The Application of Second Language Acquisition Theory to New Testament Greek Pedagogy

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Abstract

The effect of outdated NT Greek pedagogy has left many seminary students ill-equipped to properly exegete using the NT Greek language. Many seminary students graduate with a firm knowledge of syntactic rules, but they are still unable to read the NT text without having to constantly consult a Greek grammar and dictionary. Even though the current style of teaching has been used for many years, research in second language acquisition has exposed that the traditional translation method has many flaws. One of these researchers, Stephen Krashen, has identified that the key to language competence is not *learning* vocabulary and grammar rules, but rather *acquiring* language through comprehensible input. For some reason, NT Greek is still based on the outdated traditional translation method Krashen's research has shown to be ineffective. Vast improvements can be made by applying Krashen's theories to NT Greek pedagogy. Although these methods boldly defy tradition, they not only result in knowledge *about* NT Greek, but actual *comprehension* of NT Greek.

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Introduction

An Alarming Trend

There is currently an alarming trend in today's seminaries which has already had an effect on churches all across the world. This trend is that students desiring to enter the ministry rarely try to learn Biblical languages to the best of their ability. They devalue Biblical languages because it does not easily lead to a great sermon outline. As a result, seminaries have started cutting back on their Biblical language requirements. Dallas Theological Seminary, one of the most prestigious seminaries in America, has cut down a required semester of both Greek and Hebrew because alumni surveys deemed these classes unnecessary (Burer par. 2).

Certain influential pastors find this devaluing of Biblical languages alarming. John Piper, has influenced more people through his preaching and writing than perhaps any other modern pastor. His exegetical preaching style demonstrates the extreme value he places on properly understanding God's Word. He believes that a knowledge of the Biblical languages is essential to good exegesis. He writes that when pastors do not cherish and promote knowledge of the Biblical languages, there are several consequences.

First, confident powerful preaching is absent in the pulpit because pastors are uncertain of their own exegesis (Piper par. 7). It is similar to how the secret to being a good salesman is belief in the product being sold. Salesmen know they will never convince potential customers that they need what they are selling unless they themselves

actually believe in the value of their product. In order to do this, salesmen must know their product well. How ridiculous would it be for someone to try to sell a car without knowing whether or not the car ran on gas or diesel fuel? In the same way, pastors are only able to preach the Biblical text powerfully when they confidently know what the Biblical text is saying.

Second, as Biblical languages are devalued, expository preaching is also devalued. Pastors who depend solely on differing human translations get lost in the specific details of tense, aspect, and repetition and are forced to focus on the general *gist* of the passage instead of the exact meaning. These specific details are not unimportant but rather are the foundation of good exegesis. In Piper's view, if one neglects the study of Biblical languages, he must also neglect Biblical exegesis–the most important Biblical skill a pastor has (Piper par. 8-13).

If the Apostle Paul were alive today, he would surely also find this trend alarming. In his letter to Timothy he writes:

> I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things. (New King James Version, 2 Timothy 4:1-5a)

Notice Paul's main charge, "Preach the word!" He uses several phrases to add intensity to his charge. Paul's charge is not just his mere opinion, but it is "before God" and "before the Lord Jesus Christ who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and kingdom." Notice the reason Paul gives this charge is because people will have "itching ears" and listen to what they want to hear. In other words, Paul is saying there will be a tendency for men to preach eisegetically, inserting their own meaning into the text. Therefore, Paul encourages Timothy to combat this trend and kh/ruxon to\n lo/gon "preach the word!" If ministers today have the opportunity to learn the Biblical languages and simply do not, they are not obeying Paul's charge to the best of their ability.

Causes of this Trend

Biblical languages are being devalued for two reasons. First, God's Word is being devalued. Those who value God's Word most, tend to value the Biblical languages most. They are willing to work hard in order to understand what the text is actually saying because they understand that the true meaning of the text is what gives real life. Martin Luther writes:

> In the measure that we love the Gospel, let us place a strong emphasis on the languages. For it was not without reason that God wrote the Scriptures in two [primary] languages, the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. Those languages which God did not despise, but rather chose above all others for His Word, are the languages which we also should honor above all others. It is a sin and a shame that we do not learn the languages of our Book. (Luther par. 4)

The exaltation of God's Word in the heart of the early church fathers such as Augustine, also made them believe that it was absolutely essential for Christian teachers to learn Greek and Hebrew in order to avoid false teaching (Luther par. 9).

Second, the devaluing of Biblical languages is a direct result of poor, outdated New Testament (NT) Greek pedagogy in Bible colleges and seminaries. Although traditional methods have been used by some students to achieve a fair amount of competence in NT Greek, they have discouraged a large majority of others from even attempting to continue their studies in NT Greek after they finish their required seminary courses. The problem is that those who often make the decisions about the pedagogy used in seminaries are almost always part of the small group of people who did become competent in NT Greek using these outdated methods. In the modern language community, these learners have been labeled as the *four-percenters*. They are the four percent of total learners who will learn language regardless of how it is taught. They think that grammar and syntax are cool and find any form of language activity enjoyable and entertaining. Most NT Greek professors are *four-percenters*. However, since the other ninety-six percent of students learn differently, professors must learn to teach in a way that appeals to these learners as well (Patrick par. 3). By insisting on the use of these outdated methods, seminary professors are making their students work much harder than necessary.

Certain NT Greek teachers, driven mostly by frustration with the poor results of traditional teaching methods, have started branching out to teach NT Greek with alternative methods. These teachers teach NT Greek almost exactly like modern languages are commonly taught. Students listen, speak, read, and write NT Greek.

Although unorthodox, every teacher who has used this approach has seen impressive and encouraging results. There is a very good reason why these methods are working. Whether or not these teachers realize it, their methods have forty years' worth of research in second language acquisition (2LA) supporting them. While modern language pedagogy, and even some dead language pedagogy, has reflected a change due to research in 2LA, most NT Greek textbooks still use outdated methods based on language theories which have been disproven by multiple empirical studies.

This is similar to what has happened many times throughout history. On January 8, 1815, many men were killed and wounded unnecessarily. America had its most overwhelming victory of the War of 1812, but unfortunately this victory did nothing towards ending the war. It would have, but the war was already over. About two weeks earlier on December 24th, a peace treaty had been signed. Word of the peace-treaty had failed to reach the generals of the armies at New Orleans in time and, therefore, unnecessary lives were lost ("Battle of New Orleans" par. 1-4). In the same way, current seminary professors are making their students fight an *unnecessary* battle by using outdated pedagogy. Some students are still victorious, but a majority are lost in battle. Therefore, a widespread reform of the NT Greek pedagogy used in Bible colleges and seminaries must be made.

Martin Luther rebuked the pastors of his day for having the opportunity to better understand the Biblical text through the Biblical languages, but not taking full advantage of them. He writes that if "it is a sin and shame not know our own book or to understand the speech and words of our God, it is a still greater sin and loss that we do not study languages, especially in these days when God is offering and giving us men and books

and every facility and inducement to this study" (Luther par. 13). This principle of good stewardship is also demonstrated in Jesus' instruction to his disciples, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more" (New Kings James Version, Luke 12:48). In order to reapply this principle to today's time and context, the question must be asked: Are we being good stewards of God's gifts if God has provided research in 2LA that has practical implications for NT Greek pedagogy, and we ignore it?

Whether or not the principles found in 2LA can apply to NT Greek pedagogy will be discussed later, but for now, it is imperative to understand that the principles of stewardship present in the Bible demand that Christians at least explore the application of these theories to NT Greek. By giving an adequate explanation of the relevant studies of Dr. Stephen Krashen and the implications they seem to have for NT Greek pedagogy, it will become evident that a radical reform must be made.

Second Language Acquisition

Introduction to Stephen Krashen

Stephen D. Krashen has changed the world of modern language teaching more than any other modern researcher. He has written more than 250 books and articles not only researching 2LA, but also discussing the implications of his research for teaching pedagogy. He received his Ph.D. in Linguistics from UCLA in 1972 and is currently an Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Southern California ("Stephen D. Krashen" par. 1-6).

During the 1970s Krashen proposed and established five hypotheses: (1) The Acquisition-learning Hypothesis, (2) The Natural Order Hypothesis, (3) The Monitor

Hypothesis, (4) The Input Hypothesis, and (5) The Affective-Filter Hypothesis. These hypotheses have since revolutionized modern language pedagogy. In order to determine the value of Krashen's hypotheses to NT Greek, these hypotheses will be approached in three different ways. First, the concepts will be explained in non-technical, semi-pedagogical vocabulary. Second, empirical studies will be shown that support his hypotheses. Third, other relevant studies will be shown that are fundamental in applying these hypotheses to New Testament Greek. This section is not an exhaustive explanation of either Krashen's hypotheses or of the empirical studies supporting his hypotheses because such explanations are beyond the scope of this paper. However, if the evidence is found to be unconvincing, there are many other resources that have examined these hypotheses and case studies much closer.

The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

Krashen's first hypothesis is the foundation for his other four hypotheses, and therefore the foundation of his theory behind 2LA. This hypothesis states that adults have two distinct ways by which they can become competent in another language. First, adults can *learn* a language. This process consists of explicit instruction where students are required to memorize vocabulary lists and grammar rules. The hope is that by doing these mental procedures, students will eventually be able to fit vocabulary into the proper grammatical structure and create communication. This method makes students talk *about* language in order to help students talk *in* language. For a long time teaching pedagogy was designed to help students *learn* language (*Principles and Practice* 10).

However, teaching pedagogy has changed, largely due to the discovery of another way to become competent in a language. The second way Krashen argues humans can

become competent in a language is by *acquiring* a language. Acquiring a language is what happens when learners almost *sub-consciously* seem to pick-up language. They may never be explicitly taught the vocabulary and grammar of the target language, but through being exposed to the language, they eventually start to correctly understand and use the target language. Every competent native speaker ultimately became competent in their first language through acquisition. Children do not memorize vocabulary charts and grammar rules but rather they simply listen, speak, and make mistakes (*Principles and Practice* 10). Krashen argues that children never lose this ability and that even adults are able to acquire language (Krashen and Terrell 26).

The acquisition-learning hypothesis is based on works by world renowned linguist, Noam Chomsky, who noticed that children are able to become competent in a language with very little input. The only language they hear is lacking both in quantity and quality, yet they are able to learn language very quickly. Much more input would be necessary if children only *learned* language through mimicry. Chomsky hypothesized that these children are pre-programmed with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that contains a set of principles or rules about language which enables them to acquire language (Laurence and Margolis 221).

For a long time people admitted that children learned this way, but they did not think that adults also learned this way. It was proposed that there is a *critical age* (around puberty) at which the pre-programmed LAD present in children disappears and no longer functions (Lightbrown and Spada 198). However, other evidence suggests that adults still do have this ability to acquire language. Vivian Cook conducted a study designed to test whether or not second language (L2) adult learners might show evidence of possessing

knowledge of the structure dependency principle, a principle hypothesized to be part of the LAD. If the learners showed evidence of possessing this principle, then this would prove that humans do not lose at least this part of the LAD as they become adults. She gave a test, both to L2 learners of English and native speakers of English, which examined the grammatical correctness of relative clauses, questions with relative clauses, and questions with structure-dependency violations. One group of L2 learners had syntactic movement in their native language (L1), while the other groups' L1s lacked syntactic movement. If a critical age does exist, this first group would be expected to reflect the structure dependency principle, while the second group would be expected *not* to reflect the structure dependency principle. However, the results showed that both sets of students did extraordinarily well. Only nine individuals got fewer than five-sixths correct. Cook concluded that even the L2 learners of English, who had not learned the structure dependency principle, seemed to possess this knowledge (201-221). Therefore, at least this part of the LAD is not lost at puberty, but continues on into adulthood.

