

TCL

TEACHING CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

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In This Issue:

Veni, Vidi, Vicipaedia:
Using The
Latin Wikipedia In An
Advanced Latin Classroom



Quomodo Dicitur?
The Importance Of Memory
In Language Learning



Latin At The
Middle School Level:
Who Are Our Students?
How Do We Reach Them?

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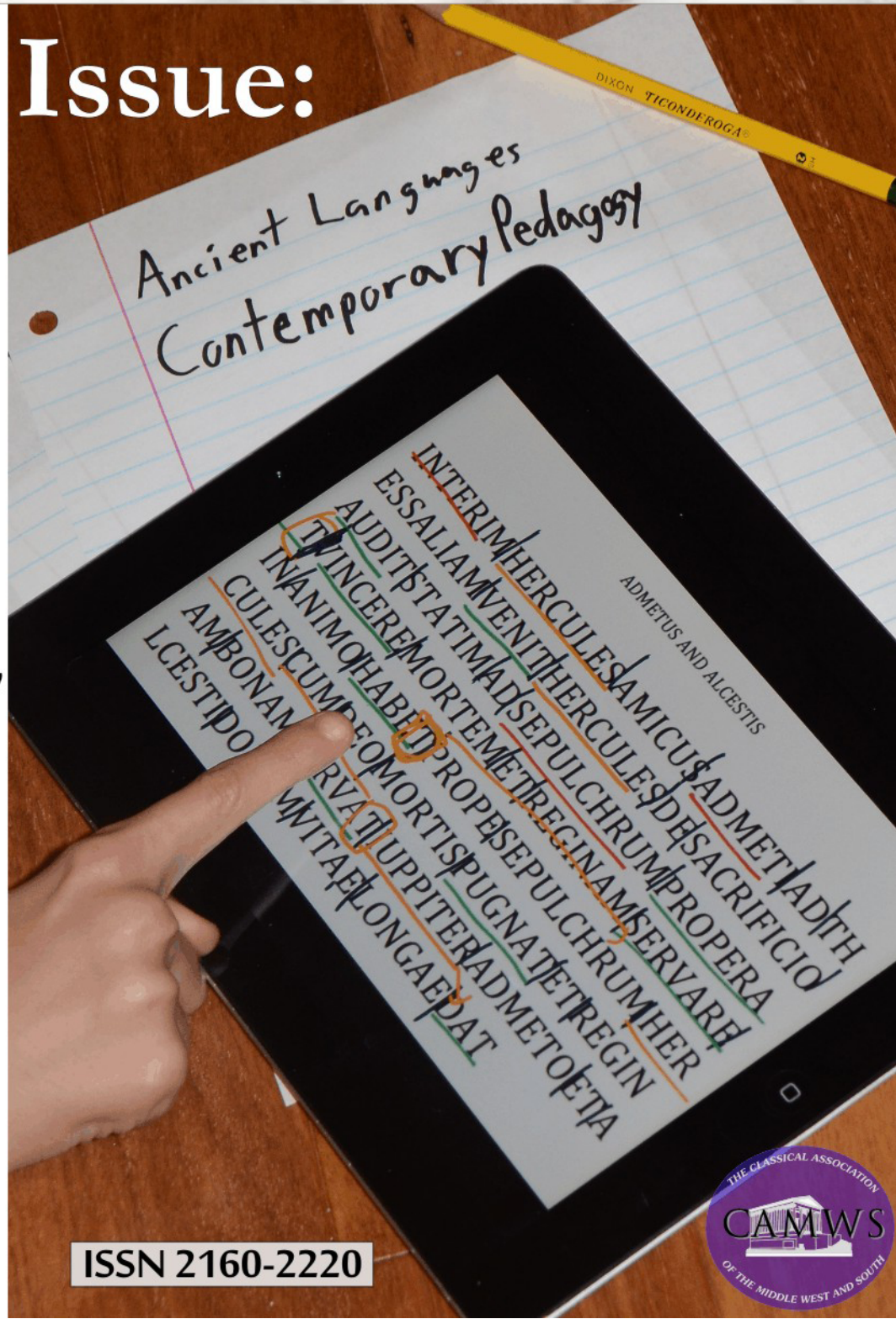


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***Teaching Classical Languages* Mission Statement**

Teaching Classical Languages (ISSN 2160-2220) is the only peer-reviewed electronic journal dedicated to the teaching and learning of Latin and ancient Greek. It addresses the interests of all Latin and Greek teachers, graduate students, coordinators, and administrators. *Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek. As an electronic journal, *Teaching Classical Languages* has a unique global outreach. It offers authors and readers a multimedia format that more fully illustrates the topics discussed, and provides hypermedia links to related information and websites. Articles not only contribute to successful Latin and Greek pedagogy, but draw on relevant literature in language education, applied linguistics, and second language acquisition for an ongoing dialogue with modern language educators.

Letter from the Editor

Four Principles of Effective Language Teaching

John Gruber-Miller
Cornell College

Picture these typical language classroom scenarios: Students are laughing at a story they just heard. They are quietly sitting at their desks filling out a worksheet. Students are paired up doing a mutual dictation. They are busily answering questions aloud about a story they just read. Students are asking each other about what they did last night? How would you determine that these activities are effective? What are some ways you could determine if student learning had been maximized?

