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Comprehensible Input: The Effectiveness of TPR, TPRS, Technology, and Reading

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COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT:

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TPR, TPRS, TECHNOLOGY, AND READING

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Abstract

This review of the literature summarizes findings on the world language teaching methods of Comprehensible Input. The review addresses the efficacy of multiple methods within Comprehensible Input when compared with previous, more traditional methods (that is, methods which rely more heavily on explicit grammar and vocabulary instruction and drills). The main methods discussed are Total Physical Response, Total Physical Response Storytelling, and the use of technology, reading, and modified input in the Comprehensible Input classroom. The concluding analysis of the research presented here strongly stands in support of Comprehensible Input as an effective teaching method. It yields equivalent or improved comprehension results as compared to other world language teaching methods.

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Chapter I

How did you learn your native language? Most people would say they were spoken to a lot as a baby, interacted with numerous picture books, and practiced speaking every day to their parents and other children. Eventually, they honed their grammatical skills in school. How did that method differ from how you learned your second language? While some would list some sort of immersion experience, such as having parents whose native language became their second language, most would probably point to formal classes in school or elsewhere.

Introduction

When it comes to teaching languages in a classroom setting, which of these methods of learning a second language is best? This is a question that has been occupying the minds of many United States teachers for years. Various methods have been developed throughout the history of language teaching. Since 1845, with the introduction of the Grammar-Translation Method, a series of world language teaching methods began to take shape. The Direct Method came into practice 55 years later in 1900, and once the Audiolingual Method was developed in 1950, a burst of new methods every few years began. Many new methods have been developed, so educators and researchers have taken to analyzing whether or not world language instruction is utilizing the most effective and efficient ways. While older methods tend to rely on explicit grammar and vocabulary instruction and drills, newer methods tend to stay away from these. Instead, the newer methods utilize a great amount of input (what students hear and read in their second language) to prompt future student output (what students say and write in their second language). Thus, contrary to previous methods such as the

Grammar-Translation Method, Comprehensible Input (teaching communicatively) teaches a second language in context.

Comprehensible Input

In CI, the words have true meaning to the learner instead of repeating phrases after a teacher or reading pre-written dialogues out of a textbook, which students may or may not comprehend. Therefore, if the goal is to have your students actively communicate their own thoughts in a second language, teaching methods must use input which is comprehensible. Furthermore, if that Comprehensible Input is relevant to the students themselves, they now have a more relatable context in which to grow their skills in the language. It is important to know that Comprehensible Input is a general umbrella under which the methods of TPR and TPRS are placed. The use of reading and technology can also be put under the CI umbrella if they are taught in a way which is using the target language and is comprehensible to the learners. In the 1970s and 1980s, Krashen developed a theory that he referred to as The Natural Approach, which relies on Comprehensible Input, or CI. According to BBC's teachingenglish.org.uk, "Comprehensible Input is language that can be understood by listeners despite them not understanding all the words and structures in it." Since Krashen developed this theory, several methods have been developed which integrate C.I. into their teaching. Two popular methods are TPR (Total Physical Response) and TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling). Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method which uses CI to teach the language, and involves students in full body movements in response to the teachers words and actions. Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) is a method which uses

stories written for language learners to teach the vocabulary in the context of a story. According to tprsbooks.com (accessed May 23, 2019), TPRS is similar to TPR:

> When developing TPRS®, Ray was influenced by the work of Dr. Stephen Krashen and Dr. James Asher. Ray combined Dr. Asher's teaching method called Total Physical Response and Dr. Krashen's CI-based language acquisition strategies. The result is a teaching method that focuses on the importance of teacher-student interaction and the use of CI in keeping the learner's interest to become fluent in a new language. ("What is TPRS?")

With the use of stories, TPRS helps students to connect the vocabulary they are hearing to a context. Within these stories, the most common words in the target language are used in a simplified format. As well, books are structured around several different levels of proficiency, so the teacher can easily find a book with an appropriate language level.

As using Comprehensible Input methods are closer to how we learn our first language, more and more teachers are drawn to this method to teach their language classes. This is evident through the teacher workshops offered on the topic, such as offered by "Comprehensible Midwest" and mctlc.org, as well as teacher resource groups on Facebook, such as "CI Liftoff". There are also multiple blogs which have been started on the topic, for example madameshepard.com. VanPatten, a former professor or Spanish and Second Language Acquisition at Michigan State University, explained why he believes Comprehensible Input is the best way to learn a language. VanPatten (2014) stated:

> A major question for language teachers is what kinds of activities promote the development of mental representation and what kinds promote the development of

> communicative ability. Clearly, input-oriented activities help to develop mental representation. Interactive activities help to develop communicative ability. In either case, we must keep in mind our definition of communication: the expression and interpretation of meaning in a given context. Thus, whether our activities are input oriented, interactive, or some combination, the expression and interpretation of meaning within the classroom context should be the core of these activities. (p. 25)

VanPatten argues here that vocabulary and grammar drills are not the type of exercise that will help students to learn a second language. He explains the difference between what it is to know the linguistic information of a language and what it is to be able to communicate in a language. He argues that if our goal is for students to be able to communicate in a language, we should keep communication as the central focus of classroom activity as opposed to explicit grammar and vocabulary translation.

Apart from TPR and TPRS, the research done on the methods used within Comprehensible Input, provides a more complete set of data to analyze the effectiveness of this method when it is applied in a classroom setting. One vehicle of delivery used frequently when teaching with CI is technology. Teachers can now employ resources such as videos from YouTube, audio files from various websites, and even set up a Skype exchange with another school in a country that speaks the target language. Another widely used strategy when teaching using CI is reading and modified input. Teachers either make or use resources which they have modified to be at a suitable level for students. This allows teachers to stay in the target language during 90% or more of the class time. For example, the teacher can modify their speech when talking to the students, and be mindful to use the vocabulary with which

students are familiar and add in new words here and there to build upon existing knowledge. Another example of modification is finding audio links or books that have been modified to several different language levels. In this way, students staying in the target language and the material they work with is either at or slightly above their current language level. Priya and Ponniah (2013) stated,

> Readers acquire vocabulary when they focus on meaning of the text they read, and not when focusing on new words. This process is subconscious; readers do not know that they acquire vocabulary while they read but, in fact, they subconsciously absorb meaning. Mastery over the use of vocabulary means acquiring all aspects of word knowledge which include spelling and grammar of words. (p. 11)

This information supports VanPatten's (2016) previously outlined claims. First, in order for students to acquire new vocabulary, they must see it or hear it in a meaningful context. Second, instead of looking at a list of vocabulary words or drilling with flashcards, students learn much faster by reading the word in a sentence they understand. Third, students are able to pick up new words without ever seeing a visual, they use the context of the other understood words in the sentence. Therefore, reading comprehension could lead to faster results with students' vocabulary acquisition. These approaches of simplification, technology, and reading, enable teachers to give students many opportunities to stay in the target language and to build on their language skills.

Problem and Rationale

As Comprehensible Input methods are not yet used universally, despite great success in the schools which incorporate Comprehensible Input, many educators still find themselves

asking important questions. For example, which method of Comprehensible Input is the best to follow? Do they all result in similar student achievement results? Do students still succeed when they are not explicitly taught grammar and vocabulary? How do TPR and TPRS work in a classroom? How effective are the Comprehensible Input methods of technology, and reading with modified input in the Comprehensible Input classroom?

My intent is to shed light on the theory of Comprehensible Input and to show how its application develops desired levels of language abilities in students. The following research article reviews include lower level students. (first and second year language students) and higher level students (third year or higher language students). An additional aim is to broaden reader perspectives on different possibilities of methods within this theory. As such, I undertake a review of the literature that pertains to the question: To what extent does the use of Comprehensible Input accelerate language learning in a world language classroom in a K-12 setting?

There are several different ways to approach Comprehensible Input in the world language classroom. As a result, teachers are in need of concrete evidence of the effects of these methods in order to know which aspects they would like to adopt into their classrooms. In the next chapter, original research study articles about the many strategies within CI are reviewed, including TPR and TPRS, the use of technology, and reading and modified input.

Chapter II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following sections each review current research based on the following topics: Total Physical Response and Total Physical Response Storytelling, Technology in the Comprehensible Input Classroom, and Reading and Modified Input in the Comprehensible Input Classroom. As many teachers ask themselves which method is the most effective to teach a world language, it is important to now turn and examine the current research.

Total Physical Response and Total Physical Response Storytelling

Total Physical Response (TRR) and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) are two popular new methods within CI. TPR is a method wherein vocabulary is taught by the teacher speaking in the target language as the students respond with physical body movements. TPRS is a method that incorporates these same tactics within the context of a story that is tailored to the class' current language level.

Effects on Motivation using TPR or TPRS and the importance of learner involvement and feedback. For over 50 years, researchers have worked to prove the positive effects of TPR on second language acquisition. However, as Wolfe and Jones (1982) stated, "...in spite of research evidence that suggests that a period of delayed oral production will lead to significant gains in speaking, reading, and writing, many teachers cease using TPR after a few hours of instruction" (p. 274). If teachers are still hesitant to fully adopt the TPR method, then research is necessary to prove how effective it is in teaching the vocabulary that goes beyond the first few moments of class time. One leading and promoting factor of TPR is learner involvement and student engagement. According to an article on the recent findings of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement produced by McClenny et al. (2012), "Students learn

more when they are actively involved in their education and engage in joint educational efforts with other students" (p. 4). The following research studies speak to the positive effects of TPR and TPRS, as well as the effects that these methods have on student engagement.

