

The effectiveness of the total physical response technique in motivating students to learn vocabulary. A case study of a year 3 Latin class.

Word count : 8476

Introduction

While taking part in my placement school's extra-curricular programme which taught Latin to year 3 students in a local primary school, I observed that the students were able to pick up abstract concepts through kinaesthetic methods relatively quickly. For example when teaching adjectives the teacher divided the students by gender. The children were taught to respond to different adjectives with an action, for example making an angry face for *iratus*. He then pointed to one child for a singular adjective and to the group for a plural. This allowed him to teach about gender and number. The adjectives were written on cards which were held up. The students were asked to respond to the appropriate adjectives. For example, if *iratae* was held up then all the girls were expected to make angry faces. I observed that the students were able to pick up the idea of different endings relatively quickly and understood which group was meant to be doing the action. However, they often could not remember what the different adjectives actually meant.

During this lesson the children's enjoyment was evident. When asked to do an action, they did so extremely enthusiastically. The main focus for this lesson had been adjectival agreement rather than remembering the vocabulary. This prompted my decision to try and find out if this motivation could be used to help vocabulary acquisition. During my first placement I had taught students a "verb dance" where each part of the verb was associated

with a different action. the students enjoyed this kinaesthetic method of learning and remembered the endings more easily. I wanted to find out if using a teaching method which motivated the year three students would have a similar affect on their vocabulary acquisition.

Research question

I intended to use Total Physical Response (TPR) as I believed that this method would motivate the students in a similar way. This method of language acquisition incorporates visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles. I thought this would be an appropriate method of teaching vocabulary as it focused on active learning styles which I was investigating. I intended to analyse the students response to this method to see if it motivated them. I also wanted to find out if this enthusiasm helped develop linguistic skills such as vocabulary acquisition.

The overall question that I was trying to answer was; How effective is TPR in motivating students to learn vocabulary. In this case TPR will be defined as the combination of listening, saying and acting out the Latin vocabulary.

During my research I firstly had to assess whether TPR motivated the students. In order to assess this I used the following questions.

- How engaged were they (the students) during this activity?

- How did their engagement with TPR compare to other activities in the lesson?

I used the following information to measure this:

- How frequently they volunteered to participate.
- How frequently they did the actions when asked.
- How quickly they responded to each imperative.
- How enthusiastically they responded to each imperative.
- Whether they said the Latin out loud.

After I used TPR to teach the vocabulary I used a written test after one and three weeks periods in order to assess whether this motivation resulted in successful vocabulary acquisition.

The School

The research took place in a state primary school attended by 260 pupils. The school was categorised as being satisfactory overall by Ofsted (2010) and states a commitment to achievement and creativity in its ethos. The school's language policy (Appendix F) outlined the aim of raising language awareness and creating a positive attitude to languages rather than assimilating large amounts of vocabulary. Latin was taught to year three pupils as part of the school's language programme before they progressed on to French.

The class

The class which I focused on was a year 3 class who had been doing Latin for approximately 3 months. They were taught Latin by the Classics department of a local school for 30 minutes a week. This is consistent with the average amount of time spent by KS2 pupils on languages (Wade, Marshall and O'Donnell, 2009). There were ten boys and nine girls in the class. Below is a summary of those with Special Educational Needs.

Special Educational Need	Number
Statement (behaviour)	1
Received individual learning support	2
IEP	1
Reading age below average	2

The class was mixed ability, ranging from a National Curriculum level 1 to level 2. The average National Curriculum score for the class was 2B.

The class had been working through the *Minimus* textbook (Bell, 1999) as well as doing a range of activities including kinaesthetic methods of learning verb endings, saying and acting out adjectives, writing in the Vindolanda script and learning imperatives through pretending to be Roman soldiers. The department had chosen to focus on a more kinaesthetic style of teaching after discussion with the headmaster. This was also a result of some of the students finding the stories in *Minimus* challenging. They also had some

awareness of the cultural context through Greek myths which were told to them at the end of each lesson. The teachers at the school were very supportive of the Greek and Roman element of the National Curriculum, undertaking activities such as designing a brochure for a house in Pompeii and reading the students stories about gladiators.

Context: languages in primary schools

Before I address the issues of motivation and vocabulary learning in my literature review, I would like to outline the current provision for languages in primary schools. I will also look at the current aims and indicate how this research fits into these aims. Latin is not specifically mentioned by these government publications as the focus was on modern languages. I will attempt to show the relevance of Latin to the current emphasis in languages.

Due to a change in government, the publications which I am about to discuss may no longer reflect current policy. Nevertheless, it seems likely that those schools which do choose to teach a language will continue to follow similar aims. It was not until 2002 that the government stated their commitment to create provision for languages at primary school level. *Objectives of Languages for All: Languages for Life. A strategy for England* (DES, 2002) outlined the broad aims that languages in primary schools should: develop transferable language learning skills; broaden linguistic awareness; extend literacy and develop cultural awareness and knowledge. Wade et al (2009) found that enthusiasm for learning languages remained the most common aim

of schools in 2008. It is this aim which I will be focusing on throughout this study, although I will also refer to the other aims that I have mentioned where relevant.

It may be observed from the above list that vocabulary acquisition is not seen as an important part of language learning at primary school level. The focus is on transferable language learning skills rather than the actual vocabulary. However, the National Curriculum (DES, 1999) does state developing techniques for memorising words as one of these linguistic skills. This study fits this aim as it focuses on one possible way of helping students to memorise vocabulary.

As I stated earlier, the position of Latin in primary schools is even less certain. Although the National Curriculum for History (DES, 1999) states that the Greeks and Romans should form part of the Key Stage 2 Curriculum, there is no specific mention of Latin. This does not mean that it is not valued by some. A government report on the implementation of primary Modern Foreign Languages (Driscoll, Jones and Macrory, 2004) stated that a small number of schools had drawn attention to the importance of Latin in their curriculum.