In “Stack the Deck in favor of your Students by Using the Four Aces of Effective Learning,” the authors Bulger, Mohr, and Walls—none of them language teachers—point to four principles that teachers can adopt to enhance student learning: outcomes, clarity, engagement, and enthusiasm. So how might these four principles be enacted in a language classroom, from beginning to advanced?

Outcomes is one of those words that educators like to use a lot, but what does the term really mean? One way to explain the term is to say that an outcome is what I want my students to be capable of doing at a certain stage of learning. ACTFL and the new World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (and soon the revised Standards for Classical Language Learning) specifically include “Can-Do” Statements for each level of language proficiency. For example, students at the Novice High level can “write about a familiar experience or event using practiced material.” But these outcomes are much broader than what students might be able to do by the end of a class session or the end of a unit.

For a lesson to be effective, we need to set smaller goals and then articulate them to the students. For example, “at the end of the unit, students will be able to describe a visit to a Roman bathhouse.” In preparing students for that writing assignment, they will have studied a plan of a Roman bath, seen pictures of Roman baths and their decorations, learned about Roman bath culture, reviewed prepositions of coming and going, worked with verbs that describe typical actions at a bath (entering and exiting rooms, exercising, sitting, sweating, conversing, etc.), and practiced related expressions in a number of ways. In outlining such a unit, it would be useful for students to see and hear what steps they will be taking to reach

that goal, what they “can do,” and understand how language, culture, architecture, time and space intersect in describing a visit to the baths.

Clarity is a term that we may connect with writing rather than language teaching, but it has everything to do with a successful learning experience for your students. It is correct, but perhaps too easy, to define clarity as a good explanation of a new grammatical concept or reading strategy. But a single explanation might not be enough for students to fully grasp the new concept. Clarity means offering students multiple avenues for understanding how a new sound or strategy or concept works in a communicative context. For example, when introducing new sounds in the language, Hill, Crown, and Leach argue in “Latin at the Middle School Level” that it makes sense to see the building blocks that compose a word, for learners to focus on individual phonemes before progressing to how the sounds come together to form a word.

Clarity also means providing a framework or scaffold on which to hang the new idea. Such a scaffold helps language learners organize this new knowledge and remember it. This is what Jacqui Carlon in “Quomodo Dicitur: The Importance of Memory in Language Learning” means by “contextualized word knowledge,” knowing what collocations or other words are frequently found with them. In short, clarity means breaking down a concept into its parts, connecting a new concept to a known framework, and building up the meaning through many different activities.

Engagement in learning is a lot like being engaged to get married. The two lovebirds share their ideas, work together on common tasks, enjoy spending time together, and sometimes struggle to reach consensus. In the classroom, Latin students learn best by doing, by testing hypotheses, by applying their knowledge to new situations. Learning is a two way experience. The teacher sets up opportunities to introduce new concepts to students and provides meaningful tasks that involve communication, not just rote practice. The students respond by using the language productively, communicating ideas, exploring relationships, and solving problems. Engagement is what Jacqui Carlon means when she argues that “active involvement is vastly more effective in fostering long-term [vocabulary] retention than passive reception.” In learning vocabulary, this means recycling vocabulary in all four modes (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and elaborating word knowledge through the study of derivatives, semantic mapping, synonyms and antonyms, and collocations. Engagement, moreover, is what David Oosterhuis in “Veni, Vidi, Vi-capedia: Using the Latin Wikipedia in an Advanced Latin Classroom” asked of his

students when they were expected to compose Latin that could be understood by a larger community of readers on Vicapaedia.

Finally, enthusiasm is often overlooked as a key for deep learning. Teachers who have taught a particular grammatical point or reading passage a dozen times or more or who may be struggling with extra-classroom challenges might see their enthusiasm flag when they get to teach their least favorite text or difficult grammar point yet again. One way to maintain enthusiasm is what Dave Oosterhuis did when he designed a new assignment, one that would challenge him and his students to learn a new digital resource and to communicate with a broader Latin reading community. Another is to push oneself to try to use more Latin in the classroom with one's students, perhaps describing a picture in Latin or retelling a familiar passage from a new point of view or translating a beloved children's story into Latin. Enthusiasm is contagious, and the confidence and sense of playfulness that a teacher models translates into increased student motivation and learning.

So to return to the beginning of this essay. If you are observing a colleague's classroom or your own, how can you tell if the four principles of effective learning are in fact happening? If the students are laughing because they are grasping the meaning, if the students filling out a worksheet are preparing to follow up and do a more communicative activity, if the students doing the mutual dictation or answering questions about a passage are truly listening to each other and paying attention to the meaning of the text, if the students asking and answering questions about what they did last night are doing it in Latin, then they understand the learning outcomes and realizing what they "Can Do," they are gaining clarity and connecting new ideas to familiar ones through scaffolding, they are engaged and involved in meaningful communication, and they are developing a sense of confidence as language learners.

The three articles in this issue exemplify what *Teaching Classical Languages* does best. The articles address a wide range of learners from middle school to advanced college students and explore the role of memory, sound, context, and purpose in crafting activities and assignments. The first by Jacqui Carlon, "Quomodo Dicitur: The Importance of Memory in Language Learning," reviews the literature on the role of memory—both working memory and long-term memory—in learning Latin. She not only defines the key terms, but also presents the major takeaways for language teachers. Finally, in an appendix she offers practical activities to enhance memory through meaningful communicative activities.

