pressure to study foreign languages or to not study foreign languages.

**Interviewer:** Why do you think studying a foreign language is a valuable asset?

**Participant E:** That's a good question for me because I do it because I enjoy it, not because it's an asset. There's a saying for goal setting, how they say part of goal setting for your life is like a rosebush. So, you know how for a rosebush to grow, you have to prune it. And if you don't prune it, the rosebush tries to grow beautiful roses for all its roses and it drains its energy. So, you have to force it to cut down on production so that it can put that energy on beauty without killing itself. That's what a rose bush all about. If you do not prune it regularly it will just run through its life cycle quickly. It's almost like there's only so many resources it has. You can make it bloom three years in a row, or it can bloom for ten years as long as you cut back. You control how much blooming it does. When it comes to the human brain, we have a similar issue that the resources are limited



and the amount of time we have the resources is limited. We are similar to a rose bush. You might love gymnastics like I did, and track, and foreign languages, and creating music. I also knew that one day I would have to make a living. So, you're pruning as you go, you wish you could do it all, and then you realize at the end of the day there are very few things you can do. Between sleeping and working every day, and if one of your goals in life is to have children, there goes another amount of time, there isn't very much left for anything. If you're able to at least make your work something that is one of your hobbies, like I was able to do, then at least your work is one of the things you don't have to prune. Otherwise, when it comes to something like learning an instrument, or a foreign language, or a martial art, those are long-term commitments that, unless you see yourself getting a lot of satisfaction out of them, or you see a lot of value in terms of opportunities in your life, you're not going to pursue them because you are pruning. People have to make very conscious decisions about where they're going to put their energies, and some things you're just born with the wonder to do. So, let's say if you were born loving engines, and you're interested in cars and engines. Why then would you bother learning another language that takes so much time. You want to put all your time into learning all the mechanics of engines. Meanwhile, you still have to eat, sleep, go to school, and do all of this other stuff that is expected of you. If we had a school system where we're not expected to learn everything, then people could become better at more things they're interested in. But we don't let people do that, we force them to sit through twelve years of learning everything and trying to convince them that knowing some algebra will be good for them.

**Interviewer:** If you could create the ideal future for foreign language learning, what would it look like?

**Participant E:** If I was to learn a foreign language now, I would start with a basic grammar book. Because for me, as a linguist, I understand syntax and I'm good at that, it wouldn't take me long to at least say "Okay, I've got the basics of the grammatical structures". So, then I know how to form a sentence. Because once I have the possibilities of sentential structures, then I add vocabulary to that. It's like scaffolding for me to be able to create sentences. I understand what the sentence structure needs to look like, and then a sense of the morphology of the language, so I have some idea of how to do tense marking and gender marking if it has it, that kind of stuff. So, yeah, I would definitely start with a basic grammar book to understand the basic grammar of the language. I'm not trying to do two things at once like memorize the words and understand the grammar. Give me a hundred words, I'll learn those, and those will be all the words I need just to understand the grammar and get the grammar down. I would do all of that with reading and writing, I wouldn't even try to sound it out. I'm a person that goes one at a time, I don't like to do it all at once. Because then you can feel the success, otherwise you always feel like a beginner. This way you can say "I'm an advanced learner when it comes to the grammar and now I'm building my pronunciation or my vocabulary." Then you can move to phonetics and be talking to a native speaker, watching movies in the foreign language, looking at WordNet, anything that will teach you how to speak properly. And at least know that nobody is going to say, "That's not how we do it." Not understanding the structure behind it blocks the communication so much. I think that was my advantage when I arrived here. I had learned English grammar so well that I knew it better than

freshman in college here. I was making mistakes, but it was always word choice and never structural. Native speakers don't mind correcting it or giving you hints for word choice, but they hate teaching you grammar. It's considered cute when you use the wrong word in a sentence, but if you say anything ungrammatical, they don't think it's cute, they just think you're stupid. So, that would be my process. And I don't know if that's the case for every language, but in my experience, that worked really well. Having the grammar down got their respect and they were willing to help with the other parts of learning.

