

Pinpointing Motivation: An Investigation into the Motivational Factors in a German
Language Education Classroom

By:

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

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I declare that “Pinpointing Motivation: An Investigation into the Motivational Factors in a German Language Education Classroom” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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2003: SOPA (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment) Training Certificate. Awarded by Center for Applied Linguistics.

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2008: Goethe Institut Network Teacher Trainer

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- 2002: Central Florida Down's Syndrome Association Award
- 2006: Vice-President of Florida Association of Teachers of German
- 2007: President of Florida Association of Teachers of German
- 2006-2010: Registrar of Florida Association of Students of German
- 2007: Florida Foreign Language Association Teacher Hall of Fame
- 2008: German Teacher of the Year/State of Florida
- 2009: Most Valuable Foreign Language Teacher/State of Florida
- 2010: Treasurer of Florida Association of Teachers of German

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wonderful husband, Michael Hoefler, whose love, support, and sacrifice have made it possible for me to become all that I am. Ich liebe Dich, Maus.

I also dedicate this work to my beloved daughters, Annika and Karen, whose excellent behavior made it possible for me to focus on completing my research.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my late father, Charles Surinck, who always kept me motivated to continue working on this thesis.

I finished it, Dad! 😊

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SUMMARY

Contemporary education literature indicates that motivation can be a deciding factor in a student's second language acquisition experience. The desire to learn more about the motivation of my own students in a second language learning setting sparked the onset of action research that led me to a better understanding of my subject area, myself as a professional, and most importantly, my students.

My initial round of inquiry was a basic one from which the other branches of research evolved: finding out what students felt was motivational about my German class. Research, in each round, took place both through examining existing literature as well as through classroom based research focused on my students.

The first round of action research led to the next research area pertinent to understanding and harnessing the power of motivation in my classroom: Using theory to re-shape practical classroom approaches in order to capitalize on motivational factors identified by students. As this round of action research took form, the need for further research became apparent: In order to truly understand what was happening in my German classroom concerning intrinsic student motivation, it was necessary to look more closely at why students were motivated by the factors they had indicated.

As a classroom teacher, my initial goal was to optimize factors that I, as the classroom teacher, can control in order to make German language learning as motivational for students as possible. As Dörnyei says, (Dörnyei 2001 a, p. 2): "...99 percent of language learners who really want to learn a foreign language (i.e. who are really motivated) will be able to master a reasonable working knowledge of it as a minimum, regardless of their language aptitude." Action research was the way for me to better understand a small slice of students' motivational intricacies concerning German language learning - those which are based in my classroom itself and are under my control to influence.

KEY TERMS

Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation

Action Research

German

Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Learning

Foreign Language

German Language

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Chapter 1: Background to Study

1.1 Introduction

As a German teacher, I want to create learning scenarios for my students that are not only academically sound, but also motivational. Motivation, according to Gardner (1985), is one of the most important factors in learning a new language. Likewise, Oxford, Park-Oh, Ito, and Sumrall (1993) report that motivation is the best predictor of overall language learning achievement. Dörnyei (1998a) goes as far to assert that motivation is so powerful a factor in second language learning that it can make up for deficiencies in both language learning aptitude as well as environment.

In considering motivation, Brophy differentiates between “intrinsic motivation” and “motivation to learn”, and defines intrinsic motivation as “affective experience – the enjoyment of the processes involved in engaging in an activity.”(1998, p.12). He also describes intrinsic motivation as the ideal goal in the classroom setting, but not one that can be attained all day, every day due to the fact that students will have different motivational orientations causing the class to not be intrinsically motivating for all students all the time.

Motivation to learn, however, has little to do with whether a student finds a learning activity particularly enjoyable, and can occur even if a student doesn’t find an activity especially intrinsically motivating. “Motivation to learn refers primarily to the quality of students’ cognitive engagement in a learning activity.” (Brophy 1998, p.12).

Intrinsic motivation can impact motivation to learn, though: “Even students who do not have much motivation to learn....may display such motivation in specific situations because the teacher has sparked their interest....” (Brophy 1998, p.12)

My classroom-based research initially allowed me to get more insight on students’ intrinsic motivation, and then also, in a later cycle of action research, on their motivation to learn. This research, combined with the knowledge learned through text based research, has made me more able to positively influence students’ motivation to learn in my German class.

Two years into a service-learning based German curriculum, I found myself asking what it was that motivated students to take and remain in my German classes. I had always been certain that it was the service-learning aspect, however, I also sensed that it had become necessary to assess and reflect upon the effectiveness of practices in place with the goal to improve upon them. It was decided that action research would be the best way to design a lens to focus on students' motivation – magnifying the facets which were positive and effective, but also highlighting those in need of modification.

Action research is “research designed to yield practical results that are immediately applicable to a specific situation or problem” (Stringer 2004, p. 5) and, according to McNiff (2013, p.23), can be initiated for a variety of reasons: “Action Research is a name given to a particular way of looking at your practice to check whether it is as you feel it should be. You may be checking it as part of your critical reflection on your practice..... If you feel your practice is satisfactory, you will be able to explain how and why you believe this to be the case....If you feel your practice needs attention in some way, you will be able to take action to improve it...”

The results of my action research proved my initial idea - that my students were motivated by the service-learning aspect of my curriculum - to be absolutely wrong. However, instead of viewing this huge gap between my ideas and the real-life situation as a failure, I instead viewed it for what it really was: an opportunity for growth, learning, and transformation.

My thesis takes you step-by-step on a transformative journey. My teaching has been optimized through the action research you will see documented in this thesis. The new optimized curriculum is based on two main factors which proved to be key to student motivation in my classes: class participation in the state German competition as well as a teaching method revolving around the ideas of Stephen Krashen.

This action research has taken place in two formats: One is through primary research through which I discovered motivational factors affecting my students in my German class. Knowledge of motivational factors made me able to fine tune instruction according to these motivational factors. The other format is through secondary

research that has enabled me to improve my instruction through understanding theory associated with those identified motivating factors. The very nature of the cyclical action research process allows for my research to be repeated in the future in order for me to stay current with the motivational trends of my students.

1.2 Research Questions

I want to capitalize on student motivation to improve my German class. Motivation, in an educational sense, is defined by Brophy (1998, p.3) as “students’ subjective experiences, especially their willingness to engage in lessons and learning activities and their reasons for doing so.” In order to formulate classroom practice and instruction that capitalizes on factors which students find motivational, it was first necessary find out what those factors are. Therefore, the first research question is:

What motivates students in my German classes?

Having identified the vehicles/teaching practices which are motivational to students, it was necessary to formulate improved German instruction for my students – instruction based on sound theory. This led to a second research question:

How can I, based on sound theory, re-shape curriculum and teaching approaches to capitalize on those identified motivating factors?

I delved deeply into several authors, in particular, Krashen and Dörnyei. Besides the theory, I was also able to learn very much about the practical application of those theories. Classroom application of theory became a reality through a newly organized curriculum.

However, in learning about these theories, I found myself asking a third research question:

Why are students motivated by these factors?

The answer to this question was a combination of deeper classroom based research and more text based research to help me better understand what students were communicating to me.

In answering these questions and conveying my research journey to readers, I explain myself in a style that I feel comes naturally to me as a teacher – both inductively and deductively. In order to best convey my thinking processes, clarify the complexities, and give background that will best represent my own context, it is very necessary to have an approach that offers optimum coverage. The combined inductive/deductive approach makes my ideas clear to all readers.

1.3 Aims and Significance of Research

Significance to Students

In the process of answering my research questions, my primary aim is to benefit the students in my German class by optimizing the learning experience. The optimized experience has taken the primary factors that motivate students (taking part in the state German competition and Krashen-based teaching methods) into consideration and integrated them. All of this provides the fertile ground for the growth of second language competencies and motivated students. Reason (2006) reminds readers that, "...the purpose in inquiry is not primarily to describe or interpret our world, to contribute to the fund on knowledge in a field, to deconstruct taken for granted realities.....but rather to forge a more direct link between intellectual knowledge and moment to moment personal and social action so that inquiry contributes directly to the flourishing of human persons..." (p. 188). The action research format of my research is indeed one that, (while making contributions to the profession as a whole, deconstructing the data provided to me by students, and describing and interpreting a small slice of the world students experience in my class) has the end goals of contributing to my own growth as a professional, and more importantly to classroom based improvements which will benefit my students.

Besides being the beneficiaries of an optimized curriculum, my students will also benefit in other ways: First of all from seeing a professional in action. It is crucial for

me as an educator to convey the importance of lifelong learning to my students. What better way to do this than to involve them in every step of the way.

Personal Significance

The direct and personal significance of my research for education is twofold: It will further my professional growth and enable me to improve my classroom practices to benefit the students I teach. Through the process of researching motivation in the classroom and second language acquisition, I have personally gained through deepening my knowledge of theory as well as learning more about best practices. The implementation of formal action research made me able to use the skill of applying the action research approach to inquiry to both large and small enterprises in my professional life. This personal enrichment directly affects my students in the form of improved classroom instruction.

Significance on a Larger Scale – a model for other teachers

Textbook-based instruction is classroom instruction that follows a textbook. This thesis represents a model of what can be done in place of pure textbook-based instruction – taking student motivation into consideration when planning curriculum. This thesis provides a replicable example of a solid, student centered, theory based, non-textbook based German program.

My motivationally optimized instruction could present a model on which similar programs could be based at other schools. Not being bound to a textbook means that the teacher has the freedom to deliver information via vehicles which are motivating to students. This thesis will endeavor to show teachers how to find out which factors are motivating as well as act as a model of how to act upon implementing those factors.

In telephone conversations with Florida Department of Education “Student Achievement through Language Acquisition” program specialists Ginger Alberto and Mark Drennan on March 12, 2009 and March 13, 2009, it was learned that state approved textbooks make up the overwhelming majority, if not all, of the state public schools’ German programs.

However, only because non-textbook based learning is not currently used as the primary instructional vehicle in public school German programs across the state does not mean that it cannot happen. Florida Department of Education Statue 1006.28 says that providing a sufficient number of textbooks as instructional materials is the duty of the school board, "...except for instruction for which the school advisory council approves the use of a program that does not include a textbook as the major tool of instruction." (Florida Department of Education, p. 2). Private schools have considerably more freedom concerning choices in instructional materials and delivery methods as "Private schools are not subject to school definitions and requirements specified in education statutes and they are not under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education." (Florida Department of Education, 2013a).

This means that the adoption of a non-textbook based curriculum for second language instruction is an option for both public and private schools in Florida, even though getting started with the process may be easier for a private school teacher who would have less bureaucracy (dealing directly with school administration as opposed to having to get a non-textbook based program approved by the school advisory council). Regardless of the differing public and private school parameters for getting started with a non-textbook based curriculum, teachers at both public and private schools are free to implement an innovative non-textbook based curriculum as well as take aspects of student motivation into consideration when planning curriculum and methods.

I have been working with state foreign language policy makers for some time on several levels: I am a German teacher candidate interviewer for the State of Florida, and have been involved in revising German teacher testing materials at the state level. I am a past president of the Florida Association of Teacher of German (FATG) and am active at the national level through the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) as a "Kinder Lernen Deutsch" specialist for teaching German to elementary and middle school students. I am also an active presenter at foreign language conferences at the state and national level. Ideally, the forum for sharing information with colleagues concerning the possibilities of action research and the importance of taking student motivation into consideration at the state and national level will be at the respective language conferences – FFLA (Florida Foreign

Language Association) and FATG (Florida Association of Teachers of German), as well as at ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

By bringing concrete information on theory and transferable examples of how it can be done, perhaps these foreign language policy makers mentioned above, and even more importantly, fellow German teachers, can be convinced that a student-centered German program based on motivating factors of any given set of students is very doable. I also hope to be a further change agent by offering teachers “how-to” training seminars on tapping into student motivational factors through my role as a trainer (Netzwerk Lehrerin) in the Goethe Institut teacher trainer network. The Goethe Institut is Germany’s cultural institution and has offices across the globe working to encourage cultural exchange and understanding of German people, politics, and culture. (Goethe Institut 2011) My role as a teacher trainer gives me access to a wide audience of German teachers. I have also presented webinars for the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) on various topics. A series of webinars on how to tap into the student motivation goldmine would surely be appropriate for teachers on a national level.

My contribution to the foreign language teaching knowledge base is in providing an example of theory in action that could be emulated by other foreign language educators and is based on the process of action research inquiry (through both text-based resources as well as classroom-based investigation). I am prepared to use my connections within the German language teaching community to extend my reach by inviting fellow teachers to join what Reason calls a “vital network” (Reason 2004, p.6) of action research practitioners as well as showing fellow teachers how to get started.

Tapping into students’ motivation is not only important on a classroom level. It may have a “trickle up” effect that could have an impact on the state of German education in Florida as a whole. According to statistics collected by the 2013 Florida Association of Teachers of German (FATG) president, Dr. Nancy Decker, representing enrollment figures in all Florida counties from the 1995/1996 school year to the 2010/2011 school year, enrollment in German over that time period has decreased by approximately 1,000 students. (From 6,246 in the 1995/1996 school year

to 5,244 in the 2010/2011 school year) Decreased enrollment at the elementary, middle school, and high school level means decreased enrollment at the university level. This translates into fewer German teachers exiting universities (Ecke (2011) reports that fewer than 21% of students at universities were taking advanced coursework at level three or above – a student aiming to become a German teacher would be taking those higher level classes) for an increasing number of job openings for German teachers in Florida as older German teachers retire. (Ecke (2011) reports that in a survey conducted of members of the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG), about half of the respondents were 55 years old or older). When a German job opening cannot be filled, the result could be that the German program is closed. All German teachers in the state of Florida must be conscious of the “trickle up” effect their individual programs can have on the profession overall. Increasing student motivation in individual classes across the state could very well be part of the solution to keeping German programs across the spectrum at healthy numbers.

A further contribution is to the applied field of second language education. My findings show an unexpected pattern concerning quantity vs. quality of student utterances in the target language. Applying theory learned in the literature review made me able to make sense of these unexpected results. Had only classroom based research been done without having incorporated theory, a completely different (and incorrect!) conclusion concerning the application of the classroom based research results to my own classroom would have been come to. The research results show that sometimes less is indeed more in the second language classroom, and serve as an example of the importance of applying theory to better understanding practice in the second language classroom.

1.4 Context

The context of my research is my own classroom and is completely natural. Founded in 1995 and located within the city limits of Orlando, Florida, New School Preparatory is a private school serving 120 students in kindergarten through the eighth grade.

1.4.1. Setting the Scene for Readers –the Class

The specific class on which the research is based is my elective German class. The 2010-2011 school year is the sixth year I have taught German as an elective. I have

always had between 15-20 students each year. Six of those students have been taking German since the onset six years ago. The students in this class during the 2010-2011 school year range from grades 3-8 and are of varying abilities.

Instruction has gone through several changes since the onset. Initially, instruction was based on children's literature with a small amount of grammar instruction. When a service-learning based format coupled with a community engagement project was introduced, the class began to take on a more project-oriented format. This developed into a partnership with a school in Namibia. However, when interest began to wane on both sides of the Atlantic, I began my inquiry based action research thesis to provide myself with a reorientation.

The initial findings of my research caused classroom instruction to take on a different format: one based on the emerging results of my research. Students identified two main motivational factors: One dealt with a delivery method (TPRS methods related to Krashen's Natural Approach), and the other dealt with curriculum content (participation in the state German competition).

I had already learned from initial literature-based research that "...when motivation coalesces with curricular components, learning is considerably more residual and consequential." (Burke 1995, p. 67). This knowledge, in turn, motivated me, as a teacher, to continue my research in order to provide the best possible instruction for my students.

Burke (1995, p. 74) says that "...content must have significance to the learner...and ...the learner must realize a level of success in the illustration, demonstration, or presentation of what has been learned." The results of my classroom-based research are related to these concepts: First of all, students identified a specific content that they found motivating – the state German competition. However, further research indicated that this content was motivational *not* in a classroom setting (as was assumed at the beginning), but rather in an independent learning setting as well as at the annual competition itself. Secondly, students identified a motivating vehicle that is used for both instructional delivery *and* for demonstration of comprehension (by students) in the classroom setting – the TPRS method.

1.4.2 Setting the Scene for Readers: FASG

The state German competition is also referred to as FASG - Florida Association of Students of German. As FASG constitutes part of the context of my research, it is appropriate to formally introduce readers to it.

FASG stands for Florida Association of Students of German and is the student-run association which sets up and runs the state German competition under the guidance of local teachers. In the past, only high school students (grades 9-12) and middle school students (grades 6-8) have taken part in this competition due to the lack of elementary German programs available to attend. However, when I started my Kindergarten-8th grade German program, the constitution of the organization was changed to allow me to bring students in grades 4-8 to compete. My class has been, since the onset of attendance in 2007, the only elementary and middle school group to attend FASG.

Students at all grade levels compete in combinations of various competitions including poetry recital, art projects, talent show, written test, quiz bowl, and impromptu speaking. My students take part in the written test, art project, poetry recital, and talent show. They are tested right alongside the high school students, and are judged using the same criteria.

As stated earlier, the state German competition has always been a part of my class, but it is not something that I spend a lot of class time on. When we do deal with FASG in class, it is to discuss the schedule at the competition itself as it nears in April, to quickly run through the lyrics of the song they will perform for the talent show, or to hear students recite poems. I require students to work on competition preparation primarily at home or together during break times. I give students what they need to succeed (German language skills), and leave it to them how they apply those skills. It is required that students “check in” several times during the school year in class so progress can be monitored. I am also available for students whenever they ask for extra assistance. Some students ask for help in planning a realistic work schedule for their art project, others ask me to listen to their poem recital during break times, and often I am asked to watch the progress on the dance as students practice during afternoon recess. Other students prepare almost all on their own, asking for

very little help at all. All in all, preparation for the state German competition is a collaborative, mostly extracurricular, student-led effort. I only give parameters, deadlines, and a requirement that all students must check-in during class time to show progress on a regular basis. Preparations for the state German competition are not a daily part of class for the great majority of the school year.

When younger students attended competition; they seemed very intimidated by the “big kids”, even though, in my presence at least, the high school students were kind to my elementary and middle school students. My small students got quite a few raised eyebrows from the high school students that first year they took part in competition. However, once they started competing, they proved their worth – coming in second overall in the state. The second year my students competed, it seemed that they had gained more respect from the “big kids”, even being greeted by high fives and shout-outs of “Hey New School kids!” from the high school students when we entered the convention center. The third year, my students felt comfortable enough to choreograph a group dance to perform during the evening disco party. They were extremely proud as the high school students cleared the floor and circled them, clapping to the beat as my students danced. My students felt very much accepted by the high school students after this experience.

My students also seem to love getting into this world of the high school student. They go to FASG every year and seem to feel “grown up”, when they hear an occasional swear word being uttered, hearing the music at the dance that they would normally not get to listen to, and hearing the conversations among high school students about topics that normally do not come up as much in the elementary and middle school scene. My students giggle and look at each other in disbelief during such instances, but seem to revel in it.

That being said, I feel perfectly safe in bringing young students to this event – the high school students are courteous to my students, and I have seen them watch the swears and change the topic of conversation when the “little ears” are around. However, parents of my students are also made aware that it is indeed inevitable that their children will hear swearing, will hear age inappropriate music, and will hear topics of conversation that are not meant for them. This is, after all, primarily a high

school function. We are there as a minority and cannot expect the whole flavor of the event to change to suit us. Besides, I feel that experiences like these are part of growing up, and the FASG experience in particular is a sheltered way for students to get a glimpse of what is to come in later years.

Research revealed that winning out over this very group that my young students have worked so hard to gain acceptance from is a key factor to what makes FASG such a motivating experience.

1.5 Qualitative Action Research Design

My project has been, since the onset, an inherently qualitative one: I didn't know where the data was going to lead me. McMillan and Schumacher's (2006) definition of qualitative research was used to help me in deciding that qualitative methods would be best for studying my own classroom. They explain that qualitative designs are just as systematic as quantitative designs, but rely on naturally occurring phenomena, with the majority of the data coming in the form of words produced by students. Morse and Richards further this definition by saying that qualitative research is based around the researcher gaining understanding from the data itself in addition to prior knowledge. (Morse and Richards 2002, p. 2)

A qualitative approach also seems to lend itself due to the fact that I acted on and interacted with my research setting and subjects. I did not extract myself from the site and process, but rather made myself part of them as I collected data and analyzed student attitudes and motivation in my own classroom. The data collected both before and after the onset of the optimized curriculum is ethnographic in nature as I am concerned with observational and descriptive questions that tell what is going on in my German classroom. (Morse and Richards 2002, p. 30)

Qualitative research, according to Gay and Airasian (2000, p. 627) is "The collection of extensive narrative data on many variables over an extended period of time, in a naturalistic setting, in order to gain insights not possible using other types of research." Due to the emergent design of my study, it was important to have a methodology which would allow me the freedom to employ data collection methods which would best suit the purposes of each research cycle. Denzin and Lincoln (2000)

explain that not one specific research method is better than another in qualitative research, “Nor does qualitative research have a distinct set of methods or practices that are entirely its own. Qualitative researchers use semiotics, narrative, content, discourse, archival, and phonemic analysis—even statistics, tables, graphs, and numbers.” (p. 6)

My research design can be narrowed down even further and classified as an action research design. Reason (2006, p. 188), in describing quality action research, explains that, “If we start from the idea that creating knowledge is a practical affair, we will start not, as in traditional academic research, from an interesting theoretical question, but from what concerns us in practice...” McMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe action research as systematic approach that education professionals use to provide information on their own practices as well as to make changes in those educational practices.

Stringer (2004, p. 4) alludes to the possibility of differentiating a step further by saying that “Action research....might be distinguished from practitioner research insofar as classroom practitioners may make use of a variety of approaches to research to assist them in their teaching.” This is certainly the case in my study as I have employed various research approaches in order to gain a clearer picture of students’ motivation including reviewing video to obtain information relating to teaching practices, several small scale surveys, classroom observations, and reflective analysis. McNiff (2013) also alludes to a differentiation of the terms “action research” and “practitioner research”: “Because action research is done by you, the practitioner, it is often referred to as practitioner research....It is a form of on-the-job research ...” (2013, p. 23)

McNiff (2013, p. 6) cautions against compartmentalizing action research to an overly extensive degree: “You can find movements called variously ‘Participative Action Research’, ‘Organisational Action Research’, ‘Living Theory Action Research’, ‘Collaborative Action Research’, ‘Contextual Action Research’ and so on and so forth; they all come with capital letters, and become common nouns, things in themselves, and sometimes lose touch with the people on the streets and workplaces,

which is what action research should be all about.” I will, throughout my work, refer to my research as “action research”.

An action research design allows me to make my own classroom my case study. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe a case study as focusing on one phenomenon that the researcher wants to understand in depth. In my case, the phenomenon is the students’ prime motivational factors in my German instruction: the Florida Association of Students of German (FASG) state German competition as well as a secondary motivational factor of TPR and TPRS methods.

I not only researched student motivation and second language acquisitions theories in depth, I also took part in method-specific teacher training. This was, for me, the best way to make sure the lessons learned through the second language acquisition literature of Krashen, Terrell, Asher, Seely, Contee, and Ray had been internalized.

However, conducting literature-based research and attending training only represents part of my research process: My small group of students was also investigated in depth— combining the results of what was learned from both the literature study and action research process into optimized, more motivating German instruction.

This dual method to answering my research questions is based on both classroom-based data collection as well as text based research. These two information sources work in action research cycles: First, I conducted, in several phases, a preliminary investigation into the basic motivational forces at work in my classroom. Then I turned to text based research to better understand the topics that emerged from the class based research. I then returned to the classroom to gain an even deeper perspective of what motivates students and why. My final delve into existing research helped me to understand these deeper meanings, and I based my new curriculum on all of my findings. In conclusion, it was necessary to find out if students were indeed feeling more motivated through this new curriculum – calling for a second round of classroom based research. I used the same research tools initially used to find out what motivating factors were in order to confirm that that the new methods and vehicles of instruction were indeed motivating.

1.6 Research Role

I am the researcher and the practitioner. As it is my own practices and setting being researched, I am, according to the continuum of positionality referred to in Herr and Anderson (2005, p.31), an “insider”. I must be able to collect information as an insider, yet be able to distance myself enough when analyzing it to be able to find new and perhaps hidden meaning. This special insider status brings special issues with it. I need to consider what my special insider status means for methodological and ethical issues of carrying out my research.

Ethically, my first concern is that students do not feel coerced into participating in my research. Even though I have the best prerequisites to get willing and excited participants – in our small school, I have taught most of my students for three years or more, and I have a very solid teacher/student relationship with most of them – the concern of students feeling coerced into participation due to the fact that I am the authority in the classroom remains. I do not want students to worry that their grades or our friendly student/teacher relationship would be damaged if they do not want to take part in my research.

In order to avoid this, I have written up specific research contracts stating that there will in no way be negative ramifications if they should choose, at any time, to not take part in the study. I feel that the long term relationship I have with my students strengthens the validity of the contents of the contract. I am not a stranger making promises. Students know and trust me. When I tell students they will not be “in trouble” for opting out, I am confident that they know I really mean it. Parents were also given a consent form because the study deals with minors.

Methodologically, I must always make sure that my research methods do not get in the way of my teaching. Data collection must be made a natural part of my teaching process. Students need to be aware that although I am the researcher in the project, I am researching *with* them, not *on* them. I am a change agent - changes made to the class came directly from students’ responses – I just followed their lead.

As an insider, I cannot distance myself to the setting being studied – I am very much a part of it. Therefore the style of this thesis may sometimes come across as almost

narrative in nature, as it unfolds and describes all of the ups and down I encounter, as they occurred.

1.7 Interactive, Triangulated Research Methods

In order to maintain trustworthiness of the data, data collection methods have been set up which allow for triangulation. Multiple forms of data collection have been employed including individual interviews, group interviews, written questionnaires requiring short answers, questionnaires requiring one word answers, and classroom observations. It is necessary to have built a reliable account of the motivational factors which influence students most. The only way to do this is to gather information on those factors in various ways.

One of the core challenges of action research, according to McNiff, is that one person may research others and speak on their behalf. (McNiff 2013). My action research, due to the triangulated data collection methods, falls right into line with McNiff's thinking. The impetus of the action research cycles was an invitation for students to make themselves be heard. The multiple forms of data collection allow for students' voices to be heard loudly and clearly.

1.8 Basic Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

Stringer (2004, p.100) tells action researchers to watch for what he calls "epiphanies" in each individual research participant's experiences. He describes them as being moments in students' lives that emerge as students gain awareness of what is going on around them. According to Stringer, my job is to first review the information gained in my data collection techniques and identify these epiphanies. These epiphanies are, for example, the moments when students are able to pinpoint what it is about the state German competition that motivates them. When these epiphanies were identified in the transcripts of individual students' interviews, questionnaires, and observations, I then identified trends that affect the group as a whole.

I have carried out a series of questionnaires and a series of interviews for both identifying the motivational factors of my German classroom as well as to double check that the identified factors incorporated into my instruction are indeed motivating to students. This data has been transcribed, analyzed, coded, and themed

as appropriate. Categories were created and linked together as data collection and research into theory went on. These data analysis procedures done on the raw data collected prior to the optimization of my curriculum are what pointed my way in researching text-based resources. The analysis of text based resources, in turn, helped me to better understand student responses.

1.9 Research Plan

The remainder of the thesis is composed of a literature survey, an explanation of my research methodology, and finally the research process itself where findings will be reported upon.

Chapter two is the literature survey which includes information from my initial round of literature-based research: focusing primarily on second language acquisition and motivation in the second language acquisition process.

Chapter three is a more detailed explanation of my research methodology, and will include information on the qualitative action research design of this thesis, the ways in which data was collected, a description of data interpretation procedures, accompanied by reasoning as to why these methods were selected.

Chapter four walks readers through the findings of the research. End results are not merely presented as being the single quintessential element of the research - due to the action research format of the thesis, results appear gradually and further research was carried out based on those gradually appearing results. In other words – the process plays an integral role. A second round of literature-based research became necessary after a cycle of classroom-based research produced results which raised a further research question concerning *why* the state German competition was such a motivating factor for students. The inclusion of the second round of literature-based research in chapter four represents the cyclical nature of the action research process. Literature-based and classroom-based research are intertwined and evolutionary in nature, much like life and practice.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction

My literature survey acts simultaneously as exploratory project and as a roadmap for readers concerning the thought processes behind my choices. This literature review makes the complex issues surrounding my thesis clearer. Key word here is “clear” - not “less complex”. If anything, the information I read opened my eyes to the extreme complexity of concepts behind my thesis.

As I read, more and more questions emerged – one more interesting than the next. This allowed me to more fully perceive the scope of my project, and opened my eyes to interesting possibilities as to avenues this project could travel. At the same time, it allowed me to narrow my focus as more literature was found that seemed a natural fit for the emerging concepts – second language acquisition theory, classroom motivation, and best-practice delivery methods.

In order to make an informed decision concerning appropriate literature, I initially read quite widely from fields including pedagogy, linguistics, psychology, and sociology. I initially focused on those authors whose work seemed to best fit my specific set of circumstances. I then revisited those authors, and considered related information from other authors as well, in order to discover much more specific and in-depth information concerning their methods, theories, and ways in which they all mesh together as the theoretical backbone of my project. I was able to make connections between the work of experts in the field and the emerging focal points of my study.

The literature-based research carried out during my first round of classroom-based research is represented here in chapter two. This classroom-based research was done in order to identify which factors motivated my students. In order to better understand the themes that would eventually come out of this classroom-based research, it was necessary to better understand second language acquisition as well as learn more about methods that emerged as a motivating factor from the classroom-based research

- those revolving around the theories of Stephen Krashen. As it became clear that students found a more kinesthetic, story-based delivery method motivational, my literature-based research into second language learning took a turn into learning more about a method called TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling).

Besides second language acquisition, the first round of literature-based research also focuses on motivation in second language acquisition. In studying motivating factors, it was necessary to be able to better understand the concepts behind student motivation as well as learn techniques of how the classroom teacher could contribute to student motivation.

A second section of literature-based research is dealt with in chapter four (where the results of my classroom-based research are shared), and focuses on the themes that emerged from further classroom-based research. I not only wanted to know *what* the motivating factors were, but I also wanted to better understand those factors by asking students *why* they were motivated by those factors and then researching the themes that emerged from student responses. Again, the answers to these questions are included in chapter four as that round of literature-based research is part of the further findings.

I am using a combination of existing theories to formulate and validate my work in the classroom, making my contribution to the academic world real and important. My research contributes to the knowledge base of German education in the practical application of these combined theories in my own classroom. I want my project to be seen as serious action research scholarship that can be replicated in order to make a difference in individual classrooms. To be seen as a project that is valid because it is based on tried and true, *do-able* educational science.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), the paradigm guides the researcher in their choice of methods. A worldview governs my inquiries into the practices of education. My theoretical paradigm is constructivist in nature – knowledge is socially constructed by the people in the research process. My job as researcher is to attempt to understand the world of my German classroom from the point of view of the

students. Vital to my study is the constructivist idea that the important concepts of the study will emerge as they are constructed by the students. I had to remind myself of this when students identified the state German competition as a major motivating factor. It was initially mildly disappointing that students were not motivated by the possibility to use language to discover a new world or to use German as an opportunity to get a great job later on in life. These were not conscious assumptions that were made at the beginning of the study, but when it emerged that the competition was such a motivating factor, these feelings surfaced. However, part of the constructivist paradigm within which I work is that students form their ideas about reality and truth *based on their own perspectives and experiences* (Guba & Lincoln 2001). For my young students, the world of work and of discovering new worlds is so far away – of course it would not be a likely motivational influence at their age, even though it was, for many students, an end goal. Perhaps at a later time in students' academic career, success at the German competition will change from a prime motivating factor into a motivational influence geared towards one of those loftier second language learning goals.

I recognize the constructivist limitation that the reality emerging from my study may not, because of the limitations of time and space, generalize to other populations, but will rather serve as an example of how other researchers can tackle the issues of motivation in their own unique environments. "The only generalization is that there is no generalization" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p.110). From a constructivist point of view all phenomena are time and context specific. Keblawi (2009, p. 11) also cautions readers in generalizing findings in language learning motivation in particular: "...scholars should be aware that the findings they reach are limited by time and space...."

A constructivist paradigm calls for personal data collection methods – I cannot separate myself from the data collection process, and must make sure that the validity of my data is secure through multiple data sources. Also, data collection methods will not be set in stone, but will evolve as important concepts of the study emerge, and may be adjusted according to the needs recognized in primary data collection.

The constructivist paradigm's quality criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity are defined by Guba and Lincoln (1994) to include *credibility* (long-term immersion in

the field, cross checking collected data with students). This is certainly true in my case. I have known the great majority of my students since Kindergarten. As far as cross checking of data is concerned, various methods were applied to the study of the same phenomenon in my classroom. *Dependability* (Could similar findings be obtained if the study were repeated?) is another aspect of the constructivist quality criteria of trustworthiness. The dependability aspect of trustworthiness could be considered problematic in my case – if the entire study were to be repeated with the same students in the same German class, it would have a different scope due to students' shifts in perception (coming from maturity, new experiences, etc). However, the triangulation of my data shows that similar findings were indeed found throughout the study itself. Students' perceptions of motivational factors, once they were initially identified, were consistent. Data collection methods were purposely set up to act as a cross check to student responses. *Transferability* is the third aspect of trustworthiness (Are my descriptions detailed enough to allow a reader to make a judgment whether or not my context fits in with his or her context?). Readers are given a thorough enough understanding of the students, competition, the students' motivational factors, and the research tools and processes that should allow them to make solid judgments concerning the transferability of the information presented. The last aspect of trustworthiness in a constructivist paradigm is *confirmability* (can the data be tracked to its source?). I have included an extensive appendix presenting the raw data to readers. I also have the original forms used by students as well as videotaped material.

The authenticity criteria of the constructivist paradigm focus on the ethics of the relationship established by the researcher with his/her participants and include: *fairness* (students are represented in a balanced manner), *educative authenticity* (students develop a better understanding of the German classroom), *catalytic authenticity* (how the research process impacted students' ability to identify issues in the social world of the German classroom) and *tactical authenticity* (how the research empowered students to improve the situation in the German classroom) (Guba & Lincoln 1994)

2.2 Second language acquisition

Acquiring a second language can mean different things. "Acquiring" can mean learning a language in the way of "picking it up" while you are on vacation in a

foreign country, it can mean “learning” it in a structured classroom environment, or it can mean both at the same time. “Second Language” is complex as well. It can mean a foreign language you learn while taking French in elementary school. It can mean the household language you learn to speak with your Italian foreign exchange student in high school, or it can mean the Spanish business language you learn to get promoted to regional manager at your job. The main criterion for a second language is that you learn it at a later time than your first language. (Mitchell and Myles 2004, p.6)

Behaviorism was the accepted theory of language learning for the first part of the 20th century and centers on the idea that language learning is basically about conditioning, and not the inner mental processes of the learner. Noam Chomsky’s work was revolutionary in the field of linguistics as it represents a major split from behaviorist based language learning theories. Chomsky argued that language learning was not conditioning, but rather a process that started in the mind of the learner. He concluded that there must be a Universal Grammar - a theory that claims that all human languages are shaped by the same principles - as he examined the native language acquisition of children. The idea of Universal Grammar provided the internal road-map for all human children – regardless of their native language – to learn to speak. (Chomsky 2006) Modern research, focusing on neuroscientific evidence of innate language ability in children, claims there is evidence of innate mechanisms which allow children to acquire language. “Given adequate early exposure to language, children's language development proceeds rapidly and fairly error-free, despite little or no instruction. The brain regions that permit this development seem to be functionally and anatomically distinct at birth, and may correspond to what linguists call Universal Grammar.” (Stromswold 2000, p.925) According to Chomsky (2006), this set of universal principles makes up the framework of our languages inside the “Language Acquisition Device” present in all of our minds.

All of the theories considered for use as a lens for my research embraced the idea of Universal Grammar to some extent, saying that we either 1) learn second languages, at any stage in our lives, similarly to the way we learned our native language as children, or 2) second language learning somewhat taps into Universal Grammar, and we lose touch with it more and more as we get older, or 3) that a Universal Grammar

exists, but only for first language learners – when we learn a second language, we base it on our first language and not on Universal Grammar. I will not go into greater detail of Universal Grammar, as this purely linguistic theory, although it serves as the base for so much of my other reading, offers less in the department of practicality for my specific purposes. I will concentrate more on theorists who, having benefited from Chomsky’s findings, have specialized in the direction of classroom applicable second language learning theory.

My case study revolves around my German classroom, and when I refer to second language, I will refer to it in the frame of reference as the language acquired outside of the familial setting at a time later than the onset of English language acquisition. (English is the native language of all of my students).

2.2.1 Krashen

2.2.1.1 Concepts

Stephen Krashen’s theoretical formwork for understanding second language acquisition revolves around the basic concepts of: The Acquisition Learning hypothesis, the Monitor hypothesis, the Comprehensible Input hypothesis, the Reading hypothesis, and the Affective Filter hypothesis. His main idea is that language acquisition unfolds primarily from within the learner as a language processor, and that we all have these natural systems at work inside of us. Krashen believes that the Language Acquisition Device is not only active in children, but that older learners can tap into it as well in order to acquire language. Another premise is that “...the goal of the language class is not to develop perfect speakers of the language, but to develop intermediaries, students who can continue to improve on their own.” (Krashen 1997, p. 50) In other words, we cannot expect target language mastery from graduating second language students. What we can expect however, are young people who have a good enough grasp on the language to be able to communicate and acquire more on their own – accuracy and fluency improving along the way.

I appreciate Krashen’s honesty concerning the expectations in a second language class – his expectations are not too high. His expectations need to be made a more central part of the Florida world language course descriptions. The Florida Department of

Education (FLDOE) course descriptions (Florida Department of Education 2011) describe a year 3 German student as one achieving “Intermediate High” or “Advanced Low” proficiency. This terminology concerning proficiency is familiar to me as a language teacher – it is the same as the terminology used by ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages) to describe proficiency levels.

Part of the definition ACTFL uses to describe the speaking of a student at an Intermediate High level includes: “Intermediate High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests, and areas of competence.” (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012, p. 7) Remember, this represents the lower end of the spectrum when it comes to the expectations of students in a year 3 German classroom in the state of Florida (if the state does indeed mean that the ACTFL standards are the point of reference – more on this to follow.)

Part of the definition ACTFL uses to describe the speaking of a student at an Advanced Low (according to the Florida course description, a year 3 German student) level includes: “Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest. Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.” (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012, p. 6)

Fourth year German students are expected to reach a proficiency level of Advanced Low to Advanced Mid (Florida Department of Education 2011). ACTFL describes the

speaking abilities of an Advanced Mid student as: “Speakers at the Advanced Mid sublevel are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as topics relating to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance. Advanced Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future by providing a full account, with good control of aspect. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse. Advanced Mid speakers can handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar.” (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012, p. 6)

These are quite lofty expectations from a student who has had four years of high school German and who has, most likely, not spent extended time in a target language country. Now consider the expectations the Florida Department of Education has for a college graduate to become a teacher in the state of Florida: The person must have an ACTFL level of advanced low or higher. (Florida Department of Education, 2013) (National Council of State Supervisors for Languages, 2012) Does that mean that a high school graduate (who should, after four years of instruction, according to the state course description be at an Advanced Low or even Advanced Mid level) would theoretically qualify? If a high school graduate is expected to leave with an Advance Low to Advanced Mid level of proficiency, what should a college student be expected to accomplish with an additional four years of language study? Reach native speaker level?

The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) states that the standards of ACTFL were part of developing the newest version of the state standards in an update posted on the FLDOE website. (Florida Department of Education 2012) This furthers my belief that the descriptions of “Intermediate High”, “Advanced Low”, and “Advanced Mid” are to be understood as ACTFL proficiency standards. However, in the same update, the FLDOE states that “Florida’s Proficiency levels do not necessarily

correlate with ACTFL's proficiency levels" and that " For example, the Superior level for Florida is different from the Superior level for ACTFL." (Florida Department of Education 2012). Does that mean that the other proficiency levels DO correlate with ACTFL's proficiency levels? If not, what do the Florida proficiency levels mean? How is the Superior level for Florida different than the Superior level for ACTFL? These parameter issues must be addressed by the state in order for Florida teachers and students to succeed.

Answers to these questions are extremely important to know considering that Florida teacher salaries are, as of July 1, 2011 based partly on how well students perform on state standardized tests – which are based on state standards. The Florida performance based merit pay system centers on an evaluation system of which a large portion – half or more –will be based upon how well students perform on the state student assessment test, such as the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) as well as other exams. (Florida Senate, 2011).

In my opinion, the course descriptions, as written, set Florida teachers and students up for failure. I do not see a great majority of students able to perform at Advanced Low or Advanced Mid proficiency levels after four years of language instruction. Again, Advanced Low is the proficiency level set for college graduates wishing to be coming Florida certified teachers. One of two things must happen: Definitions for "Florida's Proficiency levels" will retain the current ACTFL terminology but must be carefully defined at a reasonable level for expectations after each year of language study, distinguishing them from those set by ACTFL – or - the state must adopt realistic ACTFL proficiency levels to represent what is expected of students after each year of German. The expectations as they are currently set do not correspond with a realistic notion of what can be achieved in a second language classroom. I appreciate Krashen's realization that second language instruction in the school setting does not make fluent speakers out of students, but rather prepares them for further language acquisition development.

Acquisition Learning Hypothesis...

Krashen's Acquisition Learning hypothesis deals with the difference between *knowing* a language and *knowing about* a language. For example, I may consciously memorize grammar rules for German, but not be able to speak a word of it. That would be an example of knowing *about* German, but not knowing German. Acquisition is *knowing* the language, and learning is *knowing about* the language. Krashen says that when we subconsciously acquire a second language, we are basically following the same steps we followed in acquiring our native language. The processes are, he says (Krashen 1982), very similar, if not identical. However, the learned parts of second language have a use as well, as a Monitor. The Monitor becomes weightier in the acquisition process as language learners become older.

Monitor Hypothesis...

According to Krashen's Monitor hypothesis, we use the consciously learned parts of a second language to monitor the acquired parts of that second language. In other words, when someone you know speaks very good, grammatically correct German, but the slow rate of speed at which she speaks it makes it almost useless in a conversational setting – this person is letting learned language take over her acquired language. She is over-monitoring. However, if you have a friend who values fluency over correctness and speaks at a decent rate with errors that don't impede communication, she is using her Monitor appropriately. She is not over-analyzing her language to a point that it has diminished communicative value. According to Krashen (1982), the formation of a Monitor is the only useful function that learning (as opposed to acquiring) a second language has.

I agree with Krashen, that children need to build up a store of communicative language skills and that the Monitor is useful in refining those stored skills. In later years of second language learning, students can refine those acquired skills by purposely applying grammar. Once children have built up this store of acquired second language skills and have made communicating using acquired language (as well as acquired grammar) their habit, they can learn to apply the Monitor without having it take over as the main mode of language flow. They will be so ingrained with communicating with acquired language, that they, hopefully, will not fall prey to over-monitoring.

Although not the main thrust of instruction, when students do ask grammar-oriented questions, those questions are addressed in class. For example, my students noticed that the masculine German article “der” changes to “den” in certain instances. I gave them a quick English language explanation of the accusative case, and they were satisfied. They now recognize it when they see it in writing and have the basic idea that “den”, like “der”, can signify that a noun is masculine. Krashen and Terrell also seem to feel that some grammar instruction is acceptable –as long as it does not interfere with communication. (1983, p. 57). The point is to avoid students getting so tripped up over fine points of grammar that their communication is impeded. Krashen, although he makes it clear that comprehensible input is key to acquisition, is clearly not anti-grammar: “We would like our students to utilize conscious rules to raise their grammatical accuracy when it does not interfere with communication. Stated differently, the optimal Monitor user knows *when* to use conscious rules.” (Krashen 1987, p. 89)

Comprehensible Input Hypothesis...

Krashen (1982) also addresses external processes that affect our ability to acquire a second language. He tells that we need to have Comprehensible Input from an outside source in either spoken form or written form as a building block on which we base our own speech. In other words, language acquisition is not the direct result of a person orally practicing the language. The acquisition is made possible from an outside source –a speaker willing to modify his or her messages to make them understandable, visual cues used by the classroom teacher while teaching vocabulary, and reading authentic or modified second materials in the second language.

Krashen (1982) explains Comprehensible Input as second language input just beyond the second language learner’s current competencies. Consider this example from my own class: If a student knows the word for red, and I want to introduce some comprehensible input, I would say, “Please bring me the big book on the table. The burgundy one.” The student would be expecting me to say the word he knows, “red”. However, by using “burgundy”, I have taken him one step further than his current competencies. He is acquiring language using Comprehensible Input.

Krashen (1982) explains it as “i” (a student’s current abilities) + 1. “+1” represents the next step in the second language learning developmental sequence. However, he cautions against trying to teach an i+1 based curriculum – he is against setting up curriculum with concepts that the teacher believes build upon one another in order to facilitate the occurrence of i+1: “it may be better not to even attempt to include *i + 1*!” (Krashen 1982, p. 68). Krashen (1982) tells teachers that in order to naturally achieve the i+1 effect, there simply needs to be enough input and successful communication. Again, comprehensibility alone is not enough - the input must also contain the “+1” component that brings students just that tiny bit beyond their current ability.

The concept of i+1 in Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Hypothesis seems to have been influenced by Vygotsky’s concept of the Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky developed this concept in the early 1930s, and it is defined as “the distance between a child’s ‘actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving’ and the higher level of ‘potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.’” (Wertsch 1985, pp. 67-68)

Krashen’s acquisition-learning hypothesis also seems to have been influenced by Vygotsky. Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Hypothesis says that language acquisition happens during interaction with a speaker in the target language with the learner gaining language ‘input’ that is one step beyond the existing stage of linguistic ability. The existing ability of the learner is represented as “i”, and the acquisition takes place when the learner is exposed to Comprehensible Input slightly beyond that existing ability – “+1”. For both Krashen and Vygotsky, the “+1” factor is influenced by interaction with people. And not only people, but in each case people who are more capable than the learner. For Krashen this means a speaker who is more advanced than the learner language-wise and can make the input comprehensible for that learner. For Vygotsky, determining i+1 depends on the learner working with a more experienced person to determine the higher end of the learner’s developmental level.

As a teacher, I feel very much in tune with Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Hypothesis. Every day, whether in class or while monitoring carpool, I do all I can to

make sure students understand me. Visual cues are used whenever possible to back up spoken words. Speech is modified to better suit the group of students I am with: With middle school students, I may ask, “What is the main idea?” after having read a passage aloud, and with Kindergarten students, I may alter this question slightly by asking, “What is the most important thing about what we just read?” With the middle school students, I make an assumption that at the current place in their academic careers, they will know what is meant when I ask about the concept of “main idea”. With Kindergarten students, as they are just as capable of abstract reasoning, I adjust the vocabulary, but not the level of expectation, of my question to make it comprehensible to them.

Krashen and Terrell (1983, p. 34) call this type of modification “caretaker speech”, and explain that its simple form is understandable, but at the same time naturally includes the “+1” that assists learners to increase their language skills. They also note that caretaker speech evolves naturally; becoming more complex as the learner’s competencies develop.

Beside the usage of caretaker speech, teachers are also encouraged to make use of non-linguistic ways of increasing comprehensibility. Krashen (1982, p. 66) encourages the use of pictures and manipulatives in order to make the subject matter more real to students. He also recommends using James Asher’s Total Physical Response (TPR) method, which is explained in detail in a later section. This method is another non-linguistic approach and involves using physical movements to portray vocabulary. Upon my initial discovery of the TPR method through this research, I decided to give it a try in class. It ended up being a major motivational factor for my students.

Krashen explains (1992) that $i+1$ does not require the exclusive use of the second language. In fact, he says that the information students obtain in their first language can actually enhance second language comprehensible input. He advises that all students be helped to become proficient in their first language while learning a second one. Cummins (2000, p. 39) agrees and reports “Conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in the other language comprehensible”. This means increased competency in the first language builds the base for metalinguistic

knowledge that can be applied to the second language. This leads to an increase in the learner's Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP). The CUP provides the base for further progression in both the child's first and second language. (Cummins 1979) Therefore strengthening both languages makes for a stronger CUP on which further language acquisition in those languages is based. Students need to be proficient in their first language in order to gain proficiency in a second language. This is the case in my German class. All students are native speakers of English and proficient in what Cummins refers to as the BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) used for social communication, and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) which refers to academic usage of the language in a school setting. (Cummins 1979).

Even though Krashen says that Comprehensible Input is basically all a learner needs to be able to eventually produce language on their own, he does say (1997) that producing language is helpful to language acquisition as well. First of all, he sees language production as a means to gaining more Comprehensible Input. When students speak, others respond. Producing language (both written and spoken), also helps to lower the Affective Filter by making the learner feel more a card-carrying member of the "club" that uses the language. Therefore, he is not against student producing language, but feels that it is not the main vehicle to language acquisition.

However, forcing students to use the second language before they are ready can be detrimental, according to Krashen (1982). When students are expected to speak too soon, native language interference occurs, impeding progress in the second language. Krashen explains (1982) that when a teacher expects a student to speak before he is ready, that student will not have experienced the Comprehensible Input necessary to produce language and will therefore fall back onto native language patterns. When a student uses native language patterns in the second language, the native language is said to be interfering in second language production. We want students to acquire the second language with as little interference of the first language as possible, and therefore should not pressure students to produce language until they have had enough Comprehensible Input to allow them to do so. Krashen is not "anti output" – he says that output is necessary to gain more Comprehensible Input – he just feels that it should come when the student is ready.