Wolfe and Jones (1984) explored whether a TPR strategy could be used to teach a second language after students had already been exposed to four months of traditional teaching methods as well as the effects it would have on student interest in the course. The authors also wanted to see how efficient a course could be if both implicit methods (e.g. TPR) and explicit methods (e.g. Audio-Lingual) could be used in tandem with one another. The researchers hypothesized they would not see any large differences in the results of three tests given to both the experimental and control groups. Two Spanish 1 classes from a Catholic high school in suburban Philadelphia were studied. The experimental group consisted of 36 students and the control group had 43 students; students came from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Over the course of twelve weeks, both groups were taught the same vocabulary from the same textbook, *Espanol: A Descubrirlo* (3rd ed.). Classes met five days per week for 40 minutes. The control group was taught in the traditional manner (textbook focused), and relied on repetition and exercises to teach students new vocabulary. The experimental group employed 20 minutes of TPR method teaching, which included the use of props, flashcards, and chapter-themed posters, while the last 20 minutes were taught in the more traditional manner. This allowed students to keep some of their original structure. Students in the control group were asked to repeat phrases immediately, whereas the experimental group was only prompted to speak after having heard the vocabulary multiple times. Three tests were given throughout these twelve weeks, as well as a pre- and

post-evaluation for the students' thoughts on the tests and their personal interest levels in the course. The authors conclude that the TPR strategy worked very well when used alongside the traditional method. As Wolfe and Jones (1982) stated, "The novelty of having two approaches to the learning of Spanish, i.e., an implicit one through TPR and an explicit one through the standard teaching procedures is sufficient to keep their interest high" (p. 278). The authors were pleased that test scores were so much higher, as well as the increase in student interest in the course. While this study included concrete data provided by the three tests and final survey given to students, it could have included a larger number of students. Given that there were only two classes, the number of students who participated was quite small. The strength of this study lies in the amount of quality data produced. The administration of three separate tests which were the exact same test in both the experimental and control group speaks volumes for the positive effects of the TPR method.

Schneider (1984) sought to demonstrate the effectiveness of TPR as a pedagogical strategy and its effects on student motivation and engagement in the classroom. Schneider taught a 15-week spanish class using various TPR methods to achieve subconscious language acquisition, including the use of songs, games, pantomime activities, props and film strips. The participants consisted of four groups of 30 students each from two second and third grade classes. Selected participants were racially and socially balanced overall. Schneider progressively introduced small amounts of vocabulary through the TPR method. During the first 6 weeks, the teacher did not discourage or encourage student output of language. During the first few weeks, a plethora of interactive activities such as puppets, games, songs, and pantomimes were used. With each new week, the teacher introduced one or two new activities

while keeping the previous routines from the beginning of the course. From week seven onward, the students began speaking on their own with no prompts from the teacher and had increased language production through the end of the program. When students were eventually prompted to produce language during the study, their participation came effortlessly and without visible stress or unease. The researcher reported significant positive results throughout the entire process, with student enthusiasm and motivation skyrocketing; "The children were thrilled to hear themselves speak Spanish" (p. 624).

Schneider concluded her implementation of the TPR methods led to a widespread instinctive understanding of the vocabulary presented on a subconscious level. Students were almost constantly engaged and excited to take part in the course and found Spanish to be easy and effortlessly flowing. In the researcher's own words, "During the entire fifteen weeks, all signs indicated that at least ninety percent of the children thoroughly enjoyed learning Spanish. Interest was high in almost all activities at all times" (p. 624). Because of the increased motivation, a much higher and faster rate of acquisition of new vocabulary took place, and students who had been slow and lacking in English proficiency ended up excelling with Spanish through the help of TPR. The misgivings of this study are mainly the lack of pre- and post-evaluation. However, the perceived results by the researcher on general student engagement and vocabulary acquisition were still positive. This interactive method of teaching endows students with a subconscious automatic type of learning, and seemingly creates a passion for learning languages, even as early as six years old.

In 2015, Nowbakht and Shahnazari questioned the amount of input, output, and feedback that should be included during a course. Nowbakht and Shahnazari (2015) stated,

"The problems observed in MFI [Meaning Focused Instruction]; accordingly, led to a debate between the form-focused approach and meaning-focused approach…" (p. 103). MFI follows the belief that language should be learned naturally; thus, teachers should not correct errors or give explicit grammar instructions. Conversely, form-focused instruction (FFI) believes that errors should be corrected by the teacher and that feedback should be given. Nowbakht and Shahnazari set out to discover the results of a control group of students who were taught only with CI (which asked for student output and gave students feedback on their errors). Thirty male English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners whose first language was Persian participated; they were between the ages of thirteen to sixteen years old and were all enrolled in the Iran Language Institute. A placement test was given to ensure that all students were at the same level of English before beginning the study. Groups of 15 students were chosen randomly from a selection of students with the same scores on the pretest. In some of the results tables, the experimental group was divided between eight students who received a high amount of feedback and seven students who received a low amount of feedback. This way, the researchers could see the separate effects of three groups: a control group, an experimental group that produced output and received a low amount of feedback, and second experimental group that produced output yet received a high amount of feedback. Both groups were taught 25 selected vocabulary words; afterward they were asked to fill out a fill-in-the-blank exercise sheet with a word bank. The experimental group received the same amount of comprehensible input with the same 25 vocabulary words. However, the experimental group was also asked to write or speak using the vocabulary words. The experimental group also received teacher feedback on errors they had made as well as clarifications. A post-test was administered one

week after the class sessions to measure their knowledge of the target vocabulary words. The results for question one revealed a significant difference between the post-test scores of the high feedback group and the low-feedback and control groups. Worthy of note, the low-feedback and control group received the same score on the post-test, which were lower than the high feedback group. Since the high-feedback and low-feedback groups were both from the experimental group, these results are significant for the high amount of feedback was the factor that resulted in a better score, and not necessarily the amount of output students gave. Results for question two indicated the conditions for the experimental group resulted in higher test scores on the post-test. The results to the third question found feedback had a significantly higher positive impact on post-test scores than student production of output. The results to the fourth question indicated the higher the amount of feedback the student received, the higher his or her score was on the post-test. Thus, a correlation does exist between the amount of feedback received and a positive score on the post-test. As for the results of the fifth and final question, the amount of feedback on a specific vocabulary word positively correlated to the results on the post-test for that specific word. In conclusion, a low amount of feedback yields better results than no feedback, student output yields more positive results than when no output is given, and a high amount of feedback has the most positive results out of these three. One limitation of this study is the small number of participants, as there were only fifteen students each in the control and experimental groups. The amount of data generated was a strength. The pretest was piloted before it was administered to the students and bad questions were thrown out. Participants were carefully chosen based on their pretest results, and split evenly and randomly into groups. The post-test measured five

different components which stemmed from the original research questions and provided a strong base for the final conclusions.

In a 1994 study, Loschky set out to find the effects that negotiated interaction, premodified input, and comprehension have on second language acquisition. The study was conducted with 41 beginning-level learners of Japanese from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and took place over five days. The study sought to answer three different questions regarding the effects of negotiated interaction, premodified input, and comprehension. The 41 participants were divided into three groups. The first group was a control group which was taught with no input premodification or interaction. The second group was called a premodified group which was taught using input premodification yet no interaction. The third group was called a negotiated interaction group, which was taught using interaction but no input premodification. During this time, participants took a pretest, met individually with tutors for 15-30 minutes a day, and completed listening exercises. Instrumentation included maps and pictures of objects and shapes. On the last day of the study, a posttest was given. The results of the posttest revealed that the first hypothesis was the only one to yield significant positive results. These results favored negotiated interaction in which students negotiate meaning with their teacher about a certain vocabulary word or concept. A negotiated interaction could include a clarification request, a confirmation check, or a comprehension check. The first disproved hypothesis resulted in the conclusion that premodification of input doesn't help students' comprehension when compared with non-modification of input and non-interaction. The third disproved hypothesis found that the amount of language acquired would increase when a student began the study with a higher level of language. This study shows the

significance of explaining a term using only the target language. Thus, explicit teaching of grammar in the student's native language is not necessarily needed, and it can be circumvented when using a CI approach. One limitation of this study is the short duration of the experiment. Five days did not allow for ample time in which more changes could have occured. Had the duration been lengthened, it is possible better results may have resulted in this study. The main strength of this study was the thorough collection of data and preparation of the testing materials before they were used in the experiment.

Furuhata (1999) sought to find the effects of the traditional approach, the natural approach, and TPR on student motivation and satisfaction with the course. These three classes were taught with three different methods were tested and compared in a student questionnaire to determine which method students preferred. Furuhata hypothesized that although recent and innovative approaches have seen success in the United States, the Japanese students used in this study may not have been comfortable with newer approaches as they involve more student interaction than previous methods used in Japan. Traditional Japanese methods of teaching languages are quite different from more modern methods used in the U.S. such as TPR. These traditional Japanese methods generally include a heavy emphasis on grammar instruction, rote memorization, and correction of errors. Students are usually forced to speak in the target language only. In this study, the traditional approach was compared to two others. The Natural Approach is one where only the target language is used, yet errors are not explicitly corrected. Games and activities are often used to teach vocabulary. The last method tested in this study is Total Physical Response (TPR) which is a teaching method where only the target language is used and vocabulary is taught through physical

response to verbal commands. Participants in this study included 237 Japanese students who were between the ages of 18 to 22 from intensive English language schools in the United States. They were exposed to traditional Japanese methods, the natural approach, and Total Physical Response in ESL and EFL classes. Next, the students were given a questionnaire to test which methods they preferred and which aspects of each style they admired. The results of the questionnaires revealed that the Japanese students preferred the newer methods such as TPR and the natural approach when compared with traditional Japanese methods. The students realized that even though they were at times uncomfortable, they noticed that the interaction between students and teacher improved their speaking and listening abilities, which is something that the traditional Japanese methods lacked. Although this study shows strong results for students with a Japanese background, it is not representative of students from other backgrounds. Another study with a more diverse student base would give a more accurate image of which method students prefer in general. Nevertheless, this was a strong study for CI as it proved that students enjoyed methods which incorporated the most amount of CI, namely the natural approach and TPR. As these methods were preferred, it can be concluded that students would be more motivated to take such a course and the results would include a positive increase in test scores and language ability.

Tsui (1991) set out to discover which modifications made by a teacher have the most effect. The researcher hypothesized that the quality and variation of modifications of speech are more important than the amount of modifications given. The researcher also claimed student input and feedback to be a necessity for success. Tsui claimed, “The teacher or the native speaker may have used a lot of modification devices and yet failed to involve the learner

or the non-native speaker in the negotiation of meaning and to bring about comprehension" (p. 48). Thus, according to Tsui, whether by fault of the teacher or the learner, the student involvement must be present in order for comprehension to take place. In this study, two secondary classes from Hong Kong participated. One class was from a Chinese medium school and the other was from an English medium school. During the study, two thirty-five minute English reading comprehension lessons were audiotaped and transcribed. The transcriptions were then used to count the number of modification devices and to categorize the modification devices being used. Class A refers to the English medium school and Class B refers to the Chinese medium school. The categories of modification devices were comprehension checks, clarification requests, confirmation check, self repetition, other repetition, and decomposition. The results revealed the number of modification devices was roughly the same. The researcher then dug deeper to find if the sheer number of modification devices yielded different results, depending on the variety and quality of the modifications. Since Class B had slightly more modifications, Tsui stated that one might assume that Class B was more successful in delivering CI. However, this was not the case. As Tsui hypothesized, the class with the higher variety of modification devices (Class A), led to a higher level of comprehension in the students. Tsui explained, "...the greater number of confirmation checks and clarification requests used indicates more student participation in the negotiation work" (p. 52). In this case, the type of modifications that were more frequent in class A were confirmation checks and clarification requests. Since these types of modifications prompt greater student involvement, they were able to negotiate meaning with the teacher instead of being a passive bystander during the lesson. Tsui also talked about students taking initiative in asking questions as also

being very helpful in the classroom. These results support the conclusion that “The feedback provided by the student made it possible for the teacher to gauge the students’ level of competence and to carry on a very interesting conversation despite the student’s limited English proficiency” (54). This study, although thorough, could have benefited from more participants. Using only two classes did not give a wide range of variables to consider. Also, Class A operated at a higher level of proficiency than Class B, so it was hard to compare student feedback in both groups. Also, an exact transcription of both classes was recorded, and then carefully looked over to count each and every time a modification was made. Every part of both classes was analyzed and the conclusions point directly back to the results.

