**The Potential of Technology in Language Acquisition.**

[**www.sdkrashen.com**](http://www.sdkrashen.com)**, twitter (skrashen)**

**"There's a growing technology of testing that permits us now to do in nanoseconds things that we shouldn't be doing at all." Gerald Bracey (2006)**

**Computers "are one of the best things that have ever happened to the human race. They are one of the worst things that have ever happened to schools." (Frank Smith)**

**Main point: try obvious, inexpensive uses of technology in language education.**

**1. some background: how language, literacy are acquired**

**2. suggestions**

**3. misuse of technology**

**Background: Two views**

1. **the comprehension hypotheses: we acquire language & develop literacy by understanding messages**
2. **output, skills the RESULT of language acquisition**
3. **pleasant**
4. **has never lost in research studies**
5. **The skill-building hypothesis: we consciously learn about languauge (grammar, vocabulary), practice producing language, getting our errors corrected until this conscious knowledge becomes automatic.**
6. **Output/conscious knowledge of language: cause of language acquisition**
7. **not pleasant for most students: delayed gratification**
8. **but really no gratification. Has never worked.**

**The reading hypothesis: FVR > reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, grammar, spelling**

**Compelling Comprehensible Input: Lao, C. and Krashen, S. 2014. Language acquisition without speaking and without study. Journal of Bilingual Education Research and Instruction 16(1): 215-221. (**[**www.sdkrashen.com**](http://www.sdkrashen.com)**, "language acquisition")**

**The importance of narrow input: Narrow reading – familiar style, repetition of vocabulary, etc.**

**1. Lamme, L. 1976. Are reading habits and abilities related? Reading Teacher 30:21-27. Percent books read by "known authors" correlates with reading achievement, grades 3,4,5:**

**Accounts for about 25% of reading BUT: UNDERESTIMATION, only authors.**

**2. Successful L2 readers high % series books: Yeo, Y.H., Chew, P. G-L., & Krashen, S. 2016. My literacy autobiography. Language Magazine.; Henkin, V. and Krashen, S. 2015. The Naruto breakthrough: The home run book experience and English language development. Language Magazine 15(1): 32-25, published as "The Home Run book experience."; Cho, K.S. & Krashen, S. 1994. Acquisition of vocabulary from the Sweet Valley Kids series: Adult ESL acquisition. Journal of Reading 37: 662-667.; Mason, B. M. and Krashen, S. 2015. Can second language acquirers reach high levels of proficiency through self-selected reading? An attempt to confirm Nation's (2014) results. International Journal of Foreign Language. (ijflt.com)**

1. **Don't worry: as readers read more, mature, their interests expand**

**Wider range of genres: LaBrant, L. 1958. An evaluation of free reading. In Research in the three R’s, ed. C. Hunnicutt and W. Iverson. New York: Harper and Brothers, pp. 154-161.**

**They read more "good books": Schoonover, R. 1938, The case for voluminous reading. English Journal 27: 114- 118.**

**They do not simply stick with easy books: they read more "classics," they read harder books: Krashen, S., Lee, SY, Lao, C. Comprehensible and Compelling: The Causes and Effects of Free Voluntary Reading (Libraries Unlimited, in press).**

**SUGGESTIONS: BEGINNING LEVEL**

**Reading: from Language Experience to the Great Mandarin Reading Projcct**

**Language experience: reading materials created by teacher writing what children dictate.**

**- consistent with compelling comprehension hypothesis – personalization as a means of providing compelling CI**

**- similar to TPRS (Blaine Ray, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Story Telling), method of teaching second languages that relies on stories co-constructed by teachers & students.**

**- Research on language experience, small advantage compared to traditional methods: two dissertation studies, both positive. Six journal papers, 3 positive, 3 negative; one grant proposal, no difference. But only one clearly negative study.** [**http://skrashen.blogspot.hk/2016/08/notes-on-language-experience.html**](http://skrashen.blogspot.hk/2016/08/notes-on-language-experience.html)

**GAP in language education: Interesting, comprehensible material for beginners & low intermediates. EFL = graded readers, but not available in other languages, price**

**Our attempt: The Great Mandarin Roeading Project – All FREE. (Haiyun Lu, Pu-Mei Leng, Diane Neubauer, Linda Li. S. Krashen an honorary member. Guidelines:** [**http://www.ignitechinese.org/project**](http://www.ignitechinese.org/project)**.)**

**NARROW LISTENING: Krashen, S. (1996). The case for narrow listening. System 24, 97-100. (**[**www.sdkrashen.com**](http://www.sdkrashen.com)**, "language acquisition") language students record proficient speakers discussing a topic of interest to the student.**

**My accidental discovery: Ask Mexicans about Cortez. Mallorca ask about Catalan**

1. **topic of real interest to both parties, keep it short**
2. **topic you have background knowledge in**
3. **same topic, several speakers**
4. **record it, listen to it until it gets boring/totally comprehensible**
5. **don't ask people who are busy/at work (desk clerks, waiters)**

**Topics I have tried**

1. **Do you drink coffee? Tea? Do you think they are good for you?**
2. **Sleep: Morning person or night person?**
3. **Do you plan a musical instruction? What kind of music to you like to listen to?**
4. **How do you get better in another language? Do you have any advice for me?**
5. **Do you believe in ghosts? UFO's?**
6. **Describe the perfect woman? Man?**

**Rodrigo (2004) 5th semester college students of Spanish listened to short (1-3 minutes) recordings of native speakers of Spanish talking about topics of interest. 80% said that it was better than other kinds of listening activities they had done, none thought it was worse. Rodrigo, V. (2004). Assessing the impact of narrow listening: Students perceptions and perfomrance. In C. M. Cherry & L. Bradley, (Eds.), Assessment Practices in Forign Language Education, Selected Proceedings of the 2004 Joint Conference of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching and the Alabama Association of Foreign Language Teachers. SCOLT Publications. Valdosta State University.**

