

En français! auf Deutsch! en español!

Target Language Tribulations and Tenacity



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Gathering Opinions

Please briefly share:

- 1) Whether you teach solely in the target language or not
- 2) Whether you believe world language teachers should teach in the Target Language (TL)
- 3) Why you do or do not choose to teach in the target language

Obstacles to Target Language (TL) Use [Franklin, 1990]

- class characteristics
(class size, difference in language level)
- philosophical differences between teachers at the same school
- student behavior
- teacher confidence level with his/her own language level



Experience & Philosophy from Anna Danforth

- First year teaching experience: Target language until the end
- Second year: Barrier was broken
- Third year: Drifted away
- Monkey see monkey do
- Current year



Experience and Philosophy Elizabeth

- I believe the most efficient way to learn a language is through a combination of natural input accompanied by explicit explanation of the structures and regularities of the language.
- Humans learn by provided examples. I provide the aural examples and coax/coach their oral practice. This probably won't happen at home, but they might read and write.
- If I bother going to work, I'd better be doing something that only a person proficient in French can do. Otherwise I could stay in bed or get an easy job!
- Given the number of hours it takes for a human to become language proficient, we can't afford not immersing the students in the TL.

| Length of Training | Aptitude for Language Learning | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------|----------|
| | Minimum | Average | Superior |
| 8 weeks (240 hours) | 1 | 1/1+ | 1+ |
| 16 weeks (480 hours) | 1+ | 2 | 2+ |
| 24 weeks (720 hours) | 2 | 2+ | 3 |
| Group II: Bulgarian, Dari, Farsi, German, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian, Malay, Urdu | | | |
| Length of Training | Aptitude for Language Learning | | |
| | Minimum | Average | Superior |
| 16 weeks (480 hours) | 1 | 1/1+ | 1+2 |
| 24 weeks (720 hours) | 1+ | 2 | 2+/3 |
| 44 weeks (1320 hours) | 2/2+ | 2+/3 | 3/3+ |
| Group III: Amharic, Bengali, Burmese, Czech, Finnish, Hebrew, Hungarian, Khmer, Lao, Nepali, Filipino, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Sinhala, Thai, Tamil, Turkish, Vietnamese | | | |
| Length of Training | Aptitude for Language Learning | | |
| | Minimum | Average | Superior |
| 16 weeks (480 hours) | 0+ | 1 | 1/1+ |
| 24 weeks (720 hours) | 1 | 1+ | 1+ |
| 44 weeks (1320 hours) | 1+ | 2 | 2/2+ |
| 80-92 weeks (2400-2760 hours) | 2 | 2+ | 3 |
| Group IV: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean | | | |
| Length of Training | Aptitude for Language Learning | | |
| | Minimum | Average | Superior |
| 16 weeks (480 hours) | 0+ | 1 | 1 |
| 24 weeks (720 hours) | 1 | 1+ | 1+ |
| 44 weeks (1320 hours) | 1+ | 2 | 2+ |
| 80-92 weeks (2400-2760 hours) | 2+ | 3 | 3+ |

Source: Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro. *ETS Oral Proficiency Testing Manual*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1982.

La question du jour

- Language Instruction Research 
- Does it dovetail with target language teaching?
- *Oui*, linguistic principles support teaching through the medium of the target language.

After all . . .

- "Unique to the World Language classroom is the focus on communication in another language. This is not talking *about* the second language or another culture in English; rather, it is *using* the second language to learn, to communicate, and to enter another culture."

[Sandrock 2002]

[also see Franklin 1990, Crichton 2009]

Linguistic Principles Supporting TL Teaching [Ellis 2005]

68 linguists cited!

Principle 1:

Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.

Principle 2:

Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.

Linguistic Principles Supporting TL Teaching [Ellis 2005]

Principle 3:

Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.

Principle 4:

Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the L2 without neglecting explicit knowledge.

Principle 5:

Instruction needs to take into account the learner's "built-in syllabus."

Linguistic Principles Supporting TL Teaching [Ellis 2005]

Principle 6:

Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input.

Principle 7:

Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.

Principle 8:

The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency.

Linguistic Principles Supporting TL Teaching [Ellis 2005]

Principle 9:

Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.

Principle 10:

In assessing learners' L2 proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

Recipe for TL Use [Foster]

- Create ambiance conducive for language learning
- Teacher-generated motivation / excitement
- Student effort
- Provide the necessary tools
 - preparation / implantation of formulaic language
 - authentic language

Anna's TL Teaching Practices

- Français déjà??? (We are already gonna speak French???)
- Teach level 1 important phrases in the first few days
- Grade it like it's important
- Give pertinent info in the TL
- Be interesting and interested - Talk about the lives of the students
- Teach skills for remaining in TL to students (circumlocution)
- The hallway and supermarket are my classroom – opportunity to show off
- Teach it like you like it (smiles, jokes, gestures)
- Keep them on their toes (quick pacing >>engagement)

Elizabeth's TL Teaching Practices

- Both explicitly present and implicitly use aspects of the language
- Use *interlanguage* as a tool – adjust for class level
- Provide counter-examples of non-possible structures
- Only use English 'silently'
- Use pictures, images, gesture as tools
- Show examples of authentic language in context: magazines, children's literature, postcards, brochures, youtube clips, podcasts = these are 'springboards'
- Post needed 'tools' and 'traps' to avoid around the classroom.



Student Testimonials

French 1 Price Laboratory School Students

- "The fact that students have to think throughout the class makes them better learners and speakers of French."
- "I feel like I learn more and it makes the class interesting."
- "French class is a very productive class. Because the language is spoken, when it comes time to learn it, it becomes much easier."
- "I really like this system. It makes you focus."
- "We learn what the language sounds like and we can pronounce it better."

Passing the baton . . .

What are your good ideas for sticking to the target language in your teaching?



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