This issue is sometimes still debated in 2LA research, but it is clear from multiple studies that there is at least some kind of essential difference between *acquisition* and *learning*. Perhaps the best evidence in support of the acquisition-learning hypothesis is the shift in modern language pedagogy from approaches designed to help students *learn* language to approaches focused on helping students *acquire* language. The reason this has taken place is that teachers have seen that focusing on *acquisition* in the classroom is much more effective than only focusing on *learning*. Furthermore, since the rest of Krashen's hypotheses build on this hypothesis, empirical studies that support these other hypotheses often support the acquisition-learning hypothesis as well.

The Natural Order Hypothesis

Krashen further hypothesizes that grammatical structures are *acquired* in a predictable order (*Principles and Practice* 12). This does not mean that every person acquires grammatical structures in the same exact order. Some evidence suggests that certain acquirers will even acquire certain grammatical structures in groups, instead of one at time. Instead this hypothesis states that acquirers tend to acquire some structures early and other structures late (Krashen and Terrell 28).

This hypothesis is based mostly on studies done with the acquisition of English morphology. Brown first noticed this *natural order* in children. He noted that children tend to acquire certain grammatical structures earlier than others. He performed a longitudinal study where he studied the growth of fourteen grammatical morphemes within three children. His results showed many similarities between the order in which the three children acquired the grammatical morphemes (Krashen and Terrell 28). Other researchers performed a cross sectional study where speech samples were taken from twenty-one children ages sixteen to forty months. The studied noted the presence or absence of the same fourteen grammatical morphemes. The findings strongly correlated with the order of acquisition developed by Brown's research (De Villiers and De Villiers 267).

Further research confirmed that this order applies not only to children acquiring their L1, but also to children acquiring a L2. Dulay and Burt elicited natural speech from 145 Spanish-speaking five-to-eight year olds and recorded 388 errors, in order to determine whether or not English as a second language acquirers (ESL) made mistakes based on inference from their L1, or based on the order of acquisition. Their conclusion

was that children acquiring ESL made similar mistakes to children acquiring English as their native language. Interference from the L1 did not seem to present that much of an issue (245-251).

Dulay and Burt performed an additional study to determine whether or not the order of acquisition of ESL acquirers was the same as native speakers. They studied speech from 151 Spanish-speaking children with different backgrounds of exposure to English, using a modified version of the test used by Brown and de Villiers and de Villiers. They found that although the order was not the same as L1 speakers, a definite order existed. They attributed the difference between orders to the fact that children who are a little older are no longer affected by the cognitive and conceptual development that younger children undergo when acquiring their L1 (Dulay and Burt 251-258).

Building on these findings, researchers performed another test with adults ages seventeen to fifty-five. They tried to discover whether or not adults learning ESL show agreement in their struggle to acquire certain structures, and whether these agreements are similar to those of children who learn ESL. The adults had different levels of English instruction and were from a variety of different L1 backgrounds. Even so, the results not only showed a significant amount of agreement in the level of grammatical morphemes acquired among the adults, but they also agreed with the results found in children acquiring a L2 (Bailey, Madden, and Krashen 235-243).

These findings were further confirmed by a study that measured the accuracy of sixty-six adults from a variety of L1 backgrounds, which used a different test than the one used by the previous studies. The results not only confirmed a significant amount of agreement in the level of grammatical morphemes acquired, but also showed that learners

from different L1 backgrounds have a high agreement as well. Although the L1 will inevitably affect the L2 learning process, the main inhibitor still seems to be internal rather than external (Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, Fathman 145-151).

These findings not only support a unified natural order of acquisition across all ages, but they also directly support the learning-acquisition hypothesis by showing that adults still do have the ability to acquire language. If adults lost their LAD at puberty and were no longer able to acquire language, then the studies should have shown that the adults' natural order directly reflected the explicit instruction they had received. This would mean that the present tense 3rd person singular marker *–s*, often one of the first grammatical items to be taught in textbooks, would have been used correctly by all adults. However, the results indicate that out of the twenty areas tested, adults made the second most errors in applying this *simple* grammatical rule (Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman, Fathman 148). The present tense 3rd person singular marker *–s* is one of the last grammatical features to be acquired in language acquisition; therefore, the adult natural order seems to be acquisition driven, instead of learning driven. Since this natural order is similar to that of children L2 acquirers, the LAD at work in children is probably the same LAD at work in adults (145-151).

Wagner decided to test one more variable particularly valuable when applying these theories to NT Greek pedagogy. So far, all of the natural order research had been focused on students learning English in English-speaking countries (ESL). No research had explored whether the same results occurred in students acquiring English in non-English speaking countries (English as a Foreign Language or "EFL"). He examined the use of four morphemes in fourteen French students ages thirteen and fourteen who had

been acquiring English for three years in France. His findings showed a clear acquisition order among EFL acquirers similar to the order found in ESL acquirers (Wagner 1-34). This study shows that acquisition devices are still active in non-immersion environments.

Not only do these findings support the acquisition-learning distinction among child, adult, ESL, and EFL acquirers, they also show that the biggest factor in the grammatical acquisition of morphemes is the student's own internal order of acquisition. Therefore, teaching a foreign language is not as easy as teaching explicit rules, but rather it requires teachers to help students acquire morphemes according to a predictable order. This has already changed the way many modern languages are taught, and should likewise be applied to NT Greek pedagogy.

The Monitor Hypothesis

Krashen's third hypothesis describes the interaction between acquisition and learning. The Monitor Hypothesis states that although the *acquisition* faculty is what students use to actually produce utterances, the *learning* faculty acts as an editor or *monitor* to what the acquisition faculty produces. Therefore conscious learning's role is to edit the language being produced by the acquisition faculty (*Principles and Practice* 15-16). Sometimes the monitor edits the acquisition-produced utterances before the person writes or speaks. Other times the monitor edits these utterances afterwards in the form of self-corrections. Most often, the monitor is not even used at all. However, no matter how *strong* the monitor is, competency is a result of what has been acquired, not a result of the monitor. Explicit language teaching serves to *strengthen* the monitor so that it can edit the utterances produced by what the student has already acquired (Krashen and Terrell 30).

Research shows three conditions that must be met in order for the monitor to be used. First, the performer has to have enough time to think about the rules. If the acquirer is speaking rapidly in a conversation, then he will not have enough time to use his monitor. Second, the performer must be thinking about correctness or focused on form. Even when speaking slowly, a speaker will not use his monitor to edit his acquisition produced utterances if he is not actively thinking about the rules. Third, the performer has to know the rule. A student cannot consciously make an adjustment to a word or sentence that he has never learned (Krashen and Terrell 30).

Support for these conditions is evident in various studies where acquirers only use late-acquired grammatical structures when they know the rule and have time to actively think about the rule. Three Mandarin native speakers who had just completed an advanced ESL course at the University of California were shown errors in their own writing samples they had completed during the course. They each had trouble with putting the present tense 3rd person singular *–s* on the end of their verbs (a late acquired grammatical structure). When asked why they made these mistakes, their answers showed that although they knew the rule, they were not thinking about it at the time (Cohen and Robbins 45-66). Since they were not actively thinking about the rule, their monitor did not correct the acquisition produced speech utterance.

Another study found a natural order of morphemes in elicited speech and in an imitation task, but found no such order in reading, writing, and listening tasks (Larsen-Freeman 415-417). Krashen hypothesized that this was due to the fact that the reading, writing, and listening tasks allowed students to use their monitor and the elicited speech and imitation tasks did not (Krashen, "Formal and Informal Environments" 164). The

reading and listening tests were discrete-point tests that presented three different versions of a sentence: (1) with the morpheme supplied correctly, (2) with the morpheme supplied incorrectly, and (3) with the morpheme missing. Students were asked to identify the correct sentence. Similarly, the writing test was a discrete-point test where students filled in the blank with the appropriate grammatical morphemes (Larsen-Freeman 412-414). These tests not only allowed enough time for the monitor to be used, but also forced the students to think about form.

In the elicited speech and imitation tasks, students were shown a picture and either answered questions about the picture or repeated a fairly long (fourteen to eighteen syllables long) sentence (Larsen-Freeman 412-414). As students responded, they seemed to be more focused on communicating meaning than on grammatical form and, therefore, did not use the monitor. These findings show that the monitor is used only when thinking about form, and not often when thinking about communicating meaning (Krashen, "Formal and Informal Environments" 164).

Other studies further confirmed Krashen's hypothesis. Twenty-two intermediate level adult ESL students from a variety of L1 backgrounds who were attending the American Language Institute at USC were given a test where they were asked five questions about five different pictures in order to elicit speech. Their speech was recorded and the students were asked to transcribe their speech and return it two days later. When the students brought back their transcription, they were asked to make corrections using a special correction form. The original uncorrected transcriptions were evaluated for the occasion of nine different morphemes similar to the ones used in previous research. Afterwards the corrected versions of the transcriptions were also evaluated. Researchers

hypothesized that while the pre-corrected transcriptions would showcase a natural order, the corrected transcriptions would show an unnatural order due to the use of the monitor. Although the findings showed some evidence of monitor use in the corrected transcription (the use of the third person singular was largely corrected), a natural order similar to the uncorrected transcription still existed. Interestingly, a large proportion of the self-corrections made by the students were corrections in meaning, not grammar. The researchers concluded that when learners are dealing with large portions of meaningful discourse, they edit using the acquired system, not the monitor (Houck, Robertson, and Krashen 335-338).

The monitor hypothesis and its supporting studies have several important pedagogical implications. First, if the monitor is not used when trying to communicate meaning, explicit instruction about language does not directly aid communication. It only improves the monitor which in turn edits the correctness of the language. Therefore a focus on explicit instruction has no direct benefit for helping students communicate in a language. Second, teaching explicit rules may help students perform better on certain types of tests that force students to focus on grammatical form; however, they do very little to help the correctness of students' spontaneous use of these grammatical morphemes. Explicit instruction simply is not enough to achieve spontaneous communication or correctness.

The Input Hypothesis

The Input Hypothesis is the heart of Krashen's hypotheses from which most of the pedagogical implications are derived. It states that "learners acquire language by understanding input just beyond their level of acquired competence" (Krashen and Terrell

32). Krashen uses the word *understanding* to mean that the student reaches a place where he is no longer focused on form, but rather he is able to purely focus on the meaning (*Principles and Practice* 21). He represents this *next level* with the equation $i + 1$, where i represents the student's current acquired level (Krashen and Terrell 32).

This hypothesis is built upon research in how children first acquire their native language. After reviewing numerous lexical, syntactic, and phonological studies examining infants' acquisition, Macnamara concludes that when infants are learning their L1, their focus is on meaning, not form or structure. They learn language by discovering the relationship between meaning and expression (Macnamara 1).

Other studies have shown that mothers and caretakers are also focused on meaning when communicating with infants. Compared to regular adult speech, this *motherese* is only slightly reduced in syntactic complexity, but significantly reduced in semantic complexity. What a mother says to her child will be almost as grammatically complicated as her speech to adults; however, she will seek to speak in a way so that the child can understand what she means. Additionally, although the mother's speech is still as syntactically complex as normal speech, the fact that she only talks about certain topics with her child (semantic constraints) results in the use of fewer syntactically complex sentences. They also noticed that the mother's speech became more complicated as the child got older and was able to understand more semantically (Newport, Gleitman, and Gleitman 145). This shows that although the mother was not purposely trying to provide $i + 1$ input, in trying to communicate with her child, she did, in fact, provide $i + 1$ input.