This silent period of language acquisition is a time when, Krashen says, students are attending to and internalizing the Comprehensible Input. He says this silent period can last for months (Krashen 1987). I have a practical concern here. This silent period could end up being the most difficult period of language acquisition for teachers on many fields. First of all, teachers like to see results. A student sitting in class for months not saying anything would make the teacher wonder if the student weren't just "spacing out" during class. The TPR and TPRS methods were lifesavers for me in this area. TPR and TPRS methods make it possible for a student in the silent period to show comprehension and attentiveness in measurable ways during class time. However, another concern arises: Even if a student is in the silent period and doing well showing comprehension because the class is taught through TPR and TPRS methods, how can the teacher demonstrate to administration and parents that the state standards are being met?

The course description for German 1 (Florida Department of Education 2011) is highly focused on students being able to produce in the target language: "German 1 introduces students to the target language and its culture. The student will develop communicative skills in all 3 modes of communication and cross-cultural understanding. Emphasis is placed on proficient communication in the language. An introduction to reading and writing is also included as well as culture, connections, comparisons, and communities."

Some of the benchmarks for the state standards for the German 1 class are quite "silent period friendly" and could be incorporated into a wholly "Natural Approach" classroom. Consider benchmark WL.K12.NM.1.1: "Demonstrate understanding of basic words, phrases, and questions about self and personal experiences through gestures, drawings, pictures, and actions." (Florida Department of Education, 2011) However, there are others which would not be met should a first year student have an extended silent period. Consider benchmark WL.K12.NM.3.3: "Ask simple questions and provide simple responses related to personal preferences." (Florida Department of Education, 2011a)

Meeting the new state standards, which were adopted in 2011, will prove challenging for any program based on any combination of Natural Approach methods. This may

be the reason so many Florida public school teachers end up relying on a textbook. In order for more teachers to break away from textbook based instruction in the public schools, an investigation must be made into ways of meeting the state standards using Natural Approach practices which will facilitate language acquisition. A “how to align instruction with the Florida state standards” handbook, written by Florida teachers for Florida teachers, would be helpful in engaging teachers to incorporate more Natural Approach based methods (including TPR and TPRS) into their instruction.

Reading Hypothesis...

Krashen (1997) explains the Reading Hypothesis as being a special form of the Comprehensive Input Hypothesis. Comprehensive Input is not limited to speech alone. Reading, or more specifically, free voluntary reading, is considered Comprehensible Input by Krashen as well, and adds greatly to second language acquisition in terms of vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and comprehension in general. The more Comprehensible input that students gain – both verbal and written – the more second language acquisition will take place.

Reading material should follow the same $i+1$ strategy as spoken Comprehensible Input. (Krashen 1997) I can imagine that students would have to, to at least *some* extent, use a dictionary to help make this written input more comprehensible. I wouldn't want students having to look up every third word in a dictionary; that would mean that the input was not comprehensible to them. However, even at the $i+1$ level, students will still need to check on the meaning of at least some of the written words.

This would then require formal instruction in dictionary use, and to some extent, grammar as well. For example, if a student is looking up a conjugated form of a verb, he will not find it in a dictionary. He would have to have a basic idea of what the infinitive could be. This would make some formal grammar instruction a prerequisite. This “language learning” (not acquisition) would be a necessary, and natural, part of making the written input more comprehensible. Krashen, (1997, p.32) is against “extensive recourse to the dictionary”, but does not seem totally against dictionary usage when reading to gain Comprehensible Input. Again, if the student has to revert

extensively to a dictionary, the input being provided to him in written form is obviously not comprehensible enough.

According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) other examples of formal second language learning activities include explaining rules of the language, practicing of those rules as applied to the second language, bilingual listing of new vocabulary words, completing non-communicative exercises where specific vocabulary and rules are practiced, and practicing oral exercises such as dialogues or role-plays set on reviewing the consciously learned material. Activities such as these do, according to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, serve a purpose. They strengthen the Monitor. Throughout the course of implementing these methods, I have experienced students asking for further grammar clarification after having used a specific grammatical aspect in a purely communicative manner. Once the grammar is explained to students after they have already used it in communication, it seems to make more sense to them. They already have the groundwork on which to base the grammar rule.

Affective Filter Hypothesis...

Krashen's Affective Filter hypothesis deals with language learning on a more individual level. All second language learners have attitudes about learning the language. The Affective Filter hypothesis says that these attitudes not only affect how much comprehensible input students seek out, but also to what extent the students can gain from that Comprehensible Input.

Krashen (1982) describes motivation, self confidence, and anxiety as affective variables in second language acquisition. Students with positive attitudes, high motivation, good self confidence, and low anxiety have a low Affective Filter and are therefore able to 1) seek out more Comprehensible Input and 2) send that Comprehensible Input onward unfiltered to be acquired through what Krashen believes is innate language acquisition ability. Students with negative attitudes, low motivation, low self confidence, and high anxiety have a high Affective Filter that impedes the flow of Comprehensible Input. In other words, you can have great Comprehensible Input opportunities, but if the students feel negatively, that input is basically worthless.

For example, if a student holds negative attitudes about learning German, they certainly will not go out of their way to seek out those important opportunities to gain Comprehensible Input. Limited Comprehensible Input means limited opportunities for $i+1$ to occur, leaving the student at “ i ”. Again, an individual student’s attitude also affects how much the Comprehensible Input that the student *is* exposed to actually gets through to them. Negative attitudes cause the Affective Filter to go up.

Even though Krashen seems to view the language learner primarily as a processor of language, the Affective Filter aspect leads me to see him as accepting a more social psychological perspective as well. This perspective takes into account the emotional state of the learner concerning attitudes, motivation, language anxiety, and willingness to communicate – all areas that I initially expressed interest in with my research questions. Krashen’s attention to attitudinal factors in the state of the Affective Filter is what initially led me to reading more about the importance of motivation in second language learning – evolving into a concentration on the ideas of Dörnyei.

Students’ Affective Filters are, according to Krashen (1982), raised when they are forced to produce orally even though they are not ready. Students first need to take in enough Comprehensible Input. And, as stated before, “enough” varies from student to student. Another filter raising experience is when student errors that do not effect communication are corrected (Krashen 1982). This only encourages students to use the language less in order to avoid the embarrassment of making mistakes. No one wants to be embarrassed in public – especially students in front of peers. Krashen argues that error correction generally is detrimental to communication, and that instead, more Comprehensible Input is the key to ironing out mistakes. This idea is prevalent in the Natural Approach, explained in a later section.

I very much wanted to provide students with an environment that would contribute to as low of an Effective Filter as possible. Avenues to follow in doing this include the consideration of my group’s motivational factors, as well as to learn more about what I, as the classroom teacher, can do to increase student motivation through my own actions in class. Through the writing of this thesis, I feel that I am well on the way to becoming what Krashen would call “an effective language teacher”: (Krashen 1982,

p. 32) "...someone who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation"

"Enterprises"

Krashen describes one of the ways to get students cognitively involved in second language learning as "enterprises". (Krashen 1992, p. 22): "Enterprises are problems that students genuinely want to solve, problems that naturally entail reading, writing, and discussion." Students need to be posed with a problem that they genuinely want to work on. Once such enterprise could certainly be one of the major motivational factors identified by students: Taking part and doing well as a team at the state German competition. In order to understand and solve this problem, students need German language reading, writing, and discussion. My challenge is to shape instruction so that it is not "teaching to the test" with the sole purpose of preparing students to compete. Doing well at the state competition is, based on the results of the initial research, very relevant to students. The unfolding results of this action research based thesis gave me direction in how to better formulate this motivational factor into an enterprise for my students.

Last words on language acquisition ability...

Krashen's model of students' innate ability to acquire language is based on Chomsky's theory that children have within them a "Language Acquisition Device" that enables the child to learn language. Krashen believes that adults also have the ability to tap into their Language Acquisition Devices and acquire second languages much in the same way they acquired their native languages as children. The difference between adult and child language acquisition being, according to Krashen, that adults apply (and can over apply) the Monitor by consciously process the grammar aspect of language. Krashen sets himself apart from many language acquisition researchers in that he claims that the ability to acquire (as opposed to learn) languages does not disappear at puberty. Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow's 2000 research back up his claim. They found that, "Although older learners are indeed less likely than young children to master an L2, a close examination of studies relating age to language acquisition reveals that age differences reflect differences in the situation of learning rather than in capacity to learn. They do not demonstrate any constraint on the

possibility that adults can become highly proficient, even nativelike, speakers of L2s.”(p. 9)

A 2003 study begins research, which if continued in the direction indicated by the researchers, that would provide interesting insight into the topic of older learners and acquisition. A 2003 study (Pallier, et al.) of adult subjects born in Korea and adopted by French families between the ages of 3 and 8 examined the subjects' ability to become fluent in their second language. The study concentrated on plasticity of the language areas of the brain. Their data suggests that, even in children as old as 7 or 8, the ability to learn a new language to the point of absolute fluency is possible. “Our results merely indicate that those early changes [in brain plasticity] are not immediately stabilized, but remain plastic and reversible for several years.” Their findings are right in line with previous findings which mark the onset of puberty as a time associated with brain lateralization marking a biologically determined reduction in language learning ability. However, the researchers also express interest in conducting research on adopted children who had been moved to their new country and separated from their home language after puberty. This type of research would add a new dimension to the second language acquisition research. It would be the ultimate “best case scenario” experiment of the ability of post-pubertal children to acquire language. Subjects in this scenario would not be students in a classroom – they would be experiencing language acquisition in the most similar way to the acquisition of their first language as possible. I feel that Krashen, in particular, would be extremely interested in this research. It looks into a topic that separates him from Chomsky and other researchers in the field because Krashen feels that the ability to truly acquire languages does not leave us at puberty: “Some second language theorists have assumed that children acquire, while adults can only learn. The acquisition-learning hypothesis claims, however, that adults also acquire, that the ability to “pick-up” languages does not disappear at puberty. This does not mean that adults will always be able to achieve native-like levels in a second language. It does mean that adults can access the same natural “language acquisition device” that children use..... acquisition is a very powerful process in the adult.” (Krashen 1982, p. 10) A study of older adopted children who had been moved to their new country and separated from their home language after puberty could add much to Krashen's idea that the Language Acquisition Device is indeed active in older learners.

Krashen is extremely relevant today. His ideas permeate the world language teaching profession in America. Consider the opening message of the current Advanced Placement (AP) German course and exam description (College Board, p. 5): “The AP German Language and Culture course strives to promote both fluency and accuracy in language use and not to overemphasize grammatical accuracy at the expense of communication. In order to best facilitate the study of language and culture, the course is taught in the target language.” Krashen’s ideas of the Monitor (as well as cautioning against the overuse of the monitor), as well as using the target language in class are clearly important to the College Board. Also, examine the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Standards for Language Learning (ACTFL 2013) which stress the importance of communication as the goal of language instruction. In order to reach that goal, ACTFL recommends “...that language educators and their students use the target language as exclusively as possible (90% plus) at all levels of instruction during instructional time...” (ACTFL 2013a). The very first example ACTFL makes for reaching that 90% plus goal is for teachers to provide comprehensible input. Again, Krashen’s influence is evident.

However visible his ideas are in today’s world, Krashen also has had his share of critique. Gregg (1984, p.94) said that “...each of Krashen's hypotheses is marked by serious flaws: undefinable or ill-defined terms, unmotivated constructs, lack of empirical content and thus of falsifiability, lack of explanatory power”. This view was shared by McLaughlin (1987). Ellis (1985) and Mitchell and Myles (2004, p. 165) also raised concerns about the validity of Krashen’s claims. Gregg (1986, p. 121) states that “...the fundamental message of Krashen’s theory is that you do not have to know very much to be a good language teacher.” I disagree with this statement. Krashen makes it very clear that the teacher does indeed need to know quite a bit – making input comprehensible to students is an art. It may not be an art that is “verifiable” in the minds of Krashen’s critics, but it has worked well for many teachers. Although Krashen is often criticized as producing data that is not verifiable, teachers are looking for research that is useful and applicable. Krashen’s research has certainly proven to be useful and applicable to me.

In order to get a better understanding of Krashen, consider the times in which he worked. Krashen completed his higher education in California during the early 1970s. This was a time of great change in American education. The open education movement reached a peak in popularity and then began a decline in the 70s. Busing of students in order to ensure truly desegregated schools began. This has special significance to California. The Los Angeles Unified Schools District was ordered to begin redistributing white and black students in 1970. Mandatory busing of students in Los Angeles ended in the same decade. The phenomena of “white flight”, which began in after World War II, continued as white people were moving into the suburbs leaving minority populations in the inner cities. This certainly had an impact on California with its relatively high level of Hispanic immigrants. Large concentrations of Spanish speaking immigrants in California schools prompted a debate on how to best help Spanish speaking children to become fluent in English. Krashen became very involved in the language policies of California schools concerning minority education in the late 1990s.

Chomsky’s Universal Grammar concept developed in 1965 was certainly influential on Krashen, a linguist. During the 1970s, applied linguistics became a problem-driven field rather than purely theoretical in nature. Gardner’s socio-educational theory of language learning motivation (focusing on French immersion in Canada) was initiated during this era. Krashen endorsed immersion and praised the French program extensively.

The concept of communicative competence in language use and second language learning developed in the early 1970s. “The notion of communicative competence was developed within the discipline of linguistics (or more accurately, the subdiscipline of sociolinguistics) and appealed to many within the language teaching profession, who argued that communicative competence, and not simply grammatical competence, should be the goal of language teaching.” (Richards 2006, p. 9) Krashen’s theories (Acquisition Learning hypothesis, the Monitor hypothesis) represent the ideas behind communicative competence. However, Krashen’s ideas, although one could say that they are compatible with those of communicative competence because of the lessened emphasis on grammar, are different when it comes to practice.

According to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), “Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life.” (1993) Students are expected to do most of the talking in a communicative language teaching classroom as student performance is the goal (CAL 1993). Krashen’s goal is for the student to gain as much Comprehensible Input from the teacher or written materials as possible in order to acquire language as opposed to be forced to produce it through student dialogues using pre-determined vocabulary

Thompson (1996) discusses many misconceptions about communicative language teaching that made their way into classrooms. The role of grammar, for instance. Note above, in Richards’ explanation of communicative competence that he did not say grammar should not be taught. He notes that it should not be the main goal of language teaching. This original idea was somehow lost in the backlash against methods which focused so strongly on grammar, according to Thompson. He calls not teaching grammar the “most damaging” misconception about communicative language teaching.

The open education approach reached its highpoint of popularity, and also its decline, in the 1970s. This approach involved concepts such as student directed learning and classrooms without walls. In the 1980s, Americans blamed such liberal education policies on students’ falling test scores on the SAT. The pendulum swung dramatically in the other direction when “A Nation at Risk” was published in 1983 pointing out American educational underachievement. The “A Nation at Risk” report stressed the importance of language learning starting in the elementary grades. 1983 also marked the year in which Krashen and Terrell’s “The Natural Approach” to teaching second language was published.

2.2.1.2. Methods

One of the characteristics Krashen (1992, p. 39) lists as part of a quality program for second language learners directly concerns the teacher: “They will supply comprehensible input in the second language, in the form of good beginning language

classes, sheltered subject matter teaching, and a print rich environment in the second language.”

The comprehensibility of the input is key. “All that is required is that the activity be interesting and comprehensible.” (Krashen 2003, p. 8) Merely talking at students – even about a topic they have identified as being extremely motivational - without making serious attempts to make the input comprehensible will not be effective. One personal example comes to mind: While in early elementary school, my mother provided me with a record and a read-along-book of “The Ugly Duckling” in Spanish. She was hoping that I would “pick up” Spanish through listening to the record and reading along in the book. I now know why this didn’t work: The recording was just a recording and was unable to modify the input in any way to make it comprehensible to me, the listening child. The same goes for explaining why a native speaker is not always the best second language teacher. Just because they can speak the language does not mean that they will know when it has to be modified, or how to modify it for that matter, to make it comprehensible.

Making input comprehensible also includes examining the methods recommended by Krashen. Good beginning language classes, according to Krashen, should make use of the Natural Approach. The Total Physical Response (TPR) technique due to its concentration on Comprehensible Input, falls under the Natural Approach. Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), an offshoot of Total Physical Response, is another method am sure Krashen approves of due to its emphasis on Comprehensible Input.

I attempted a few TPR/TPRS based lessons in class, and those initial attempts to include TPR and TPRS into my German classroom seemed to go over very well with students. Several students (11 out of 16) noted that the TPR/TPRS was motivating to them in German class. It was decided to attempt to use TPR and TPRS as a main delivery method for teaching due to these results. However, it was necessary to gain more experience with using these methods as they were still relatively new to me. After speaking with the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG), it was decided to visit the Sweet Briar College TPRS institute to sharpen my skills. This week-long teacher training seminar, which began in July 2010, is endorsed by both

AATG as well as the Florida Association of Teachers of German (FATG). This seminar gave me the skills necessary to confidently deliver Comprehensible Input to my students using the TPRS method. More information on both the TPR and TPRS methods, as well as my experiences at the training seminar at Sweet Briar College will follow the initial examination of The Natural Approach.

The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach is, according to Krashen and Terrell, based on the idea that students must have the need to acquire the language in order to apply it to “real communicative purposes” (1983, p. 17). According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) this focus on content of the *communication*, as opposed to *form*, is what makes a natural language environment that triggers acquisition as opposed to learning. In a Natural Approach classroom, class time is devoted primarily to communicative activities in a natural environment.

When communication is the main goal of the second language class, teachers are providing students with the tools to expand their own language competencies outside of the classroom. If students can get their ideas across to a native speaker – even if there are errors – that student will be able to continue the language acquisition journey started in the classroom. Again, Krashen’s realization that students will not reach absolute fluency in the classroom situation is appreciated. If a student is not a confident communicator, and the Monitor shuts down communication by overwhelming the communicative attempts outside of the classroom (where they really count!), the student is unable to participate in the conversation needed in order to gain the Comprehensible Input necessary to improve. In fact, Krashen states (1982, p. 117) that errors that do not impede spoken communication should not be directly corrected at all, but says it is acceptable to correct written work and any grammar based learning activities done outside of the acquisition-based environment.

When students do make errors in a Natural Approach classroom, Krashen and Terrell (1983) say that students should be corrected in a specific way according to whether the error impedes communication or not. In short, direct correction should take place when a student makes an error that impedes communication - for example pointing at a computer and saying, “That is a sock”, the teacher should make a direct correction

by simply telling the student something like, “No it’s not a sock, it’s a computer.” If gone uncorrected, this error would be a barrier to communication.

Errors in grammar or in pronunciation that do not impede communication should be handled in a specific fashion as well. Krashen and Terrell (1983) recommend a non-direct correction in the form of an expanded response. For example, if a student responds, “That be a dog”, the teacher would correct the student in an indirect manner: “Yes, you’re right, that is a dog.” This non-direct correction serves two purposes. First of all, it is a correction - but it does not put the student on the spot, which would automatically raise his Affective Filter. Secondly, such a correction serves as Comprehensible Input for the whole class. Krashen and Terrell remind readers that the only cure for such errors is more Comprehensible Input (1983, p. 87), and providing such a non-direct correction is a step towards a long term solution.

The Natural Approach is a series of what Krashen and Terrell call “acquisition activities” (1983, p. 97) and is a constant exchange between teacher and students, with new vocabulary being introduced, previous vocabulary being reviewed, and students being engaged in real conversation all the while. Now, “real conversation” does not mean that students are forced to answer back, or, if they do answer, answer in complete sentences. No parroting here – if students do answer at all, they will most likely answer in short phrases, or even one word answers.

This idea proved to be integral to the evaluating of student utterances in class sessions videotaped for the purpose of examining whether or not students were on task during specific times during instruction. Had this background information from Krashen not been in place, the utterances would not have been properly evaluated, and would have led to false conclusions concerning the efficacy of the TPRS method in my classroom. It was expected that students would be speaking less German during more traditional frontal instruction, and much more during Krashen-approved TPRS instruction. The exact opposite turned out to be true: students were actually speaking more German during the traditional instruction than they were during the Natural Approach based TPRS based instruction.

This brought me to take a closer look at the *type* of utterances being made in German under both traditional instruction and TPRS instruction: Even though there was more German being spoken during the traditional instruction, students responses were (in the great majority of cases) either students simply repeating a word I had just said or one word translations of vocabulary. In other words, either parroting or simple recall was going on. On the other hand, during TPRS instruction, even though there were *fewer* utterances being made in German, they were all freely formed responses which Krashen would consider real conversation.

The “acquisition activities” central to students producing real conversation during Natural Approach instruction are categorized into four groups: (Krashen and Terrell 1983) affective humanistic activities, problem solving activities, games, and content.

Affective humanistic activities focus on content that students are emotionally tied to (Krashen and Terrell 1983). An initial cycle of action research showed that the state German competition was a major motivating factor for students in my class. A further cycle of action research showed just how much this motivating factor qualified as an affective humanistic activity which very much influenced students’ feelings and desires. Details on these findings follow in chapter four.

Problem Solving activities concern, according to Krashen and Terrell, the use of language to present a problem and solve it (1983, p.108). Students must find the problem at hand interesting in order for them to be interested in solving it, however. I feel that one way of making a problem interesting for students to solve is to make it a real life problem with a real life solution. A solution that students can see and feel happening. Preparing for success at the state German competition is very real, and students see and feel progress as well as see and feel the satisfaction of the end result. My continual challenge as the classroom teacher is to discover which factors contribute to this competition being motivational and to capitalize on those factors without “teaching to the test” – meaning that the sole purpose of my instruction does not become preparing students to win at the competition.

Game based activities are another type of acquisition activity Krashen and Terrell (1983) list as a good source of Comprehensible Input. They caution teachers not to

misuse games as rewards or fluff activities, and instead say that involving games is an integral method to integrate vocabulary, communication, and student interest. The games that I have now integrated into my curriculum are ones that rely on both me, the teacher, as well as on students for providing the Comprehensible Input. Students have been taught to play games previously unknown to them in German. The great majority of these games are from Germany. Students acquire the rules of the game from me through Caretaker Speech, the appropriate responses to co-player activity (examples: it's my turn, it's your turn, whose turn is it?), and enough Comprehensible Input to understand simplified game cards (made by me) put into use during game play. Krashen explains that using materials written in a simplified version of the target language are very useful, and even defines such texts as "authentic". "The usual definition of 'authentic' is 'a text written by native speakers for native speakers'. Perhaps a better definition is this one" "A text that is interesting and comprehensible.'" (Krashen 1987, p. 34).

It is important to me for students to be introduced to games they are unfamiliar with. If games the students knew well were used, they would most likely pay less attention to me when directions were being explained – why listen if you already know how to play? The same is true for books – I stay away from stories the students are already familiar with. For example, instead of German language fairy tales students are already know, Namibian fairy tales published in German for a Namibian audience have been used. These stories are new and interesting to my students.

Krashen and Terrell also describe Content Activities for language acquisition. Krashen refers to this as Sheltered Subject Matter Teaching (1992). Sheltered subject matter teaching revolves around one main idea: Teaching subject matter in the target language. The idea of sheltered subject matter teaching can be incorporated into my instruction by making part of my lessons about German culture focus on the theme of the state German competition each year. These themes change annually and reach from German holidays, the fall of the Berlin Wall, German opera, and German music from various eras. Krashen (1992, p. 31) sums it up as "subject matter teaching in a second language, when it is comprehensible, is language teaching, because it provides comprehensible input." This Comprehensible Input is truly acquired instead of learned, as students will most likely focus so much on what is being said

(communication) , that they will pay significantly less attention to how it is said (grammar and form). (Krashen 1982, p.168).

Presenting subject matter in the target language is what sheltered subject matter teaching is focused on. The French immersion programs offered in Canadian schools follow Krashen's idea of sheltered subject matter teaching. This program for teaching French is one that Krashen wholeheartedly supports (Krashen 1984). While Krashen highly praises the Canadian model of immersion, he feels quite differently towards the immersion programs which have been initiated in the United States to help immigrant children acquire English. Structured English Immersion, initiated in Arizona in 2000, is one program he is critical of. (Krashen 2004). In reviewing information on the Structured English Immersion (SEI) Model used in Arizona (Arizona English Language Learners Task Force 2007), it shows the immersion model is not the same as the Canadian model. The Canadian model involves students being taught multiple subjects in the target language over the duration of the school day. In the Arizona SEI model, students are taught about English in English for a mandated 4 hours a day (Arizona English Language Learners Task Force 2007, p. 5).

Also, whereas the Canadian program produces students with a relatively high proficiency level in the target language by the end of grade 12 (after several years of study), the Arizona model, according to Krashen (2004) is expected to produce relative fluency in students after only a year. In fact, Krashen classifies the instruction that took place as not immersion at all, but rather as using aspects of bilingual instruction (Krashen 2004). He cites a lack of data concerning the amount of English and Spanish which were used in the Arizona classes, and cites data collected from another study of structured English Immersion program in California that indicated that the program was not taught solely in English, but rather a sometimes an almost equal mix of Spanish and English.

This is the type of instruction Krashen warns about as being detrimental to student progress with acquisition. Quality bilingual education is composed of programs which "... introduce English right away and teach subject matter in English as soon as it can be made comprehensible, but they also develop literacy in the first language and teach subject matter in the first language in early stages." (Krashen 2004) This

strengthening of academic language in the first language, referred to by Cummins as the CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), strengthens a student's overall language acquisition abilities (Cummins 1979).

Although the Canadian French immersion program has been successful, such a program may not be the best choice for Spanish speaking immigrant students in America. English speaking Canadian students, as they have a mastery of both social and academic realms of their first language, (as English is the language spoken in their immediate environments of home, school, and society) have a strong base for metalinguistic knowledge that can be applied to the second language (French acquired through immersion). This leads to an increase in what Cummins calls the student's Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP). The CUP provides the base for further progression in both the child's first and second language. (Cummins 1979) For Spanish speaking immigrant students in America, a bilingual approach may make more sense as these students often do not have a mastery of Spanish in both the social and academic realm that would set them up for success in an immersion environment. It may be more effective to strengthen their academic language in their first language, leading to that strong metalinguistic knowledge base that can serve as a support to acquisition of the second language.

Terrell and Krashen, comprehensibility of language, both oral and written, is key to acquisition. The Natural Approach is primarily concerned with gaining Comprehensible Input to facilitate oral communication. However, Terrell and Krashen are not adverse to exposing students with written forms of Comprehensible Input as well. For a text to be appropriate for the Natural Approach, it must be at an appropriate level of complexity and interesting to the student.

If a text has too many unfamiliar words, it is not comprehensible. If a student spends the majority of the reading experience with a dictionary in hand, translating word for word, the text's vocabulary is too complex. Krashen (1983) recommends simplifying the texts of existing books – there is no need to attempt to use literature aimed at native speakers for language acquirers. This will only serve in raising the Affective Filter as it confronts the reader with incomprehensible input. Krashen (1997) explains that “Handcrafted Books” could also be used in class. These texts are ones that have

been written by intermediate students to be read by beginning students. Once the stories have been written, the teacher corrects the texts before they are illustrated and bound for the beginning students' reading pleasure.

Krashen and Terrell (1983) explain that the Natural Approach is one that can be successfully integrated into language programs in a variety of degrees through a variety of techniques. One technique which sounds very much like it is in line with the Natural Approach is Rosetta Stone. The Rosetta Stone website defines Rosetta Stone as "...the world's most popular and most advanced program for learning a new language." (Rosetta Stone website). The computer program's website describes the program's method as follows: "Dynamic Immersion[®] is the cornerstone of the Rosetta Stone method. By eliminating translation and grammar explanations from language learning, Dynamic Immersion activates your own natural language-learning ability. You begin to think in your new language from the very beginning—the same way you learned your first language." (Rosetta Stone website).

This sounds very similar to the Natural Approach. However, Krashen (2013) makes it clear that Rosetta Stone is not a language program that has integrated the Natural Approach. Krashen (2013) states that although the program does provide a low level of Comprehensible Input, it is far from ideal in nature: "Rosetta Stone does indeed present comprehensible input, but in the samples I have seen, the input is not very interesting, and a long way from compelling.....The approach is straightforward: the student hears a word or phrase and is asked to choose a picture that matches that word or phrase. Rosetta Stone then tells the user if the answer is right." This basically sounds like electronic flashcards and does not seem to embody the spirit of Krashen's teachings.

Although Krashen (2013) reports that Rosetta Stone offers only "... a tepid version of comprehensible input", and "that the evidence so far provides only modest support for its effectiveness", there are other techniques that come closer to representing his intentions when it comes to second language acquisition in the classroom. Some of the techniques which are recommended by Krashen include Total Physical Response (see Krashen 1998 for his endorsement of this method), Sheltered Subject Matter Teaching, Free Reading, and proper use of the student's first language to produce the

maximum amount of Comprehensible Input in the classroom. I will also examine Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), an offshoot of Total Physical Response (TPR).

Total Physical Response (TPR)

With the Natural Method, students are not to be forced to speak until they feel ready. (Krashen and Terrell 1983) During this “prespeech” (Krashen and Terrell 1983, p. 75) phase, students are absorbing the target language – taking in Comprehensible Input and, as they succeed in understanding, lowering their Affective Filters. Readiness to orally produce in the second language can occur at different times depending on the student. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982, p. 23) report that children have taken up to a half year to speak, even though they demonstrate solid comprehension. However, they also report (1982, p. 261) that having students write responses during the prespeech phase is acceptable. This additional strategy for measuring student comprehension, alongside the physical actions demonstrated during TPR, is infused throughout the prespeech phase of my revised instruction. In order to learn how to provide the Comprehensible Input so vital to this phase, I more closely examined Total Physical Response (TPR) developed by James Asher.

TPR follows the principles of Krashen and Terrell’s Natural Approach as one of its main tenants is that listening (gaining Comprehensible Input) is the key to acquiring language. Asher explains that children, when acquiring their first language, are able to carry out commands without being able to verbalize those commands themselves. They have internalized the language, and the production of that same language follows later. The same process is valid, according to Asher, for second language acquisition. (Asher 2003, pp. 2 – 4). He also adds that language understanding abilities are always more advanced than language production abilities.

In TPR, the teacher gives students commands and the students act them out. There are two phases of TPR instruction (Asher 2003, pp. 2 – 10). The first phase is modeling. In the modeling phase, the teacher acts out the words or phrases she is saying – giving the students a comprehensible visual cue for the words. In the second phase, demonstration, the student acts out the word or phrase when the teacher says it. Later,

the goal is for students to demonstrate fluency by being able to put together utterances of their own. (Asher 2003)

From the use of individual words and phrases, the teacher will continue to add vocabulary through TPR and other physical means such as modeling vocabulary on visuals, having students model, and then demonstrate throughout the lesson. Asher credits the success of TPR to muscle memory: long-term recall of physical skills. He describes the typical second language classroom as a place where students use textbooks and sit for prolonged periods of time. My contact with the Florida Department of Education seemed to prove Asher's ideas to be true: On March 13, 2009, it was learned from the state Student Achievement through Language Acquisition program that textbook based instruction made up the overwhelming majority, if not all, of the state public schools' German programs.

TPR puts a different spin on the second language classroom by incorporating kinetics. Verbs are indeed action words, and the Total Physical Response method handles them (as well as nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and propositions) as such. Communication remains the first objective, and because there is very limited translation necessary (abstract ideas pose an exception), students are thinking in the target language – further supporting long term retention. (Asher 2003) Students are thinking in the target language because the teacher is presenting the new information, in a comprehensible format, in the target language. One of the reasons Krashen supports TPR is that it provides so much Comprehensible Input.

TPR, while conducted in the target language in a manner which is comprehensible to students, also relies on kinetics. The key to tapping into the physical aspect of acquiring a second language is to transform all TPR based instruction from the *declarative* to the *imperative*. (Asher 2003) Telling about something does not require students to act. Telling students to do something does. The physical actions need to be repeated in class as long as it takes for students to internalize the meaning of the words behind them. Teachers will know that students have internalized the meaning when they can confidently perform alone. This non-verbal “prespeech” communication is the first step leading up to verbal communication. Like Krashen, Asher is not *against* students learning (as opposed to acquiring) grammar to augment

their communication skills. Asher describes scenarios (2003, pp. 3 – 19) where students ask grammatically oriented questions, which are answered, but do not become the main thrust of the program.

Krashen and Asher agree that the language *acquired* through Comprehensible Input provides the material with which students can apply the Monitor to once they have *learned* the grammar skills necessary to do so. Optimal Monitor users will have a large enough vocabulary and feel comfortable enough communicating to not allow grammar to hijack their communication.

Asher (2003, pp. 3 – 20) describes how TPR can be applied to just about any text – written or spoken: The teacher goes through the text and notes all action verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. First, the teacher focuses solely on the verbs by planning TPR exercises that will convey the meaning of those verbs to students, introducing no more than two or three words in a lesson. (Asher 2003, pp. 3 – 43) Then, two or three at a time per lesson, the nouns, adjectives, and adverbs are added to make the commands more complex, yet comprehensible. In those lessons where new vocabulary is being introduced, previous words are reviewed in conjunction with those new words (recall Krashen’s $i+1$). Finally, the text can be introduced. The texts, in my case, are geared to being taught through TPRS – Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling. TPR is an important part of the TPRS teaching techniques learned at the Sweet Briar College TPRS seminar I visited in the summer of 2010. TPR has a key role in TPRS: Step one of TPRS is to establish meaning. TPR is a way to do this. More details on TPRS and its steps come later.

While Asher says that most concrete vocabulary for a text can be taught using TPR, he acknowledges that more abstract ideas do pose a problem for the method. In my own usage of TPR, I have sometimes just given students the English word for such abstract words, and then just went on TPRing. This approach was also recommended at the Sweet Briar College TPRS seminar. The best example of this was when the lyrics to a song were introduced in class. The lyrics included the word “government”. Instead of using TPR right away to try to attach an accurate physical representation to such an abstract concept, students were simply told that the German word “Regierung” meant “government” in English. We continued with the lesson using the

TPR method with the remaining vocabulary. Since the word only appeared once, was not a main idea of the song, and since I do not expect the word “government” to be in students’ regular spoken vocabulary at this time, a physical gesture was not attached to it. I only translated it for students into English.

Asher makes recommendations of his own based on the precept of “No matter how effective a technique is, it will not carry the entire instructional load. It must be used judiciously with frequent change of pace and frequent change of activities.” (Asher 2003, pp. 3 – 54). Asher recommends Blain Ray’s Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) in assisting with abstract vocabulary. The training I received at the Sweet Briar College TPRS training helped me in applying both TPR and TRPS in a harmonious fashion. This TPRS course is endorsed by the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) and was recommended to me by other fellow German teachers.

Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS)...

Krashen (1998), while praising TPR, also notes that there are other ways to provide Comprehensible Input in the classroom including storytelling. Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) is a method founded by Blaine Ray and focuses on consistently providing repetitive but interesting Comprehensible Input through “asking” (as opposed to telling) a story.

Like Asher and Krashen, Ray’s (Ray and Seely 2008, pp. 9-10) ideas are centered on communication and four main principles are at work in TPRS to work towards this goal:

1. Information conveyed to students must, above all, be comprehensible. This is done in three primary ways: limiting the amount of vocabulary that is introduced at any one time, repetition of that vocabulary and grammatical structures, and translation of individual words, if necessary.
2. Students must experience frequent repetition of the vocabulary and grammatical structures. They experience this repetition through the teacher asking questions about stories in a technique called “circling” (Ray and Seely 2008, p. 28). With circling, the concept or vocabulary word should

be repeated again and again in the framework of a story. This repetition is the comprehensible input.

3. Language acquisition must be kept interesting through teacher-led stories. Keeping the class interesting seems relatively easy as the Comprehensible Input gained through circling is based on stories that the teacher makes up and individualizes. Ray and Seely recommend that the story always involve students from the class, use unexpected details that require explanations, and have students act them out and speak parts when appropriate. Unexpected details stretch the question into the next level of student understanding – the $i+1$: “Is the boy in school? Is he in the German room in school?” Exaggerations are another way to make the class interesting as they add an element of the unexpected. If Input is predictable, students will zone out, even when it is Comprehensible.
4. Students must keep oral interaction going through student-led stories with topics that students care about. One way (learned at the 2010 TPRS training at Sweet Briar College, Virginia) of doing this is to ask students to provide the details for the stories. These student-led stories can get quite crazy, but students are very involved. No matter how crazy the stories get, I continue with the questioning technique described above concerning each detail of the story. This gives the students several repetitions of the target vocabulary/grammar structures as comprehensible input. This “Asking of the story” as the teacher uses the circling technique ensures that students are exposed to several repetitions of material in various formats include involving the students in storytelling. (Ray and Seely 2008, p. 15) This way students are directly involved in deciding the direction the story takes by providing content that interests them.

Both the teacher-led and student-led stories proved to be motivating to students in my class, as “funny stories” (Students did not differentiate between student-led and teacher-led “funny stories”) were named by students as being motivational in the October 6, 2010 questionnaire.

What Ray and Seely call the “Fluency Circle” and the “Reading Circle” (2008, pp. 16-17) also influence what is taught in class and the mediums through which it is taught.

The Fluency Circle refers to the basic grammatical structures and vocabulary that are taught through TPRS in class. For example, take my previous example of the word “government” in German. This word is not one students would be expected to use on a regular basis for communication. This word belonged to the Reading Circle in my class.

The Reading Circle is related to the Fluency Circle and includes all of the vocabulary and grammatical structures included in the Fluency Circle, but also includes words and grammar not needed for fluency. Ray and Seely explain that the words which fall into the Reading Circle are encountered in reading or speech, and some of them may be simply translated - leaving more time for the teacher and students to deal with the vocabulary in the Fluency Circle. (Ray and Seely 2008, p. 21) The Fluency Circle is basically the words that students will use actively in class. Ray and Seely call this the “production vocabulary”.

The Reading Circle basically contains the vocabulary and grammatical structures that students encounter, but do not necessarily use orally in class - the “comprehension vocabulary”. In-class TPRS instruction concerns itself primarily with the active “production vocabulary” of the Fluency Circle..

When I use the term “grammatical structures”, I am not referring to grammar instruction. I mean specific structures that are repeated again and again throughout the lesson. For example, one of the earliest grammatical structures I have taught is “ich habe” (I have). The grammatical structure “Ich habe” is repeated throughout the story being asked of students. For example, I may work the structure as follows: “Ich habe eine Katze. Habe ich eine Katze? Habe ich einen Hund? Habe ich eine Katze oder einen Hund?” (I have a cat. Do I have a cat? Do I have a dog? Do I have a cat or a dog?) Most students answer the questions with simple one-word answers at first, with some attempting to make sentence length answers.

The Fluency Circle starts off very small and grows as students understand and use the language more and more. Latching on to my previous example, I would continue by making my next grammatical structure “er hat” (he has) as follows: “Ich habe eine Katze. Er hat einen Hund. Hat er eine Maus? Habe ich eine Katze? Hat er eine Katze

oder einen Hund?“ (I have a cat. He has a dog. Does he have a mouse? Do I have a cat? Does he have a cat or a dog?) The Fluency Circle is based on combining selected limited grammatical structures (ich habe, er hat) with selected limited vocabulary structures (Katze, Hund, Maus).

Grammar, in the form of grammatical structures, does play a role in TPRS. However, it is also dealt with in what Ray and Seely call “pop-up” grammar lessons. The “pop-up” grammar lesson is described by Ray and Seely (2008, p. 184) as follows:

“Although a pop-up usually consists of a quick question and its answer, occasionally the teacher must give a short explanation or translation of the grammatical element being focused on.” (Ray and Seely 2008, p. 184)

Krashen recommends not planning the syllabus around grammatical concepts, but rather around themes of conversation instead. Ray and Seely suggest the same as they recommend simply focusing on the grammatical concepts that would naturally occur in the language used to speak about whatever conversational themes are being presented - and to teach those grammatical concepts through TPRS. Don't ignore the grammar – just teach 3-5 grammar concepts per class as they naturally occur in the language through TPRS.

In order to do this, the teacher must make some sort of patterns that students can latch on to. If the teacher were to just speak freely, as a native would, without regard to the Comprehensibility of the Input, she would use such a plethora of vocabulary and grammar, that it would more than likely overwhelm students – raising the Affective Filter. This would not be what Krashen would consider Caretaker Speech. However, when a teacher employs Caretaker Speech and consciously limits the grammatical structures used in Comprehensible Input, she is making the words comprehensible to students as they acquire the grammatical concepts presented to them.

Basically what Krashen, Ray, Seely, and Asher are demonstrating is that students will be confronted with grammar in class, but it needs to be part of the Comprehensible Input, and not a separate entity that is focused on out of context of the communicative activity. As students acquire the language, they will naturally acquire the grammar

that goes along with it, and teachers can ease that by making the input they provide as comprehensible – in regard to both grammar and vocabulary – as possible.

I felt that I had a good theoretical grip on the TPRS method after my initial research; however I was unsure of what actual implementation would look like. I needed to be able to feel confident enough in the method to use it in my own class and formulate materials that would complement not only my topics (topics that would relevantly deal with the prime motivating factor of my students –the state German competition), but also be appropriate for the method. Visiting the Sweet Briar College TPRS training institute made me ready to implement TPR and TPRS effectively.

The seminar took place at Sweet Briar College in Virginia/USA from July 25-30, 2010 under the tutelage of Julie Baird. From the onset of the seminar, it was made clear that Comprehensible Input was the main thrust of the program. The sections of the seminar that were most valuable to me were the ones that focused on how to keep the Comprehensible Input flowing continuously during class.

After I read the information on circling in Ray and Seely (2008), it made sense, but I couldn't imagine keeping it going in a way that would be interesting to students. The first thing learned from Julie Baird (Sweet Briar College TPRS Seminar 2010) was that the circling works because our students are more inclined to stay “with it” when questions are asked as opposed to dealing with statements alone. She explained that the very act of questioning makes the process of delivering Comprehensible Input more engaging for students.

TPRS is done in three steps (Ray and Seely 2008, p. 31): Establishing meaning, storytelling/asking, and reading. In TPRS, meaning is initially established through TPR if possible or just flat out translation in the case of more abstract vocabulary. These TPRed/translated words or phrases are practiced either as TPRed gestures divorced from the context of the story or as translated words. These are the vocabulary words students must understand in order to understand the story that will be “asked” in step two.

The Sweet Briar College seminar made it clear to me that the grammatical structures are what TPRS is conveying, not vocabulary alone. At Sweet Briar College, establishing meaning through TPRing the TPRable vocabulary was learned, as well as using the circling technique to provide as much comprehensible input as possible before moving into TPRS.

For example, I would TPR “sit down” and stand up” with gestures and circling as follows: “I sit down” (I’d sit in a chair). “Everyone sit down” (Gesture for everyone to sit down. The sitting down itself is the gesture for “sit down”) Then I’d do the same for “stand up”. After the class had demonstrated comprehension of both “sit down” and “stand up”, I’d circle as follows: “Everyone sit down.” I’d go over to John (or any other student in the class) and ask, “Is John sitting down?” The class would answer “yes”. “Is John standing up?” The class would answer “no”. “Is John sitting down or standing up?” The class would answer “Sitting down”. I would then ask “Who is sitting down?”, and the class would answer “John”. During the TPR vocabulary lesson I could have had a student alone act out what I was saying, other volunteers, the whole class together, or could have even had students who feel confident enough give TPR commands to other students. Again, for vocabulary that is more abstract, students were told what the word meant and then circling was continued as for the TPRable words.

I realize that this sounds very repetitive, but since it is going on in a language students don’t fully understand, the repetition is not boring, but is a lifeline to comprehension once the initial meanings of key vocabulary have been established in TPR. The TPRed words in this beginning stage serve as the “i” and the circling as the opportunity to introduce the “+1”. Repetition of the target vocabulary is key - in this short example exchange alone, the vocabulary of “sit down” has been repeated in various ways as comprehensible input at least five times. I experienced the importance of this repetition myself as demonstration classes were taught to seminar participants in Japanese. Since I know no Japanese, I hung on every word the instructor said during the lesson and relished the repetition. This use of TPR in the beginning of the lesson equips students to be able to comprehend the stories (both teacher-led and student-led) in the next step.

The second step is the telling/asking of both teacher-led and student-led stories. This is where much more Compressible Input comes in. Keep in mind that students have already experienced quite a bit of Comprehensible Input as they were taught vocabulary through TPR prior to the telling of the story - vocabulary they will need in order to take part in the “story asking” process. A set of stories should, according to Ray and Seely, concentrate on no more than three to five grammar and vocabulary structures. These structures will be incorporated through the facts of the stories.

This technique of using two types of story formats was learned from Julie Baird at the 2010 Sweet Briar College TPRS training. She called the teacher-led story a Personalized Mini Story, and the student-led story the Asking of the Story – students are asked to fill in details. Once a teacher-led story has been asked, I go on to the student-led story– one where students give me the input and we craft the story in the target language as we go along, with me circling it all the while.

Once the teacher-led story has been planned by the teacher, it can be implemented as planned in class, using the circling method to provide Comprehensible Input. The teacher-led Personalized Mini Story could start off with just the teacher telling it and circling the grammatical structures and vocabulary, however, the teacher could also ask the subject of the story to come forward and act it out as it was being told to the class. Such modeling acts as a visual cue to students who need it in order to make the input more comprehensible. Julie explained that we are looking for as many repetitions of the grammatical structure as possible during the telling of the Personalized Mini Story. In my practice Personalized Mini Story circling, I was able to get as many as 45 repetitions of the selected grammatical structures in a 10 minute period.

The student-led “Asking of the Story” involves a basic story line thought out by the teacher that focuses on the same 2 or 3 grammatical structures introduced with the teacher-led Personalized Mini Story. This story line serves as the baseline to make sure students keep using those pre-chosen grammatical structures and vocabulary. By this time, students have received Comprehensible Input focusing on vocabulary and grammatical structures through TPR as well as through the teacher-led Personalized Mini Story (TPRS). Students are well prepared to take part in this “Asking” of the

story. Students get involved on a personal level as they add to the story. The teacher asks them questions to gather information on which to further the plot. The story may or may not end up following the baseline planned by the teacher. Some of the stories become quite humorous, however, as Julie Baird explained, and as I have experienced myself – the funnier the better. The main idea is that students gain Comprehensible Input based on the predetermined grammatical structures and that they feel ownership of the story as they are the ones providing information for its further telling.

As the story is being “asked” (as opposed to simply being told), I circle (ask questions requiring answers based on the featured grammatical structures) all information students provide me with. For example, the student-led story would start off as follows: “Carolyn sits. Does she sit?” Students would ideally answer with either a simple “yes”, or a more advanced “She sits”, depending on their personal level of readiness.

I would continue by asking “Does she sit or jump?”, and students would answer “She sits”. I would then ask another yes or no question: “Does she stand?”, and students would answer with either a simple “no”, or perhaps with “No, she sits.” My next question would lead students into providing authentic information of their own: “Where does Carolyn sit?” (A student would provide information here, for example one may say “a table”).

I would continue using the input the student added to the story: “OK, Carolyn sits at the table.” I would then circle the newly added input as follows, waiting for students to respond orally after each question: Does Carolyn sit at the table? Does she sit or stand at the table? Does she sit at the window? Who sits at the table? Right...Carolyn! Carolyn sits at the table and reads a book. Does Carolyn read a newspaper? Does Carolyn sit or stand? Does Carolyn read a book?

After having circled this information, I would then give another opportunity for students to add more information: “What color is the book?” Students may answer with either a simple “black”, or maybe “The book is black”. I would continue the circling process: “The book is black? OK. The book is black. She sits at the table with a black book. Does she sit at the table with a blue book? Does she sit or stand at

the table with a black book? Does John sit at the table with a black book? Who sits at the table with a black book? What does Carolyn have? Where does she sit? Right....she sits at the table with the black book. What is in the black book?" (Student answers "Recipes") "Recipes? Are recipes in the black book?" Etc.....

The main idea is to get as many repetitions of the grammatical structures being focused upon as possible. In my practice rounds of Asking the Story, I was able to get up to 65 repetitions of targeted grammar structures in a 15 minute period.

In order to make sure I am circling enough (and providing the maximum amount of Comprehensible Input) during both the teacher-led Personalized Mini Story and the student-led Asking of the Story, Julie Baird recommended writing the following symbols at the back of the room: + , +/-, -, w. These four symbols are to remind me to, while circling, ask several types of questions using the grammatical structures including one that requires a positive answer (+), one with an either/or answer (+/-), one that requires a negative answer (-), and at least one question using a "question word" (who, what, where, when, why, how).

Again, all of this repetition may leave readers believing that students will quickly become bored with this method. However, much depends on the delivery – I find that my students seem to enjoy it most when it has an upbeat pace, lots of laughs in the story line, and lots of student input. It was just a matter of getting comfortable with the delivery modus. I conducted further cycles of action research to find out if students felt more motivated by this new delivery modus as compared to the previous year (before it was being used full time). Students indicated that they found the new TPRS based teaching methods extremely motivating – more detailed results of that research will be portrayed in chapter four.

The seminar gave me the experience necessary in order to feel comfortable with using TPRS full time. I thank Julie Baird as well as the other instructors for their patience with my many questions concerning delivery and best practice.

Using TPR to clarify vocabulary, then using the circling method to provide Comprehensible Input through the teacher-led Personalized Mini Story and the

student-led “Asking” of a story are the first steps to successfully utilizing the TPRS method. The final step concerns reading. The material students read will have the same structures introduced in establishing meaning and in the stories. Remember, since the oral stories only revolved around three to five basic structures, the information that is read is relatively short as it is based on those same concepts. First of all, the students read the story paragraph by paragraph, with student writing down the meanings of any unfamiliar vocabulary. Then students are asked in the target language, questions about the facts of the story. This is just like oral circling, but this time the focus is on the written Comprehensible Input instead of the spoken.