**MOVIE TALK (Ashley Hastings): play movie with the sound off, teacher supplies narration and dialog.**

1. **more comprehensible input than a regular movie sound track: words/min with visible referents in regular movies: 2.13. Movie talk = 18.5**
2. **Class focussed mostly on Movie Talk made more progress in listening comprehesnion, slighly better progress in reading.**

**Murphy, B. & Hastings, A. (2006). Making movies more comprehensible: The narrative/paraphrase approach. International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching (ijflt.com), 2(2), 25-27.**

**Suggestions: create videos, comic talk**

**INTERMEDIATE LEVEL: can understand some "authentic" input**

**Free Voluntary Surfing (FVS): a kind of narrow reading.**

**First language study: Jackson, von Eye, Biocca, Barbatsis, Zhao and Fitzgerald (2006) provided 140 children from low-income families, most between ages 12 and 13, with computers with internet access. More internet use resulted in improved reading, as reflected by grades & standardized tests.**

**1. The improvements present after six months of internet use for test scores & after one year for grades. Internet use improved reading, not vice versa.**

**2. The children liked web-surfing: When asked what their main activity on the computer was, 33% said it was “web search."**

**Wang & Lee (2015): one year of websurfing, second year university students in Taiwan, not English majors; surfed for 20 minutes at a time at least once a week for one academic year.**

**1. Surfers made better gains in subtests of knowledge of infrequently occuring words (those appearing once eery 10,000 words in texts) & academic words, also on a cloze test.**

**2. Surfers followed their own interests when surfing, doing "narrow reading": “I think I can really pick what I like and disregard my dislikes. Then, I’ll choose what I really want for sure. I definitely won’t choose something I’m not interested in.” (Sally)**

**3. No attempt to read broadly. One surfer said that his reading ability had improved because of growing familiarity with sports terms that he encountered repeatedly from reading of basketball news.**

**Wang, F. Y., & Lee, S. Y. (2015). Free voluntary surfing: An extensive reading curriculum supported by technology. In L. H. Das, S. Brand-Gruwel, J. Walhout & K. Kok (Eds.), (2015). The School Library Rocks: Proceedings of the 44th International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) Conference 2015, Volume II: Research Papers (2nd Ed.) (pp. 488-503). Heerlen, Open Universiteit.**

**S.Y. Lee: 31 university students in Taiwan with good proficiency in English in 2016: 30/31 regular surfers – usually used Chinese for fun and used English for school assignments.**

**BUT: Javis & Achilleo (2013): internet for personal interest: students studying in UK: L1 only = 36%; Mainly L1, some English = 48.2%; Mainly English = 41.1%**

**For social networking: L1 only 0; Mainly L1: 37.5%; Mainly English = 42.9%**

**WHY: fear that authentic texts will be incomprehensible. – unaware of advantage of narrow reading. Unaware that you don't have to know every word.**

**Wang (in progress): once they try it, they like it: 51/55 non-English majors say FVS increases interest, 53/55 prefer it to textbooks.**

**Similarly: Javis & Achilleos (2013): helpful for English language develoopment**

**Web pages designed for language learning = 28.6%**

**Accessing information on web, communicating with friends, etc = 71.4%**

**Jarvis, H. & Achilleos, M. (2013). From computer assisted language learning (CALL) to mobile assisted language use. *TESL-EJ 16(4)*. Retrieved from http://tesl- ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume16/ej64/ej64a2/.**

**BUT: Jarvis (2013): support for both: Jarvis, H. (2013). Computers and learner autonomy: trends and issues. In S. Sheehan (Ed.), *British Council ELT Research Papers Volume 1*(pp. 387-409). London, England: The British Council. Retrieved from http://www.tesolacademic.org/huwjarviseditor.htm.**

**ESLpod.com = wide variety of aural English texts appropriate for low intermediate students, especially those who have studied English as a foreign language in school but lack confidence. Free. Transscripts, cultural notes, "tips on improving your English," a glossary with sample sentences, and a discussion of idioms for modest fee.**

**THE MISUSE OF TECHNOLOGY: Competency-based instruction – testing all the time: McDermott, M., Robertson. P., & Krashen, S. 2016. Language Magazine, January 16.** [**http://languagemagazine.com/?page\_id=125014**](http://languagemagazine.com/?page_id=125014)**; Posted at:** [**http://skrashen.blogspot.com/2016/03/testing-all-time.html**](http://skrashen.blogspot.com/2016/03/testing-all-time.html)

**CBE = modules presented online:**

1. **covers skills and content knowledge as objectives that are "clear" and "measurable" (p. 3), - severely limits what can be included.**
2. **Students take the tests when they feel they are ready.**
3. **Determines school and teacher ratings.**
4. **Encouraged by new US education law.**
5. **STRONGLY supported by the National Governor's Association in the US, but little research evidence! "Although an emerging research base suggests that CBE is a promising model, it includes only a few rigorous evaluations and analyses of current and ongoing CBE pilots and similar programs" (p. 6).**
6. **Claim: personalized because of rate: but pressure to get through quckly**
7. **Claim: personalized because students can use alternate strategies – but limited by programmers' options**
8. **Reduces role of teachers at the same time teacher quality is being (unfairly) questioned in the US. When you control for poverty, US test scores are very high.**
9. **Expensive – huge profits for companies.**

**The alternative: Leave tech to the oteachers**