I would like to address the relevance of the language aims that I have discussed for Latin. The most common aim for learning a modern language at primary school is creating enthusiasm. This is also a key aim for primary level Latin. Barbara Bell's *Minimus* course aimed to do just this by creating characters which would engage primary school children (Bell, 1999). The Iris

project states similar aims. This project offers free Latin courses to primary schools in London and Oxford. Their website states their intention “to instil a fascination for learning new languages.” (Robinson, 2011). In addition both Bell (1999) and the Iris project state their intention of supporting literacy, developing cultural awareness and developing language learning skills. It can therefore be seen that those involved in supporting Latin teaching at primary school level have very similar aims to those teaching Modern Foreign Languages (MFL).

Literature review

Student Motivation

I have already stated that creating enthusiasm for languages is one of the major aims at primary school level and one of the focuses of this research. In this section I would like to address the importance of motivation and enjoyment for learning languages.

The Key Stage 2 framework for languages states a commitment to the promotion of motivation for language learning through enjoyment (Cable et al, 2010). A research report undertaken by Cable et al (2010) suggests that this objective has been met. Year 3 students in 8 case study schools were asked whether they enjoyed languages. The table on page 8 shows the percentage who answered yes, sometimes or no to this question.

Year	Yes/ %	Sometimes/ %	No/ %
2006/2007	81.6	16.9	1.5
2007/2008	86.7	13.3	0.0

This study also used focus groups to find out exactly what was so motivating about languages. Some of the activities that the children found motivating included:

- Range of approaches
- Memorising new words
- Learning about a different language and culture

“I’m fascinated that our language came from so many other languages – Greek, Latin, French.” Year 6 Focus group 2008/2009
- Whole class chanting
- Songs which helped vocabulary recall through linking words to actions
- A focus on games and activities which was different to the approach in other subjects

Hunt et al (2005) also found that enthusiasm and effective classroom practice were key factors in motivating young language learners. Bors (1999, cited in Hunt et al, 2005) also cited weekly teaching hours, parents’ educational background and school attended as factors in language progression. So far there has not been an attempt to assess whether this evident enjoyment in languages has had a positive affect on attainment. There is more concern

that students enjoy languages and show an interest in continuing them post-14 (Wade et al, 2009).

The issue of motivation has also been addressed by those teaching Latin at primary school level. Cross (1996) emphasised the importance of using images when teaching Latin to young children. She found that the ability of students to translate sentences was greatly enhanced through the use of images. She also found that the use of a drama activity motivated the students so much that they were able to recall the play months later.

Although I have witnessed many of the types of activities mentioned by the focus group being used in primary level Latin (Cable et al, 2010), there has been relatively little research into the different types of activities which motivate students to study Latin. This research will show how one type of kinaesthetic activity can motivate students in the Latin classroom.

Vocabulary learning

I would now like to address current research into vocabulary learning. There has been no research into learning Latin vocabulary at primary school level, perhaps because this is not seen as one of the primary aims of Latin at this level. As the introduction of primary languages at this level is relatively new there has also been relatively little research done in this area. Vocabulary acquisition at primary school level also has a different focus. Although the Key Stage 2 curriculum (DES, 1999) does state that there should be an emphasis on memorisation, the average amount of time allocated to learn a

language is 40 minutes per week (Wade et al, 2009). As this subject is often not assessed (Cable et al, 2010) students are not required to learn vocabulary independently. I only intend to look at strategies which can be implemented in the primary school classroom.

One of the key ways in which primary school children acquire vocabulary is through repeated exposure to the language. In a government commissioned research report Cable et al (2010) observed that modern foreign language lessons were often characterised by an emphasis on memorisation achieved through repeated exposure. They observed 45 lessons which began by recapping previous vocabulary before moving onto new language.

Techniques such as games, activities and use of an IWB were also employed to enforce vocabulary through repeated exposure.

In addition the target language was reinforced through everyday routines such as taking the register or giving simple instructions. This is something that I also observed at the primary school where I carried out my research. I discussed with several teachers their practice of taking the register in a different language each week and noticed that the children were able to say 'thank you' in a number of different languages. This was something which had also been incorporated into their Latin lessons by other members of the department. At the beginning of the lesson they would often be greeted with *salvete* and told to *sedete omnes!* The first time that I taught them they all understood the command to come and sit down in Latin.

It is difficult to be sure of how effective this method of acquiring vocabulary is as many schools do not formally assess their students ability in languages. A combination of different approaches also makes it difficult to be certain which ones are effective. Cable et al (2010) assessed the achievement of groups of students in 8 different schools over three years. The results for year three students are summarised below:

Success of groups in remembering target vocabulary

Year	5- 20 words remembered	20 – 50 words	50 + words
2006/2007	2 groups	4 groups	2 groups
2007/2008	1 group	6 groups	1 group
2008/2009	0 groups	5 groups	3 groups

As can be seen, the acquisition of vocabulary in these particular schools appears to have improved. These results should be treated with some caution as they represent a very small sample. It is also impossible to be sure which particular types of vocabulary learning were responsible for the improved results. However, it does appear that repetition at the starts of lessons and active methods of learning vocabulary may be a successful way of improving vocabulary acquisition. There is no reason that these methods could not be employed to support the learning of Latin vocabulary. Although oracy is not a major aim of Latin, this does not prevent teachers from using

active methods and in some cases encouraging students to speak the language.

One key way of learning vocabulary which perhaps has not been exploited by MFL at primary level is the importance of derivatives for learning vocabulary. Derivatives are fully exploited by Latin at this level. *Minimus* (Bell, 1999) was originally intended as a language awareness course and makes use of derivatives to help build vocabulary. The Iris project also states that its focus on vocabulary takes derivatives into account (Robinson, 2010). Anderson and Jordan (1928) tested vocabulary in the following categories; identical words; words with known derivatives; idioms and phrases; words with no known association. They found that words with derivatives were remembered best after identical words. This certainly seems to suggest that derivatives may be helpful to students for learning vocabulary.

