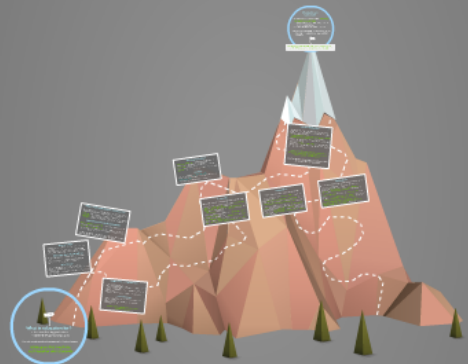


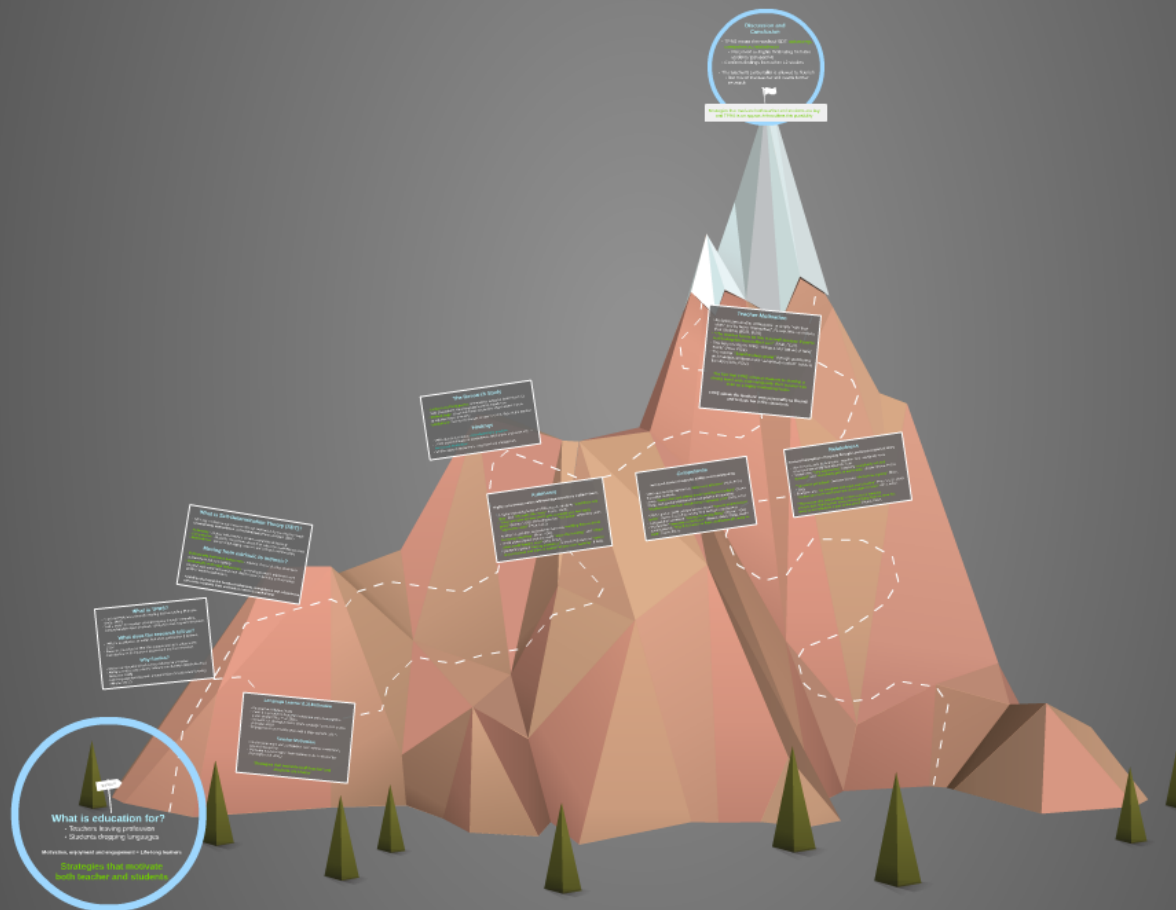
The motivational pull of storytelling

Creating self-determined learners



The motivational pull of storytelling

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What is education for?

- Teachers leaving profession
- Students dropping languages

Motivation, enjoyment and engagement = Life-long learners

**Strategies that motivate
both teacher and students**

Language Learner (L2) Motivation

- Focused on individual traits
- How L2 motivation is fostered, maintained and encouraged is under-studied (Boo et al. 2015)
- Research on strategies that motivate language learners is scarce (Dörnyei, 2010)
- Engagement has recently been added (Oga-Baldwin, 2017)

Teacher Motivation

- Student enjoyment and participation over extrinsic rewards like pay and recognition
- Motivated teachers inspire their students to be motivated too (Kassagby et al. 2001)

Strategies that motivate both teacher and students are crucial

What is TPRS?

- Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (Ray and Seely, 1997)
- 'Ask a story': Co-creation of bizarre stories through 'compelling, comprehensible input' (Krashen, 1981) with most frequent structures.

What does the research tell us?

- TPRS is as effective, or better, than other approaches (Lichtman, 2015)
- Reduces the 'affective filter' that causes anxiety in adolescents
- Few studies on its impact on student and teacher motivation

Why Stories?

- Stories as educational tool across cultures for centuries
- Ability to hold young learners' interest and attention (Machado 2012; McMaster 1998)
- Aids language learning and comprehension through intent listening (Whaley, 2002).



What is Self-Determination Theory (SDT)?

- SDT argues that we can increase intrinsic motivation by meeting the needs of **autonomy**, **competence** and **relatedness** (Ryan and Deci, 2000)
- **Autonomy** - choice; self-direction; student ownership of learning
- **Competence** - students' perceptions about their capacity to achieve success
- **Relatedness** - sense of belonging, support and inclusion; relationships

Moving from extrinsic to intrinsic?

- **Extrinsically motivated behaviours** - rewards; fear or shame; short-term achievement but no longevity
- **Intrinsically motivated behaviours** - pure engagement, enjoyment and interest; increased self-confidence, desire towards learning and sustained positive learning behaviours
- **Activities that meet the needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness can move students from extrinsic to intrinsic motivations**

The Research Study

- **Context and Participants:** International school in Switzerland; 13 Year 10 students; Vast language learning experience
- **Methodology:** Group interview; Classroom observations; Focus group interviews; 3 months
- **Limitations:** New to my classes or new to TPRS; Role of the teacher

Findings

- TPRS was perceived as **overwhelmingly positive**
- TPRS satisfied needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy -> **Increased motivation**
- Visible signs of excitement, enjoyment and engagement

Autonomy

Highly autonomous nature acknowledged positively multiple times.

- A highly motivating factor of TPRS was the ability to “**contribute any idea**” and “**it'll make this story**” (Kevin, FGI2).
- “**when you give an idea and it gets accepted you feel really good**” (Donna, FGI2), while others also “**felt better**” when they could “**add to the class**” (Prue, FGI1).
- In other FL activities students felt there was “**nothing they could do to change anything**” (Prue, FGI2).
- TPRS stories meant students could “**steer the learning**” and “**effect what would happen next**” (Amy, FGI2).
- Students reported “**feeling motivated**” in the TPRS class as “**you're more involved and more in control of your own learning**” (FGI1).

Competence

Increased sense of capacity, ability and understanding

- TPRS was broadly reported as **“way more effective”** (Matt, FGI1) than other methods.
- It was **“better than just sitting down learning vocabulary”** (Diana, FGI1), as it greatly improved their competence for speaking.
- **“I believe that through storytelling I improved a lot”** (Amy, FGI1)
- TPRS’s goal of 100% comprehension meant **“you do understand it better”** (Gwen, FGI2) thus raising their feelings of proficiency
- It erased their anxiety of **“saying the wrong thing”** (Steven, FGI2)
- The fact that **“everyone contributes”** (Steven, Aidan; FGI1), meant participants felt **“they’ll be heard so their confidence will really be built”** (Kevin, FGI1).

Relatedness

Sense of belonging to the group through combined creation of story

- Use of words such as 'everyone', 'together' and 'everybody' were employed repeatedly throughout the data
 - Stories were **“very extroverted”** meaning **“everybody will feel included”** and **“everybody gets to participate”** (Kevin; Donna, FGI1).
 - **“You don’t get judged”** because you are **“doing it as a group”** (Prue, FGI2).
 - Everyone was **“so energetic and open and talkative”** (Prue, FGI2), which **“makes you more motivated and more eager to learn”** (Orla, FGI1).
- “The reason why [storytelling] is less scary is because everybody's sharing their ideas and modifying them to form the story so everybody is a part of the story”** (Aidan, FGI2)

Teacher Motivation

- By being personable, enthusiastic or simply “with their vibes” and by being “themselves”, FL teachers can inspire their students (BGI1, BGI2)
- **“The teacher has to be into it as well because if you're not having fun then neither am I”** (Matt, FGI1).
- Teachers are key in TPRS - things could “get out of hand easily” (Prue, FGI1).
- The teacher **“kept the ideas going”** through questioning and maintained interest with “completely random” twists to the story (Amy, FGI1).

The fact that TPRS allowed students to develop a strong bond and relationship with their teacher was seen as a highly motivating factor.

TPRS allows the teachers' own personality to flourish and to have fun in the classroom.

Discussion and Conclusion

- TPRS meets the needs of SDT: **autonomy, competence, relatedness**
 - Perceived as highly motivating from the students' perspective
- Confirms findings from other L2 studies
- The teacher's personality is allowed to flourish
 - But role of the teacher still needs further research



Strategies that motivate both teacher and students are key and TPRS is an approach that offers this possibility

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