In a 2017 study, Fahrurrozi responded to his perspective of a lack of effective teaching methods as well as facilities and infrastructure in Indonesia. In particular, the English program was suffering the most in the school of Guntur 03 South Jakarta, Indonesia. He believed that the TPR (Total Physical Response) method could be an effective teaching method in this context. The main question was whether or to what extent TPR would bring positive changes to the English program at this school. In this four-month study, 40 students participated as part of a Classroom Action Research project. This project used three steps in particular: plan, action, and observation. After these steps, a reflection was done and the process was repeated. During the first cycle, an observation started the process, the learning target was not stated, speaking opportunities for students were not given, and students were less active in their class participation. This was taken into account, and a plan was made for the second cycle to make sure to implement these missing pieces along with the TPR method. In the second cycle, the students started speaking up in English, and began speaking more correctly. Overall, the

average percent increase of students learning vocabulary through the TPR method was 9.25% (from 74.13% to 83.38%). The TPR method was successful even after the two cycles of planning, taking action, and observation. In all measurements taken, an improvement occurred. Although this study yielded positive results, it could have benefitted from a third and/or fourth cycle to see if the positive trend continued. This study not only yielded positive results with students learning vocabulary at faster rates, but also instilled a new sense of motivation in the students. As well, it made the class more fun for students.

In a study conducted by Nugrahaningsih (2007), the researcher wanted to discover whether the TPR method would have a significant amount of success in teaching English prepositions to students in SDN Tajuk 1 Kec. Getasan, Kab. Semarang. The hope was the TPR method would particularly help maintain student engagement with younger learners. The focus of the study was whether the TPR method was effective in improving students' knowledge of English prepositions. In this 15-day study, 33 students from the fifth grade class of SDN Tajuk 1 participated. It began with a pre-test of 30 questions. After the pre-test, the class was taught English prepositions using TPR, and ended with a post-test to determine the amount of progress in the students' knowledge of English prepositions. a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores occurred. Although the TPR method was not tested against any other method in this study, the positive results speak to the effectiveness of TPR, especially for younger learners who benefit from more movement in the classroom. Teachers also reported that, "The students showed a great enthusiasm during the lesson" (Nugrahaningsih, 2006, p. 52). This increased motivation and enthusiasm for learning a new language is a large benefit for using TPR, and therefore is a recommended method for the future. However, the strength of

this study was the significant increase between pretest to the post-test. The instructional design was successful not only in that it motivated students and increased enthusiasm, but also that it significantly raised student scores.

Using visuals and realia. Within the methods of TPR and TPRS, numerous visuals and realia (authentic resources from a country which speaks the target language) are used. The following studies include research that supports the use of visuals and realia within the CI method.

Khanehgir and Khorasgani (2017), set out to discover the differences in the efficacy of teaching a second language when using Total Physical Response as compared with Keyword method. Their driving question was "How does the effectiveness of the KWM compare with TPR when teaching new vocabulary words in a FL to early elementary school children?" (2017, p. 151). The Keyword method uses similar sounds and cognates to help teach new vocabulary. The learners associate sounds from their native language with sounds in the target language, and even use some words to help with vocabulary acquisition. When using cognates in the Keyword method, students are privy to a stronger mental image. Keyword method relies on students' connections to their native language(s) to build a sense of familiarity with the new language and facilitate acquisition of new vocabulary. Three separate groups were sampled from 34 early elementary school children from three Iranian schools: A TPR group, a KWM group, and a "P" group, or control group. The control group was taught using what the researchers see as a more traditional method of teaching where a picture is shown, the target word is said, followed by a translation in the native language. The study began with an initial assessment, an "intervention" period consisting of the classroom treatments, followed by a next day

assessment, and finally, a two-week-later final assessment. For the KWM treatment, instrumentation included one booklet (10 sets of paired pictures representing new vocabulary words) and one booklet for the P treatment, or control treatment (10 pictures representing new vocabulary words). Students who were taught using the Keyword method scored significantly higher on the posttests than the TPR control groups. In fact, "the recall performance of the KWM treatment was more than three times higher than the recall performance of the P treatment, [which] suggest[s] that the former method can be very effective in teaching young children" (2017, p. 154). Thus, the researchers concluded that KWM is a more effective method in teaching second language vocabulary.

In 2014, a study by Ghani and Ghous sought to study the efficacy that TPR has with slow young learners who also fall into the group of low achievement. The researchers set out to discover the difference in pre- and post-test scores between an experimental group and a control group. Ghani and Ghous recorded four possible hypotheses in which each described a possible outcome. The first hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference between pretests. The second hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference between the posttest scores. The third hypothesis stated there would be a significant difference between the pretests, and the fourth hypothesis stated that there would be a significant difference between the posttests. The 48 participants were year two students who were all from the rural area of Penang in Malaysia, and were split in half to form a control and an experimental group. The students showed similar traits and were considered low achievers in their school. The control group used traditional methods of rote memorization and exercises, whereas the experimental group relied solely on the TPR method and use of visuals. Initially, a pretest was

given for preliminary knowledge of English. Next, the experimental group was taught with the TPR method and the control group was taught with more traditional methods (e.g. rote memorization, drills). A minimum of 10 new vocabulary words were presented during each class session. At the conclusion of the two weeks, students were given a post test which was taken from the textbook that the control group was using, which the school had usually used. The researchers concluded that TPR is helpful for slow young learners to acquire English as a second language. There were neither significant differences between the pretests of each group. Nor significant differences in the posttests. However, the experimental group's mean on the pretest was roughly 16 points below that of the control group. Additionally, the experimental group ended only four points below the mean of the control group's on the posttest. These results show the experimental group was able to make more progress in the same amount of time. The implications of these results are positive in that "...the experiment group that uses [the] TPR approach and visual aids has successfully close [closed] the achievement gap" (Ghani & Ghous, 2014, pp. 10-11). This could prove to be valuable to schools experiencing difficulties in closing the achievement gap whether within a mainstream or adapted student subpopulation. Since the lower achievers in the experimental group made more overall progress than the control group, it is possible that these students may be able to excel in their learning beyond the achievement levels in mainstream classrooms. The author identified three separate problems with the study. One, the study only incorporates young learners who are already having difficulty with academics. Two, teachers may not be comfortable with TPR. Three, the test (although validated by professionals in the field) was not the standard testing used in Malaysia. Another perceived issue is while it does include

numerous specifics on test scores, its duration was only two weeks. In future research, researchers advised an evaluation of the amount of time needed to complete the treatment process, as well as to be sure that both groups begin at the same level on the pretest. This would help the audience to showcase the positive results of using TPR with low achieving students.

In 2014, Hamilton set out to test Krashen's theory of CI with Preschool aged children. According to Krashen, using CI (authentic materials in a second language that can be understood without prior knowledge) may be a more effective way for students of all ages to learn a second language. Hamilton (2014) hypothesized that the two young boys chosen for this study would be able to learn new English vocabulary simply by listening to a story in English and viewing the pictures in the book provided. Two mother-son groups were selected; both groups were native Japanese speakers whose children did not have any prior English knowledge. Hamilton had created a prototype picture book which he then instructed the mothers to read to their children three times per week. This prototype picture book contained narratives and dialogues that alternated between Japanese and English. The purpose of this alternation was to give the children a context for the story in Japanese, and then insert English in approximately every other page of the story. Because the story contained pictures and was at a fairly elementary level, it falls within the realm of CI. The two mothers expressed two concerns as they set out to read this book to their children: their own pronunciation in English and the possibility of their children becoming confused or frustrated with having two languages represented in one book. After a pretest, the mothers began reading to their children. After having read the story, they realized the children had not asked any questions about the

presence of two languages, and they comprehended the material. In both cases, the children were able to pick up several English words by the end of the experiment. A posttest was given shortly afterward to obtain a true measure of gained knowledge. Not only did the results support Krashen's theory, but also the mothers were happy to report that their children began sporadically using their new English words in appropriate situations that demonstrated word comprehension. Hamilton later reflected that in order to sell a book such as his prototype, he would have to educate parents further on the impacts of CI. This was due to both mothers admitting that without prior knowledge of this theory, they would not have purchased such a book for their child. Hamilton also acknowledged that since asking a child to read the same book more than three times would become boring and repetitive, one solution would be to publish several more books, which would be available in leveled readers. Another limitation of this study was the small number of participants. A strength was its simplicity, for the reading of a picture book to a child is a basic yet encompassing way of using CI to teach a language. Although the mothers were a bit apprehensive to read the English parts of the story for fear of mispronunciation, the implementation did not require much effort from the mothers. The positive results of this study exceeded expectations as they not only taught the children new vocabulary words through CI, but also gave the children a desire to continue on with their English education. The mothers stated that their children were using their new words in proper contexts sporadically throughout the next several days. In conclusion, the results of this study prove that using a book such as the prototype would prove to be an effective source of CI for second language acquisition at the Preschool level.