The second is a collaborative effort by researcher Barbara Hill, long-time middle school teacher Rickie Crown, and Baker Demonstration School middle school teacher Tyler Leach. Their article, “Latin at the Middle School Level: Who are our students? How do we reach them?” helps teachers understand the cognitive and developmental issues that middle school learners face while emphasizing the importance of phonemic and morphological awareness and breaking Latin words and sentences into their constituent parts. Throughout the article, readers will find a wealth of successful classroom activities.

The final article by Dave Oosterhuis, “Veni, Vidi, Vicapaedia: Using the Latin Wikipedia in an Advanced Latin Classroom,” takes us on a journey through the process of developing an online project that involves research, writing in Latin, and explaining the contents and significance of Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura*. In the process, students become members of a larger Latin community and fulfill not only the Communications Goal but also the Communities Goal of the Standards for Classical Language Learning. In short, even though each article has a different target audience, reading all three will help teachers be more sensitive to learner needs and capabilities at different stages of the language learning process and offer creative ways to help students progress from novice to advanced Latinists. You can find these articles and more at tcl.camws.org.

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Bulger, Sean M., Derek J. Mohr, and Richard T. Walls. “Stack the Deck in favor of your Students by Using the Four Aces of Effective Learning.” *Journal of Effective Teaching* 5.2 (2002). Web. <<http://www.uncw.edu/jet/articles/bulger/>>.

Teaching Classical Languages welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek.

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<http://www.tcl.camws.org/guidelines.pdf>.

***Quomodo Dicitur?* The Importance of Memory in Language Learning**

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ABSTRACT

Second language acquisition (SLA) research results have substantially transformed the way languages are taught in the classroom, with a significant shift away from rote learning toward the creation of a communicative classroom environment. Yet communication is impossible without lexical and morphological competency. SLA researchers have begun to investigate the role of working memory in language acquisition, a field largely left previously to cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists. Much of SLA research in this area thus far has focused on the learning of English as a second language, but the findings have clear implications for the Latin classroom. This article provides a survey of recent research results, particularly as they pertain to learning vocabulary, and offers some ways in which Latin instructors can modify their pedagogy in order to optimize for their students both the acquisition and the retention of vocabulary. Also included are some activities with which teachers may begin to incorporate learning strategies that have proven to be effective.

KEYWORDS

memorization, vocabulary, SLA, working memory, teaching strategies

Memorization used to be standard fare in the classroom. From multiplication tables to speeches from Shakespeare, most of the baby-boom generation had regular experience committing pieces or chunks of information to memory. Indeed, more than twenty years ago my high school students had to memorize the opening lines of the *Bellum Gallicum*, if for no other reason, I told them, than that when they were at a cocktail party and confessed to years of Latin study, they would have an impressive response when asked to say something in Latin. They also were expected to memorize lists of vocabulary and, of course, their paradigms. But, while most of them were quite good at memorizing vocabulary for a quiz, they could not remember it for the test a week later; and while they had their declensions and conjugations nailed, they did not recognize the endings in textual context, freed from the structure of the paradigm.

In the modern (as opposed to ancient) language classroom, memorization used to play an even greater role. The audio-lingual method was in vogue in the United States in the 1960s, and each student took a vinyl record home after school to listen to and memorize a dialogue. Such an approach is still in use in other parts of the world—particularly in China¹—and, while scoffed at for decades for focusing too heavily on situational discourse rather than real communicative skill, recent research demonstrates that memorization (as opposed to incidental acquisition of vocabulary and syntax) can and should play a role in the language classroom, as discussed in depth below (see Appendix for Suggested Activities).²

The strong push for the communicative classroom largely forestalled research into the role of memory in language learning among Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers until the early 1990s,³ and I daresay memorization remains a dirty word, avoided by most Applied Linguistics scholars. Instead, researchers now favor the term ‘deliberate learning,’ no doubt to distinguish the approach from the rote learning so favored in the middle of the 20th century.⁴ Encouraged in part by and generally relying on the results of cognitive science research, particularly concerning working memory, a substantial number of researchers have turned to examine the role of memory in SLA, particularly in the acquisition of vocabulary.

1 See particularly Chang Zonglin, whose article offers a consideration of the seismic shift in English language instructional approaches in China away from grammar-translation to audio-lingual and communicative methods.

2 O’Malley and Chamot rightly point out that the audio-lingual approach to language instruction focuses on grammatical accuracy rather than communication (31-32). Student learning consists of conditioned response to specific input in set social situations, e.g. ordering food at a restaurant or buying a ticket at the train station.

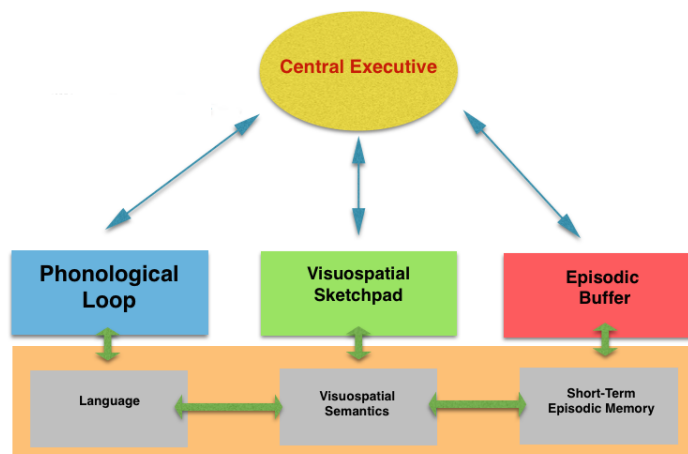
3 For a concise summary and extensive bibliography of research on the acquisition of vocabulary, see Laufer 2009.