**Interviewer:** Thank you for your time and for your unique responses!

## CHAPTER III

### The Future

#### TECHNOLOGY

In the 21st century, technology affects the lives of everyone in some way. Improvements on current technology and the creation of new technology are ceaseless enterprises, and foreign language pedagogy is no exception to the reach of technological developments. Technology was first seen in the realm of foreign language teaching with the Audio-Lingual Method and the use of language labs and tape recordings.<sup>1</sup> It has now manifested itself in foreign language teaching in numerous ways. The attitudes of professors, students, and others who have an interest in foreign languages vary from the desire to expel all technology from the classroom, to the desire to incorporate technology to the exclusion of all else. As an inanimate tool, technology is neither inherently good or bad; those perceptions are derived from how technology is used. The interviews that I conducted with various MTSU faculty provided me with information and perspectives regarding technology that I had never before considered, and I have integrated their views into my research of how technology affects foreign language teaching. This project will focus on a few examples of foreign language related technology that most people have heard of and/or have access to.

Translation technology is one of the more commonly known technologies related to foreign languages. There are an array of translation applications and devices, but I will only touch on a few of the more popular and groundbreaking ones. Google Translate and Microsoft Translator are online applications that have continued to improve over time

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<sup>1</sup> Richards and Rodgers, 57.

and are now valuable assets to those looking to use a foreign language temporarily. Alexander Waibel, a professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University's Language Technologies Institute writes that "Systems have now really achieved a phenomenally good accuracy, and so I think, within our lifetime I'm fairly sure that we'll reach, if we haven't already done so, human-level performance, and/or exceeding it."<sup>2</sup> At the creation of foreign language translators, inaccurate translations were an understood consequence, but now, their accuracy has developed to the point that professors have trouble discerning if a student is using a translator on an assignment. There are also language-specific online translators, like Reverso for French and SpanishDict for Spanish. Because these applications focus solely on one foreign language, they are considered by most to provide a higher level of accuracy than Google Translate or Microsoft Translator. Lastly, in the past decade, technology has been increasing to a level where we now have achieved real-time translation. Major companies like Google<sup>3</sup> and Waverly Labs<sup>4</sup> have successfully created earpieces that instantaneously translate up to forty languages as they are spoken and heard. As they are based on translation technology like Google Translate, they are only as accurate as the current translators, but they still allow for on-the-go translation. When teaching a foreign language, translators can sometimes be a crutch for students to lean on when rushed or lacking confidence. If used in small doses, to look up a forgotten noun or verb for example, translators are beneficial.

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<sup>2</sup> WBUR, "Translation Technology Is Getting Better. What Does That Mean For The Future?" *Here & Now*, WBUR, 19 July 2018, [www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2018/07/19/translation-technology-future-language](http://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2018/07/19/translation-technology-future-language).

<sup>3</sup> "GooglePixel Buds," *GoogleStore*, Google, [store.google.com/us/product/google\\_pixel\\_buds?hl=en-US](https://store.google.com/us/product/google_pixel_buds?hl=en-US).

<sup>4</sup> "Meet the Pilot," *Product*, Waverly Labs, [www.waverlylabs.com/products/#fourth](http://www.waverlylabs.com/products/#fourth).

It is when they are used for whole assignments that they begin to negatively affect the language learning process.

Another genre of technological resources for foreign language teaching are computer-assisted language learning (CALL) applications.<sup>5</sup> Among these common applications are: Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, and Vista Higher Learning. These can range in variety of languages offered, price, and accessibility. I have firsthand experience with all three of these applications and can speak to their educational quality. Duolingo is a free language learning platform that provides fun, easy, and interactive exercises in a wide variety of foreign languages.<sup>6</sup> It rewards continuous use and offers instant feedback. Duolingo is successful for those who want to attain an intermediate understanding of the grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language, and it is great when supplemented with a foreign language course. Rosetta Stone has a rich history and considers itself to be the world's most trusted language learning software saying, "Millions of satisfied learners can't be wrong."<sup>7</sup> It is relatively high-priced software, ranging from \$150-\$500 depending on the package, and it is a technology-based immersion approach that has attained a high level of success. When I used Rosetta Stone in high school, I found it very entertaining and educational, but I had difficulties with the technological aspects, like my computer and microphone, that led me to stop using it. I am sure that if I were to use it now, with access to better technology and more knowledge of how to use it, I would achieve results quickly. Vista Higher Learning (VHL) is an "online environment created specifically for

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<sup>5</sup> Chappelle, Carol, and Shannon Sauro, *Handbook of Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017: 12.