In 2015, De Costa sought to to specify the exact advantages of the TPRS method of teaching as opposed to previous methods that rely on a less interactive reading experience for students of world languages. The main purpose was to evaluate the impact of a TPRS system of learning within a French immersion environment, and compare the subsequent improvements or lack thereof with a classic traditional teaching method that does not incorporate a story telling component. Two groups of students from Minnesota State University were recruited for this experiment. Twenty people (13 females and seven males) had just been involved in two months of French Immersion. It was hypothesized that the language skills of the students in the experimental group using the TPRS method would show greater improvements on measures of listening, vocabulary, culture, grammar, and writing abilities than those taught using methods which do not incorporate the story context. The research employed a quasi-experimental pre- and post-test design to measure French language listening, vocabulary, culture, grammar, and writing improvements resulting from lessons taught using both methods. All were administered the same French proficiency test using a standard French teaching book called *Français Interactif* by the Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services at the University of Texas. The control group was taught with a more traditional method for five days, where they were to learn with the help of a whiteboard. They were given sheets to write on, watched or listened passively to PowerPoint presentations, and used the book *Français Interactif*. The experimental group had the option to use the standard learning book, and the benefit of exposure to wide picture illustrations of the material in question. The learning experience was interactive; they were taught the material through a storytelling context. They also used two stuffed animals to visually display different parts of the story, which personalized the scenarios, and brought the

stories to life. After the same test had been administered post-exposure, the experimental group with the more interactive TPRS had a much larger retention of vocabulary words. They specifically scored statistically higher in French culture, and their listening skills were more developed than their counterparts. Listening scores with the TPRS group had a positive pre- to post-test difference of 24.07% whereas the control group had a pre- to post-test difference of 22.6%. The TPRS group saw a positive pre- to posttest difference of 58.83% in vocabulary knowledge, whereas the control group evidenced a 45.8% difference. This indicates when a student feels more engaged in his or her learning experience, either through participation, visual stimulus, or story telling, he or she will identify more with the material, and the listening skills and retention of information will be enhanced. This study did not take into effect the long-term memorization and retention of new words, vocabulary, or comprehension of grammar rules since it was only a 5-day study with a relatively small number of participants. It would be beneficial to repeat the same process on a larger focus group over a period of months to years and examine the broader margins and differences in learning and assimilation. One potential problem with this study was one group had relatively little previous exposure to French Immersion environments, so the difference in learning and vocabulary usage was broad and visible in a short time of implementation.

Non-tech procedures in the Comprehensible Input classroom. As Comprehensible Input strategies are analyzed, researchers are beginning to ask themselves which strategies and methods under the CI umbrella are most valid. While many previous studies compare a method within CI with a more traditional method, there is a lack of research which compares CI

strategies (e.g.games, songs, chants). The following research studies analyze the effects of CI with the use of various strategies.

Omari (2001) set out to discover if there is a significant difference between using TPR and songs/chants when teaching a foreign language. Omari hypothesized there would not be any significant difference between the TPR and songs/chants methods. The participants in this 6-week study included 20 Kindergarten children in Tennessee between the ages of five and six. The students were placed in small groups of four to five Kindergartners. Sessions were twice a week and lasted twenty minutes each, TPR was used for the first three weeks. Instrumentation included (but was not limited to) vocabulary cards and picture cards. A maximum of eight new vocabulary words per session were taught. After these initial three weeks, children were individually tested. For the last three weeks, songs/chants were used to teach the vocabulary; these weeks with the songs/chants also culminated with a final test. As hypothesized, Omari concluded there was no significant difference between the two methods. However, since both methods fall under the same concepts used in CI and both methods saw positive gains in vocabulary recognition after the three weeks, he was able to see that both methods are an efficient way to teach a second language. While the number of participants could have been greater and the time in each session could have been longer to strengthen the argument, the researcher saw the results as positive, stating "...it is obvious that combining the two methods in a classroom teaching situation would be effective in motivating the students to learn Spanish" (p. 30). One example of this high amount of motivation was displayed as the researcher "...observed the students "playing school" by quizzing their classmates on different body parts, colors, animals, etc." (p. 30). It is clear to see the teaching elements employed in

this study were able to motivate students, and through the test scores, both had positive results on vocabulary retention. For future studies, it would be useful to include a larger group of participants and elongate the amount of time for the study to strengthen the significance of the results.

While there are several studies for TPR which use data from older students, it is important to include all age types when studying the effects of a language learning method. Harrasi's (2014) study took into account the lack of research with young learners and TPR with his study in Oman. The purpose was to discover the efficacy of TPR with young learners when teaching a second language. This study brings an interesting turn as it did not contain the usual control and experimental group. Instead, there were two groups of students called "cycles." Students from grades one-four comprised the first cycle, and students from grades five-ten comprised the second cycle. During the study, the cycle one students were taught using the TPR method with a textbook that contained many TPR resources. For this group, a song was first modeled by the teacher with accompanying gestures to aid with memorization of the new vocabulary. Cycle two students were taught with the direct method for the entire duration of the study. Both studies did not contain any particular tests; rather, self-evaluations were given to all participants, including questions of preferences in course activities, what they felt they learned, and a self-assessment with regards to individual classroom behaviors and work ethic. At the end of the study, Harrasi (2014) concluded, "This review of TPR in Oman indicates that TPR can be a successful approach for teaching young children..." (p. 42). Although Harrasi did not share specific results, the study showed positive results including the advantages and disadvantages of the TPR method. For example, Harrasi declared TPR to be "... a teaching

method that incorporates fun and amusement, and therefore creates a stress-free environment" (p. 42). He described he songs, rhymes, and chants used in TPR are "a way of creating interest and motivation while learning, the students are exposed to a wide variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures in meaningful contexts" (p. 39). These results provide a compelling argument for the use of TPR in world language classrooms due to the positive correlation between the TPR method and heightened engagement and interest in a second language classroom. One possible disadvantage of TPR perceived by Harrasi is the possibility for misapplication of the method from the teacher, mainly as most teachers are not provided training on the subject and have to rely on self-education on the method. Another perceived disadvantage was the lack of time in class in relation to the demands of the curriculum. While this study yielded positive results for the efficacy of TPR, it lacked details. For example, the number of students who participated was not stated, and instead of an experimental and control group, there were pre-established groups of different ages called "cycles."

In a 2016 study by Naeini and Shahrokhi, the main purpose was to determine whether there were any significant differences between the TPR method and the Direct Method for teaching students new vocabulary, as well as any significant differences between achievement and gender. In this study, four null hypotheses were tested. The first hypothesis was "...[the] Total Physical Response Method does not have any significant effects on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning improvement" (p. 62). The second hypothesis was "...[the] Direct Method does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning improvement" (p. 62). The third hypothesis was "There is not any significant difference between the effects of TPR and DM on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning

improvement" (p. 62). Finally, the fourth hypothesis was "Gender does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' L2 vocabulary learning" (p. 62). In this study, 40 students from an elementary language institute in Isfahan, Iran participated. The group of students was split into two groups of 20, and each group had an equal number of boys and girls. The class met three times per week for 30 minutes. There were two experimental groups. While one group was taught using the TPR method, the other was taught using the Direct Method. Both groups used the same first four units of the book *Back Pack 1* to teach vocabulary. For each unit, the TPR group started out by asking some basic questions to introduce the topic, followed by choral responses. Then, a song was introduced and actions were taught to portray various vocabulary words. Objects or pictures of the vocabulary words were also shown. The teacher gave commands so the students would respond to show their comprehension. Then, students were asked to volunteer to take the teacher's role in asking questions to the class. Finally, the researchers summarized the vocabulary they had covered by asking some concluding questions. The group using the Direct Method began the unit by placing a large photo of the new unit in front of the students, then played the song while pointing to the pictures. Instead of acting out the vocabulary, students first listened to the teacher using basic sentences. Then, the teacher used flashcards with pictures to ask questions to the students and would wait for choral responses from the class. Pronunciation was corrected as problems arose. Toward the end of the unit, students were called on to create their own questions in the target language. Every student replied before ending the exercise. Naeini and Shahrokhi discovered that their first hypothesis was rejected. This hypothesis had stated that there would be no significant difference when using the TPR method. The results indicated the contrary, and the TPR method

proved to have significant effects on teaching vocabulary. The second hypothesis was also rejected as the Direct Method also showed significant positive results for vocabulary learning. The third hypothesis was rejected since TPR has a significantly higher success rate in teaching vocabulary than the Direct Method. The fourth hypothesis was the only confirmed hypothesis, which concluded gender did not produce any significant differences during the study. This study showed positive though not overwhelmingly significant results. In fact, after comparing the pre-test and post-test scores, another series of tests had to be done to determine whether those results were significant enough to be considered worthy of proving the hypotheses wrong. Further tests provided a stronger argument for TPR as a more effective than the Direct Method. The strength of this study is that it did support the hypothesized results (including no significant differences between gender groups), and the conclusions were almost always in line with several other research studies.

Technology in the Comprehensible Input Classroom

When looking into the effectiveness of CI, it is important to take an individual look at all of the different components of which lessons are composed. For example, reading and listening materials should be examined, as well as strategies for writing and speaking. A lot of these modes of language learning can be aided by the use of technology.

Videos and Skype. Neuman and Koskinen (1992) looked closely into listening and reading components through the medium of captioned television. The researchers set out to study what effect CI has when in the form of captioned television. They hypothesized that students with different levels of background knowledge of the English language would learn the meanings of many new words as they watched captioned television without being explicitly

being taught the vocabulary or the grammar. In this study, 129 bilingual seventh and eighth graders from seventeen different middle school classrooms participated. This study began with Participants taking a pretest to determine their starting level of English proficiency. The study lasted 12 weeks, and consisted of four different units which were three weeks each. There was a total of four groups: captioned TV (group one), traditional TV without captions (group two), reading along and listening to text (group three), and textbook only (group four; the control group). Two times per week, the groups either read or listened to three units from a science television series entitled *3-2-1 Contact*. The pretests and posttest included 90 target words which were chosen strategically by five judges beforehand. Several parts of speech were represented by these 90 vocabulary words,only 10 of which were the focus in each class meeting. Groups one and two were introduced to the video segment by a sentence which summarized what they would watch. They watched the video, and afterward were read a summary statement. For groups one and two, the lesson ended there. For group three, they also read the stories silently before viewing the video and students and teachers read the script aloud to the class. The fourth group was taught in a traditional manner where students studied the same science subjects from a textbook, but no video was included. All groups took the posttest. The results revealed the first group which used captioned television was more efficient than either of the other two treatment conditions as well as the control group for learning vocabulary words. Also, when students were consistent with watching captioned television, they outscored all other students who did not. The researchers stated, "...the captioned TV group consistently achieved higher mean scores than all other comparison groups on all word knowledge tests" (Neuman & Koskinen, p. 21). They also found that in conjunction

with the captioned television, other mediums such as visuals and printed contexts helped to enhance the experience, provided more repetition of the same words, and resulted in increased vocabulary acquisition. Although this study did include a wide variety of experimental groups, it would have been beneficial to see each of the groups when mixed with another practical teaching medium, such as captioned television with TPR, or perhaps with other audio sources. However, this study did provide a strong case for Comprehensible Input since the captioned television provided audio, visuals, and written text on the screen. Since the captioned television group outscored the rest of the groups in vocabulary acquisition, it is clear when teachers provide students with multiple ways to experience vocabulary, it is easier for students to acquire that vocabulary.