4 As early as 1959 in his review of a book by B.F. Skinner, Noam Chomsky railed against the memorization of dialogue, a method advocated by behaviorists, who defined language learning as the result of stimulus and response. In a 1966 address to the Northeast Conference for the Teaching of Foreign Languages, republished in a 2002 collected volume of his papers, Chomsky remarked, “Language is not a habit structure. Ordinary linguistic behavior characteristically involves innovation, formation of new sentences and patterns in accordance with rules of great abstractness and intricacy” (349).

TYPES OF MEMORY

Before considering empirical results from SLA investigations, let me first briefly describe the various types of memory as determined by cognitive science researchers:⁵

1) Working memory (WM): this used to be incorrectly called short-term memory, but it is vastly more than a time-limited storage facility. Indeed it is limited by both time and capacity, but rather than merely storing, it is a processing center that can deal with between five and nine pieces of information at one time, and, in the most widely used model, first conceptualized in 1974 by Alan Baddeley and Graham Hitch, it consists of three parts: the phonological loop, in which the content and sequence of input is memorized; the visual-spatial sketchpad, which creates an image or plan of what our senses perceive; and a supervisory attentional system (SAS), the central executive, that controls which of these two subsystems will store new information.⁶ In 2000, in response to test results that showed adequate first language ability in subjects with deficits in the phonological loop, Baddeley modified his model adding a fourth component, also subject to the SAS, called the episodic buffer, which has the ability to access both short and long term memory and to retain



Source: loopa.co.uk

⁵ The mostly friendly introduction that I have found to these concepts is Baddeley (2004).

⁶ Randall offers a clear explanation of Baddeley and Hitch's model as well as a useful introduction to the cognitive framework in which languages are learned (5-30). The field of cognitive science is difficult for the non-specialist, often jargon-filled. But Randall provides an accessible introduction to research results that are the most salient to language instruction.

and reuse information. Given its recent addition to the model, episodic memory is largely untested.⁷

2) Long-term memory (LTM): while WM is a conscious process—the mind is actively considering some kind of sensory input—LTM is a subconscious process, which is even more complex than WM, as not all long-term memories are actually retained for the long term. Though not at all well understood, duration of retention seems to depend on how many links are made between the new entry when it arrives and items already present in LTM, as well as its regular retrieval and reactivation (Randall 126-130).

LTM consists of: declarative memory that we can consciously access—things like words, facts or numbers, and memories of past events; and procedural memory—skills we have gained from experience but whose procedural steps are opaque to us, e.g. tying shoelaces, an action that we can complete without any conscious thought but that seems amazingly complicated when we have to explain it to a five-year old. This latter type, procedural memory, is what allows us to speak automatically and with fluidity, with little conscious attention to the process.⁸

LTM's role in language learning is largely unresearched, likely because longitudinal studies are extremely difficult to design and carry through. However, many factors that seem to enhance the retention of information in LTM are particularly pertinent to language learning: the repetition of information; the personalization of the material—that is how much the student relates to it; the chunking of lexical units with the result that meaningful phrases are stored in the same way as words; the number of associations made between new material and material already stored; the provision of context for the new item; affective factors (things that prompt the learner's emotions); physicality (the connection of memory to movement); and conscious decision making about the relevance or place of the new material (Bilbrough 43-44).

In language learning, the WM needs to offload pieces of comprehended language into LTM in order to consider the next chunks. There is an encoding process by which it looks for links in LTM for the purpose of storage and retrieval. One

7 Juffs & Harrington remark that (at the time of their writing) no SLA research had investigated the role of episodic memory (140). Other models represent working memory as an activated part of long-term memory; see discussions in Sagarra, 2, and Wen, 2-4.

8 Automaticity is understandably critical to fluency in a language. Segalowitz notes its characteristics: fast in processing, unstoppable (i.e. an utterance once begun simply pours forth), load independent (i.e. the quantity of information needing to be processed is irrelevant), effortless, and unconscious (382-391).

important limitation for second language learners is that retrieval of information stored in LTM often requires much more participation of the WM than for their first language.⁹ The second language learner cannot rely on automaticity, particularly in the early years of study.

Peter Skehan remarks unsurprisingly that a good memory is one of the key features of language aptitude—along with the ability to recognize patterns and strong auditory skills (234-5). I would argue that memory is the most important of these, particularly with respect to vocabulary; without lexical items there is no language and no possibility for either comprehension or production. Other researchers have determined that we speak our native languages with fluency only because we are able to piece together sentences on the fly—improvisationally—from memorized chunks of meaningful language, leading one of them to remark that we are “much less original in using language than we like to believe.”¹⁰ Thus memorization and retention of words and phrases is crucial to proficiency.

SLA RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF WORKING MEMORY

Let us move now to specific SLA research on the role of various kinds of memory in language learning, most of which has been focused on the role of WM in acquiring and retaining new vocabulary. Of the various aspects of WM, the phonological loop or phonological working memory (PWM) has been the focus, because it appears to be the chief mechanism for processing language and memorizing information.¹¹ PWM, itself, has several distinct functions: holding content, maintaining the sequence of the content, and rehearsing the content sub-vocally. All three functions are easily demonstrated when we need to retain information for the short term—e.g. a telephone number or street address. Retention is profoundly affected by the number of phonemes required for the task and by the capacity of the learner’s WM—the longer the sequence, the more difficult it is to master.¹² The limited capacity

9 Randall Chap. 6. Robinson notes that new information is rehearsed in WM, which encodes the input for storage in LTM; it also plays a crucial role in retrieval of information (631).