<sup>6</sup> "Learn a Language for Free," *Duolingo*, [www.duolingo.com/](http://www.duolingo.com/).

<sup>7</sup> "How It Works," *Does Rosetta Stone Work? How Rosetta Stone Works - Methodology*, Rosetta Stone Ltd., 1999, [www.rosettastone.com/how-it-works](http://www.rosettastone.com/how-it-works).

world language acquisition.”<sup>8</sup> Publishing materials in both print and digital form, VHL is a beneficial application for both teachers and students. Students are provided with “plenty of practice, a safe environment, and engaging media,” and teachers are provided with “time-saving tools, powerful course management, and enhanced support.”<sup>9</sup> The online grammar and vocabulary exercises are extensive and thorough and are successful at teaching the foreign language. Online foreign language resources come in a wide variety and the implementation of them in the classroom receives varying reactions from both teachers and students. Supplemented with an in-class teaching method, these resources allow for a range of teaching mediums.

The most accessible technological resources that foreign language learners and teachers have access to are those found on the Internet, for example, podcasts, literature, movies, news journals, videos, corpora, and WordNet. With the advent of the Internet, a whole world of knowledge gradually became available to the public, and foreign language teachers have the opportunity to use these resources for assignments and lessons. Each digital resource is unique and allows students and teachers to see various aspects of a foreign language. Podcasts, movies, and videos reveal native pronunciation and contextual use of the target language. Literature illustrates proper grammatical structures and words written in situational context, while news journals provide current topics related to the target language’s culture and allows for topical vocabulary. Corpora is the plural form of corpus, and corpus is defined in the Cambridge English Dictionary as, “A collection of written or spoken material stored on a computer and used to find out

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<sup>8</sup> “Learning Is Just a Click Away,” *Vista Higher Learning Supersite - Higher Education*, Vista Higher Learning, 2018, [vistahigherlearning.com/highered/supersite-highed-overview](http://vistahigherlearning.com/highered/supersite-highed-overview).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

how language is used.”<sup>10</sup> The English language has two primary corpora: the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). COCA is the “largest freely-available corpus of English...containing more than 560 million words of text.”<sup>11</sup> These corpora contain contextualized examples for any English word. WordNet is a “large lexical database of English.”<sup>12</sup> Basically, WordNet discerns meanings and relations between words, and tags them online so that when one word is searched, all its synonyms and cognitively related words will show up in the search. Now all these resources are only as helpful as they are provided in the target language. Prevalent languages like English, Spanish, and French have many more educational resources than lesser-taught languages. Thus, for the more common languages, these technological resources allow for numerous benefits and proper integration in the classroom can pique the interest of students.

There are too many technological advancements relating to foreign languages to cover in this project, but it is worth the time to research how technology can improve the learning experience. Students entering college have been raised alongside technology and it is an integral part of life. Carol Chapelle, and Shannon Sauro write that “A number of unstructured online activities, including public forums, fan fiction, social media sites, and massively multiplayer games, have been found to be valuable language learning opportunities.”<sup>13</sup> Teachers seek to create a learning environment that will draw the interest of students and effectively teach the target language. The proper implementation

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<sup>10</sup> “Definition of ‘Corpus’ - English Dictionary,” *CORPUS | Definition in the Cambridge English Dictionary*, Cambridge University Press, [dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/corpus](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/corpus).

<sup>11</sup> *Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)*, Brigham Young University, [corpus.byu.edu/coca/](http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/).

<sup>12</sup> “What Is WordNet?” *WordNet - A Lexical Database for English*, The Trustees of Princeton University, [wordnet.princeton.edu/](http://wordnet.princeton.edu/).

<sup>13</sup> Chapelle and Sauro, 20.



of technological tools can achieve that. Not everyone has the time to devote to learning a foreign language. For those who merely need a quick translation, or who plan to travel abroad, the various forms of technology and translators presently available provide a simple solution. And for those who devote hours to learning or teaching a foreign language, listening to the radio, streaming a movie, or going online are all ways to gain exposure to the target language. Technology is not perfect and it is always being improved upon, but having access to the latest resources could make all the difference in students' success.