Asher's Total Physical Response

The specific method of learning vocabulary that I have chosen to use is Asher's Total Physical Response (TPR). This came about because Asher believed that the proficiency expected from language learners is not realistic in the time available (Asher, 1969.) It focuses on achieving listening fluency by listening to commands and acting them out. There is less of a focus on speaking which is left to develop naturally later on. This method was usually done with one instructor and two students. The first unit of training made use of one word commands. This later progressed to more complex commands.

The original research carried out by Asher found that those who acted out the commands during retention tests retained vocabulary more effectively than those who were taught by total physical response and were assessed by writing out a translation. This suggests that an active method of learning vocabulary may be more effective than more conventional methods.

Asher (1969) was also interested in proving whether children would learn more effectively through the TPR method than adults. There was a belief that young children who came to a new country picked up a new language more quickly through play than adults did through more conventional methods. Asher's experiment did not support this theory. Undergraduate students retained more vocabulary than groups of 8, 10 or 14 year olds. 8 year old students retained half the vocabulary that adults acquired.

In spite of its potential for success, Asher's technique has not been readily utilised (Sano, 1996). In a more recent study Sano (1996) attempted to use Asher's Total Physical Response to enhance language acquisition. Sano emphasised the importance of students feeling comfortable and confident for learning a language. Sano incorporated TPR techniques including the use of imperatives with actions and flashcards which aided pronunciation as well as focusing on developing oral skills. Sano's interpretation of TPR differed from Asher's due to this focus on making students less inhibited when communicating. During one part of the lessons students were encouraged to respond to imperatives in their own way, rather than in the more restrictive style recommended by Asher.

After sixteen hours of this method of TPR, a multiple choice test was administered. The average score for this test was 96.6%. As Sano (1996) acknowledged, this suggests that the test was too easy. It may also contradict Asher's finding that those who undertook written tests after TPR had not obtained vocabulary effectively. TPR also appears to have had an affect on nationwide standardised tests for English. There was an increase from an average of 60.8 in 1980/81 to 66.4 in 1984. This focus on making students feel comfortable also suggests that techniques which motivate students may make vocabulary acquisition more effective. Sano's research did not explore this link explicitly. However, there are too many variables to be certain if TPR on its own was the cause of this improvement.

The aims of learning Latin at primary school are clearly different to those of Asher. As I stated earlier, the main aim for studying Latin at primary school level is to create enthusiasm for languages alongside literacy and linguistic skills (Iris, 2011). On the other hand Asher was focused on achieving listening fluency through TPR. I will be using TPR mainly as a way to create enjoyment for languages and to help the students develop ways of memorising vocabulary. Although this was not Asher's original intention, I believe that it can be adapted to suit this purpose.

Methodology

I chose to use a combination of a number of approaches to carry out my research. Cohen et al (2007) characterise a case study as an investigation into a particular phenomenon which makes use of observation and document analysis among other types of data. This approach fits my study. Although none of the department had experimented with TPR previously, my decision to investigate this followed on from observing the effective use of kinaesthetic teaching approaches. It was the phenomenon of active teaching that I was particularly interested in. A case study approach seemed appropriate as it allowed me to use observation to determine the relationship between motivation and vocabulary acquisition.

The research method can best be described as an evaluative case study (Cohen et al, 2007) as I was interested in assessing how effective my method of teaching vocabulary was. In addition I also used documentary analysis, including a recording of the initial lesson, an observation record from a non-participant observer and student products. I chose not to carry out any interviews due to the age of the children.

Cohen et al (2007) have suggested that in interview situations children can be reluctant to say what they really think, being more inclined to give a response that they think the interviewer is looking for. Children also have reduced linguistic competence compared to adults. I felt that an interview would be likely to only produce responses that the children thought I wanted to hear. I

had observed that this group were eager to please. For example, when writing in the Vindolanda script many of them had approached me to show me their messages. As they had had relatively little exposure to languages I also felt that they would be unable to say in detail how much they had gained from this method. Latin was the first language the children had learned and so they would have had relatively little to compare their experiences to.

Research has already indicated that children are motivated by active styles of learning (Cable, 2010). I did not feel that interviewing them would provide more detail on this issue. I decided that observing their response to the TPR method would be a more accurate way of determining how effective it was. I intended to make use of field notes and the electronic recording in order to do this. Posttests carried out at intervals would also give some indication of the extent of vocabulary acquisition.

The research

I decided to use the TPR method to investigate the relationship between motivation and vocabulary acquisition. I chose to use TPR as it used kinaesthetic styles of learning which I had previously observed as motivating students. TPR has also previously been shown to aid vocabulary acquisition. Previous studies into TPR have focused on vocabulary acquisition. I intended to develop these studies further by looking at the role that motivation played in vocabulary acquisition within the TPR method.

I wanted to replicate the initial stages of TPR (Asher, 1969) where the students are required to act out only single words. I felt that this would be the most consistent approach with the aims of the National Curriculum which also focuses on developing word-level oracy (Cable et al, 2010). In line with TPR, I also did not focus on developing oracy at this initial stage. I aimed to say the word and for them to do the action, with the intention that this would make them more comfortable with understanding the language. At this stage saying the word was entirely up to them. My method also differed from Asher's original experiment as there was an entire class rather than several students and an instructor.

As this method uses imperatives I selected 8, the majority of which they had met in other contexts. One of my selection criteria for the imperatives was whether there was an appropriate action to go with each imperative. It was important that the students found this method as enjoyable as possible so that they were motivated. I did not want to select imperatives which had an obscure action related to them. For this reason the actions had to be easy to do and to have a clear connection with the word that they represented. For this reason I used verbs which they may have encountered before as I wanted to use single words only. I had also previously observed that they often had to be reminded of the meaning of a word each week, so did not feel that this would compromise the data too much. In addition I planned to check their understanding of each of the imperatives initially, so that I could assess the impact that TPR had on their vocabulary acquisition. Keeping these issues in

mind I devised an appropriate action for each imperative before teaching the lesson.