10 Lewis 11; he continues, “Much of what we say, and a significant portion of what we write, consists of prefabricated multi-word items.”

11 Although aptitude in second language learners is poorly understood, there is general consensus that the capacity of a learner’s WM and particularly of PWM is crucial for early learning (Juffs & Harrington 138).

12 Williams 437-438; he advises instructors to be sensitive to the varying WM capacities of their students, as well as variation in their attentional systems, and to pay particular attention to what a task demands of PWM.

of WM governs the way in which it can be explored, with most studies investigating how single words are processed and stored. One important caveat regarding the research discussed below: virtually all of the studies focus on learners of English as a second language (ESL). English has a larger lexicon (perhaps 1,000,000 words) and more idioms (at least 25,000) by far than any other language, and so students of English need to know many more words/phrases in order to speak or read fluently (Pellicer-Sánchez 2). Thus, projections of how many words or word families an ESL student needs to command in order to function at an intermediate or advanced level have little relevance for the study of Latin, whose lexicon and figurative language are vastly smaller. Yet much of SLA research on WM has clear and enlightening implications for the Latin classroom.

Encountering New Vocabulary

Of primary concern to SLA researchers in the last twenty years has been investigating the source of new vocabulary. Comprehensible input (CI) in communicative environments has long been accepted as an ideal conduit for acquiring lexical items. Immersion settings that flood the learner with language in compelling interaction with native speakers make understanding and communicating imperative and are thus profoundly effective in prompting acquisition.¹³ But few language students have the benefit of a full immersion experience; their learning instead must rely on perhaps five hours of classroom time for forty weeks a year—not enough contact with the language for even the best student to acquire sufficient vocabulary to read or speak fluently. Lexical sources beyond communicative interaction must be tapped in order to expand the learner's internal resources.

- 1) There is strong evidence that reading is a profoundly effective way for learners to acquire new vocabulary in their first language. Unfortunately, the same results are not evident for second language learners. A number of studies have shown that a reader needs to know at least 95% of the words in a text in order to infer the meaning of unknown vocabulary (Gu 2015: 5). The most recent SLA research results indicate that this percentage is too low, indeed that

¹³ Stephen Krashen's five hypotheses (input, acquisition-learning, monitor, natural order, affective filter), now often referred to collectively as "the input hypothesis," have been fundamental to SLA research for more than three decades. They have been questioned, refined, expanded, confirmed, sometimes even refuted, but Krashen's work remains profoundly influential and an important starting point for the application of SLA research to classroom practice.

98% is the correct number (Pellicer-Sánchez; Schmitt, Jiang, and Grabe; Hu & Nation 419). Furthermore, words that are new to the reader must appear repeatedly in the text—at least eight times each in varying contexts, but arguably many more—in order to be acquired (Pellicer-Sánchez 4).¹⁴ Reading works well as a conduit for vocabulary for native speakers because they already have a strong basis in the language. By the time English-speaking children begin to read, they comprehend as many as 20,000-25,000 words; by adulthood that number doubles (or quadruples depending upon educational level) and continues to grow. Furthermore, native speakers can read extensively, many more and much longer texts than a second language learner. So as long as text is age-appropriate, it is a great source for new vocabulary. But in the second language classroom, even if reading is pitched at precisely the right level with few new words and the needed repetition, learners simply do not have a strong enough foundation in the language for reading to be an efficient way to acquire new vocabulary, until they are of advanced proficiency.¹⁵

- 2) Deliberate learning (rote learning/memorization) of vocabulary has received a great deal of attention in the last decade, and the research results are not only encouraging but reflect what many language learners report anecdotally: that they can learn a substantial number of words fairly quickly with word cards (used in most of the studies on deliberate language learning, along with computer programs). Research results indicate that in deliberate learning vocabulary is learned and retained at a higher rate than words encountered incidentally.¹⁶ Several factors have been shown to enhance the successful use of word cards, including the addition of memory prompts—

14 See also Laufer who concludes that cloze exercises and writing activities that ask students to create sentences or compositions are significantly more effective for the acquisition of vocabulary than reading (2003: 583-584). Horst et al. find that “explicit and systematic instruction that focuses on high frequency vocabulary” is necessary, since, particularly for intermediate readers, reading may reinforce known words but does little for acquiring new ones (221).

15 Pellicer-Sánchez (3) remarks that for second language students, the uptake of new vocabulary is low and requires follow-up to be truly effective.

