

## Observation Reflections

### Robert Patrick- Beginning Comprehensible Input with Beginners

This is my first experience with Latin being used like this in the classroom. The instructor sets up a good culture immediately. He scans the room and makes eye contact with the people in the room. He also makes use of hand motions even while speaking in English. He also immediately starts by giving students choice and the ability to personalize. He gives the classroom safety nets, e.g. yes! And no! what does \_\_\_ mean? How do you say \_\_\_\_? He does this so that students can stay in the conversation if they fall out. He emphasizes that students need to be amazed whenever he tells them something. I'm not sure about the efficacy of this. He emphasizes that everyone answers question unless he asks a particular person a question. He uses signals for repeat, slow down, and stop, he also emphasizes that students should be allies to each other and they should also use the signals if they see a classmate in need. He puts vocabulary on the board and defines the meaning to them. They are question words, he gives them all praise, and whenever they pretend to be amazed at things that he does a really good job of praising them and it honestly even feels good to see it in a secondhand manner. He chooses 3 students a day to engage with in a PQA. He begins by pointing at words, he puts a lot of energy into talking, he constantly looks around the room. He does a very good job explaining words with hand phrases, he also does a good job of pointing out different verb forms, he doesn't give rules, he just says the inflected verb and then the meaning. He leaves spots open in his dialog for students to speak to engage in. He starts to clue them in conversations. He even includes a subjunctive verb, which is something that would not be typical for beginners. He doesn't give the rules, but just says that it means 'maybe' something. That is cool as heck. Whenever something doesn't go at plan, he does a good job of making it entreating still. Whenever students ask a question about a word he repeats the word to them, then gives the definition, he then brings up similar words that questions had been asked about earlier in the class i.e. student asks

about or, he defines it, then also reminds them about but, and ,and. “guessing counts” He is honestly mesmerizing and it seems like he is almost a performer. I think that this is something that I need to work on, I think if I think of teaching as a performance may be a key to becoming a good teacher. He talks about mimicking the way that parents help their children learn language in homes. He emphasizes making sure that students know the essential few words that he aims to teach them that day.

#### Robert Patrick- Introduction to Comprehensible input

This man is an absolute gem! He begins his talk by talking about his motivation, which is to make Latin more accessible to more people. The ways that Latin is taught currently is very conducive to leaving people in the dust. He believes that teaching Latin through CI will help more students, and data shows that it is right. Robert walks us through Krashen’s theory’s, First Acquisition vs Learning. Acquisition, informal subconscious, learning conscious, implicit. How to apply to Latin, we delay formal explicit teaching rules, we provide experiences that feel right to the students and allow them to learn. Second there is a natural order of language acquisition, students learn when they learn, and we need to support that. Is the lesson today understandable and is it interesting? I think that this is an essential lesson to learn. Monitor Hypothesis, acquisition helps us initiate language, but learning about language only functions as the monitor or editor. We need to limit our structure into short need to know items, encourage students to create their own working grammar. Stop correcting written work, instead just ask them to improve meaning, this allows them to negotiate meaning better. Input hypothesis, focus on message understandable, think  $I + 1$ . Few new words, and add a new use of an old word, allow for a silent period. Affective filter, motivation, self-confidence, low anxiety is essential to acquisition. The filter changes for each, we need to make sure that students aren’t being pushed outside their affective filter. Things to think. Am I focused on acquisition not learning, am I prepared to see inflections, can I

avoid error correction? Robert is extremely knowledgeable; I think that this leads to him being confident when talking. He also engages in active listening, every time that someone asks a question he nods and responds. He emphasizes that teaching with CI requires a lot of reflection, that it is essential to work this out in a personal path. Emphasizes that we need to speak well enough for our students to learn, its hard to just decide that you are going to speak Latin, mentions that it is good to be patient with yourself and speak well enough for your students.