Selected verbs and actions

Verb	Action
spectate	pointing to the eyes
audite	cupping the ear
scribite	pretending to write
sedete	sitting down
surgete	standing up
tangete	touching a person/object
valete	waving
ridete	smiling

The sample

The class was made up of 9 boys and 9 girls of mixed ability. I was teaching two different sets at the time and had observed that although these were not setted one was stronger than the other academically. Other teachers had chosen to teach *Minimus* selectively as this had proved too challenging. I focused on the stronger class as I was interested in seeing how effective TPR was across as wide an ability range as possible. As this was the larger set it

also increased the sample size, meaning that there was greater opportunity to see a range of data.

Nevertheless, the sample size was still very small. This means that any trends which appear in the findings may or may not be significant. A number of students were also away for the second test. This may have distorted the data, particularly as several of these students had scored quite badly in the first test. Further research would need to be carried out with a larger sample to come to any significant conclusions.

The nature of the Latin lessons in the school may also have caused problems for the results. The children were only taught Latin for 30 minutes a week. This is one of the problems acknowledged by those currently reviewing MFL (Cable et al, 2010). As there was no exposure to Latin through lessons or homework inbetween being introduced to the verbs and being tested on them, it seems natural that there would be a decrease in their knowledge, especially as they were not learning the vocabulary inbetween.

Introduction of TPR

The pupils were taught the words in the initial lesson by being encouraged to copy the action while the word was said. The 8 imperatives were repeated a number of times to make vocabulary acquisition more effective. I had observed that in previous lessons there had not been a focus on repetition and theorise that this may have been one of the reasons why the students

found it difficult to acquire the vocabulary. Cable et al (2010) also pointed out the focus on repetition for helping memorisation in MFL. The students' understanding was then assessed as a group by repeating the different imperatives without showing them the correct action. This group assessment created a more supportive environment, making it more likely that the students found the activity enjoyable (Cable et al, 2010).

A different activity was then undertaken. This also involved looking at a story in *Minimus*. A visual approach was reinforced by asking the students to look at the pictures to work out what was happening. The students were asked to fill out a sheet with the different body parts. Again, actions were used to assist with their understanding of this task. The inclusion of different types of activities in the lesson was used to reduce the monotony of TPR, motivating the students through a range of approaches (Cable et al, 2010). At the end of the lesson the students' recall of the different verbs was tested. Individual students were asked to minimise the risk of the students copying each other. Asking individual students may have reduced motivation for some students if they found this task very difficult. However, research has also indicated that some students value being given ownership of the work and may have relished the challenge (Cable et al, 2010). Ideally each student would have been asked all 8 words individually. As this research was being carried out as a visitor there was not sufficient time for this approach. As a result it was only possible to gain an idea of the effectiveness for the whole class rather than for individuals.

Posttests were carried out after one and three weeks. This was carried out at the beginning of their normal Latin lesson. In order to gain a more comprehensive view of each student's knowledge they were assessed using a multiple choice test (see appendix A). A multiple choice test was used as I felt that the students would have found it too challenging to recall the vocabulary with no help. There were a number of drawbacks to this method of assessment. As Asher has suggested (1969), the students may have been less effective in written tests than in aural and kinaesthetic ones. This method of testing may therefore have been less effective but for the reasons stated above it was not possible to gain an understanding of each individual's knowledge through aural methods. The nature of the multiple choice test also meant that results were inclined to be lower if students got one wrong due to the number of options. The test required the students to draw a line to indicate the correct answer. If they connected a Latin word to an incorrect English word, this also meant that the English word was eliminated from their correct answers. In addition the reading age of some students made the test difficult for them as they were not able to read the test in order to complete it. Another difficulty with the reliability of this data was that the students may have copied one another, although they were instructed very clearly to work on their own. This was enforced while they were carrying out the test.

In order to see if the TPR method had worked they were also encouraged to think about the actions that they had been doing in the previous lesson. The Latin imperatives were also read out as this was how they had originally heard the imperatives.

Methods of observation

In addition to the assessment of the students a member of the Classics department at Norwich School who had been involved with teaching the students also made notes on the lesson when the students were first introduced to the imperatives. This was done in order to reduce the bias that might have arisen from using the digital recording to make my own observations (Taber, 2007). The field notes were structured through the research questions which have been outlined previously. These were given to the observer and discussed before the lesson took place.

The structured approach of these observations only allowed for comments to be made on existing categories (Taber, 2007). However, due to the small scale nature of this study a focused approach seemed more appropriate than one which explored other possible issues.

An electronic recording of the lesson was also made so that any assertions in these field notes could be corroborated. Permission to do this was obtained from the headmaster. In addition to any comments that had been made on the students behaviour, this also allowed a more accurate method of recording how many students had got the answer right. The speed at which the students answered the questions often meant that it was difficult for the observer to record every answer. An electronic recording allowed greater accuracy when assessing their answers.

The use of a laptop also created some issues which need to be addressed. The students may not have been acting as they usually would (Cohen et al, 2007). Many were making faces at the camera and some had to be asked to move away from the camera several times. It was necessary to address the students several times at the start of the lesson due to their excitement. They had also been taking part in a steel band workshop, resulting in them being in a very active mood. Both of these factors may have resulted in them responding more positively than they would have otherwise. Equally their excitement could have adversely affected their concentration. During the assessment in the initial lesson volunteers were also asked for. This may have resulted in students being asked who were more confident. As a result the full range of ability may not have been represented during this part of the assessment.

Results

In order to assess the relationship between motivation and vocabulary acquisition, I will be analysing the extent that the students were motivated by TPR. I will then look at their responses to individual imperatives to see if this resulted in effective vocabulary acquisition. I will finish my analysis by looking at their overall vocabulary acquisition using the posttests.