16 See particularly Boers and Lindstromberg, section 3.1, and Nation 2013.

pictures, sentences, key words (Nation 2001: 296-316), repeated and spaced study, and the addition of an auditory component.¹⁷

- 3) While deliberate learning is effective for all types of words, research done by Ulf Schuetze with beginning students of German supports earlier findings that function words (conjunctions, adverbs, particles) are much harder for students to retain than nouns, verbs, and adjectives, likely because they do not carry content critical to rudimentary comprehension. In addition, his study confirmed two other factors: the longer the word, the harder it is to retain, and similar sounding words are often confused (39). Finally, a number of studies have shown that there is a great advantage for students to learn intentionally chunks of language, frequently used phrases, which facilitate both comprehension and production (Boers & Lindstromberg 35-39). Learning such phrases as *'cura ut valeas'*, *'quid agis hodie'*, *'bonum mane tibi exopto'*, *'signo dato'*, *'mihi curae est'*, *'quae cum ita sint'*, not only encodes them as lexical items, but likely serves a major role in creating automatic response patterns in the brain. There is enough empirical evidence from cognitive research to suggest that given enough memorized chunks, the brain finds the grammatical patterns within them and is then able to anticipate and process similar patterns when it encounters them.¹⁸
- 4) A long-standing concern has been whether or not memorized words become part of the implicit (that is subconscious) knowledge of the learner. Critical studies conducted by Irina Elgort have demonstrated that, like vocabulary learned incidentally through CI, words learned deliberately do in fact become integrated into the learner's

17 See Bürki, whose study of beginning students of English found that auditory support for word card study increased the percentage of words learned and retained by about 20% (225-226).

18 Hopper argues convincingly that repetition of forms and phrases in sufficiently varied situations compels the brain to form a sub-system that defines their grammatical function. Thus grammar emerges from repeated and effective expression (158-167). His hypothesis is in direct controversion to the concept of 'a priori' grammar that controls correct utterance. Randall also stresses the value of learning chunks, not only for creating automatic response but for establishing grammatical patterns (170). Nick Ellis also remarks that the ordering function of PWM is crucial in learning grammatical forms and sequences (2012: 19-21).

internal lexicon, the implicit system, and can be automatically accessed. Thus there is no disadvantage to the intentional learning of vocabulary.¹⁹ I should make clear here that none of these researchers suggests that deliberate learning should comprise a majority of the language student's time or effort. Indeed, each of them sees it as merely a part of a balanced approach to language learning.

One final but crucial factor that can derail deliberate learning is that our students too often have little or no experience with memorization of any kind. Indeed, I can stun a roomful of students by breaking into Antony's speech from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, which I memorized now more than 45 years ago; I suspect that many of my contemporaries could do similar. But we cannot assume that our students have any sense of where to begin to commit something to memory. Not surprisingly, research shows clearly that students who are taught a variety of memorization techniques—association, visualization, auditory repetition, etc.—fare vastly better in learning and retaining vocabulary than those who are simply told to memorize it.²⁰

Retrieval and Retention

Of course memorization is not enough. I once knew Antony's entire speech, but now I can only recall the first ten lines or so, because those are the ones I trot out for shock and awe; the others have been relegated to the trash and cleared out of my LTM. Retrieval and use is paramount for any real and lasting acquisition. Batia Laufer notes that SLA research is now shifting away from the source of vocabulary learning to issues of elaboration, task involvement and rehearsal (2009: 341). The term elaboration is used by SLA researchers to describe any formal process that is designed to add information to the knowledge of a word—from simple syntactical information (e.g. part of speech) to more complex relationships, e.g. the contexts in

19 Elgort's research on implicit knowledge gained from deliberate learning of vocabulary and her 2011 article detailing her results have been profoundly influential among SLA researchers. Her work is widely cited.

20 Folse 88-106. In a chapter devoted to debunking the misconception that the most effective learners use only one or two strategies to learn vocabulary, Folse offers a number of different approaches and demonstrates that, in fact, successful students have their own individualized set of strategies, which might include learning the component parts of words, drawing relationships with synonyms or antonyms, visualizing, and keeping a notebook, any and all of which might be used to supplement memorization. He is also a clear advocate of metacognition; i.e. students should investigate and understand their own learning processes.

which the word generally appears (collocation). These elaborations help not only retention but retrieval.

- 1) Research by Gregory Keating, among many others, makes clear that active involvement with the language is vastly more effective in fostering long-term retention than passive reception. Testing something known as the “Involvement Load Hypothesis,” Keating found that students who are compelled to use new words remember them and that the percentage of retention increases with the ‘involvement load.’ So students who had to fill in new words to complete sentences retained more than those who merely read or heard the words, and students who had to create their own sentences using those new words did the best of all (381).²¹
- 2) While it may not be particularly effective for acquiring new vocabulary, reading can play an important role in its reinforcement. Ana Pellicer-Sánchez suggests that intensive reading, that is the detailed reading of a short text, is useful for rehearsing new vocabulary, while extensive reading (a longer text read primarily for comprehension) is effective for the consolidation of lexical knowledge (4-5). It should also be noted that Keating found that the act of looking a word up in the dictionary led to better retention than seeing it in a gloss;²² again learner involvement in the process matters (368-370).
- 3) There is no doubt that reinforcement of a word is critical for acquisition; particularly for high frequency words, which demand intentional strategies, if the classroom student is to make sufficient progress in the language to be able to reading with any fluency (Horst 218-211). Vocabulary may come incidentally from CI or from deliberate learning or from reading, but frequent review, retrieval, and reiteration are required for long-term retention (Folse 158-159).

21 Randall also emphasizes practice over memorization, per se; i.e. students need to think about the word or form, understand it while practicing, and elaborating, with repetition as key (171).

22 This is a particularly thorny issue for Latin instructors, whose textbooks so often include a textual gloss that is readily accessible during reading.