Another electronic resource for the world language classroom that can help motivate students is Skype. Instead of simply partnering up with a school in another country for penpal exchanges, students can have real-time conversations with students from another country without having the commitment or cost of a true exchange program. In 2015, Ockert, set out to discover the benefits that Skype can have on the classroom. In this study, 29 fifth-grade elementary students from a school in the Nagano prefecture in Japan partnered with a school in Australia for a series of Skype exchanges. The main purpose was to discover to what degree Skype exchanges could have a positive effect on learning outcomes in the world language classroom. This study sought to answer the level of the six variables among the Japanese students chosen for this study, determine what changes there were between the variables, and make logical hypotheses when looking at the pre- and post-Skype data. The two hypotheses were “The students will show a desire to learn English (motivation) and interest in foreign

language activities" (p. 54) and "There will be strong correlations between WTC, IP, FLAs, and motivation" (p. 54). The six variables where data was collected on in this study were as follows: the students' desire to participate in foreign language activities, International Posture (IP), motivation, communicative confidence, willingness to communicate (WTC), and a desire from students to visit other countries. In this study, 29 elementary students from the same school in the prefecture of Nagano, Japan participated. These students partnered with an elementary school in Australia for the Skype exchanges. The instrumentation included a self-report measure administered in Japanese using a six-point Likert-type scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 6 (completely agree) and was given both before and after the Skype exchanges. Each question measured one of the six variables. This study began with the survey in April and then activities were completed in class to prepare students for the 30-minute Skype exchanges. The first Skype exchange included basic introductions between students and was completed about four months after preparation had started, on July 21st. The second Skype exchange took place November 1 and included several songs and games as well as students talking about photos containing cultural concepts. The third Skype exchange took place November 2 and consisted of students greeting each other then singing songs together. The fourth and final Skype exchange was on December 2, where the English-speaking Australian students sang the song "Are you sleeping?" in Japanese, followed by a question and answer session. The study concluded with a post-Skype session survey to measure the six variables. The results were positive; every category saw improvement except for communicative confidence, which declined slightly after the post-Skype session survey. This could have been due to the low speaking abilities of the students at the time, as they were in elementary school and may have

been their first encounter with students speaking their non-native language. After looking at all the positive increases with the other variables, Ockert concluded that Skype exchanges should be recommended practice moving forward. Perhaps one of the most encouraging aspects of this type of study was "The use of technology-based FLAs would help maintain student interest" (p. 57). As students stayed motivated, they were more likely to want to continue with the language, therefore Skype exchanges help bring the language to life in the classroom. Ockert suggested future studies should include more research on the amount of CI that is experienced during such Skype exchanges to strengthen the results of this study. Other than one category of communicative confidence showing a small decline, this study found most of its strength in increasing aspects such as student motivation and a desire to explore other countries. These aspects keep language programs strong, encourage students to think globally, and achieve higher levels of success in their language classes.

Use of audio files. Comprehensible Input can exist within several mediums. The auditory-only medium is unique because the student is not able to negotiate meaning with the speaker. For example, with an audio file, the student may only listen to or change the speed of the recording, but is unable to ask any clarifying questions. However, the person in possession of such an audio file could ensure that some modifications were made to it in order for the audio file to be more comprehensible. Some of these possible modifications are: normal speed, adding blank pauses, adding filled pauses with hesitation markers, and finally, a slowed speed.

In a two-part study by Blau (1991), aimed to discover which of these methods was the most effective in rendering the audio file comprehensible: normal speed, adding blank pauses, adding filled pauses with hesitation markers, and finally, a slowed speed. Blau hypothesized

there would be no significant differences between the four modes of audio file modification. In the first study, 61 students on the Mayaguez Campus of the University of Puerto Rico participated. These students were all in basic English classes. In the second study, 48 education majors participated from the University of Japan. In the first study, participants were assigned to hear three monologues from *Listening and Speaking Out* under one of three conditions. One, the audio file played at the normal rate. Two, the audio file inserted three-second pauses. Three, included the same number of pauses as the second condition, but hesitation markers filled those pauses. After listening to the audio file, participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire about the audio file as well as a self-assessment regarding how well they were able to understand the audio file. In the second study, all conditions were the same as in the first study, except there was one additional condition added to the audio file arrangements. The fourth and final modification of the audio file incorporated a slowed version of the original. The participants in the second study also filled out the the post-study questionnaire. The results in the first study indicated that filled pauses and blank pauses were similarly successful, and were together more effective than the normal version of the audio file. In the second study, filled pauses were better by far than blank pauses, and the normal and slowed versions which both scored very low. In all studies, The scores from the questionnaire and on the self-assessment were similar to one another and showed a correlation with one another. The hypothesis that all four modifications of the audio file would not yield significant results was therefore disproven. For the filled pauses version, comprehension scores were higher than the normal and slow versions. This study had a seemingly moderate to small sample size, which could prompt further studies. Another perceived weakness in the second study in Japan, was

that it included another variable; however, that fourth variable of slowed audio proved to be highly ineffective in rendering the file more comprehensible. The main strength of this study was that there were two studies completed in the same manner, which strengthened the results that were found when filled pauses yielded the most effective results in providing a comprehensible audio file.

As students of world languages listen to audio files, it is important to consider the dynamics of the audio file (e.g. speed of speech, pauses, clarity). This is due to the lack of attention that has been given to the effectiveness of pauses, whether filled or blank, in CI research.

Griffiths (1991), explored the effect of pauses on the comprehensibility of an audio file for second language (L2) students. This study set out to answer two questions. First, to what extent do hesitation pauses confuse the learner rather than aide the learner? Second, how often are hesitation pauses actually used in L2 classrooms? To answer the first question, three groups were selected to transcribe a recording. 19 non-native speakers who were first-year university students comprised group one, and 10 intermediate proficiency non-native speakers comprised group two. Group three included 10 native speakers who were also EFL university teachers. All participants were told to transcribe an audio file. The transcribed scripts were then taken and analyzed for errors made at the points where hesitation pauses occured in the audio file. In the first study, it was found that blank pauses had far less errors than at the points which had filled pauses. Therefore, pure silence between phrases seemed to help L2 learners the most when trying to comprehend an audio file. To investigate question two, elementary and intermediate proficiency students from Sultan Qaboos University in Oman participated. While

the number of students was not specified, the recordings were taken from 30 audio-taped English lessons with these students. To obtain the 30 audio-taped recordings of English language lessons, each teacher (ten in total) recorded one lesson during the first, fifth, and tenth week of a semester. These audio recordings were then analyzed, and the number of hesitations was counted. The researcher concluded there are a significant amount of hesitation pauses per 30-60 seconds of teaching (about 2-3 hesitations on average). However, these teachers are generally aware of the paradox of Comprehensible Input. This is the idea that in an L2 language classroom, a native speaker who is not trained in language teaching, in an attempt to simplify language and make it more comprehensible, may in fact do the opposite and further confuse the learner. Because of the teachers' awareness of this paradox, the teachers attempted to modify their hesitation pauses to aide learners. Griffiths (1991) mentioned other studies have reported mixed results on the effectiveness of hesitation pauses; he explained "... production modification is an appropriate comprehension facilitating strategy at least where hearers are of elementary levels of proficiency" (p. 36). This conclusion is consistent with a study by Blau (1991). Although the findings of these two studies differ in filled versus blank hesitation pauses, their common ground is that the filled pauses brought about a higher level of comprehension with elementary-level learners. This study could have benefited from a larger number of participants, and more than one audio file from another source.

When learning a new language, it is vital for students to hear the language. While some methods may have students repeat words after the teacher or listen to single-sentence examples, methods that are heavy on CI will be sure to include more listening input from native speakers. If a teacher decides to incorporate more listening exercises into the curriculum, how

much is enough and what is the best way to teach this skill? Hung and Yang (2018) set out to discover which of two listening teaching methods was best: extensive listening or metacognitive listening instruction. They also sought to understand learners' perceptions of each method. In extensive listening, much audio input is given, though less teacher guidance and instruction is provided. In metacognitive listening instruction, the teacher explicitly teaches listening skills before students listen to audio files and proceed with several exercises to hone those specific skills. However, with metacognitive listening instruction, students listen to far less audio input, since most of their time is consumed by learning the listening skills. Extensive listening is defined as "...learner exposure to a great deal of comprehensible spoken input through all kinds of activities" (Hung & Yang, 2018, p. 45). Metacognitive listening instruction "encompasses a wider variety of activities designed to improve learners' listening comprehension and to guide them to reflect on their listening processes inside and outside of the classroom" (p. 44). Twenty-six EFL learners participated. Fourteen participants made up the metacognitive listening instruction (META) group, and 12 participants made up the extensive listening group (EL). Participants underwent testing to ensure that they were all at the same starting level. The study began with a pretest, followed by the main class sessions which were held over a course of four weeks. The META group ended up with 12 total hours of in-class training, and the extensive listening group ended with a total of nine hours. The META group listened solely to CNN news broadcasts after having been taught listening strategies. Their assignment was one story per day. The EL group also listened to CNN news broadcasts, but unlike the META group, they were required to listen to two stories per day that the META group had seen, and then watch approximately 13 additional videos per day. While the EL group only

listened to each story once, the META group watched each video three times. The posttest followed, and two weeks after the posttest, four of the students (two from each group) were interviewed to gain perspective on their opinion of the method they were taught with. Three months after the end of the classes, a delayed posttest was given to analyze the amount of vocabulary retention over time. After the students took the posttest (a TOEFL listening test), the researchers determined there were no significant results between the two groups. Both groups made significant gains between the pretest and the posttest. The only area where they differed was in the delayed posttest for vocabulary knowledge. The META group received a higher score on the delayed posttest than the posttest itself; however, the EL group saw a decline from the posttest to the delayed posttest. The researchers stated "...the training that the META group received seems to produce a long-term effect" (Hung & Yang, 2018, p. 57). It was then concluded that both methods help students to see significant gains in listening comprehension. With more explicit teaching for listening skills such as in the META group, long-term retention and further success can be expected. The researchers end with this claim, "The empirical results do not appear to support previous arguments that one type of instruction is better than the other" (p. 57). This study saw great gains in both groups with listening comprehension, further such studies could strengthen the argument for these methods and perhaps develop patterns across previous research as to which method is more successful. This study provided positive research results for the EL and META methods, and underscored that one method isn't necessarily better than the other. Even so, this study does provide a strong argument in favor of the incorporation of more comprehensible spoken input to its students.