## **PICTURE OF THE FUTURE**

Looking back at how foreign language pedagogy has evolved, the future seems bright because of the certainty that there are those who will never stop striving for excellence. With the saying "If it isn't broke, don't fix it" in mind, every foreign language pedagogy can be seen, in some part, in today's classrooms. Professionals have perceived flaws in every method, but the best of those methods has carried on into the present. No one knows what the future will bring, specifically in terms of methodology and technological developments for foreign language pedagogy, but by observing the past and present, informed decisions can be made for the future. Other cultures are becoming more and more accessible, both online and in person, and those who devote their time to learning a foreign language and its associated culture have more interactive, communicative opportunities than ever.

As I interviewed the selected MTSU faculty and asked what their idea of an ideal future would look like, I received answers varying from grammar and vocabulary

memorization to creating rooms individualized for topical learning. The variety of responses reinforced the idea that there is no one, single fail-safe method to teaching a foreign language. Instructors use a variety of methods, but also believe that a particular method introduced in an appropriate way can mold itself to any type of student. When considering the future of foreign language pedagogy, balance and moderation should be the cornerstones: a balance of interactive activities and study of grammar and vocabulary; a balance of teacher and student communication; a balance of in-class and online exercises. All things in moderation is the perfect recipe for success. In the past, the over-extension of focus on one aspect of foreign language learning over another was the catalyst for a gradual shift into a new methodology. That, among other reasons, led to the development of new methods. With the way methods are being implemented today, students are being taught one way and expected to perform in another way. That means balance is lacking between the instructional methods and the expectations. In an ideal future, students would be taught in the classroom what is expected of them in the real world.

If I were a student walking into a classroom to learn a foreign language today, what would the ideal classroom look like and how would I want to be instructed in the foreign language? My answers to those questions are both simple and complex. Much like the concepts behind TPR, I would want to walk into a welcoming, stress-free environment where learning a foreign language is the highlight of my day, not something to be dreaded. This can be achieved by starting with listening comprehension to build up a basic vocabulary in the foreign language, followed by simple grammar structures that apply to the listening comprehension activities explained in the students' native language.

I believe that understanding the patterns behind the sentences in conjunction with listening comprehension exercises is what unlocks the student's brain to be able to attain oral proficiency. After listening for comprehension in the foreign language and learning structures in the native language, I believe the next step should be communicative interactions between students. The focus of these interactions is not to have perfect pronunciation, but to begin producing the foreign language verbally. Assigned homework should be to read over a news article, or watch a YouTube video, something containing content at the expected proficiency level of course, that will allow students to experience native pronunciation and contextualized examples of the vocabulary and structures studied in class. These last two steps are very important because the goal of foreign language learning is to be able to communicate fluently, and I believe that many times students do not achieve that because they are not put in situations where communicative or native use of the language is involved. The order of instruction should be listening, understanding, speaking, reading, then writing. And all foreign language teaching should be preparing the students for real world situations.

Teachers appear to have the tendency to say they teach using different methods, like the Communicative Approach or TPR, but when the class begins, they sometimes slip back into old habits. When that happens, they are losing the balance necessary to create a conducive learning environment. And, since what is required today from new teachers is not the same as what was required fifteen years ago, they might not realize that they are no longer preparing the students for success. Another aspect of teaching is that the balance of methods and techniques used needs to change as the students' progress. What worked at a beginner level will need to evolve as the students reach an

intermediate level, and again as they reach an advanced level of language proficiency. I understand that there are endless differences that affect why and how teachers teach the way they do but imagine where we could be if the method that produced the highest level of foreign language proficiency was adopted worldwide? My experience has revealed that ignorance of what is available to us or a fear of change is what's keeping foreign language pedagogy from moving forward. There are a lot of players on the board, including politics, money, and educational systems, but only we can determine how successful we are at what we put our minds to – like learning a foreign language. In my opinion, the ideal foreign language learning environment is one that can create a desire for foreign languages in anyone by shaping itself to fit the needs and abilities of the students and teachers. Indeed, this flexibility allows for growth.