Response of the students to TPR

I will be using the field notes made by the non-participant observer alongside my own observations from watching the video again to assess how motivated the students were. A combination of both of these observations should help to reduce my own bias as the practitioner (Taber, 2007).

During the initial lesson, the non-participant observer recognised a very active level of engagement with the method of learning the words. This was indicated by many students putting their hands up when being asked what a verb meant. During the initial teaching many were also poised, waiting to hear what the next word was. This enthusiasm did not necessarily extend to reciting the Latin when doing the action. However, the non-participant observer noted that those who both recited the word and did the action had a greater understanding of the vocabulary.

One of the reasons cited by Sano (1986) for using the TPR method was to decrease the inhibitions felt by students when learning a second language. I therefore intend to address whether a group approach helped to motivate the students. Research carried out by Cable et al (2007) has also suggested that children enjoy the support of choral repetition. This was supported by this case study, as the children were poised waiting for the next command during group work. However, even in this environment I observed a certain amount of reluctance. The students were usually led by one student. It seems logical that the students would be less confident when they could no longer simply

copy the teacher. I observed this occurring at least 10 times during the initial assessment. This suggests that although the students were motivated and wanted to take part, they did not feel confident in their ability to answer correctly. Motivation alone cannot produce secure subject knowledge.

The students appeared to feel even more unsure when asked individually. In the most extreme case one girl would not attempt an answer. Some students were also hesitant even if they knew the correct answer. This sometimes presented as them preferring simply to give the meaning in English rather than doing the action. On the other hand there were some students who were very engaged with the actions and continued to do them even when other individuals were asked. The students volunteered to be the next one to answer readily, although they were sometimes slightly reticent once asked. One student was very keen to be involved but often repeatedly did the same incorrect action (standing up). This may have been attention seeking behaviour rather than an involvement with the TPR method.

The ability level of the students probably had an affect on the students' motivation during the initial lesson. As previously discussed, there were a number of students with SEN or who had a reading age below average. Those who were finding the activity challenging seemed to feel isolated when asked individually. However, those who had clearly mastered the vocabulary became even more motivated in this situation and were eager to show off their knowledge (Cable et al, 2007). The age of the students may also have had an affect on them finding this difficult. Asher (1969) found that students

of this age retained only half the vocabulary that adults did. Nevertheless it is encouraging that a number of the students responded enthusiastically to this method and that all of the students were enthusiastic in a group situation. This seems to suggest that TPR does motivate students. The results may have been more favourable if it were possible to carry out the same method with much smaller groups.

Imperatives

I would now like to address how effectively each word was recalled. I will discuss the students' response to the words when they were taught them through the TPR method in order to assess whether a favourable response led to more effective vocabulary recall. This will indicate whether motivation affected the recall of individual words.

Scribite was remembered consistently well in both tests, with 84% answering this correctly in the first test and 88% in the second test. I found this slightly surprising as the action for scribite was not responded to as enthusiastically as for others. I theorise that there may be an alternative reason for the high number of correct responses. The students had met this word previously and been introduced to the derivative "scribble" which many of them enjoyed. When the word *scribite* was said many of them put their hands up as they remembered the derivative. The accuracy of their responses for scribite may therefore have been a result of awareness of derivatives rather than the effectiveness of the TPR method (Anderson and Jordan 1928; Bell, 1999). It

could still be said that motivation was a factor in their recall, as they had responded enthusiastically to the derivative.

During the initial lesson I observed that the students had enjoyed the action for *tangete*. This involved touching either an object or the person next to them. They responded well to being allowed to “*tangete*” each other. They often became over excited during this word and had to be told to stop doing the action. When asked as a group around $\frac{3}{4}$ recalled this word. This may have been the reason for the high percentage of accurate answers for this response. There is another possible reason for the students finding this verb easier to remember. It was the only verb that began with a ‘t’, reducing the possibility of confusing the verb with other similar verbs. There were four verbs which began with an ‘s’, which may have resulted in less accurate recall for these verbs.

The students also responded to the verb “*spectate*” well with 79% of the answers being accurate in the first test which increased to 100% in test 2. There was not as positive a response to this in the initial lesson. The students had to be addressed several times before they did the action. However, *spectate* was often used as a command to gain the children’s attention during this lesson. The increased exposure to this verb may have resulted in accurate recall of this particular verb (Cable et al, 2010).

I found the results for *valete* particularly surprising. During the initial lesson the students had responded to this particularly verb positively with the whole

class waving and shouting out the word “bye”. I would have expected this to result in more students remembering the word. The students had not been introduced to *valete* before this lesson. There may have been some additional confusion as they were familiar with “salvete”. I had chosen not to include this word due to their existing familiarity with the word and as there were already four words beginning with ‘s’. This seems to suggest that although TPR helped some students to remember the meaning of the different words, repeated exposure was also an important factor in which words were remembered. Pronunciation may have been an additional factor which made this word more difficult to remember. The students had heard *valete* pronounced as *wallete*. Although every effort was made to assist with pronunciation through reading out the Latin words, the students may still have been confused when they saw the word written down.

ridete was the word which was remembered least successfully. Many of the students had responded to this verb very positively, doing the action immediately and enthusiastically. This supports the theory that a more active approach helped the students to learn the words as smiling was the least active action.

I would like to discuss “surgete” and “sedete” together. I would have expected both of these to be remembered relatively successfully, as these were both words which were regularly built into the lesson. The students were often told to come and “sedete” on the carpet. This may have helped their recall, as 89% answered *sedete* correctly in the first test although this dropped to 63%

in the second test. “surgete” was recalled much less successfully, with 42% in the first test and 63% in the second test. A possible reason for this is what Asher (1969) referred to as sequence. When teaching the whole class, the word *sedete* naturally followed *surgete*. It was logical for the children to be asked to sit after standing. This may have resulted in them using logic to work out the meaning and not actually understanding what the word meant. Repeated exposure does seem to have aided their recall of *sedete*. Again, the students may have been confused by a high number of verbs which started with the same letter.