Next, the teacher orally asks students questions about the story that are not based on facts written in the story – questions related to the story that the students will have to make up answers to on their own- reaching into their Fluency Circle to do so. This step is all about individualizing the story and tailoring it to students own interests. Again, the main idea is to add more Comprehensible Input. Finally, the written story is changed resulting in even more personalized Comprehensible Input as a new main character is presented – a student in class. Students use the basic outline of the story and add information of their own choosing. Here, the structures that students have been practicing remain the same, only the details change, opening up an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words that are relevant to students. I like to do this together with students as a group effort – students re-tell the story with new details then I copy it onto the board. Students then copy the story into their notebooks and questions concerning that new story are assigned as homework.

Implementation of TPRS

I rescheduled my instruction for the 2010/2011 school year as follows: Early elementary students (K-3) took classes together with the upper elementary and middle school students for the first hour of class. These classes were based exclusively on TPR and TPRS and were completely oral in nature.

After 60 minutes of all oral instruction, K-3 continue on to their next class, and 4-8 continue on with a mixture of oral and written activities. Both the K-3 and the 4-8 grade classes were based on a pre-existing TPRS curriculum. This second hour eventually included a dose of preparation for the State German Competition. Once I

have become more proficient in delivering the ready-made curriculum, I will develop a section of the TPRS curriculum which deals with the topic of the annual state German competition. A further cycle of action research indicated that although students felt they would be less motivated by handling the topic of the annual competition all year, they would be open to handling it, through TPRS methods, for a section of class each year.

Each year, the state German competition has a different theme, for example “The Fall of the Wall”, “Germany and the World of Sports”, “Berlin”, “Germany in the 80s”, “German Fairy Tales”, and “Karneval”. All events of the competition are related to this theme: poetry selections for recital, quiz bowl questions, as well as questions for the written tests in German culture.

I am able to design all of my own materials for this section of the curriculum. Each year, the materials change since the theme of the competition changes. Step one is to gather written materials to be used to formulate Comprehensive Input in both written and spoken form. Next is to design TPRS-based communicative activities using these materials including the basis for teacher-led Personalized Mini Stories, student led stories, and written sources of Comprehensible Input. This further development of the curriculum would represent another loop in the ongoing action research process.

This step-by-step fine tuning of my curriculum serves as an effective way to keep the Affective Filter down. According to Krashen, one way of keeping that filter low is to increase and maintain student motivation. I have already pinpointed the sources of student motivation in class –the state German competition as content and the TPRS delivery method. However, there is much more to in-class motivation than the vehicle and content alone. I have learned through initial cycles of text-based action research that motivation has much to do with the teacher as well.

One statement made by Zoltán Dörnyei, an expert in motivation in second language acquisition, really made an impact on me, (Dörnyei 2001 a, p. 2): “...99 percent of language learners who really want to learn a foreign language (i.e. who are really motivated) will be able to master a reasonable working knowledge of it as a minimum, regardless of their language aptitude.” According to Chambers (1999), the

students' perception of the teacher is even identified as the key factor of how students evaluate second language learning. If I can tap into students' motivation goldmine by changing my own practices to increase motivation, I am more than glad to do so. In the upcoming section, I explore students' motivation in the second language classroom by examining the processes experienced by students as well as what I, as the classroom teacher, can do to increase motivation.

2.3 Second Language Acquisition and Motivation

Two theorists in particular were intriguing to me: Canadian social psychologist Robert Gardner and Zoltán Dörnyei, professor of psycholinguistics at Nottingham University. Gardner believes that the learner's attitudes towards the linguistic cultural community of the second language are key to success in that language. This would have given me some direction in what types of questions to consider asking when collecting data from students had it been decided to concentrate on motivation using Gardner's work as a lens. Dörnyei specializes in the role of motivation in second language learning, and has published much on motivation from an educational perspective, but also has published on how to go about researching motivation as well. Dörnyei and Gardner have different models, but both are based on a cognitive approach. In the end, Dörnyei's approach seemed the more practical one for my action research. Researching the theories of both Dörnyei and Gardner opened my eyes to more facets of student motivation in the second language learning environment – including processes which students experience at various phases as well as practices that I, as the classroom teacher, can adopt to facilitate and increase student motivation. Gardner and Dörnyei's work has meant a significant change in the field of responsibility for language teachers. Motivation is now accepted as a contributing factor to student success in the second language classroom. This results in a wider responsibility for the teacher than just a single classroom. The teacher's contribution, in fostering motivation, is one that affects the students on a far greater scale as it impacts students across subject areas and locations.

Dörnyei's and Gardner's work emerged at very different times and physical locations in the history of education, adding another dimension of interest to their views. Gardner's higher education ended in Canada in 1960. The early 1960s was a time of great change in education in North America. New approaches such as team teaching,

non-graded classes, and open classrooms were emerging (or really re-emerging – think of the “one room school house” that was part of education in many parts of North America up until the 1940s). Language learning was beginning to be seen as something not just for the college bound student. The audio lingual method (developed during WWII in order to facilitate quick language proficiency in American army personnel – it did not prove to be successful) was going strong in new language labs across North America, even though it already had its critics due to the behaviorist theory it was built on. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 was providing aid to American schools at all levels (one main goal was to increase foreign language instruction), and Americans were still reeling from Russian success in the “space race”. These exciting times influenced Gardner, who emerged as a pioneer in the area second language learning motivation research. According to Locke and Latham (2002, p. 705), studying motivation during the 1960s in North America was not considered a respectable pursuit as the field was dominated by behaviorists. “...’motivation’ was argued by them to lie outside the person in the form of reinforcers and punishers” (Locke and Latham 2002, p.705).

As the field of education evolved, the emergence of psycholinguistic theory turned attention even further away from behaviorism and toward the relationship between language and psychology to further the study of how people produce and understand language. Piaget’s widely accepted theory of cognitive development contributed to the replacement of behaviorism with theories more geared towards cognitive development. According to Keblawi (2009), one of the direct outcomes of what he calls the cognitive revolution is the increased awareness of the importance of the learning environment including the role of the teacher and learning materials - both of which emerged as central themes in my research.

Second language acquisition developments in Canada during the 1960s must have been especially influential to Gardner’s ideas on second language learning. One of the earliest French immersion programs in Canada called upon Wallace Lambert of McGill University to advise them in setting up their program in the early 1960s. Gardner is associated with Lambert - he earned his Ph.D. in psychology from McGill University in 1960 under the direction of Lambert. McGill University released research on the results of this small but promising program in 1969, (The Government

of Alberta, 2013) and Canadian immersion continued to grow. French immersion enrollment has increased since the early 1960s to over 330,000 students in all of Canada today. (The Government of Alberta, 2013). Gardner also published with Lambert on the topic of language learning motivation.

The impact of Gardner's involvement with Lambert and Canadian immersion is evident in Gardner's emphasis on integrativeness ("...an openness to the target language group..." (Gardner 2006, p. 237)) as a significant part of his second language motivation theory. In Gardner's case, French native speakers are, and have been, readily available in Canada. According to Statistics Canada (2012), "Mother tongue francophones comprised 29% of the Canadian population in 1951, 28% in 1961, 27% in 1971, 26% in 1981, 24% in 1991, 24% in 1996, 23% in 2001, and 22% in 2006." Critics claim that Gardner's emphasis on integrativeness is a drawback of his work. However, when considering his background, the French immersion model plays an important role in Gardner's experience with second language learning – of course his model would focus on integrativeness. An openness of English speakers to the French target language group is something that would contribute positively to Canada as a whole considering its historical and linguistic background of both French and English. Integrativeness, in the case of French immersion, is socially and educationally relevant. The Canadian program's success must also be attributed to the fact that it, by nature of being implemented in a country with target language speakers, encompasses both Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) as well as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS are the language skills needed for day-to-day social contact with others. These skills develop relatively quickly – sometimes in a short period of months. CALP refers to the skills needed to be able to listen, speak, read, and write about subject area content material. These skills take longer to develop – from 5 to 7 years. (Cummins 1979) The Canadian immersion program allows for the development of CALP as students are taught in what Krashen would refer to as Sheltered Subject Matter Teaching, and students also have the opportunity to practice BICS in a francophone setting in their own country. This combination of social language and academic language makes the Canadian immersion program – especially with the emphasis on the academic language which becomes more challenging as students get older, as opposed to the less cognitively demanding social language aspect. When considering Gardner's theory, the larger

context of the environment from which his ideas came must be considered. While integrativeness does not play a role in my study, it certainly was integral to the unique context of his own studies.

What Gardner began in the 1960s was becoming an accepted science in the 1970s. Gardner's work was seminal to the investigations into second language learning motivation that continued well into the 1980s. (Ushioda and Dörnyei 2012, p.397) Gardner can be considered an icon of early second language learning motivation theory not only because so much later research was based on his findings, but also because of how his critics characterized his work: "this particular approach was so dominant that alternative concepts have not been seriously considered" (Crookes and Schmidt 1991, p. 501), "the main problem with Gardner's social psychological approach appeared to be, ironically, that it was too influential" (Dörnyei 1994, p. 273).

Dörnyei describes the early 1990s as a time of widening the field of second language motivation research more and more into the realm of cognitive theory. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) began to differentiate the concepts of motivation and attitude. The internet made access to information easier than ever before, and usage of the World Wide Web was spreading like wildfire. Americans and Europeans alike were concerned with how their children compared to the tested abilities of children in other countries, and student performance, school accountability, and parental choice emerged as top policy concerns in the United States.

Many of Dörnyei's own contributions to the field appeared during the 1990s which were referred to as a "motivational renaissance" by Gardner and Tremblay (1994) and are different to the research conducted by Gardner in that they are less dependent on the quantitative, and more on the perspective on the students. Dörnyei's refers to this approach as a more situated approach to second language learning motivation that focuses on aspects of the learning context such as teaching materials, the motivational power of the teacher, and the methods employed. (2003, p. 11)

History plays a role in Dörnyei's development as well. Dörnyei's higher education was completed in 1988 in Hungary. This was a time of great change in the country as

it moved from communism to democracy. In 1989, the Hungarian government removed the barbed wire border with Austria – the beginning of the end of East Germany as thousands of East German citizens traveled through Hungary to the West. Dörnyei relates the interest of Hungarian people learning foreign to the socio-political events in Hungary at the time (Dörnyei, Csizer, Nemeth (2006, p. vii). Dörnyei, Csizer, and Nemeth also, through this examination of the unique Hungarian perspective on language learning, introduced new motivational theory, the “L2 Motivational Self System”, which incorporates the concept of “self” into a person’s ideal self, ought-to self, and the second language learning experience.

Cognitive neuroscience advancements in the 1990s must have also had an impact on Dörnyei as it became apparent to second language researchers that an understanding of cognition could be enhanced by knowing how cognition is implemented in the brain. The development of neuro-imaging techniques allowed scientists to produce maps of neural activity while the brain was performing a cognitive task. Research based on these early advances in the 1990s showed evidence that second language learning was acquired through the same neural structures responsible for the learning of the first language.(Abutalebi, 2008)

Considering basic background information on the time frames in which Dörnyei and Gardner completed their own education gave me a better understanding and a more complete view of their roles in the development of ideas in the science of motivation as a factor of second language acquisition.

2.3.1 Gardner...

Gardner’s cognitive approach to second language learning is called the socio-educational model. This model takes natural ability as well as a student’s actual motivation to learn and become fluent in a foreign language into consideration, and not specific task or classroom oriented motivation alone. Gardner (2006) explains that language courses in school are unique as they involve not only the material learned in class itself, but also a cultural component that he feels effects student motivation.

Gardner’s socio-educational model of second language acquisition is in agreement with Krashen’s model as that both revolve around the idea that learning a second

language takes a considerable amount of time, and that proficiency levels vary from student to student. The two diverge to some extent as to the role of the learner. Krashen primarily sees the learner as a language processor – with all learners having an internal language acquisition capability that can be activated to optimal use by being provided with Comprehensible Input. Ability then is dependent upon the amount of Comprehensible Input as well as the level of a student’s Affective Filter. In Krashen’s view, the student’s Affective Filter can be either high (blocking the reception of Comprehensible Input, and therefore impeding language acquisition) or low (allowing the Comprehensible Input to be processed).

Gardner sees each learner on a more individual level and says that ability, along with motivation are the key concepts behind a student’s success in learning a second language. In Gardner’s view, high motivation compliments the linguistic outcome portion of language acquisition by producing the non-linguistic outcome of low anxiety. On the other hand, low motivation impedes the linguistic outcomes of second language acquisition and produces the non-linguistic outcome of high anxiety.

Both agree that motivation plays a role in acquisition. The difference is in how Krashen and Gardner see these relationships unfolding. Krashen does not take non-linguistic outcomes into consideration, and sees anxiety not as a non-linguistic outcome, but rather as a learner-generated *impediment* (in the form of a high Affective Filter) to the internal processes of language acquisition. Gardner sees the high anxiety as a negative non-linguistic *product* of negative motivation that is separate from linguistic products.

Motivation and ability partner, according to Gardner, as factors that affect a learner’s acquisition outcomes. He explains that many people have goals, but that does not mean they are motivated. He defines a motivated person as having the following characteristics (Gardner 2006, p. 242): goal directed, persistent, having desires/wants, aroused, demonstrating self confidence, expending effort, attentive, displaying positive affect, having expectancies, having reasons/motives. If a reason does not have an association to one or more of these characteristics, it is just a reason – not motivation. “It [motivation] definitely cannot be assessed by asking individuals to give reasons for why they think learning a language is important to them.” (Gardner

2006, p. 243). Gardner (1985) says that motivation deals with "... the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity." (p.10).

Gardner might say that I am more interested in the *reasons* why students take part in my German class – not their actual motivation. However, I am not as interested in the *extent* of why the student exerts energy and time into those reasons. My concerns are more practical in nature, as my goal is to identify what it is that motivates students, apply that knowledge to my classroom, and then research why those factors are motivational to students.

I am also less concerned with the ability of individual students to acquire a second language in the sense that Gardner understands it. Consider his socio-educational model below. Language ability (which is made up of intelligence and aptitude), according to Gardner, is a factor that directly influences language outcomes (2005, p.5) Krashen says that people (he does not differentiate between intelligence level) have an innate ability to acquire language and that the innate ability that we all have develops and emerges as we are exposed to Comprehensible Input at the i+1 level.

Krashen does talk about ability in the sense of the student's ability to *produce* language, but not the ability to *acquire* it. That ability to acquire, according to Krashen, is innate. Krashen does not make language *acquisition* ability dependent upon language *production*. One of the main tenants of Gardner's research, the ability to acquire language acting as a main factor affecting a learner's acquisition outcomes, is not one that I am applying to my own research situation.

Instrumentality is another main tenant of motivation in Gardner's socio-educational model. Instrumentality refers to the learner learning a second language in order to use it for practical purposes. Basically, treating second language as a tool for other purposes. The dotted arrow from instrumentality to motivation represents the shorter range that instrumentality plays on motivation. If a learner sees learning a second language as a tool to reach a goal, then once the goal has been met, the "tool" may no longer be needed, and even cast aside. However, if the goal is an *ongoing* goal, then the "tool" will continue to be used on an ongoing basis as well.

Instrumentality, in the sense of getting a good job or a place in an engineering department at a top university, was less of a concern for my elementary and middle school students. Taking part in the state German competition turned out to be the prime motivating force. Students need to use German in order to do well at competition. Therefore, instrumentality does indeed play a role in my students' motivation. According to Gardner, a student's attitude towards the learning situation is another influence on motivation. This does not mean "quality instruction", it refers to the student's attitude towards the instruction. The teacher may be delivering A1 instruction, but if the student's attitudes towards it are negative, it will not be effective.

He lists another key aspect of motivation as the effect of integrativeness ("...an openness to the target language group..." (Gardner 2006, p. 237). He cautions us not to mix up *integrativeness* with *identification*, and clarifies that integrativeness does not mean that a learner wants to become one with the other cultural community - it only means that he or she is *open* to taking on characteristics of the second community. Integrativeness, according to Gardner (2005, p.7) is related to "...cultural background, early home experiences, child rearing characteristics...", in other words, the students' degrees of integrativeness depends much upon what has already happened at home prior to the students attending my class.

Another aspect of the important concept of integrativeness was important for me to consider: If integrativeness refers to openness towards the target language group, does Gardner feel that non-native speakers of the second language can be included in the target language group? He refers to "target language culture" and "target language speakers", but does not say "native speakers" of that language and culture.

I believe that he does only mean native speakers, as non-native speakers living in the same place as the learner would have basically the same ethno-linguistic heritage as the learner. Integrativeness is not an issue when all parties involved share the same ethno linguistic backgrounds. My students do not have many opportunities to interact with native German speakers. However, they do interact with other learners of German. We partner with German university students at nearby Rollins College of

Winter Park, Florida for German oriented field trips on a regular basis as we seek out the (often hidden!) German heritage of the state of Florida. I and the professor with whom I coordinate these field trips have christened them “German in your own backyard” field trips. My students and the university students are just at different levels of German learning, and don’t have different backgrounds. Therefore, there would not be an opportunity for the ethno-linguistic integrativeness that Gardner talks about. Keblawi (2009) lists the heavy focus of the socio-educational model on integrativeness as a limitation to the model on many fronts including the problem of components being considered as integrative in nature by some students, but instrumental by others. Keblawi also addresses my concerns for using Gardner as a lens for my particular case study as he mentions the irrelevance of integrative motivation in cases involving students who do not have direct contact with native speakers.

Even though my students and the Rollins College German students share the same ethno-linguistic backgrounds, therefore negating the possibility for integrativeness as described by Gardner, I feel that learners certainly can and do have positive identification towards non-native speakers of the language. For example, my elementary and middle students see their college-age counterparts as a German-speaking group (even though those college students are still learning themselves, albeit at a higher level than my students). My students feel that the university German students are “cool”, and seem open to taking on characteristics of that group – for example, learning more German. My students want to be part of the college age “German speaking group” that they have contact with on a regular basis.

Gardner’s research would be more applicable to my situation if my students had direct contact with native speakers of the second language they are learning, such as the Canadian situation (French and English) that Gardner often uses as an example. Integrative orientations towards and identification with the college age students are highly likely with my group of students. However, this is not the integrativeness that Gardner refers to as being a main idea of his theory.

Gardner (2005, p. 8) points out that since integrativeness deals with openness towards another linguistic group, it is socially relevant as opposed to being primarily

educationally relevant, and therefore the attitudes that come out of it would be "...less susceptible to actions of the teachers." (Gardner 2005, p.14). In other words, integrativeness, one of the main tenants of the socio educational model, will not be as helpful to me in answering my (classroom based) research questions. I want to know more about students' motivation on a classroom level. I'm interested in aspects I can influence, and their integrativeness is not one of those aspects. Since I felt that my specific situation did not meet one of the main criteria of the model (integrativeness), I felt compelled to look into other models, although Gardner's model is supported by research. The AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery) is one of Gardner's tools (Gardner and Smythe 1981) to measure integrativeness, attitudes, and motivation. It has been deemed successful, in various formats, by several researchers over the years to study second language learning motivation (Harris and Murtaugh 1999, Lett and O'Mara 1990, and Dörnyei 1998). Despite the fact that Gardner's work is so widely accepted, a socio-educational lens was not used for examining my own second language instruction because of the importance his model places on integrativeness and student aptitude in relation to success in language acquisition. (Gardner 2000)

I was looking for an alternative model which would give me more in-depth understanding of second language learning motivation in the immediate classroom setting and which was more in line with Krashen's idea of students' innate language acquisition ability. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) critiqued Gardner's model by pointing out that it did not put enough focus on educational themes. They also introduced me to the ideas of Keller, who integrates attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction into his model of motivation design. Dörnyei was another critic of Gardner's (Dörnyei 2001) and states that second language motivation research required a more education based orientation. Dörnyei's earlier work focused much more on the idea that the learning situation, rather than integrativeness, was key to the student's motivation. Dörnyei's later work also raises concerns about the appropriateness of integrativeness (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009) as it does not have any connection to more recent findings in motivational psychology or psychological research on the self. Dörnyei's ideas seemed more applicable to the avenues that opened themselves as the action research cycles unfolded.

2.3.2 Dörnyei

Dörnyei differentiates between “foreign” and “second” languages. He defines a foreign language as one where the learner has no direct contact with the second language community (Dörnyei 1994, p. 275). He would consider my instruction as foreign language instruction. However, I will continue to use Mitchell and Myles’s definition when describing what goes on in my class: The main criterion for a second language is that you learn it at a later time than your first language. (Mitchell and Myles 2004, p. 6)

Like Gardner, Dörnyei agrees that second language acquisition is not like other school subjects due to the fact that students don’t just learn the subject on its own. It is impossible to separate second language acquisition from the social aspect that accompanies the language aspect. Students who learn a second language are learning the tools and nuances they need not just to “get things done” in another country, but also the social and cultural nuances that the language brings with it. These are also important to navigating your way successfully in a foreign country. This aspect does not exist in other subjects such as math or science.

Dörnyei and Otto (1998) say that motivation does not just play an important role in the *initial decision* to start learning a second language, but also that *Motivational Influences as the student learns* are extremely important. Dörnyei and Otto are more concerned with what happens as the student learns, as it is what keeps students going in their second language learning journey. This is also the area I want to learn more about, as this is the area that I have the most influence on in the classroom. When I learn what motivates my students as they learn, and how improvements can be made to my practices to maintain and increase motivation, I believe that this will have a trickle down effect. Students will enjoy the class more and get the word out that it is a good class to take, in the process influencing their peers’ choice to take the class.

Dörnyei and Otto define motivation as “...the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised, and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out.” (Dörnyei and Otto 1998, p.64) The forces that drive this are called Motivational

Influences and these influences come into play at various times in the flow of the Process Model. Important to the Process Model is that the factors that figure into second language acquisition motivation are seen as part of a *process*. In other words, motivation comes from internal and external forces on the individual, and those forces come into play at different times. Keblawi (2009) and Oxford (1994) also affirm that motivation is not static, but that it is a process which can change over time.

Dörnyei's more recent work also concentrates on dynamic processes instead of static concepts and deals with the psychological side of motivation that links the self with action. Dörnyei (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009, pp.3-4) refers to a "self system" that incorporates a person's ideal self (what a person wants to become), ought-to self (what the student believes he or she should be. This includes attributes the student believes he or she ought to possess to meet expectations of others and avoid negative outcomes.), and the second language learning experience. If second language proficiency is part of this "ideal self", it acts as a powerful motivator as that person acts to reduce the gap between his or her current self and future self. The idea of dynamic processes being central to Dörnyei's both past and current models of second language learning motivation is one that appeals to me because it is so in tune with the action research methodology of uncovering information not in static chunks, but that the "big picture" emerges as a process.

2.3.2.1 The Process Model

Dörnyei and Ottos's Process Model of second language acquisition motivation has two parts to it: 1. the Action Sequence (behavioral processes that go into play when initial wishes are transferred into goals, then into specific intentions, action upon those intentions, then (through the actions) accomplishments, and last but not least, evaluation of the process. 2. Motivational Influences (all motivational forces that fuel the Action Sequence.) (Dörnyei and Otto 1998, p.47)

The Action Sequence

Dörnyei and Otto (1998) describe the three main phases of the Action Sequence as the Preactional Phase, the Actional Phase, and the Postactional Phase.

Preactional Phase

The Preactional Phase starts off with the learner just thinking about actions through wishes and hopes. These thoughts become more concrete once the learner sets a goal – a basic idea of what he or she would like to have happen. The goal becomes an intention once the learner assigns some commitment to reaching that goal. Once the learner has a solid intention, as well as an action plan with organized subtasks, he moves on to the next phase in Dörnyei and Otto’s Action Sequence: the Actional Phase.

Actions being driven by wishes and hopes also play a role in second language motivation in Dörnyei’s later work. However, the focus is not on the Pre Actional Phase, but is based on the psychology of self. He describes a person’s ideas of future selves –what he/she might become, what he/she wants to become, and what he/she is afraid of becoming – as integral “future self guides” (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009) that help the person move forward.

Actional Phase

According to Dörnyei and Otto, The Actional Phase is the phase where the learner first starts actually working towards realizing the goal by going through three processes. The first of those is to start carrying through on those initial subtasks organized at the end of the Preactional Phase. Another ongoing process is called appraisal, where the learner has to deal with environmental stimuli such as the teacher, the class, the subject, the material, and learning. The attitudes formed concerning one type of stimuli can easily spill over into other types of stimuli. For example, a positive attitude about the teacher of a foreign language class can spill over into a positive attitude towards the language itself.

The third part of the Actional Phase is what Dörnyei and Otto call action control. Think of an American football scenario: An offensive lineman is on action control duty as he tackles other intentions and clears the way for the intention he works for to be acted upon. Action control keeps us focused on the task at hand and redirects us when distractions pop up. Dörnyei and Otto say that action control is so important because students need to rely on this to keep working when the going gets tough.

The going gets tough when class work and homework come into play. Students, according to studies conducted by Dörnyei and Otto (1998), "...students tend to find most academic classroom activities unenjoyable and uninteresting" (p.50-51) All of these factors serve as distractions that the action control offensive lineman needs to fend off, or else they will derail the intentions the offensive lineman is trying to protect. Part of my research was to find out what motivates students in class so this derailing can be avoided as much as possible. Class work, which Dörnyei describes as having the possibility to be unenjoyable for students, includes reading. Although there is research on student motivation to read in the second language (including Mori 2002, Takase 2007, other contributors to the international journal *Reading in a Foreign Language*), there needs to be more research on the incorporation of student selected pleasure reading in the classroom and the effect it has on motivation. Krashen believes that free voluntary reading is an important part of second language acquisition, however, what is the relationship between free voluntary reading and motivation? Does student selected reading increase motivation because it gives the student a sense of autonomy? Or, because students often do not know what is appropriate for their level of language learning, is it more motivational for the teacher to limit choices as she may have more of a sense of what the student can comprehend and therefore get greater satisfaction from? This is an important consideration for future research as Dörnyei stresses the importance of class work, which includes reading, as a distraction to action control.

Appraisal and action control come together, and over time will lead to an outcome. This outcome may be right on target, and the learner has fulfilled the earliest ideas of the intention. However, it can also turn out differently than the learner had envisioned – the outcome may be modified in some way, or it may have even been given up upon, either for the time being or indefinitely. After an outcome has been attained, the learner enters the Postactional Phase.

Postactional Phase

Dörnyei and Otto (1998) describe the postactional phase as taking place after the goal has been attained or given up on, or when working towards a goal is interrupted. Here, processes that led to achievement (or termination) are evaluated. This type of evaluation is different than the evaluation that takes place during the appraisal part of

the Actional Phase. During the Postactional Phase, you are no longer actively working towards the goal and can look at it from a different perspective. In other words, you are no longer in the heat of the moment and can see the whole process from beginning to end on a continuum.

2.3.2.2 Motivational Influences

Motivational Influences are the second main part of Dörnyei and Otto's Process Model. Motivational Influences occur at several times in the Action Sequence and can either act positively on the actions (helping them to happen) or negatively (stopping them from happening). According to Dörnyei and Otto (1998), Motivational Influences include cognitive, emotional, and situational factors and come into play at different phases of the Action Sequence.

Motivational Influences in the Preactional Phase of the Action Sequence build as they effect each stage; motivational influences that spurred on the formation of the hopes and wishes stage carry those hopes and dreams into becoming informal goals.

Motivational influences in this stage carry over into adding commitment to that goal and making it an intention. If the motivational influences are not strong enough to do this, the momentum dies out and the initial hopes and dreams do not get very far in the Process Model before they are abandoned.

Think of the Motivational Influences as a wave that carry the hopes and dreams on the crest of the wave. If the hopes and dreams are to go on to become goals, the crest of that Motivational Influences wave must flow onward, and not crash back into the depths of the sea – taking the hopes and dreams down with it. The same goes as the ideas move from a goal to an intention, and so on throughout the process.

From Intention to Action: Motivational Influences in the Actional Phase...

The Actional Phase begins when the final impulse to take action overcomes the learner, and three processes begin through Motivational Influences: taking action on the subtasks that the learner planned in the Preactional Phase, appraisal of those actions, and ongoing action control.

Most of the Motivational Influences are either at the (Dörnyei 2001 a) “Language Level” or the “Learner Level” meaning that they deal with internal forces revolving around beliefs and values concerning the language, or characteristics of the individual student. The internal forces at the Language Level and the Learner Level, can, to some extent be influenced by outside forces, however, there is an area of external Motivational Influences that is much more readily influenced by outside forces – those at the “Learning Situation Level” (Dörnyei 2001 a, p. 19)

External Motivational Influences at the “Learning Situation Level” refer to the influences that are specific to an individual classroom including course-specific motivational components (the syllabus, the materials, methods, and tasks), teacher-specific motivational components (teacher personality, behavior, and style), and group-specific motivational components (characteristics of the learner group).

Dörnyei (2009), in his later work, continues to count the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, and the experience of success as key factors which make up the learning experience aspect of the second language motivational self system. Since the Learner Situation Level is one where I, as the classroom teacher, carry a great amount of influence as an external source of motivation, I will go into greater detail about more teacher-specific motivational components in a later section.

When Dörnyei was considering the idea of external motivational influences at the Learner Situation Level in the 1990s, the internet was just getting started. The internet has extended today’s students’ scope of the external environment in an education as well as a private sense. Peers and classmates are no longer necessarily surrounding the student in physical form. Limitations of time and space concerning relationships, educational or otherwise, with peers are less of an issue. It is very possible for students in modern second language learning environments to have much stimuli provided by an online external environment. This stimuli could be formal (group work with native speaking students in a target language country, or online language classes being taken to fulfill a high school or university language requirement) or informal (catching up with a target language speaking “friend” on a target language social networking site). It merits further study to find out if the current generation of students (a generation which has been exposed to the internet and social media throughout their high school and secondary education) finds online language learning

delivery methods motivating. If so, is that motivation more executive in nature? Do today's students feel motivated in their second language learning endeavors by the relationships forged over the internet? What role does social media play in language learning motivation? Could it be tapped into to increase motivation? It is important to find out how language learners' motivation is impacted by an online delivery format as well as for language teachers in the "virtual school" environment to learn best practices for motivating students to continue with language studies. The capabilities on online language learning add a new dimension to Dörnyei's Learning Situation Level.

The importance of the Learning Situation Level of student motivation is supported by Chambers (1999, p. 137) as he notes that the teacher is the key element to students' motivation: "The teacher carries an enormous burden of responsibility. ... Her approach to teaching, her personality, her power to motivate, make learning meaningful and provide something which pupils refer to as 'fun', represents the real foundation upon which pupils' judgment of the learning experience is based".

My classroom-based research showed that most students identified external Motivational Influences at the Learning Situation Level as those that motivated them most. This finding influenced me to concentrate further action research cycles on the students' Learning Situation level of student motivation. Based on those cycles of action research, I was able to make changes to my classroom practices in order to better tap into the motivational potential within my students.

My study was conducted on younger students. It is relevant to know if other younger second language students in other programs also identify younger learners' motivating factors at the Learning Situation Level. Nikolov's 1999 study of elementary Hungarian children found evidence that motivation took place at what Dörnyei would classify as the Learning Situation Level. She found that elementary learners were mainly motivated by factors revolving around the teacher, activities, and materials. Mihaljevic Djigunovic (1993, 1995) also reports that the immediate language learning environment is the most important factor to elementary students' motivation. These researchers found that younger students provided little proof of being motivated by instrumentality or integrativeness. It seems that these types of motivational influences become more relevant as students progress through adolescence and get closer to the

world of work (thinking about finding a good job, writing a resume). Only one of my students, William, specifically mentioned that he was learning German for his resume, and that even if there was no German competition, he would take German for the sake of his resume. This student is a seventh grader whose father is a high ranking executive at the German multinational company Siemens. He surely entered my German class with motivational factors at the Language Level firmly in place. Another student, a fourth grader made one reference to the idea that people who know foreign languages have more job opportunities, but he did not specify German in particular, nor did he refer to himself in particular. His statement was more of a generalization.

Nikolov (2002) indicated that students began to indicate more instrumental motivational factors starting at age 11 (the fifth grade in the United States), but stresses that the motivational influences in the classroom continue to be considerable even up to age 14 (Nikolov 2000). Hardi (2004) in Nikolov (2009) studied Hungarian language learners ages 9-14 and also reported that in younger learners, the classroom environment was key to motivation while with older children, more instrumental factors contributed to motivation.

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in England says, that concerning second language learning, “motivation, progress and attainment in primary and secondary schools were improved by creative approaches to learning” (2010). Ofsted (2010a) also reports that “Pupils...responded well to practical opportunities for learning, when visual approaches and kinaesthetic skills were encouraged to compensate for any lack of understanding of the language. These pupils felt they were included and capable of succeeding.” (Office for Standards in Education, 2010a, p. 15) Dörnyei would consider their examples to be at the Learning Situation Level because they deal with the classroom situation. The kinesthetic skills the Ofsted study mentions as being so motivational to students were also a major motivational factor identified by my students. (TPRS instruction)

When considering the Learning Situation level, which proves to be so important to motivation during the elementary years, it is important to think to the future. More and more elementary students are carrying out their studies online. (Consider the

Florida Virtual School program which begins online instruction in Kindergarten)
What impact does this development have on motivation at the Learning Situation level? What are best practices concerning motivation for educators in the role of the online teacher? Will online second language teaching become more common for elementary students? How will this language instruction differ from high school online language instruction? As the field of online education for elementary students continues to grow, the research on how teachers can, at the Learning Situation Level, employ best practices when it comes to student motivation in an online learning environment must increase as well.

Motivational Influences in the Postactional Phase...

The Postactional Phase takes place after the action has been completed, and is basically the learner looking back at how things went. Dörnyei and Otto's Process Model takes four Motivational Influences into consideration in the Postactional Phase. All of these are involved in evaluation. They include a group of individual attributional factors including past experiences with ability and effort that learners use to gauge future efforts. The learner's feelings of self confidence (belief in themselves and their abilities), self-competence (believing that you've got what it takes to overcome challenges), and self-worth (how you view your own worth as a person) also come into play as Motivational Influences.

Motivational Influences in the Postactional Phase became very apparent after a second round of classroom-based action research was carried out to find out why students were so motivated by the state German competition, especially in the areas of self-confidence and self-competence. Students proved to be motivated by a phenomenon I label "beating the big kids" that emerged as they reflected on their performance at the state German competition. Students' sense of confidence and competence both played a role in their motivation to not only do well at the state German competition, but to return to it the next year. In other words, "after the competition is before the competition" – the Process Model can work in a cyclical fashion. The Motivational Influences in the Postactional Phase, in the case of my students, also serve as Motivational Influences for the Pre Actional Phase. Detailed information on the phenomenon of "beating the big kids" will come in chapter four.

2.3.2.3 Dörnyei Conclusion

I related well to the Process Model because it could apply to several instances in my personal teaching situation. I felt I could use the same basic criteria to look at either the “big picture” of my students’ motivation or only the tiny details. This is important as I couldn’t have known in advance what students were going to say/write in the follow up interviews/questionnaires. No matter how students described their motivation, having a basic understanding of the Process Model helped me in better understanding what students were communicating to me and gave me further tool to consider when analyzing the results of my research. Now that I am more aware of the processes that keep motivation rolling along, it will be easier to identify and facilitate those processes in the future.

The information learned from Dörnyei has been used in two ways. First of all, the way Dörnyei and Otto break second language acquisition motivation into minute steps has helped me to see the areas that affect students overall – both in the classroom, at home, and in their own minds. This has assisted me very much in the formulation of my student research instruments (questionnaires, interviews, etc.) as I understand that motivation is not an isolated construction, but rather a flowing construct that formulates over time, with one part influencing the next. This information has also helped me in recognizing patterns in and relationships between Motivational Influences within and between individual responses. Dörnyei’s ideas about the relationship between language performance and motivation are also complimentary to Krashen’s. Dörnyei sees Motivational Influences (including a certain amount of anxiety in various forms at various levels of the Process Model) as part of the process that affects language outcomes, not as an outcome itself.

Secondly, the information on the Process Model has also helped me by adding another dimension to the fine-tuning of my classroom instruction: I not only implemented what was learned about second language acquisition, I made sure my classroom delivery was infused with practices that take student motivation into consideration. Understanding the Process Model has served as a backdrop to being able to analyze the motivational conditions of my own classroom and the motivational strategies that were necessary for implementation.

2.3.3 Implementing Motivational Strategies in the Classroom

Motivational strategies are (Dörnyei 2001 a, p. 2) "...methods and techniques to generate and maintain the learners' motivation." These practices concerning teacher enhancement of student motivation go hand in hand with the ideas behind second language learning motivation. These ideas all fall into the realm of Dörnyei's Learning Situation Level of student motivation. As opposed to the Language Level and the Learner Level, The Learning Situation Level is the level that I, from my external standpoint as teacher, can influence most. The Motivational Influences that act upon students' motivation at this level can either help propel the wave of motivation forward, or make it crash.

I am interested in positively influencing students' motivation to learn by gaining a better understanding of and increasing their intrinsic motivation. Brophy (1998, p.126) recommends tapping into students' intrinsic motivation in three ways: 1. modifying classroom management and teaching styles, 2. planning learning activities that students are more likely to find intrinsically rewarding, and 3. modifying the design of other classroom activities (not directly related to the ones they find most intrinsically rewarding) to enhance their appeal.

The research which indicated that FASG (the state German competition) is the prime motivating factor for students to take and remain in my class was a good start to tapping into intrinsic motivation and represented the first step of planning of learning activities that students would find rewarding. Going to the Sweet Briar College TPRS training and my research of second language acquisition allowed me to arm myself with the knowledge (both classroom-based and text-based) to be able to plan activities and lessons around this prime motivating factor represents the modification of further classroom activities.

Modifying classroom management and teaching styles came into play next. It is here that I explored, through text-based research, how I, as the classroom teacher, can make changes in what I do to promote student motivation.

2.3.3.1 Dörnyei's Four Steps to Motivational Teaching Practices

At the Learning Situation Level, Dörnyei (2001 a) describes four basic steps to implementing motivational teaching practices: Creating basic motivational conditions, generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive retrospective evaluation.

Step One to Motivational Teaching Practice: Creation of Motivational Conditions

Dörnyei describes the creation of motivational conditions in the classroom as the building block for implementing motivational teaching practices. It was necessary to ensure that I was on the right track before moving on with my research. I needed to make sure that my students felt that the basic motivational conditions are being met in my classroom. This was done by listing Dörnyei's specific strategies and asking students to indicate whether "yes", "somewhat", or "no" if I, as the teacher, am carrying out these basic strategies. The actual survey can be found in the Appendix under Appendix 2: Basic Motivational Conditions Survey. As a control, besides listing the specific strategies, general strategies that related to the specific ones are also listed.

In order to find how students rated the state of Basic Motivational Conditions in my class, results were tallied for each response for each question. The results of the main strategy to the results of the specific strategies listed under the main strategies were then compared. This triangulation acted as a validity check of students' answers. The main strategies are in bold print, the strategies specific to that one main strategy follow the item in bold print (See Appendix 2)

The results confirmed that, in general, basic motivational conditions were being provided for in my classroom. Had they not confirmed this, a new cycle of action research would have evolved as an attempt to rectify the situation. The Basic Motivational Conditions survey served as a guidepost for me and allowed me to continue my investigation of how teachers can improve motivational practices in the classroom knowing that a motivational base was provided for in my class. Thirteen students took part in this survey given on December 2, 2009. Students indicated one

area which can be improved upon: allowing students to personalize the classroom environment.

Future action research topics will include an examination into the nature of the personalization of the classroom environment. I associate “decoration” with “personalization”. However, does “personalization of the classroom” mean “decoration” to my students? Are there best practices concerning students personalizing the classroom environment? Are there practical considerations on the part of school administration? What are students doing now to personalize other classrooms? How would students personalize the environment in German class? Does it count as personalization of the environment if students are given specific parameters concerning a theme for this personalization? A close examination of the topic of “personalization of the classroom” would not have seemed necessary to me without having had conducted this action research.

Although students did not rate the motivational conditions of my classroom as perfect, it was apparent that the basic requirements for a motivational classroom were generally fulfilled in the eyes of my students. I was then able, with confidence, to go forward with further action research concerning my students. Knowing that the state German competition is the prime motivating factor for students in my class, the categories that emerged from this initial investigation were investigated. Then, taped oral interviews were conducted to shed more light on what students said motivates them in my German class. The categories that emerged from both the initial questionnaire as well as the interviews were then the ones given more attention to through further book-based research in the chapter highlighting my results – chapter four. Then, further triangulation was carried out by setting up an observational system to note in which areas students are motivated to participate in German class itself. These results are shared in chapter four as well.

Step Two to Motivational Teaching Practice: Generating Initial Motivation

Once it had been established that basic motivational conditions were present in the classroom, it was necessary to make sure I was doing my part to generate positive student attitudes towards my class as part of the generation of initial motivation in my

daily practice. Dörnyei includes the consideration of instrumental values in igniting that initial spark by making students aware of how learning the second language can be useful to them. Although my young students do attach an instrumental value to learning the language, it is a more short term goal (doing well at the state German competition). However, this does not dilute the potency of the goal. My classroom-based action research has shown me that students do indeed see learning German through an instrumental lens – making a good showing at the state German competition has proven to be a prime motivational factor. The next step for me is to work towards providing the motivation for students to see greater goals in continuing German as they get older. I would like for students to develop longer term goals, and for the state German competition, although it is a major motivation force now, to grow into a motivational influence flowing towards a greater goal concerning fluency in the language.

Increasing learners' goal-orientedness is vital to generating initial motivation. Dörnyei (2001 a, p.59) really gave me food for thought concerning increasing students' goal-orientedness: "...research has repeatedly found that in an ordinary class many if not most students do not really understand (or accept) why they are involved in a learning activity." As I stated before, I have a fantastic group of students, most of who are extremely cooperative and seem to enjoy school as a whole experience very much. However, their experiences at school are quite different than the ones I make each day. School is their social arena as well as an academic area, and, for many, the social may take precedence to the academic. Dörnyei (2001 a, p. 61) suggests that motivation can be greatly affected in a positive light if the group sits down and talks out the various goals in class – both individual and institutional. Then the group identifies success criteria for these goals, and finally rates their progress throughout the year attaining these goals.

Dörnyei (2009) addresses goals in his later work as well and makes it clear that goals are not the same as a person's ideal self. A person's goals are part of that ideal self, but the future, ideal self is larger in scope than the goals alone. (p.15). This is evident in my own classroom based research as most students refer to winning the state German competition (a definite goal), but also feel strongly about being a team player

(an attribute of their ideal self). That goal is only part of their envisioned future self, which encompasses much more than just reaching the goal of winning.

I felt compelled to find out more about my students' personal goals in my class, not only to help them feel as if they had a stake in the class itself, but also out of curiosity as to how the information they provided could assist me in further pinpointing motivational factors. This round of action research was yet another method of triangulation. Dealing with motivation, but in a slightly different format – focused on goals students brought with them to class instead of specifically on classroom-based motivational factors. In revisiting these goals from time to time, students can reflect upon what is motivating them to achieve these goals, or upon which forces have a more demotivating influence. This also sharpened the picture of motivation I formed for individual students as well for the group.

The goals of my students were examined in two ways, through a written questionnaire as well as through group goal discussions. On the questionnaire, students were asked to discuss the following four questions: 1. Why do you want to learn German? 2. What do you want to do with German in your immediate future? 3. What do you want to do with German when you are older? 4. What are some of your personal goals in learning German?

Fourteen students responded to this questionnaire. The great majority of students' goals focused on the state German competition in one way or another. There are more than 14 responses to each question, because most students wrote about more than one reason for each question.

As for the responses to “Why do you want to learn German?”, students had varied responses: two listed communicating with other people, three said that they learned languages for enjoyment, four are learning German so they can visit Germany, one noble soul is learning to teach her family, one stated that she is learning it to talk with family members, two just want to learn German because they enjoy German class, one stated that it helps her in history class, one mentioned the state German competition as her reason for wanting to learn German, another student listed just wanting to know as many languages as possible, and three said that German would “help” them in the future, but gave no details about what form that “help” may take.

Seven students of the fourteen listed competing in the state German competition (known as FASG: Florida Association of Students of German) as a response to “What do you want to do with German in the immediate future?”. One said she wants to use German to confuse people when they talk to her, one wants to use it to do well in class, two plan on using their German to impress people, three plan on having conversations with their family members, two want to go to Germany, and one plans on taking German in high school.

As far as the future is concerned, students had definite ideas about what they want to do with German. Three students want to be able to speak it to “others”. These three students did not specify Germans in particular. Four students specifically stated that they wanted to be able to communicate with Germans, six students want to go to Germany when they are older, one plans on using it in college, and the same student plans on using it in high school. Two see themselves using German to get a job. (The father of one of these respondents is a high ranking executive at Siemens.) Three students plan on teaching German to others, two tricksters say they will use German to talk to others who don’t understand the language, and one student plans on simply understanding the language when she is older.

Nine students shared the same personal goal: to become fluent in German. One aims to use correct grammar, one has the goal of getting a job dealing with German, two list that they want to be able to communicate with others (again, they did not specify communicating with Germans), one wants to extend her vocabulary, two want to be able to read German, one boy wants to pronounce everything correctly, one’s only personal goal is to do well at the state German competition, and one has the goal to somewhat understand the language.

Besides the questionnaire, students and I also had goal discussions as well. The first goal discussion (See transcript in Appendix 5) took place on January 7, 2010, and revolved around short term goals for the month of January 2010. This was a student led discussion, and student goals revolved exclusively around the upcoming state German competition.

Students’ two goals were oriented towards the state German competition: to memorize their poems as well as get started on their 3D art projects. Further goal

setting discussions took place on the first Wednesday of February, March, and April of 2010 and were similarly based around succeeding at the state German competition. These goal discussions made it apparent that the state German competition has much more of an effect on students' motivation than ever anticipated. Would the state German competition have been such a driving factor of the goal discussions had they been initiated in September instead of January? September marks the beginning of the school year. January is a point when many students start looking towards the end of the year. The state German competition takes place annually in spring. The timing of the goal discussion may have been a deciding factor concerning the students' pinpointing of the German competition as a topic of discussion. However, when the same questionnaire was administered in September of the following school year, FASG still was on the radar as a top motivating factor. The only difference is that it had been replaced as the top motivating factor by TPRS methods.

Another aspect of generating initial motivation is to make classroom materials relevant to learners. "...one of the most demotivating factors for learners is when they have to learn something that they cannot see the point of because it has no seeming relevance whatsoever to their lives."(Dörnyei 2001 a, p. 63) This goes right along with Krashen's idea of "enterprises" :(1992, p. 22) "...problems that students genuinely want to solve, problems that naturally entail reading, writing, and discussion." My initial classroom-based research pointed towards the right enterprise for teaching German – the state German competition. However, I felt that one more, final, survey asking them point blank to name ONE thing that motivates them in German class. I administered this survey on March 24, 2010. As Dörnyei (2001 a, p. 63) says, "Find out what your students' goals are and what topics they want to learn about, the build these into your curriculum as much as possible."

Of the 17 responses, two students indicated that TPRS instruction was the main motivator, two answered fun/joking around, and 13 answered FASG (the state German competition). These results confirmed that the state German competitor is the primary motivating force in class. Again, the timing of this survey (close to the actual competition) could be the cause for students' indication of it as a motivating force. This is not in any way discounting their responses – only pointing out that this motivating force may be short term in nature based on the relatively close temporal

proximity of the competition. Further research that took place examined which attributes of the competition are motivating. The results of this classroom-based research as well as literature-based research that helped me to better understand student responses are shared in chapter four.

The final component to generating initial motivation in the second language classroom revolves around helping student to create realistic beliefs about their progress in second language learning. Dörnyei (2001 a, p. 67) states, “Unrealistic beliefs about how much progress to expect and how fast, can function like ‘time bombs’ at the beginning of a language course because of the inevitable disappointment that is to follow.”

This is a topic that was never thought about before reading Dörnyei. It could very well have been that many of my students were suffering from such “time bombs” and not saying anything about it because they doubted their own intelligence for doing so. Especially since so many of them listed fluency as a goal. Dörnyei suggested (Dörnyei 2001 a, p. 68) finding out what students beliefs concerning language learning are by using a short questionnaire designed by Elaine Horwitz called the “Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory” or, BALLI. Professor Horwitz granted me permission to use the BALLI in my research in a March 30, 2012 email and provided me with an electronic copy of the BALLI 2.0. (The BALLI version featured in Dörnyei is an earlier version.) The BALLI 2.0 consists of 44 statements, however due to the young age of my research participants, I opted to focus on only some of the statements. I felt that 44 statements would seem overwhelming to them. Slight changes were made to some statements to reflect my subject matter (BALLI 2.0 is meant for students learning English) as well as clarity for my students. I administered selected statements from the BALLI to 13 of my students through anonymous questionnaires that contained no identifying information and used the results as a way to start a videotaped discussion in which we reviewed answers as a group. The main idea of this discussion was to dispel erroneous beliefs, and help students to define “success” in foreign language learning– meaning that success does not equal complete fluency.

This exercise also served as a first attempt at working with both written survey material as well as a taped and transcribed conversation as a data source. After transcribing the data, I initially felt that I talked too much, and did not let students talk enough, however, after careful consideration, pure student data was not the goal of this survey and the accompanying videotaped discussion session. It was to help identify “time bombs”, as Dörnyei calls them, ticking away in my classroom and to disarm them. This initial work served as not only a “practice round” for me, but also for my students, making them more comfortable with the idea of a video camera in the classroom.