#### Keith Toda – Comprehensible Input Demonstration

He starts his demonstration with giving students 7 words on the board. He gives them 6 words, and the 7<sup>th</sup> is a phrase that is completely glossed. When he asks the students a question he does a good job of eliciting responses with his actions and his voice. He gives them short simple instructions and moves on once the students complete the instructed action. When he gives them longer instructions he looks out to the class and repeats instructions so that students understand. He gives the students sometimes funny instructions for example “touch the feet of your neighbor with your hands” this elicits a laugh and he says “hey you laughed that means you understand me”. He explains that he was using TPR to teach the lesson. He is very good at speaking, however he has more verbal ticks than other instructors, and it is more noticeable than I would have thought. He like Robert asks students to students to act amazed whenever he states a new fact, he also sets up hand motions for communicating yes, no, and question mark. He begins to tell the story, he states a fact, then immediately restates the fact, and defines any unknown words. He spends almost three min explaining the fact that “will is a bad boy” The way that he tells the story is very good. As he tells the story he rephrases the sentence into a question, e.g. for the statement “will is a bad boy” he asks “ is will a good boy?” “is will like Justin Beiber”. After telling the story he asks three students to come up and act out the story. He asks the students still out in the crowd

to give the students live feedback. The student who is asked to act out “will is a bad boy” doesn’t do a great job the first time and Keith helps him to look like a bad boy better. He is very good at helping students act out the story and have a good time. He praises students when they do a good job of acting out the story. He introduced the story, asked questions about the story, then had them ask out the story. After the story has been acted out, he tells us that he made the students repeat acting the story out because he wanted to repeat our exposure to the vocabulary. He mentions that when constructing the story that it is good to repeat sentences in the story. He uses the stories to develop more lessons!

#### Keith Toda- Comprehensible input

He starts out by talking about Comprehensible input, he personally started out slowly transitioning to using it for all parts of his class. He reviews Krashen’s theory. He talks about how to keep the affective filter in a good space. He talks about the different ideas that people have around ci for Latin . He states that he wants his students to be able to read well ahead of all other tasks. He mentions that he used to be very against the use of spoken Latin, “why who speaks it”. He converted in 2010 and he is still learning, and he doesn’t identify as a great speaker. He mentions that he listens to “tea with Bill Van Patten” good thing that was assigned listening last semester! He mentions a litmus test for immersing students in language. Is what I’m saying comprehensible? Is what I am saying compelling? To make things more compelling he mentions doing PQA’s, and that you can make it even more interesting by asking students what they think answers might be for a famous person. With immersion, be careful that it is not submersion. He mentions not focusing on taking grammar constructs, but just teaching lessons. He emphasizes deep and simple over shallow and complex. Complains about how chapters seem to introduce a new concept every week and that it may be unrealistic for students to learn that quickly. He wants to start lessons by establishing meaning in English, which makes sense. The whole philosophy is

centered around giving them understandable input and that eventually output will go flowing out. Vocabulary is essential, focus on key words and learning them well, then you can explode with grammar later on. When students don't know both the word and the form it gets really hard, but if they know the word, parsing the form becomes a lot easier. He goes into a description of TPR and TPRS. He talks about building up gestures for students to do and associate with words. He emphasizes that you cannot do everything through TPR as it gets kind of boring with repetition. He does a simple TPRS demo, he sets up situations, and asks students to add subjects to the story, and then he riffs off the examples they give. He mentions that he runs with the answers that seem to get the most student engagement. This approach makes sense and seems like it would be great for a class! He mentions the ways that we can teach CI, and the easy ways that we can get students to engage. He talks about his initial experiences teaching with CI, mentions it is hard and that it took him several years to transition. Mentions reflecting as essential to his growth in CI, it is okay to fail, and you just need to keep on reflecting and improving, the success of your students is not always within your control. Reading CI is good, reading incomprehensible input just becomes hunting for words and is not good for learning. He uses an example of 3 different ways to say the same thing, each time a couple of details are included that make it more complex. I am not sure about the efficacy of this. He gives an example, first in simpler Latin, and he increases the complexity over 4 iterations. He speaks Latin, and he even seems to doubt himself a couple times during the vocab, and speaks with a southern accent, it's honestly a little funny, and I think it is great. It gives me confidence to speak more in other class settings. He is very well spoken and versed in his speaking. He links to several blogs, I intend to read and interact with them in the future.