These studies make clear that success for the language student requires both broad and deep exposure to vocabulary, accompanied by activities and exercises that make connections between form and meaning. Student attention must be drawn repeatedly to elements that are critical to understanding, if they are to be retained.²³ Practice and repetition (in communicative settings) is crucial: thinking about the word, understanding it while using it, elaborating on it by considering its qualities, and creating sentences or phrases in which it is used. As Yongqi Gu remarks, successful learners are active, take initiative, and understand their own learning process (2013: 5).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LATIN CLASSROOM

In his 2011 essay on the application of research results to teaching strategies, Paul Nation laments: “It may be that the problems in the application of research come from teachers’ desire (and perhaps need) to simplify the findings of research” (537). I would respond that the body of research is vast, sometimes contradictory, and often jargon-filled. Teachers are perfectly capable of undertaking a multi-faceted pedagogy, once definitive research is shared in an accessible way, and I think that there are some clear implications for the Latin classroom to be drawn from SLA research on WM and vocabulary acquisition, as well as some outstanding questions and several areas of frustration, not the least of which is the lack of research that focuses on Latin learners.

What then, does the research conducted to this point advise us about classroom practice? Alan Hunt and David Beglar’s seven principles for vocabulary development seem to offer a good starting point. They advise the instructor to:

- 1) *provide opportunities for the incidental learning of vocabulary*; that is, through comprehensible input (CI)—either oral or written. Hunt and Beglar refer to the many studies on vocabulary acquisition gained from extensive listening and reading, while acknowledging, as discussed above, that the latter is only possible for more advanced students. They suggest graded readers for low proficiency learners—alas, something sorely lacking for the Latin classroom.

²³ Indeed, Sagarra remarks that attentional control is key to the efficient functioning of WM. The capacity of WM is directly connected to an individual’s ability to deal with distraction (2).

- 2) *identify the 3000 words students need to study*; first this terrifying number is for students of English, a lexically heavy language as mentioned above. The number for Latin students is more likely 2,000—not much less daunting. But the 1,000 most frequent Latin words comprise 70% of a text on average, and those words belong to many fewer word families, that is groups of words built on the same root.²⁴ If we teach our students how Latin vocabulary is formed—prefix, root, suffix—their lexicon will expand exponentially. Many others in the top 1,000 are function words, crucial for writing and fluid reading. Sadly, few Latin textbooks focus on critical vocabulary or on word formation. It is up to the instructor to determine and fill in the gaps.
- 3) *provide opportunities for the intentional learning of vocabulary*; if Latin were taught in an immersion environment from early childhood, as it was for centuries, we could expect our students to acquire the vast majority of the words they need to be proficient through CI. But, most of our students come to the Latin classroom as adolescents or adults. We simply do not have the contact time with them for CI to be the sole conduit for vocabulary learning. Deliberate learning has proved to be an effective way to expand a student's lexicon, with word cards being one of its most effective tools. Hunt and Beglar suggest a number of enhancements that might be included on word cards—images, keywords (an English word that sounds like the Latin word but is unrelated), grammatical information, or a Latin sentence with known vocabulary that uses the word. They also offer other useful advice for the process of studying from word cards, based on research results: students should study 5-7 words at a time; the words chosen for the group to be studied should not be semantically related or have similar spelling/form (e.g. *servus* and *minister* or *ferrum* and *feria*) in order to avoid confusion; several short sessions of study are more effective than fewer longer ones. I have always also suggested that my students use blue, pink, or

24 See list [here](#); a quick glance finds that *fero*, *cipio*, *mitto*, *specto*, *facio* and their compounds total 25 words, with other words related to *facio* adding another 5.

green cards for nouns to indicate gender. Most important, we need to introduce our students to memorization techniques and help them find what works best for them.²⁵

- 4) *provide opportunities for elaborating word knowledge*; the most obvious way to do this is to provide a set of contexts in which students encounter the new word, but other options include work with derivatives, semantic mapping (i.e. a list of words/circumstances with which the new word is likely to appear), synonyms and antonyms, etc.
- 5) *provide opportunities for developing fluency with known vocabulary*; as Hunt and Beglar point out, the most salient approach to fluency is the recycling of vocabulary, in all four competencies (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). As Nigel Harwood has remarked there is a notable lack of recycling in most language textbooks (141).²⁶ As instructors who need our students to have quick access to their internal lexicon in order for them to read with any fluency, we must create frequent opportunities for students to retrieve and use as much vocabulary as possible in high involvement tasks.²⁷ Pellicer-Sánchez suggests narrow reading, that is reading a variety of texts on the same topic, as the most effective way for lower level students to encounter recently introduced vocabulary (5).²⁸

25 See also Nation 2011, 533-536. While consideration of the value of metacognitive awareness to student success is beyond the scope of this paper, I have found think-aloud activities in the classroom extremely helpful for my students in identifying the learning strategies that are most useful for them. For example, I might ask students to talk through (often in pairs) the process they use when they first encounter a sight passage or unfamiliar vocabulary, which generally exposes both good and poor strategies and prompts them to incorporate alternative approaches with those they generally use. For a brief and friendly introduction see [here](#).

26 Harwood also points out that variety and novelty are an important part of effective recycling (147).

27 Keating strongly stresses this point. Instructors need to revisit vocabulary frequently, rather than assuming its acquisition simply because it has been presented and assessed (382).

28 John Piazza's [website](#) offers a plethora of reading resources; his collection of Latin mythology narrative, for example, contains numerous versions of the same story, allowing repeated encounters with similar vocabulary and comparison of the various narratives.