Krashen concludes from these and other studies that there are three important characteristics of caretakers' speech that seem to elicit acquisition. First, caretakers speak to be understood, not to teach language. Second, caretakers' speech structure is simpler than that of regular adult speech. Their speech tends to be roughly tuned to the level of the child and increases in difficulty as the child grows in linguistic competence. Third, Krashen reasons that oftentimes the speech adults deem as semantically appropriate is about topics in the *here and now*. Because children are able to observe these items with their five senses, they are often able to understand the meaning of their caretaker's speech even if the vocabulary and grammar are unfamiliar (Krashen and Terrell 34). This further supports the idea that children acquire language by understanding $i + 1$ input, input just beyond their current level (Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition* 126). Therefore, the best advice for parents wanting to help their children learn language is to communicate with them (Brown 26).

Krashen hypothesizes that similar processes occur in 2LA. He thinks that there are three basic types of speech input in 2LA. Teacher-talk is the speech of the teacher in the classroom that consists of explanations, instructions, clarifications etc. Interlanguage-talk is the speech of the ESL speakers among their own group. Lastly, foreigner-talk is the speech that native-speakers use with ESL students in order to communicate (Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition* 121).

Krashen sought to see which type of speech-input is most beneficial to 2LA. One study he conducted documented a linguistic professor's attempt to learn four different languages. The analysis showed that teacher-talk and interlanguage-talk are extremely beneficial when trying to acquire a language because they provide more comprehensible

input than foreigner talk (Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition* 122-124). Even so, his findings showed that anyone trying to communicate will provide some level of comprehensible input (132).

Ultimately, Krashen has concluded that when students understand what they are hearing or reading, and there is enough input, *i + 1* is normally included automatically. Krashen calls this the input *net*. Although the net might contain structures the learner has already acquired and structures the learner has not yet acquired, if enough comprehensible input is supplied, it is inevitable that in some way, the student will receive input containing the next appropriate level of grammatical structures (Krashen and Terrell 33).

Notice how different this is from the traditional view of L2 learning. Traditional L2 learning holds that a student becomes competent in a language by first learning small simple structures and then moving on to larger more complex structures, which ultimately result in extended conversation and high-competency (Hatch 403-404). This is almost the complete opposite of what Krashen says. He theorizes that students acquire by focusing on meaning, not form, and that the key to becoming competent in language is comprehensible input (*Principles and Practice* 21). The practical implications of this radical change in thought will be explored later.

The Affective-Filter Hypothesis

The Affective-Filter Hypothesis addresses the affective variables of language acquisition. It says that certain variables, such as high-motivation, will encourage input, and other variables, such as high-anxiety, will discourage input (Krashen and Terrell 38). In essence, this theory states that if two students are given the same input, those who have

a low-affective filter, meaning that they have good motivation, low-anxiety, etc., will acquire more than students who have a high-affective filter.

One of the significant determinants in whether students have a high or low affective filter is their motivation. There appears to be two types of general motivation in 2LA. *Integrative* motivation is the desire to learn a language because one desires to be liked and accepted by members of that language community. *Instrumental* motivation is the desire to learn a language for some specific purpose, such as to use the language in business or education (Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition* 22). Researchers have sought to identify which type of motivation correlates with better language proficiency, but the results of these studies are very inconsistent. Although motivation definitely correlates with greater proficiency, some studies show a greater correlation with integrative motivation and other studies show a greater correlation with instrumental motivation (26-29). Perhaps these inconsistencies are driven by the differences in peoples' personalities. Some people are task-driven and others are people-driven. However, it is inevitable that motivation, whether integrative or instrumental, is a significant factor in determining whether or not students acquire language.

Numerous cases studies have also identified anxiety as a significant factor in acquisition. Studies have found the closest correlation between high-anxiety and low ability to speak. They have also found evidence that high-anxiety inhibited listening comprehension. Surprisingly, the correlation between anxiety and success was the opposite in students being taught under a translation method. These students seemed to perform better when they were anxious. This further emphasizes the difference between

acquisition and learning. It appears that anxiety inhibits acquisition, but actually encourages learning (Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition* 29-30).

Other studies also seem to show that students who are self-confident, have an outgoing personality, and have a good attitude towards the teacher and classroom will be more prone to *acquire* a language than students who are lacking in some or all of the these qualities (Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition* 30-34). These studies are slightly less convincing than the others, particularly because many of these qualities are so closely connected with other qualities that it is hard to determine whether or not the qualities per se really contribute that much to 2LA. Even so, it is good for teachers to be aware of their significance, because if a student has a bad attitude towards the teacher and classroom, he probably will not be motivated to acquire, and likewise if a student has low self confidence and an introverted personality, he will probably be anxious about participating in the classroom. In other words, these qualities may indicate the presence of a greater affective issue.

Theoretical Application of Theories to Second Language Pedagogy

The Natural Approach

Krashen and Terrell applied these theories to English in an approach titled "The Natural Approach." This approach has five main underlying strategies. First, the main goal is to be able to communicate with native speakers of the target language. The emphasis is on communication, not accuracy, under the assumption that as students become more communicatively competent, they will also become more grammatically accurate. Second, comprehension comes before production. Therefore, beginning stages of acquisition consist of activities that provide comprehensible input without requiring

oral or written production. Third, "production emerges" (Krashen and Terrell 58). This means that students will only start to speak and write as the acquisition progress progresses. At first their speech will be incomplete and full of errors. Teachers should allow students to wait until they are ready to speak and not require that they only speak in the target language. Fourth, the heart of the approach is acquisition activities. Although some explicit instruction is given in order to build up the monitor, a large majority of class time is given to activities that contain comprehensible input for students. Lastly, the affective-filter should be as low as possible. Even if much comprehensible input is supplied, a high-affective filter can stop all acquisition from occurring (58).

The Role of Acquisition in New Testament Exegesis

Krashen's theories also have implications for NT Greek pedagogy. Before examining the implications of these theories, it is important to note the similarity between the definition of *reading comprehension* and the definition of *exegesis.* In 1999, the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research asked the RAND Reading Study Group (RRSG) to discover the most pressing issues in literacy. This group defined reading comprehension as "the process of simultaneously *extracting* and *constructing meaning* through *interaction* and *involvement* with written language" (RAND 11). Many well-known professors at Dallas Theological Seminary define Biblical exegesis as "*setting forth the authors'/text's meaning* by *interaction* with the original language" (Bock and Fanning 24). Based solely on these two definitions, it appears that reading comprehension and exegesis are almost synonymous. They both try to *extract meaning* through *interaction* with the text.

On a practical level, exegesis includes other processes that reading comprehension does not include. In exegesis, the reader must not only understand what the author is saying in the NT Greek text, but he must also examine the historical setting, literary genre, and other hermeneutical items that may influence the meaning of the text (Bock and Fanning 25). Reading comprehension is not concerned with these outside factors, but is merely concerned with what the text itself says removed from its original context. Although reading comprehension is not sufficient by itself to complete good NT exegesis, it is absolutely essential to good NT exegesis.

Research in reading comprehension has shown that the single biggest factor that contributes to reading comprehension in a L2 is proficiency in the L2. Reading comprehension strategies in the native language can sometimes compensate for poor proficiency in the L2, but ultimately the reader's ability to communicate in the L2 will determine his ability to comprehend what he reads (Yamashita 89-90). Herein lies the essential problem with how NT Greek has been traditionally taught. The translation method, does not give students a sufficient understanding of the language in order to best contribute to their reading comprehension. Essentially, it does not enable students to be able to communicate in NT Greek.

Before continuing, a distinction must be made between *communication* in the modern language sense and *communication* in understanding the NT text. *Communication* in the modern language sense is used to refer to a student who not only receives input in the target language, but also produces output in the target language. The ESL learner's goal is not only to be a proficient listener of English, but also to become a proficient speaker of English. *Communication* in the NT Greek sense only includes the

receiving half of *communication*. The NT Greek student is not concerned with being able to respond to the NT Greek text in NT Greek; his only goal is to be able to understand what the original author is communicating through the Greek. Therefore, *communication* in this sense, or rather, understanding what the author is communicating, is the basis of reading comprehension and essential to exegesis.

The traditional translation method is both insufficient and inefficient to teach NT Greek students how to understand what the author is communicating primarily because it does not teach students to understand NT Greek in the same way the authors of the NT understood NT Greek. The translation method is focused more on *talking about* language than actually *communicating in* language. A student trying to learn to communicate in a language through the translation method is like a swimmer trying to learn how to swim by analyzing the muscle movements of a swimmer (Levy 204). Analyzing may be helpful, but eventually the person must jump in the water and learn to swim. Likewise, if the learner is only presented with declension patterns, lists of vocabulary words, and grammatical rules without having any communicative context, the learner will only know *about* language and will not actually *know* the language in the way needed to contribute to reading comprehension (Patrick par. 7-11).

No native speaker learns to communicate in their native language through *talking about* language. If the average native speaker of English is asked to recite the principal parts of the verb *swim*, he will not be able to do it. However, if the same person hears the sentence, “The swimmer swims every day,” he will completely understand what the speaker is communicating (Levy 206). If native speakers, who can perfectly

communicate in their own native language, do not possess this explicit knowledge, then why do we expect that this knowledge is essential to communicating in the language?

Some may claim that there is a huge difference between communicating in English, a living language, and communicating in NT Greek, a dead language. Robert J. Ball and J.D. Ellsworth write that teaching a dead language with an emphasis on communication, "falls within the context of bizarre attempts to convince the public that a dead language is a living language" (77). They believe that it is impossible to have any type of communicative approach to a dead language because "one does not learn a language simply to communicate in the classroom but to communicate with speakers of that language outside the classroom when desirable or necessary" (80). This perspective argues that since there are no native NT Greek speakers, there can be no communication.

The main fact that Ball and Ellsworth miss is that although native speakers of NT Greek no longer exist now, they did exist at one time. It is a safe assumption that at that time, native speakers of NT Greek were able to sufficiently communicate in NT Greek without explicit knowledge about declension patterns and conjugations. Although students may not be able to communicate with native NT Greek speakers orally, they still can communicate through the written text (Pavur 1). If native NT Greek speakers learned without a focus on explicit knowledge, then why can't students do the same now? The translation method focuses so much on explicit knowledge that is unnecessary to being able to communicate in NT Greek.

Another critique of the translation method is that it inadequately teaches students to employ the correct balance of language processing essential to communication. Most psycholinguistics believe that there are two distinct ways that language can be processed

(Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams 382). First, language can be processed from the *bottom-up*. This is the main type of processing employed during translation. The reader moves step-by-step from the letters, to morphemes, to words and phrases, and ultimately to semantic interpretation. The other way language can be processed is from the *top-down*. The reader starts by observing relevant semantic and syntactic information and then makes predictions about what each individual word or morpheme means. The reader then checks these predictions with the word and morphemes themselves, proceeding when his predictions are correct and backing-up to make an alternative prediction when he is wrong. Both types of processing are utilized in communication (382, 596).

These two types of language processing are comparable to two different approaches used to complete a puzzle. First, bottom-up processing is like paying close attention to each individual puzzle piece, but never looking at the picture on the box itself. Some people consider this more fun, but it almost always takes more time, especially if the puzzle consists of a large number of pieces with similar colors and patterns. Each piece is carefully scrutinized to determine its place in the big picture. On the other hand, top-down processing is comparable to the person who looks at the box first and only when he properly understands the *big picture*, proceeds to put the puzzle together. This method is almost always faster and for most, is more enjoyable. This person is focused much more on the general *meaning/message* that the individual puzzle pieces create than the individual pieces themselves.

