High Leverage Teaching Practices for Powerful Language Learning

Ali Moeller
ACTFL President
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
• I can define and explain core/high-leverage teaching practices in language instruction

• I can explain how and why target language use enhances the language learning experience

• I can identify strategies and explain how, when and why these strategies work for increasing TL and interpersonal communication in the language classroom
Highly Effective Teachers

Teachers with **high expectations for all students**, who intentionally match instructional strategies to learning goals and who create **positive student-teacher relationships** are more likely to have the above average effects on student achievement (Hattie, 2009, p. 126)
Optimizing Student Learning: What we know from research

Students are most apt to learn at high levels when teachers clarify learning intentions for their students and themselves, select the most fitting strategies and “provide appropriate feedback to reduce the gap between where the student is and where they need to be” (Hattie, 2009, p. 199)
What is a High Leverage Teaching Practice (HLTP)?

- Results in comparatively large **advances** in student learning
- Supports the work **central** to foreign language learning
- **Improves** the achievement of all students
- Occurs **frequently** in instruction across contexts
- Are **learnable** by novice teachers through instruction.

(Ball, Sleep, Boerst, & Bass, 2009; Hlas & Hlas, 2012; Slide from Kristin Davin)
High-Leverage Teaching Practices (HLTPs)
Core Practices

Powerful in advancing student learning

“Tasks and activities that are essential for skillful beginning teachers to understand, take responsibility for, and be prepared to carry out in order to enact their core instructional responsibilities.”

Ball & Forzani, 2009, p. 504
Characteristics of HLTPs

- Are powerful ways to support learning;
- Are not learnable through modeling and observation;
- Are complex practices;
- Need to be deconstructed and explicitly taught;
- Can be rehearsed and coached.

Glisan & Donato, 2017; adapted from TEI Curriculum Group, 2008
What is the “Work of Teaching”?

The “work of teaching” involves the “core tasks that teachers must execute to help pupils learn”.

- Ball & Forzani
Basic Principles of Language Learning

• Proficiency-focused Language Learning
• Building Literacy Across Disciplines
• Setting Outcomes and Articulating Sequences
• Using Target Language for Teaching and Learning
• Using Authentic Texts
• Building Learner Autonomy
ACTFL Guiding Principles for Language Learning

The principles that are the underpinnings of our core practices
HLTP - Core Practice #1
Facilitating target language comprehensibility.
Large-grain and small-grain Core Practices

Using gestures to support meaning making

Target Language Use

Set of Teaching Moves
a.
b.
c.
### Categories of Instructional Strategies That Affect Student Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ave. Effect Size (ES)</th>
<th>Percentile Gain</th>
<th>No. of ESs</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying similarities and differences</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing and note taking</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcing effort and providing recognition</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework and practice</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonlinguistic representations</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative learning</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting objectives and providing feedback</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating and testing hypotheses</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions, cues, and advance organizers</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,251</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use of the Target Language in the Classroom

“ACTFL therefore recommends that language educators and their students use the target language as exclusively as possible (90%+) at all levels of instruction during instructional time and, when feasible, beyond the classroom.”

**Maximum TL use is necessary but not sufficient:** It must be accompanied by a variety of strategies to facilitate comprehension and support meaning making.
Why use the target language?

The following ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Ratings represent levels of expected performance for language learners who complete full-time intensive and/or immersion, proficiency-based language training under the supervision of an instructor and with 1-4 students per class.

Group I Languages:
Including Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, French, Haitian Creole, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Training</th>
<th>Minimal Aptitude</th>
<th>Average Aptitude</th>
<th>Superior Aptitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 weeks (240 hours)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low</td>
<td>Intermediate Mid</td>
<td>Intermediate Mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 weeks (480 hours)</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
<td>Advanced Low</td>
<td>Advanced Mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 weeks (720 hours)</td>
<td>Advanced Mid</td>
<td>Advanced High</td>
<td>Superior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What we know about TL in the Classroom

• Learners can only acquire/language when they hear large quantities of input $i + 1$. (Krashen, 1982)
• Learners need opportunities to interact in the TL with others to make themselves understood and to understand others. (Long, 1983)
• Collaborative interactions: Learners engage in talk-in-interaction (Donato, 1994; Swain, 2000)
• Sociocultural Theory: TL is a mediational tool for language learning. (Vygotsky, 1986)
Important Caveats about TL Use