The students did not seem to remember *audite* from previous lessons when taught this verb initially. Individual assessment at the end of the lesson also revealed that recall of this verb was low, with neither student who was asked being able to recall the correct action or meaning. The difficulty with recalling this word seems to have been reflected in the result as only 63% of students recalled this word each time. Nevertheless, this is still an encouraging percentage for a word which some students seemed to have difficulty recalling.

Common errors

During the initial testing of the imperatives there was a high level of recall. This tended to be because the students who had understood better did the action first with the rest following after. A number of patterns emerged during the assessment at the end of the lesson. Several students guessed *audite*

incorrectly when *ridete* and *spectate* were said. One student also did the action for *spectate* and *valete* on separate occasions when *audite* was said. This could be explained by all of these actions being quite similar. They all involved touching different parts of the face. The most common incorrect answer was *surgete*, although on three occasions this was the same student. The students always recalled *surgete*, *sedete*, *scribite* and *valete* correctly, although the actions for these verbs were sometimes used incorrectly with other verbs.

Overall vocabulary acquisition

During the assessment at the end of the initial lesson 60% of the words were recalled individually. During whole class assessment 100% of the words were recalled. This could be attributed to those with a more natural aptitude for languages leading the group while the rest copied. Both of these results should also be treated with caution as only 15 words were tested individually and 10 as a group. Therefore this gives a general idea of how successful the TPR method had been rather than a definite answer. As explained above, more extensive testing was not possible due to time constraints. After 1 week 64% of the vocabulary was recalled. After another 2 weeks 73% of the vocabulary was recalled. The increase in recall may be attributed to a smaller number of students taking part in the second posttest.

Appendices B to E show individual scores by gender as well as how successfully each of the verbs was remembered. The recall of the vocabulary

by individual students was very encouraging. Around 75% of the students remembered at least half of the words, suggesting that the TPR method had been successful. It should be acknowledged that the test was multiple choice, meaning that the scores may have been higher than if the students had been given no options. The small number of words involved also means that these results should be treated with caution.

As can be seen from appendix B, many students actually improved their result after another 2 weeks. Again this should be treated with caution due to the simplistic nature of the test and the limited range of words. Only one student (G5) showed a significant dip in results. In particular those students who scored 100% in the initial test managed to maintain this score in the second test. This is perhaps slightly surprising, Anderson and Jordan (1928) found that there was a significant reduction in vocabulary recall after 1 week. This would seem to suggest that the TPR methods was successful, although the test may have been too easy for some. The students may have succeeded in guessing more correct answers in the second test than the first. A more rigorous method of testing would be required to corroborate the success of this method.

Conclusion

This research seems to suggest that TPR is one possible way of creating enthusiasm for languages. It was particularly effective in group situations, with the students being poised for the next imperative. It seemed to be less

effective at motivating students when they were being questioned individually, with only those of a higher aptitude for languages finding this as enjoyable (Cable et al, 2010). Almost all showed a willingness to try throughout but some were held back as they found it difficult to remember all the vocabulary. Motivation cannot necessarily compensate for the ability level of the students.

It also seems to suggest that active methods which motivate the students may help vocabulary acquisition. After learning through the TPR method over 50% of students remembered at least 6 verbs. The small number of words that the students were introduced to means that this result should be treated with caution. Overall it was inconclusive whether TPR was responsible for this vocabulary acquisition. A positive response to *tangete* did result in a high number of students recalling this word. On the other hand, *valete* was also responded to particularly well but was remembered by far less students. Knowledge of derivatives and repeated exposure to vocabulary were shown to be important additional factors, as over 80% students remembered *scribite* in both tests. The students were aware that 'scribble' was a derivative of this word.

It has also been suggested that building vocabulary into daily routines can be beneficial for the acquisition of vocabulary (Cable et al, 2010). It was also inconclusive whether this had an affect on acquisition of vocabulary. It should be noted that this kind of exposure was only possible during the 30 minutes that the students had Latin as they were taught by visiting teachers. *spectate* and *sedete* were both used in Latin lessons to gain the attention of pupils.

The recall of *spectate* was very good at over 75% in both tests. 89% of students recalled *sedete* in the 1st test but only 63% did in the second test. Therefore it is unclear whether this additional exposure to the vocabulary helped vocabulary acquisition.

Further work

This was a very small scale study which only looked at the responses of 19 students. In order to assess whether there is any value to this method a case study involving more students would have to be undertaken. It would also be of use to do the study in much smaller groups as the size of the group appeared to inhibit some students (Cable et al, 2010). It would also need to take account of a greater number of single words as well as phrases. This study attempted to make use of repetition to enforce the vocabulary, but some students would have benefited from the opportunity to practice the actions for even longer. Any future work should make use of repetition over a longer period of time to assess whether this improves vocabulary acquisition. It would also be of interest to see how children in years 4, 5 and 6 responded to this method, as it has been argued that aptitude for languages may increase with time (Asher, 1969). This method may prove more effective with those with more developed linguistic abilities. Interviewing the students to find out how enjoyable they found this method of learning vocabulary may also provide useful insight into whether motivation does affect vocabulary acquisition.

This study did not attempt to assess the children's existing vocabulary before introducing the vocabulary with the TPR method. This meant that a number of other factors may have been responsible for vocabulary acquisition including knowledge of derivatives, repeated exposure through routine and previous familiarity with the vocabulary. Any future study should eliminate these variables so that it is certain that TPR is responsible for any improvements in vocabulary acquisition. This could be done by administering a pretest to find out the students' existing knowledge. Any familiar words could then be eliminated from the study.

One of the issues with this study was the use of a written test to assess the effectiveness of TPR. This was necessary due to a lack of time and resources. The students may have had more success if they had continued to carry out TPR during posttests. This is supported by Asher (1969), who found that those who translated during posttests were less successful than those who simply did the actions. Any further research should assess the effectiveness of TPR through an active test.