Results of the BALLI

The initial, questionnaire format results of the sections of the BALLI I selected were extremely helpful in giving me a better picture of student language learning beliefs. While all of the questions open up doors that would be beneficial to examine, I chose only a few of the questions to address with my students. Focusing on all of the BALLI questions would make for a very long discussion for elementary and middle school students. I instead focused on 11 main questions which seemed to lend themselves to finding out more about student motivation.

I used a power point presentation based on these 11 questions to give students a visual account of their answers. This served as the springboard of the conversation. The transcript of the BALLI based discussion is in Appendix 4.

It was a pleasant surprise to find that students generally held healthy foreign language beliefs about themselves and learning German in my class. The results for each BALLI statement are in Appendix 3. However the results are not necessarily the end use of this tool. Besides opening a window into students’ beliefs and giving me the opportunity to dispel myths, it also served as a spring board for getting closer to the topic at hand – student motivation in my German class. Several categories emerged from the discussion, most of those revolving around teaching techniques, which were mentioned on 26 occasions during the 43 minute long class discussion.

For the majority of those occasions, techniques were mentioned in a positive manner, including acting out stories (Students are referring to the TPRS method, which had

only been tried out a very few times in class), high levels of class participation (also indicative of TPRS), interaction between students as well as between students and teacher, conversation (Students made it clear that conversation needs to be real and meaningful - “you never know what to expect”. Real conversation is not pre-planned. Students also spoke about the importance of usefulness of classroom language: “It gets used somehow, and usefulness is what it’s really all about”), movement throughout the room, “physical stuff” (again referring to TPRS activities). Examining these results made it clear that this new method of teaching was worth further inquiry on my part. FASG (Florida Association of Students of German - the state German competition), reading stories, and reading/writing/speaking as varying ways of experiencing language were also mentioned as ways the language was used in class.

Students also laughed a lot during the discussion. Students laughed, individually or as a group, 50 times throughout the 43 minute discussion. Dörnyei (2001a) says that humor is a component of a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere and a tool for improving that atmosphere. I interpret the laughter of my own students as an indicator of a low Affective Filter. Students feel comfortable enough in class to laugh at jokes, as well as make many jokes of their own. This also means that they are paying attention as they are able to catch the meaning of small jokes as they come along. When I say jokes, I am not implying that I am a comedian, preparing funny material for my classes. As you can see in the transcripts of class discussions, humor comes from the situations at hand, and is not in joke format, but is more in a relaxed atmosphere that tells students that not everything needs to be taken as extremely serious – including ourselves.

Negative connotations were attached to “just sitting there” in class, reading textbooks (textbooks are used in other foreign language classes, but not in German), rote memorization of vocabulary words (students explained that this happened often in other classes, and much less in German), and the teacher talking too much.

I was able to identify theory in my data. William states “...when you do the German, you know, you want to learn something, for example, the stories, we don’t know a word in the story. You want to have a story that’s a little above your level so you learn the little area you’re not familiar with.” This is a perfect example of Krashen’s

i+1 theory. I had obviously begun to integrate these theories into class, proof being that students were describing these theories as taking place in classroom practice. Another instance of proof of integration of Krashen's ideas were the student references to "physical stuff" and "acting out stories". This referred to the TPRS method recommended by Krashen.

Students felt it was important to use the language in class. "It [German] gets used somehow, and usefulness is what it's really all about.", "...you've got to put it [German] to use somehow. Or else it's pointless", "You've got to put it to use in different ways." I discovered more detailed information from students concerning the ways of using German in class which they found motivational when I gave students the Motivational Questionnaire, and with the follow-up taped discussion as well. The state German competition was also mentioned on two separate occasions during this discussion.

Step Three to Motivational Teaching Practices: Maintaining and Protecting Motivation

Maintaining and Protecting Motivation is Dörnyei's (2001a) third step in implementing motivational teaching practices. I again refer to the action control offensive lineman pushing off any counterproductive obstacles that would derail the student's motivation necessary to achieving his or her goals. I, as the classroom teacher, am very much the action control offensive lineman as I have so much influence about what goes on in class. I play a major part in student motivation in the classroom. So far, the basic conditions were found to be in place, and strategies were being implemented to further optimize the generation of initial motivation (dispelling false foreign language beliefs, defining student and group goals, and personalizing the curriculum towards the interests of individuals in class). The Actional Phase seemed well underway and students' motivation, sparked in the Preactional phase, had then to be bolstered by new motivational influences. – many of which are in my control as the classroom teacher.

Increasing student involvement is one way Dörnyei describes for maintaining and protecting motivation, and students made mention of it in the very first videotaped student discussion. Students explained in seven different instances (December 9, 2009

BALLI discussion) that interactivity and “acting stuff out” was important to them. They explained that they did not enjoy “just sitting there” as the teacher did most of the talking. It was necessary to make sure that I was planning lessons for the future that made the students an essential part. Dörnyei says that class discussions are a good example (2001a, p. 77) as the students who take part in them find them interesting, and those who sit on the sidelines do not. I need to continue with practices like the ones observed by students and mentioned in the December 9, 2009 BALLI discussion. For example, as Amy said, “...you’re like, all around the room, and you’re talking to every person, like you’re talking to one person individually, and then you’ll go to another person, and then you’ll talk to the whole class.” In specific, Dörnyei suggests selecting tasks that involve physical movement from each participant. This was a deciding factor for me that TPR and TPRS were appropriate methods for my class. This served as yet another theoretical link between the second language teaching strategies which were adopted (Krashen), and the second language motivational strategies (Dörnyei).

Increasing self confidence is a further way to maintain and protect motivation. Dörnyei harmonizes with the teachings of Krashen in stressing the importance of confidence in the second language classroom: “...in order for students to be able to focus on learning with vigour and determination, they need to have a healthy self-respect and need to believe in themselves as learners.” (Krashen 2001a, pp. 86-87) Anxiety in the second language classroom only serves to raise the Affective Filter and thwart attempts to gain proficiency in the language. Dörnyei tells of four distinct ways that a teacher can help to build students’ self confidence: providing instances where students can experience success, providing encouragement, reducing anxiety, and teaching students learning strategies.

Dörnyei gives teachers strategies to reduce and even remove these fear factors in the second language learning classroom, including the avoidance of social comparison. A social comparison is comparing the performance of one student, or group of students, to another. Such a comparison creates “...a mindset in the student whereby everything is looked at critically through others’ (imagined) eyes.” (Dörnyei, 2001a, p. 92). It has been my experience that even when students are at the positive end of such social comparison, it still raises anxiety, as they realize that just because they are at the

positive end now, they could be receiving the negative end the next time. Thus they will work hard to stay at the positive end, often by making sure that the others remain at the negative end of the comparison.

Such a scenario sets the stage for the next field: competition. When a student believes that he can only stay at the top when others are pushed down, he will make avoiding failure his goal, and not language learning. Dörnyei suggests playing down competition and playing up cooperation. This is something that happens at the annual state German competition. Yes, it is a competition, but students from one school work together as a group. In order to be successful at competition, my students must cooperate with one another to earn points in various categories. Individual achievements contribute to the group achievement. As they are all working for a common goal, they work together for the mutual benefit of their school winning the competition. Their collaborative learning and support of one another make a big difference. The aspect of competition turned out to be an important factor for students in choosing FASG as a motivating factor for attending German class.

Brophy also explains that there are appropriate forms of competition, saying that it brings excitement to the classroom. Although he warns against it in most educational circumstances, he acknowledges that it can serve as a motivational force in the form of “student team learning methods” (1998, p. 119). These methods capitalize on the thrill of competition as well as the benefits of cooperating to make the win. The state German competition represents this mix well. Students must work as strong members of a team in order to come out on top in the end. Individual successes in various competition categories result in high team scores. Brophy describes such methods as consistently showing positive effects on student achievement and reports that such methods contribute to prosocial interaction, positive outcomes in individual self-esteem, academic self confidence, and an increased liking for classmates as well as the class itself. This initial contact with the positive side of competition has led me to the beginning of an understanding as to why the state German competition has emerged as such a motivating factor in my class. Further literature based research into competition, as well as other factors, will be examined in chapter four.

Helping students to maintain a positive social image is another way to keeping the waves of motivation moving as students move toward their goals. As Krashen and Dörnyei have pointed out, students' positive image in front of their peers is paramount to them, and failure can hurt on many levels – personal as well as public. According to Dörnyei, the teacher can do a lot to not only protect the students' self images, but also to enhance them as well. His later work explains the importance of the student's image of self as projected onto the ideal future self. The ability of the student to imagine a successful future self is key to actually becoming that ideal future self (2009).

Dörnyei (2001a) feels that cooperation between students is an extremely important factor in maintaining motivation. Cooperation plays a great role in the cohesiveness of the group in question, causing students to tend to like one another because they belong to the group, regardless of their differences. Consider the age differences between my elementary and middle school students – 9 year olds to 14 year olds. Despite the group being very heterogeneous concerning age groups and interests, they still feel as one when it comes to cooperating to reach the final goal – winning the state German competition.

The solidarity students feel grows as they reach common goals and depend upon one another in the process of reaching those goals. This interdependence factor, often labeled by students as “team effort”, proved to be a very important one to almost all students taking part in the competition. Cooperating classmates also have a higher success expectancy rate as they know they can rely on the strengths of the group to get them through. Individual strengths are valued, adding a sense of feeling needed to each contributor, and a sense of “I'd better put more into this!” for those who aren't exerting themselves as much as they could, as team members are judged according to their commitment to the team. Group cohesion is associated with a positive evaluation of the learning environment (Clement, Dörnyei, Noels 1994) and could be a factor in the students' positive appraisal of the motivational climate of the classroom in the Basic Motivational Conditions survey (see appendix 2). Several students mentioned team effort in the second round of oral interviews that took place. Students felt a sense of urgency to give all they could in order to support not only their own chance of winning, but the chance of the team. This leads into what Dörnyei (2001a, p. 101)

calls “effort-based attributions”, which play an important role in the fourth and final section of the teacher’s role in student motivation, self evaluation.

Cooperative tasks are defined by Dörnyei (2001a, p.101-102) as being those which happen in groups of 3-6 students; where students can only complete the task if they rely on one another (working towards a single end product, working towards a team grade in addition to an individual grade), each team member is given a specific role, resources are shared, and learners have been giving in-class training on group skills. Performance at the state German competition could certainly be considered a cooperative task as the school only wins if the group members perform well individually.

Cooperative Learning is defined as “...group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others” (Olsen and Kagan 1992, p.8) Oxford (1997, p.444) describes the relationships in the Cooperative Learning setting as “Individual is accountable to the group and vice versa; teacher facilitates, but group is primary”. This description can very well be applied to how students go about taking part in the state German competition: individuals do their own parts, students help each other to get ahead as a group, I facilitate though classroom activities as well as monitoring progress of individuals, the group competes as individuals, and the final score for the group is comprised of those individual scores.

Taking all of this into consideration, the FASG aspect of my class, as a whole, is very cooperative in nature. The class certainly is traveling towards a pre-determined final product: in my eyes, increased fluency. In the eyes of the students, however: success at the state German competition. According to a further round of classroom based research, one reason FASG serves as a prime motivating factor is this sense of cooperative mission. I will revisit cooperative learning in a later section of this thesis dealing with the interpretation of the results of this additional classroom based research.

As far as the learner autonomy aspect of maintaining motivation is concerned, choice is key. Learners should be allowed choices in as many aspects of the learning process as possible. Dörnyei (2001a, 104), suggests starting off by giving students an assortment of safe choices to choose from, then allowing them, as they grow and learn about what makes for a good choice, to modify the choices given to them, and then finally come up with choices of their own. Learner autonomy turned out to play an important role for some students who took part in the state German competition. The state German competition (FASG) was listed as the top motivating factor by students; however, research showed that it was not teacher-led handling of FASG in class that was motivating, but rather the student-controlled aspect of the competition that took place outside of the classroom. More information on this comes in chapter four.

Step Four to Motivational Teaching Practices: Encouraging Positive Self-Evaluation

Having motivational conditions in the classroom is the beginning of creating an optimally motivating atmosphere for learning. The “finishing touch” to such an atmosphere is to empower students to evaluate their past performances, giving them direction for the future. Dörnyei finds there to be four ways (Dörnyei 2001a, p. 118) that teachers can use student self-evaluation in making their classroom more motivating: teach students how to use their successes and their failures constructively, help students in gaining more satisfaction from their successes, learn how to best give students feedback in a way that will promote further learning, and use grades and rewards in a manner that promotes student motivation.

Dörnyei reminds teachers to steer students towards seeing failures as temporary shortcomings, and encourage them to see success as a reflection of their personal efforts – something they have control over. However, in order to get students to attribute their successes to personal effort, teachers need to arm students with the skills and strategies that will spur on students’ own effort to motivate themselves. Teachers also need to not accept it when students get stuck on attributing failures and successes to ability. Not everybody has the same levels of abilities, but everyone has the capacity to put effort into acquiring a second language. One student described this during our December 9, 2009 discussion in class as he told about how he felt that second language acquisition had little to do with aptitude: “Well, aptitude, I think you

have the aptitude to do anything. You can't just say, 'I can do this in German, but I can't do that with calculus.' You know, you have an aptitude to learn foreign languages or anything...." In other words, he sees motivational attributions as being effort based, not ability based.

Part of encouraging self evaluation, Dörnyei says, is that the group needs to review as a class what has been achieved in general, not just what was written down as a goal. Dörnyei says that having students make a visual product to gain public attention is worthwhile, and I couldn't agree more. My students take part in the state German competition, and have enjoyed the individual medals and group trophies they have received due to their hard work each year. Nothing can replicate the feeling of receiving a trophy in front of 500 other German students – all of whom are older than my students. This great feeling has proven to be, according to my research, a great motivator in getting students to do their best at competition.

A final suggestion Dörnyei gives in creating motivation through positive self-evaluation is for teachers to give out rewards and grades in a motivating manner. He sees rewards as very useful when used appropriately. According to Dörnyei (2001 a, p.130), appropriate use of rewards includes not using them too often, making sure the reward has a visual representation that students can share with others, rewarding students with something relevant to them (in other words, ask for students feedback when choosing rewards), giving those rewards for activities that have required expended creativity and engagement on the part of the student, and using rewards as an incentive to get students to try new things they might not have attempted without the promise of the reward. The tangible reward of receiving a trophy at the state German competition is extrinsic in nature. Deci and Ryan (2000) further deconstruct this type of extrinsic motivation and describe it as introjected regulation. This type of extrinsic motivation deals with activities performed due to an outside source (in my case these activities are part of our German class) that the student has incorporated into his or her self. This falls right into line with Dörnyei's "L2 Motivational Self System", which incorporates the concept of "self" into a person's ideal self, ought-to self, and the second language learning experience.

Brophy cautions about the use of rewards, as giving them does not always increase the value the student places on the learning itself, but rather links getting the learning over with to get to the reward students do value. In other words, students might not learn to value the learning for itself. Now, one could argue that no matter if rewards are good or bad, students are getting the work done. However, this represents behavior modification, and not motivation.

However, not all kinds of rewards lead to behavior modification, rewards can actually be beneficial in a motivational sense. The danger lies, according to Brophy, in the kinds of rewards that are offered. Extrinsic rewards that are very flashy, given for mere participation, and ones that are totally unrelated to the behaviors tend to lead to decreases in motivation. (Brophy 1998, p. 109) Rewards like these, says Brophy, especially in an educational setting, could possibly lead children to believe that the behavior extrinsic rewards are rewarding must be behavior that people do not normally exhibit on their own, and therefore must be “bought” in order for it to occur. (1998, p.109) This undermining of intrinsic motivation is the last message I, as a teacher, want to give students.

Brophy suggests that extrinsic rewards could be better used by implementing them in a different way. Providing them as a surprise at the end of a successfully completed activity doesn't turn the rewards into a carrot on a stick, but rather into a special “goodie” that students weren't expecting. I feel that the lure of success at the state German competition would be considered an effective reward by Brophy. First of all, winning is not guaranteed. In order to even have a chance at winning, mastery of learning objectives and skills is absolutely necessary. Participation alone doesn't cut it when students are up against older students from high schools from across the state of Florida. Also, as acquiring the language is used not only at competition, but in combination with other types of events (field trips, concerts, communicating with university level near-peers, German movie evenings), students do not experience their learning of German as useful for the sole purpose of winning at competition.

I also feel that Dörnyei (2001 a, p.130) would find the winning of the German competition an acceptable reward as the opportunity to win comes but once a year (it is not happening at close intervals which would cause winning to lose its

“specialness”), it certainly has a visual representation -the trophy itself (if students do indeed win), and the relevancy of winning has been proven in my classroom-based research. Students said several times that “winning” was one reason that FASG was indeed such a motivating factor. Also, the competition does require extra work at home as well as a huge dose of creativity (for the 3D art project and the Talent Show) in order have a chance.

The Four Steps to Motivatioanl Teaching Practices:

Conclusion

Dörnyei is not recommending that a teacher take all of his suggestions for incorporating the four steps to motivational teaching practices and pack them into the curriculum. “What we need is quality rather than quantity.” (Dörnyei 2001a, p. 136) What was done here is a basic review of his ideas, an examination into what other authors say, and a commentary on the areas that are already being incorporated. Throughout this process, more information was gathered concerning suggestions which were less familiar. Dörnyei’s checklist is included (in Appendix 10) as a visual breakdown of all of his suggestions.

2.3.4 Keller’s ARCS Model of Motivational Design

I was introduced to the work of Keller through Crookes and Schmidt (1991), and Dörnyei mentions the work of John Keller throughout his book “Teaching Research and Motivation”. What I read interested me, and when it was found that Mr. Keller is a professor at Florida State University, I thought I’d contact him personally to learn even more. Prof. Keller was more than helpful and on October 19, 2009 emailed me copies of several of his papers and actual tools that he developed for measuring motivation in the classroom. It was an honor that Prof. Keller took the time to respond so positively to my request for information.

Like Dörnyei, Keller is interested in giving teachers strategies to include increasing motivation as part of their daily teaching practices. Keller focuses on the motivational appeal of classroom instruction and materials and promotes the inclusion of motivational objectives into the curriculum.

Keller's understanding of motivation is that it is based on the satisfaction of four basic conditions: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (ARCS). (Keller 1987) Getting and sustaining attention means that students must be able to focus their attention on the appropriate stimuli – the stimuli the teacher is providing that leads to learning. If the stimuli is not attention provoking, then students will seek out other, inappropriate stimuli instead - missing the learning opportunity in class.

Keller's theory gave me the idea of taking one area of motivation - attention – and making it into a tool for further triangulation for my research. Attention is one area that I am able to monitor in class using an observational rubric. While teaching, the entire class was videotaped, and then afterwards, instances of students' attention, or lack of it, were noted using a predetermined rubric. The "attention" aspect of students' motivation would fall under "motivation to learn" rather than "intrinsic motivation" as it involves the quality of cognitive engagement. This data was compared to the data provided by students in their interviews to either confirm or deny what they stated concerning their motivation being due to the state German competition and the TPRS teaching method. The results of this comparison are examined in chapter four.

According to Keller, relevance is all about answering the student question, "Why do I need to learn this?" In the case of my German class, the main motivational factor is the state German competition. The answer to the question "Why do I need to learn this?" would seem to be "To do well at the German competition". In the preliminary research I have already completed, it seems that students take German because there is a relevant and immediate use for it in participating in the competition. Of course, it would be preferable that students learn German for the love of learning, or because they find it useful to their adult futures, but it seems that the immediate relevance of German, for most students, lies within using it at competition.

However, Keller mentions another form of relevance in the classroom: that it can come from the way subject matter is taught. "For example, people high in need for affiliation will tend to enjoy classes in which they can work cooperatively in groups." (Keller 1987, p. 3) My research pointed out the trend that students found relevance through a particular mode of teaching - TPRS. My follow up research, done after I

started implementing the TPRS method almost full time in class, confirmed that this was indeed a motivational factor for students.

Confidence is an area that Keller, like Dörnyei, says is very dependant upon effort based attributions. If a student has talked themselves into “I failed because I can’t do X”, the student has basically negated any chances of ever being able to do X. However, by being taught to apply effort based attributions, such as “I failed because I didn’t do enough of X”, then there is a possibility for success the next time around. My students, despite odds that have been very much against them, have done extremely well at FASG. My elementary students are up against high school students who have a heavy German work load including nightly homework. These high schools include some of the biggest, well-funded German programs in the state. However, my students came in first in state in 2010, 2009, and 2008, and second in state in 2007. Their confidence level is very high. This confidence must be part of the motivation that has made them select the state German competition as their prime motivating factor in class. My further research told much, through individual interviews, about the role of confidence in the motivational picture surrounding FASG.

The final category of ARCS is satisfaction; that which helps people feel good about their accomplishments. (Keller 1987). Keller attributes satisfaction to the amount of control a student has in a specific circumstance. In an educational setting, there is always an element of external control; however, Keller says that the key to the satisfaction balancing act is to give guidelines without being over controlling. This also turned out to be an important factor for two students in choosing FASG as the prime motivational factor for attending German class. As one student put it, “...no one’s on my back telling me I need to do it...” (See “William” in transcripts of student interviews in Appendix 17).

In order to increase motivational teaching practices, Keller says that teachers need to consciously include motivational objectives into their planning. The motivational issue to be addressed in my classes is to improve the motivational appeal of the instruction as well as the materials. Defining what needs to be done is the first step in consciously including motivational practices into planning. Next, Keller calls for an

audience analysis. I view my further research on the motivational factors of the state German competition as this audience analysis. Through triangulated students interviews, I was able to pinpoint underlying motivating factors and understand why the state German competition is the prime motivational force for students to take German and stay with it.

By carefully identifying the students' motivational forces, I was then able to begin planning how to implement what was learned in class. The final step is to evaluate how well students have internalized the motivational objectives. Keller tells that we can't judge the effectiveness of motivational objectives on academic grades (grades are effected by so much more than motivation alone), but rather by using more direct measures such as observations of persistence, effort, emotion, and attitude. I am primarily using such observations as a cross check to see if student behaviors match what they say in their taped interviews both before and after I optimized my teaching technique by integrating more TPRS.

Another aspect of evaluation is for me to evaluate how I, as the teacher, deliver motivational instruction. Here, the taped observations come into play. I used them to observe and note students' behaviors according to a predetermined rubric in order to compare student classroom behavior to the responses students gave concerning motivation in class.

Keller and Dörnyei both, with their very practical approaches to second language learning theory, compliment my intentions in my research. Both have given me what I need to better observe and evaluate the class's motivational picture as well as my own teaching performance in relation to motivational teaching practices. They also have given me what I need to better understand that picture.

2.3.5 Teacher Motivation

Current events in the state of Florida/USA have made me consider another aspect of motivation affecting second language students – the motivation of the teacher. In May 2011, Florida lawmakers passed Senate Bill 736 into law introducing performance based merit pay for public school teachers as well as ending tenure for public school

teachers hired after July 1, 2011. Florida Governor Rick Scott hails the legislation as critical to improving Florida's public education system, and says on the Florida Government website, The Office of the 45th Governor of Florida Rick Scott, "We must recruit and retain the best people to make sure every classroom in Florida has a highly effective teacher." (2011)

The Florida performance based merit pay system will center on an evaluation system of which a large portion – half or more –will be based upon how well students perform on the state student assessment test, such as the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) as well as other exams. (Florida Senate, 2011) However, there are no guarantees that teachers whose students perform highly on state testing will be compensated with more pay. State Senator Bill Montford is the director of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents and has expressed doubts that the state would have the funds available to be able to pay more money to teachers whose students do well on state testing. (Haughney and Postal 2011)

Diane Ravitch, Research Professor of Education at New York University and nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., says that performance based merit pay is the wrong track to take in order to improve student results in the classroom: "Vanderbilt University conducted the most rigorous empirical research ever done on merit pay, and they found no evidence of differences in student performance even with a \$15,000 incentive for one group of teachers." (Moran 2011) Referring to the results of the same study, Ravitch says, "That tells me that both groups of teachers were working as hard as they could. I don't know how rewarding a teacher will get students to work harder." (Murray 2011)

This performance based merit system couples with the loss of the tenure system for public school teachers. As of July 1, 2011, newly hired teachers will have contracts that will be reviewed annually, meaning that teachers can be fired at the end of a school year if students are not performing on state assessment materials at satisfactory levels. The U.S. news magazine *The Week*, calls such legislation "...the biggest fad in public education: judging schools and teachers based on their students' standardized tests." (April 25, 2011 p. 20)

Fad or not, Senate Bill 736 was passed into law. Only time will tell the effects this will have on teacher motivation in the state of Florida. However, previous research shows that merit pay has not has positive effects on teacher motivation. Farrell and Morris conducted a study of UK teachers' attitudes towards what they term Performance Related Pay (2009). They found that almost 90% of teachers included in their research felt that Performance Related Pay would have a negative impact on teacher motivation (2009, p. 86). Taylor, Leitman, and Program Planners (1989) found that teachers, at that time, were, at best, undecided about merit pay programs.

A merit pay program based on student performance outcomes, like the one going into effect July 1, 2011 in Florida, brings a special set of problems along with it. Teachers may feel that such evaluation criteria is unfair in that it takes factors into consideration which are out of the teachers' control including student abilities, prior academic training, and home backgrounds. (Rosenholtz 1986) . Rosenholtz also reports that when teachers perceive evaluation procedures to be unfair, teacher morale may suffer as a consequence (1986, pp. 518-519).

Morale of the group could certainly effect motivation of the individual teacher. Motivation of the teachers must certainly have an effect on the motivation of students. A study carried out by Wild et.al. (1992) shows that the intrinsic motivation of students can be increased by the mere *suggestion* that a teacher is intrinsically motivated herself, and that students' motivation can be decreased when they are under the impression that the teacher is only extrinsically motivated. Merit pay, according to several studies, is inherently extrinsic in nature and does not act as a motivator for teachers (Porter 1989, Johnson 1986, Chandler 1959, Mathis 1959, Mayston 1992, Deci, Koestner, and Ryan 2001). According to Sylvia and Hutchinson (1985), teachers were not motivated by pay incentives at all, but rather by higher order needs such as freedom to try new ideas and higher levels of responsibility within the school.

My students related enthusiasm to positive motivation (see section *Pilot Study for Questionnaire I: Getting Students ready to write about Motivation* in chapter three). Patrick, Hisley, and Kempler describe teacher enthusiasm as "...an external catalyst for the intrinsic motivational energy that may be lying dormant within the student."

(p. 219) and found that when students see the teacher as being enthusiastic that they, in turn, report being highly intrinsically motivated themselves (p. 225).

Patrick, Hisley, and Kempler also report that teachers who support student autonomy acted as a positive influence on student intrinsic motivation. This supports the ideas of Dörnyei who sees self-determination as a driving Motivational Influence. (Dörnyei and Otto 1998) Self directed learning turned out to be an important contributor to motivation for some students in my class. As I review the results of my research in chapter four, I consider this factor more in depth.

Teacher motivation in the state of Florida will most certainly be affected by this new set of laws which includes a merit pay plan for teachers. Past research has shown that merit pay does not contribute positively either to student performance nor does it contribute in a positive manner to teacher motivation. The effects of merit pay upon teacher motivation and student performance in the state of Florida remain to be seen.

2.4 Conclusion to Chapter Two

The purpose of this literature review was to learn what others have previously discovered and apply it my own investigation of student motivation and second language acquisition. As the study continued, literature was identified by the emerging data and my interpretation of the data. The literature review was not a predetermined collection of literature but rather an evolving and dynamic body of work which also affected the conduct and direction of the research. It helped to define the key characteristics of my research as they emerged in my interviews and classroom based research and providing a base of theory from which to build an optimized, student motivation based version of my existing German class.

More literature is consulted in chapter four when I share the results of my research including not only *what* motivated students in my class, but *why* the prime motivating factor that emerged from that research, the state German competition, was indeed so motivating. It is the “whys” that get further attention in the form of reviewing more literature, in this final chapter dealing with the cumulative results of my research.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Research Design

3.1 Introduction

Chapter two started the literature-based leg of my action research journey of better understanding the answers which were found to my first and second research questions: What motivates students in my German classes? How can I, based on sound theory, re-shape curriculum and teaching approaches to capitalize on identified motivating factors?

Chapter three serves as a road map that explains how I went about collecting data to assist in answering the first two questions, as well as to how to approach the third research question that emerged: Why are students motivated by these factors? In chapter three, I explain how I use a qualitative action research design and triangulated data collection methods in order to gain answers.

3.2 Methodology: Qualitative Action Research

Qualitative research (Leedy & Ormrod 2005, pp. 95-97) seeks to provide a better understanding of complex situations and is exploratory in nature. The qualitative process is emergent as there is no telling in advance which categories may emerge from data. Qualitative data collection is not a neat and tidy process. It was found that the reality in which qualitative researchers work is not always easily divided into measurable variables. Also, qualitative data collection generally depends on a deeper sampling of a smaller number of participants. Qualitative data analysis calls for the researcher to inductively search for patterns that are reflected in the data itself. However, at the same time, deductive processes were used after themes had been uncovered in order to verify those themes.

McMillan and Schumacher's (2006) definition of qualitative research was used to help me in deciding that qualitative methods would be best for studying my own classroom. They explain that qualitative designs are just as systematic as quantitative designs, but rely on naturally occurring phenomena, with the majority of the data coming in the form of words produced by students. Morse and Richards (2002, p. 2).

stress that qualitative research is based around the researcher gaining understanding from the data itself in addition to prior knowledge. The literature-based research in chapter two simultaneously gave me more insight into the classroom-based research taking place and it also assisted in pointing the direction of future research.

A qualitative approach also seems to lend itself due to the fact that I will be acting and interacting with my research setting and subjects. For the most part, I will not be extracting myself from the site and process, but rather making myself part of them as I collect data on and analyze student attitudes and motivation in my own classroom.

A qualitative methodology allows me to make my own classroom my case study. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe a case study research design as focusing on one phenomenon that the researcher wants to understand in depth, regardless of the number of sites or participants for the study. Gay and Airasian (2000, p.202) say that the key question that a case study aims to answer is: “What are the characteristics of this particular entity, phenomenon, or person?” In my case, the phenomenon under close scrutiny is the source of my students’ motivation in class. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.316) explain that in such a case study design, that the research plan is an emergent design, “...in which each incremental research decision depends on prior information”. This is very true of my research, as it was not known in advance what students’ responses would be.

In the process of identifying motivational factors, I not only researched student motivation and second language acquisitions theories in depth, I also investigated my small group of students as well – combining the results of what was learned from both the literature study and action research into better, more motivating German instruction for my students.

My research methodology can be classified as qualitative action research. Hopkins (1985) states that action research is most appropriate for those individuals who recognize shortcomings in their educational activities and who would like to adopt some initial stance in regard to the problem, formulate a plan, carry out an intervention, evaluate the outcomes and develop further strategies. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe action research as systematic approach that education

professionals use to provide information on their own practices as well as to make changes in those educational practices. As Gay and Airasian (2000, p.594) say, action research is all about finding problems and correcting them.

Mills describes action research (2000, p. 6), as a four step process: Identifying a focus, collecting data, analyzing and interpreting that data, and developing an action plan. Below, I explain how my research went through several cycles of the action research process. Action research is cyclical in nature – one step leads to another. Reason (2006) defines Action Research as an emergent process, and that it “...does not arrive fully fledged in a clear research design separate from the stream of life but evolves over time...” (p. 189). He also reminds readers that quality action research includes choices that may be markedly different from choices made in more conventional processes. (p. 189).

Stringer (2004, p. 12) describes the action research process as the action research helix. A continuous cycle of looking, acting, and thinking that allows the action researcher to discover deeper dimensions of the issue at hand as the research goes along. The steps outlined by Mills (2000, p. 6) are evident in each cycle: Step one is identifying a focus, step two is collecting data, step three is analyzing and interpreting that data, and step four is to develop a further action plan.

My action research helix can be mapped very clearly. In the initial cycle, step one (identifying a focus) was for me to identify student motivation in my German classroom as a topic that required further investigation. Step two (collecting data) of this initial cycle was to perform literature based research into second language acquisition and motivation as well as perform classroom based research through questionnaires and videotaped instructional time. Step three (analyzing and interpreting data) included the identification of the state German competition and TPRS methods as motivating factors. I applied what was learned from my literature based research conducted in step one of this initial cycle of action research to gain a better understanding of both factors. The final step in this cycle was to develop an action plan, which included recognizing that it was necessary to find out more about why the state German competition was so motivating as well as the TPRS delivery method.

Step four of this initial action research cycle led me to step one of the second action research cycle. Step one (identifying a focus) of this second action research cycle included the development of questionnaires and planning for interviews to clarify the reasons the German competition was so motivating for students. Step two (collecting data) of this second action research cycle was two fold and included researching TPR and TPRS methods through literature and learning about TPRS training being offered for German teachers during the summer of 2010. Carrying out taped student interviews as well as attending the TPRS training during the summer of 2010 was the second part of collecting data for this second step. Step three (analyzing and interpreting the data) of this second action research cycle was carried out through analyzing the data which was collected through the student interviews and consulting literature to help me better understand that data. Step four (developing an action plan) of this second action research cycle was to develop a new curriculum for the 2010/2011 school year based on what was learned.

Again, step four of the second action research cycle led me to step one of a third action research cycle. Step one (identify focus) of this new cycle was for me to question the motivational worth of this new curriculum that was now in place: Did students indeed feel motivated by the more TPRS based curriculum? Step two (collect data) led me to carry out more questionnaires and taped instructional time in order to find an answer. Step three (analyzing and interpreting the data) made me come to the conclusion that students did indeed find the new TPRS based curriculum motivational. Step four (developing an action plan) made me realize that, based on what was found, more state German competition content needed to be integrated into the curriculum through TPRS methods.

3.2.1 Sampling

My students are my main source of data, and since I wanted to find out more about my class, students seemed the natural choice as a sample. Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p.144) say the following about sampling: "...qualitative researchers draw their data from many sources....The particular entities they select comprise their sample, and the process of selecting them is called sampling." McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p. 125) refer to a scenario like mine (using the students in my own class) as nonprobability sampling and say that it does not include random selection at all, but

rather subjects who represent certain characteristics – for example, belonging to a class.

To further define my sample, McMillan and Schumacher call my scenario convenience sampling as the research concerns itself with this one group and the purpose of the research was not to be able to generalize the findings to other populations but is to better understand the population at hand – my students. Keblawi (2009, p. 11) also cautions readers in generalizing findings in language learning motivation: “...scholars should be aware that the findings they reach are limited by time and space....” This idea is key to action research: “Actions research is done by teachers, for themselves...” (Mills 2000, p. 6) This aspect of my research is very important to me. If I can better understand what is going on in my classroom, I can be a better teacher – making a difference in the education of the students I reach out to.

Ideally, all students would have agreed to take part in all parts of my research and would have been in school and on camera each time I carried out data collection. This however, was not the case. As it often is in elementary education, students get sick, disappear to the guidance counselor, have dentist appointments, and move around the classroom. For the great majority of my research, I used students who were in class on that day to take part in the data collection (convenience sampling)

For the taped classroom observations, I limited my observations to three students. This is a different type of sampling – purposeful sampling. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p. 475) define purposeful sampling as “A type of sampling that allows choosing small groups or individuals who are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon of interest...” These three students were chosen because they presented the most information for me to analyze. –they attended class and were in view of the video camera for the majority of days I collected information. Another criteria is that all three of these students were taking German during both the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 school year.

3.2.2 Data Collection Methods

Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 143) say that emergent design is often characteristic of many qualitative studies, meaning that “Data collected early in the investigation often

influences the kinds of data that the researcher subsequently gathers”, and that qualitative students generally heavily rely on observation and/or interviews (2005, p. 144) as data sources. This is certainly true for my action research case study.

I used a dual method to collecting data based on both classroom-based data collection as well as literature-based research. These two information sources worked in a cycle: First, I conducted, in several phases, a preliminary investigation into the basic motivational forces at work in my classroom. Then I turned to literature-based research to better understand the topics that emerged from the class-based research. I then returned to classroom-based research to gain an even deeper perspective of what motivates students and why. My final delve into existing literature helped me to understand these deeper perspectives. Repeatedly returning to the literature served as a form of further data interpretation that had a formative fashion on my research as a whole.

The literature-based research I undertook in chapter two proved that motivation is a very complex construction. This means that the information learned from students only represented a small part of their entire motivational picture. My initial classroom based research was focused on what was learned from Dörnyei during my literature-based research in chapter two: Motivational Influences in the Actional Phase.

According to Dörnyei and Otto (1998), student appraisal is ongoing during the Actional Phase. During appraisal, the learner attaches values to environmental stimuli such as the teacher, the class, the subject, the material, and learning. This is where attitudes are formed. I wanted to find out what classroom factors were shaping student motivation. The main factor turned out to be a class activity – the state German competition. Another factor was a vehicle of instruction – Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS).

Since I am primarily interested in motivational factors that I can adjust to tailor my instruction to my students, information on Motivational Influences in the Preactional Phase, which are focused on influences that have occurred prior to the student entering my classroom, was not collected. Examples of Preactional Motivational Influences would include individual students’ internalized value systems, as well as parental influences on students’ thinking. (Dörnyei and Otto 1998) If I were to

conduct the study again from the beginning, I would have included an initial questionnaire concerning the factors influencing the students' joining the class in the first place. Knowing these factors would have added more depth to the study as information about students' Preactional Motivational Influences would have been discovered. This, in turn, would have enabled me to find out if a relationship existed between Preactional Motivational Influences and Motivational Influences in the Actional Phase at the Learning Situation Level.

I used various methods of collecting my initial data, as I wanted to ensure gaining a full picture. This use of several forms of data collection enriched the depth of results as well as made my findings more credible as (ideally) similar conclusions would appear in all types of data collection. Such use of multiple sources of data is called triangulation. (Mills 2000, p. 49) Data collected was transcribed and archived for confirmability.

Open ended questionnaires

My initial methods were written, open ended questionnaires. These were very easy to administer, allowed me to see a very broad (too broad in the beginning) range of information. The open ended format did not force students to make choices, but left it wide open for them to write what they truly felt. Since the questionnaires were administered in class, and were often tied to a short explanatory lesson (for example the motivation lesson given before the initial motivation questionnaire), the questionnaire was not given to students absent on that day, as they had missed the short lesson that clarified the object of the questionnaire. Therefore, there are often varying numbers of responses dependant upon attendance on the day of delivery of the questionnaire.

Written questionnaires acted as a springboard for group and individual interviews. It was decided to use this method first as a way to give students quiet time to begin thinking about what motivates them. This written questionnaire can be seen as a warm up exercise to the interviews. Taped interviews without this "quiet time" to think might have made students feel "on the spot" and more likely to provide an "I don't know" answer during the interviews. I wanted to give students a chance to take an introspective look at motivation – something they may not have thought about before.

I left initial questionnaires in conversational format. I write my tests in the same way. I find that the “Tell me about...” question format has an informal feel to it and *invites* students to give an answer instead of *demanding* one from them. This very open ended format also worked well as no predetermined categories were imposed on the data collected. Categories are allowed to emerge from the data itself.

Dörnyei (2003, p. 63) recommends piloting the questionnaire before actually giving it to the actual participant group. On October 31, 2009, I piloted the questionnaire on 16 3rd and 4th grade Social Studies students and asked them questions concerning the clarity of instructions and clarity of the questions themselves.

It was found in my pilot study that getting students to provide a detailed response meant that it was necessary to give them a little food for thought. As I passed out the questionnaire to the pilot study group of 16 3rd and 4th grade Social Studies students, the first question came within 60 seconds of handing out the questionnaire: “What is motivation?” An opening speech with the group was needed to explain what motivation was. Students were told that I would get back with them by the end of the day and we would continue with the pilot study.

I used my break time to research how I could teach “motivation” as a mini lesson, and found a model on which to base my lesson on line (Mills and McKnight 1988). I modified the lesson to better suit my elementary and middle school audience, and then presented it that afternoon as follows.

Pilot Study for Questionnaire I:

Getting Students ready to write about Motivation

First, I explained that motivation is something that can come from inside or outside of a person, and that it is the force that makes you want to continue doing something or to start doing something. I also explained that they already knew a lot about motivation, and that I was going to prove it to them.

I then orally reviewed adjectives and synonyms before going on to the second part of this exercise – asking students to tell me some other words for “motivation” or “being

motivated”. Students came up with quite a few words including “excited”, “wanting to do something”, “enthusiasm”, and “pumped up”.

Students were then asked to tell about a time they were motivated. As different students volunteered to tell, I wrote down key vocabulary they used into two categories – a negative and a positive category. Following the instructions given by Mills and McKnight (1988), those categories were not yet labeled, but rather students were allowed to discover the labels themselves after quite a few samples had been collected.

Students quickly did discover that the categories were positive and negative. I then explained that we can be motivated in both positive and negative ways. Positive motivation resulting in “seeking behaviors” (when we are motivated to do something because we are looking for something like pleasure or a good feeling) or negative motivation resulting in “avoidance behaviors” (when we are motivated to do something to avoid something else, like a punishment). I then returned to the individual students who volunteered instances of motivation and helped them to define if the instances they described were resulting in motivation as a seeking or an avoidance behavior.

Before going on to the next part of this small lesson, I reviewed what motivation was once again, stressing that it can come from within a person or from an outside source. I helped students to recognize where the motivation came from in each instance volunteered in class – from inside of the students, or from an outside source. We then discussed the following question: If motivation is being “excited”, “wanting to do something”, or “pumped up”, what does it mean to be UNmotivated? I wrote down students answers which included “bored”, “tuned out”, and “wishing you were somewhere else”.

I asked students which state they most preferred to be in: it was unanimous. All preferred to be in a positively motivated state. After this mini-lesson, students and I all felt that they were ready to write about what motivated them in class. Another student asked a question dealing with length of response. It was decided to tell students what they are usually told in a regular writing class: That I was extremely

interested in knowing their thoughts, and to write as much as they needed to in order to make me understand their thinking.

In addition to the questions, a few “yes/no” questions were added to help me learn what students thought of the quality of questions. These simple “yes/no” questions were added because students had already been through the mini lesson and the actual answering. I did not want to prolong the pilot study with a lengthy Q and A session concerning question quality. It was decided that if several students indicated that the quality of questions was not good, specifics would then be asked for. However, this was not the case. (See the results in Appendix 1)

The pilot study taught me that I can't assume that young students will understand what motivation is, and that the best way for them to understand it was to tap into their own experiences. Based on the experiences made through the pilot study, it was decided to give the mini-lesson on motivation at the beginning of the actual questionnaire for the German class and keep the questions as they were.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviewing, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 144) is a data collection technique that is common in qualitative studies, and that interviews are either open-ended or semi-structured. Semi-structured meaning that the interview revolves around a few central questions. (Leedy and Ormrod 2005, p. 146)

My interviews are semi-structured in nature as I formulated the main question, based on the results of the initial questionnaire students had done in class, in advance, but left it open ended and also allowed for myself to modify or add questions as needed. These semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility as the dynamics of the conversation changed. I feel this method worked well, as I already have a relatively high comfort level with my students – this hopefully lent itself to them speaking freely. They have also had experiences in front of the camera in group discussion formats, making them feel more comfortable speaking with the camera rolling.

I used the results of the questionnaire to help make these interviews as far reaching as possible. I clarified those written results with students as a starting-off point for the

interview, and then saw where each student took it from there. Since I worked with a relatively small sample, I conducted personal interviews with individual students or in small groups. My sample was a convenience sample, and consisted of the students from my class who were available for interviews that day.

Students basically focused on the topics derived from the questionnaires; however, they had the freedom to go off on other tangents. Using the written questionnaires as a base allows for retrospection on the part of the students, I asked questions aimed at both clarifying previous information and providing new information. I tried to get students to add depth to their responses by searching for opinions, asking for explanations, using a mirroring technique, and using hypothetical questions. These are all techniques I use on a regular basis when talking to students both in formal classroom situations as well as in informal school situations, and therefore were not unfamiliar to students.

Participant Observation Recordings

Stringer (2004, p. 80) says, “The principal purpose of observation is to familiarize researchers with the context in which issues and events are played out, or to provide participants with opportunities to stand back from their everyday involvement and watch purposefully as events unfold.” My situation is the latter: I am an active participant observer in my own research and needed the opportunity to be able to watch my classroom with a different view than the one I have while teaching the class. Observation was a powerful data collection method in my research.

Besides questionnaires and interviews, in-class observations served as a further triangulation of data. Making observations is particularly challenging as I am a participant observer – teaching the class and observing at the same time. Using a video camera was a great help, allowing me to teach the class, then observe student behavior afterwards by reviewing the tape I made of the class. I hung a small video camera from the top of the chalkboard at the front of the room so that students’ faces and actions would be able to be seen. Recording started as class began, and students seemed to forget that the video camera was there at all. The camera was not referred to during class, as I wanted students to act naturally. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) tell that although a video camera is helpful, it is not fool-proof. This was experienced first

hand as I videotaped my own classroom. More than once, the subjects I was trying to get on video moved about the classroom, or sat at different seats.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 145), observations in a qualitative study are generally unstructured, allowing for unforeseen data sources to naturally emerge. For triangulation purposes, I wanted to watch for specific instances of on and off-task behavior in this case and decided to use simple descriptive statistics to be able to better portray what I was observing. Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 180) explain that an observational study focuses on "...a particular aspect of behavior. Furthermore, the behavior is quantified in some way. In some situations, each occurrence of behavior is counted to determine its overall frequency."

It was decided to carry through with such observations based on what was learned in my literature-based research. Keller (1987) gave me the idea of examining attention as a measure of motivation. Getting and sustaining attention means that students must be able to focus their attention on the appropriate stimuli – the stimuli the teacher is providing that leads to learning. If the stimuli are not attention provoking, then students will seek out other, inappropriate stimuli instead - missing the learning opportunity in class.

According to Keller, motivation is based on four conditions that must be fulfilled - attention is one of them, and attention is one area that I am able to monitor in class using an observational rubric. Turning my observations from the rubric into simple statistics (example - James was on task 89% of the time) is just a way of making data easier to work with. Even though this method of data collection seems more quantitative in nature, my research remains inherently a qualitative case study as using statistics to generalize my findings is not my goal – in my case – using simple statistics is just a means to a much bigger end. Mills (2000, p. 106) reminds qualitative action researchers, "Do not feel compelled to include elaborate statistical measures simply to add a perceived sense of rigor or credibility to your inquiry." Denzin and Lincoln (2000) also assert that various methods are appropriate for qualitative research, "Nor does qualitative research have a distinct set of methods or practices that are entirely its own. Qualitative researchers use semiotics, narrative,

content, discourse, archival, and phonemic analysis—even statistics, tables, graphs, and numbers.” (p. 6)

My goal was to observe and record on-task and off-task behavior during class. This off-task behavior signifies periods of less motivation- periods where the action control offensive linemen working during the Actional Phase are not fending off distractions. I noted the topic at hand and type of presentation when the off-task behavior was taking place. I then compared the amount of off task behavior during one topic/type of presentation to another. These results were then compared to the information students had supplied in the written questionnaires.

A second set of in-class recordings was made after having completed TPRS training as well as the literature based research into second language learning and made changes to the curriculum. This second set of observations was analyzed the same way (looking at amount of on—task and off- task behaviors, as well as considering the topic at hand), but it was also used to compare the amount of off-task behaviors viewed in it to the amount of off-task behavior in the instruction being given prior to my new curriculum. In other words, did the new TPRS curriculum make students produce less off-task behavior? Did students exhibit more on-task behavior when the topic at hand was the state German competition? Results are featured in chapter four.

This second round of classroom observations was coupled with the second round of questionnaires, and served as a validation of my attempt to improve my instruction through the implementation of TPRS. Did my changes deliver outcomes that positively affected student motivation? Again, the results are in chapter four.

The same exact students were not on camera each day I taped instruction – absences, disappearances to the guidance counselor, and simply not being in view of the camera made it impossible for me to video tape each individual student in the natural classroom setting each time the class met.

However, three students were on camera most of the time for both the 2009/2010 school year recordings as well as the 2010/2011 school year recordings –Alan, James, and Dina. In order to maintain vigor in reporting results, I only consider the observed

behaviors of these three key people. As Mills reminds action researchers (2000, p. 50), when making observations, “A good rule of thumb here is to try to do less – better.”

This observation based, non-interview data is used as a further round of triangulation of the data collected from the initial round of questionnaire and interview data. Along with this non-interview based data, further literature based research was also conducted in order to better understand the outcomes of the second round of questionnaires (those done AFTER making the TPRS method the main delivery method in my classroom). An analysis and interpretation of the data that emerged from these questionnaires as well as the related literature-based research can be found in chapter four.

Semi-structured Whole Group Discussions

A semi-structured was used again, this time in a whole group setting. The videotaped whole group discussions were meant to serve as another data collection arena with a dual purpose: 1) to shed light on my questions at hand that came up from my initial round of literature-based research in a natural environment for my students – the classroom, and 2) act as a triangulation method to use with the results of the personal/small group interviews as well as the questionnaires.

The whole group setting allowed students to provide me with data in a way they are already familiar and comfortable – the classroom. Students bounced ideas off one another as they are accustomed to doing – providing me with data. These results of these discussions were formative in nature as well – pointing me in directions I normally would not have gone in. Each of these whole group discussions was videotaped and transcribed. This was an extremely time consuming task, but made me really examine what students were saying as the transcription occurred, making for a less complications during analysis later on.

Descriptive Statistics

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, my final research instrument was based on descriptive statistics. This final part of the research was conducted to act as a further measure of triangulation and deals with words instead of numbers as an indicator of

student responses. Here, I am reporting on the findings without applying statistical tests and am using a narrative style to relate these results to others. Mills (2000, p. 106) reminds action researchers, “Do not feel compelled to include elaborate statistical measures simply to add a perceived sense of rigor or credibility to your inquiry.” I treat this final delve into descriptive statistics as simply another tool to provide data for me to analyze and interpret. This method serves as a compliment and triangulation to previously collected questionnaire and interview data.