Both types of processing are used in good reading comprehension. The insufficiency of the translation method is that it only uses bottom-up processing when top-down processing is absolutely essential to understanding what the NT text is

communicating. When the NT Greek student is exegeting a verse, he will often come across multiple ways a particular form can be translated. Here, bottom-up processing can no longer help him in any way. He has already derived all the information that can be taken from the words and their specific forms. In order to exegete correctly, the student must use top-down processing and look at the context of the rest of the passage. He must follow the meaning of the surrounding context in order to determine the meaning of that particular word.

For most NT Greek students in their first couple Greek classes, their understanding of the language is not good enough to be able to understand the meaning of the surrounding context by reading the NT Greek text. Therefore, they revert back to an English translation for the *top-down* processing portion of their exegesis. While this may sometimes be a sufficient substitute, at other times it misses certain broad-context items which are not as clear in English as they are in NT Greek. For instance, someone exegeting Galatians 4:9 may not realize that the Greek word stoiceia translated by the NIV as “miserable forces,” is the same word used back in verse 4:3, translated as “elemental spiritual forces,” unless he is able to read the context in NT Greek.

The following analogy further emphasizes this point. Pretend an average person were to pay $10 to watch the newest action movie at the town theater. He excitedly walks into the theater bouncing with anticipation of what he will experience. Before the movie starts, the theater personnel explain that their projector is malfunctioning and only ten second clips are able to be seen for every five minutes of the movie. In order to help the audience have the best experience possible, the personnel explain that they will read a dialogue in between the ten second clips to help the audience understand what is going

on. Certainly this person who was formerly bouncing with anticipation would now be thriving with rage. In this case, reading is no substitute for seeing. In the same way, the NT Greek student who uses bottom-up processing to translate an isolated Greek verse, and then surrounds that verse with English context, is not maximally benefiting from his knowledge of NT Greek.

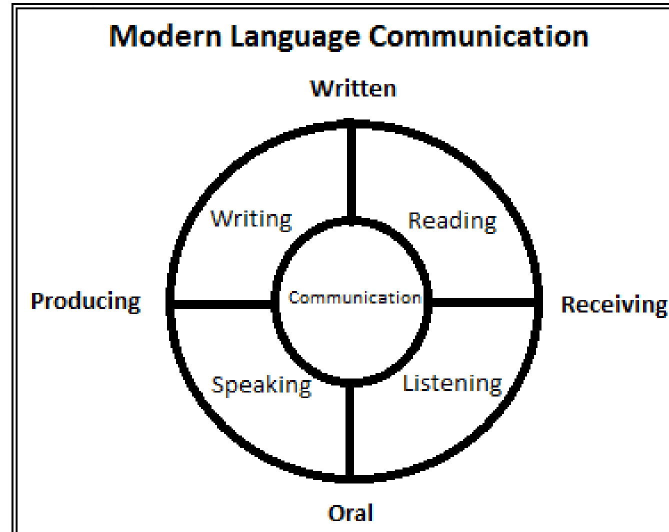
Some may say that this is not a big problem. They reason that even though it may not be the best way, the exegesis still gets done in the end. However, in reference to the former analogy, why would the person pay $10 to see this poor representation of a movie, when he could pay the same amount of money and experience the real movie? Certainly if the theater had both one broken projector and one projector that was working properly, everyone would hurry to the room with the working projector. They would probably even sit on the stairs and floor of this room before returning to the other room with the broken projector. In the same way, although translation is somewhat sufficient for exegesis, there is a better way to help students learn how to understand what the NT text is communicating. This way not only teaches them how to comprehend language through bottom-up processing, but also teaches them how to comprehend language through top-down processing.

In summary, the translation method alone is insufficient and inefficient to help the NT exegete become proficient enough in NT Greek to properly understand what the authors of the NT text are communicating. This is why Krashen's theories in 2LA are so promising to NT Greek. Students who *acquire* NT Greek will be able to understand Greek similar to the way the original authors did, and will be able to utilize top-down processing in NT Greek in order to more accurately determine the meaning of particular

passages, verses, and words. Unless students *acquire* NT Greek, they will not be able to really understand or comprehend NT Greek in the best way possible.

Can the Natural Approach Be Applied to NT Greek?

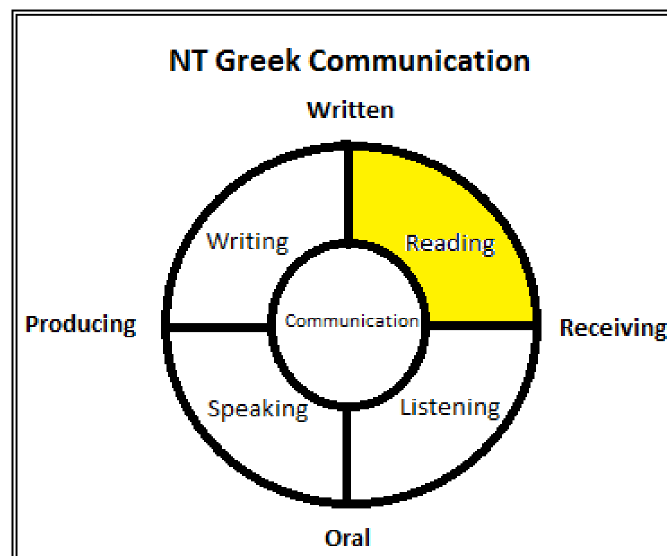
Even though Krashen's theories deal directly with 2LA, we must be careful when applying Krashen's applications of his theories designed for English, to NT Greek. Because the former is a living language and the latter is a dead language, there is a significant difference between communicating in ESL and communicating in NT Greek. Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach is primarily designed to develop students' ability to communicate with native speakers of the target language (Krashen and Terrell 67). Communication in a modern language can be broken down into four different sectors represented in the following diagram.



Notice that there are two sides of communication: a producing side and a receiving side; and there are also two types of communication: oral and written communication. These sides and types of communication make up the four basic aspects of communication: writing, reading, speaking and listening. Since modern language communication exists in

these four manifestations, when Krashen applies his theories to English, he is seeking to develop communication in each of these four areas.

The essential difference between modern language communication and communicating in NT Greek, is that native-speaker communication in NT Greek is no longer manifested in all four facets. The following diagrams shows that reading is the only surviving authentic form of communication in NT Greek.



The term *authentic* in this sense means that the language used is actually from native NT Greek speakers. Certainly one could write, speak, or listen to sentences in NT Greek, but in each case the language would have been produced by a non-native NT Greek speaker and thus would not be truly authentic. Therefore, the main goal of NT Greek acquisition is increasing linguistic competence in order to better read and comprehend the NT text.

Therefore, when applying Krashen's theories to NT Greek pedagogy, his suggestions must be viewed through the lens of whether or not each practice is necessary to improve reading comprehension. Principles that will not contribute to reading comprehension should be disregarded. Principles that do contribute to reading

comprehension should be further examined to see if they are worth pursuing based on how much time and effort they require to apply to NT Greek. The following section will first examine general applications of Krashen's theories and then will be followed with a discussion of what this means specifically for the NT Greek classroom.

Principles of Application to New Testament Greek

Acquisition is Emphasized More than Learning. This is the most important application of Krashen's theories. "Language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages, not when it is explicitly taught for conscious learning" (Krashen and Terrell 55). Krashen and Terrell call it the "Great Paradox of Language Teaching" (55). Indeed, this is the opposite of what most NT Greek teachers are used to. The grammar translation method is filled with tools that mostly build learning. Since there is significant evidence that adults can *acquire* language, and that the acquisition of language is ultimately what causes communicative competence in a language, NT Greek pedagogy will be much more effective if it focuses on helping students' acquisition. The exact balance of acquisition activities and learning activities will vary according to context, but Krashen and Terrell believe that as a general rule of thumb, at least 80% of a course should be devoted to acquisition building activities, and only 20% should be given to learning exercises (148). Since the goal of NT Greek is ultimately exegesis, and since exegesis utilizes explicit grammar terms more than a L2 classroom would, slightly more learning exercises might be beneficial to NT Greek pedagogy. Even so, the majority of exercises, especially early on, should still focus on helping the students *acquire* NT Greek.

Optimal Comprehensible Input Is the Main Goal of the Classroom. According to the Input Hypothesis, acquisition occurs when students are exposed to comprehensible input that is just a little beyond their knowledge. Therefore, the biggest way to encourage acquisition is to provide comprehensible input that is optimal (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 21). Optimal input is that which is sufficient in quality and quantity. It must contain comprehensible *i + 1*, be interesting to the student, and be enough.

On a practical level, this means that instead of spending most of class time teaching adults explicit grammar rules, perhaps teachers should seek to provide as much comprehensible *i + 1* as possible. This does not mean teachers should be focused on analyzing which exact structures are *i + 1* and then attempt to use them as much as possible. Although Krashen's natural order hypothesis seems to imply that textbooks should strive to reflect this natural order, he argues against such procedures. The problem with trying to purposely include the next grammatical structure in input is that most students in a class will acquire at different rates due to such factors as the affective filter, amount of input, etc. Trying to identify the exact stage of each student would take a lot of time and a lot of assessment (*Principles and Practice* 68).

Instead, Krashen suggests that teachers strive to produce input that is comprehensible to all. If every student understands the input, and if the teacher gives enough input, then according to the *net* theory, *i + 1* will automatically be included in the input (*Principles and Practice* 68). Teaching this way also provides for a lot of natural review. Normally textbooks that have "a rule of the day" expect students to grasp the rule and immediately internalize it. They do not have very much review later on. The student

who does not quite understand the rule the first time will continue on without ever acquiring the rule. By focusing on communicating meaning, teachers will not only be providing *i + 1,* but they will also be helping students review and practice structures they might have missed (*Principles and Practice* 69).

It is also important that the optimal comprehensible input given in class be interesting to the student. The goal is to make the message so interesting that the acquirer ultimately forgets he is hearing the information in a language different from his own native language (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 66). The best reading tasks seems to be those that reflect the kind of reading the students would do on their own in their L1 (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 67). Practically, seminary and Bible college professors might want to explore topics relating to the Church, Church history, simple theology, etc. If these topics are the message being communicated, students will not only be acquiring language, but will also be learning in another content area all the while enjoying the whole process.

Lastly, optimal comprehensible input must be sufficient in quantity. A small written paragraph containing comprehensible input still might not contain the acquirers *i + 1* (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 72). However, if the acquirer is given a small book to read that he will be able to understand, there is a good chance it will contain his *i + 1*. Krashen does not specify an exact amount of how much comprehensible input must be given in order to ensure the next level is included in the input, but he does make it clear that the more comprehensible input acquirers can be exposed to, the better (*Principles and Practice* 72-73).

Some question whether or not the classroom can provide enough comprehensible input for acquirers to become fluent. Most language acquirers who have become fluent in other languages did so by spending time immersed in the language. Many critique using modern language techniques for NT Greek because NT Greek lacks native speakers. After receiving sufficient class instruction, students studying French can greatly increase their skill by traveling to France and interacting with native French speakers. However, a similar option is not available to NT Greek acquirers. Critics reason that because the option of an immersion environment is not available to NT Greek, even the best classroom instruction will never result in competence similar to that of acquirers who are immersed in other languages.