Future practice and limitations

As teachers already make good use of active methods, it seems likely that TPR could be incorporated into the teaching of MFL at KS2. However, as has been noted, one of the challenges for languages at key stage 2 is the limited amount of time (Driscoll et al, 2004). Teachers would need to be convinced that TPR is a good use of their time. Many lessons currently start with a

review of previous vocabulary. It may be possible to adapt TPR to fit into the lesson at this point. This research only looked at enhancing students knowledge of one word imperatives. In order for TPR to be used throughout lessons more widely, a range of topic based imperatives would have to be created as Sano (1986) suggested.

This research is of potential use to those teaching modern as well as ancient languages. Due to the existence of more conversational language it may be more readily utilised for teaching Modern Foreign Languages. However, as this research has indicated, it has the potential to both create enthusiasm and help language acquisition in Latin. A relatively small number of primary schools currently teach Latin. These schools would need to come up with similar topic based imperatives in order to fully utilise TPR. Alternatively TPR methods could be incorporated as a way of supporting vocabulary acquisition for more simple words. Although Latin may not appear best suited to support the objective of oracy, increased vocabulary can still contribute to literacy. The continued use of actions and visual approaches to support understanding and vocabulary acquisition can continue to be used at secondary level. This may be easier with some things than others. For example, TPR can be used to teach imperatives very easily. However, due to the amount of vocabulary that it is necessary to acquire and the increased focus on literature and analysis rather than oracy, the TPR method could not be used exclusively at this level.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Name _____

Verbs

Draw a line to show what the verb means.

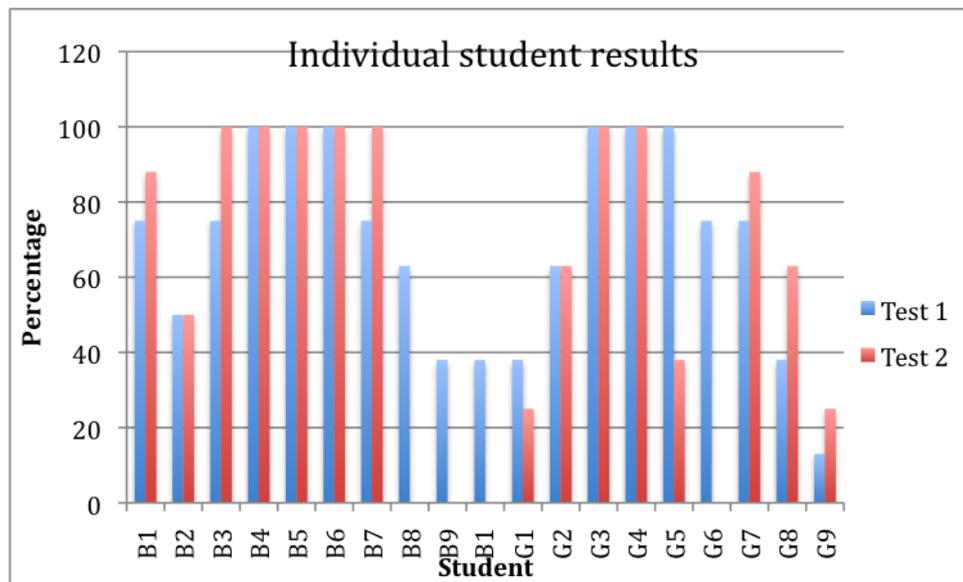
- | | |
|-------------|--------|
| 1. spectate | hear! |
| 2. audite | touch! |
| 3. valete | sit! |
| 4. surgete | write! |
| 5. tangete | look! |
| 6. sedete | stand! |
| 7. scribete | bye! |
| 8. ridete | smile! |

Appendix B: Individual student results

Student	Test 1/%	Test 2/%
B1	75	88
B2	50	50
B3	75	100
B4	100	100
B5	100	100
B6	100	100
B7	75	100
B8	63	N/A
B9	38	N/A
B10	38	N/A
G1	38	25
G2	63	63
G3	100	100
G4	100	100
G5	100	38
G6	75	N/A
G7	75	88
G8	38	63
G9	13	25

Key: B = boy
G = girl

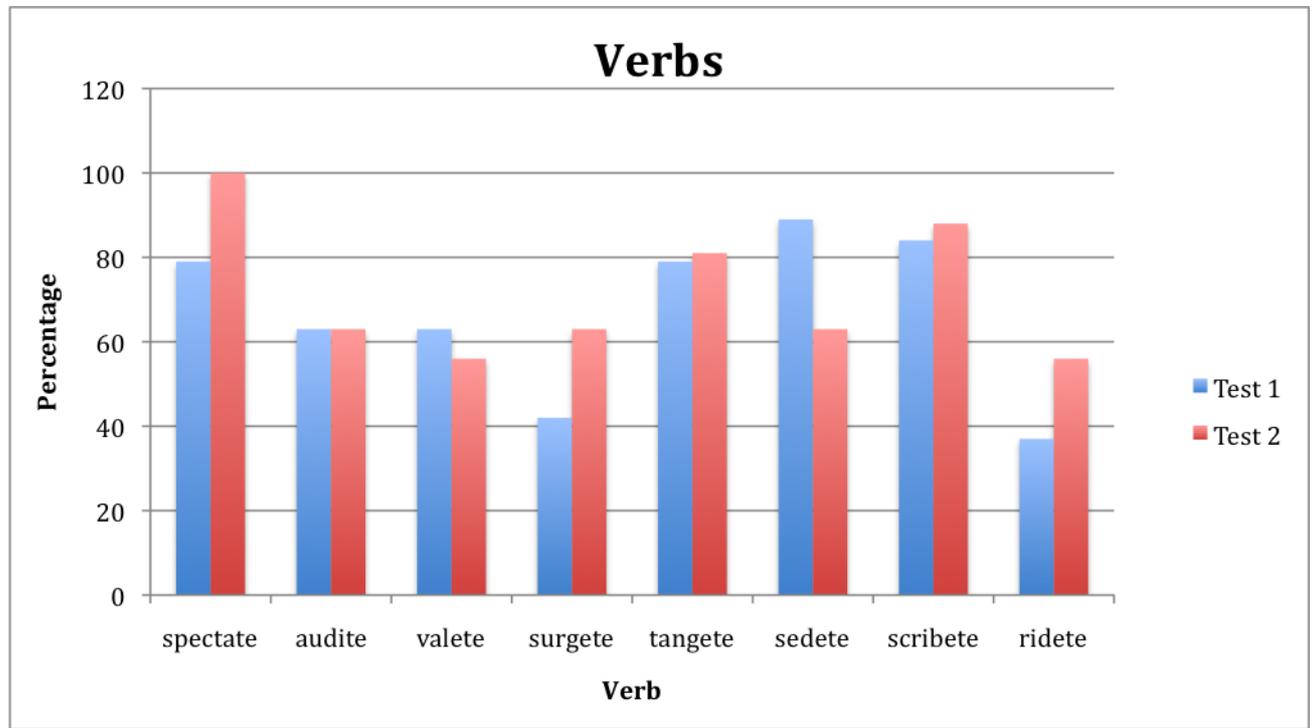
Appendix C: Graph for individual student test results