3.2.3 Researcher Role/Ethical Considerations

I am the researcher and the practitioner. As it is my own teaching practices and setting that I am researching, I am, according to the continuum of positionality referred to in Herr and Anderson (2005, p. 31), an “insider”. I must be able to collect information as an insider, yet be able to distance myself enough when analyzing it to be able to find new and perhaps hidden meaning. This special insider status brings special issues with it. I need to consider what my special insider status means for methodological and ethical issues of carrying out my research.

Ethically, my first concern is that students do not feel coerced into participating in my research. The concern of students feeling coerced into participation is real due to the fact that I am the authority in the classroom remains. I do not want students to worry that their grades or our friendly student/teacher relationship would be damaged if they do not want to take part in my research.

In order to help avoid this, I have written up specific research contracts (Appendix 12) stating that there will in no way be negative ramifications if they should choose, at any time, to not take part in the study. The informed consent documents that I produced includes the following: a description of the study, a formal question asking if they want to take part, a section explaining what I will do with their information if they provide it, an assurance of confidentiality, and a notice that they may stop taking part at any time. (Stringer 2004 p. 54)

There is another ethical issue that my special insider status forces me to consider: Because I am dealing with minors, I also need to get the permission of their parents in order for students to take part in my study. The parent consent form (Appendix 11)

will tell the same information as the student consent form, and it will require a signature.

Methodologically, I must always make sure that my research methods do not get in the way of my teaching. I must make my data collection a natural part of my teaching process. Students producing data is something that occurs naturally and informally, though students' comments in class, teacher/student exchanges in class, and informal student talk at the lunch table each day. The difference will be that I will employ more formal and obvious *methods* to collecting and documenting their valuable data and students will become aware that I actually use their feedback in planning and implementing lessons.

3.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

Gay and Airasian (2000, p.239) describe data analysis as being concerned with "...describing what is in the data.", and interpretation as being concerned with making sense of "...what the descriptions mean." In chapter four, I will provide a detailed report of both what my data say as well as what that data means in an inductive manner as I discover patterns and make sense of them.

There are different approaches to qualitative data analysis, but all boil down to the same common denominator: "The researcher begins with a large body of information and must...sort and categorize it and gradually boil it down to a small set of abstract, underlying themes." (Leedy and Ormrod 2005, p. 150)

However, my specific instance is a case study, and Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 136) make specific recommendations including arranging facts of the case in chronological order, categorizing data into meaningful groups, interpreting even single instances, identifying underlying themes, and constructing a general portrait of the case study at the end.

Even in early stages of data collection, I became familiar enough with it to begin identifying emerging themes. This, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 136) is quite common with case study researchers. After performing further literature-based research on these themes to better understand them, a broader picture was able to be

created. Further data collection led to a closer classification system of that data, allowing for the final step – the interpretation of the data.

3.3.1 Analysis

Stringer (2004, p.100) tells action researchers to watch for what he calls “epiphanies” in each individual research participant’s experiences. He describes them as being moments in students’ lives that emerge as students gain awareness of what is going on around them. According to Stringer, my job is to first review the information gained in my data collection techniques and then identify these epiphanies. As I reflected on the interviews and questionnaires, themes emerged that helped me to understand the nature of what was going on in my classroom. These themes helped me organize further research as one step led to the next.

My intent is to understand the experienced reality of one aspect of students’ lives in my classroom –motivating factors. As I analyze students’ epiphanies, I want to capture their voices and emotions that make them feel as they do. I want to be able to collectively view those voices and emotions in order to cause positive change in *their* German class. According to Stringer (2004, p. 99), examining epiphanies allows me to “...reveal features and elements of experience, often not apprehended in the normal course of events, that provide significant insight...” - insight, in my case, into the prime motivational factor for my students – the state German competition.

Stringer (2004, p.105) explains that understanding epiphanies is a two part process: First of all, I need to identify the information I will need, and then “unpack” the epiphany in order to reveal the nature of the experience. The first questionnaire made it clear that the state German competition was a major motivating factor for my students. The questionnaire dealing with why it was motivating was a second look which revealed epiphanies. The follow-up video taped interviews revealed further details related to these epiphanies – themes that emerged again and again with different students. Themes that were further “unpacked” using existing literature to gain an even clearer picture of what my students were experiencing through the state German competition. The results of this deconstruction of students’ epiphanies will be featured in chapter four.

In finding these epiphanies, a system of how to categorize and represent data was needed. The most systematic way was to simply read through the transcripts of the videotaped interviews and develop categories that represented the data. As I encountered epiphanies that were the same in different students, I allotted those epiphanies to their corresponding category. The categories emerged as I read and reread the transcripts.

As I read and developed categories, I compared those categories to find relationships between them. For categories that held the most epiphanies, I conducted literature-based research to find out more about the category, which in turn gave me more insight into my students' epiphanies.

With the questionnaires, I relied on frequency of mention to find main themes. Every time a theme was mentioned by a student, I categorized it. Counting responses in this manner helped me to keep student views in perspective, and not my own. Initially, it was thought that a service learning based project with a school in Namibia was a main motivating factor, seeing that a minority of students actually listed this project as a motivating factor in the initial questionnaire, and that no students listed it in the follow up fill in the blank questionnaire proved otherwise.

3.3.2 Interpretation

Once epiphanies in the data had been identified, connections between epiphanies had been made, and the findings had been reported upon, it was necessary to attach meaning to those findings. Mills (2000, p.104) recommends several approaches to interpreting data including an extension of the analysis by considering directions that were *not* taken as part of the original data gathering procedures. There are also times in the interpretation when I employ my own personal experience to tell how I, as the insider, experienced particular instances. Another type of interpretation Mills explains is to contextualize findings in the literature. I have been dealing with literature in this way throughout the research process, using theories to help me make sense of my data as it materialized.

My results are reported in a narrative style, giving readers insight into a tiny slice of students' lives that revolves around motivating factors to stay in my German class. As

I researched, I saw that such narrative accounts would go deeper than simply listing motivational factors. My multiple sources of data provided wonderful insights into the hidden dimensions of the prime factor that motivates my students - the state German competition.

3.4 Trustworthiness of Research

Stringer (2004, p. 57) defines trustworthiness as being established by recording and reviewing research procedures to make sure that the phenomenon being studied is accurately and adequately represented. He says that trustworthiness takes the following into account (2004, pp. 56-57): credibility (“The plausibility and integrity of a study, transferability (“Whether results might be applied to other contexts than the research setting”), dependability (“where research processes are clearly defined and open to scrutiny”), and confirmability (“where the outcomes of the study are demonstrably drawn from the data”).

My research is credible. My prolonged engagement (Stringer 2004, p. 57) with my class for the purpose of collecting data is evident in the dates of the data collection which started in December of 2009 and continued up until November of 2010. I was absolutely immersed in the setting. Stringer’s credibility criteria of persistent observation was also fulfilled. Not only was I immersed in the setting for a prolonged time period, I also made use of that immersion by repeatedly engaging in different types of data collection throughout the period of engagement. (See my section in this chapter “Steps to triangulation”) Triangulation is another aspect of credibility and, according to Stringer (2004, p. 57) “...involves the use of multiple and different sources, methods, and perspectives to corroborate, elaborate, or illuminate the research problem and its outcomes.” This has been done throughout the study to make sure that student data from different sources was pointing in the same direction, or if not, to find out why it wasn’t.

Stringer lists transferability as another aspect of research trustworthiness. As my research represents an action research case study, it, by nature, was not preformed for transferability – the results apply specifically to my classroom. However, the context of the research setting has been described in depth, allowing for other researchers to decide for themselves if my research has transferability to their own individual

situations. And while the exact results of the classroom-based research may not be able to be transferred to another classroom due to constraints of time and space, the main ideas that emerged from the marriage of theory and practice certainly can be.

My research is dependable and confirmable. Besides having practiced triangulation at each step of the way, I have also clearly described research processes and procedures, and also have transcripts of all interviews as well as the original video material of all interviews, group discussions, and classroom observations. I also have available all of the original questionnaires that students filled out. There is complete transparency in all data collected.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

Chapter three served as a guide for readers to better understand how I went about collecting data through a qualitative action research design. The parameters of this design gave me freedom, but at the same time structure, within which I could collect triangulated data in a dependable and confirmable manner.

Chapter 4: Research Process and Findings

Report

4.1 Introduction

The results presented in this chapter show a process through which my original research questions have been answered. My goal was to formulate classroom practices and instruction that would capitalize on factors which students find motivational. In order to do so, I first had to find out what those factors were via my first research question:

What motivates students in my German classes?

In-class research answered this question: Students indicated, through questionnaires and interviews, that they were motivated by the state German competition as well as the TPRS delivery method. After these motivational factors were pinpointed, I was then able to move on to my second research question:

How can I, based on sound theory, re-shape the curriculum and teaching approaches to capitalize on identified motivating factors?

I delved deeply into several authors, in particular, Krashen and Dörnyei. I also attended training to help me become more proficient in the TPRS method. This combination of literature-based and hands-on experiences prepared me to make classroom application of theory a reality through a newly organized curriculum. This enabled me to begin the 2010/2011 school year with a more TPRS infused German instruction for my students – instruction based on the sound theory previously researched.

However, as I learned about and applied these theories, I also began to wonder about the deeper meaning of students' responses to questionnaires and interviews. I found myself asking a third research question:

Why are students motivated by the state German competition?

The answer to this question was a combination of deeper classroom-based research combined with more literature-based research to help me better understand what students were communicating to me.

The following analysis and interpretation of results represents a dialogue between my observations, classroom-based research, and literature-based research. The journey is approached in a linear fashion, dealing with the results of each research instrument in the order it was applied in class analyzing the results and interpreting them as I go along.

This section represents the findings of an action research process that identified motivating factors in the class: the state German competition and the TPRS delivery method. Once these factors were identified, I delved deeper into why the state German competition was motivational to students and made changes to the curriculum to more fully integrate the TPRS method students had indicated as a second motivating factor. The results of this integration of TPRS are also featured in this section.

4.2 January 21, 2010 Motivation Questionnaire I (see Appendix 6)

This was my initial step into researching motivational factors in my German class. At the beginning, I was convinced that a German language service learning project started with a school in Windhoek, Namibia was the prime motivator for students to stick with German. It was, at the time, disappointing that the Namibian school partnership portion of my class wasn't even in the top three factors that students listed as motivating. However, it was interesting that students found the state German competition so motivating, as this was an event that we attend annually, but had not been ever made a major highlight during extended periods of class time. Instead, most of the preparation for the state German competition was done by students on their own or in student organized groups at home. It turns out that this self-organized learning was one factor contributing to the high motivational quality of FASG.

In this initial round of research, students named the top three motivating factors as “joking around”, “FASG”, and “German class is fun”/“acting out vocabulary” shared third place. Four students claimed that the dancing and singing we do in class was a motivating factor. This dancing and singing is part of preparations for the state German competition. Each year, students choose a German language song for the talent show portion of the competition, and are responsible for choreographing a dance, learning the lyrics, and practicing it on a regular basis. Dancing and singing is not incorporated into class in any other way, pointing once again at the state German competition (often called by students FASG – Florida Association of Students of German) as a motivating factor.

Another part of the results was intriguing for me as well –six of the sixteen students said that “acting out vocabulary” was motivating to them. This acting out of vocabulary represented my dabbling in the TPRS delivery method prior to beginning my research. However, it was only tried it out a few times in class based upon what had been read. At the time, I didn’t feel very confident in using the method, and wasn’t planning on making it a fixed part of my instruction, as students didn’t voice any opinions on it in class. TPRS was not expected to show up as a motivating factor at all, let alone in the top three. However, these initial questionnaire results made me think again about including TPRS methods into my classroom, especially since five students said that having more acting out of vocabulary would be motivating to them.

Later research would point out to me that at least some of the “we joke around” responses were related to the TPRS method as well. The September 29, 2010 (Appendix 13) and October 6, 2010 (Appendix 14) questionnaires have several responses that describe the TPRS instruction as “silly stories” and “funny stories” that are motivating– stories that involve quite a bit of planned joking around.

Students were given a questionnaire and were allowed to write as much as they wanted concerning both factors that motivated them in German class at that time, as well as factors that would make the even more motivated. Sixteen students took part in this questionnaire. Students were allowed to write about more than one motivational factor in this open ended questionnaire, therefore there are more total responses listed than the total number of students:

Question 1: Tell me about what motivates you in German class:

- We joke around: 11 responses
- FASG: 7 responses
- German class is fun: 6 responses
- Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 6 responses
- Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 4 responses
- Dancing/Singing: 4 responses
- Namibia-based service learning project: 4 responses
- My parents think it is important: 2 responses
- Level of comfort/absence of fear: 1 response

Question 2: What would make you more motivated in German class?

- More Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 5 responses
- More Games: 5 responses
- More Namibia service learning based instruction: 4 responses
- More Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 3 responses
- More artistic activities/dance more/more music: 3 responses
- In-class competitions: 2 responses
- Read more stories: 2 responses
- Watch more videos: 1 response

The “more games” responses struck a chord with me after I had researched Krashen and learned more about TPRS method at the Sweet Briar College seminar. I learned about how meaningful games can be as methods of Comprehensible Input, which made me feel confident about incorporating more of them (several fun classroom games were introduced at the TPRS seminar) into my daily classes. “Games” also took on a much broader meaning to me. I always considered classroom games to be the kind developed by teachers with the main goal being the driving home of vocabulary. However, after reading Krashen, it was understood that regular board games, revamped with home-made simplified German language game cards, were a valuable tool in providing Comprehensible Input for students. Think of these as “Handcrafted Games” based on Krashen’s idea of “Handcrafted Books”. (Krashen 1997)

4.3 March 24, 2010 Fill in the blank Questionnaire I (see Appendix 8)

This second questionnaire was carried out as a follow up to the first one and requires students to pinpoint one aspect that motivated them most in German class. This second questionnaire was much more limited in possible responses. Students asked if they could write two reasons, but were told that they were not allowed to for this particular questionnaire. Of the 17 students who responded, 2 said that fun/joking around was their motivator, 2 listed TPR/TPRS methods, and 13 listed FASG (the state German competition) as their motivator. This simple fill-in-the-blank questionnaire was carried out to act as part of triangulative measures which help add an extra measure of rigor to the research. These results were in harmony with my initial round of research – the state German competition was listed as the leading motivational factor, followed by the use of TPR/TPRS methods and fun/joking around. Looking back on the results and the month the questionnaire was given, it may be that the majority of students wrote that FASG (the state German competition) was motivating because the competition itself was right around the corner and may have very much been on the minds of students. This is a possibility, because the same questionnaire was given to students October 6, 2010, and students indicated that TPRS was the top motivating factor. The state German competition doesn't take place until spring. It could be that students' motivational focus goes to FASG once the half way point in the year has been reached.

Revisiting my literature based research in chapter two, Keller (1987) calls relevance one of the main factors of motivation. For Keller, relevance is all about answering the question, "Why do I need to learn this?" For my students, the answer to the question, "Why do I need to know German?" seems to be: "to do well at FASG." Students seem to have an immediate and relevant use for the language in the parameters of this annual competition. Keller also states that relevance can also come from the way subject matter is taught as well. My research points out that students have found relevance in a specific delivery method as well – TPRS.

These first two questionnaires were merely an initial probe to find out the answer to my first research question: What motivates students in my German classes?

True to the action research format, the path for further research began to unfold with these two questionnaires. They pointed me in a direction for my already ongoing literature-based research – I started to specialize my general reading about second language acquisition towards the specific delivery method that students had pinpointed – TPRS.

4.4 April 7, 2010 “What is Motivating about FASG?” Questionnaire (see Appendix 9)

Once FASG was pinpointed as a prime motivating factor in my classroom, I was compelled to find out an answer to my third research question: What was it about this competition that made it so motivating to students? Eight students participated in this questionnaire. Due to the open ended responses, students listed multiple motivating factors, resulting in the emergence of multiple categories.

Winning: 4 responses

Competing against others: 3 responses

Fun: 3 responses

Making art projects: 2 responses

Teamwork: 2 responses

Being with friends: 2 responses

Hands on projects in general: 1 response

The possibility to speak German to a lot of people: 1 response

Reciting German poems: 1 response

Recognition in front of high school students: 1 response

Recognition from friends and family: 1 response

Group dance event: 1 response

Staying at a hotel: 1 response

Skipping school for the days students are at competition: 1 response

Excitement: 1 response

Learning more German: 1 response

The most prevalent response was “winning” with four responses, followed by “competing against others” and “fun” with three responses each. “Teamwork” came in next with two responses alongside “making art projects”, and “being with friends”.

This probing questionnaire served as the basis for the follow-up videotaped student interviews. It was necessary to triangulate the information for validity purposes.

One interesting comment on this open ended questionnaire came from an elementary student: “When you get medals you get to stand up in front of all the high school students”. This was the first time a phenomenon that I eventually came to call “beating the big kids” had come about, but was to surface again and again from several students in the videotaped interviews.

4.5 April 27, 2010 Student interviews (see Appendix 16)

Knowing that the state German competition is the prime motivating factor for students in my class, the categories that emerged from this initial investigation were examined. Taped oral interviews were conducted to shed more light on what students said motivated them in my German class. The categories that emerged from both the initial questionnaire as well as the interviews are the ones given more attention to through further literature-based research. Then, further triangulation was carried out by setting up an observational system to note in which areas students seemed motivated to participate in German class itself.

Certain themes that came up repeatedly in both written questionnaires and oral interviews included winning, competition (none of my students mentioned wanting to be better than their own classmates – just better than the other schools present at competition), the cohesive experience of acting cooperatively during competition, and what I’ve called the “beating the big kids” factor – my young elementary and middle school students enjoyed being able to say that they had won out over “big kids” in high school. I wanted to further research these factors in order to get a clearer picture of what was happening with my students.

Eleven students took part in the video taped interviews. The goal of these interviews was to find out what it is about FASG that motivates students. The results were very similar to those of the written questionnaires from April 7, 2010. Due to the open ended nature of these interviews, several categories emerged.

Cooperative group effort – teamwork: 27 references from 10 different students
Beating the High School students: 22 references from 10 different students
Winning: 7 references from 6 different students
Competition: 7 references from 6 different students
Self-directed learning: 4 references from 2 different students
Fun: 4 references from 2 students
Being at the beach: 2 references from 2 different students
Being with friends (no mention of teamwork): 2 references from 2 different students
Completing an art project: 2 references from 2 students
Preparing to recite the poem: 2 references from 2 students
Plays at the talent show: 1 reference from 1 student
Relaxed atmosphere: 1 reference from 1 student
Learn more German: 1 reference from 1 student
Gaining approval from friends and family: 1 reference from 1 student

The most prevalent response dealt with the cooperative group nature of the project with 27 references from almost all students (10 of 11), followed by “beating the high school students” with 22 references from 10 students, Six students made a total of seven references concerning “winning” and “competition with others” (no reference made to beating them). Two students made four references to the self directed learning aspect of FASG as being motivational, and two students made four references to just plain “fun” as being a motivational part of FASG.

The references I looked into in further detail were the cooperative group nature of the competition and the phenomenon of “beating the big kids”. The self-directed learning aspect was another area that emerged. At first, treating each of these references as a separate entity was considered, but the more research that was undertaken, the more was found that these topics are very much intertwined. These topics are representative of the Motivational Influences described by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) which fuel students’ motivation to succeed at the state German competition.

4.5.1 Cooperative competitive achievement through teamwork

Teamwork or group effort was mentioned most by students as a reason that the state German competition was motivating to them. Through my literature based research, I

was able to see FASG, even though it is a competitive event, as a cooperative team effort on many levels. It was necessary for me to learn more about the cooperative aspect of the state German competition in order to better understand this motivational aspect of the competition.

Dörnyei (2001a) feels that cooperation between students is an important factor in maintaining motivation and says it plays a great role in the cohesiveness of the group in question, causing students to tend to like one another because they belong to the group, regardless of their differences. The solidarity students feel grows as they reach common goals and depend upon one another in the process of reaching those goals. Cooperating classmates also have a higher success expectancy rate as they know they can rely on the strengths of the group to get them through. Individual strengths are valued, adding a sense of feeling needed to each contributor, and a sense of “I’d better put more into this!” for those who aren’t exerting themselves as much as they could, as team members are judged by peers according to their commitment to the team.

Cooperative tasks are defined by Dörnyei (2001a, pp.101-102) as being those which happen in groups of 3-6 students; where students can only complete the task if they rely on one another, each team member is given a specific role, resources are shared; and learners have been given in-class training on group skills. Performance at the state German competition could certainly be considered a cooperative task: students in grades 4 -8 work as a team towards one goal – success at the state German competition. Students are given specific roles, each is to become the master of his or her own set of contributory activities. In becoming master of an individual activity set, each student contributes to group success. Resources are shared – students try out practice tests on one another, recite poems for one another, share the CD player for dance practice during breaks, and come together to produce props, choreograph dance moves, practice lyrics, and write scripts for the talent show. Learners are also informally coached on group skills at the academic and social level, but formal training in group skills, as recommended by Dörnyei, had not been a part of my class to date.

Dörnyei’s work on cooperative tasks as a motivational classroom strategy led me to learn more about cooperative learning as a teaching strategy. Dörnyei states that the

specific cooperative learning process “...generates a specific motivational system that energizes learning.” (Dörnyei 2007, p. 490) and says that from a motivational standpoint, that cooperative learning is one of the best methods of teaching.

Slavin and Karweit define cooperative learning as “...instructional strategies in which students work in small, cooperative groups or teams to master academic materials and are rewarded for doing well as a group.” (1981, p. 29) Cooperative Learning is defined by Olsen and Kagan as “...group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others” (Olsen and Kagan 1992, p.8) Oxford (1997, p.444) describes the relationships in the Cooperative Learning setting as “Individual is accountable to the group and vice versa; teacher facilitates, but group is primary”. This description can very well be applied to how students go about taking part in the state German competition: individuals do their own parts, students help each other to get ahead as a group, I facilitate though classroom activities as well as monitoring progress of individuals, the group competes as individuals, and the final score for the group is comprised of those individual scores.

Two students mentioned that the self-directed learning aspect of the cooperative task was a reason that FASG is a motivating factor for them to stay in German class. Thomas, Strage, and Curley define self-directed learning as “...activities that are wholly or partly under the control of the learner.” (1988, p. 314) and list four components that need to be in place to foster self-directed learning: appropriate academic demands, adequate instructional supports, opportunities to carry out self-directed learning activities, and an appropriate goal structure. The satisfaction that students seem to get from these self-directed activities is an integral part of motivation, according to Keller (1987). He attributes satisfaction to the amount of control a student has in a specific circumstance. In an educational setting, there is always an element of external control. However, Keller says that the key to the satisfaction balancing act is to give guidelines without being over controlling.

Thomas, Strage, and Curley (1998) say that the demands made upon students expected to undertake in self-directed learning must be appropriate for the students’

academic levels, but also prompt students to extend beyond what they already know. Think of Krashen's "i+1" concept. This is not something I have intentionally differentiated for students in various grades, however, the open nature of the opportunity for students to ask for assistance has allowed for a differentiation as younger students taking part in the competition do indeed tend to check in more often, asking for more direction, while older students (such as the two seventh graders who indicated that the self-directed aspect of FASG was motivating for them) tend to check in much less often.

However, just because it has not been intentionally differentiated in the past, does not mean that changes cannot be made in the future. Perhaps a result of intentionally differentiating the demands made upon students would result in more of the younger students claiming that the self-directed aspect of FASG was motivating to them. Maybe the 7th grade students who indicated that self-direction was motivating were only at that stage because they had finally felt they had fully gained control of the demands put upon them that year. Each of those 7th grade students had taken part in FASG since the 4th grade, and therefore had had three years of prior practice in meeting those demands. By differentiating the demands, I feel that student self-confidence in self-directed learning can be promoted much earlier.

Providing adequate instructional supports took the form of checking in on student progress on a regular basis and teaching students skills they will need in order to be able to work in a self directed manner. This has been occurring successfully since the onset of my German class taking part in the competition in 2007. Students indicated in the anonymous Basic Motivational Conditions Survey administered on December 2, 2009 (Appendix 2), that they feel I am available to talk about all things concerning school. (77% of students stated that "yes", I was available, and 23% agreed that I was "somewhat" available.) Students approach me in class, but also during lunch and break times asking "Do you have a minute?" for me to listen to concerns concerning their progress, ask for advice, help them come up with a new work plan, or just listen to an idea they have. Students were also met with once a week as a group to go over progress and concerns. Not only do I give my feedback, but other students do as well, contributing ideas related to their own experiences.

Giving students opportunities to practice is the next component, and Thomas, Strage, and Curley (1998) say that these opportunities must be a central part of the curriculum. Opportunities to practice happen in German class once a week. Other than that, students practice during their break times, as well as at home in full group and small group practice sessions. Opportunities abound, however, ones organized by me are only once a week. The question is do students prefer to have just the one formal meeting a week? Based on their track record, it seems that this strategy works well for them, but I may be able to alleviate stress by telling them to take their recess break as a play time, and adding a second formal meeting time during the week.

Providing an appropriate classroom goal structure deals directly with student motivation: "...the quality of this goal structure – for example, whether students compete with one another or not – has been linked to the quality of learning activities students voluntarily and spontaneously exhibit when working on a learning task." (Thomas, Strage, and Curley 1988, p. 323) The goal structure of my class is not based on threat of failure, as reported by students in the Basic Motivational Conditions Survey administered December 2, 2009. Students reported a basic absence of threat in class. 85% of students reported that I have a pleasant and supporting classroom atmosphere (15% reported that it was "somewhat" pleasant and supporting.) Also, 92% of students reported that it was OK to make mistakes in my class (8% said it was "somewhat" OK to make mistakes in my class). This is indicative of an atmosphere in which students do not feel compelled to jockey against one another for good grades.

Student self-directed learning is directly related to the cooperative group work carried out by students for the state German competition. In research conducted by Kurt Lewin (Marrow, 1965), it turned out that student groups with adult leadership allowing for the group to set it's own priorities and agenda appeared to be more productive, as well as demonstrated higher levels of originality and independence. Groups lacking leadership altogether did not perform nearly as well, nor did groups with an adult autocratic leader. The state German competition is a version of cooperative learning that is unique in that it does not only occur in the German classroom, but also on the students own time, as well as during non-German class school hours. Again, students are given parameters, specific guidance when they ask for it, and frequent check-ups to make sure they are on the right track. However, the

key to their success, according to Lewin, is that this work is self-directed in nature. This self-directed sense of working certainly struck an extremely positive chord with at least two of my older students.

The state German competition is a form of cooperative learning that shifts the focus of competition from between individual students in the class to between groups (various schools at competition). This cooperative learning through the vehicle of FASG is very motivational to my students. Slavin (1984) considers cooperative learning to be a classroom incentive that teachers can use to promote student motivation, and, in the process, promote the image of high academic achievement. Slavin compares the coolness factor of high achievement in academics to high achievement in sports and uses research done by J.S. Coleman to come to the conclusion that sports achievements are held in higher regard by students because of the benefit that success in sports brings to the team, school, and town – as well as the individual. Most of the time, in academics it is the individual performance that benefits the individual.

Not so with the state German competition. A compilation of excellent individual efforts from team members results in a win for the team and the school as well as for each individual member. Consider the words of my student, Alice: “...we all are a big group because it’s all one giant effort, you know, to do the best you can, and, like, represent our school and things because we each do our own thing and then we bring it together to, like, get more medals and things like that.”

The group cohesiveness that makes such a win possible is called the cohesiveness-performance effect by Dörnyei (1997), and he credits this effect as being especially potent in a second language class: “The cohesive-performance effect can be particularly strong in language classes in which the learners’ communicative skills are developed primarily through participatory experience in real world language tasks. In these contexts, communication is unfolded and enlivened in positive relationships, and the warm, cohesive group climate significantly enhances peer interaction.”

(Dörnyei 2007, p. 485)

Slavin explains that there are two components of the cooperative learning method that can be combined in different ways – both need not be present in order for an endeavor

to be a cooperative one: cooperative incentive structure (team members share a reward if they are successful as a group) and a cooperative task structure (group members coordinate their efforts to complete the task). The state German competition has both of these characteristics: if students work hard to master their own set of activities, then help each other to improve both at school and outside of school, they will win the trophy. The case of the state German competition is a special version of cooperative learning as it includes both what Slavin would call “group study/group reward for individual learning” (students working in small groups to master information presented by the teacher) as well as “task specialization/group reward for individual learning” (students become specialists of their own individual tasks, then come together as parts of a whole for the final grade – in our case ranking among other schools.) Part of the state German competition, the talent show portion, can be categorized as “group study/group reward for group product” as students choreograph the dance in their free time at school, practice during their breaks, and then perform as a group at competition; a high score resulting in the group reward of a trophy for coming in first in state. Considering Slavin’s definitions, the state German competition is a cooperative effort on both levels.

As I researched, I came across information that said that tangible rewards, such as the trophy the first place school wins at the state German competition, were *detrimental* to intrinsic motivation. Brophy (1998) defines intrinsic motivation as “affective experience – the enjoyment of the processes involved in engaging in an activity.” (p.12). In their 2001 analysis, Deci, Koestner, and Ryan say that “...tangible rewards significantly undermined intrinsic motivation...”, and that this undermining effect was even greater for children than it was for adult learners. (Deci, Koestner, and Ryan 2001, p. 10) Although this may be true in cases dealing with individuals working on their own for a tangible reward, these results do not apply, in my opinion, to my case, where a cooperative group is working towards a competitive goal – even if it is a tangible one.

The interesting mix of cooperation and competition that seems to serve my students so well (They have come in first in state – against high school German students - in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 and came in second in state in 2007) is referred to as “Cooperation-Competition” by Attle and Baker (2007) and is defined as “...an

instructional strategy combining components of cooperative learning with the positive aspects of motivational competition through inter-group competition between collaborative teams...” (Attle and Baker 2007, p. 79). This is the perfect definition of what the state German competition represents. The competition itself is the motivation for students to work cooperatively, and the cooperative interaction between students has proven itself to be a motivating factor for my students.

Research conducted by Julian and Perry (1967) also deals with the positive outcomes of cooperative groups competing against other groups resulting in higher levels of quality and quantity of performance when compared to purely cooperative environments. Their results point to the possibility of the positive effects which seem to come from cooperation may actually come from the inter-group competition instead, and that inter-group competition appears to enhance group morale and cohesiveness.

4.5.1.1 Dewey and Cooperative Learning through the state German competition

The ideas of Dewey are evident in Cooperative Learning, especially the ideal of self-directed learning that was so important to two of my students. Dewey (1938, p. 64) says that self-control is the ideal aim of education. Through the German competition experience, students work together to develop their sense of self-control – learning to trust themselves as individuals responsible not only for the pace of own competition-oriented learning for their specific events, but also for their individual contribution to the overall success of the group. The importance of such self directed learning was mentioned twice by older (middle school students) in the oral interviews. Students said that they liked the fact that no one was “on their back”, telling them when and how to prepare for their individual events. As the teacher, I provided students with the raw materials they needed to succeed (German language skills), but students were left to be as independent as they wanted to be in applying those skills in their individual events. The great majority of preparation for the German competition occurs outside of the classroom, on the students’ own time.

Besides classroom activities led by me and student led preparations on an individual level, some students take the initiative for group activities themselves when preparing

for the state German competition. There are several instances throughout the year when “FASG work parties” are held at various students’ houses. These work parties are much talked about events, and students are eager to hold one at their own homes. Here, students have told that they take turns reciting poems, practicing the dance, having quiz-bowl type games with practice test questions, and eat dinner together (usually pizza) before children are picked up and taken home by parents. They seem to be quite well carried out, and students take great pride in organizing and carrying out these work parties – with the help of their parents of course.

This is a further indication of the team building capacity of the state German competition – I can’t think of another instance when an 8th grader would invite 4th and 5th graders to come to their home (or vice versa). However, it is “cool” to talk about these weekend multi-grade work parties on Monday morning. Again, these parties are not organized or attended by myself – this is a student initiated phenomena. This is a good example of what Dewey (1916, p. 39) called “joint activity”: “Only by engaging in joint activity, where one person’s use of material and tools is consciously referred to the use other persons are making of their capacities and appliances, is a social direction of disposition attained.” Such self-directed joint activity, according to Dörnyei, is very motivational to students in its own right as it is an opportunity for students to experience autonomy through involvement in the organization of learning processes (Dörnyei 2001a).

Taking all that has been discovered about cooperative learning into consideration, state German competition can be considered in a new light- as a cooperative endeavor that is a large part of my program. I have learned that this cooperative structure is very motivating to students, and must consider how to implement this cooperative structure more formally into my curriculum in other ways as well, primarily by taking a closer look at the works and recommendations of Robert Slavin.

4.5.2 “Beating the Big Kids”

Ten students (out of 11) made a total of 22 references to “beating the big kids” in the student interviews that were carried out in order to discover what it was about the state German competition that made it such a motivating factor for students. Part of this definitely came from the sense of group membership that came from the

cooperative learning aspect of FASG preparations. However, there was something else behind this sense of winning out over the high school students – a sort of David and Goliath type of momentum. Just consider these student responses: As James (who was in 4th grade at the time) was triumphantly laughing, he responded that “...we creamed a whole bunch of high schools!”

Also consider Mary’s words as she tells about how our students won first place at the 2010 competition: “...I mean, we kicked their butts.” (Referring to the high school students). Even when students were confronted with the possibility that they could indeed NOT win first place at competition, students continued with the “us vs. them” rhetoric. Consider Helen’s words: “And even still [if we did not win], we can still say that we competed against high schools from all around the state, you know?” My students seemed to very much identify themselves with the victorious underdog.

Some even enjoyed getting under the skin of their high school competitors. Consider the comments of Mary and Helen, two seventh grade girls: “It’s actually pretty interesting, because at the *beach*, they [high school students] think we’re just little kids visiting and when they see us in *competition*, and we win, their attitude totally changes...” “Yeah and they all hate us! It’s so much fun!” “Yeah! I got insults after I was walking out the door after we won!” (This was reported gleefully and with look of great satisfaction). “...it’s fun! Because you *know* that you’re getting to them.”

Students indicated that this sense of standing up, as a group, to perceived adversity was part of what made FASG so motivational to them. The first year my students competed at FASG they were very unsure of themselves in front of the high school students. At best the high school students saw them as perhaps “cute”, but certainly not as a threat. I am not sure that my own students felt that they had a chance at winning. However, their extreme hard work paid off, they came in second place in the state. I think this was a major breakthrough for my students: They had overcome the seemingly impossible. When they overcame this adversity, they gained a sense of confidence that seems to have fueled them ever since.

Confidence, as was learned in chapter two, is a deciding factor for second language acquisition. Krashen (1982) stresses the impact it has on the ability to take in

Comprehensible Input as he describes motivation, self confidence, and anxiety as affective variables in second language acquisition. Confidence is key to lowering the Affective Filter that stops students from being able to acquire language. Confidence is also key to motivation in general. Keller (1987) calls confidence one of the four conditions that must be fulfilled in order for motivation to occur.

Students no longer seem afraid of the competition; they seem to see it as a personal challenge, rallying their resources each year to succeed. They seem to want to take on the challenge of “beating the odds” every year anew. Now, is their perception of beating the odds really true? They certainly feel that it is. Based on the interview results, it seems that my students feel that the age of the high school students is enough to give them the advantage at competition. Mary also commented that the high school students have more time in the German classroom to prepare for FASG, stating that they have “three hours every day” (a *major* exaggeration on her part – public high school only have one hour of German a day, therefore negating the possibility that they spend three hours a day solely preparing for FASG) Her comment shows that she has convinced herself that the odds are totally against us – but she sees these not as unbeatable odds, but rather as a challenge.

The sense of overcoming perceived adversity seems to be one factor which contributes to students feeling the way they do towards the older students. Adversity, according to Stoltz and Weihenmayer (2006) “...occurs when something negatively affects, or is predicted to negatively affect, someone or something you care about.” (p. 17) The presence of the high school students does not seem to actually affect my elementary and middle school students negatively at all: The high school students have always (in my presence at least) been kind to my younger students, and my students have never reported any incidents of unkindness towards them. My students actually seem to enjoy being among this older crowd, and seem to want to fit in. The high school students also allow my younger students, to some extent, to feel as insiders – cheering them on during their group dance, clapping for them when they receive medals, and greeting them the first day of competition with cheerful greetings and high fives.

However, despite seeming to want to belong to this group, my students also gain a certain amount of momentum from feeling as if they are mortal enemies of this group at the same time. I feel that this is more of a group self-generated myth that helps keep momentum going, and that it helps my students to maintain their edge and a “healthy fear”. Perhaps students are afraid that if they feel too confident, they will fail. Or perhaps that if they keep up this front of standing in the face of extreme adversity, if they do indeed fail, they will have a good excuse. As Helen put it: “And even still [if we did not win], we can still say that we competed against high schools from all around the state, you know?”

This statement tells me that even if students did lose, they would, in their own minds, have a decent excuse for having lost. Dörnyei (2009, p. 18) explains, “...motivation in this sense involves the desire to reduce the discrepancy between one’s actual self and the projected behavioral standards of the ideal/ought selves.” Students would most likely not get flack from fellow students, friends or family for losing under such “adverse” conditions, and would take it as fuel to add to next year’s fire. Dörnyei (2009) addresses the importance of such imagery to his theory of motivational self systems. Students are incorporating an element of fantasy in their construction of future selves - whether those future selves come out as winners or losers. The motivating power of their mental imagery in imagining their future possible selves may be the force that pushes their goals into intentions and the power for students to act on those intentions.

Higgins (1998) adds clarity to the ideal self and the ought-self Dörnyei refers to. The ideal self focuses on the positive: a student’s hope that he will indeed be victorious over the perceived adversity of the older and, in the student’s mind, better prepared high school students. The ought self has what he refers to as a prevention focus which regulates the presence any negative outcomes (not winning the state German competition, but having a good reason - extreme adversity) that would make the students feel like a failure. This ought-self offsets the impact of the feared outcome. Students had psychologically prepared themselves for wither winning or losing by formulating both an ideal-self and an ought-self. Oyserman and Markus (1990) support Dörnyei’s idea of the self as important to motivation and further investigate the impact of various future selves on motivation by asserting that the presence of

positive and negative possibilities for a future self are integral to motivation: “...a feared possible self will be most effective as a motivational resource when it is balanced with a self-relevant positive, *expected possible* self that provides the outlines of what one might do to avoid the feared state. Likewise, a positive expected self will be a stronger motivational resource, and maximally effective, when it is linked with a representation of what could happen if the desired state is not realized. (p. 113)

Dörnyei’s consideration of current psychology is complimentary to his earlier work. By adding the element of psychology, he solidifies the idea of the processes in the Preactional Phase. In the Preactional Phase, a learner’s goal becomes an intention once the learner assigns some commitment to reaching that goal. That commitment comes from the learner imagining the achievement of that goal as an attribute of his/her future self. Once the learner uses this imagery to transfer the goal into a solid intention, he or she can move on to the next phase in Dörnyei and Otto’s Action Sequence: the Actional Phase.

Students seem to be feeling a sense of inner adversity, defined by Stoltz and Weihenmayer as “internal, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual states that cause you hardship” (p. 17). Examples of the inner adversity that students may be imposing on themselves could be a lack of confidence, fear, or uncertainty. It seems though, that students are harnessing these self imposed emotions and making them work for them in a positive manner. I feel that Dörnyei would see this sense of inner adversity as part of the student formulating an ideal future self. Stoltz and Weihenmayer describe taking on adversity head on and choosing to take on a challenge : “The one most compelling thing what you’ve always wanted to do, but have not yet done” (p. 43) Students seem to take the state German competition as their annual challenge fueling themselves with a sense of positive adversity that needs to be overcome. The inner sense of adversity that students seem to be imposing upon themselves serves as a Motivational Influence (Dörnyei and Otto 1998) that keeps them on track as they work towards their goal of winning the state German competition. The imagery component of the future-self pushes them forward and serves as a motivational tool.

In order to overcome this annual challenge, students view it as something exciting that enriches them and connects them as a group. James reported that FASG was a team

effort “because not everybody does their own thing or just one person’s doing it, then everybody bombs and that whacks you way down.” Implying that if one person does go their own way without taking the group into consideration, the penalty is an absolute group failure that affects each person individually. This group effort seems to serve as yet another Motivational Influence (Dörnyei and Otto (1998) that helps the wave of motivation going along as students work towards their goal.

Mary also sees the group effort as worthwhile and motivating: “...well, we being all these individual things ...like we have our own art projects and we have our poems, but since we’re all a school, we all, like, represent each other. So when we’re competing, and we win first place, and we all get that medal...or the trophy, and we can all just be a team and have fun and...motivate each other to work harder...”

Mary is stating that even after the group has won first place, they still need to continue as a group to work harder, implying that some sort of challenge is still in view of the group – perhaps the challenge of next year’s competition. Mary is setting herself up for the challenge of next year by already building the idea of positive adversity that will need to be overcome with hard work.

William also shares insight into the motivational aspect of the cooperative effort as well as the sense of positive adversity surrounding FASG: “Thinking that, you know, in essence, the whole team is on your shoulders, it does motivate you.” William seems to be calling on his strongest inner will to inspire himself and the team and keep that team from falling (He states “Because if one person falls, we all fall”) to fuel the greatness of himself, and therefore the team.

William also includes me, as the teacher, in his realm of responsibility: “Because if you show up without your work done, it kind of not only makes you look bad, but it makes your school look just as bad as you or worse. Especially your teachers. She’s supposed to teach you it, and it makes her look bad. And Miss H [this is me], she’s one of the presidents and leaders of FASG so if she doesn’t have a good reputation, then they’re not going to be able to trust her.” I have never expressed the idea that students are responsible for my image at FASG, and therefore can say with confidence, that this is an example of a student creating a situation more adverse than it is in order to optimize the power behind that adversity and gain personal momentum

from it. In other words, I feel that students are creating inner adversity in order to optimize it, harness it, and use it as a motivational source. It seems that they have changed the *goal* of winning into a *cause*.

Stoltz and Weihenmayer call this harnessing of the adversity the “Take It On” strategy – gearing up, turning into the onslaught, and taking it on. (2006, p.48) Students are gearing up as they talk themselves into believing that there is much more adversity than really exists, they are gearing up as they prepare individually and as a group for their events, they also gear up as , through these processes, they form the group cohesiveness that so many of them referred to in the interviews. Turning into the onslaught is the point where they actually attend the competition, seeing the high school students as the onslaught to be overcome – as a team.

According to what my students have reported in the interviews, they seem to understand that individual strengths only go so far, and that they have won at FASG due to teamwork. As students assemble around their unified goal, they realize that their fate is linked to everyone else’s. A commitment like this one requires trust. And, according to Stoltz and Weihenmayer (2006, p.81), this kind of trust can only emerge from facing adversity together. Part of facing the adversity students perceive at FASG are the elements of Control, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance (Stoltz and Weihenmayer 2006). Students exhibit these elements before and during the competition.

The greatest part of Control, according to Stoltz and Weihenmayer, is knowing how much influence you have over what happens in a given situation. If students were to truly fear the perceived adversity of competing against the high school students, they would feel they had less control over the situation. However, students obviously feel that they have a great amount of influence over the outcomes of the competition based on their interviews. One example of this are the two seventh grade students who said they enjoyed the self-directed learning aspect of FASG. “No one was on my back telling me I need to do it.” reported William. Other examples of how students demonstrate a feeling of control is how they take the initiative to work in self-directed groups during break times, and even at the homes of students. This idea of evaluating the amount of influence you have over the adversity at hand is much like Dörnyei’s

Preactional Phase when students are making choices among initial options that move them in a direction of getting something done. Choices concerning the amount of personal control they have concerning the outcomes of the competition.

Stoltz and Weihenmayer tell that even though Control is the first step to successfully facing adversity, that action itself unfolds once you take Ownership of that adversity. Think of this as the Dörnyei's Actional Phase. The first action students take is to start carrying through on those initial subtasks they deemed they had influence over at the end of the Preactional Phase. Stoltz and Weihenmayer define Ownership as the "...energizing tendency to do something, no matter how small, to make things better." (2006, p.105) Better in the sense that students feel better and more empowered that the outcome of the state German competition will be the one the envisioned in the Preactional Phase. This feeling of Ownership of perceived adversity is very strongly evident in the student interviews. Eight students made a total of 12 references to the importance of their personal responsibility towards attaining the group goal. These students exhibit a sense of Ownership in the fact that they have taken the adversity upon themselves and are focused on their personal realm in the overcoming of the perceived adversity. They have not pushed Ownership of facing adversity off onto other students.

Reach, as defined by Stoltz and Weihenmayer, is then extent to which adversity is perceived. Overcoming adversity means not seeing setbacks as all encompassing, but rather seeing them for what they are, adversity that needs to be overcome. Brophy's idea of effort as an investment over time comes into play here. Failure doesn't mean you "can't" achieve something, but rather that you "didn't" achieve something. In order to do so, you must improve your, as Stoltz and Weihenmayer call it, Reach. "The bigger and worse everything appears, the more suffocating life becomes, crushing you under its mass, making it difficult for you to keep your footing. When you improve your Reach, you shrink the contamination, limit the downside, and expand the upside, unleashing newfound energy and possibilities." (Stoltz and Weihenmayer 2006, pp. 107-108). This reminds me very much of the Action Control Offensive Lineman. If he does his job, he pushes factors which serve as distractions off, so that these distractions don't derail the intentions the offensive lineman is trying to protect. Reach is the same thing – allowing setbacks to become too large will throw

you off track from the task at hand – facing and conquering the adversity. Stoltz and Weihenmayer describe what they call an “Engaged optimist” – a person who is hopeful because he or she is counting on their own relentless efforts to make things turn out the way they imagine them over time. This is the same description of Action Control. Action Control doesn’t just happen, it is a constant fight – pushing back other influences that detract from the goal at hand. Dörnyei, in his later work (2009) reminds readers of the power of imagining the successful future self obtaining the set goal. In order to be guided towards success by the image of a future self, a person needs to have the ability to imagine. This, according to Dörnyei (2009, p. 19) may be part of the problem that seemingly unmotivated people have. They may have less of an ability to generate an effective and successful possible future self. “.....the more elaborate the possible self in terms of imaginative, visual, and other elements, the more motivational power it is expected to have.” (Dörnyei, p. 19).

The question arises of how to assist second language students in this area, preferably from a young age onward. When faced with “unmotivated” students, what are best practices to encourage them to develop an idea self? There is a plethora of research on the development of a positive self image, but considerably less in the area of applying creative ability to imagine a successful future as a second language learner.

Capitalizing on Endurance when facing adversity (or perceived adversity in the case of my students) means asking yourself realistically how long the adversity may go on and break it up into achievable sections. Stoltz and Weihenmayer refer to this as creating “mini finish lines”. This idea goes hand in hand with Dörnyei’s idea of Motivational Influences - waves that carry the hopes and dreams on the crest of the wave. If the hopes and dreams are to go on to become goals, the crest of that Motivational Influences wave must flow on into the next wave, and not crash back into sea – taking the hopes and dreams down with it. Endurance means making it from wave to wave until you reach your goal. Students use the Motivational Influence of “perceived contingent relationship between action and outcome and the perceived progress the learner had made on this contingent path...” (Dörnyei and Otto 1998) as a way to evaluate if they are indeed getting closer to achieving the goal. If students do feel this, they gain motivation to keep going. When students feel like they are not making enough progress, they are more prone to giving up. According to Dörnyei,

having mini finish lines that are attainable and realistic is part of maintaining and protecting motivation.

This idea was evident in the goal setting discussion from January 7, 2010 (Appendix 5) where students practiced creating a measurable and attainable goal. For example, learning about the art projects students would be completing – students went from general goals such as “work on them” to measurable goals with a due date. Students did the same for the poems they needed to memorize for recital, even suggesting processes that would take them to the end goal of having the poem memorized: “Well, if we learn one line a day, we could finish it this month. And one line is no more than six words.” Students were obviously heading in the direction of making do-able action plans instead of only having ideas.

Again, concerning the self-imposed sense of adversity students associated with the state German competition, I see students exhibiting a real David and Goliath sense of overcoming that perceived adversity: They are David – young, not as strong, but clever. (Consider the exchange between James and Richard: “Are you smarter than a 12th grader?” and Richard replying with a vehement “YES!”.) The high school students are Goliath -strangely enough a basically good natured Goliath who is generally supportive of the younger students – but a Goliath none the less. Larger, older, more prepared (in the eyes of my students at least). My students, much like David, summon their strengths and move forward relentlessly - the first place trophy in the hands of my students representing Goliath’s severed head. Quite dramatic....but then again, this IS elementary and middle school.....

4.6 2009/2010 School Year: Set I of Taped classroom observations (Appendix 17 and 18)

In order to observe in which classroom situations students exhibited on-task behaviors indicative of motivation, I set up a series of taped classroom observations which were used in various ways for triangulation purposes. First, I designed a rubric that allowed me to record whether a student was on or off task as well as the topic at hand at the point of observation. I wanted to see if student behavior matched what they said in their questionnaires – that the topic of FASG and TPR/TPRS techniques were indeed motivating to them. If they were, then students should be on task when this topic/these

techniques were being handled/implemented. The names of all students have been changed for anonymity.

I carried these observations out in two different ways for triangulation purposes. First, I used the four different observation sessions ranging in time from 18 to 30 minutes, noting the behaviors of three key students every five minutes. Secondly, I focused on each of my three key students again, noting changes in two minute time intervals. This was done to make sure that observations were being rated in a uniform manner. The ratings at the 10, 20, and 30 minute intervals were the same for observations made with both 2 and 5 minute intervals.