Latin 1, YouTube 1a, PQA and Review, circling with Balls

The instructor has drawn pictures for the students to look at and he uses them when speaking. When he discusses the images with the students he uses hand signals and points to words with their definition written out as he speaks them. They come to a new word and students stop the teacher because they

do not know it, they negotiate meaning with gestures and pictures, then continue to interact with the word throughout the lesson. The instructor often goes to the side and asks students what it means, or if that is where the character is. The instructor elicits responses from students and builds the story based off of what information they give him. Part of the story takes place on the death star. When the class seems to be losing focus the teacher states a fact and does his hand sign for excitement, this kind of brings the class back in. I think this kind of forced positivity eventually leads to actual positivity. The students are able to state that one of the characters is in a garden, but they struggle with remembering how to say it in Latin, the teacher takes a moment and uses gestures that were associated with the word garden before. The students still do not remember, and he has to give them the answer, he waits about 5 seconds, that wait time is a little short. He gives them the gesture and the English meaning and then asks them to repeat the gesture and Latin meaning back. He asks a couple more questions on the word horto, and then moves on. A student makes a gesture that means they do not understand, and the instructor does a good job of immediately recognizing and helping the student. He then gives the gesture and also gives the student cognates (horticulture). The instructor seemed to do a very good job I liked that they included circling, cognates, and gestures when telling their story. I also really enjoyed the engagement he was able to get from the class. Some of the students in the frame seemed to be a little bored, I think that he might need to make the story more engaging. The student in the frame who needed to have a word repeated spent almost half of the lesson with her head in her hands, maybe having students move about during the lesson could help this.

### 32 Latin Class Password and Circling with Balls

The instructor begins the class by giving them a password, he introduces the words by having them big on the projector. Underneath he has the English meaning. He reads the Latin aloud and then gives tries to get them to respond, one student yells out the English meaning of the word. After the students don't

engage, he just moves on. I am honestly not sure if this is the best practice because he didn't seem to have any engagement. He then attempts to read out the next slide, students begin talking over him about material not related to the course, he turns off the projector and immediately students get a little upset, he points to a sign that says listen. Eventually the students shush each other, and it is quiet enough for him to move on. This was good he maintained eye contact with the students almost the whole time and they seemed to be more engaged as they moved on. He then proceeds with telling students the new password, he doesn't go in depth with the words surrounding the password. He introduces words on the board and repeats them aloud and writes their English meaning. There is not circling or negotiation of meaning beyond this, it seems like the students might not be making solid connections. He then proceeds to move on. He moves on to circling, he seems to also have trained his students to feign excitement as his statements because students begin to do so. He moves throughout the classroom as he begins the circling, he also makes lots of gestures. He has a slide filled with phrases and he points to the phrases and tries to circle around them, but he includes the English meaning under every word or phrase. It is good to establish meaning, but I am not sure about the efficacy of giving students the translations so quickly. This class also leans Spanish, and the students answer some questions in Spanish instead of Latin or English, I think that is very very cool! The teacher introduces the word to play, and the definition is written under it, but the instructor does not mention its meaning in English at all, instead after introducing the new word he moves straight to associating it with baseball, basketball, and other words. The students eventually deduce the meaning of the new word. I really liked his approach with the students. The class seemed to always be talking, but usually it was them repeating things back in the TL. I think that is awesome, I think it might be hard for me to think while students are being so loud, but I think it is more important that the students are excited to communicate.

Comprehensible Antiquity

This website is absolutely amazing. There is a nice table that includes a lot of activities. I think that this is extremely cool. The website is set up so that teachers may borrow the videos and learning materials for use teaching in their classrooms. The material is generally good, a lot of work seems to go into the meat of the lessons, but there is a lot left to be desired when it comes to refining them. The videos lack an attention to detail, which is fine especially for a free repository of quality spoken Latin. The instructor does a good job of creating different readings and stories for students based off of their ability. The instructor also has uploaded a large variety of instructional materials covering a wide variety of topics. All of the materials are in almost 100% Latin, this is very in line with ACTFL's guidelines. His activities do not leave a lot of room for student personalization, but I think using them to supplement instruction, not alone as instruction, would alleviate many concerns I have with them.