Effects on motivation using technology. No matter what method a teacher uses, increasing student motivation is something toward which all teachers ought to work. Terrell (1993) noticed that oral comprehension skills were lacking at the University of California, San Diego and wanted to find a way to better those skills while increasing student motivation. Terrell claimed classroom discussions in the second language tend to occur at a lower level than those encountered outside of the classroom, so they do not provide an accurate depiction of speaking with a native person. According to Terrell, this can be a challenge to improve the oral comprehension skills of higher level university students (that is, levels 300 and higher) enrolled in a second language course. Terrell (1993) stated, "On one hand, it must be admitted that it is not easy to provide the sort of input in the classroom or in the language lab that would be necessary to develop intermediate or advanced levels of oral comprehension skills" (pp. 17-18). Despite the challenge this presents, Terrell set out to discover some resources that would be closest to a real listening experience with a native speaker while also increasing student engagement and motivation. Terrell focused on finding a way to improve the listening comprehension skills of intermediate to advanced students of a second language, as well as understanding the broadcast media in the native language. The researcher questioned the extent to which videos that were originally broadcast in the second language and intended for native speakers would improve the listening skills of intermediate to advanced students of Spanish. The 13 participants were enrolled in "Spanish 15: Advanced Listening Skills" at the University of California, San Diego. They were mainly all Spanish majors and their listening skills were rated intermediate-mid to advanced. The experimental class met for two hours per week, twice a week for 10 weeks. Three groups were formed: experimental, control non-native, and

control native. Students were expected to attend the class, and put in a total of 60+ hours watching videos outside of class. The videos were all taken directly from the broadcast media of Spanish speaking countries. The videos contained news, a soap opera, movies, documentaries, game shows, variety shows, and commercials. During class time, students discussed the key vocabulary, held discussions of video summaries, and practiced listening techniques. Every two weeks, a vocabulary test was given based on in-class discussions. When the speed of the audio was too fast, the teacher found the students were able to comprehend it by simply repeating it at the same speed. At the beginning and end of the course, a listening exam was given which included four video texts and eighteen questions. The experimental group experienced a mean increase of twice that of both of the control groups. Terrell concluded the listening comprehension training videos and class discussions were able to provide the type of input needed to best simulate listening to a native speaker, and therefore close the gap often caused by simpler in-class conversations with non-native speakers. Not only were students able to understand the broadcast media in the second language, but also they also reported greater confidence when speaking with a native speaker. They were able to comprehend more of what the native speakers were saying and possessed a larger pool of vocabulary with which to communicate. Student testimonials were all extremely positive, and they reported having more motivation and success in understanding and speaking the language. This study's strength was in the materials they found for this course as well as the implementation of discussions and vocabulary tests that went along with what students watched at home for homework.

Reading and Modified Input in the Comprehensible Input Classroom

When looking at teaching methods that use Comprehensible Input, it can be difficult for

teachers to navigate which methods are the most effective. Though much research has been done with TPR, its cousin, Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) has not yet been well researched. Reading in a language can help students learn new vocabulary and implicitly learn grammatical and cultural concepts. Apart from the positive academic effects, reading can also increase student motivation if they are able to experience success. TPRS includes books that are tailored to the student's language level, and so students can begin reading right away and have a lot of success with understanding short novels.

Effects on motivation using reading. In Castro's (2010) study, the Grammar-Translation and more recent Total Physical Response (TPRS) methods were compared. The purpose was to determine whether there was a significant difference in efficacy between these two teaching methods. TPRS teaches a second language in which stories with CI are read and acted out by the students and the teacher. In the Grammar-Translation method, students mainly translate texts from their native language to the target language. The researcher hypothesized students would learn the vocabulary by engaging with the stories (reading, acting out, etc.) rather than via a conscious effort to memorize the words. Thus, it was hypothesized that TPRS would be more effective than Grammar-Translation. Twenty-five Hispanic adults (14 men, 11 women) from an ESL group participated. Two groups were formed and each was taught for 90-minute sessions once a week for four weeks. The first 60 minutes were used to teach the study's lessons; the remaining 30 minutes were used to teach the adopted curriculum. Before the study began, a pretest was given, and a post-test was given after each session. The study employed the Grammar-Translation method for the first four weeks, and TPRS for the last four weeks. Only eight new words were taught in each class session. Both methods proved to be effective in

achieving significantly higher vocabulary recognition scores when compared with the pretest scores. More students preferred the TPRS method and said they enjoyed learning with the more interactive method, which increased engagement and motivation. Castro reported, "Neither TPRS™ nor the Grammar-Translation approach proved more efficacious in vocabulary acquisition and retention, but there was far more enthusiasm in learning under TPRS™" (p. 42). This could be reason enough to favor the TPRS method. This study could have been strengthened by increasing the number of participants, as there were only 13 students in each group. Additionally, sessions were only held once a week, which allowed many days with no instruction between sessions to pass, and a total of only four 60-minute sessions were provided in this study. A more frequent schedule of sessions and more total sessions, may have illuminated other significant differences.

The fact that speaking remains the most difficult aspect of English language learning for students in China inspired a study by Zhang (2009). The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how students' experiences shape their education in language learning. This was accomplished by analyzing two students' progress in a language, their experiences in the classroom, and their outside opportunities. The researcher claimed the amount of input a student receives as well as the amount of their classroom interaction (input and output) will all play into a student's success in the language. Zhang (2009) hypothesized that "non-native oral fluency can be obtained through efficient and effective input, interaction and output in a foreign language setting" (p. 94). At the outset, the participants included 15 young Chinese-speaking students who had been studying English for 4-5 years. Students were chosen based on their high level of ability in their English classes. The first step in this study was to give

all 15 students an oral test to determine which two students would be pulled for the main part of the study. After this round of pretests the beginning tests, two students (David and Snow) were selected based on the fact that they spoke for relatively the same amount of time, at about the same complexity level, and had fewer errors than the rest of the students. Additionally, David had a much better speaking ability in English, while Snow had well-developed reading and written skills. Afterward, David and Snow were given a second oral test to determine whether David's speaking abilities were truly at a higher level or if Snow was perhaps just not as prepared for the questions in the first test. David's was again much longer, and had fewer errors in his speaking than Snow. While David was confident and took only 15 seconds to read the passage and then retell the story, Snow spent two full minutes reading the passage and then hesitantly retold the story using fewer words. The researcher felt Snow's speaking ability may be giving a false image of her comprehension of the language, so the researcher had her retell the story in Chinese. She did well; she was even able to give an exact translation of the new word in the story, which was a task in which David had used a separate but similar word. It was clear that Snow's reading skills were far better than previously thought. Zhang then interviewed the two participants in their native language about their previous learning experiences. Zhang discovered that David was younger and had only one more year of studying English than Snow. However, David went to a private school, read often in English, had more English classes per week, had help at home with homework, watched TV in English, and had regular access to speaking with native speakers. Snow was older than David by four years, went to a state-owned school, had studied English one year less than David, and didn't have access to any of David's aforementioned resources. As it pertains to their English scores in

school, Snow was only a few points behind David. Zhang (2009) argued that Snow's speaking ability would have been positively impacted if these resources had been present. It would have given Snow access to higher quality input and prompted more interaction with the language and output. Zhang concluded this study supports most Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature in that input, interaction, and output are needed to develop near-native spoken fluency in a language. The researcher also stated that other factors may have been at play, such as age, motivation, and learning style. While David always spoke without hesitation even if errors were made, whereas Snow spoke while deeply thinking to make sure her speech was without error. Although this study yielded positive results, there were only two participants in the main study. Further study may be needed to see a pattern emerge, though student experiences rang true that more access to input, interaction, and output would allow students to produce language more like a native speaker.

Modified input and the linguistic context learning strategy. When discussing the effectiveness of comprehensible input, it is important to consider how much input can be inserted into a lesson before the input becomes incomprehensible. Depending on the course level, content can be modified to simplify or add rigor to a text. For each level, it is important to know how to modify the text, so it contains the appropriate amount of language for the students' abilities.

Garza and Harris (2016) sought an answer to the issue of the appropriateness of text level to match student ability; the researchers used the medium of a story and a linguistic context learning strategy to determine how much new input would become too much. The researchers questioned how the ability to translate and comprehend words from a second

language would increase or decrease when more or fewer words from that second language were added to a story written in the student's native language. They hypothesized the posttest scores would increase as more target language words were introduced to a written story in English. However, they also hypothesized that at some point, the increase in target language words would cause a decrease in posttest scores, as the text would become increasingly incomprehensible. In their first study, 364 students from a south Texas university and a Mid-Western U.S. university participated. A pretest was given, followed by a written text which the participants were instructed to read. For this part of the experiment, the instrumentation included a written story passage of about 137 words. The text was written in their native language of English, and each of the eight groups had either zero, one, two, or three words in Spanish or Pseudo-Finnish inserted into each sentence of the story. A posttest measured how well the participants were able to comprehend and translate the target language words. This first study revealed a positive increase in posttest scores as the number of target language words increased. Importantly, this proved that within a context, participants were able to understand the meanings of words previously unknown to them simply from context, thus demonstrating CI. The researchers were not satisfied, however, since the decrease in posttest scores they were expecting when the number of target language words became too abundant did not render the text less and less comprehensible. The amount of new vocabulary introduced may simply never have become high enough to make the text too difficult to read. In order to discover the amount of new vocabulary needed to be added to the text to make it less comprehensible, Garza and Harris (2016) conducted a second more difficult study in which zero, two, four, five, six, or seven Spanish words per English sentence were inserted into the

story. In the second study, 147 non-Finnish-speaking individuals from a Mid-Western university participated. All procedures remained the same except for the number of target words per sentence. The results indicated that when the target language words exceeded five per sentence, there was a decrease in posttest comprehension and translation scores. This supports the researchers' hypotheses in two key ways. First, CI can help a student to learn previously unknown vocabulary in a second language simply through context, and second, comprehension will begin to decrease when too many new target language words are used. This study's strength is its inclusion of a large number of carefully chosen participants. Interestingly, the results reveal that content was comprehensible when five target words per sentence or less were included, and that students were able to understand the meanings of the words through context without explicit instruction of the words' definitions in their native language.