• TL use should always occur in meaningful contexts!
• TL use should occur in the absence of translation to English!
• TL use works both ways—both teacher AND students must be expected to use it.
• Students need incentives to use TL.
• TL use is necessary but not sufficient.
Target Language Use: What we know from research

Increases motivation as students realize its usefulness (MacDonald, 1993 and Wong-Fillmore, 1985)

Amount of TL input does affect learners’ target language development (e.g. Larsen-Freeman, 1985; Lightbown, 1991; Liu, 2008; Turnbull, 2001)
Optimal use of TL

• “It is a ‘rewarding and worthwhile challenge’ to ‘have to use the FL to communicate rather than fall back on [English]’” (Levine, 2003 p. 351)

• Teachers perceived higher levels of student anxiety than the students themselves felt (Levine, 2003)

• If students are used to more L2 in the FL classroom they are less likely to be anxious about it
• There exists a negative correlation between reported amounts of TL use and reported TL use anxiety.

• Greater TL use may not necessarily translate into greater anxiety for many learners. Many students feel comfortable with more TL use when that is what they are used to (Levine, 2003)
Pygmalion Effect—self-fulfilling prophecy

- Teacher expectations can transform student performance
- How teachers view their students is inextricably linked to student performance
We can acquire language in only one way

➢ When we understand messages
➢ When we understand what we hear and what we read
Create a learning environment where target language is standard
What strategies would you use to make language comprehensible?

- **TPRS** is an instructional strategy that can keep anxiety levels low.
- Use lots of **repetition** and **routine**.
- Use lots of cognates if possible.
- Focus on **repeating high frequency vocabulary words**.
- **Limit the amount of L2 vocabulary you use** as a teacher. Make that vocabulary comprehensible and **split it into manageable chunks**.

(Martha Behlow, 2014)
Comprehensible Input that is Meaning Bearing

General Features of Useful Input

**Input must be COMPREHENSIBLE.**

Learners must understand most of what the speaker is saying for language learning to occur.

**Input must be MEANING BEARING.**

Useful input must contain a message that learners want and need to understand. There must be some communicative intent.

Smith and Donato, Startalk 2012
Die Maus und die Katze
Das Ende
Checking Comprehension
Scaffolding Verbal Responses

• Yes-no questions
  • Ist das die Maus/die Katze, der Käse, der Tisch . . .

• Choose between two options provided
  • Ist die Maus in dem Loch oder auf dem Tisch?
  • Rennt die Katze in das Loch oder rennt die Maus in das Loch?

• Wh- type questions
  • Warum geht die Maus in das Wohnzimmer?
  • Was liegt auf dem Tisch?
  • Wo ist die Katze?
Tips for Target Language Comprehension

- Introduce vocabulary in the context of what they already know
- *Use connected discourse to make language easier to understand*
- Enter and reenter vocabulary or grammatical structure in a natural way
- *Accompany the story telling with a drawing and have the learners either draw or place pictures in order while you tell the story to activate the neurons*
Creating Comprehensible Input

1. Paraphrase—saying it in an easier way
2. Slow down the rate of delivery
3. Define words through visuals & examples, not translation
4. Use background knowledge of structures students are familiar with and recycle and build on these
5. Use key words & phrases more than once
6. Use tone of voice to emphasize key parts of a message
Brown Bear/Bremer Town Musicians/The Tortoise & the Hare/The Very Hungry Caterpillar

ACTFL Core Practice

Use Authentic Cultural Resources

- Present interactive reading and listening comprehension tasks using authentic cultural texts with appropriate scaffolding while promoting interpretation.

wlclassroom.com
# Making Input Comprehensible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensorial Supports</th>
<th>Paraverbals</th>
<th>Non-Verbals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Visuals</td>
<td>• Exaggerated pronunciation</td>
<td>• Gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graphics</td>
<td>• Slower than normal speech</td>
<td>• Facial expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Realia</td>
<td>• Purposeful pauses</td>
<td>• Pantomime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pictures</td>
<td>• Intonation</td>
<td>• Demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graphic Organizers</td>
<td>• Enunciation</td>
<td>• Routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Slowed speech for emphasis</td>
<td>• Context clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Key word emphasis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACTFL Webinar – Spring 2012: Tara Fortune
Input Processing

Input → Intake → Developing System → Output

[Diagram showing the process: INPUT, PROCESS, OUTPUT]
Natural, real-world interactions....