TPR Storytelling presentation at SIT Graduate Institute-

The instructor goes through the process of explain TPRS. He describes it in a unique way that works very well in my head. TPR is good, but generally only uses commands. TPRS does a good job of moving students away from commands and into using different persons. The presenter does a good job of connecting with the students in the classroom. He has a good speaking technique, makes eye contact, has interesting anecdotes, and does a good job of using hand gestures. He talks about good ways to ties the students into the lesson, for example if someone is using their phone, the teacher comes and grabs the phone and includes that action into the story. He mentions teaching to the eyes, I agree, and I think that it is important for teachers to assess what is going on. Assessment during TPRS is ongoing and we as teachers should move on once students show understanding. He then talks about testing, announced tests, shows how well you can prepare, unannounced test, shows how well you have acquired the language. I think that this is really good, when discovering how effective TPRS has been I will probably



use un-announced tests. Circling repeat stuff a lot and changes it into questions that the students can answer. The TPRS at the end is delivered in Spanish. There are two presenters and they work together to present the lesson. Both of the instructors do a good job of making the story comprehensible. One spends most of the time acting it out, he is very enthusiastic about his demonstration, and it seems to really draw the students into the story. When it is clear that students do not know a word, they very quickly give them a short little definition. I hope that one day I can be as energetic as the lecturer when delivering lessons. The board that they use for their lesson does not have a single word of English on it, however there are several cognates on the board. They follow up the lesson with an assessment that includes matching. The teachers end the assessment by asking students what is going on with their life right now, this seems like a good way to check in on students, and the instructor mentions that he will use the sentences to influence stories for the future.

#### Mr. Sytek's Latin Class

The teacher begins the class by giving us a description of what is about to occur, this happens while the class is sitting still, I think the fact that I assumed he was alone in the classroom says something about the structure of his classroom. In his description of the class he tells us that it is day 20 of a Latin 1 class. The students in the classroom seem to be well behaved. The students are engaging in a contest, which seems good of engagement, but one of the first things that happens is a student reads Latin aloud, and another student is asked to critique her pronunciation. This seems not in line at all with the methods we have learned in our class. The students successfully translate the passage, but they are unable to answer basic grammar questions about the passage. The students do not seem to clearly know what is expected of them, they do not even answer the question. He opens up the question to the rest of the room, someone offers up an answer, he tells her that she is wrong in a semi demeaning way, the student casts a disgusted look at the camera. This is not looking very good for the instructor. Additionally, he is asking

students questions about the tense of verbs and cases of words on day 20, this seems incredibly fast. I don't think he should have even introduced more than the present tense. He also belittles students when they do not answer correctly, I'm not sure if it is intentional, but he comes off of as sassy towards students. I don't think that this is very good for the students. Students seem to be very excited when they are successful, and but they do not get very happy when they fail. I think this is made even worse by the fact that students are encouraged to point out the flaws of others during this activity. This can not be good for the student's affective filters, if that even applies, since there is little to no activity in the TL. The instructor introduced ablatives with apposition, I didn't even think about it until my 5<sup>th</sup> semester in college. I think it is totally fine that he showed that to the students, but he asked them to be able to identify (not translate) it without prompting. I think that is not something that is within the ability of students on day 20. The instructor seems to jump around, constantly referring back seemingly at random to earlier points in the passage. I honestly can't keep up with what he is saying all of the time. As the activity continues students slowly get more engaged, but it seems superficial, and eventually it seems as if only a few are really engaged in the lesson. The instructor also asks students to identify accusatives of place to which with a preposition to indicate motion. The students get it, but I think that is a little ridiculous. This happens many times through the activity. I think that this may be a fun activity for myself and other people who enjoy obscure grammar questions, but I don't think that this is a good way to learn Latin. I don't think that this is a very conducive to language acquisition, I think that that a version of this using CI could be good, but I'm not sure that I would do anything like this within the first 9 weeks of class. The competitive nature might be good, but it seems like students are almost randomly guessing at points. Since the activity seems to be beyond the grasp of most students, I think that this sets the students up to fail and is not good for encouraging future learning. This entire activity is almost painfully slow, and the teacher spends most of the time sitting at his desk looking at his papers. I think that the lesson reflects outdated modes of thoughts when it comes to the science of language

acquisition. I think that the activity also suffered from being beyond the comprehensibility of the students. I hope not to embody this when I teach Latin, I can't help but think back to times when I have been in a classroom like this. It was very easy to disengage. I feel like the teacher has his heart in the right place, but he seems a little misguided. I hope whenever I teach to do lessons that take advantage of a CI approach.