In this first set of classroom observations, all three students are included in the video except for April 15, 2010 and May 6, 2010. On April 15 Alan and Dina were both absent, resulting in observations for only James. On May 6, Dina was seated out of range of the video camera.

Although the observations were noted at both 2 and 5 minute intervals for the sake of data integrity, I only used the data collected at 2 minute intervals for consideration in the actual examination of student behaviors in order to make connections and observations. Behaviors were either on task (listening/watching, writing, speaking, reading, or taking part in a hands-on activity) or off task (involved in own activity such as staring, laying on desk, playing with objects/fingers, looking at clock, listening to others, or talking to others.) The hands-on activity mentioned as an on-task behavior refers to the physical acting out of German vocabulary. This method is integral to teaching using TPR and TPRS methods and was described in detail in chapter two.

Besides noting whether individual students were on or off task, the topic at hand at the time interval the observation was being recorded was also noted. This was to see if there was a discernable pattern of off task behavior as related to the subject matter at hand with individuals or as a group in general.

Once the observations of students' behavior had been recorded, percentages were calculated to show how much of the time students were on task by dividing the

number of on task instances by the total number of instances recorded. For example, on April 14, 2010, Dina was noted in 5 separate time intervals of 5 minutes during a 30 minute time frame. (Dina was out of the picture during the last 5 minute observation, resulting in only 5 observations, instead of six.) She was on task for 4 out of 5 instances resulting in her being on task for 80% of the time. Putting the results into simple percentages made them easier to work with when comparing the amount of on task behavior during the time specific subjects were being discussed, as well as made it easier to make comparisons before and after the implementation of my revised, TPRS based curriculum. All percentages were rounded to the nearest one.

The observations made during the 2009/2010 school year were made in sections of classes that happened to deal exclusively with FASG (April 14, 2010 and April 15, 2010) in a lecture oriented manner as well as classes that dealt with seat-work, paper-and-pencil oriented activities such as reading comprehension and translation with a considerable amount of teacher talk, writing, and reading.

	April 14, 2010	April 15, 2010	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010	Average % of time on task for these four periods of observation
James	On task 73% of the time	On task 44% of the time	On task 100% of the time	On task 64% of the time	James was on task 70% of the time
Alan	On task 60% of the time	absent	On task 54% of the time	On task 41% of the time	Alan was on task 52% of the time
Dina	On task 87% of the time	absent	On task 92% of the time	Not on camera	Dina was on task 90% of the time

If you had asked me to estimate students' rate of on task behaviors without having watched the video, I would have rated it as much higher. What a humbling experience to watch my student off task for so much of the time! Even when the subject matter that they said they found so motivating, FASG, was the topic at hand (April 14 and April 15, 2010), rates of on task behavior were not stellar. When considering each

student's percentage of on task time as a whole, you end up with James being on task 70% of the time, Alan on task 52% of the time, and Dina on task 90% of the time.

I broke my observations down into even smaller categories, noting the amount of on-task behaviors when FASG was the topic at hand and with more traditional classroom activities (reviewing vocabulary through translation and a reading comprehension activity).

On task behavior when FASG was a topic

	April 14, 2010	April 15, 2010	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010	Average percentage of time on task when FASG was dealt with
James	On task 73% of the time	On task 44% of the time	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	James was on task 59% of the time
Alan	On task 60% of the time	absent	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	Alan was on task 60% of the time
Dina	On task 87% of the time	absent	FASG not a topic	Not on camera	Dina was on task 87% of the time

On task behavior during traditional translation and reading comprehension activities

	April 14, 2010	April 15, 2010	May 5, 2010	May 6 , 2010	Average percentage of time on task when traditional activities were dealt with
James	Only FASG activities this day	Only FASG activities this day	On task 100% of the time	On task 64% of the time	James was on task 82% of the time
Alan	Only FASG activities this day	absent	On task 54% of the time	On task 44% of the time	Alan was on task 49% of the time
Dina	Only FASG activities this day	absent	On task 92% of the time	Not on camera	Dina was on task 92% of the time

I had defined specific qualities for what made up on and off task behavior and labeled specific behaviors that were witnessed at each specified interval. On-task behaviors included listening/watching, writing, speaking, reading, and hands-on activity. Off-task behaviors included being involved in own activity (staring, laying on desk, playing with objects/fingers, looking at clock), listening to off task conversation, talking to others (in off task conversation). This specification of behaviors allowed me to make more detailed observations during this initial round of classroom observations that included the amount of speaking and hands-on participation students were involved in. Students did very little talking themselves, and took part in very little hands-on activity as well. Again, hands-on activity means incorporating movement into the acquiring of the language as is typical for TPRS based teaching. It is a way for students to participate in German class without having to actually speak until they are ready.

	April 14, 2010	April 15, 2010	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010
James	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 10%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 0%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 0%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 0%
Alan	Speaking: 20% Hands on: 10%	absent	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 10%	Speaking: 5% Hands on: 0%
Dina	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 10%	absent	Speaking: 23% Hands on: 10%	Not on camera

Perhaps this lack of participation is what accounts for the generally low on-task rates for these three students. When comparing the lowest on-task rates for each student to the amount of speaking/hands-on participation they took part in on those days, there seems to be a relationship: On the days where students exhibited the least on-task behaviors, they also had the lowest speaking/hands-on rates as well.

4.7 Summary of research done prior to adopting a more TPRS based curriculum

It seems that although students rated FASG as the highest motivational factor in German class, they meant being at the competition itself and their time spent preparing for it on their own, not classroom time spent preparing for it. The results of this first round of taped classroom experiences shows that students were not on task as often as I would have liked them to be, and also that they were participating very little. The results of the first student questionnaire (April 7, 2010) points to this being true as well: None of the students wrote about in class activities when asked “What is motivating about FASG?” The same goes for the videotaped student interviews from April 27, 2010. Two students made one reference each of a classroom activity (preparing the poem they had chosen for the recital competition) affiliated with FASG when asked to tell more about why FASG as so motivating to them. Other students did not make such references to class time activities that involved FASG.

The observations made from the first set of classroom videos show complimentary results to the above idea that FASG itself is indeed motivating to students, but the classroom time spent preparing for it is not as motivating: James exhibited on-task behaviors only 59% of the time when FASG was the topic at hand (April 14, 2010

and April 15, 2010), Alan only 60% of the time (April 14, 2010), and Dina an encouraging 87% of the time (April 14, 2010).

The follow up questionnaire I gave students at the very end of the data collection process on November 3, 2010 also compliments this idea: Of the 10 students who took part in this questionnaire, only two strongly agreed or agreed that the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic all year long. Eight of the ten students did not want FASG to be the topic all year long – six students disagreed and two strongly disagreed with the statement “All year, the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic.”

One student strongly disagreed with the suggestion that FASG be a topic handled in class even some of the time. This was Alan, the student who exhibited the lowest amount of on-task activity (on task only 60% of the time) while FASG topics were being handled in class during the in class observations video taped during the 2009/2010 school year. Again, this research seems to point out that students seem to find the non-teacher directed aspect of free-time FASG preparation as well as the competition itself motivating, but not necessarily the in-class preparation.

4.8 September 29, 2010: Motivation Questionnaire II (Appendix 13)

The new TPR based curriculum was implemented starting in August of 2010. I wanted to find out if students were indeed feeling motivated by this change in delivery method. Students were given a questionnaire and were allowed to write as much as they wanted concerning both factors that currently motivate them to come to German class, as well as factors that would make the even more motivated to come to class. Nine students took part in this questionnaire. Students wrote about more than just one factor, therefore there are more responses listed than the number of students.

Question 1: Tell me about what motivates you in German class:

- Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 8 responses
- FASG: 5 responses
- Having fun: 2 responses
- Being with friends: 1 response
- Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 1 response

- Dancing/Singing: 1 response
- Saying things and other not being able to understand: 1 response
- Saying cool things: 1 response

Question 2: What would make you more motivated in German class?

- Nothing/I like class the way it is now: 6 responses
- More Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 1 response
- More FASG: 1 response
- Less time in class: 1 response
- More Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 1 response
- More dance more/more music: 1 response
- If the class were to address the information necessary to win the Florida State German competition through the TPR and TPRS methods: 1 response
- More activities “for older kids”: 1 response
- “More words about what the Germans said” (I am not sure what the student is referring to): 1 response

Students still clearly felt that FASG and TPR/TPRS methods are motivators. The main change is that responses listing TPR/TPRS methods as motivating have outnumbered responses that list FASG as motivation in this questionnaire. In the January 21, 2010 questionnaire, FASG as motivator had one more response attached to it than TPR/TPRS did. In that questionnaire, 16 students took part. Seven of the 16 said that FASG motivated them in German class (44%) of those surveyed. In this new survey, five of the nine surveyed listed FASG as being motivational (56%).

In the January 21, 2010 survey, 6 of the 16 students surveyed found TPR/TPRS methods motivational (38%), and in this new survey, 8 of the 9 students surveyed (89%) found these methods to be motivational. Prior to the January 21, 2010 survey, TPR/TRPS methods had only been employed very sparingly as the ideas behind it were new to me, and I was unsure of myself in using it. However, after taking part in the 2010 summer TPRS training camp, I was able to re-write my curriculum to be much more TPRS based.

The answers to the second questionnaire question gave me further food for thought: Six of the nine students who responded stated that they liked the class the way it is, or that there is nothing that could make them more motivated. This is a clear sign that that changes that were made making the class much more TRPS in nature had a positive influence, in the eyes of the students, on their motivation. One student wrote a response which caused me to give students yet another questionnaire: "...the stories [referring to the acting out of silly stories in the first part of the questionnaire] could be about the competition [referring to the state German competition]..." I conducted a further questionnaire as a triangulation factor, but also included a question to find out if other students would feel the same way if presented with the idea of taking on the topics of competition with a TPR/TPRS based approach.

This questionnaire dealing with making the annual theme of the state German competition part of classroom instruction was administered to 10 students on November 3, 2010. Details on the entire questionnaire come later in this section, but I'd like to address the two questions, dealing with FASG as a topic in class, now. Of the 10 students who took part in this questionnaire, only two strongly agreed or agreed that the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic all year long. Eight students did not want FASG to be the topic all year long – six students disagreed and two strongly disagreed with the statement "All year, the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic."

Students seemed more amicable to the class dealing with the annual FASG topic for only *some* lessons during the school year. Nine students stated that they either strongly agreed (four students) or agreed (5 students) with that statement. One student strongly disagreed with that statement. That same student also strongly disagreed that FASG should be a topic all the time during class; in other words, this student does not want FASG as a topic at all during class time. This was interesting, as the student who stated this was Alan, the student who exhibited the lowest amount of on-task activity (on task only 60% of the time) while FASG topics were being handled in class during the in class observations video taped during the 2009/2010 school year. Again, this gives me a clue that students seem to find the non-teacher directed aspect of free-time FASG preparation as well as the competition itself motivating, but not necessarily the in-class preparation.

The general consensus is that the great majority of students would like to see the annual topic of FASG presented in some classes, but certainly not all –AND they would like to see those lessons carried out in the TPR/TPRS format. If the lessons videotaped during the 2009/2010 school year had been carried out in the TPR/TPRS manner (as opposed to the teacher-centered lecture type manner), perhaps, Alan’s number of on-task behaviors would have been higher and he would feel differently about handling FASG as subject matter in class.

4.9 October 6 2010: “Fill in the blank” questionnaire II (Appendix 14)

This fill-in-the-blank questionnaire was done after TPRS had been made much more of a part of our classroom instruction since the beginning of September 2010. In other words, students had already had a good month of TPRS based instruction before filling in this questionnaire. I wanted to use it as a triangulation method to use against the results of other data gathered after the onset of the TPRS method in class. Eight students took part in this questionnaire and were to fill in a word or a statement as follows:

“_____ motivates me most in German class!”

Even though students were told to write only one item, one student wrote two, resulting in a total of 9 responses from the 8 students. There were 6 responses dealing with “acting stuff out”/”acting out funny stories”/”funny stories” referring to the acting out of stories in TPRS fashion. Three responses were “FASG”. Again, just like with the September 29, 2010 questionnaire, even though both FASG and TPRS are mentioned as motivators, the order of their popularity has reversed – TPRS classroom methods are now trumping FASG as a motivating factor. It can only be assumed that this is because TPRS methods had been employed more often. However, had videotaping of my classroom between the two questionnaires been done, there would have been the opportunity to go back and review the tapes looking for answers as to why students reversed the order of preference.

4. 10 2010/2011 School year: Set II of taped classroom observations (Appendix 19)

This second set of taped classroom observations was carried out exactly as it was for the first set. I used the same rubric that allowed me to record whether a student was on or off task as well as the topic at hand at the point of observation. I wanted to see if student behavior, concerning the amount of time students were on-task, had changed with the implementation of more TPR and TPRS based instruction.

Keller (1987) gave me the idea of examining attention as a measure of motivation. Getting and sustaining attention means that students must be able to focus their attention on the appropriate stimuli – the stimuli the teacher is providing that leads to learning. If the stimuli are not attention provoking, then students will seek out other, inappropriate stimuli instead - missing the learning opportunity in class.

According to Keller, motivation is based on four conditions that must be fulfilled - attention is one of them, and attention is one area that I am able to monitor in class using an observational rubric.

First, I used the four different observation sessions ranging in time from 57 to 60 minutes, noting the behaviors of three key students every five minutes. Secondly, I focused on each of my three key students again, noting changes in two minute time intervals. This was done to make sure that observations were being rated in a uniform manner. If I were doing so, the ratings at the 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, and 60 minute intervals would be the same for observations made with both 2 and 5 minute intervals. You'll notice that this second set of videotaped classroom observations contains observations that are considerably longer than the first set of videotaped classroom observations. If I were able to re-do the first set of taped classroom observations, I would have– making them longer in duration in order to have more data to work with.

Full 60 minutes of data considered at every 2 minutes

	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17 , 2010	
James	On task 85% of the time	On task 90% of the time	On task 64% of the time	On task 82% of the time	On average, James was on task 80% of the time
Alan	On task 86% of the time	On task 63% of the time	On task 61% of the time	On task 79% of the time	On average, Alan was on task 72% of the time
Dina	On task 100% of the time	On task 100% of the time	On task 86% of the time	On task 81% of the time	On average, Dina was on task 92% of the time

I also examined the percentage of on-task behavior, for both pre- and post-TPRS based instruction with different lenses. First the percentage of on-task behaviors when FASG was the topic at hand was examined. Then percentages of on task behaviors when FASG was not a topic at hand and the instruction was being delivered using TPRS methods were examined. Then percentages of on task behavior when FASG was not a topic at hand and the instruction was being delivered using non-TPRS methods (oral vocabulary review from a worksheet, oral translation, reading comprehension exercise) were examined.

According to the data, James was on task only 63% of the time when FASG was the topic at hand. He was on task 89% of the time when TPRS activities were the topic at hand, and he was on task 78% of the time when more traditional activities (that were neither FASG related nor TPRS related) were the topic at hand. According to this data, James was most on task when the TPRS method was in place, and least on task when FASG was the topic at hand, being delivered in a traditional lecture method.

According to the data, Alan was on task only 62% of the time when FASG was the topic at hand. He was on task 86% of the time when TPRS activities were the topic at hand, and he was on task 59% of the time when more traditional activities (that were neither FASG related nor TPRS related) were the topic at hand. According to this

data, Alan was most on task when the TPRS method was in place, and least on task when FASG was the topic at hand, being delivered in a traditional lecture method.

According to the data, Dina was on task 83% of the time when FASG was the topic at hand. She was on task 93% of the time when TPRS activities were the topic at hand, and she was on task 95% of the time when more traditional activities (that were neither FASG related nor TPRS related) were the topic at hand. According to this data, Dina was on task most of the time at a higher level than the boys. She was more on task, by 2%, when the more traditional activities were being carried out than she was when the TPRS activities were being carried out.

In general, the data for all three students supports my previous ideas that FASG, even though students listed it consistently as a motivating factor, it does not seem to be a motivating topic in class. It seems, instead – based on the results of the videotaped student interviews - the student-controlled work done outside of the classroom as well as the competition itself that seem to be the force behind FASG as a motivator. This may very well come from the delivery method – students generally had more on task behaviors with the TPRS delivery method than they did with the more traditional methods that did not involve FASG or TPRS.

This possibility gave me food for thought – maybe delivering FASG based content with a TPRS delivery method would be a way to bring in this topic that students claimed was so motivating to them in a way that had proved motivating as well – TPRS. However, later research proved that FASG in the classroom – even if delivered in the motivational TPRS method – was not high on students list of what would be motivational. In fact, of the 10 students who took part in this questionnaire (given November 3, 2010), only two strongly agreed or agreed that the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic all year long; more evidence that students felt FASG was motivational as student directed learning and as the event itself, but not as a topic in the classroom.

2009/2010 and 2010/2011 on-task behavior when FASG was the topic at hand

	Apr.14 2010	Apr. 15 210	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov.10, 2010	Nov.17, 2010	
James	On task 73% of the time	On task 44% of the time	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	On task 55% of the time	On task 78% of the time	In total, James was on task 63% of the time
Alan	On task 60% of the time	absent	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	On task 55% of the time	On task 72% of the time	In total, Alan was on task 62% of the time
Dina	On task 87% of the time	absent	FASG not a topic	Not on camera	FASG not a topic	FASG not a topic	On task 91% of the time	On task 72% of the time	In total, Dina was on task 83% of the time

On task behaviors after implementation of new TPRS based instruction exclusively during TRPS activities

	Apr. 14 2010	Apr. 15 210	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov.10, 2010	Nov.17, 2010	
James	No TPRS activities this day	No TPRS activities this day	No TPRS activities this day	No TPRS activities this day	On task 93% of the time	On task 100% of the time	On task 71% of the time	On task 90% of the time	In total, James was on task 89% of the time
Alan	No TPRS activities this day	absent	No TPRS activities this day	No TPRS activities this day	On task 93% of the time	On task 90% of the time	On task 71% of the time	On task 90% of the time	In total, Alan was on task 86% of the time
Dina	No TPRS activities this day	absent	No TPRS activities this day	Not on camera	On task 100% of the time	On task 100% of the time	On task 71% of the time	On task 100% of the time	In total, Dina was on task 93% of the time

On task behaviors during instruction dealing with non TPRS/non FASG activities (the activities during these observations were more traditional in nature - oral vocabulary review from a worksheet, oral translation, reading comprehension)

	Apr.14 2010	Apr. 15 210	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov.10, 2010	Nov.17, 2010	
James	Only FASG activities this day	Only FASG activities this day	On task 100% of the time	On task 64% of the time	On task 75% of the time	On task 85% of the time	On task 67% of the time	Only FASG and TPRS activities this day	In total, James was on task 78% of the time
Alan	Only FASG activities this day	absent	On task 54% of the time	On task 44% of the time	On task 80% of the time	On task 50% of the time	On task 67% of the time	Only FASG and TPRS activities this day	In total, Alan was on task 59% of the time
Dina	Only FASG activities this day	absent	On task 92% of the time	Not on camera	On task 100% of the time	On task 100% of the time	On task 89% of the time	Only FASG and TPRS activities this day	In total, Dina was on task 95% of the time

Again, for the videotaped classroom observations done during the 2010/2011 school year, I was able to make observations on the amount of active participation, in the form of speaking themselves as well as acting out vocabulary, that students took part in during class. This was done by noting if the students were speaking or taking part in hands-on activity at each 2 minute interval:

	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17, 2010
James	Speaking: 19% Hands on: 23%	Speaking: 23% Hands on: 27%	Speaking: 4% Hands on: 25%	Speaking: 14% Hands on: 18%
Alan	Speaking: 24% Hands on: 17%	Speaking: 17% Hands on: 20%	Speaking: 11% Hands on: 25%	Speaking: 29% Hands on: 14%
Dina	Speaking: 28% Hands on: 17%	Speaking: 33% Hands on: 20%	Speaking: 7% Hands on: 25%	Speaking: 19% Hands on: 15%

There is a notable difference in amounts of speaking and hands-on participation when comparing these results to the results of speaking and hands-on participation in the 2009/2010 school year (before TPRS was a main part of my instruction):

	2009/2010 school year (pre TPRS implementation)				2010/2011 school year (post TRPS implementation)			
	April 14, 2010	April 15, 2010	May 5, 2010	May 6, 2010	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17 , 2010
James	Speaking : 0% Hands on: 10%	Speaking : 0% Hands on: 0%	Speaking : 0% Hands on: 0%	Speaking : 0% Hands on: 0%	Speaking : 19% Hands on: 23%	Speaking : 23% Hands on: 27%	Speaking : 4% Hands on: 25%	Speaking : 14% Hands on: 18%
Alan	Speaking : 20% Hands on: 10%	absent	Speaking : 0% Hands on: 10%	Speaking : 5% Hands on: 0%	Speaking : 24% Hands on: 17%	Speaking : 17% Hands on: 20%	Speaking : 11% Hands on: 25%	Speaking : 29% Hands on: 14%
Dina	Speaking : 0% Hands on: 10%	absent	Speaking : 23% Hands on: 10%	Not on camera	Speaking : 28% Hands on: 17%	Speaking : 33% Hands on: 20%	Speaking : 7% Hands on: 25%	Speaking : 19% Hands on: 15%

Students generally spoke more and experienced more hands on participation after the new TPRS based instruction had been introduced in the 2010/2011 school year. At first, it was disappointing that students did not speak even more than they did during the 2010/2011 school year, but then reminded myself of Krashen’s ideas about production of language in the second language classroom – that production will come in time, and that teachers should not rush to make students produce until they are ready.

During this second set of videotaped classroom observations, I also thought it would be interesting to compare how much speaking and hands on participation students were exhibiting during different times of the class. Percentages of speaking and hands on participation during times when students were engaged in TPRS instruction as opposed to when they were engaged in more traditional methods of instruction (paper and pencil based reading comprehension exercises, vocabulary work, and translation) were examined.

Percentages of time spent with speaking and hands-on activity during sections of class being taught in TPRS format

	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17, 2010
James	Speaking: 14% Hands on: 43%	Speaking: 10% Hands on: 70%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 43%	Speaking: 10% Hands on: 30%
Alan	Speaking: 29% Hands on: 36%	Speaking: 20% Hands on: 60%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 43%	Speaking: 10% Hands on: 20%
Dina	Speaking: 7% Hands on: 36%	Speaking: 20% Hands on: 50%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 43%	Speaking: 33% Hands on: 22%

Percentages of time spent with speaking and hands-on activity during sections of class being taught in a more teacher-centered traditional format (paper and pencil based reading comprehension exercises, vocabulary work, and translation.)

	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17, 2010
James	Speaking: 33% Hands on: 0%	Speaking: 30% Hands on: 5%	Speaking: 0% Hands on: 0%	No teacher-centered traditional format activity going on this day
Alan	Speaking: 20% Hands on: 0%	Speaking: 15% Hands on: 0%	Speaking: 22% Hands on: 0%	No teacher-centered traditional format activity going on this day
Dina	Speaking: 40% Hands on: 0%	Speaking: 40% Hands on: 5%	Speaking: 11% Hands on: 0%	No teacher-centered traditional format activity going on this day

When I first compared these informal statistics, it was alarming that the amounts of time students spent speaking was actually higher during the more traditional type of instruction than it was during the TPRS based instruction! I revisited the videotaped student observations. I simply went to each instance of spoken on-task behavior, then noted the language the student was using during the on-task behavior.

I expected that there would be more English speaking during the more traditional instruction. However, I was in for a surprise. Students were speaking more German during the traditional instruction than they were during the TPRS based instruction. It was necessary to take a closer look at the utterances being made in German – were they answers to a direct translation question or a mere repetition of what I was saying? Or were they freely formulated language? This is where a pattern emerged. Even though there was more German being spoken during the traditional instruction, students responses were (in the great majority of cases) either them simply repeating a word I had just said or one word translations of vocabulary. In other words, either parroting or simple recall was going on. On the other hand, during TPRS instruction, even though there were fewer utterances being made in German, they were all freely formed responses.

Instances of English and German being spoken during TPRS instruction

	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17, 2010
James	2 speaking instances – 1 English and 1 German. (freely formulated language)	1 speaking instance – 1 German. (freely formulated language)	0 speaking instances	1 speaking instance – 1 German. (freely formulated German)
Alan	4 speaking instances -2 English and 2 German. (Both freely formulated language)	2 speaking instances -1 English and 1 German. (freely formulated language)	0 speaking instances	1 speaking instance – 1 German. (freely formulated language)
Dina	2 speaking instances – 1 English and 1 German. (freely formulated language)	2 speaking instances – 2 German. (Both freely formulated language)	0 speaking instances	3 speaking instances – 2 English and 1 German. (freely formed language)

Instances of English and German being spoken during more traditional non TPRS/non FASG instruction

	Oct. 6, 2010	Oct. 13, 2010	Nov. 10, 2010	Nov. 17, 2010
James	4 speaking instances – all in German. All 4 utterances repetitions or one word translations	6 speaking instances – 3 English and 3 German. All three utterances one word translations or repetition of teacher language.	0 speaking instances	No non TPRS/non FASG instruction on this day
Alan	3 speaking instances -2 English and 1 German. This one German utterance was a one word translation	3 speaking instances -3 German. All three utterances one word translations or repetition of teacher language.	2 speaking instances – 2 English	No non TPRS/non FASG instruction on this day
Dina	6 speaking instances – 2 English and 4 German. 2 of these four utterances freely formed language, and the other 2 were responses to translation questions or a repetition of teacher language	8 speaking instances – 3 English and 5 German. Of those 5 German utterances, three were one word translations or repetitions of teacher language, and two were freely formed language.	1 speaking instance -1 English	No non TPRS/non FASG instruction on this day

4. 11 Summary: What do the videotaped classroom observations tell?

The videotaped classroom observations were invaluable to me. First of all, they showed me that students did, in general, show higher levels of on-task behavior when information was being imparted using TPRS methods. Consider the time frame (2010/2011 school year) when both TPRS methods as well as more traditional

methods were being used: When TPRS methods were being employed, James was on task 89% of the time, Alan 86%, and Dina 93%. When more traditional methods were being used, James was on task only 76% of the time, Alan 66%, and Dina 96%. Dina seems to be the exception to this rule – she is a powerhouse during all types of instruction – except when FASG was the topic at hand.

During times when FASG was the topic at hand (calculated for all lessons dealing with FASG in the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 school year), Dina’s rate of being on task slipped to 83%. The drop for on task behavior is more drastic for the male students: James was on task 63% of the time when FASG was the topic at hand and Alan was on task 62% of the time. These low rates of on task behavior were not expected at all. Since students had rated FASG so high as a motivating factor, I had expected their rates of being on- task to be much higher. However, the results of the videotaped student interviews as well as the openly structured questionnaires helped me clear this up. It was not the class time spent on FASG that was so motivating, but rather the events happening at the convention itself as well as the independent study that students felt was so motivating.

4.12 November 3 2010: Informal Descriptive Statistics Questionnaire (Appendix 15)

This final questionnaire was carried out as yet another triangulation tool, as well as a further investigation into the question of whether or not the annual theme of FASG should be incorporated into instruction, and if yes, to what extent. Of the 10 students who took part in the questionnaire, 9 of them either agreed (3) or strongly agreed (6) that taking part in FASG (the state German competition) was a major reason they came to German class. This matches up with past student responses listing FASG as a major motivating factor for coming to German class. Eight of those same 10 students said that if FASG did not exist that they either strongly agreed (5) or agreed (3) that they would still take German. This suggests the existence of other motivating factors besides FASG, one of the main ones being TPRS instruction as indicated by students.

However, one student disagreed, and one strongly disagreed with the statement “If FASG did not exist, I would still take German”. The student who strongly disagreed was Alan. He is the same student who felt very strongly about there not being any

mention of the annual FASG topic in our TPR based instruction and the same student who exhibited on-task behavior only 60% of the time when FASG was the topic at hand in class. This, again, points to FASG as being extremely motivational for him, but not in a classroom-based sense. His FASG-based motivation seems to come from the competition itself. Alan is one of the students who reported that his motivation came from on-site competition activities such as the dance and the final product delivered by the group. FASG in the classroom was not mentioned by Alan as a motivating factor, nor does it prove to be a motivating factor based on the in-class observations.

All of the ten students either agreed (6) or strongly agreed (4) with the statement “Acting out vocabulary makes me want to come to German class”. This acting out of vocabulary refers to the TPRS method. Again, this is in harmony with previous research results which listed TPRS as a motivating factor for students.

As for the statement “Our German class is better this year than it was last year”, only one student disagreed, and eight either agreed (5) or strongly agreed (3). One student wrote “I wasn’t here” as a response, as he had joined the class as a new student at the beginning of the 2010/2011 school year.

The last two questions dealt with the incorporating of FASG into daily instruction. Of the 10 students who answered the questionnaire, only two strongly agreed or agreed that the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic all year long. Eight of the ten students did not want FASG to be the topic all year long – six students disagreed and two strongly disagreed with the statement “All year, the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic.”

One student strongly disagreed with the suggestion that FASG be a topic handled in class even some of the time. Again, this research seems to point out that students seem to find the non-teacher directed aspect of free-time FASG preparation as well as the competition itself motivating, but not necessarily the in-class preparation.

4.13 Conclusion

My class underwent quite a transformation during the time I have worked on this doctoral thesis. One end result is that I will continue to use an action research approach to answer future practice related questions following the action research cycle of identifying the focus, collecting data, analyzing and interpreting that data, and developing further action plans based on the results.

Instruction started off the 2009/2010 school year as being much more paper and pencil based on a service learning project, and transformed into a classroom well on its way to being more fully based on the delivery of Comprehensible Input through TPRS.

Learning about TPRS and having the opportunity to practice it has changed my German curriculum immensely. I will continue to make TPRS a main mode of delivery as I explore other content avenues with future classes. I will also continue to research student motivation in both formal and informal means in order to make sure that my work in the classroom is matched with the motivational needs of my students. Tapping into the motivation goldmine has allowed me to grow as a professional, and most importantly, service my students to the very best of my ability.

While my action research project deals primarily with the small world of my German class, it has implications far beyond the walls of the classroom. Second language instruction is not mandatory in order to graduate from high school in the great majority of states in America. (NCSSFL 2010). In those states where it is mandatory, only one or two years are required. ACTFL reports that only 18.5% of all students in American are enrolled in a second language course. (ACTFL, 2011). Compare those dismal statistics to what is happening in Europe: Eurostat reported in 2010 that in several European countries, more than 90 % of pupils are learning English as a second language. Eurostat also reports that some European countries such as Denmark, Italy, Cyprus, Romania, Finland and Iceland have more than 75% of students learning two languages in school. (Eurostat 2010)

American students are not choosing to take second language in school, even when it is offered. This needs to be a wake up call to world language departments across the

country. Perhaps a better understanding of student motivation in the second language classroom would increase student enrollment. This can take place on two fronts: in the classrooms (for veteran teachers) and at the universities (for future teachers).

Veteran teachers would use the classroom as a guide. My literature based research (Dörnyei, Ray and Seely, Chambers, Krashen), showed that it is best practice when teachers make the effort to find ways to personalize instruction and make it meaningful for their students. In order to do this, teachers must go straight to the source: The students. If students identify certain topics, teachers can collaborate in order to find innovative ways to include these identified motivational factors into their individual state standards. If students identify teaching techniques, teachers can seek out professional development in that area. Whether students identify motivational factors in one or both areas (or a totally different area!), the follow up activities by teachers are vital for professional growth for the teachers as individuals as well as for the good of the discipline as a whole. Secondly, teachers can combine that knowledge of student motivational factors with knowledge of motivational delivery practices in order to maximize student motivation in their second language classrooms.

For future teachers, teacher education programs are part of the solution. It is extremely important for future educators to understand more about both the role of motivation in second language learning as well as what can be done to increase motivation. There needs to be discussion among language teacher educators at universities concerning the relationship between the efficacy of future teachers to not only manage the second language classroom and teach the subject matter, but to do so in a way which will increase student motivation.

On a more focused scale, consider the following statistics concerning German, especially in the state of Florida. According to statistics collected by the 2013 Florida Association of Teachers of German (FATG) president, Dr. Nancy Decker representing enrollment figures in all Florida counties from the 1995/1996 school year to the 2010/2011 school year, enrollment in German over that time period has decreased by approximately 1,000 students. (From 6,246 in the 1995/1996 school year to 5,244 in the 2010/2011 school year) This trend is representative of the national trend in German: According to Rhodes and Pufahl (2010 in Ecke 2011), "In all U.S.

regions, the percentages of secondary schools that offer German decreased between the years 1997 and 2008, but at different rates: The biggest declines can be found in the South (from 14% to 6%)” In elementary schools, percentage of schools offering German fell from 5% in 1997 to 2% in 2008. However, private schools slightly increased their offering of German from 2% to 3% (Rhodes and Pufahl 2010 in Ecke 2011).

Ecke cites data from the past Executive Director of the American Association of Teachers of German Helene Zimmer-Loew (AATG) pointing to a continued strong interest in finding teachers to fill pre-collegiate level teaching positions. This is not a surprise as he also gives statistics, collected from AATG, concerning the ages of AATG membership: “...the largest age group of the association’s membership is between 51 and 60 years old, the second largest group is between 41 and 50 years old, and the third largest group is between 61 and 70 years old. In a recent survey conducted with randomly chosen AATG members, about half of the 777 respondents were 50 years or older.” (Ecke 2011, p. 67). Teachers are retiring from the profession and new teachers are needed. This is problematic, as Ecke also tells that there is a shortage of qualified German teachers. German enrollment in elementary through university needs to be a concern on both a state and national level for German teachers at all levels.

Articulation is crucial to keeping German alive in Florida. Articulation is the process of providing a transition for students from feeder schools at the earliest levels. German programs at the elementary and middle school level feed into high school programs. High school programs feed into university programs. University programs produce German teachers ready to enter the field.

As small as my program is, it is a contribution to the continuation of German as an academic subject in the state of Florida. My program is part of articulation in action as middle to high school articulation has been carefully planned with other Central Florida German professionals. As my students graduate from middle school, many of them have continued their studies at the high school level, with the opportunity to start at German 2 instead of German 1. My middle school students actually get to meet their future high school German teachers at the state German competition. Fostering articulation at this early age, even on a small scale, makes a difference in

the big picture of the profession as a whole as my students “trickle up”. Even if elementary school students leave the school before completing the middle school portion of the German program, German is still attractive to them at the high school level because they have already had some experience in it. Two of my elementary German students left the school prior to graduating middle school, but contacted me later via email to inform me that they opted for German at the high school level. Again, having formal data on students’ academic German experiences would be beneficial to gaining a better picture of the “power of one” my program has overall.

In order to give a more complete picture of the impact my students have had on German in Florida as a whole, a formal investigation following students’ high school and university level language learning choices would be necessary. Such an investigation has not yet been carried out, but would be an interesting study into “the power of one” in changing the outlook of German education in the state of Florida.

Spanish remains a very popular language choice in the United States with almost 69% of high school students opting to study Spanish (AATSP 2013). This is a language choice that makes sense for students in Florida – almost 23% of the population is Hispanic. (United States Census Bureau 2013). Florida has close proximity to Spanish speaking nations in the Caribbean. However, the high number of Spanish speakers in Florida is exactly the reason why other second languages, including German, must be offered in Florida schools. Students who already have a Spanish language background should not be enrolling in Spanish 1. These students should be enrolling in courses, as recommended by Krashen and Cummins, which will sharpen their already existing skills. A “Spanish for advanced speakers” course would bring enrichment to the students Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins 1979). These students should then enroll in a third language in order to further broaden their language repertoire. According to Cummins, bilingual speakers generally have higher linguistic competences than students who only speak one language and put these linguistic skills to use in further languages (Cummins 1984).

German is a natural choice for these students. According to Wikipedia, at least one million German speakers reside in Latin America. (May 18, 2013). Students who speak both Spanish and German will be employable to companies working in this

region of the world. Not only is Latin America attractive to German speaking Hispanic students, so is Europe. Germany is a key player in Europe. Consider this quote from the Centre for Research on Globalization: “Germany today effectively runs the European Union”.(Werbowski 2013). Knowledge of English in combination with German and Spanish would make students attractive prospects for employers with any type of European operations.

The fact that Germany plays such an important role in today’s European Union should be one that makes German attractive to all students, not only Spanish speaking ones. One tactic to increase numbers of students taking German in Florida needs to be to attract Hispanic students. The Florida Association of Teachers of German (FATG) needs to work together with institutions such as the Goethe Institut (which already has an initiative to attract Spanish speakers to German – Todo Aleman) and the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) to strengthen recruitment of Hispanic students.

German should be an attractive language option to students, but statistics show that statewide, German has declining enrollment. Attracting Hispanic students is one part of maintaining and increasing enrollment in German statewide, however, as mentioned earlier, the “power of one” should not be underestimated. In order to keep my own enrollment levels high, it was necessary for me to assess and reflect upon the effectiveness of the practices in place. I felt that high levels of student motivation were a key factor in my steady enrollment numbers. Checking my own practice made the need for change apparent. I am interested in progress and growth in the classroom. This cannot happen without change. The ability of German teachers across the state to tap into the motivation goldmine within their students may just be the key to increasing student interest in taking and staying in German classes at school. The topic of student motivation in the classroom should be seen as integral to the health of the discipline of German teaching at all levels – from elementary to university. A long term study of student motivation-based changes made to individual classrooms and the long term academic German careers and motivation levels of those students in German classes would help clarify the picture of whether or not making changes to curriculum based on student motivation is indeed a factor that makes a large scale impact on the profession as a whole.

My classroom based research – questionnaires, surveys, observations, and interviews – was what formulated the path of my work. It provided me with the most surprises as data was collected. The very first being that my assumption that the service learning based curriculum being taught at the time was a main motivator for students was incorrect. Lemony Snicket is the author of “The Series of Unfortunate Events” books which were hugely popular with my students at the time this research was being conducted. In reading the fifth novel in the series, “The Austere Academy”, with a student, we came across this quote about making assumptions: “Making assumptions simply means believing things are a certain way with little or no evidence that shows you are correct, and you can see at once how this can lead to terrible trouble. For instance, one morning you might wake up and make the assumption that your bed was in the same place that it always was, even though you would have no real evidence that this was so. But when you got out of your bed, you might discover that it had floated out to sea, and now you would be in terrible trouble all because of the incorrect assumption that you'd made. You can see that it is better not to make too many assumptions, particularly in the morning.” (Snicket, 2000, p.187) Since this experience with action research, I know that it is better to not make too many assumptions in the classroom, either.

My next surprise dealt with the finding that less is sometimes more in the German classroom. It was, at first, very disappointing to find, as the videotaped class sessions were reviewed, that students were actually speaking more during times of traditional instruction and less during times when TPRS was the mode of instruction. The videotaped student observations were revisited to find out what kind of student speech was occurring during the traditional instruction and during TPR instruction. It was found that even though there was more German being spoken during the traditional instruction, most of those students utterances were either them simply repeating a word I had just said or one word translations of vocabulary. During TPRS instruction, even though there were fewer utterances being made in German, they were all freely formed responses – quality over quantity. Literature based research allowed me to gain a better understanding of what students were reporting to me. The more that was read, the more relationships were recognized between methods and theories. These relationships are made evident throughout my work both in the literature review as

well as in the discussion of the results. The literature was what made me able to make sense of my students' responses. Students identified the TPRS delivery method to be motivational. In response, I attended professional development in order to become more proficient in the methods, and made my instruction more TPRS based. My classroom based research showed that students did, in general, show higher levels of on-task behavior when information was being imparted using TPRS methods. This delivery method follows the main ideas of Krashen's Natural Approach, and represents Dörnyei's idea of External Motivational Influences at the Learning Situation Level. External Motivational Influences at the Learning Situation Level refer to the influences that are specific to an individual classroom. Further exploration into Dörnyei led me to learn more about how I, as the classroom teacher, can contribute even further to the motivational forces in my classroom by incorporating motivational teaching practices.

More surprises followed. When students identified success at the state German competition a major motivating factor, it was a little disappointing. Not only was I sure that the service learning project I had put so much time and effort into was a huge motivator for students, I was also sure that they viewed German as a means to discover a new world of possibilities both vocationally and socially. Wrong on all accounts. I had to remind myself of the constructivist idea of important concepts of a study emerging as they are *constructed by the students*. For my young students, the world of work and of discovering new worlds is very far away. Further action research in the classroom will identify ways for me to design instruction that, as students grown older, may change success at the German competition from a prime motivating factor into a motivational influence geared towards making one of those loftier second language learning goals more reachable.

After students made the initial identification of the state German competition as a major motivational factor in German class, I investigated deeper into initial student responses with follow up questionnaires and interviews. I applied what was being learned in the ongoing literature review to the responses that students provided. Several aspects of the competition emerged as being especially motivating for various students: "beating the big kids", winning the competition, teamwork, and the autonomous nature in which students worked towards success. The tangible reward of

receiving a trophy at the state German competition is extrinsic in nature. However, because it can be defined as introjected regulation (Deci and Ryan 2000), (extrinsic motivation deals with activities performed due to an outside source that the student has incorporated into his or her self). “Beating the big kids” by winning the first in state trophy involves Dörnyei’s second language Motivational Self System (which incorporates the concept of “self” into a person’s ideal self, ought-to self, and the second language learning experience) as students have gained motivation from the incorporation of the state German competition into their possible future selves.

Group effort was mentioned most by students as a reason that the state German competition was motivating to them. FASG, even though it is a competitive event, is experienced by my students as a cooperative team effort on many levels. Students felt solidarity as they strived to reach common goals, depending upon one another in the process of reaching those goals. The competition itself is the motivation for students to work cooperatively, and the cooperative interaction between students has proven itself to be a motivating factor for my students.

Although team work was such an important factor to the motivational power behind the state German competition, the autonomous nature in which students worked also contributed to motivation for some of the older students. Two seventh grade students said they enjoyed the self-directed learning aspect of FASG. Existing literature (Dörnyei; Keller; Thomas, Strage, and Curley, Krashen) helped me to understand that the satisfaction that these students gained from this came from the balance of control. In any educational setting, there is always an element of external control. The key to the satisfaction experienced by these students was to give guidelines without being over controlling. Students were prompted to extend their knowledge beyond what they already knew and allowed the freedom to do so while still feeling that the support was there if they needed it.

Another important finding of the study was that FASG, although it was indicated by students to be a major motivating factor, was not motivational to students as a topic in class. All of the identified motivational factors were related to attendance at the competition itself or in preparing for it outside of the classroom. Students were less motivated by handling the topic in class. This was proven through both video taped

classroom sessions focusing on on-task behavior as well as questionnaires completed by students.

This action research was an exercise in improving my practice, and has made improving practice an ongoing aspect of my professional life. The desire to learn more about the motivation of my own students in my German classroom sparked the onset of action research that led me to a better understanding of my subject area, myself as a professional, and most importantly, my students. The action research journey my work represents is one that has some significant twists and turns to it. The research is presented in a way that is true to life and to the main purpose, according to Peter Reason (2006) of inquiry: "...to forge a more direct link between intellectual knowledge and moment to moment personal and social action so that inquiry contributes directly to the flourishing of human persons..." (p. 188).

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Appendix

Appendix 1: October 21, 2009 Pilot Study – Motivation! Questionnaire and Results

Motivation!

(A Pilot Study)

1. Tell me about what motivates you in German class.

2. What would make you more motivated in German class?

Please let me know what you thought of this questionnaire! Circle your response.

1. I understood what the questions were asking: YES NO

2. It took too long to do: YES NO

3. The questions were confusing: YES NO

4. Instructions were clear: YES NO

Results of October 21, 2009 Pilot Study

16 3rd and 4th grade Social Studies students took part in the pilot study. It took place in their regular Social Studies classroom, and all 16 students we present for the entire mini lesson on motivation that preceded this small questionnaire.

Question 1. “I understood what the questions were asking”:

16 out of 16 students circled “YES”.

Question 2. “It took too long to do”:

15 out of 16 students circled “NO”.

Question 3. “The questions were confusing”:

14 out of 16 students circled “NO”.

Question 4. “Instructions were clear”:

15 out of 16 students circled “YES”.

Interestingly enough, the students who indicated that the questions were confusing *both* indicated in question number 1 that they understood what the questions were asking.

The pilot study taught me that it can’t be assumed that young students will understand what motivation is, and that the best way for them to understand it was to tap into their own experiences. It was decided to give the mini lesson on motivation at the beginning of the actual questionnaire for the German class and to keep the questions as they were.

12. Mrs. H creates a pleasant and supporting classroom atmosphere.

Yes

Somewhat

No

85% yes
15% somewhat

13. In Mrs. H's class, we are tolerant of one another.

Yes

Somewhat

No

69% yes
31% somewhat

14. It is OK to make mistakes in Mrs. H's class.

Yes

Somewhat

No

92% yes
8% somewhat

15. Mrs. H encourages humor in class.

Yes

Somewhat

No

100% yes

16. Mrs. H encourages students to personalize the classroom environment.

Yes

Somewhat

No

31% yes
38% somewhat
31% no

85% answered yes to the main question, and
73% (an average of yes answers) answered yes to the related sub questions.

17. Mrs. H promotes a good group feeling in German class.

Yes

Somewhat

No

69% yes
31% somewhat

18. Mrs. H promotes interaction, sharing, and cooperation between group members.

Yes

Somewhat

No

69% yes
31% somewhat

19. We take part in small group activities in German class.

Yes

Somewhat

No

92% yes
8% somewhat

20. We have extracurricular activities in German class.

Yes

Somewhat

No

100% yes

21. German class has activities where the whole group takes part.

Yes

Somewhat

No

46% yes
54% somewhat

22. German class has a history of its own with traditions.

Yes

Somewhat

No

85% yes
15% somewhat

69% answered yes to the main question, and
78% (an average of yes answers) answered yes to the related sub questions.

23. German class norms (rules) are clear and accepted by students.

Yes

Somewhat

No

100% yes

24. Class norms (rules) are consistently followed.

Yes

Somewhat

No

85% yes 15% somewhat

25. Mrs. H follows class rules (norms), too.

Yes

Somewhat

No

77% yes 23% somewhat

26. Mrs. H notices and acts on violations of class norms (rules)

Yes

Somewhat

No

92% yes 8% somewhat

100% answered yes to the main question, and 85% (an average of yes answers) answered yes to the related sub questions.

Appendix 3: December 2, 2009 Selected questions from “Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory” (BALLI) by Elaine Horwitz and results from administration to 13 students.

Selected Questions from Elaine Horwitz’s Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

1. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

77% either strongly agreed or agreed.

2. If someone spent one hour a day learning this language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent?
 - a. Less than a year
 - b. 1 -2 years
 - c. 3-5 years
 - d. 5-10 years
 - e. You can’t learn a language in one hour a day

69% said 1-2 years

3. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

54% said easier to speak than understand

4. I have foreign language aptitude.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

77% either strongly agreed or agreed

5. Learning the foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

31% strongly agreed or agreed, and 31% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

6. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

69% either strongly agreed or agreed

7. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

92% either strongly agreed or agreed

8. You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

100% either strongly disagreed or disagreed

9. If I heard someone speaking the language I was trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

69% either strongly disagreed or disagreed

**Statement 9 is taken from the earlier BALLI version listed in Dörnyei (2001a)

10. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

31% agreed, 31% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 38% disagreed.

11. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

69% either strongly agreed or agreed

Appendix 4: Transcript of December 9, 2009 BALLI discussion:

☺ = student or students laughing out loud

Teacher: All right, ladies and gentlemen, here we go. What we're going to be doing today is we're going to go over the results. Do you remember that survey that we took where they asked a bunch of questions about what you feel about learning languages and are you going to be good at it, and do smart people know a lot of languages...

Alan: Yup

Teacher: Do you remember that from last week?

Students: umm hmm

Teacher: I put all your results together. Now I didn't do every single question, there were thirty some questions so that would have been a lot to talk about. So I pulled the ones that I thought were most important to what we're doing.

(Referring to Power Point Presentation on computer) First of all, "I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well." 77% of you said either yes, strongly agree or agree (pointing) this many people, 77% said yes, you believe that you will, eventually, learn to speak German very well. Which makes me very happy! Because if you stick with something...

Alan: You eventually learn it.

Teacher: Right, and you're smart kids.

Students: Yeah! Thank you!

Teacher: Yes, it is true! What makes you think, put your hands up for this, what makes you think that you will eventually learn German? What is it that's making you think that? And there's no right or wrong answers for this, so don't be afraid. Amy?

Amy: Because I love German, so if I keep working hard enough, I will eventually learn it.

Teacher: Dorothy?

Dorothy: It's the determination, you know?

Teacher: What give you that determination? What makes you love it?

William: The way we get taught.

Teacher: William, put your hand up next time! ☺ Keep going...

William: The way we get taught German we don't just sit and read textbooks, we actually, um, get to do class participation...

Teacher: A little louder, so we can hear all this...

William: We ,we don't just sit and read textbooks, we have a lot of class discussions, class participation, we do stories, we act them out sometimes. I mean Also we do have to learn vocabulary and comprehension as if in any class, but we also, we also, we also learn it in a different way than others which makes it a lot easier.

Teacher: OK, we'll get back to that in another question. It's funny you brought that up, because it's coming up. OK, what about the rest of you? What's happening to make you feel like, "YES! I'm going to learn this very well!"? What's happening? George?

George: Um, I think it's just that uh, I , for me anyway, I've been taking it for a while, so I figure that if I keep on going, I mean, I can speak it OK right now, but if I keep going I'll just slowly advance more and more until I'm at the point where I can speak it very well.

Teacher: You do a good job, you're absolutely right. George, you do an excellent job actually. Anybody else? Richard, you had your hand up, what were you going to say?

Richard: Never mind.

Teacher: Why? I'm sure it was something really smart. You always have smart things to say....