Scroll down...

Click on that link.....

Copy that graph

What is the source for this website?
I selected “Spanish.” Now see if you can figure out how to withdraw your allowance...

Motivating your kid to learn a second language.
Use language to access content
Die Deutschen lieben Fleisch und Nudeln
Anteil der Befragten, die folgende Gerichte am liebsten essen

- Fleisch: 53%
- Nudeln: 38%
- Gemüsegerichte: 20%
- Fischgerichte: 16%
- Suppen: 15%
- Kartoffelgerichte: 14%
- Pizza: 13%
- Geflügelgerichte: 13%

Basis: Rund 1,000 Befragte ab 14 Jahren aus Deutschland
Quelle: BMEL Ernährungsreport 2017

Breakdown of food consumption in the US in 2011
One ton = 2,000 lbs.
(about the weight of a small car)

Increases in consumption per year

- Meat (lbs.): 119 Early 1950s, 158 Early 1980s, 170.4 2011
- Cheese (lbs.): Early 1950s, 17 Early 1980s, 31.4 2011
- Soda (gallons): 10 Early 1950s, 34 Early 1980s, 53 2011

Includes: beef, turkey, pork and chicken

Sources: Men’s Health.com, United States Department of Agriculture

R. TORO / © LiveScience.com
Images
Example: introducing vocabulary with a story

Students listen to the story with pictures, help fill in the blanks orally on 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} listen, put sentence strips in order with partner, pick out key words.
Enter and reenter vocabulary or grammatical structure in a natural way

*Teach grammar inductively*

“Crack the Code”
La rutina en la mañana.

Carolina

Sashi
Carolina se despierta.
Carolina despierta a Sashi.
Carolina se baña.
Carolina baña a Sashi.
Carolina viste a Sashi.

Carolina se viste.
Carolina se peina.

Carolina peina a Sashi.
Carolina se lava los dientes.

Carolina lava los dientes a Sashi.
Strategies: Did they understand?

Check to make sure students understand before going on

• Use active comprehension checking prompts
• Provide students with ways to ask for clarification
• Provide students with ways to confirm their understanding

‘Just say it in English’ Making Language Comprehensible. Donato & Smith STARTALK 2011
Strategies: Did they understand?

Check to make sure students understand before going on

- Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down
- Stand Up/Sit Down
- Act Out/Charades
- 4 Corners
- Draw what you understand
- Tell your partner . . .
- Match/Sort

Adapted from a presentation by Donna Clementi
Tasks that require L2

• Engaging learners in relevant tasks where knowledge is developed = motivation to engage with content
• Challenge learners to use TL, to negotiate for meaning = opportunity to apply feedback for increasing noticing and awareness of form
Place four separate paintings in each corner of the classroom that represent different art movements.

Ask students to go to that painting that they like and to which they are drawn.

No more than 6 persons at any one painting.

Aleidine J. Moeller, Ph.D. University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Learning tasks

1. Using L2, list words that describe this painting
2. Why do you like this painting?
3. When do you think this was painted?
4. What do you want to know about this painting and the artist?
Alternative Art Project

➢ Provide large piece of butcher paper in which the painting is in the middle and students record their findings from their oral discussions
➢ Provide text in L2 that provides information about the painting
➢ Students receive short texts that describe one aspect of the painting that students read and then record major information points on the butcher paper
➢ Students cross out any information previously recorded that was false
➢ Students create a ppt and present their painting to the class

Aleidine J. Moeller, Ph.D. University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Balthasar van der Ast

Georgia O’Keefe

Van Gogh

Juan Gris
Project Based Learning Task

Have students create a brochure (in Chinese) highlighting 4 paintings that reside in the local art museum

Aleidine J. Moeller, Ph.D. University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Checklist for building curriculum

- Is it communicatively purposeful—leading to proficiency?
- Developing interculturality?
- Relevant to learners? Sitz im Leben
- Cognitively engaging?
- Standards based?
$20,000 Pyramid: Promote Circumlocution