Appendix D : Percentage of accurate answers for each verb

Verb	Test 1/%	Test 2/%
spectate	79	100
audite	63	63
valete	63	56
surgete	42	63
tangete	79	81
sedete	89	63
scribete	84	88
ridete	37	56

Appendix E : Graph for percentage of accurate answers for each verb



Appendix F: School Language Policy

January 2009

Signed (Chair of Governors)

Date accepted by Governors

Review Date

Primary Languages Policy for Key Stage Two

Our approach to language learning links closely with the key message from the Primary Languages Framework. The emphasis is on:

Raising children's awareness of the nature of language, languages and culture rather than on the acquisition of large amounts of vocabulary (2.1.p4).

Aims and objectives

- to develop a positive attitude towards language learning.
- to challenge and motivate all learners through high expectations, a variety of teaching styles and an enriched environment.
- to have or build up, where possible, class teachers delivering the language entitlement so that learning becomes embedded throughout the curriculum and sustainable.

Teaching and learning styles

We will use a variety of techniques to fulfil the framework objectives eg. games, role play, drama, and songs encouraging creative use of the language, making sound-spelling links, use of target language. (Framework :2. 2 page 25) Lessons will provide a mixture of whole class, group and individual work. Resources will include schemes, posters, stickers, puppets, IT, dictionaries, books etc. ICT will be an important tool to support classroom delivery of Primary Languages and will include interactive whiteboard activities, DVD and CD extracts with native speaker voices and intercultural links.

Differentiation/Inclusion/SEN/Gifted and Talented

We recognise that there are children of widely different abilities in all classes. We usually set common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses. Where appropriate, more-able children will be encouraged to move on from using single-word responses, to phrases and then sentences, including questions. We make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.

Planning

The framework's objectives are at the core of our planning, in conjunction with the *EarlyStart* schemes for French (Years 5 and 6) and German (Year 4), and the *Language Investigator* unit (Year 3) as the basis for its curriculum planning. Where possible, Year 3 children are taught Latin by teachers from Norwich School. This has been organised so that there is built-in progression throughout the Key Stage, leading to two years of French, the agreed transition language for Thorpe St Andrew High School. A flexible

approach will be needed in the event of mixed-age classes for Primary Language teaching. Languages could be taught in a rolling programme or in separate groups dependent upon what has happened the previous year. All Key Stage Two classes will provide an hour of language learning per week, at the discretion of year groups, making use of teachers with subject strengths where possible.

Every Child Matters*

Teaching languages in a primary school gives us rich opportunities to make every child matter- through celebrating linguistic diversity and valuing every child's cultural and linguistic background. Children are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the community by respecting others and working collaboratively; they also develop team skills, which will contribute to their future economic wellbeing. Moreover, the *National Languages Strategy, Languages for all: languages for life*, stresses the inclusive nature of primary language-language learning is for all children.¹

The contribution of Primary Languages to teaching in other curriculum areas

The Framework supports children's literacy, and also contributes to the planning of other subjects, providing a genuine cross-curricular strand to the curriculum. The learning of a foreign language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for the pupils. Pupils develop communication and literacy skills that lay the foundation for future language learning. Pupils develop linguistic competence, extend their knowledge of how language works and explore differences and similarities between another language and English. Learning another language raises awareness of the multilingual and multicultural world and introduces an international dimension to pupils' learning, giving them an insight into their own culture and the culture of others. The learning of another language provides a medium for cross-curricular links, and for the reinforcement of knowledge, skills and understanding developed in other subjects.

Assessment for Learning

Teachers assess children's work in Primary Languages by making informal judgements and providing instant feedback as necessary, as they observe them during lessons. At the end of the year, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the progress of each pupil, using the Languages Ladder wording for Oracy and Literacy and the Framework's guidelines for Intercultural Understanding, Knowledge about Language and Language Learning Strategies for guidance.

Resources

The Schemes of Work mentioned in Section 4 are enriched by the following resources:

Collins First Time French Dictionary: x4	Singing French (songbook)
Jouons Tous Ensemble (games)	Collins German Dictionary: x2
Hey Hey Hallo (songbook)	Wir Spielen zusammen (games)
Class set of Euro notes and coins	

¹ Quotation taken from *Primary Subjects Issue one Summer 2008: Primary Languages: Making every child matter*.

Monitoring and review

The work of the subject leader involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of Primary Languages and identifying opportunities for training and upskilling, where available, for non-specialist staff. This also involves keeping abreast of current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.