#### A Taste of Express Fluency

The instructor has placed many different groups of words around the room, from what I understand this is an intensive immersion course. The instructor has vast amounts of energy. He begins by splitting the class up into two groups. Romans and Carthaginians, He does a good job of circling; he also gives the students orders and they follow them. The entire class seems to be laughing and having a very good time. The conversation steers towards finding out who in the class is a spy, the teacher asks students to answer questions about how they want to interact with the other side of the class. He goes down the line of students and asks them all similar questions. While doing this the instructor does a good job of showing circling with the students by showing them motions and telling the story with very strong methods. The students are all arranged in a circle where the instructor is the focus. This is conducive to learning, as students can see each other and the instructor. There are many different aged people in the class, when the instructor interacts with the smaller children, he takes special time to make sure that they understand what is happening. He also slows down the rate of instruction. Whenever a student answers a question the wrong way for the role play, he is able to take it as an opportunity to commit to spending more time with the individual. The students seem not to want to be the spy, and this excites them into engaging. The instructor imitates the lessons we have been learning about good instruction during class. Whenever new vocabulary is introduced the instructor does a good job of showing student the meaning, through images and circling. The class begins to develop an identity around being a "bonus Romanus" and it even pervades in jokes that the whole class seems to be able to get. Students from

around the room are excited to engage. He never seems to have a long wait time for responses, that must mean that his input is pretty comprehensible.

#### TPRS Storytelling by Caoline Miklosovic

The class seems to be happy, and they are engaging with each other and the teacher. The teacher begins the lesson by assigning groups of students with a few vocabulary words. She does not write them out but says the words aloud and describes them with a cognate and a definition. She does this all in English, and the students are still communicating with one another. The students work together to think out ways that they may act out the words in the story. The students seem to be communicating, they are still in English, but they are attributing meaning through motion to vocabulary words. The students share the motions/ actions they attribute to the words. There isn't much repetition, so I think the students who came up with the motions will be the best. A student mentions the "cursus honorum" which is very very cool. At this point the teacher shows that there are images on the board to help with the vocab as well. I'm not sure if the students will be able to get all of the vocabulary words. The teacher asks the students to do these actions with their heads down so that they do not get clues from one another. The students have a lot of fun with this activity. As the teacher gets to the bottom of the list, it seems like students begin to struggle with doing the correct actions. The students are on board for the first couple of lines, but they slowly begin to taper off. A few students are very energetically doing the motions, it doesn't seem like there is time to assess actual student understanding though. The lesson continues more or less the same for a large duration of the class. The teacher asks the class to retell the story, one student enthusiastically raises her hand and repeats the whole story. The story is like 15 sentences in a row. The instructor does a very good job of teaching in my opinion. The class is not completely given in Latin, but it seems to me that the instructor is making a good faith effort to incorporate comprehensible input into her class. I think that she has lots of room to improve, specifically she would be markedly better if she spoke Latin with the students. I know it is hard to transition,

especially with the manner that most of us have learned Latin.

### Micro Teaching Lesson Reflection

I honestly had a lot of fun preparing this lesson. I prepared to teach a lesson using the game elimination. The game is very complicated, it is easy to pick up by playing, but since we would only really have one chance to play the game, I made the decision to explain the rules well. I am barely able to explain the rules in English, so I decided to explain the rules in English. I wanted to make the activity more fun and tie it in closely with a period in Roman history. I attempted to do this by making the game take place during the Catilinarian conspiracy. I think this might have been fun and interesting to me, but I think that parts may have been lost on a lot of students. Additionally, I think that I could have been more entertaining when presenting background on the events. I feel like I continue to fall into the trap of wanting to go too in depth when trying to lesson plan. Most of my experiences in Latin of late surround obscure poetry and literature. I think that it would be better for me if I spent more time trying to familiarize myself with everyday items and tasks. I think that would make lesson planning easier, it would help me be better about communicating in the TL more, and it would help me make my lessons more relevant to my potential students. To summarize I think that my lesson suffered from being beyond I+1, was not necessarily relatable for students, and a lack of comprehensible input on my part. To remedy this for future lessons I need to discipline myself to narrow the scope of what I hope to teach, keep concepts relatable, and produce more spoken input for students. When I compare myself to educators I watched during my observations, I feel like I do not approach the levels of confidence that the good teachers present. I think I need to put more time into speaking Latin so that I can be as confident as the teachers I would like to emulate.