When reviewing CI research, one commonality is participants' language level at the outset of a study. In most CI studies, participants' language levels are beginning to low-level at the outset of the study. An unfortunate side-effect is the few studies wherein the participants' language ability is more advanced. Therefore, more research is needed in order to have a more complete view of how this method works within the range of language abilities.

Xiaohui (2010) conducted a study with 220 participants who were in their seventh or eighth year of English as a second language. The main purpose of this study was to determine the efficacy of different forms of CI when compared with a control group with no CI. The various forms of CI were: premodified input, interactionally modified input, modified output, enhanced input, and elaborated input. The researcher's main question was whether there is a significant difference in efficacy between various forms of CI and a group where no CI was used.

The 220 participants were non-English major freshmen in northern China from a university of science and technology. Their ages were 18 to 20, and they were all learners of English as a foreign language. Before the study began, placement tests were given as a pretest to all participants. Over the course of this study, a total of 20 words and 10 expressions were taught during 45-50 minute sessions. There were five groups. Four utilized different variations of CI as the teaching method; one served as the control group. Instrumentation included a reading passage from *New College English--Integrated Course Two* (Student Book). A posttest was given. The results of the posttest showed that all forms of CI experienced significant positive changes to test scores on English vocabulary recognition when compared with the posttest scores of the control group. The researcher concluded all variations of CI which were used in this study are beneficial when learning a second language. One problem was the researcher's neglect of the study's duration/number of sessions in this study. This study's strength was that every form of CI the researcher used was proven to be highly effective in teaching a second language; each achieved a high level of success achieving a positive result for the questions posed.

As some language classrooms adapt and change to incorporate more CI, several authors have popped up in the language teaching community. On websites such as TPRSbooks.com, authors have either created or adapted texts which they have written specifically for second language acquisition into several different reading ability levels. However, without many new studies on the subject, how will teachers know whether or not these books are comprehensible to students? And relatedly, do CI texts work when they are intuitively simplified? Crossley, Allen, and McNamara (2011) aimed to answer these questions in their study of intuitively

simplified texts. Prior to analysis, 100 news texts were gathered which had already been intuitively simplified into three different language ability levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced). In order to answer their main question regarding the effectiveness of the texts in a language classroom, the researchers analyzed whether or not the texts would be comprehensible to each respective language level. To accomplish this, a computational tool called Coh-Metrix was used. Coh-Metrix determines the types of linguistic features that are found in each text, and provides the researchers a clearer image of the effectiveness of these texts in a CI classroom. In this study, 100 news texts were split into three different reading levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced), thus providing a total of 300 news texts. This system analyzed 14 different linguistic features to see if the given texts would fall into the language levels for which they were adapted. Results revealed that intuitively simplifying texts is an appropriate method for scaffolding a text to different levels. For example, they found that the lower level texts did include less difficult linguistic structures than the intermediate and advanced levels, and that each level contained an appropriate level of linguistic structures. Thus, they concluded "...intuitive text simplification processes produce texts that become linguistically more comprehensible as the text level decreases" (p. 103). This study supports the case for CI in that the intuitive approach for simplifying texts is a suitable method for making texts more appropriate for the respective language levels. Ensuring the texts are comprehensible to students means the materials used by teachers are able to provide a legitimate source of target language input in which students can both understand the words and learn new words from context. Although this study revealed that the intuitively adapted texts were appropriate for their respective language levels, a study with live participants would

have helped to strengthen the argument. Another possible weakness was related to replicability, for text adaptations would no doubt vary between future potential authors. Many researchers have reported on the significant positive effects of CI when implemented by reading books which are mostly comprehensible by language learners (Hamilton, 2014; Huffman, 2014; Zhang, 2009). The study done by Crossley et al. (2011) demonstrated the validity of the materials being used, and also potentially strengthened other studies on the subject of reading as CI as authenticates that these texts are indeed at appropriate levels for students to be able to learn the target language.

This next study places an emphasis on the theory of CI by Stephen Krashen. In this study, Krashen, Rodrigo and Gribbons (2004) proposed that at the intermediate level of a world language, students who are provided with more CI materials will experience more growth than a group provided with little to no CI. This would also be seen in a classroom setting using previous methods for world languages, in which parts of language such as grammar and spelling are taught more explicitly and explained in the native language of the student. The purpose of this study was to discover if two different methods of CI based teaching would improve second language proficiency, and therefore also improve test scores. The researcher hypothesized that the two experimental groups (those given more CI materials) would perform at least as well or better than the control group (those who studied in a traditional setting). A total of 33 students were divided into three groups and two separate rounds. Each round lasted one semester. All of the participants were undergraduate students in their fourth semester of Spanish at the same university and were required to successfully complete a three semester elementary Spanish sequence prior to participation. All participants were given vocabulary, grammar, and

reading pre- and post- tests. The first experimental group was an extensive reading group who were encouraged to read as many books as they could comfortably read during the semester. This group was encouraged to read the required leveled readers (1-5) before advancing to more authentic materials, and were also allowed to read books of their choice. The second group was a reading-discussion group required to read certain materials and hold a discussion group afterward with well-prepared statements from each student. Both experimental groups spoke only in Spanish in the classroom, were not given formal tests besides those used for this study, and wrote book reports on each book they read. The third and final group was a control group from a traditional Spanish classroom setting. This particular class was taught grammar and vocabulary explicitly (contrary to the two experimental groups). The six tests each included two rounds of study, wherein each group took tests in vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Four of the six tests yielded significant support for the researchers' hypothesis. The extensive reading group scored as well as, if not better than, the traditional group on all tests. The reading-discussion group performed significantly higher than the other two groups on most occasions, and never scored less than the other two groups. This research supports Krashen's theory that when CI is provided in a world language classroom, test scores will be as high as or higher than their traditional classroom counterparts. One possible weakness in this study was the disclusion of one of the tests given, for none of the students in the control group (traditional group) had taken pre or post-tests. However, it appears that this test was not included in the study's results. Another limitation was the small class sizes; it would be preferable to follow this study again with more participants. However, the significant amount of growth shown in the two experimental groups is undeniable.

Carrigan and Coppola (2017) set out to determine what role communication has in homesign systems, and to discover to what extent the signs can be comprehensible to family members who have no background in signing. They aimed to ascertain whether or not CI must be provided in order for individuals with no linguistic model to be able to comprehend and acquire language. Unlike American Sign Language, Homesign is a form of sign language developed by a hearing family with a deaf child who may not have access to education services for deaf children. Four deaf homesigning participants and their families participated. They had little to no knowledge of spoken or written Spanish, which also was used during this study to check for differences between homesigning and spoken and written Spanish. Each of the participants' homesigning systems were individually developed, so they differed greatly. This study also included four smaller studies. The first questioned whether homesign or Spanish was more easily comprehended by a family member with no knowledge of either language. The second questioned whether age had a role in learning the homesign system of a family member. The third was to find whether mothers' poor comprehension of homesign was due to incomplete homesign descriptions. And the fourth questioned whether deaf native users of American Sign Language with no prior knowledge of homesigning would comprehend the homesigning of a stranger better than the stranger's own family who had no prior exposure. Instrumentation for these studies included 83 simple videotaped events with actors and everyday objects, as well as picture arrays (four pictures for each study). The main finding in the first study was that mothers understood spoken Spanish from one of their children more easily than the homesign used by their deaf child. The second study found that age did play a role in comprehension, and the earlier an individual was introduced to homesign, the more

easily he or she was able to comprehend. The third study found that the inability of a family member to comprehend homesign was not due to an incomplete homesign description. The fourth study found that unrelated deaf users of American Sign Language were able to more easily comprehend the homesigning of the main deaf homesigning participants better than their non-signing mothers. The researchers concluded that in order for either homesigning or Spanish to be understood, it must be a familiar topic presented at a simple enough level to be comprehensible. One weakness was the low quantity of participants; four deaf homesigners did not allow a great amount of data to be collected. The study's main strength was its ability to prove that input must be made comprehensible, whether it is a spoken language or form of sign language.

When a teacher uses CI, it is natural for negotiation of meaning to occur frequently in the classroom. According to Yi and Sun (2013), negotiation of meaning happens when "...a listener requests message clarification and confirmation, and the speaker follows up these requests through repeating, elaborating, or simplifying the original message" (p. 120). If negotiation of meaning happens almost constantly in a CI classroom, it is necessary to conduct research to find how it impacts learning. Sun and Yi aimed to determine the effectiveness of negotiation of meaning when acquiring a second language. A total of 182 students participated; 100 students were from a high school; 82 students were from a college. The students were all native Chinese speaking students who were learning English as a second language. Participants were split into four groups: high school experimental, high school control, college experimental, and college control. Sessions lasted one week each, and each group went through three phases. They began with a pretest, then moved on to the bulk of the study where students were taught

English using CI that included a lot of negotiation of meaning between the teacher and the students. The class included many conversations in English. Instrumentation also included matching tasks with pictures and vocabulary words. After the week was complete, all students completed a post test. The high school students in the experimental group outscored the control group, whereas the college students did not see any clear results. It would be interesting to see a future study in which middle school students or adult learners participate in the same type of study. Perhaps this could strengthen the researchers' belief that college students did not see any significant differences because they may prefer to utilize other implicit ways of negotiation of meaning. Perhaps adult learners would have the same results as the college students, and high schoolers may have the same results as middle schoolers. In this way, the age factor could have strengthened the study. All high school test scores showed significant positive differences in the post test. Therefore, with younger learners, staying in the target language can be successful when negotiation of meaning is used to make the words comprehensible.

