

Glossary of Terms Used in TPR Storytelling

affective filter:

The affective filter is the level of intimidation that a student feels in a classroom. It is known to affect the students' ability and willingness to learn. The goal of a TPR Storytelling classroom is to **lower** the affective filter so that students are not afraid to use the language.

silent period:

One of the best ways to lower the affective filter is to allow students the time they need between being exposed to language and being asked to produce it. The TPR kinesthetic responses to vocabulary play a vital role in providing that silent period because they provide students a means of proving comprehension without having to speak before they are ready to do so. One of the tenets of TPR Storytelling and of The Natural Approach is to refrain from forcing students to produce oral language, but instead wait for it to emerge naturally and spontaneously.

acquisition:

Acquisition is the natural process of "picking up" a language through communicative situations in the same way that children acquire their first language in the context of their family and caregivers. *Acquiring* a language is different from *learning* a language which refers to "knowing the rules" and "having a conscious knowledge" about the language and its grammar. Grammar-based classes focus on the rules of the language. The end result is a higher affective filter because students fear making grammatical errors. In contrast, TPR Storytelling and The Natural Approach focus on acquisition of the language. Students don't fear making grammatical errors because the focus of the class is on the message. Therefore it is imperative that teachers **not** correct grammatical errors. Teachers **model** grammatically correct language, but student evaluation is based on comprehension and production of messages; can the student understand the teacher and can the teacher understand the student? If so, the primary goals of an acquisition class have been met.

comprehensible input:

Comprehensible input is language presented to the student in such a way that the student can understand without the need of translation. Input can be made comprehensible by using language in conjunction with drama, picture files, context, gestures, cues, etc.—anything that will make the language immediately understandable to the listener. Students do not have to understand every word that a teacher uses. If students comprehend the gist of the message, the teacher has provided comprehensible input.