In light of Krashen's studies, the lack of an immersion environment is not as big as a problem as it may appear. Krashen views the classroom as the most significant source for comprehensible input. When native speakers talk to L2 learners, they often use their regular complicated syntactic structures. This can often keep L2 learners from understanding the message, thereby stopping acquisition and discouraging the student from attempting to use his language in the future. On the other hand, when teachers talk to students, they often use a modified form of speech in order to make sure that students understand. Since this speech is comprehensible, it aids acquisition. Krashen says that sometimes fifty classroom minutes of teacher-talk benefit acquisition more than a huge amount of input from the environment that is far too syntactically and grammatically complicated to be understood by the L2 learner (*Principles and Practice* 58-59). Therefore, it seems even more imperative for the focus of the classroom to be on providing comprehensible input.

Comprehension is Supported by Extra Linguistic Support. Teachers can help their students understand difficult utterances through the use of extra-linguistic support. Caretakers often talk to children about items that are present at the time of speaking. This gives the children a visual image of the words being spoken, thereby helping them understand the message and aiding acquisition (*Principles and Practice* 66). In a similar way, visuals are a great way for teachers of NT Greek to help students understand messages. When a book that has no illustrations is read by students, they rely solely on their linguistic and previous knowledge of the subject to work out difficult or un-acquired structures. When these means fail, comprehension fails, preventing acquisition from occurring. However, books which contain pictures provide another clue as to the meaning of the text. Although students will still not always understand every word, the extra evidence gives them a better chance of understanding the meaning of what is being communicated, thereby increasing the probability of acquisition.

Teachers should also use students' background knowledge in order to support their comprehension. They can do this by using topics with which the students are familiar. For seminary students, this might mean using examples from Biblical sources. However, Krashen writes that if students are too familiar with the topic, then they will become bored and little acquisition will occur (*Principles and Practice* 66). Certainly a balance between the two extremes is best. Acquirers of NT Greek will most likely be interested in topics relating to the Bible, but will probably be so familiar with the NT that they might become disinterested. Therefore it might be beneficial to explore less familiar Biblical topics as well as early church history and culture.

Grammar Has a Limited Role. Although the focus is clearly on acquisition and comprehensible input, learning and grammar are not useless. Context will determine the extent to which grammar is taught. In most cases, teaching grammar can aid adults by improving their language monitor, which can lead to more comprehensible input and, therefore, to more acquisition (Krashen and Terrell 57). For example, a NT Greek student may be taught that the proper word for 'I love' is a}gapw/. Therefore, when he goes to use this verb, he uses his monitor to think about the rule, and produces a flawless "a}gapw/." However, contrary to previous thought, the benefit of this utterance is not that through repetition the conscious rule will become internalized, but rather that by hearing his own utterance, the acquirer has provided comprehensible input for himself and, therefore, provided an aid to his acquisition of that structure.

Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis also states that the monitor is only used when there is sufficient time to think about the rule, sufficient knowledge of the rule, and the learner is actually thinking about the rule. Therefore, grammar should only be corrected when these three conditions are met (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 118). In other environments where one or all of these conditions is lacking, grammar errors should only be corrected if they interfere with communication (Krashen and Terrell 57). Although this is the complete opposite of years of tradition, the evidence suggests that error-correction is not the key to becoming competent in NT Greek (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 76).

The evidence also seems to suggest that teachers should be sensitive to the fact that students have a natural order in which they acquire grammatical rules. Therefore, they should not expect students to correctly use late acquired rules early on (Krashen and

Terrell 59). They should also be realistic about the value of the monitor in language. In reality, the rules a person's monitor contains will be relatively small compared to the massive amount of rules that exist in a language (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 94). Even a person who uses his monitor often will never be able to achieve high competence through the monitor alone.

One difference between the role of grammar in modern language pedagogy and the role of grammar in NT Greek pedagogy is that in modern language acquisition, students do not need to understand the explicit grammar terms, whereas in NT Greek, these terms are imperative to exegesis. Even so, NT Greek teachers should probably not synthesize teaching grammar with helping learners acquire NT Greek. Although these terms are needed for exegesis, they only play a limited role in helping students *acquire* NT Greek. The exact role teaching explicit grammatical terms should have for exegesis will be discussed further in the next section, but for now it should be understood that teaching grammar should not be confused with helping students acquire language.

Vocabulary Should Be Emphasized. Perhaps the most important individual aspect of this approach is vocabulary (Krashen and Terrell 71). Vocabulary is essential to acquisition because vocabulary is essential to communication. Students who hear or read NT Greek sentences can make some sense of an utterance that contains higher-level grammatical structures if they are able to understand the general meaning of the words. However, students who have not learned the right vocabulary will be unable to understand the sentence, even if they know the right grammar. A big vocabulary allows students to comprehend $i + 1$ input and is therefore essential to acquisition. The more an

acquirer of NT Greek can increase his vocabulary, the more comprehensible input and acquisition will also be increased (Krashen and Terrell 155-157).

It is also important to understand how vocabulary should be emphasized. Just as grammatical concepts are acquired through comprehensible input, vocabulary is also acquired through comprehensible input. Thus, emphasizing vocabulary does not mean giving students long lists of vocabulary words to be memorized through rote. Rather, new lexical items should continually be included in the comprehensible input being supplied. Emphasizing vocabulary in this way means that the acquirer will focus on the general meaning of what is being communicated and not the specific lexical definitions of the individual words, further encouraging acquisition (Krashen and Terrell 156).

The Affective-Filter Should Be Kept Low. Krashen and Terrell wrote that since the goal of the Natural Approach is acquisition, the biggest early goal of the Natural Approach is to lower the affective filter; for if the filter is high, it will impede most acquisition. Therefore, early activities are designed to help students develop confidence in the target language and also to develop a positive attitude towards the target language (91). For a long time, NT Greek has had a very negative stigma. Few people look forward to the study of NT Greek and many of those who do are viewed as weird. Thus, it is even more imperative that during the early stages of NT Greek pedagogy, activities be designed to lower the affective-filter.

There are many factors that influence the affective filter in indirect ways. Many methods which lower the affective-filter have already been discussed in some of the previous principles. These will be mentioned again briefly in order to discuss their relation to the affective-filter. First, if the teacher successfully finds topics that are

interesting to the student, the student's filter will be lowered and the student will be more motivated (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 74). Second, if the student is not corrected when he is unable to use his monitor, his filter will be kept low. Students who are constantly corrected feel defensive and anxious, focus less on meaning, focus more on form, and avoid difficult constructions (Krashen, *Principles and Practice* 74). Students will become less anxious and more motivated in a language as they continue to communicate meaning.

Lastly, the affective filter can be kept low by informing students of the theory behind this approach. A student who does not know why he is speaking in and listening to NT Greek will probably not be very motivated to learn. To prevent this, students should know what to expect, how many vocabulary words they will learn, what texts they will read, and whether they will speak, write, listen, or only read. It also might be a good idea to give students a small introduction to the theory behind this approach and to how acquisition occurs. Helping students understand these theories will also help them better understand how to help themselves improve**.** Previously, students who wanted to excel in Greek performed activities to increase their monitor. Now these students can really help themselves by performing activities that help their acquisition of NT Greek, not just conscious learning. (Krashen and Terrell 73-74). It also would be beneficial to provide a short and concise reference sheet to give to students which clearly explains the theory behind these methods. Not only would this help them when they doubt certain methods, but it would also give them a resource to answer those who criticize this method.

The NT Greek Classroom

Now that these general principles have been established, their specific application to the NT Greek Classroom will be examined. Specifically it will be shown that although the goal of NT Greek pedagogy should be acquisition for the purpose of exegesis, reading NT Greek is not the only way, or even the best way, to accomplish this. Listening, speaking, and writing all have their various benefits to helping NT Greek students acquire better, ultimately helping them to read better.

Vocabulary. As was stated earlier, vocabulary should be the top priority for new NT Greek students because understanding what words mean is the key to understanding what sentences mean. Statistics have shown that reading fluency requires the reader to understand the meaning of 95% of the words in a text just for *minimal* comprehension (Grabe 280). The Greek NT contains 5,437 words. 3,246 of these words are used three times or less. Most vocabulary guides only focus on the 1,067 words that are used ten times or more (Wilson 195). Therefore, to become a fluent Greek reader certainly these 1,067 words must be learned, as well as the other 1,000 words that occur more than three times. Thus, with a vocabulary of about 2,000 words, the NT Greek student should be able to read most texts fluently.

Furthermore, vocabulary does not seem to be best taught through word lists with the Greek words on one side and their English definitions on the other, but rather through comprehensible input given by the teacher to the students. This may seem revolutionary, but really it should not surprise us. People who often have the largest vocabularies do not accredit it to vocabulary programs, but rather to a large volume of reading (Krashen,

Fundamentals of Language Education 9). Why should we expect people learning NT Greek to learn vocabulary through a different method?

Perhaps the hardest time to teach vocabulary through comprehensible input is in the early beginning stages when the students have no previous knowledge of NT Greek. It is incredibly tempting to give totally new NT Greek students an initial vocabulary list to go home and study, and then have a quiz at the beginning of the next class to assess their *knowledge* of these words. Although vocabulary lists are not to be avoided all the time, and certainly assessing students' knowledge is important, there appears to be a better way to go about this – even for beginners.

Krashen saw that caretakers often talk to their children about items in the *here and now* (Krashen and Terrell 34). Even though children may not know a particular word for an object, they are able to learn new words quickly because they can see and experience the objects. Likewise, NT Greek teachers will help their students learn vocabulary more effectively if they are able to provide extra-linguistic aids while teaching. This could come in the form of pictures, objects, movies, etc. This could be as simple as having a picture of a person and then a description of the person in NT Greek. It might show a Roman soldier with the description: ou^to/j e}stin }Ale/xandroj. }Ale/xandroj stratiw/thj e}stin – "This is Alexander. Alexander is a soldier."

Extra-linguistic support can also be supplied through actions. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method developed by James Asher that attempts to help students learn language by involving their body. A professor will give some type of verbal instruction or command and the student must immediately respond with an action (Asher

4). For example, the professor would tell the student, "e}ggi/ze kai/ kaqi/ze" – "Come here and sit down" and then the student would obey the action by coming close to the professor and sitting down. This not only leads to improved listening comprehension (Asher 17), but also to improved reading comprehension (Cabello par. 10-13). One study even found that while TPR aided listening comprehension, translation seemed to almost hinder it (Asher 17).

One last item that must be discussed is how the vocabulary words are to be organized. Traditionally, vocabulary has been taught in a combination of two ways. First, beginning Greek grammars often organize vocabulary according to grammar. They teach the vocabulary words that use the declension patterns being learned. So, as first declension noun endings are learned, the most relevant first declension nouns are taught. Second, often as students progress in their study of NT Greek, they will move to learning the words according to the frequency of their occurrence in the NT, regardless of the words' corresponding grammars.

Certainly there is much value to learning vocabulary this way. Learning vocabulary corresponding to grammar helps the students organize the words they learn into appropriate groups, and learning the most frequent words ensures that the student who is primarily concerned with reading the NT is investing his time wisely. However, these methods are probably not the best way to help students *acquire* vocabulary.

The vocabulary taught in Terrell's Natural Approach is organized around the topics and situations that the student would find most useful. So students are originally taught greetings, classroom commands, descriptions, family terms, numbers, etc. (Krashen and Terrell 67). NT Greek vocabulary would also benefit from being taught

according to semantic groupings. For example, instead of learning all of the first declension nouns in one lesson, teachers could allow students to learn all the family terms which are relevant in the NT. Then, in the next lesson the class could talk about adjectives that could be used to describe people. A focus on organizing vocabulary by similar meaning would help students better remember their meaning.