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Appendix I

**IRB**  
**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
 Office of Research Compliance,  
 010A Sam Ingram Building,  
 2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd  
 Murfreesboro, TN 37129



**IRBN001 - EXPEDITED PROTOCOL APPROVAL NOTICE**

Tuesday, October 09, 2018

Principal Investigator **Casey Brinegar** (Faculty)  
 Faculty Advisor Steven Estes  
 Co-Investigators NONE  
 Investigator Email(s) *cjb6h@mtmail.mtsu.edu; steven.estes@mtsu.edu*  
 Department Health and Human Performance

Protocol Title ***The evolution of foreign language pedagogy***  
 Protocol ID **18-2281**

Dear Investigator(s),

The above identified research proposal has been reviewed by the MTSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) through the **EXPEDITED** mechanism under 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110 within the category (7) *Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior*. A summary of the IRB action and other particulars in regard to this protocol application is tabulated below:

IRB Action	<b>APPROVED for ONE YEAR</b>		
Date of Expiration	<b>7/31/2019</b>	Date of Approval	7/6/18
Sample Size	10 (TEN)		
Participant Pool	Primary Classification: <b>Healthy Adults (18 or older)</b> Specific Classification: <b>Current MTSU employees</b>		
Exceptions	1. Collection of contact information is allowed for coordinating the meeting(s). 2. Voice data is permitted		
Restrictions	1. <b>Mandatory active informed consent; the participants must have access to an official copy of the informed consent document signed by the PI.</b> 2. <b>Identifiable personal information must not be retained..</b> 3. <b>Inclusion/exclusion criteria must be followed as proposed.</b> 4. <b>Audio/video data must be destroyed once data process is done. .</b>		
Comments	Approval notice issued late (refer IRB Reviewer File for reason)		

This protocol can be continued for up to THREE years (**7/31/2021**) by obtaining a continuation approval prior to **7/31/2019**. Refer to the following schedule to plan your annual project reports and be aware that you may not receive a separate reminder to complete your continuing reviews. Failure in obtaining an approval for continuation will automatically result in cancellation of this protocol. Moreover, the completion of this study **MUST** be notified to the Office of Compliance by filing a final report in order to close-out the protocol.



**Post-approval Actions**

The investigator(s) indicated in this notification should read and abide by all of the post-approval conditions imposed with this approval. [Refer to the post-approval guidelines posted in the MTSU IRB's website](#). Any unanticipated harms to participants or adverse events must be reported to the Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918 within 48 hours of the incident. Amendments to this protocol must be approved by the IRB. Inclusion of new researchers must also be approved by the Office of Compliance before they begin to work on the project.

**Continuing Review (Follow the Schedule Below):**

Submit an annual report to request continuing review by the deadline indicated below and please be aware that **REMINDERS WILL NOT BE SENT.**

Reporting Period	Requisition Deadline	IRB Comments
First year report	6/30/2019	NOT COMPLETED
Second year report	6/30/2020	NOT COMPLETED
Final report	6/30/2021	NOT COMPLETED

**Post-approval Protocol Amendments:**

**Only two procedural amendment requests will be entertained per year.** In addition, the researchers can request amendments during continuing review. This amendment restriction does not apply to minor changes such as language usage and addition/removal of research personnel. .

Date	Amendment(s)	IRB Comments
NONE	NONE.	NONE

**Other Post-approval Actions:**

Date	IRB Action(s)	IRB Comments
NONE	NONE.	NONE

**Mandatory Data Storage Requirement:** All of the research-related records, which include signed consent forms, investigator information and other documents related to the study, must be retained by the PI or the faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) at the secure location mentioned in the protocol application. The data storage must be maintained for at least three (3) years after study has been closed. Subsequent to closing the protocol, the researcher may destroy the data in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity.

IRB reserves the right to modify, change or cancel the terms of this letter without prior notice. Be advised that IRB also reserves the right to inspect or audit your records if needed.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board  
Middle Tennessee State University

**Quick Links:**

[Click here](#) for a detailed list of the post-approval responsibilities.  
More information on expedited procedures can be found [here](#).