One source of Comprehensible Input that can have great gains in language learning but isn't used frequently in world language classrooms is extensive reading. Reading extensively in a second language at the student's reading level builds vocabulary,, reinforces grammatical concepts, and delivers cultural aspects. Huffman (2014) aimed to determine whether extensive reading yields more positive effects than intensive reading in reference to reading rate gains. The first hypothesis was that the extensive reading group would experience significantly greater reading rate gains than the group using intensive reading as a method. The second hypothesis stated that the extensive reading group would see significantly greater reading rate gains. This

method has students reading more material than the intensive reading group. In Extensive Reading, students select their own books to read (within their ability level); the main goals of which would be enjoyment and speed (rather than for learning grammar or vocabulary). Benefits include incidental vocabulary acquisition, general reading proficiency, and improved reading fluency and speed. In Intensive Reading, a text is preselected for the students, and students are asked to read the excerpt more than once. Emphasis is placed less on the number of pages read and more on the comprehension of a more challenging text. Sixty-six female first-year students at a four-year nursing college in Japan participated. There were 34 students In the extensive reading group; these students were also enrolled in a writing course at the same time. The intensive reading group had 32 students; they were also enrolled in an oral communication course at the same time. The study lasted a duration of 15 weeks, which was equivalent to one semester. The extensive reading group was split into two 17-student classes, and the intensive reading group was split into two 16-student classes. All students completed a pre- and post-course reading rate and comprehension test to measure their progress. In the intensive reading group, students read from the book *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul*. Every student was assigned the same number of pages to read, estimated at 32.6 pages. The readability level of the text was at an 8.0 on the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, which was much higher than the extensive reading group, marked at a Grade Level of 1.1-3.9. Unlike the extensive reading group, the intensive reading group read their excerpt twice. Each week, a passage was assigned and a separate small group worked to translate that piece into Japanese. The average time per week spent reading was 2.44 hours per student. In the extensive reading group, the 34 students read from in-class libraries which included 237 *Macmillan Readers* series

graded readers, the *Oxford Bookworms* series, and the *Cambridge English Readers* series. As previously stated, the reading level of these books was much lower than in the intensive reading group. However, compared to the intensive reading group's total of 32.6 pages, the extensive reading group read an average of 545.85 pages per student. Some students moved up to read higher-level books, and some students remained at the same level. There was no pressure to read at a higher level, and students were told to read for enjoyment. If they didn't enjoy a book, they were told to put it away and choose a new one. The extensive reading group also participated in conversations surrounding the books they had read and participated in journal activities. The average time spent reading per student was 3.59 hours per week, which was 1.15 more hours than the intensive reading group. At the end of this study, the ER group experienced a reading rate increase of 20.73 standard words per minute. The IR group experienced a decrease of .62 standard words per minute. The second hypothesis was nullified as there was no significant difference between the pre- and post-course scores on reading rate gains for the ER group. This study may have been strengthened had the classes had been set up more randomly, rather than choosing classes that were already assembled with the university. Also, the researcher admitted there could have been a ceiling effect on this study, for higher-level questioning was not used to push the students. Lastly, the great success in proving the first hypothesis may have been due to the fact that the ER group read an extremely higher volume of pages than the IR group, thus tipping the scales to the ER group's favor. The main strength of this study was that the two groups were comparable in numbers of students, and that the data collected pre- and post-course maintained a high level of integrity for the results.

Another strength was that they were able to prove their first hypothesis in favor of the Extensive Reading method as compared with the Intensive reading method.

Chapter III: Discussion and Conclusion

As evidenced in the research studies on Comprehensible Input presented here, the methods in which CI are used are similar to how we learn our first language. For example, CI employs almost total immersion, authentic resources from one of the countries where the target language is spoken (e.g. videos and audio files), images, games, and songs. CI parallels how we learn our first language, in that when we talk to babies, we produce language that contains simpler vocabulary and grammatical structures. As previously described,

> Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movement to react to verbal input. The process mimics the way that infants learn their first language, and it reduces student inhibitions and lowers stress. The purpose of TPR is to create a brain link between speech and action to boost language and vocabulary learning. (theteachertoolkit.com)

Therefore, there is no doubt that this teaching method employs a more natural approach to language learning and facilitates learning best for beginning students.

Summary of Literature

The first CI methods questioned for their efficacy and effects on motivation were TPR and TPRS. All but one of the TPR and TPRS studies present in this thesis yielded positive results in this regard. Schneider (1984) stated, “During the entire fifteen weeks, all signs indicated that at least ninety percent of the children thoroughly enjoyed learning Spanish. Interest was high in almost all activities at all times” (p. 624). Additionally, in the studies analyzed in this thesis, the effectiveness of TPR or TPRS on vocabulary retention and general language learning all yielded positive results. For example, Ghani and Ghous (2014) found positive results in regards to

closing the achievement gap between low-level learners (those performing below the average level for a specific area) and average learners (those able to achieve success in a class without extra support): "...the experiment group that uses [the] TPR approach and visual aids has successfully close [closed] the achievement gap" (pp. 10-11). This information could have great implications with K-12 schools as the achievement gap is an issue at the forefront in today's schools.

As TPR and TPRS pertain to the use of technology in the classroom and student success, all studies yielded stronger retention of vocabulary and grammatical structures. For example, Neuman and Koskinen (1992) stated "...the captioned TV group consistently achieved higher mean scores than all other comparison groups on all word knowledge tests" (p. 21). The use of technology in the classroom helped students achieve either the same or higher scores in every case when compared with traditional teaching methods. Concerning both technology and motivation, the two consistently yielded increased levels of student engagement and student motivation. For example, several students reported positive feedback at the end of the class in regards to their improvement and motivation to continue. One such student declared, "I comprehend Spanish very well now. I feel more confident when I turn on Spanish TV. It seems when I was watching the commercials lately, I understood almost everything" (Terrell, 1993, p. 33). As evidenced here, when using technological resources (especially an authentic native resource), students experience a higher level of success. Simply, since they have just understood something that was not a construct from the classroom, but rather a resource meant for native speakers, a boost of confidence causes further motivation to learn the language.

Another question investigated in this review focused on the effects of reading as well as modified input and the motivation produced within these. In the 2010 study by Castro, both of the tested methods (Grammar-Translation and TPRS) proved to be effective in achieving significantly higher vocabulary recognition scores when compared with the pretest scores. What set the study apart was that Castro (2010) reported that more students preferred the TPRS method and that they enjoyed learning with the more interactive method. This directly caused an engaged student base and a higher sense of motivation. Castro (2010) stated "Neither TPRS™ nor the Grammar-Translation approach proved more efficacious in vocabulary acquisition and retention, but there was far more enthusiasm in learning under TPRS™" (p. 42). Thus, even if the scores from both methods had produced higher levels of vocabulary retention and general success in the language, TPRS set itself apart. TPRS grabbed ahold of the students' interest and motivated them to continue with the language after feeling the success of reading short novels in the language. So, whether it pertains to motivation or success, TPR and TPRS have demonstrated a higher potential for success than traditional methods.

The main question explored in this thesis was: To what extent does the use of Comprehensible Input accelerate language learning in a world language classroom in a K-12 setting? As evidenced in the literature reviewed in this thesis, Comprehensible Input is a more effective teaching method the traditional methods that have long dominated world language classrooms. No matter which CI strategy is chosen, the results consistently yield the same if not better results than traditional teaching methods in which more of the student's native language is spoken and vocabulary and grammar are drilled. Thus, we can conclude that this more natural approach to learning a language, namely CI, has a higher potential for student success.

Professional Applications

After reviewing the aforementioned research, several professional applications can be confidently suggested. Many teachers in the state of Minnesota have adopted at least some strategies of CI, whether they have included a video series in their teaching, used more communicative games, or simply have tried to cut out the use of the students' first language in the classroom. Some teachers in Minnesota have jumped in and are teaching with 100% Comprehensible Input strategies. These studies encourage the use of TPR and TPRS for vocabulary instruction and inherent grammar instruction. They also support the use of technology, whether for the purpose of speaking with others via Skype, or simply for the use of videos and other audio files. Technology is shown in these studies to improve listening comprehension skills, and in the case of using Skype, confidence in speaking. Finally, they support reading in the target language in the classroom for general vocabulary retention and for learning new words and strengthening the students' inherent knowledge of grammatical structures.

Limitations of the Research

The array of original research articles on Comprehensible Input strategies were small. However, the articles which comprise this literature review all reported positive effects on student learning when using of CI in the classroom. This is encouraging for all teachers, whether they happen to be CI veterans or are considering adopting CI methods for the first time.

Nevertheless, the topic of Comprehensible Input methods in world language classrooms is in need of further research studies. Apart from the original research studies, there were several resources (not actual studies) about Comprehensible Input that provided valuable

information on the topic. These included the likes of print sources, articles, podcasts, and blogs. Anyone who is looking to teach with Comprehensible Input should look into other such resources (see Appendix A).

Implications for Future Research

Further research on the topic of Comprehensible Input is needed. While TPR and TPRS have a relatively strong research base (Fahrurrozi, 2017; Furuhata, 1999; Schneider, 1984; Wolfe & Jones, 1982), other CI strategies such as technology, reading, and the use of visuals and games lack sufficient studies. CI has been proven to work well for lower level learners and beginners in particular (Ghani & Ghous, 2014; Loschky, 1994; Nugrahaningsih, 2007; Schneider, 1984). However, one area lacking research in Comprehensible Input is studies that include higher level/advanced learners (world language students in their third year or beyond); only two of the studies presented here were with with students, and those were at a collegiate level. Another aspect in need of further research is the accuracy with which students are able to write. This is neither included nor evaluated; rather, the focus of the studies is consistently on vocabulary retention.

Conclusion

Several questions were asked on the topic of Comprehensible Input. The topics of these questions included the efficacy of individual CI strategies, the effectiveness and motivation experienced with TPR and TPRS, the effectiveness and motivation experienced with technology, reading, and modified input. However, the main question of this study was to determine to what extent the use of Comprehensible Input accelerates language learning in a world language classroom in a K-12 setting. After reviewing the research, it can be concluded that

Comprehensible Input methods have the highest amount of potential for learning in world language classrooms in a K-12 setting, as they have always provided equal or greater results than their traditional methods counterparts (Fahrurrozi, 2017; Ghani & Ghous, 2014; Nowbakht & Shahnazari, 2015; Nugrahaningsih, 2007; Schneider, 1984; Wolfe & Jones, 1982).

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Appendix A

For further research on the topics discussed in this thesis, see the following resources.

Books

- Lee, J. & VanPatten, B. (1995, Boston: McGraw-Hill Education). *Making communicative language teaching happen.*
- Slavic, B. (2017, benslavic.com). *A natural approach to the year* (pdf only).
- Slavic, B. (2015, benslavic.com). *The big CI book* (pdf only).
- Williams, J. & VanPatten, B. (2015, New York: Routledge). *Theories in second language acquisition*.

Websites

- benslavic.com
- grantboulanger.com
- madameshepard.com
- nobodyexpectsthespanishacquisition.com

Podcasts

- *Language Latte: A Podcast for World Language Teachers*
- *Tea with BVP* (VanPatten, teawithbvp.com).