Some may fear that students will not effectively learn the correct grammar if they are introduced to differing declensions at the same time. Vocabulary organized according to *family* would include: words such as ui{o/j – son, path/r – father, or mh/thr – mother. All of these follow a different declension pattern. Students would probably assume that each of these had the same case endings and when they found they did not, might become extremely frustrated. However, the benefit of organizing vocabulary according to semantic grouping outweighs the grammatical frustration this may create for students for two main reasons.

First, ordering vocabulary according to grammar tends to take the students focus off of the meaning of the words being learned, placing emphasis on the forms of the words. This simply is not the best way to learn vocabulary. A child learning English does not first learn all the regular past tense verbs (for example "walked, talked etc.") and then, once he has mastered these words, learn the irregular past tense verbs (such as "threw, ran" etc.). Instead, he acquires both simultaneously. Trying to help adults acquire language according to a grammatical grouping does not seem to reflect how humans best acquire language.

Second, there is a better way to teach acquired grammar than through explicit instruction alone. Because children acquire according to semantic groupings, they often

will make repeated grammatical mistakes. A child may misuse the irregular past tense by saying something like, "Timmy threwed me the ball and it hitted me in the head." How then do children eventually come to use the right forms? Are they corrected explicitly? Sometimes they are, but often when a child uses the wrong past tense and is corrected, he will make the same mistake shortly afterwards. What appears to happen, is that as children continue to listen to these words and use them, the problem eventually fixes itself. Another factor seems to be at work here besides explicit correction.

Daniel Streett, associate professor of Greek and NT studies at Cornell University, has started using this type of semantically driven syllabus instead of the traditional grammatically driven syllabus. He found that this approach helped his students learn three times as much vocabulary as they had learned before. Although Streett was sometimes forced to teach some words that rarely occurred in the NT, he claims that even these words were beneficial to the students because they helped bring the language alive. The students started to see NT Greek as a language in which they could actually communicate (Streett, 4-6).

In summary, the best way to teach vocabulary seems to be through input supported by extra-linguistic factors that make the input comprehensible. Also, since vocabulary is the most important part of language to acquire first, NT Greek curriculum should be semantically driven, instead of grammatically driven. These changes will not only result in improved acquisition, but will also be much more fun than the typical translation method.

Grammar. Although vocabulary is the most important contributor to acquisition, grammar still has a role in acquisition. Krashen and Terrell advocate giving grammar

instruction in the form of texts to be read outside of class in order to allow for more comprehensible input to be given during class time (144). This is perhaps even more important in NT Greek pedagogy, because the classroom is probably the only opportunity students will have to receive a good quantity of comprehensible input. Giving students readings on grammatical items may present a challenge, considering the difficult nature of some grammatical concepts; Nevertheless, especially while the students are just beginning to *acquire* NT Greek, teachers should only attempt to help students learn explicit grammatical instruction well enough to provide monitor support that will aid acquisition. Only after students have *acquired* much of NT Greek and are ready to focus on formal exegesis, should class time be taken to focus on explicit grammatical terms.

Krashen and Terrell explain further that when occasions do require in-class explanations of grammar, the teacher should strive to explain in the target language as much as possible. They claim that this provides more comprehensible input exposure and also provides a good test as to whether or not the students are ready for a certain grammatical concept; if the language being used to explain the concept is too hard for the students to understand, chances are that the concept itself might be too far ahead of the learner's level of acquisition and learning should be postponed until later (Krashen and Terrell 144).

Regardless of whether or not Krashen and Terrell are correct, this same approach seems to be ineffective when applied to NT Greek for two reasons. First, the specific vocabulary necessary to explain NT Greek is simply not in the NT and not relevant to a majority of students. Having students learn a whole grouping of NT Greek vocabulary that they will never use, except on rare occasions in their beginning NT Greek classes,

and further down the road in their exegesis classes, is not very effective. Second, a large majority of current scholarship and exegetical help is not currently written in NT Greek. Therefore, in order for students to benefit from these resources later on in their exegesis classes they would have to know the grammatical terms in English as well as NT Greek. Although providing the explanations in NT Greek would provide additional comprehensible input, it does not seem to be worth the effort of teaching vocabulary that is irrelevant to the NT, their exegetical research, and everywhere else outside of class. In summary, NT Greek grammar information that will benefit acquisition through improving the language monitor should be provided in instruction for students to read in English outside of class.

Reading. Since the ultimate goal of *acquiring* NT Greek is to support the necessary reading comprehension involved in good exegesis, reading benefits exegesis by providing comprehensible input and by giving students reading comprehension practice. The benefit of reading comprehension practice is pretty basic; the more a student performs a process, the better he gets at it. This simply does not need much explanation. Therefore this section will deal only with the advantage reading has for helping students *acquire* NT Greek.

Reading is a valuable source of comprehensible input. The Input Hypothesis makes no distinction between oral input and written input. Therefore, just like oral input, reading contributes to acquisition if the message is comprehensible, the reader is focused on meaning, and if the reading contains *i + 1* input (Krashen and Terrell 131). Since, there are no native speakers of Koine/ Greek, reading is the only way authentic input can

be provided. Therefore, reading is absolutely essential to helping students *acquire* NT Greek.

Krashen and Terrell identify two essential elements to making reading beneficial. First, the selection of the text is crucial. The text must not only be appropriate to the student's vocabulary and grammatical level, but should also be a text the student finds interesting (132). Second, students must have an appropriate goal. Students should know whether they are reading for the general meaning or for perfect understanding of every clause and phrase (Krashen and Terrell 134).

First, providing appropriate NT Greek texts is slightly more challenging than providing English texts. There are three basic textual options that can be used to provide comprehensible input. First, is to provide authentic texts. This would mean giving students readings from the NT, or other authentic NT Greek writing. The biggest benefit of this is, obviously, that the students are getting exposure to what they really want to translate. The weakness of this approach is that these texts are often way too difficult for most NT Greek students to read until after at least a year of study.

The second option is to provide authentic texts with footnotes that provide vocabulary and grammar help. These types of resources would take a long time for one individual instructor to develop but fortunately, there are already such resources. One particular reader is "A Graded Reader of Biblical Greek" by William D. Mounce. Each page of this reader is divided into three sections: (1) the Greek text, mostly the NT but also a little bit of the Septuagint and other texts, (2) footnotes containing definitions of words that occur less than twenty times and hints for difficult constructions, and (3) exegetical discussions. The strength of this type of reader is that it helps Greek students

translate passages that otherwise could be frustrating for them. The biggest weakness of this reader is that it still largely focuses on the use of explicit instruction. Mounce specifically states that students are expected to first translate the passage using the footnotes and then go back and translate the passage again without the footnotes (xii). This means that the students are focusing on form first, and then meaning second. Even so, this reader could still be helpful. The best way to use this would be to give students who needed a little extra support to understand authentic texts an assignment from the reader and tell them to look for the general meaning of the passage, only referencing the footnotes when they absolutely had to. Unfortunately, this assumes that the reader knows most of the vocabulary and syntax already, thus making it inappropriate for the beginner student.

Lastly, is the use of synthetic texts. These are texts that are *made-up* or *written* by a non-native speaker. Unlike the other two texts, this type of text could be molded to fit the needs of the students. The biggest strength of this text is that it would allow students to begin comprehending at an early stage, instead of just translating. The weakness of using synthetic texts is two-fold: First, there are not many synthetic texts available in NT Greek. Therefore if reading is to be the primary source of comprehensible input, the professor would have to invest a lot of time and energy into writing NT Greek texts. The second drawback is that creating synthetic texts runs the risk of not being authentic. No matter how great a Koine/ Scholar the NT Greek professor may be, a synthetic text will never use the exact same language and constructions as the original.

Even so, these weaknesses are not sufficient reasons to abandon the pursuit of using synthetic texts as a main source of comprehensible input. Although synthetic texts

will never be truly authentic, this does not seem to matter for beginners. Synthetic texts can act as a valuable stepping stone towards helping the student eventually read the authentic texts. Some may argue that using synthetic texts runs the risk of misleading students to misinterpret the authentic texts later. In reality, slight misleading in language learning is inevitable. This is no different from the student who, under the translation method, has learned that the definite article o} directly corresponds to the English definite article *the*, thereby leading him to assert that the absence of the definite article in John 1:1 means that John is implying the existence of multiple gods. The best strategy seems to be not to avoid mistakes, but rather to allow mistakes to correct themselves as the reader progresses in his reading ability and moves from synthetic to authentic texts.

The bigger challenge to using synthetic texts is the current absence of synthetic texts sensitive to the level of beginning NT Greek students. Hopefully, as NT Greek professors begin to see the value in using modern language techniques, there will be an exponential increase in the development of synthetic Greek texts. For now, it seems that NT Greek professors would highly benefit from doing what they can to create texts for their students. This challenge, however, should not be diminished. The fact that there are so few texts makes input through other means necessary. This will be discussed further in the following listening section.

Setting goals is much easier, but just as important. When NT Greek students read these texts, whether authentic or synthetic, they will only benefit if they are looking for the right information. Krashen and Terell give four different types of reading. First, *scanning* is when a reader looks through a text for specific information. In a similar way, *skimming* involves looking through a text, only instead of looking for specific

information, the reader is looking for the main idea of the passage. Third, *extensive* reading is usually the rapid reading of large texts normally just focusing on the main ideas. This is the type of reading most people do when they read for pleasure. Lastly, *intensive* reading is when the reader tries to understand every individual detail of the entire text (134). An extreme form of intensive reading is what is done in exegesis.

Almost half a century ago, Kenneth Goodman exposed the error of the common conception that reading was a neat sequential process where students looked at each individual word in perfect order. Based on his studies, he wrote that reading was a rather *messy* guessing game, where the reader uses various linguistic clues and tests to arrive at the meaning of a sentence (126-135). This view has since become generally accepted as true (Krashen and Terrell 134-135). When readers read, their guess-making is dependent upon which type of reading they are doing. Students who are scanning are hardly reading any words, making a lot of guesses, and looking for a lot of clues. Students who are reading intensively will read every individual word, hardly ever making any guesses. This is normally the primary type of reading NT Greek students do under the grammar translation method. Unfortunately, it is the only type of reading they know how to do.

Intensive reading is definitely valuable for exegesis, but the other forms of reading have value as well. Scanning can serve to help the exegete know whether or not the author uses the same word or concept in the previous chapter. Skimming will help remind the reader of the writer's argument when he comes to a phrase that could be taken several ways and needs a good background to choose the correct one. Extensive reading is probably how the recipients of the letters and the early Christians read the NT epistles and there seems to be great value in reading the NT in the same way the early Christians

did. Although intensive reading is important, the other types of reading should also be encouraged as well.

The teacher can and should guide students in the kind of reading they do, by asking the right questions (Krashen and Terrell 137). If the teacher asks the student for a significant, yet minute detail, chances are the student will either scan or skim the text to find the answer. If the teacher asks the student to tell the plot of the story, the student will tend to read more extensively. Compare this to the type of NT Greek reading most students traditionally do under the grammar translation method. Because students are so used to doing translation, often when they are asked to read a Greek passage they immediately start parsing each word, reading extremely intensively. By asking a variety of questions about the texts, the NT Greek teacher can help students become proficient in each type of reading while providing comprehensible input, all without ever giving one bit of explicit instruction during class.