Richard: No, I did "neither agree nor disagree"..

Teacher: Oh, you answered "neither agree nor disagree", OK. Anybody else? What makes you feel like "Yeah, I can do this." (silence) Just because you know you're geniuses? ☺

Frank: Well, because if you stick with something, you always get it eventually.

Teacher: Well, what makes you want to stick with it? Why do you stick with it? I've know you guys for years. Alan?

Alan: Well if you, if you stick with it, it kinda becomes a habit, and then you keep on doing it fluently.

Teacher: So you're saying German is becoming a habit for you. (Students shake heads) Say, "yes", I can't hear your brains rattle ☺ You know what I mean? I've got to see it and hear it because we're on video. All right, anybody else? Remember, there are no right or wrong answers here, no pressure. ☺

George: Can I get a chair?

Teacher: Yes, go get a chair. That's good.

Dorothy: Can we all get chairs?

Teacher: Yes, if you'd like a chair, go get a chair

Dorothy: Thank you!

William: I was smart!

Teacher: OK, we're going to keep going. Again 77% of you, which is a lot of you for people who don't know statistics yet, it's this many (referring to pie chart on Power Point) ... red and the blue? This many said, "YEAH! I'm gonna learn this, baby! I'm gonna learn German and I'm gonna learn it well." So that's wonderful to hear, I'm glad to hear that. So we'll go on to the next one. There's not too many of these...

If someone spent one hour a day learning German how long would it take to become fluent? Now, 69% of you, that's this blue right here, said that in 1-2 years, you'd be fluent. And the rest of you, a few said 3-5 years, a couple said 5-10 years. I want to know what does "fluent" mean to you? Because before we talk about how long it takes, I've got to know what you're thinking. What is fluent? Evelyn?

Evelyn: Speaking it like an everyday German.

Teacher: Keep going. What else? William?

William: For me fluent is being able to speak it, not necessarily writing it or reading it. So if I'm able to just converse with someone when I need to, then that's to me fluent.

George: I think that fluent is speaking it and understanding it, but when you speak it, you don't have to stop every other word to think of what the next word is, you can just talk as if it was your first language.

Frank: Yeah, like you talk like it's English.

Teacher: OK, Richard, what does fluent mean to you?

Richard: Fluent basically means to speak that language like you were born with it.

Teacher: Like you're born with it, OK Dina.

Dina: It's like you speak it so well, like if you came from that country.

Teacher: Alanna, do you know what fluent means? (she shakes head). Fluent means that you're really really really good at it. But I want to know what "really really good" means to different people. Some people thought that it means that you can get by, you know, say what you need to say, some people think it means, you know, like you're born with it. Amy, what do you want to say?

Amy: Like if you can say it really well without messing up.

Teacher, OK, Alan.

Alan: If you can speak it, and, like if to help, well, fluent for me it's basically like learning it and memorize what they're doing and you can easily speak it after you learn it.

Teacher: It was important for me to ask, and this is why I gave you this survey, because it made us all think about stuff that we've never really thought about before. Now here's the deal. A lot of you just said that fluent means talking it like English, not making any mistakes, not messing up. Do you think it's going to take you 1-2 years to learn to talk like that?

Alan: yes?

Other students: No...longer?

Teacher: And also, too, some of you say that fluent means "can I get what I need to get?" Now for that, a couple of years is realistic. There's some of you now, I'd let you loose in Germany and you wouldn't starve! You'd get what you needed. Would it be pretty? NO 😊. Does it need to be? NO. So it was important to me to find out, what does fluent mean to you guys before we talked about the results here.

Like I said, “fluency” depends on what you’re looking for, and all of you are, to a degree, fluent. You’re getting there, you’re working towards fluency. And I don’t know when you’re really fluent. Do you know what I’m saying? It’s a long long time. I feel like I’m fluent. I can do what I want to do...anything. I can go to school, I’ve been to school there, I’ve worked...but what William said is correct, too though. Can you get what you want to get? That’s fluent, too. Again, almost 70% of you, 69%, said it would only take 1 or 2 years, so have you ever felt like, “Oh, I’ve been in German for a couple of years, and I’m not fluent yet! I still make mistakes!” Have you ever felt like that? (Some students nodding in agreement) Sometimes? Yes? Don’t just shake your heads, you’ve got to say yes or no, too.

Alan: Yes

Teacher: Are you being too hard on yourselves?

Students: Yes!

Teacher: Way too hard! Way too hard on yourselves! So don’t say, “Oh! I’ve been doing this language for 2 years and I STILL can’t read National Geographic in German! ☺ Get real!

Alice: Yeah, that’s gonna take some time!

Teacher: That’s right! That’s gonna take some time. So don’t feel bad, and don’t think, “Oh, I’m still reading baby books that Mrs. H brings in...” Don’t feel bad about it! Don’t be so hard on yourselves!

Alice: That’s our level...

Teacher: You’re at your level, you’re doing a great job! You can get what you want to get, right? OK, next one....

It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.” Now, we had mixed answers on this one. I mean, we were all over the place. Some of you said “Yes way”, others

said “No way”, 54% of you thought it was easier to speak than understand.
Understanding is easier. Pass mal auf! Alle aufstehen . Ja, alle aufstehen. Heb bitte mal die rechte Hand auf, sehr gut sehr gut, rechte, und jetzt die linke Hand, und jetzt springen, yeah!! Klatschen! Yeah!! Evelyn, was ist deine Lieblingsfarbe?

Evelyn: Rosa

Teacher: Rosa? Alice, was ist deine Lieblingsfarbe?

Alice: Braun

Teacher: Was ist deine Lieblingsfarbe?

George: Oh, um...blau!

Teacher: Blau, OK, gut gut gut. William, was ist deine Lieblingsfarbe?

William: Blau

Teacher: Auch blau. William wie heisst deine Mutter?

William: Ah, meine Mutter heisse Marie.

Teacher: Uh huh, und wie alt ist sie?

William: (counting on fingers) uh...

Teacher: You're thinking about it. Was it easier to understand than answer?

William: Yes.

Teacher: Did you all understand basically what I was asking for?

Students: Yes.

Teacher: Now, what if I had asked you, “Please explain to me which hand you are now holding up, Amy” Would you have been able to answer it?

Amy: No!! 😊

Teacher: But could you understand?

Amy: Yes!

Teacher: Understanding is always your first step. Understanding is easier than speaking. So when you have a hard time speaking...just like when you (William) paused to think about the number, you’re going “ohh ohh what is it? What is it?” - that’s normal. That’s OK, you haven’t made it a habit yet, like Alan was talking about. OK? So don’t be tough on yourself, “Oh ,I don’t speak very well”, and “Oh, I make pauses in between words”, very normal guys, very normal. But if you can understand, you’re OK. You know how when we work and I say “Dorothy, what did I just say?”, and you say “I think you just said this this and this!”, and you’re, most of the time. right.

Dorothy: Yeah...

Teacher: Are you amazed?

Dorothy Yeah...It’s a guess kind of thing.

Teacher: But, it’s OK to guess! Because most of the time, guess what?

Dorothy: It’s right!

Teacher: It’s right! Yes, my dear...

Amy: It is a really good thing that German sounds like English kind of.

Teacher: OK!

George: (jokingly) It's a Romantic language!

Dina: Did it take you about 5 to 10 years to speak fluently?

Teacher: You know, I started learning when I was a teenager, and I would say it took me about 5 years, but then...

William: How long did you take it?

Teacher: Well, I started in high school, but I really learned it when I went and lived there. You know me, I like to talk. So if I wanted to talk with German people, guess what I needed to learn?

Students: German.

Teacher: And I made all kinds of mistakes-some of them we can talk about in class, others we can't! ☺ You make a lot of really funny mistakes when you're learning, but you've got to, you've got to talk! You know?! Which is coming up, too. We'll get there. Hang on, this is number four...

"I have foreign language aptitude". That means I have it inside of me to do well in foreign language. And I love it that 77% of you said, "yes, yes, I've got it in me to do well. I've got something going on inside of me that makes me special in foreign language." What makes you think that? It's important to me to know these things. What makes you think that you've got aptitude in foreign language? George?

George: Well, I just think that, learning a different language, I mean, I'm able to do it, because I know that it would be, I mean it could be very useful later on in life, so I'm figuring that if I learn it earlier, I'll have more time to get better with it so I won't have to...

Teacher: So you're saying that being younger gives you the aptitude...yes, Amy?

Amy: When I'm learning the language I can hear a word like 2 times, and then I can know it. Expect for Spanish!?

Dorothy: Yeah, Spanish is....

Teacher: That's OK That's OK.. Whatcha got, William?

William: Well, aptitude, I think you have an aptitude to do anything. You can't just say, "I can do this with German, but I can't do that with calculus." You know, you have an aptitude to learn foreign languages or anything...

George: Whether you choose to...

Teacher: Say that again louder, please George.

George: Whether you choose to or not really.

Teacher: Yeah, it really is. You can't just say, "I'm not good at that", because if you say that, what happens?

Students: Then you're not good, then you fail, then you're probably not that good at it!

Dina: If you try hard enough, you can always do something.

Teacher: Good attitude! Good attitude! So 77% of you thought, "Yeah! I've got it in me to do well at this!" And that's good because, guess what, everyone of you has it. Did you all learn to speak English?

Students: Yes?!

Teacher: Then guess what?

Alice: We can learn to speak German?

Teacher: That's right! Say that again Alice.

Alice: We can learn to speak German!

Teacher: That's right, you are absolutely right, you can learn it, too.

“Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words” Is that what foreign language learning is, learning lists of vocabulary? Frank, you're giving me a look and shaking your head. Tell me about it.

Frank: No, it's not just vocabulary. It's grammar, and understanding, and gestures, it's a lot more than just “Rosa ist red”

Student: it's pink!

Frank: I mean pink! ☺

Teacher: I knew what you meant! It's more than that. I get you, it's more than learning lists of words...da da da da da....31% of you said it's all about the vocab words, you've just gotta learn vocab words. 31% of you said it's not about the vocab words! ☺ The ones in the middle didn't know! So we've got a mixed bag of answers on this one, too. So he, Frank just explained that “learning a lot of vocab words”, for him, is a list. He explained and gestured about learning lists of words. What does it mean to you to learn a bunch of vocab words. William?

William: Like I said, it's boring, like we do learn vocab words. But like I said before, this class, you learn in different ways than others. So if you were just basically learning vocab words, it would just be basically like others, like other foreign language classes.

Teacher: So you're saying, wait, did you say it was boring, did you say that?

William: I said that if you're learning vocabulary words, just listing, the whole entire class, that's just learning vocabulary.

Teacher: OK, that's boring. Does that make you feel like you want to keep going?

William: No

Teacher: What about you guys? Have you even had a class where you just learn lists of vocabulary?

Students: Yes....no

Teacher: Does it make you feel like you want to keep going?

Students: NO!

Teacher: Well, that was...eindeutig! OK, that was obvious! 😊 OK, but does it work for you, to learn, to memorize lists of vocabulary words, does it work for you? Say something, don't shake your head.

Students: No.

William: No, because if you just cram it all in your head, you won't know...

Alice: You could lose it..

Amy: I mean I learn it, but I never use it again and I just lose it.

Teacher: OK. Alright, Why...you said we use gesture and stuff here, why does it stick here? Do you like the way we do it?

Students: Yes.

Teacher: Why does it stick? I don't know. There's no right answer for this one, I want to know what you think. I've got to know what you think in order to make changes to make things better for you. Does that make sense?

Alan: Yes

Amy: because we do it in a fun way, and everybody gets to interact with each other. Instead of just sitting there and the teacher talking.

Teacher: Oh good, I always worry that I talk too much. Oh good! ☺ OK, but basically what I am hearing from you is that you like acting things out, you like that we talk, and you don't like lists! Which I don't think I've ever given you lists...

George: A few, Once or twice vocab, but I mean we do other things. I mean things besides that.

Alan: Not just vocab, vocab vocab.

William: We do stuff, and then you give us the vocabulary we learned, or we should be learning afterwards...

Teacher: "Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects." 69% of you said this class is different than your other classes. Why? What makes this class different? I want to know, you need to tell me everything. I need to know a lot about this. Yes, Dina.

Dina: Well, because other classes, you already know, you already know some of it. And if you're in, like, German, you don't know, you haven't studied it for a long time.

Teacher: So what you're saying, is it's new. Even if I'm teaching you math, I'm saying it in English and you're understanding it. But everything in German is new. Is that what you mean?

Dina: because you already know English, so it would be, it's different in German.

Teacher: OK, Alan

Alan: And why it's different in another class is because you're basically learning the same thing, but they're teaching it to you in a different way, So like if you went to the country where it speaks, you could easily take the school there and you'd know what you were doing, but by learning what their language and basically learning what They're doing but you're still learning the same words, it's just in a different way, so...

Teacher: I've got to think about what you said. That's why I'm video taping it. I'm not sure where you're going with that, but I'm going to look at it and listen to it again, all right? William.

William: Well, ah, you know, when you are learning math, let's say. You're speaking a fluent language. So what I mean by that is, she says "x times x equals x squared". Well, you know, that, you know, you know "times" means multiplication. In German, if there's two ways to say a word, you don't know what he or she is implying by that, so when you say it's different, it's not like other school subjects, it is because we all know the basis, for example in Social Studies, when he tells an event that happened, we won't know the event until he tells us, but we know we should try to guess it.

But in German you ask us a question that we've never heard before. We can either try to logically figure it out, or we just don't know it. So you tell us, and...

Teacher: OK, this is what I'm understanding. If I say we're going to learn about the.....the ...Smith War. You don't know what the Smith War is, but you know what a war is!

Students: Right...yeah...

Teacher: You've got some sort of prior knowledge there. But if I say something in German, and if you don't know what it is..

Students: Ask... Yeah... you've gotta ask...

Teacher: You don't know what it is. Is that what you were saying?

William: Yeah

Teacher: I just want to make sure. Yes.

George: I would say, I'm gonna use the example of math. I'm thinking because in math, you learn one thing, that you might have some prior knowledge on, and you might learn a few new things to go with it. But you can kinda know what to expect in, say, a worksheet after you've learned it, and it's mostly the same thing over and over again, just maybe different scenarios. But say you're doing a speaking exercise in German, and it's a conversation exercise, you never know what to expect.

Teacher: Right, you don't know...

George: With Math, you do, but with languages, you don't know what the person's gonna say or ask you..

Teacher: And we say some things in here, don't we!? 😊

George: Oh yeah!

Students: Yes...

Teacher: OK, Yes, Amy.

Amy: Like we said before it's fun and interactive. And around here there's an aura that's not in the classroom - I think that's the right word - that's not in a regular classroom or other school subject. 😊

Teacher: Tell me about the aura...

Amy: Like around here, it feels differently because in like regular school, you're just sitting there and you're staring at a teacher who's talking or you're doing a worksheet or you're working on something, and here, you're like, all around the room, and

you're talking to every person, like you're talking to one person individually, and then you'll go to another person, and then you'll talk to the whole class.

Teacher: To keep you on your toes. Keep you on your toes, kids! Anything else?
Dorothy. Share with us Dorothy, I'm going individually, from person to person,
Dorothy! ☺ OK, what makes this class different from other classes that you've been in? There are no right or wrong answers, and I would really like to hear from as many people as possible.

Dorothy: I think, it's the, like a lot of other people said, it's the interactivity that we get to do, and sometimes we get to do physical stuff, we don't have to just sit down...

Teacher: and sit there..

Dorothy: And sit there, right. We sometime, for FASG, we get ready for, you know, dances and stuff, so it's a lot different.

Teacher: Richard, have you got something to say?

Richard: No

Teacher: Are you sure?

Richard: Positive!

Teacher: We'll, I expect something out of you today because you've always got good things to say. Yes my dear...

Alice: Also, when you're speaking like German, every word you say in German is practicing that language, and other subjects, like when you speak English; it's not really practice for English.

Teacher: I hear you, OK. I hear what you're saying, and we're going to come to that. I'm glad you guys are saying these things. I'm setting you up! Don't worry, it's not bad though. ☺

"It is important to repeat and practice a lot" 92% of you said yes, it is important to repeat and practice a lot. ☺ William, would you agree with this statement?

William: Yes.

Teacher: Thank you William, thank you very much. I am sure your mother will be pleased. ☺ So for those of you who aren't real hot with statistics, all of these here, the blue and the white all said it is important to repeat...

Students: yellow..

Teacher: Is it yellow? All right, thank you. It's important to repeat and practice a lot. What are the best ways to repeat and practice? What works for you? What works for you? Evelyn?

Evelyn: Saying it

Alan: over and over and over and over again...

Teacher: So you mean just going "Katze, Katze, Katze Katze..." ☺ I need details, I need details.

Evelyn: I means saying it maybe in a conversation or reading it in a story..

Teacher: OK, Using it..

Evelyn: Yeah

Teacher: Yes.

Alice: I think writing it, saying it, and seeing it. Because every time you see it, it helps you practice.

Teacher: Good. You guys are helping me so much, you have no idea! These are all things I kinda thought I knew about you, but you're really saying it, it's really helping me a lot. Yes.

Amy: This is kind of what Evelyn said, it helps me when I'm talking to someone else in German class and we try to have a conversation in German using the words we learned.

Teacher: Good. Yes.

Dina: When we just learn words you can speak it in a conversation, or you could listen to it a lot, or you could write it in sentences.

Teacher: Good. Yes.

William: I was gonna say basically the same thing, uh, you know, the best way to do it is not, like you said, just "Katze, Katze Katze", you know, we read several stories and in those stories, we have those words used in a different way, in a different form, you know, uh, in different parts. So it's just, you... you see the word over and over again, and you know what it means, and you learn different ways to use it.

Teacher: So what I'm hearing from you is you're saying "reading" a lot...

William: No no, Also you give us... Last year the quiz on the song. We had to know that this word goes there, this word means that, so if you read the sentence over, you say this in English and know what the words mean, so you go that and that would this fit in there.

George: It gets used somehow, and usefulness is what its really all about.

Teacher: You got any more on that?

George: It's pretty much what William was saying, you've got to put it to use somehow. Or else it's pointless.

William: you've got to put it to use it in different ways.

Teacher: I've got a question now, When you say the conversations, you know how I just get you and I start talking in German and you guys sort of follow me, and sometimes you're not sure of 100% , but we keep going? That's one way of doing it, you know when we act stuff out? And another way of doing it is using words, all that you know, see you guys don't have a comparison for this...a lot of times, in high school, you'll learn some words, and then you'll write a dialog, about...using those words. And it's not necessarily anything you really care about...does that make sense? Do you like writing, I mean can you pretend that you care about something, or would you rather write about something that you care about?

Students: Rather write about something you care about. ...care about....

Teacher: Do you like the stuff that I'm picking out for you?

Students: Yes!

Teacher: Why do you care about it? Because there's kissing in it?! ☺ Why?

Dorothy: It's the things that we're interested in. Like what I'm doing for the FASG project it's what I like to do. Build things.

Teacher: William.

William: When you're at a chess tournament, you don't want to play someone that's, uh, beneath your level. You always want to get someone who's a little better than you, so that if you're at the same, you learn the difference between you and that person. Same thing goes here, uh, you know, when you, when you, do the German, you know, you want to learn something for example the stories, we don't know a word in the

story. You want to have a story that's a little above your level so you learn the little area you're not familiar with.

Teacher: Very cool. Anybody else? All right, let's see what the next one is. "I would like to learn German so I can get to know its speakers better". 69% of you said "YES, I would like to get to know the German speakers better" What's the best way to get to know the German speakers? What's the best to get to know people? Richard. 😊

Richard: I forgot what I was going to say.

Teacher: Alan?

Alan: Speaking with them!

Teacher: Speaking with them! Now, remember when I said I was setting you up? This is part of the set up! Everyone say, "Speaking with them is the best way to get to know them!" Go ahead!

Students: Speaking with them is the best way to get to know them!

Teacher: I am so glad you guys said that, that is amazing! 😊 Because...Here's another thing (referring to next Power Point) "You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly". I'm so proud of you – 100% of you said "NO WAY!" You don't have to be perfect to communicate!

William: It's only two colors (referring to the Power Point)

Teacher: I know, because nobody agreed with the statement. Nobody agreed with it, everyone of you said "No way, man! That's not true!"

Alan: I strongly disagreed.

Teacher: You don't have to be perfect to communicate in a foreign language!

Alice: People will know what you mean.

Amy: It's like people speaking English like that, even little kids, they don't use proper grammar.

Teacher: No, but you know what they mean.

Dina: You still know what they mean.

Teacher: OK, this is all good. That's a great answer, you guys. Now... "If I heard someone speaking German, I would go up to them and practice" 69% of you said "no". Here's the set up. WAIT...I saw that, and said, this doesn't make sense! 100% of us say you don't need to be perfect to communicate, 92% say it's important to practice when we get the opportunity...

George: (jokingly) But don't talk to strangers...

Students ☺ yeah!

Teacher: Did you just say "Don't talk to strangers"?!

Students: ☺ Yeah!

Dorothy: ☺ Yeah, so what happens if they're like murders or ..

William: ☺ I don't want to be at McDonalds eating a burger and see a guy talk German on the phone, and be like, "hi guy, hi"

George: ☺ Yeah, just walking up to and talking to random people is kind of weird.

Students: ☺ Yeah yeah!

Teacher: (laughing) It's not weird!

Dorothy: ☺ To us it is!

Teacher: (laughing) Oh, you guys are using it against me! I had no idea this was coming at me! Oh my God, you guys, you've taken like the rule that nobody can touch, and you're using it. ☺

Dina: What if it's someone you don't know?

George: (laughing) Are we supposed to just go up and say "What are you doing?" ☺

Teacher: You don't do it that way, you don't do it that way. Have you never seen me approach strangers?

Dina: No

William: I mean, I approach strangers if I'm in a class, or if I'm waiting outside the class.

Dorothy: You've got to have a reason....

Teacher: Well what about the reason that you want to practice your German?

Dorothy: ☺ No!

William: ☺ Get a tutor!

Amy: ☺ I'm afraid they'd kidnap me!

Dina: I'd rather talk with someone that I know. Than someone that I don't know.

Amy: Dorothy just said you do it to chastise people.

☺

Teacher: (laughing) OK Dorothy just said I do it to chastise people! OK, That's my job! OK, I have been floored now...☺ I was not expecting "What about not talking to strangers?" ☺ OK, Let's move that rule aside! OK, I've got the wink (referring to the winking face on the Power Point) going on here, so I'm with you, I'm not really yelling at you...yeah OK, I am a little ☺ OK, So why do you not want to talk to people? You put no for a reason, and it wasn't to not talk to strangers. Why? Alan? Be real honest with me.

Alan: Well, because what if you went up to them and they were just trying to learn German? So maybe you might want to get a tutor because they might already know the German and that's why you got them. Because a stranger they might not already know it...

Teacher: No no, we are talking about if I hear two strangers, or two people speaking German, would I go up to them. Think about it. Dorothy.

Dorothy: You could just make a big fool out of yourself. ☺

Teacher: How could you make a fool out of yourself? How?

Dorothy: Making mistakes.

Teacher: Wait! I believe it was ...100% of you that said you don't need to be perfect in order to communicate.

Dorothy: Well, OK, right right

Amy: Well, yeah, but these are perfect strangers.

Dorothy: If you make a fool out of yourself by saying completely the wrong thing, what happens then?

Students: All speak at once

Teacher: wait wait wait! Let me answer Dorothy first. Say the question again. What happens if you make a complete fool out of yourself? What happens then?

Dorothy: Yeah

Teacher: Everybody laughs real hard, and then you go on. Guys let me tell you a quick story.

Amy: What happens if you say “my teeth are green”? ☺

Teacher: I’ve said much worse than that. I’m going to tell you a real quick story, OK? I could tell you one about me, but I’ll tell you one about my friend. She was learning Spanish, and she was learning Spanish for her church, so she could go out and tell people about her church, right? So she’s in the neighborhood called Spanish Harlem in New York, and Heidi is standing there in front of this congregation, this church, and she is speaking Spanish, and she wants to tell them that she is embarrassed to speak Spanish so she goes, “me embarassa”, she said “I am pregnant” in front of the entire congregation. The entire church went “AHHHH” like this, and she “what did I say, what did I say?”. Someone told her, she turned beet red, and everybody laughed ..

William: and she fell...

Teacher: But did she make a fool of herself?

Students: YES!!

Teacher: NO, because other people who are learning a foreign language, they understand. And I’ve done much worse than that. I can’t even tell you!

Alan: Tell us! Tell us one story!

Teacher: But when you make a fool out of yourself, everyone laughs, and you go on.

Alan: But you deal with it!

William: But you don't know what the stranger is thinking. He might be a really mean jerk and (Amy interrupts) hold on hold, on, he might be a really mean person and you go up and embarrass yourself, and he might be thinking the worst things about you. And then he would go, he would go and tell someone else. And that person tells someone else.

Teacher: OK, I'm going to use you and Frank. Frank practices his German on me, he makes a whole bunch of mistakes. I go to you and say, "oh William, ☺ Frank tried to speak German with me, and it was so bad! Oh my God there were so many mistakes!"

George: But you don't talk like that!

Teacher: What would you think about me? That I was a mean jerk!

William: right. I never though about that ☺

Teacher: You never though about that? But you'd think I was the mean jerk, wouldn't you? What if I talked to Dorothy. Dorothy, Evelyn Kunkel, she just tried to practice her German on me, and it was so bad, I had to walk away. What would you think about me? (Dorothy makes shame shame shame sign) ☺ Right, shame shame shame. What would you think about Evelyn?

Dorothy: She's learning.

Teacher: She's just learning.

Alan: Give her a break!

Teacher: Guys, people aren't going to think bad about you, and in most cases, people are very very glad that you're trying to learn their language. If I had shut my mouth when I was living in Germany, I would have never learned the language. You know, there's people who do that. They're so self conscious, they're so afraid to practice, they never get any better. Your Mom learned English, right?

Dorothy: Yeah...Kind of...

Teacher: If she never practiced, would she get any better?

Dorothy: No, but she had to.

Teacher: Right, but here's the thing. You don't have to, because we don't live in Germany, but my goodness guys, when you get opportunities, lay it on 'em. You know, you've got to practice. Like I said, I'm setting you up a little bit here. I'm setting you up. 100% of you said you don't need to be perfect, 69% said "no no no, I wouldn't take the opportunity!" ☺ You have to at some point...you know for like FASG when we do the dance, and you guys say we take dignity and throw it out the window, you know how we do that?

Students: yeah...

Teacher: Is the dance always amazing?

Students: Yeah...I guess

Teacher: We win first place every year, what do you mean I guess!?! OK, we won second last year. So what! There were like 50 schools, there and we came in second. So you just give it up and you just do it, and you're happy in the end, right? In German it's the same thing. Same exact thing.

Alan: Yeah, Basically.

Teacher: OK, hang on, we're almost done. Last one, guys. "If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on." Now, 31% of you said, "it's OK to make mistakes", 38% said "no way!, you should not be allowed to make mistakes in the beginning" Yes?

William: Um, We're reading a book right now where, uh, this is a utopia, and part of this is true, and they tell the kids stuff, they tell the kids stuff since they just a little

tiny baby, and by the time they're, they're an adult and they're talking to other people they repeat it over and over and over again.

Teacher: Because they believe it.

William: Right, so at the beginning of learning a language, the beginning of learning the language is the beginning of a life if just for that language, so if you start out making mistakes, you're going to end making mistakes too.

Teacher: I've got an example for you. Stand up. How do babies walk when they first start walking? (Students demonstrate baby walk) ☺

Dorothy: They don't!

Amy: And the kind of fall over!

William: their legs are kind of bent.

Dorothy: My cousin's learning to walk...

Teacher: They're doing the Frankenstein Shuffle.. but how do you walk? You walk normally now, right?

Dorothy: Well, define normal. ☺

Teacher: Sit down for me again. In foreign language and this is the truth. Even if you make mistakes, and you keep on going, you eventually stop making those mistakes.

Amy: As long as someone tells you, you made a mistake.

George: I think I misinterpreted the question.

Teacher: No one even really needs to tell you, you just sort of learn it. Its just like with Annika - if I corrected Annika every time, she's 4 years old, every time she said

something wrong, gee, I'd just be correcting her all day. So if she says, "I goes to the store", I say "Oh you go to the store", and she says "yes, I go to the store." I didn't correct her, I...

Alan: You basically told her...

Teacher: I kind of modeled it, and eventually...

George: I interpreted the question as if you just let the person, and you don't even point out that...

Teacher: Ah, so that you don't do anything at all...

George: yeah, you just act like it was right...

Teacher: Like I never ever...

Students: yeah, that's how I thought it was too....yeah

Teacher: Oh, OK, Let's rephrase the question then, because is that what you asked, too?...ok, let's see, "If you're allowed to make mistakes in the beginning...let's change that to if you're allowed to make mistakes and are never given a good model, you'll be making mistakes later on, but if you're allowed to make mistakes, but are given a good model, what will happen then?"

George: You'll learn new words

Alice: Then you'll learn

Teacher: William

William: Then you'll make the mistake again. Lynn told us she would always be typing when she was a kid and she would never be able to look, but now apparently, she types slow and slower than most of us, but she never ever makes a mistake, and

that's proven true because I've seen her type up a paper, and she never makes a mistake and she types at a decent pace.

Teacher: OK. Yes, Dina

Dina: Well, um, you're allowed to make mistakes, when you're first learning it, because later on, you'll learn how to do it the right way. But when you first learn it, you don't know the correct way.

Teacher: Let me ask you this way, if I didn't let you talk unless it was perfect, would any of us talk, including me?

Students: No!

Teacher: No. It would be a nice quiet class, wouldn't it?

Amy: And you wouldn't be able to stand it! ☺

Teacher: No, I wouldn't stand it, you're right. I would go absolutely nuts. ☺

(Talk about throwing things in class)

Teacher: Anyway, here's the main idea, in a foreign language, even if you make little mistakes in the beginning, it's OK. Now if you call a cat a dog, and a dog a cat ☺, I'm going to help you out there! I'm going to say, "No! Not so much!" But if you make little mistakes here and there, can I still understand you? ☺

Students: Like grammatical mistakes... Yes

Teacher: Then we're still in good shape!

Dina: You can figure out what they're trying to say.

Teacher: Sure, and that's the whole point. Trying to figure out what the heck it is we're trying to say to each other, and trying to spit it out, that's what it's all about.

Alice: Listen and try to figure out what they're trying to say.,

Teacher: That's right. All right you guys, that was it, like I said, we had a whole slew of questions. I didn't do all of them, I just did some that were most important to us

Dorothy: There were like 50 of them

Dina: No there was like 32

Teacher: I think there were 32 or 33. I don't even remember, but I wanted to show you that you guys are on a good track. Sometimes you're awful hard on yourselves. You expect in a year or 2 to be fluent, and fluent, for many of you, meant to speak like a native speaker. Not gonna happen, all right? So don't be so tough on yourselves! Any questions before we close?

Appendix 5: Transcript of January 7, 2010 Short Term Goals discussion:

Teacher: I want to talk about goals...ok, and I want to talk about what specific goals we have a month at a time, about what we want to accomplish. Because when we've got goals...this is part of my doctoral thesis that I'm writing...I'm learning a lot and I want to use all of what I'm learning to improve what we're doing in class. And one of the things that they're suggesting is that we have written goals. So I am the "Goal Keeper"...kind of like soccer... (Motioning to the notebook in which I write down what students say)

What are your specific goals for this month? What does everybody want to accomplish? Now I can think of one thing right off the bat....OK...Donald..

Donald: To make sure that we finish all our poems, everybody who's in FASG.

Teacher: Does everyone agree on that? Say it again.

Donald: Finish our poems.

Teacher: What does that mean "finish them"?

Donald: Kind of like, finish memorizing them. Cause we don't really know them that well. (Students nod in agreement)

Teacher: Can everybody kind of put that on their agenda...to memorize the poem? Is that something we can do?

Student: Yes

Teacher: OK so that's a goal for January. What about other goals in class? Are they all going to be FASG related because the competition is coming up, or are there other goals that you want to get done this month? I want to hear from everybody. Alan?

Alan: To try and improve on like regular every day basis stuff like...homework or something..

Teacher: I don't give you homework, honey.

Alan: No... (Another student whispers that the conversation is related only to German goals)....OH!!!!

Teacher: James?

James: To work on finishing our 3D projects for FASG.

Teacher: I think that's a pretty good goal!

Donald: To finish them?

Amy: Well to work on them

Student: Yeah to work on them.

Teacher: Well, don't just say "work on" cause that's not a measurable goal. Do you know what I'm saying?

Doris: I can not finish mine...

Frank: I mean, I can't...

Teacher: OK, so we need to get more specific. Can we get half of it done?

Donald: I can NOT make a torture chair...

Doris: I don't think I can get half of that whole crown done...

Frank: No way..

Teacher: What do you think we can get...a quarter of your projects done?

Helen: At least a quarter.

Doris: Yeah.

Alan: I'm gonna try doing it.

Teacher: Is that realistic?

Helen: I would like to know what I'm doing.

Teacher: That's a very good question Helen!

Helen: Thank you!

Teacher: There you go (handing over a package of information) Got a package for you!

Helen: Thank you!

Teacher: You're welcome my dear! So we want to finish memorizing the poems, we want to get a quarter of our art projects done. What actions or steps do we need to take to memorize the poems? What do we need to do? Donald?

Donald: Well, if we learn one line a day, we could finish it this month. And one line is no more than six words.

Teacher: Helen, your ideas.

Helen: I think that just to go and make sure it's a repetitive thing. Go over it in class like we used to last year, have people stand up...

Teacher: So go over it in class...

Helen: Yes, make sure pronunciation is correct and general things..

Teacher: OK, that's good. And I have a general goal. I'm not saying that one line at a time is bad, but I'm asking you, could you every night for homework, just recite your poem, Even if you have to read it right off of the page.

Helen: Right repetitive...

Doris: I don't have time...

Helen: Like it takes an hour and a half...

Frank: Come on Doris...

Teacher: It's 30 seconds, it's 30 seconds...

Donald: It doesn't take over a minute to read it...

Helen: Going over it is the repetitive...

Donald: Just do it, going over it is no big deal..

Teacher: Do you know what I'm saying? It's 30 seconds.

Doris: Yeah...

Teacher: Is that doable?

Students: Yes...

Helen: That's very doable...

Teacher: Or do it in the car. I'm fine with that too. When I say do it every day, do it in the car. Read your poem in the car read your poem out loud to yourself. If you have a waterproof version do it in the shower..

Donald: Oh! We should get it like laminated...

Teacher: Well, you're gonna laugh, but when I had Latin at University, I laminated the Latin declinations, stuck it in my shower, and I would stand there doing the Latin declinations as I washed my hair.

Helen: Makes sense to me!

Teacher: I know...It was weird, but...

Helen: What ever it takes!

Teacher: Alright, so the steps we're going to take are to go over it in class and for people to go over it every day..

Amy: Like a homework assignment..

Helen: Yes

Teacher: I think if we do that, we'll have this baby done by the end of the month. How will we know...how will we know we've accomplished the goal? How will we know? When we can do....what? Alan?

Alan: When we could say it without even looking at the paper...or if it's for our projects, just bring on our projects to show you...

Teacher: So for the poem, when we can say it without looking at the paper...oh, I forgot something... what steps are we going to take for the 3D art project to get a quarter of it done? What are we gonna need to do?

Frank: Work on it over the weekend?

George: Gather materials...

Helen: I haven't even started...

Alan: I didn't start mine either.

Teacher: So maybe we need to work on it on the weekend? How much?

Students: An hour...couple hours,, a little bit...3 hours a day

Teacher: Why don't we put an hour every weekend? At least? That's for a quarter of it.

Donald: You think an hour's a lot, but when you're working really hard...

Teacher: And if you do more, that's great! But we want the goals to be attainable, that means reachable. So how will we know if we've accomplished our goal for the 3D art project?

Doris: We might not be able to actually do that, but we could be able to bring it in...

Teacher: So you could bring something in, you're saying...

Doris: Yeah, like a photo..

Helen: For my 3D art project, my theme is medieval, right?

Teacher: You go it.

Helen: So could I do a goblet with medieval foods from that time period in Germany?

Teacher: Medieval foods? Now that would be very cool. Now, I gave you some ideas, but if you've got a better one, go for it!

Helen: OK!

Teacher: You've gotta research that though.. OK...what are some possible difficulties we're gonna encounter with finishing the poem? Doris mentioned one already, time constraints.

Donald: It only takes like a minute

Teacher: And we mentioned for that, do it in the car,

Doris: Laminate it.

Teacher: Put it in the shower. Seriously, if you want to laminate that baby and put it in the shower, it worked for me. Your whole family will; be doing it then, standing there and washing their hair and reading it. Which is not bad either...OK, what about for the art project? What are possible difficulties we're going to encounter in getting that done. I know I can name a few, what do you think?

Evelyn: Like you can't find and buy materials?

Teacher: Right, because you guys can't get in your cars and go buy stuff.

Donald: I wish I could!

Teacher: I'm glad you can't! Stay off the sidewalk! Donald's driving everyone!!

Helen: Transportation. Like if you're trying to take...that's what happened last year.. I was trying to help Mary transport her project and it all spilled and got ruined...

Teacher: Oh no!!

Helen: Yeah...

Donald: I don't know if this is a problem for everyone, but it's my problem, I'm gonna need my dad's help because some of it's kind of dangerous to do..

Teacher: Adult help...HIM having time...

Students: Yeah...

Teacher: Alan

Alan: yeah, I need help with my project....can I do like one 3D building and then like paint like the backboard with other buildings like...

Teacher: Alan, I don't want to talk about specific projects right now. I've got to think about yours and I'm not in the...you know...I don't have it in front of me. How can we overcome the project difficulties? Depending on adults for help, transporting the project, and can't find materials? That's a tough one. You can't make your parents get in the car and go shopping.... (long pause)

Teacher: I've got an idea! How about planning with your parents ahead of time?

Helen: So setting dates?

Teacher: Setting dates and times.

Doris: To go shopping

Teacher: Right. Setting dates and times to go shopping. Setting dates and time to work on the project? How many of you are using adult help on the project?

Students: Probably, I don't know yet? Yes...

Teacher: So here's your homework: Your job, if you require adult help on your project is to go home tonight and say "Mom and Dad, I know I require adult help on my project, and my goal is to get a quarter of the project done this month. When can

you work with me? Or When can you take me shopping?” Put it in your calendars. You all should have calendars anyway...

Students: Oh yeah...we do...

Teacher: Does that make sense? We're going to meet again next month and we're going to see how far you're gotten on these goals. OK? I am the "Goal Keeper", the "Keeper of the Goals, and we'll just see how people did on it. Alright? What's your homework for tonight?

Students: Set goals and dates: Talk to our parents about a date....tell our parent we need their help...

Teacher: To set dates, to..

Students: Shop...get materials... go out

Teacher: and to actually work on the project. And your other homework is s to study that poem every night. 30 seconds...read that poem. OK guys, stack those chairs.....

Motivation!

1. Tell me about what motivates you in German class.

2. What would make you more motivated in German class?

Motivation! Questionnaire Results:

Students were given a questionnaire and were allowed to write as much as they wanted concerning both factors that currently motivate them to come to German class, as well as factors that would make them even more motivated to come to class. Sixteen students took part in this questionnaire. Students were allowed to write on more than one factor in each category. The results of this initial motivation questionnaire were very surprising. I really expected a great majority of the students to rave about a Namibia-based service learning project. Results were quite mixed. Although I will get into more detailed results soon, here is a basic idea of what came out of this research (Remember, students wrote about more than just one factor, therefore there are more responses listed than the number of students):

Question 1: Tell me about what motivates you in German class:

- We joke around: 11 responses
- FASG: 7 responses
- German class is fun: 6 responses
- Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 6 responses
- Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 4 responses
- Namibia: 4 responses
- Level of comfort/absence of fear: 1 response
- My parents think it is important: 2 responses
- Dancing/Singing: 4 responses

Question 2: What would make you more motivated in German class?

- More Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 5 responses
- More Games: 5 responses
- More Namibia: 4 responses
- More artistic activities/dance more/more music: 3 responses
- More Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 3 responses
- In class competitions: 2 responses
- Read more stories: 2 responses
- Watch more videos: 1 response

Your Goals!

1. Why do you want to learn German?

2. What do you want to do with German in the immediate future?

3. What do you want to do with German when you are older?

4. What are some of your personal goals in learning German?

Results:

Fourteen students responded to this questionnaire. The results were surprising (at the time I was certain that the Namibian centered service learning portion of my curriculum was the most motivational to students) – I had expected students to in some way mention helping out a Namibian student, but not ONE student did so! The great majority of students’ goals focused on the state German competition in one way or another. There are more than 14 responses to each question, because most students wrote about more than one reason for each question.

As for the responses to “Why do you want to learn German?”, students had varied responses: two listed communicating with other people, three said that they learned languages for enjoyment, four are learning German so they can visit Germany, one noble soul is learning to teach her family, one stated that she is learning it to talk with family members, two just want to learn German because they enjoy German class, one stated that it helps her in history class, one mentioned the state German competition as her reason for wanting to learn German, another student listed just wanting to know as many languages as possible, and three said that German would “help” them in the future, but gave no details about what form that “help” may take.

Many students, seven, listed competing in the state German competition (known as FASG: Florida Association of Students of German) as a response to “What do you want to do with German in the immediate future?”. One said she wants to use German to confuse people when they talk to her, one wants to use it to do well in class, two plan on using their German to impress people, three plan on having conversations with their family members, two want to go to Germany, and one plans on taking German at High School.

As far as the future is concerned, students had definite ideas about what they want to do with German. Three students want to be able to speak it to “others”. These three students did not specify German in particular. Four students specifically stated that they wanted to be able to communicate with Germans, six students want to go to Germany when they are older, one plans on using it in college, and the same student plans on using it in High School. Two see themselves using German to get a job. (The father of one of these respondents is a high ranking executive at Siemens.) Three students plan on teaching German to others, two tricksters say they will use German to talk to others who don’t understand the language, and one student plans on simply understanding the language when she is older.

One of my students shared the same personal goal: to become fluent in German. One aims to use correct grammar, one has the goal of getting a job dealing with German, two list that they want to be able to communicate with others (again, they did not specify communicating with Germans), one wants to extend her vocabulary, two want to be able to read German, one boy wants to pronounce everything correctly, one’s only personal goal is to do well at the state German competition, and one has the goal to somewhat understand the language.

Appendix 8: March 24, 2010: Fill in the Blank Questionnaire I

_____ motivates me most in German class!

Results:

Of the 17 students who responded, 2 said that fun/joking around was their motivator, 2 listed TPR/TPRS methods, and 13 listed FASG (the state German competition) as their motivator.

Appendix 9: April 7, 2010 “What is Motivating about FASG?” Questionnaire

What is motivating about FASG?

Results:

Eight students participated in this questionnaire. Due to the open ended responses, students listed multiple motivating factors, resulting in multiple categories.

Winning: 4 responses

Competing against others: 3 responses

Fun: 3 responses

Making art projects: 2 responses

Teamwork: 2 responses

Being with friends: 2 responses

Hands on projects in general: 1 response

The possibility to speak German to a lot of people: 1 response

Reciting German poems: 1 response

Recognition in front of high school students: 1 response

Recognition from friend and family: 1 response

Group dance event: 1 response

Staying at a hotel: 1 response

Skipping school for the days students are at competition: 1 response

Excitement: 1 response

Learning more German: 1 response

The most prevalent response was “winning” with four responses, followed by “competing against others” and “fun” with three responses each. “Teamwork” came in next with two responses alongside “making art projects”, and “being with friends”.

This probing questionnaire was the basis for the follow-up videotaped student interviews.

Appendix 10: Motivational Strategies Checklist (Dörnyei 2001a, p. 137-144)

Motivational Strategies: Creating the Basic Motivational Conditions	Tried it out	Part of my teaching
1. Demonstrate and talk about your own enthusiasm for the course material, and how it affects you personally		
Share your own personal interest in the L2 with your students.		
Show students that you value L2 learning as a meaningful experience that produces satisfaction and enriches your life.		
2. Take the students' learning seriously		
Show students that you care about their progress.		
Indicate your mental and physical ability for all things academic.		
Have sufficiently high expectations for what your students can achieve.		
3. Develop a personal relationship with your students.		
Show students that you accept and care about them.		
Pay attention and listen to each of them.		
Indicate your mental and physical ability		
4. Develop a collaborative relationship with the students' parents.		
Keep parents regularly informed of their children's progress.		
Ask for their assistance in performing certain supportive tasks at home.		
5. Create a supportive and pleasant atmosphere in the classroom.		
Establish a norm of tolerance.		
Encourage risk taking and have mistakes accepted as a natural part of learning.		
Bring in and encourage humor.		
Encourage learners to personalize the classroom environment according to their taste.		
6. Promote the development of group cohesiveness.		
Try and promote interaction, cooperating, and the sharing of genuine personal information among the learners.		
Use ice breakers at the beginning of a course.		
Regularly use small group tasks where students can mix.		

Encourage and organize extracurricular activities and outings.		
Try and prevent the emergence of rigid seating patterns.		
Include activities that lead to the successful completion of whole group tasks or involve small-group competition games.		
Promote the building of a group legend.		
7. Formulate group norms explicitly, and have them discussed and accepted by the learners.		
Include a specific 'group rules' activity at the beginning of a group's life to establish the norms explicitly.		
Explain the importance of the norms you mandate and how they enhance learning, and ask for the students' agreement.		
Elicit suggestions for additional rules from the learners and discuss these in the same way as the rules you have proposed.		
Put these group rules (and the consequences for violating them) on display.		
8. Have the group norms consistently observed.		
Make sure you yourself observe the established norms consistently.		
Never let any violations go unnoticed.		
Motivational Strategies: Generating Initial Motivation		
9. Promote the learners' language related values by presenting peer role models		
Invite senior students to talk to your class about their positive experiences.		
Feedback to the students the views of their peers, e.g. in the form of a class newsletter.		
Associate your learners with peers (e.g. in the form of group or project work) who are enthusiastic about the subject.		
10. Raise the learners' intrinsic interest in the L2 learning process.		
Highlight and demonstrate aspects of L2 learning that your students are likely to enjoy.		
Make the first encounters with the L2 a positive experience.		

11. Promote ‘integrative’ values by encouraging a positive and open-minded disposition towards the L2 and its speakers, and towards foreignness in general.		
Include a sociocultural component in your language curriculum.		
Quote positive views about language learning by influential public figures.		
Encourage learners to conduct their own exploration of the L2 community (e.g. on the internet).		
Promote contact with L2 speakers and L2 cultural products.		
12. Promote the students awareness o the instrumental values associated with the knowledge of an L2.		
Regularly remind students that the mastery of the L2 is instrumental to accomplishment of their goals.		
Reiterate the role that the L2 plays in the world, highlighting its potential usefulness both for themselves and their community.		
Encourage the learners to apply their L2 proficiency in real-life situations.		
13. Increase the students’ expectancy of success in particular tasks and in learning in general.		
Make sure that they receive sufficient preparation and assistance.		
Make sure they know exactly what success in the task involves.		
Make sure that there are no serious obstacles to success.		
14. Increase your students’ goal-orientedness by formulating explicit class goals accepted by them.		
Have the students negotiate their individual goals and outline a common purpose, and display the final outcome in public.		
Draw attention from time to time to the class goals and how particular activities help to attain them,		
Keep the class goals achievable by renegotiating if necessary.		
15. Make the curriculum and the teaching materials relevant to the students.		
Use needs analysis techniques to find out about your students’ needs, goals, and interests, and then build these into your curriculum as much as possible.		
Relate the subject matter to the everyday experiences and backgrounds of		

the students.		
Enlist the students in designing and running the course.		
<i>16. Help to create realistic learner beliefs.</i>		
Positively confront the possible erroneous beliefs, expectations, and assumptions that learners may have.		
Raise the learners general awareness about the different ways languages are learnt and the number of factors that can contribute to success.		
Motivational Strategies:		
Maintaining and Protecting Motivation		
17. Make learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events.		
Vary the learning tasks and other aspects of your teaching as much as you can.		
Focus on the motivational flow and not just the information flow in your class.		
Occasionally do the unexpected.		
<i>18. Make the learning stimulating and enjoyable for the learner by increasing the attractiveness of the tasks.</i>		
Make tasks challenging		
Make task content attractive by adapting it to the students' natural interests or by including novel, intriguing exotic, humorous, competitive or fantasy elements.		
Personalize learning tasks.		
Select tasks that yield tangible, finished products.		
<i>19. Make learning stimulating and enjoyable for the learners by enlisting them as active task participants.</i>		
Select tasks which require mental and/or bodily involvement from each participant.		
Create specific roles and personalized assignments for everybody.		
<i>20. Present and administer tasks in a motivating way.</i>		
Explain the purpose and utility of the task.		
Whet the students' appetite about the content of the task.		

Provide appropriate strategies to carry out the task.		
21. Use goal-setting methods in your classroom.		
Encourage learners to select specific, short-term goals for themselves.		
Emphasize goal completion deadlines and offer ongoing feedback.		
22. Use contracting methods with your students to formalize their goal commitment.		
Draw up a detailed written agreement with individual students, or whole groups, that specifies what they will learn and how, and the ways by which you will help and reward them.		
Monitor student progress and make sure that the details of the contract are observed by both parties.		
23. Provide learners with regular experiences of success.		
Provide multiple opportunities for success in the language class.		
Adjust the difficulty level of tasks to the students' abilities and counterbalance demanding tasks with manageable ones.		
Design tests that focus on what learners can rather than what they cannot do, and also include improvement options.		
24. Build your learners' confidence by providing regular encouragement.		
Draw your learners' attention to their strengths and abilities.		
Indicate to your students that you believe in their efforts to learn and their capabilities to complete the tasks.		
25. Help diminish language anxiety by removing or reducing the anxiety-provoking elements in the learning environment.		
Avoid social comparisons, even in subtle forms.		
Promote cooperation instead of competition.		
Help learners accept the fact that they will make mistakes as part of the learning process.		
Make tests and assessments completely 'transparent' and involve students in the negotiation of the final mark.		
26. Build your learners' confidence in their learning abilities by teaching them various learner strategies.		