- Krashen
- ACTFL
- Gestures
- TPR
- Visuals
- Context

- Statue of Liberty
- Empire State Building
- Apple
- Central Park
- NECTFL
- Broadway
**Buddy Bingo**

Buddy Bingo - Find at least one person to whom this applies and have them sign the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Someone who teaches a language other than Spanish</th>
<th>Someone who went to a public school</th>
<th>Someone who has more than 3 pets at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone who has more than 3 siblings</td>
<td>Someone who has traveled outside the country</td>
<td>The person who has the best school here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone who sponsors a club other than a language club</td>
<td>Someone who has lived in another city or state</td>
<td>Read all 7 Harry Potter books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Mysterious Gift: What is in the package?
Instructions for gift activity

• Provide context: Clothing
• Ask only yes/no questions
• To ensure participation by all, once a student guesses the answer, the instructor places a mark next to their name, or picks up the index card containing the student’s name
Humor

- Laughter **can build community** by validating a common emotional response (Edwards, 2010).
- “by **lowering defenses** and bringing individuals together” (Henderson, 2015).
- Humor **activates the reward system** in the brain (Vinod & Dolan, 2001).
- This **flood of dopamine** is important for goal-setting and long-term memory (Henderson, 2015; Wise, 2004).

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Banas, Dunbardi, Rodrigues, and Liu (2011) reviewed four decades of research on humor and concluded that, “the use of positive, nonaggressive humor has been associated with a more interesting and relaxed learning environment, higher instructor evaluations, greater perceived motivation to learn, and enjoyment of the course” (p. 137).

They went on to say that, “there is substantial empirical evidence that humor can enhance recall and aid learning” (Banas, et al, 2011, p. 137).

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Using Memes to

➢ manage student behavior
➢ stay in the target language
➢ relate to students

 Aleidine J. Moeller, Ph.D.
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Haifisch Selfie

Was machen Sie da?

Ich fotografiere mein Essen für Facebook.
Esto es Maya

Esto es Azteca

Y esto es una Oreo
Relate to Learners
HLTP #2: Developing a classroom discourse community

- Designing oral interpersonal pair and group tasks.

- Engaging learners in oral classroom communication.
Negotiation of meaning is a process that speakers go through to reach a clear understanding of each other. Asking for clarification, rephrasing, and confirming what you think you have understood are all strategies for the negotiation of meaning.
**Partner 1:** You have the original. Your partner has the forgery. Describe your drawing for your partner and determine what the 10 differences are between the two drawings. Note down the differences you find.
Original and Forgery

Partner 2: You have the forgery. Your partner has the original. Describe your drawing for your partner and determine what the 10 differences are between the two drawings. Note down the differences you find.
Highlight of Practice

Interpersonal communication tasks require conversational partners to:

- Focusing on meaningful topics, outcomes, follow-up
- Listen to one another
- Activating background knowledge
- Negotiate & Interpret meaning
- Providing assistance, scaffolding, monitoring
- Arrive at an understanding
Real-world contexts: Interpersonal

- “Small talk”; Talking at a social event
- Getting to know someone
- Making plans to do something
- Playing a game
- Making a purchase
- Ordering in a restaurant
- Asking for/getting directions
- Making an appointment
- Participating in on-line chat
- Debating an issue

- Completing a transaction at the post office
- Completing a transaction at the bank
- Completing a transaction at a ticket window (travel, concerts, movies, etc)
- Discussing a current event
- Interviewing someone
- Applying for a job
- Making/building/creating something
- Working on a project
- Texting, etc.

Donna Clement9 – Chicago Public Schools Project, 2016
Nature of Interpersonal Communication
(Shrum & Glisan, 2016)

• Is spontaneous—not scripted and read or memorized
• Occurs within a meaningful context—working in pairs to do mechanical text exercises is NOT an example
• Features an “information gap”—one speaker seeks information that another speaker has
• Requires conversational partners to listen to one another & negotiate meaning
• I can define and explain core/high-leverage teaching practices in language instruction

• I can explain how and why target language use enhances the language learning experience

• I can identify strategies and explain how, when and why these strategies work for increasing TL and interpersonal communication in the language classroom