Another type of reading that has been shown to be somewhat successful for improving comprehension is called Free-Voluntary Reading (FVR). In this approach to reading, students are told to read because they want to. They do not have to answer any questions at the end of a book or give a report on what they learn. If they do not like the particular book they are reading, then they do not even have to finish it (Krashen, *Free Voluntary Reading* 1). The value of this type of reading is that it exposes the reader to comprehensible input, while the student has a low affective-filter. Krashen believes that this approach is most beneficial to beginning-intermediate learners (10).

Krashen has numerous reports on a type of FVR called Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). In SSR, students are given time to read whatever they want in class. Studies have

shown that SSR students do better than comparison students particularly in the area of vocabulary. In fifty-one out of fifty-four comparisons, students who spend time doing SSR do as well or better than other students in reading comprehension. SSR has also proven to have the same results in other languages such as Japanese and Spanish (Krashen, *Free Voluntary Reading* 1-9).

Perhaps this can be applied to NT Greek by supplying a wealth of NT Greek literature easily accessible to students outside of class. Instead of asking questions about the texts, the NT Greek professor could require the students to read for a certain amount of time. They could read any text they wanted as long as it was in NT Greek. Krashen says that both texts under the student's level and texts over the student's level are beneficial to the student (*Free Voluntary Reading* 10). The biggest factor is that the students actually want to read the texts. Therefore, the NT Greek teacher would greatly benefit from providing NT Greek literature on various linguistic levels that is interesting to the students.

Overall, reading is one of the primary ways comprehensible input should be given in NT Greek pedagogy. By helping students approach both appropriate authentic and synthetic texts through a variety of reading methods, students will not only *acquire* NT Greek, but they will also improve their reading skills. The biggest problem to this approach is the current lack of synthetic texts that could be used with beginning students.

Listening. Because of the limitation of NT Greek texts that are readily available to beginning students, listening becomes a very valuable tool in NT Greek pedagogy. If students are expected to listen and understand NT Greek, then professors can provide massive amounts of comprehensible input, in a fraction of the time it would take them to

write a synthetic text for students to read (Nunan 239). The average person speaks at a rate of 100-150 words per minute. The average double-spaced page of text contains about 250 words. Therefore, if a NT Greek professor speaks to his class for ten minutes, he is letting them interact with as much Greek as they would in four to five pages of text (Streett, "Are Aural-Oral Methods?" 5). If listening is abandoned simply because no native-speakers still exist, then NT Greek students are missing out on a wealth of potential comprehensible input.

In order to become a fluent reader of NT Greek, the student must ultimately start *thinking* in NT Greek. The paradox is that reading and translating alone are not sufficient to make one a fluent reader. The working memory has about a ten second time limit before it forgets. If the student who is trying to read a NT text spends more than a second trying to understand each word, he will forget the first part of the sentence by the time he gets to the end of the sentence and have to go back and translate the sentence over again. Therefore, in order to read fluently, the meaning of the NT Greek words must be somewhat automatic to the reader – the reader must *think* in NT Greek. This cannot be developed through reading alone (Streett, "Are Aural-Oral Methods?" 3-4).

Furthermore, adopting NT Greek word order is often tricky for native English speakers. Under the translation method, students were often encouraged to scan the text for the main verb, nominative, and accusative, and then put the various words into English word order. This keeps them from *thinking* in Greek. A better approach is to teach students to try to read the NT Greek in the order it is written. Even this is difficult, as students will be tempted to *cheat* and scan a sentence for the appropriate information.

The benefit of using listening tasks is that they force students to adopt NT Greek word order (Gruber-Miller 88), thus encouraging them to start *thinking* in NT Greek.

Besides helping language acquisition, improving listening comprehension has also been shown to help reading comprehension. There is a consistent correlation between good listening comprehension and good reading comprehension (Perfetti, Landi, and Oakhill 246). Therefore, listening tasks not only serve to aid acquisition, but also directly benefit reading comprehension.

Some may argue that expecting students to listen and understand NT Greek is unrealistic. They argue that the limitations of classroom time make it nearly impossible to provide enough input to help NT Greek speakers become good listeners. Although this objection is not an entirely accurate portrayal of the situation, it does expose the challenge of providing enough oral comprehensible input to make listening possible in a limited amount of class time. This is definitely the biggest challenge in designing NT Greek listening tasks.

This challenge can be addressed with this simple philosophy: the main goal of the classroom is maximum, optimal, oral comprehensible input. Professors will benefit from focusing specifically on giving the *maximum* amount of *oral* input possible, because reading input can be given to students outside of class. The oral input should be *optimal* in that it should be relevant to the student – information the student would be interested in learning about in his L1. Lastly, the input should be *comprehensible,* meaning that it should be able to be understood by the NT Greek students, thereby including the $i + 1$ structures.

As a practical matter this might look similar to tasks Daniel Streett has designed for his classroom. He sometimes tells Bible stories in NT Greek while using a picture book to provide extra-linguistic support. At other times, he tells stories in NT Greek and has students act out the parts and then retell the stories. His classroom will often also include communicative tasks which range from purchasing items at a market, to making a Day of Atonement sacrifice (3). The possibilities of individual tasks are endless. The best strategy seems to be for NT Greek professors to try to design tasks that provide interesting, oral input that can be comprehended by all students involved.

There is no doubt that providing the maximum optimal oral comprehensible input during class can be quite challenging for the professor, especially since many NT Greek professors have never sought to develop their own listening comprehension skills, much less their speaking skills. However, even though this is difficult, it is not impossible. Those who feel as if they will never be able to teach this way should find encouragement in the example of Daniel Streett's Chihuahua. He recounts about the unique ability of his dog:

> In the past year, my wife and I acquired a Chihuahua, whom we named Athena, and—what else?—trained in Greek. Chihuahuas are not very smart—their brains being about the size of a pea—but Athena has done well with her limited resources. Due to my wife's rigorous training, Athena now responds to "sit: ka/qou," "lay down: kata/keiso," "come: deu/ro," "eat: fa/ge," "walk: peripatei~n," "outside: e/xw," "well-done: kalw~j," "stretch: e/kteinon," "fetch/bring: fe/re," "heel: para\," "go into your crate: ei}j th\n qh/khn,"

> and my personal favorite, when she has been let outside: "ou/rhson." When I say "pau~sai" or "ouci\," Athena cowers. ("Are Aural-Oral Methods?" 5)

If a Chihuahua can do it, so can NT Greek professors. The benefit of: providing a massive amount of input, helping students adopt Greek word order and start *thinking* in Greek, and improving reading comprehension through improved listening comprehension, make listening an integral part of NT Greek pedagogy.

Speaking. Krashen is clear that speaking in and of itself does not contribute to 2LA. The main two benefits of speaking are that it can elicit comprehensible input by engaging others in conversation, and it can lower the affective filter by helping speakers feel like users of the target language (*Fundamentals of Language* 7). These reasons do not appear to be very beneficial for NT Greek. First, there are very few NT Greek speakers to engage in conversation with. Second, although teachers want the affective filter to be low, it is irrelevant whether NT Greek students feel like adequate users of NT Greek or not. Since the ultimate goal is reading comprehension, speaking seems to be unbeneficial to NT Greek pedagogy.

Furthermore, teaching speaking in the NT Greek classroom seems to distract students from relevant matters. First, teaching speaking also means teaching pronunciation. Teaching students proper pronunciation seems to waste valuable class time, where comprehensible input could be given to the students instead. Second, teaching speaking would probably be seen as a massive waste of time by many students. Most seminary students are not learning NT Greek just for fun, and unless the benefit of

speaking to NT exegesis was clearly shown, students would probably be very unwilling to exert themselves on a task they felt was useless.

However, in spite of the negative aspects of teaching speaking, Krashen's theories seem to show that as students acquire language, speaking is ultimately inevitable. Krashen hypothesizes that as students continue receiving messages in a language, they will eventually seek to produce language (Krashen and Terrell 56). Because of this, NT Greek professors should expect to hear their students start speaking on their own as they start acquiring language. For this reason, although it does not seem very beneficial for NT Greek professors to focus too much on *teaching* speaking, they might want to provide opportunities for their students to *speak* NT Greek in the classroom.

Speaking NT Greek also may greatly enhance the monitor faculty in speakers. A student who wants to say something in class in NT Greek will sometimes run his sentence through his language monitor in order to avoid being incorrect. If students are not encouraged to speak, this valuable opportunity to increase the language monitor, learning faculty that is also very valuable to exegesis, is lost. So in summary, speaking should not be taught, but it should not be avoided either. NT Greek professors would greatly benefit from waiting until their students start speaking NT Greek on their own and then, after this, provide opportunities for them to continue speaking.

Writing. In a similar way, writing also helps to greatly increase the language monitor. When students are forced to write each individual letter of a word, they are constantly using top-down processing. They start with the message they are trying to communicate and are constantly checking these with the forms that they are using.

However, writing is not like speaking in that it will gradually emerge on its own. Writing is a task that must be taught if it is to be done well.

Therefore, writing should have a somewhat limited role in NT Greek pedagogy. Its main purpose should be to evaluate students understanding of particular grammatical forms. This could be seen as taking the place of quizzes on explicit instruction. Although quizzes can cover a wider spectrum of topics, a student can understand explicit topics but still not understand exactly how to use them. Having students write sentences in NT Greek would not only help them utilize top-down processing, but would also allow professors to assess students understanding and use of certain grammatical concepts.

Exegesis. The central question remaining is if class time is spent on giving oral comprehensible input, and students are given reading both in NT Greek and in English outside of class, when will exegesis and translation be taught? Simply put, it seems that it shouldn't be, at least not in the same classes focused on acquisition. This appears to be the biggest fault of traditional methods of teaching NT Greek. These classes have tried to teach the language of NT Greek, while at the same time teaching exegesis. This strategy is highly ineffective. Students may learn proper exegetical methods, but they ultimately never learn NT Greek. Under this new approach, teachers should first focus on helping students become proficient in NT Greek, and only after they have *acquired* much of the language, proceed to teach them terms and rules relating to exegesis.

On a practical level, this might mean that for the entire first year of seminary level NT Greek students are focused only on acquiring NT Greek. During this year, they may never hear even one exegetical term. Once that year is over, they would switch from a focus on acquiring NT Greek, to a focus on exegesis. It is in these classes that they would

be introduced to all the official syntactic categories and terms. Although they might be slightly behind students studying under the traditional method who have already been introduced to these exegetical terms and processes, they will know NT Greek considerably better than *traditional* students.

Practical Proof

Latin Pedagogy

Although many of the principles are not being applied on a large scale to NT Greek, they are being applied to Latin. Looking at the effect these principles have had on the teaching of Latin is valuable considering the similar nature of Latin and Greek. They are both largely inflectional, dead languages. Many Latin teachers have seen the benefit of using Krashen-type methods in teaching Latin. In particular, Latin teachers have seen the incredible benefit of using oral communicative techniques in helping students learn Latin.

The number of organizations and support for using modern language-type communicative methods in Latin pedagogy continues to increase. Nancy Llewellyn, Associate Professor of Latin at Wyoming Catholic College, is the leading advocate of using modern language methods in Latin language teaching. She advocates using active methods, such as TPR, for the Latin classroom (Coffee 265). She does not see her work as revolutionary, but instead writes, “We are working to help restore in our own time the methodological tradition that was the norm in Europe for centuries before us – the same tradition that produced the great classicists of the Renaissance, and which, incidentally, far antedates the translation-based approach now commonly called ‘traditional’”

(Llewellyn par. 10). Her writings and presentations have influenced many Latin teachers to start considering using communicative methods (265).