Teach students learning strategies to facilitate the intake of new material.		
Teach students communication strategies to help them overcome communication difficulties.		
<i>27. Allow learners to maintain a positive social image while engaged in the learning tasks.</i>		
Select activities that contain ‘good’ roles for the participants.		
Avoid face-threatening acts such as humiliating criticism or putting students in the spotlight unexpectedly.		
<i>28. Increase students’ motivation by promoting cooperation among the learners.</i>		
Set up tasks in which teams of learners are asked to work towards the same goal.		
Take into account team products and not just individual products in your assessment.		
Provide students with some ‘social training’ to learn how best to work in a team.		
<i>29. Increase student motivation by actively promoting learner autonomy.</i>		
Allow learners real choices about as many aspects of the learning process as possible.		
Hand over as much as you of the various leadership/teaching roles and functions to the learners.		
Adopt the role of a facilitator.		
<i>30. Increase the students’ self-motivating capacity.</i>		
Raise your students’ awareness of the importance of self-motivation.		
Share with each other strategies that you have found useful in the past.		
Encourage students to adopt, develop, and apply self-motivating strategies.		
Motivational Strategies: Encouraging Positive Self-evaluation		
<i>31. Promote effort attributions in your students</i>		
Encourage learners to explain their failures by the lack of effort and		

appropriate strategies applied rather than by their insufficient ability.		
Refuse to accept ability attributions and emphasize that the curriculum is within the learners' ability range.		
32. Provide students with positive information feedback.		
Notice and react to any positive contributions from your students.		
Provide regular feedback about the progress your students are making and about the areas which they should particularly concentrate on.		
33. Increase learner satisfaction.		
Monitor student accomplishments and progress, and take time to celebrate any victory.		
Make student progress tangible by encouraging the production of visual records and arranging regular events.		
Regularly include tasks that involve public display of the students' skills.		
34. Offer rewards in a motivational manner.		
Make sure the students do not get too preoccupied with the rewards.		
Make sure that even non-material rewards have some kind of lasting visual representation.		
Offer rewards for participating in activities that students may get drawn into because they require creative goal-oriented behavior and offer novel experiences and consistent success.		
35. Use grades in a motivating manner, reducing as much as possible their demotivating impact.		
Make the assessment system completely transparent, and incorporate mechanisms by which the students and their peers can also express their views.		
Make sure that grades also reflect effort and improvement and not just objective levels of achievement.		
Apply continuous assessment that also relies on measurement tools rather than paper-and-pencil tests.		
Encourage accurate student self-assessment by providing various self-evaluation tools.		

Appendix 11: Parental Permission form for taking part in research

October 12, 2009

Dear Parent:

Your child is being invited to take part in a research study about motivational factors in German class.

I will be gathering and analyzing the information for use in my University of South Africa (UNISA) doctoral thesis. This research has been approved by UNISA.

By doing this study I hope to learn more about what motivates students in their German classes at New School Prep. Results will be shared with students in a group forum at the end of the study.

Research procedures will be conducted at New School, and your child's participation in the study will involve no more than three 3-5 minute videotaped individual visits with the researcher, two 3-5 minute videotaped group visits, as well as short written responses to questions about their motivation. Videotapes will only be accessed by me for purposes of gathering qualitative data. No identifying information will be included in the transcription of this data.

Your child will not get any personal benefit from taking part in this study. If your child decides to take part in the study, it should be because he or she really wants to volunteer. There will be no penalty if your child chooses not to volunteer. Your child can stop at any time during the study.

Before you decide whether or not to give permission for your child to take part in the study (parent) and before you agree to participate in the study (minor), please ask any questions that come to mind now. Also, if at any time you have questions about the study, you can contact researcher Sara Höfler at 407.246.0556.

Sara Höfler

Appendix 12: Research Participant Statement and Signature

For Students:

I understand that my participation in this research study is entirely voluntary. I may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits. I may also stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep. I understand that even if my parent gives permission, I do not have to take part in the research. I understand that video recordings will be taken during the study.

Signature of minor giving assent to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of minor giving assent to take part in the study

For Parents:

I understand that my child's participation in this research study is entirely voluntary. I may refuse to allow him or her participate without penalty or loss of benefits. I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep. I understand that even if I give permission, my child does not have to take part in the research. I understand that video recordings will be taken during the study. I voluntarily agree to have my child take part in this study.

Signature of parent or legal guardian giving permission for the minor to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of parent or legal guardian giving permission for the minor to take part in the study

Name of person providing information to the parent and minor

Date

Motivation!

1. Tell me about what motivates you in German class.

2. What would make you more motivated in German class?

Motivation! Questionnaire Results:

The new TPR based curriculum was implemented starting in August of 2010. I wanted to find out if students were indeed feeling motivated by this change in delivery method. Students were given a questionnaire and were allowed to write as much as they wanted concerning both factors that currently motivate them to come to German class, as well as factors that would make them even more motivated to come to class. Nine students took part in this questionnaire. Students wrote about more than just one factor, therefore there are more responses listed than the number of students.

Question 1: Tell me about what motivates you in German class:

- Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 8 responses
- FASG: 5 responses
- Having fun: 2 responses
- Being with friends: 1 response
- Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 1 response
- Dancing/Singing: 1 response
- Saying things and other not being able to understand: 1 response
- Saying cool things: 1 response

Question 2: What would make you more motivated in German class?

- Nothing/I like class the way it is now: 6 responses
- More Acting out vocabulary (TPR/TRPS): 1 response
- More FASG: 1 response
- Less time in class: 1 response
- More Parties/Celebrations/Field trips: 1 response
- More dance/more music: 1 response
- If the class were to address the information necessary to win the Florida State German competition through the TPR and TPRS methods: 1 response
- More activities "for older kids": 1 response
- "More words about what the Germans said" (I am not sure what the student is referring to): 1 response

Appendix 14: October 6, 2010: Fill in the blank questionnaire II

_____ motivates me most in German class!

Even though students were told to write only one item, one student wrote two, resulting in a total of 9 responses from the 8 students. There were 6 responses dealing with “acting stuff out”/”acting out funny stories”/”funny stories” referring to the acting out of stories in TPRS fashion. Three responses were “FASG”.

Appendix 15: November 3, 2010: Informal Descriptive Statistics based final data collection

1. Taking part in FASG (the state German competition) is a major reason I come to German class.

Strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly
disagree			

2. If FASG did not exist, I would still take German.

Strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly
disagree			

3. Acting out vocabulary makes me want to come to German class.

Strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly
disagree			

4. Our German class is better this year than it was last year.

Strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly
disagree			

5. All year, the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic. (Example, this year's topic is German music.)

Strongly agree agree disagree strongly
disagree

6. For some of our lessons, the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic. (Example, this year's topic is German music.)

Strongly agree agree disagree strongly
disagree

Results:

Of the 10 students who took part in the questionnaire, 9 of them either agreed (3) or strongly agreed (6) that taking part in FASG (the state German competition) was a major reason they came to German class.

Eight of those same 10 students said that if FASG did not exist that they either strongly agreed (5) or agreed (3) that they would still take German. One student disagreed, and one strongly disagreed.

All of the ten students either agreed (6) or strongly agreed (4) with the statement "Acting out vocabulary makes me want to come to German class".

As for the statement "Our German class is better this year than it was last year", only one student disagreed, and eight either agreed (5) or strongly agreed (3). One student wrote "I wasn't here" as a response, as he had joined the class as a new student at the beginning of the 2010/2011 school year.

Of the 10 students who answered the questionnaire, only two strongly agreed or agreed that the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current

FASG topic all year long. Eight of the ten students did not want FASG to be the topic all year long – six students disagreed and two strongly disagreed with the statement “All year, the class should be based on acting out vocabulary related to the current FASG topic.”

One student strongly disagreed with the suggestion that FASG be a topic handled in class even some of the time.

Appendix 16: Transcripts of Videotaped Student Interviews from April 27, 2010

Transcription of Student Interviews

27. April, 2010 -George and Donald

Teacher: What's today's date, guys?

George/Donald: April; 27

Teacher: 27th of April, 2010, George and Donald. OK. Donald, you wrote that what was motivating about FASG was winning. Being with friends, personal résumé, learning more German, the 3D art project...so...we didn't win. Are you still motivated?

Donald: Yeah.

Teacher: Why?

Donald: Because winning is not the only thing.

George: There's an opportunity for winning next year, too.....

Donald: Yeah

Teacher: So...not winning...did it do anything for you?

George: It makes me wanna win more next year..

Donald: YEAH!

Teacher: OHHH..

Donald: Yeah, the other schools are getting a little cocky, so we're going to crush them next year, but that's just my personal opinion.

Teacher: OK...so being with friends...tell me about being with friends at FASG...I mean you're with friends all day long..

George: Well..

Donald: It's different...

George: It's the free time, and , ah, it's not as pressured as the school atmosphere, so..its free dress...people...

Teacher: I'm not saying you're wrong, I'm not quizzing you, but we want FIRST place, that's not pressure?

Donald: It's not pressure

George: It's different when you're at school, and there's a social environment at school and then there's the social environment out of school.

Teacher: So even though it's a school function...

George: It's different cause you're at the beach, I mean it's just different, I don't know how to explain it.

Teacher: OK

Donald: It's not like teachers telling you do this tonight, do that tonight..

Teacher: But you do, you've got a huge...I mean ...I'm telling you what to do all the time..

Donald: Yeah, but it's different..

George: There's the three hours in between things, and there's the one day where we have a six seven eight hour free time thing where it's...

Teacher: And who do you spend your free time with?

George: We all kind of stayed as a group

Donald: It's kind of odd, cause seven eight was with seven eight..

George: And the younger kids...uh...five..

Teacher: and fourth..

George: which is understandable..

Teacher: So, tell me about what motivates you to stick in German so long.

George: Well, I'm not doing it next year cause my high school doesn't offer it.

Teacher: Right. But I mean you stayed in it for a long. What has motivated you? Has FASG been the motivating factor? That's what everyone wrote down, and that's what I want to talk about ,too.

George: Yeah, probably.

Donald: Yeah, you said before that Spanish is a language you can get almost everybody to speak, there's lots of Spanish speaking people, but German's a little more different, and also just knowing more language just opens you to a whole new continent.

George: There's more opportunities...

Teacher: What about working together? Do you feel pressured? Because sometimes competition can make you feel bad, and sometimes it can make you feel good.

George: Well, although we did work together by the scores being combined, there was no group project really, so,..

Teacher: Yeah... the dance...

George: Well but.. that's true, but on the terms of the test, and the poetry, and the art projects, and things like, that....that's more of an individual effort, so...

Teacher: But do you feel like a team?

George: A little bit in some parts...like when it's the art project and you do that, you're at your house by yourself...

Donald: Yeah but the score of your friends' effects you.

George: That's true. I mean... you feel, you feel as a team as in you're with your school, you're representing your school, but the things you do are more individual.

Teacher: So tell me...what you're saying is that this is good pressure.

George: It's definitely good pressure.

Teacher: OK, what is bad pressure? What does bad pressure look like?

George: Uhhh...

Teacher: Just give me an example.

George: Bad pressure is to..pressure that makes you do bad things?

Teacher: Pressure like competition that makes you feel bad. What does that look like?

George: I don't know

Teacher: It's a competition, there are winners and there are losers. We were not in the top three. Do you still feel good, or do you feel bad?

George: I still feel good. I think that we did well.

Donald: Out of 16 schools, 4th place is still pretty good! We're the youngest kids there!

Teacher: I was just gonna say, that you're about 5 or 6 years younger than the other people who were there. Hang on, I've got some other questions...SO the competition is motivating to you. Can you tell me anything else why it's motivating to you?

George: Well, ah, in any competition for me, I'm competitive. I want to do better than everyone else, so that keeps me motivated to try to be the best.

Donald: It's kind of like the presidential fitness test, where you run to try to go faster.

George: Yeah. Motivation is if you want to be the best in the competition, you're motivated to do more in order to be the best.

Teacher: OK, how could I teach to make German more relevant to you?

Donald: I think you're doing a pretty good job right now.

George: Relevant..like right now, Angela does there getting along in Spanish type things where you have situation you might run into. There's like one where we in a restaurant and they got the orders wrong or somethingmaybe things like that where you form the scenario and we have to

Teacher: Like Impromptu?

George: Yeah...

Donald: I wanna do that too...

George: Cause that would actually help the comprehension skills, and the actual speaking , and getting things across more than paper and pencil...

Teacher: OK, OK. Cause I'm taking classes this summer for TPRS, you know do the vocabulary...the story telling with the vocabulary and the actions, cause I want to get better at that for sure.

Donald: Also what we do in Spanish that helps a lot is kind of the skits we do sometimes.

George: Yeah, like Angela has two people get up and act a little scene out. You read off a script and everything, but people see it...

Teacher: Did you write the script?

George: No, it's in a packet, I mean...we could write it if we wanted to...it's just something like that...it's really helpful

Teacher: alright, that's it for right now! Thanks! Bye guys!

Transcription of Student Interviews

27. April, 2010 –Richard, Alan, and James

Teacher: OK I've got it on you so I can tell who's talking. Did FASG motivate you to do German?

Richard and Alan at same time: YES!

Teacher: OK..how?Richard

Richard: It motivated me because I just like...I always wanted to learn German so I could go visit my Dad's friend named Heiko who lives in Germany and it's a really fun time at FASG.

Teacher: So what about FASG motivates you...I mean what is that made you think "Yeah! I wanna do German because of THIS!"

Richard: The competition definitely and friends

Teacher: What was it about the competition?

Richard: It's just really fun!

Teacher: Was it winning? Because we didn't think we had won in the beginning ! Did you still...was it still motivating?

Richard: YES!

Teacher: Cause it was fun? What made it fun? What was the best part?

Richard: The best...you mean my favorite part?

James: I vote beach!

Alan: Yeah! I vote the beach!

Richard: Yeah.

Teacher: What about the other competitions? Did they motivate you too?

Richard: Yes.

Teacher: How?

Richard: Pretty much by going up there and showing off your German skills.

Alan: Like the dance and the poem.

James: Ha, High schoolers!

Teacher: Tell me about that.

James: So basically we thought we were in fourth place..or how...

Teacher: Everything James, everything, go ahead.

James: Well normally we're up again a whole bunch of high schoolers, there's only one other school that's middle school and that's in Miami and that sometimes comes.

Teacher: And they weren't there this year.

James: Lucky us! And we creamed a whole bunch of high schools! (laughing)

Alan: Yeah! (smiling)

Teacher: That made you feel good?

All three boys: Yes!

Teacher: Why?

James: Are you smarter than a 12th grader?

Richard: YES!

Teacher: (Laughing) OK! SO what motivates you? What is it about FASG that make you go “Oh my God I so want to do German!”

James: I just it’s just a test to see how good I am.

Teacher: And what did the test tell you?

James: That I’m really really good at German.

Teacher: That made you feel good? What about you Alan?

Alan: I thought it was really fun like actually competing against al lot of people, and I got to be with a lot of my friends, and doing the sandcastle contest, that was a lot of fun and a big group effort. So I thought for the dance it was a really good group effort. For me, I thought we were gonna lose against the play with the dragon and the knights. I thought we were gonna lose against that...

James: Didn’t they win the Bunter Abend?

Teacher: Yeah, they did. I mean, it WAS good...

Alan: Yeah...it was really good.

Teacher: So you like the group effort. Tell me about the group effort.

Alan: Well....the group effort...everybody was really working together very hard. The dance...everybody started to laugh whenever we did funny stuff..

Richard: I was the leader of the sandcastle competition. I'm just telling you.

Teacher: OK

Alan: OK, and well...we were in the dance we were really working together and it was a lot of fun and it was really...somewhat hard for some people...

Teacher: What made it hard?

Alan: Well like the steps with the cane...like putting it (motions under his arm)...and um...the part where we had to go to dance class that day with all the German people to learn the new part...

James: Yeah we missed half of recess!

Alan: Yeah...that was really...

James: Bad!!

Alan: Yeah...but then for the poem..yeah...I worked really hard on that. So a lot of people I heard were like..just like...luckily for some people they had the same poem just so that they know that if they forget a line...just like what happened to me...someone called me just to find out a line.

Teacher: Good. So you like working together?

Alan: Yeah.

Teacher: Richard, you write "The competition really excites me. It makes me nervous." Was it a good nervous or a bad nervous?

Richard: It was about both.

Teacher: What does good nervous mean?

Richard: It means kind of excited basically.

Teacher: What's bad nervous?

Richard: Means like you're really afraid to do it.

Teacher: So when you got there what was it like?

Richard: I was the bad nervous, but then when I got up there, it was still a little bit bad nervous, but when I got out of there, it was the good nervous again.

James: And this thing was that the place looked nothing like I expected.

Alan: Yeah..

Richard: Me too!

Alan: I thought it would be crowded.

James: I thought it would be extremely crowded.

Alan: I thought there would be a table by the front door.

James: And then it ended up to be a really nice place and I was feeling pretty confident, or at least I looked like I was (laugh) and I was the good kind of nervous.

Teacher: What do you think of the team effort, James? Does that mean anything to you? Does that motivate you to stay in German?

James: (nods yes)

Teacher: How? What is a team effort to you? How is FASG a team effort?

James: Because not everybody does their own thing or just one person's doing it, then everybody bombs and that whacks you way down.

Alan: That's not gonna be good..

Teacher: So did you watch each other, or get on each other to make sure you were all on track?

James: Yes

Alan: Kind of.

James: I didn't quite make it visible, but yes.

Teacher: Good, OK. So I didn't know about it, but you were doing it? What were you doing to each other?

James: This was mostly during practice, and I'd just give people the evil eye and say "work!" (all boys smile)

Teacher: So it was a good feeling? Anything else you want to say about it?

James: Not much really?

Teacher: Does it make you want to keep taking German?

All three boys: YES!!

Teacher: What's the main thing that keeps you in German class?

Richard: For me visiting my Dad's friend in Germany.

James: First of all, people who know more languages have more job opportunities. And if you are a tourist in another country its kind of nice to know what people are saying.

Teacher: What about the things that we do? What motivates you most to keep coming? When we do things in class, and you're like "Yeah! I wanna keep coming to German cause this is COOL!" What is it that's cool?

James: There's a whole bunch of things like that.

Teacher: Like what?

James: We do joke around a lot and I really enjoy that. And even when we are joking around we really get stuff done. So we can learn more German.

Teacher: Would you say that FASG is a reason you keep coming?

James: Yes

Alan: Yes

Richard: No

Teacher: No? Why do you keep coming?

Richard: Cause I want to visit Germany so badly! And try their sausage!

James: He just wants to know how to order sausage in German!

Teacher: Ich moechte eine Wurst! I want a sausage! Alright guys, am I gonna see you next year?

All three boys? YES!

Teacher: Awesome!

Transcription of Student Interviews

27. April, 2010 –Liz

Teacher: How is FASG?

Liz: Now?

Teacher: Yeah

Liz: FAS was really good because ...um...can I start over?

Teacher: Yeah, you don't have to...you know...just talk...just talk.

Liz: OK! Well...um..

Teacher: What did you like about it?

Liz: OK, I liked that there were lots of plays, and that the plays were funny, and everyone has a part, and some people made a cake, like Mary.

Teacher: Pretty cool...

Liz: Yeah..

Teacher: What makes you...how does FASG make you feel about taking German?

Liz: That I shoulda..shoulda took German a long time ago.

Teacher: Did it make you like it?

Liz: (nodding)

Teacher: Do you remember what motivating means? That it turns you on, makes you feel good? Does FASG motivate you to take German?

Liz: Yes.

Teacher: What if we didn't have FASG, would you still take German?

Liz: I would probably still do German, it just wouldn't be as fun.

Teacher: SO you really like it?

Liz: um hm

Teacher: I'm glad, Liz, you do such a good job. What made you feel really good at FASG? What parts of it made you feel good?

Liz: Um, when we rode in on the horses at the dinner...

Teacher: Why did that make you feel so good?

Liz: Because everyone was laughing, which kinda made me feel good, and I knew they weren't laughing AT us, they were just saying it was funny...

Teacher: Right...they were laughing WITH you, definitely. So you felt good about being in a group..

Liz: uh hm

Teacher: Tell me, do you like the way the group worked together?

Liz: Yes.

Teacher: Did the competition make you nervous?

Liz: No!

Teacher: Why?

Liz: At first, when I was in German class kind of, I was nervous, before FASG, because I thought it was going to be different.

Teacher: How was it?

Liz: How was German?

Teacher: No, how was it really? You thought it would be different, but how was it?

Liz: I thought it was gonna be...we didn't have LOTS of time to go swimming, but I was mistaken on that...

Teacher: Yeah, you had a lot of free time, I try to plan it that way. Did you like being with all the kids...

Liz: Yes.

Teacher: Do you feel like you all worked towards one common goal?

Liz: Um..yes..

Teacher: What was that goal that you all worked towards?

Liz: Um...I don't really know the goal...

Teacher: Winning, right?

Liz: Well, yeah winning, but...I can't believe we came in first place

Teacher: Even when you thought we were in fourth, did you still feel good?

Liz: Uh huh...cause there were like 15 high schools and we came in first...

Teacher: We actually came in first..

Liz: We tied for first...

Teacher: So do you like it that everyone works together to win?

Liz: Yes.

Teacher: I mean if everyone didn't work together, we wouldn't have won, right?
Cause that's what a lot of schools do, everyone works for them self. It doesn't happen then does it?

Liz: No.

Teacher: Good, I'm glad you had a good time. Anything else you want to say about it?

Liz: uh....

Teacher: How did you feel being around all those high school kids?

Liz: I guess I felt like I do all the time... Well I felt like I feel around my brother cause he's in high school.

Teacher: How did you feel?

Liz: Normal.

Teacher: Yeah...very normal..ok...good. good good good. No problems?

Liz (shakes head no)

Teacher: Did you LIKE beating them?

Liz: YES!

Teacher: Tell me about that. How did it make you feel?

Liz: Really good. Because like, that, I've never really been to a that big of things, and we came in fourth, really first.

Teacher: Excellent! Thanks, Liz! That's it!

Transcription of Student Interviews

27. April, 2010 –Helen and Mary

Teacher: Yeah, cause I need to type it up afterwards. OK Mary. You wrote: What's motivating at FASG is staying at the hotel for 2 nights and skipping school. What about that motivates you?

Mary: Ah, well instead of going to school, we get to have fun at a hotel and hang out with all these other kids from around the state. And we get to challenge ourselves a lot at FASG, and being able to come back winning first place over all the other high schools in the state and telling everybody and having other people recognize our German class, which by the way we only take for one hour per week, and some people take three hours every day, so I mean we kicked their butts.

Teacher: What about...cause you've got on here to, and I think that Helen....you've got it too.. the teamwork, being able to compete as a team...tell me about the teamwork...

Helen: Yeah..

Mary: It's really fun because well we bring all these individual things like we have our own art projects and we have our own poems, but since we're all a school we all like represent each other. So when we're competing, and we win first place , as we all get that medal, or the trophy, and we can all just be a team and have fun and, motivate each other to work harder...

Helen: I think it also helps us with social skills and just skills in general that we'll need throughout life. To get to learn what its like to work with a team and it's also nice to have other people's opinions and ideas on things, because you will have, like maybe we're trying to come up with something for our dance, and someone will, and we're trying really hard, and someone has a good idea, and you can come up with thing that you've never even thought of because we have so many creative people...

Teacher: Yup... you guys saved it several times with those ideas.

Mary: Yeah, and we have people talented in different areas so we can really work together...

Helen: We're a very versatile group.

Mary: Also since we all know each other so well cause the school is so small, and we've been with each other for a long time. Like I've known her for 8 years, I've known George for 9 and Donald for 8 also. So we all hung together and we were just so comfortable around each other,...it's not even about....you know when you go somewhere else outside of school, it's not about competition with clothes and stuff, cause you don't care. We're just so close.

Teacher: What happens if we lost?

Helen: If we lost it would be perfectly fine. We'd act the same way...

Mary: Well, maybe not the same way..

Helen: We'd be a little disappointed of course. Because we're not used to losing! (all three laugh) Winning's in our nature, but if we lost, think we'd all just...I think we'd want to find out why we lost.

Mary: Yeah..what we did wrong and improve it...

Helen: and we'd try and improve it for next year and just work even harder.

Mary: But..it's not really what its about. I mean winning.. we're there to have fun...

Helen: Yeah, but it's one aspect of it...but it's not the entire thing for us...

Helen: And even still, we can still say that we competed against high school from all around the state, you know?

Teacher: So that's for you the big thing...

Mary: Uh huh!

Helen: Yes!! Like kind of show off!

Mary: Exactly!

Teacher: OK, good good good. DO you think we should do more FASG related stuff in class?

Mary: Maybe yeah, but the only problem with doing that is that some people aren't in FASG

Helen: So I think they feel a little left out or confused about some things.

Teacher: If we did too much...

Mary: Yeah but the other thing about that, like um...

Helen: It also helps them so that when they do go to FASG...

INTERRUPTION BY ANOTHER TEACHER

Teacher: Don't worry, I just put "dot dot dot" for this part! Keep going.

Mary: OK, what were we talking about? Oh yeah, OK, the other about that is that we need a lot of preparation, so in a way, I think we should. Maybe we should....

Teacher: Split it up next year?

Mary: Yeah, split it up.

Helen: Yeah the people who do FASG do certain days, and the people who aren't....

Mary: Wednesday FASG, or Wednesday regular German, and Thursday...

Helen: is FASG.

Teacher: That's kind of a neat idea. I'm going to think about that, thank you. OK, let's see... "the whole aspect of competing"... tell me about competing. Why does that motivate you?

Helen: The whole competition...it's fun to compare yourself with others, mainly high schoolers because the majority of them are older than us, so it's fun to see where we are compared to them. And it's also just fun I think...

Mary: I don't really know. I mean anyone is going to have fun competing, unless they lose, but like, I mean that's what FASG is for...

Helen: I think it's kind of fun to see how the high schoolers treat us when we're against each other rather than just at the beach...

Mary: And it's fun to win!!

Helen: It's actually pretty interesting, because at the *beach*, they think we're just little kids visiting and when they see us in *competition*, and we win, their attitude totally changes and..

Mary: (happily) Yeah and they all hate us. It's so much fun!!

Helen: (happily) Yeah! I got insults after I was walking out the door after we won!

Teacher: WHAT?!

Mary: They called me an eight year old - it's fun! Because you *know* that you're getting to them.

Teacher: Oh my God!

Helen: Yeah, they were like “There’s that little” then they say the “b word” from New School.

Teacher: Ohhhh! They DO not!

Helen: I was so scared walking out.

Teacher: It made you scared? And now you’re laughing?

Helen: well a little

Mary: It was a joke...

Helen: yeah...

Teacher: Do you think they were really being mean to you?

Helen: No.

Transcription of Student Interviews

27. April, 2010 –William

Teacher: All right, William. Tell me about FASG

William: Um...FASG honestly, I had a great time this year. At the dance I got to..no I decided to...I decided to dance. SO George and I went out and we both just were dancing for the whole hour and I'm not gonna lie, we actually tried to stay past 11:00, but it didn't happen. Um...

Teacher: Tell me how FASG is a motivating force for you to take German.

William: Well, I was definitely more prepared this year than I was in the past years, and FASG teaches responsibility because you know you have to get your song done, you have to get your art project done. Because if you show up without your work done, it kind of not only makes you look bad, but it makes your school look just as bad as you or worse. Especially your teachers. She's supposed to...she's supposed to teach you it, and it makes her looks bad. And Miss H, she's one of the presidents and leaders of FASG so if she doesn't have a good reputation, then they're not going to be able to trust her.

Teacher: You you said, you were kind of alluding to that it was a team effort.

William: Yeah

Teacher: If you don't do well, we don't do well.

William: Because if one person falls, we all fall.

Teacher:: Right: Is that motivating for you? Is that exciting for you?

William: Thinking that you know, in essence, the whole team is on your shoulders, it does motivate you.

Teacher: Is that a bad motivation or a good one.

William: It's never been a bad one for me, not to speak for anyone else, but for me, personally it's been a good motivation because I mean I get all my school work done, I get my extracurriculars done and part of it is from FASG – from knowing that I gotta get my work done for FASG. And not only at FASG, I've gotta perform at home, gotta perform at school, so its kind of all around.

Teacher: Good.; Tell me about team effort – what does it mean to you?

William: Well...um..teamwork, definitely teamwork. Because if you cant; work with other people, then you can't make whatever you're working on work. And also it's getting your share of your work done so, bringing in the same example, we all get points whenever one of us wins out of the amount of students we have. We get the average. And if one of us fails everything, we don't bring in our work, we don't study for our tests, we don't do our poem, then that's already three points out of our average that's taken off, and that's just making our school look bad, like we said. So it's really a team effort where you really have to make sure your team members can trust you.

Teacher: Do you like the competition?

William: Competition? Yeah, I mean it was...you got free time, you got to compete with kids your age and older and..

Teacher: What do you think about that?

William: Competing with older kids? Hard, hard-er this year than in the past years. Ahh..I just think they came more prepared this year than last year. They definitely stepped up their game. I was expecting them to definitely beat us this year. When I walked in and brought my castle in, I thought "Oh my Gosh! Their castles are ten times better than mine!" And I was right. They did really well this year, so ...

Teacher: How do you feel about..well..this is what you wrote, this is a while ago What is motivating about FASG? You wrote “I like winning. I like winning awards and being able to say I am better than others. I also like winning in form of personal resume. I enjoy being able to put new achievements on my resume. That’s to me a win.” So you like winning.

William: Of course I like winning. I don’t know anyone who doesn’t like winning, I mean you can’t be a sore loser when you lose, but when you win, you know, you feel good. You like saying, well no one helped me with this, I did it, I won, and no one was behind my back telling me, “No no, it’s like this, you’re wrong you’re wrong”

Teacher: Would you say... well no one helped you, but for our....

William: No one helped, ah...I’m gonna say...no one was on my back telling me I need to do it, but I had help preparing for it.

Teacher: OK, like we help each other, like if one kid...

William: Like you, you help me with my pronunciation, you help

Teacher: And if one kids doesn’t do his work, we all fail, like you said before, I just wanted to clarify on that. So we all help each other in one way, but no one’s on your back like saying “William, did you do *this*?”

William: Right, so you get the satisfaction of saying “Well, I got it done on my own merits. No one was telling me, I wasn’t getting punished by someone saying “Well if you don’t do your poem, you don’t go to the party this weekend.”

Teacher: Right – if you don’t do your poem...everybody’s gonna hate your guts! ☺
Good alright... Anything else? Does FASG motivate you to want to continue to do German?

William: Well I think if I go to a new school, well I'm going to in high school, I'm not sure where I'm gonna go, but if they have German class, that's definitely something that I'd like to do. Even if they don't have FASG, I would still like to take German because first it's good for my resume, like I put before, I like putting new things and new achievements on my resume, and good jobs, better jobs...

Teacher: And if they didn't have FASG, what would you do?

William: Honestly, I'd go with Spanish.

Teacher: No, you'd get them to go, William!

William: Oh, I thought you said if they didn't have German language..

Teacher: No, if they don't have FASG

William: If they don't have FASG, I would try to get them to go.

Teacher: Definitely, definitely. OK that was it, thanks so much! Bye!

Transcription of Student Interviews

27. April, 2010 –Evelyn and Alice

Teacher: I'm just going to read your response about what motivates you at FASG. I'll start with...I'll start with Alice because I've got hers here. "What is motivating about FASG? I like the great experience you get for doing FASG. You get to speak German to a lot of people and make art projects and learn German poems, and I like the winning part. You get to tell your friends and family and you feel all special and better than them. When you get medals you get to stand up in front of all the high school students." Lots of things I want to ask you about here.

Alice: Yes

Teacher: What makes it a great experience.

Alice: It makes it a great experience because you...you just get to do a lot of stuff with German and it helps you learn a lot. Also, with let's say making art projects, you get to make your art project and you also get to learn about and you get to, you know, really learn it cool and really.

Teacher: So you like that art project?

Alice: Yeah, I like the art project...

Teacher: That was cool...

Alice: Also, the poem is really fun, too.

Teacher: OK, you like that..but those aren't things we do in class.

Alice: Yes, true.

Teacher: How does that motivate you? How are those motivating to you?

Alice: Well....because.....

Teacher: Think about, think about it, we'll come back to it. You like the winning part?

Alice: Yeah! It's like especially when you win, you feel really good. You get like this glowing feeling inside of you and like you get to stand up like in front of all the high school students ... like win medals. It's like a really good feeling. Also like, you go home on the phone and you're like, "Yeah I won a lot of medals and stuff"...

Teacher: That makes you feel good.

Alice: Yeah ...yeah....it's a really good feeling.

Teacher: So you feel good as a person. Alice feels good. How do you feel..do you that FASG brings the class together or are we a bunch of people going "me me me my medals my medals my medals"?

Alice: No, no no, we all are a big group because it's all one giant effort you know to do the best you can and like represent our school and things because we each do our own thing and then we bring it together to like get more medals and things like that.

Teacher: Do you feel pressured or anything? Does anyone ever...

Alice: No, I don't feel pressured at all. Because we get it in plenty of time, too. It's not like one month before we get all our information. We get it in much plenty of time before and so, yah, it's very relaxing to me. I don't feel any pressure.

Teacher: All right.. does the competition motivate you?

Alice: A little. Not as much as some other people, but it does motivate me to do better, too. Because if I'm going to be entering a competition, I want to win, I don't just want to do sloppy work because then I know that I'm not going to win. Because I know that other kids there are really good at that too. So yeah, that does motivate me to do better at my work.

Teacher: Does FASG in general motivate you to stick with German? Because you've been with me for how many years..

Alice: Ummm like...

Teacher: FIVE years...this is the..

Alice: This is the fifth year. So what was the question again?

Teacher: Does FASG motivate you to stick with German?

Alice: I like German a lot. Just even...I would stay, I would stay in German even if there was no FASG because the class is fun, it's fun by itself. It's just fun, you also learn a lot of German which is good. So it does motivate me to do more, but I would definitely keep doing German even IF there was no FASG.

Teacher: OK, great. I like that winning part! What would happen if we didn't win?

Alice: Um, you know, I would feel bad of course, but I would still, like love the experience. And it would still be a lot of fun for me. Of course I would be down, but I wouldn't let that losing get in my way of having fun during FASG. So..yeah.

Teacher: All right! Let's talk about what Evelyn's got. All right Evelyn hi!

Evelyn: Hi.

Teacher: (Reading Evelyn's written response) "I like the competition, winning motivated me. I sort of like the goofiness that we do in the dance. I also like being with my friends there and it seems like a really fun time." So tell me about the winning.

Evelyn: Well I definitely like the winning because like Alice said, we're in front of a bunch of high school students and it sort of feels good to get them back.

Teacher: Because we're in 4th grade and that feels kind of good – I got ya! I got ya!
And the goofiness, tell me about the goofiness as a motivating factor.

Evelyn: Well, this year, we're doing a dance from the 1920s or something, and we have feather boas, and it's just fun to play around.

Teacher: SO you don't feel embarrassed?

Evelyn: No, no.

Teacher: Goofiness is always good.

Alice: Yeah!

Evelyn: Yeah!

Teacher: All right, I got ya! How do you feel about FASG as an experience as a group? What does it do for our classroom?

Evelyn: It definitely brings us together. It's a real group effort when we do it. When we're singing, if one person doesn't sing then we might lose. Or just one person can't just sing by themselves. It's a real group effort and it definitely brings the class together.

Teacher: How? How do you think it does that?

Evelyn: Well, because we all have to work together to win at the end with the medals. Because all of our medals combined is what lets us win.

Teacher: What do you think of...about the competition as a motivational factor?

Evelyn: Well I like competition, but like Alice said, it's not like a big big factor for me. I like a little bit...it's hard to explain.

Teacher: Do your best, girl, do your best.

Evelyn: Can I come back to that?

Teacher: Yeah, I think so. What was the thing we were going to come back to Alice on? I can't remember.

Alice: Something with FASG.

Teacher: The art project and the poems? Was that it? Well, I taped it, so we'll meet again. Big deal. Great! That's it. Anything else about how FASG is motivating to you?

Evelyn: Well I definitely like the art projects and the poems are fun to memorize and we translate them. Also the art project is really fun because it's a time to show your creativity. And also you can show people what you can do and you get to have fun.

Teacher: Do you think you'd do German without FASG. You've been here for five years too.

Evelyn: Yeah, I would definitely do German without FASG. Because even if there was no competition, the class is fun by itself.

Teacher: Well, beating High school kids is a good thing!

Evelyn: Definitely.

Teacher: ha ha ha! Yes!

Alice: Also I have two more things. Also with the poem, cause we're talking about the poem right now, the poem is also a lot of fun because you can show it to your relatives or family and friends and they...you feel really proud when they clap and stuff. And the second thing is getting to do this great experience with my friends, cause I love my friends and I love the competition, so it's like a double bonus having both of those..

Teacher: At the same time...

Alice: Yeah, at the same time...

Teacher: It is a lot of fun, ladies. All right, I think that's it for now, I might get you later though. Thanks guys! Bye!

Results: Eleven students took part in the video taped interviews. The goal of these interviews was to find out what it is about FASG that motivates students. The results were very similar to those of the written questionnaires from April 7, 2010. Due to the open ended nature of these interviews, several categories emerged.

Cooperative group effort – teamwork: 27 references from 10 different students

Beating the High School students: 22 references from 10 different students

Winning: 7 references from 6 different students

Competition: 7 references from 6 different students

Self-directed learning: 4 references from 2 different students

Fun: 4 references from 2 students

Being at the beach: 2 references from 2 different students

Being with friends (no mention of teamwork): 2 references from 2 different students

Completing an art project: 2 references from 2 students

Preparing to recite the poem: 2 references from 2 students

Plays at the talent show: 1 reference from 1 student

Relaxed atmosphere: 1 reference from 1 student

Learn more German: 1 reference from 1 student

Gaining approval from friends and family: 1 reference from 1 student

Appendix 17: Results of 2009/2010 school year taped classroom observations – 5 minute intervals

Date:

April 14, 2010 -30 minutes of video

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG						
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min						
James	lw	lw	lw	lw	lw	lw						
Alan	s	r	ioa	lw	ioa	ioa						
Dina	lw	ioa	lw	lw	lw	Off camera						

Date:

April 15, 2010 -18 minutes of video

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	FASG	FASG	FASG									
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	s	lw	lw									
Alan		Absent										
Dina		Absent										

Date:

May 5, 2010 – 27 minutes of video

	Topic at Hand Vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand Read comp	Topic at Hand Read comp	Topic at Hand Read comp	Topic at Hand						
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	hoa	lw	w	lw	lw							
Alan	hoa	hoa	ioa	ioa	ioa							
Dina	hoa	hoa	lw	w	s							

Date:

May 6, 2010 – 44 minutes of video

	Topic at Hand vowels	Topic at Hand Read comp	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand						
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	s	lw	s	lto	lto	lto	w	r				
Alan	ioa	lw	w	ioa	s	w	ioa	ioa				
Dina	Not on camera											

Key:

On Task Behaviors

Listening/Watching:	lw
Writing:	w
Speaking:	s
Reading:	r
Hands-on activity:	hoa

Off Task Behaviors

Involved in own activity: (staring, laying on desk, playing with objects/fingers, looking at clock)	ioa
listening to others (off task talk):	lto
talking to others (off task subject):	tto

Topic at Hand:

State German Competition:	FASG
TPR/TPRS :	TPRS
Vowels:	German vowel sounds
Read Comp:	reading comprehension
Trans:	translation exercise
Vocab:	oral vocabulary practice

Appendix 18: Results of 2009/2010 school year taped classroom observations – 2 minute intervals

Date: April 14, 2010 – 30 minutes long

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	lw	lw	ioa	ioa	lw	lw	lw	lw	ioa	lw	ioa	lw
Alan	ioa	s	ioa	s	ioa	lw	lw	lw	ioa	lw	ioa	s
Dina	lw	lw	lw	lw	ioa	lw	lw	lw	lw	lw	lw	ioa

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	FASG	FASG	FASG									
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	hoa	lw	lw									
Alan	hoa	lw	ioa									
Dina	hoa	lw	lw									

Date: April 15, 2010 – 18 minutes long

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG			
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	ioa	ioa	lw	ioa	ioa	lw	lw	ioa	lw			
Alan				ABSENT								
Dina				ABSENT								

Date: May 5, 2010 – 27 minutes long

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	vocab	vocab	Read Comp									
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	lw	r	r	r	lw	r	w	lw	w	lw	w	w
Alan	ioa	r	r	r	hoa	ioa	w	ioa	ioa	ioa	w	ioa
Dina	lw	r	r	r	hoa	ioa	s	w	s	w	w	r

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	Read Comp											
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	w											
Alan	w											
Dina	s											

Date: May 6, 2010 -44 minutes long

	Topic at Hand vowels	Topic at Hand vowels	Topic at Hand Read Comp									
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	ioa	ioa	lw	lw	lw	ioa	r	w	r	tto	w	w
Alan	ioa	ioa	ioa	ioa	lw	lw	tto	w	ioa	ioa	w	w
Dina					NOT ON CAMERA							

	Topic at Hand Read Comp											
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	ioa	ioa	tto	lw	tto	w	r	r	w	lw		
Alan	ioa	ioa	w	s	lto	lw	ioa	ioa	r	ioa		
Dina					NOT ON CAMERA							

Key:

On Task Behaviors

Listening/Watching:	lw
Writing:	w
Speaking:	s
Reading:	r
Hands-on activity:	hoa

Off Task Behaviors

Involved in own activity: (staring, laying on desk, playing with objects/fingers, looking at clock)	ioa
listening to others (off task talk):	lto
talking to others (off task subject):	tto

Topic at Hand:

State German Competition:	FASG
TPR/TPRS :	TPR/S
Vowels:	German vowel sounds
Read Comp:	reading comprehension
Trans:	translation exercise
Vocab:	oral vocabulary practice

Appendix 19: Results of 2010/2011 school year taped classroom observations – 5 minute intervals

Date: October 6, 2010 – 60 minutes

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	TPRS	TPRS	TRPS	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab	TPRS	TPRS	Vocab	Vocab
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	hoa	hoa	lw	lw	s	lw	ioa	ioa	s	lw	Not on camera	
Alan	hoa	hoa	lw	lw	s	s	lw	ioa	s	s	s	w
Dina	hoa	hoa	lw	lw	lw	lw	lw	w	s	lw	lw	lw

Date:

October 13, 2010 – 60 minutes

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	TPRS	TPRS	TRPS	TPRS	TPRS	Vocab						
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	ioa	ioa	w	s	lw	lw	s	lw
Alan	lw	ioa	hoa	hoa	ioa	lw	w	ioa	ioa	lw	s	ioa
Dina	lw	lw	Off camera	hoa	Off camera	lw	w	s	lw	lw	s	lw

Date:

November 10, 2010 – 60 minutes

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	TPRS	TPRS	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab	Vocab
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	hoa	ioa	hoa	hoa	s	s	s	o f f	w	w	w	ioa
Alan	hoa	ioa	hoa	hoa	s	s	s	c a m	w	s	w	ioa
Dina	hoa	ioa	hoa	hoa	Off camera	s	s	e r a	ioa	w	w	ioa

Date:

November 17, 2010 – 57 minutes

	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand	Topic at Hand
	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	FASG	TRPS	TPRS	TPRS	TPRS	
Student	Time of Observation											
	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min	45 min	50 min	55 min	60min
James	lw	ioa	r	lw	s	s	hoa	hoa	lw	lw	w	
Alan	lw	ioa	s	s	ioa	s	hoa	hoa	lw	w	w	
Dina	lw	ioa	lw	ioa	s	s	hoa	hoa	lw	w	s	

Key:

On Task Behaviors

Listening/Watching:	lw
Writing:	w
Speaking:	s
Reading:	r
Hands-on activity:	hoa

Off Task Behaviors

Involved in own activity: (staring, laying on desk, playing with objects/fingers, looking at clock)	ioa
listening to others (off task talk):	lto
talking to others (off task subject):	tto

Topic at Hand:

State German Competition:	FASG
TPR/TPRS :	TPR/S
Vowels:	German vowel sounds
Read Comp:	reading comprehension
Trans:	translation exercise
Vocab:	oral vocabulary practice

Appendix 20: Results of 2010/2011 school year taped classroom observations – Individual students – 2 minute intervals

Date: October 6, 2010 – 60 minutes

	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab								
Student	Time of Observation												
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min	
James	hoa	lw	hoa	hoa	ho	hoa	hoa	lw	tto	lw	lw	s(g-t/r)	
Alan	hoa	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	s(e)	lto	lw	lw	lw	
Dina	hoa	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	lw	lw	lw	lw	lw	

	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS							
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	lw	s(g-t/r)	lw	s(g-t/r)	ioa	lw	s(g-t/r)	ioa	s(g-f)	s(e)	hoa	lw
Alan	lw	ioa	s(e)	lw	lw	lw	s(g-t/r)	ioa	s(g-f)	lw	s(e)	lw
Dina	lw	s(e)	lw	lw	s(g-f)	s(g-f)	s(g-t/r)	s(g-t/r)	s(g-f)	lw	s(e)	lw

	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand					
Student	Time of Observation											
	50 min	52 min	54 min	56 min	58 min	60 min						
James	lw	ioa	O f f C a m e r a	Off camera								
Alan	s(g-f)	ioa		s(e)	w	w						
Dina	lw	lw		lw	s(e)	lw						

Date: October 13, 2010 – 60 minutes

	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand TPRS									
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	s(g-t/r)	hoa	s(g-f)	lw	hoa	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa
Alan	s(g-t/r)	ioa	s(g-f)	s(e)	ioa	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa
Dina	s(g-t/r)	hoa	s(g-f)	lw	lw	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	s(g-f)	hoa

	Topic at Hand vocab											
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	io	lw	ioa	w	w	ioa	lw	a(e)	s(e)	lw	s(e)	lw
Alan	lw	lw	lw	w	w	ioa	lw	ioa	s(g-t/r)	ioa	ioa	ioa
Dina	lw	lw	lw	w	w	w	w	s(e)	s(e)	s(e)	lw	s(g-f)

	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand										
Student	Time of Observation											
	50 min	52 min	54 min	56 min	58 min	60 min						
James	lw	lw	r	s(g-t/r)	s(g-t/r)	lw						
Alan	ioa	ioa	lw	s(g-t/r)	ioa	ioa						
Dina	lw	lw	s(g-f)	s(g-t/r)	s(g-t/r)	lw						

Date: November 10, 2010 – 60 minutes

	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand FASG										
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	lto	hoa	hoa	hoa	ioa	lw	lw	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa
Alan	tto	hoa	hoa	hoa	ioa	lw	lw	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa
Dina	tto	hoa	hoa	hoa	ioa	lw	lw	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa

	Topic at Hand FASG	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand vocab								
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	ioa	ioa	s	ioa	ioa	ioa	Not on camera		lw	ioa	w	lw
Alan	ioa	ioa	s	ioa	ioa	ioa	Not on camera		ioa	lw	w	ioa
Dina	Not on camera	ioa	s	lw	lw	lw	lw	Not on camera	lw	lw	lw	w

	Topic at Hand vocab	Topic at Hand										
Student	Time of Observation											
	50 min	52 min	54 min	56 min	58 min	60 min						
James	w	w	w	w	ioa	ioa						
Alan	s(e)	s(e)	lw	w	ioa	ioa						
Dina	w	s(e)	lw	lw	w	ioa						

Date: November 17, 2010 -57 minutes

	Topic at Hand FASG											
Student	Time of Observation											
	2 min	4 min	6 min	8 min	10 min	12 min	14 min	16 min	18 min	20 min	22 min	24min
James	ioa	lw	lw	lw	ioa	lw	s	r	lw	w	ioa	ioa
Alan	lw	lw	ioa	s	ioa	lw	r	s	ioa	s	ioa	ioa
Dina	ioa	lw	lw	lw	ioa	lw	lw	lw	ioa	ioa	ioa	lw

	Topic at Hand FASG	Topic at Hand TPRS										
Student	Time of Observation											
	26 min	28 min	30 min	32 min	34 min	36 min	38 min	40 min	42 min	44 min	46 min	48min
James	s	lw	s	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	s(g-f)	hoa	ioa	w
Alan	s	s	s	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	s(g-f)	lw	ioa	w
Dina	s	lw	s	lw	hoa	hoa	hoa	hoa	s(g-f)	lw	Off camera	w

	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand TPRS	Topic at Hand							
Student	Time of Observation											
	50 min	52 min	54 min	56 min	58 min	60 min						
James	lw	lw	w	lw								
Alan	w	r	w	w								
Dina	w	w	s(e)	s(e)								

Key:

On Task Behaviors

Listening/Watching:	lw
Writing:	w
Speaking:	s
Reading:	r
Hands-on activity:	hoa

Off Task Behaviors

Involved in own activity: (staring, laying on desk, playing with objects/fingers, looking at clock)	ioa
listening to others (off task talk):	lto
talking to others (off task subject):	tto

Topic at Hand:

State German Competition:	FASG
TPR/TPRS :	TPR/S
Vowels:	German vowel sounds
Read Comp:	reading comprehension
Trans:	translation exercise
Vocab:	oral vocabulary practice

Language

(e)	English
(g-f)	German - freely formulated
(g-t/r)	German – translation/repeating