Milena Minkova and Terence Tunberg are also Latin pedagogy pioneers for oral communicative methods at the University of Kentucky. Not only do they integrate oral communicative activities into their own classrooms, but they also have created an introductory textbook for Latin that utilizes oral exercises in every chapter. Professor Minkova has also written and spoken about how speaking and writing activities mutually reinforce Latin acquisition and result in improved reading fluency. Professor Turnberg advocates that oral communicative activities can be integrated with elements from the traditional translation method (Coffee 265-266). The University of Kentucky also hosts one of the most well-known annual Latin workshops, "Conventiculum Latinum." This one week-long conference is designed to help Latin learners improve their active language skills by providing an all-Latin *immersion* environment ("Conversational Latin Seminar" par. 1-5).

There are also numerous organizations designed to help teachers begin using oral communicative approaches in the classroom. The Septentrionale Americanum Latinitatis Vivae Institutum – *North American Institute for Living Latin Studies* is one of the most prominent organizations. Their mission statement reads: "SALVI's mission is to propagate communicative approaches to Latin language acquisition, making the entire Classical tradition of Western culture more available to—and enjoyable for—students, teachers, and the general public" (par. 1). On their website, they have many resources including: rationale behind using the communicative approach, podcasts in Latin, Latin

discussion groups, and Latin recordings of texts. They also host their own conferences once a year (*Septentionale Americanum Latinitatis* par. 2).

Perhaps the best evidence of the success of the communicative approach in teaching Latin is the Vivarium Novum academy founded in 1991. This school seeks to strengthen students "in the values of humanity and human dignity" by enabling them to learn Latin and Greek like a L2. They do this by allowing students only to speak either Latin or Greek (depending on which language they choose to focus on) (*Vivarium Novum Accademia,* "Our Mission" par. 1). Many scholars from all over the world have much to say in praise of this school. Francesco Peas, a professor at the University of Parma, writes that this school sets "a real milestone for the Latin of the third millennium" ("Testimonial Scholars" par. 11). Many alumni also agree that being immersed in Latin not only improved their reading and writing skills, but also helped them start to love Latin ("Testimonials Alumni" par. 1-12*)*.

The gradual shift in Latin pedagogy from the sole use of the grammar-translation method to incorporating communicative methods is not an accident. The value of oral communicative methods is founded on firm theoretical rationale and also has been repeatedly proven in the Latin classroom. Thus, Latin teachers should not be surprised if in fifty years the sole use of the traditional translation method is the exception in Latin pedagogy rather than the rule.

NT Greek Pedagogy

Although NT Greek is still waiting for a large scale shift from traditional teaching to modern language-type teaching, there are several men and institutions that are already starting to use this new method in their classrooms.

Randall Buth has designed both courses and products that teach NT Greek in a modern language type way. His textbook called "Living Koine/ Greek" is split into three parts. The first part is 228 pages long and is accompanied by about 3.5 hours of audio. It uses 1000 pictures and has an accompanying audio track to provide an immersion environment for students. All of the descriptions of the pictures are in Koine/ Greek, first starting with simple words, and eventually progressing to full stories. The second and third parts are slightly shorter but feature more audio material. The audio material includes substitution drills, vocabulary introduction, dialogs, and readings. They also feature multiples chapters of dialogues which augment various NT parables. Buth's website also features a book on Greek morphology designed for those who want to write and speak in NT Greek, an extra-Biblical text featuring two conversations "Against the Academics" and "On Familial Love," and an audio cd of the Epistles and Gospel of John ("Koine/ Greek Books" par. 2-12).

Since 1996, Buth has been teaching NT Geek through immersion at the Biblical Language Center. His philosophy is driven by many of the principles discussed in this paper. He believes that audio and oral internalization of NT Greek is necessary in order to enhance reading comprehension, speed, and long-term retention. His website says, "One cannot fluently read the Bible in its original languages, without those very languages living inside of them" ("Methodology" par. 2). More than 90% of classroom time is filled with spoken NT Greek. TPR and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) are both used in the classroom and the Living Koine/ Greek textbooks are used outside of class for review ("Methodology" par. 3-11).

Sebastian Carnazzo has taken Randall Buth's method of teaching NT Greek and put it in an online format. He states on his website that even for those who simply want to read, it is essential that they first listen and understand. His courses use Randall Buth's "Living Koine/ Greek" textbook and also use web-conferencing software that allow participants to interact in TPRS online (*The Academy of Classical Languages* par. 1-2).

Carnazzo is not alone in his attempt to teach NT Greek in an online format. John Schandt is the founder of the "Institute of Biblical Greek" online. He offers a fluency course that not only teaches the traditional grammatical terms, but also seeks to help student begin *thinking* in NT Greek. The course features live meetings where students interact with the professor and the professor even has live online office hours where students can ask him questions. It uses the Oxford textbook "Athenaze" which is a story-driven text. It has a webpage for each lesson that features a vocabulary list with pronunciation, as well as pictures for many of the vocabulary words. Best of all, this course allows users to work at their own pace (Schandt, YouTube vid.).

Daniel Streett, who has already been mentioned several times, has also been using modern language methods in his NT Greek classes at Cornell University. He follows a topical syllabus, utilizes TPR and TPRS, and ultimately sets *fluency* in NT Greek as the main goal of his classes (although I think that by the term *fluency* – the speed or rate of production; he really means *competency* – the ability to communicate). He even advocates the creation of NT Greek houses where students are immersed in NT Greek. He is currently one of the most vocal advocates of the benefits of applying modern language techniques to the teaching of NT Greek ("Are Aural-Oral Methods" 4-7).

Christophe Rico has created what is the perhaps the most developed NT Greek textbook and course. His textbook is entitled "Polis: Speaking Ancient Greek as a Living Language." The textbook uses synthetic texts as well as authentic texts. Every lesson features two or three of these texts illustrated with many drawings to provide extra-linguistic support. The textbook also uses the same eleven created characters in their synthetic texts. These characters each have strong defining personalities and since they remain the same throughout the book, they create a context to help readers understand difficult texts. The book is accompanied by an audio cd, and students are encouraged to listen to the texts three or four times before they attempt to read it ("The Polis Method" par. 1-9).

Rico teaches at "The Jerusalem Institute of Language and Humanities." He uses modern language techniques such as TPR, TPRS, and others that feature a constant communicative exchange. The goal is that at the end of four semesters, students are able to *think* in NT Greek and are able to read NT Greek literature without needing the constant help of a dictionary. The institute also offers intensive summer courses that are the equivalent to two normal semesters of NT Greek (*Polis: The Jerusalem Institute* par. 1-5).

People who have studied under such methods consistently have three comments about this method. First, they claim that treating the Biblical languages as modern languages enables them to retain them long after class ends. They actually use it after they stop taking the course. Second, people are surprised with how fast they learn the language itself. Third, people always say that learning this way is much more fun than the traditional way ("What People Are Saying" par. 1-27).

These men and what they are doing are real life examples of the benefits of teaching NT Greek with a focus on *acquisition.* Although skeptics may be able to refute Krashen's theories and their applications, the success of the practical applications of these theories is irrefutable. Each of these NT Greek teachers is a leader at the forefront of what should eventually become a shift from traditional NT Greek pedagogy, to a new type of pedagogy that seeks to help students *acquire* NT Greek.

Conclusion

The Church is only as strong as its proper understanding of God's Word. In order to understand a NT text, *learning* NT Greek is not enough. One must also *acquire* the language. Krashen's theories and their respective applications show that in order to do this, a radical change in NT Greek pedagogy must take place. Many people have already made similar changes to Latin pedagogy, and a few have even started applying these changes to NT Greek. These changes have always fostered encouraging results, and 2LA data explains that this is not an accident. Despite the significant 2LA evidence, a widespread pedagogical reform has still yet to occur. If seminaries and Bible colleges are to do the best possible job of training men and women to handle God's Word, they must follow after the example of these ruffian NT Greek teachers, and make significant changes.

Notice what *is* and *is not* the single biggest inhibitor to incorporating these changes into the NT Greek pedagogy currently in American Bible colleges and seminaries. Many criticize this new type of approach for being ungrounded in research and give the excuse that this approach must first be supported by a firm theoretical foundation before being implemented. They often condemn this approach, because they

assume that it is designed to promote fun, and therefore, does not contribute to exegesis. This perspective, though wrong, is understandable. Performing TPR activities in which the professor is ordering the students all around the room in NT Greek does not feel nearly as academic and professional as the traditional approach. However, over forty years' worth of research in 2LA show that this new approach should actually encourage much better exegesis than the traditional approach. Furthermore, there has been several people who have confirmed these theories in the classroom already. Therefore, lack of a firm theoretical groundwork simply *is not* a good reason for refusing to make changes to current pedagogy.

The single biggest inhibitor to a NT Greek acquisition approach seems to be familiarity with the traditional method, and the fear of changing to another method that is so different. Some seminary professors have taught NT Greek according to the traditional method for multiple decades. It is understandable that such a drastic change in methodology and practice would meet severe opposition. Is there any hope that these professors might one day be able to teach according to this new method? There certainly is, but this would require that professors be sufficiently convinced that the benefits of making this necessary shift are worthwhile.

Seminary professors must first see the problem with current pedagogy. Perhaps surveys could be done that examined how regularly seminary graduates used their Greek exegesis knowledge in the pastorate. This is essential. If professors are convinced their own methods are somewhat inadequate, they will be much more inclined to seriously consider incorporating new methods into their own teaching.

After this, seminary professors would need to be educated on the distinction between learning and acquisition. Perhaps a study could be done about how the translation method specifically relates to acquisition – “Does it promote any acquisition at all?” This would explain theoretically why the traditional method is inadequate.

Likewise, seminary professors should be able to clearly see the benefits of this new pedagogy from a theoretical side. They should be able to understand the implications Krashen’s theories have on NT Greek pedagogy. One resource that would be beneficial to this task would be a work that explains in simple terms many empirical case studies in 2LA and their relevance to NT Greek pedagogy. Krashen has done this several times for English, and these books are great resources for the ESL professor doubting the theoretical validity of what he is doing. This type of book could serve the same purpose for NT Greek.

Fourth, resources would need to be made available that linked the theoretical with the practical. In order for these resources to be successful, they must go further than merely drawing connections between theory and general application. What is really needed is resources that will include specific types of exercises for NT Greek professors to use with their classes. Krashen and others have published a plethora of works that have done this for ESL teachers. To a certain extent, this is already happening with the various textbooks previously mentioned that are based on 2LA theories. Still many more resources need to be developed if a widespread reform is to take place.

Lastly, seminary professors must continually see that these new methods actually work. This would require testimonies of the success of these methods to be readily available, preferably in academic journals. This would not only provide real-world proof

of how these theories work, but also would give more insight into how to practically apply these theories in the classroom by allowing professors to see what specific activities others are using. Hopefully this stage would only be necessary for the first few years, after which professors would no longer need to read others' success stories because they would already have their own.

Although the changes that must be made are radical, making them is not impossible. With the right education and evidence, professors of NT Greek will be able to start making these changes in their own classroom. As this happens, it will most likely not only lead to an improved competency in NT Greek, but also an improved competency in exegeting God's precious Word.

The armies at New Orleans fought an unnecessary battle in 1812 because of their inability to receive a certain piece of information in time. How much more ridiculous would this situation have been if the information had arrived that the war was over, yet both generals had refused to believe this? Today, NT Greek students are fighting an unnecessary battle and the information to save them has been made readily available. Case studies, theories, and practical examples all show that NT Greek can be taught in a much more effective way. Will the world of NT Greek pedagogy listen?

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