- 6) *experiment with guessing from context*; as discussed above, this is most appropriate for advanced learners with sufficient lexical knowledge. In the Latin classroom, bottom-up processing (typified by parsing) is often critical in guessing what a word must mean. Students should also use their familiarity with Latin word structures to analyze the unknown word.
- 7) *examine different types of dictionaries and teach students how to use them*; while choice in Latin dictionaries is somewhat limited, it is critical that our students learn to read the entire entry for a word. Too often students assume that there is a one-to-one correlation between Latin and English words, rather than a semantic range or even several.

In his consideration of the application of research results to classroom practice, Norbert Schmitt cites Hunt and Beglar's seven principles and then adds six of his own insights (353-354). He points out that:

- 8) because a large vocabulary is crucial for success, instructors need to set and pursue high targets for their students. I would add that for Latin teachers these goals will most often need to be external to the textbook, since most texts introduce new words as they pertain to the reading at hand, rather than with an eye to either frequency or semantic field.
- 9) different approaches to vocabulary instruction may be necessary at various stages of the learning process; as obvious as this may seem, too often teachers assume that the only way to instruct Latin vocabulary is with English equivalents and derivatives. While this is one way (see 10 below), it is far from the only way. Teachers can and should use a multitude of approaches, including: images, TPR, TPRS, and meaning-focused input (CI) and output (speaking or writing), that is, communicative activities that require students to integrate new words into their lexicon.
- 10) establishing a link between meaning and form is crucial at initial stages of language learning, and using the student's native language

is a sensible way to accomplish this. Much as it pains me to agree with Schmitt here,²⁹ there is strong evidence that beginning students of a second language need to be able to hook its vocabulary to words and concepts in their native language. Even advanced students may need to do this with conceptually difficult vocabulary. I cannot imagine explaining a complex concept like *virtus* or *auctoritas*, without some discussion in English.

- 11) repetition is essential; this is so sensible that it might be overlooked, and yet too often students learn vocabulary for a quiz or test, only to forget it immediately thereafter. Whatever name researchers choose to use, retrieval, reuse, or recycling, it is clear that teachers must provide opportunities for students to encounter and use vocabulary repeatedly, if it is to become part of their internal lexicon and thus accessible for fluency.
- 12) contextualized word knowledge is also key to acquisition; here Schmitt uses the term collocation, one that is a key component of the Lexical Approach described by Michael Lewis.³⁰ Many words are used in specific contexts with other words, not only in idiomatic use but in the every day. While collocation is rarely considered in Latin textbooks, it is no less valid a feature of Latin than it is of any other language, though fluent readers of Latin tend only to have a feel for what seems right. It would be immensely useful for teachers to have a vocabulary resource less cumbersome than the Oxford Latin Dictionary, which offers common collocations for important words.

29 As co-founder of the *Conventiculum Bostoniense* and a strong advocate of active learning (speaking and writing), I would prefer to think that we could simply teach Latin in Latin. But the exigencies of our educational system make it impossible for students to make sufficient progress without direct instruction in vocabulary. We can optimize that time by focusing on teaching skills that will enable our students not only to memorize words but also to understand the structure of the Latin lexicon.

30 Lewis is a great resource, as he offers a number of specific activities and exercises meant to help students identify and learn chunks of language; much of what he presents could be adapted for the Latin classroom.

13) engagement with words is necessary for their acquisition; it is not enough to introduce vocabulary. Students need to use new words repeatedly in meaningful and compelling interactions in order for those words to become part of their internal lexicon. While this paper is not about student motivation, there is no question that the desire to participate is a crucial factor in language learning.³¹ Thus, the ideal language classroom has a variety of engaging activities that compel students to use new words and recycle previously learned material.

Finally, I like to add a few things that I have noted in my many hours of classroom observation; these are less quantifiable but crucial aspects of learning that have to do with the society of the classroom and the persona of the teacher. What qualities of in-class experiences make something memorable? First, I suggest simplicity, i.e. what we present and the students encounter must be understandable; next, unexpectedness—don't we all remember best the weird thing the teacher did in class; thirdly, concreteness—students need to be able to wrap their minds around what they see, hear or read; fourth, credibility—what they encounter should seem believable, even if they have to suspend their doubt—we need to make it real; fifth, emotions—get them laughing or crying and they'll remember forever; last and best of all, the telling of stories—because that's how we define ourselves as humans. And, of course, we Classicists are fortunate to have the best stories to tell!

³¹ See Dornyei for a summary of the research on motivation among second language learners as well as a series of recommended strategies for prompting engagement.

Appendix of Suggested Activities

Before I outline a few activities, let me first recommend Nick Bilbrough's *Memory Activities for Language Learning* as a resource for classroom exercises that apply many of the types of strategies discussed in the body of this article, particularly for reviewing/recycling vocabulary. Although all are designed for students of English, most are adaptable for the Latin classroom. Then a disclaimer: I have not taught either beginning or intermediate Latin for many years, but I do teach a methods course that includes active approaches (in a department with a number of Latin-speaking faculty), and I supervise teaching practica and practicum equivalents. Many of our program graduates use the activities that I present below, I have seen how effective each of them can be, and several are used by my colleagues in immersive classroom settings.³²

³² In 2012, UMass Boston began teaching Latin at all levels using all four language skills. Classes are not taught entirely in Latin (approximately 70-80% in beginning courses), but active use of the language (speaking and writing) is a critical component at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Introducing new vocabulary

Activity 1: Multi-sensory vocabulary (enhanced deliberate learning)

1. The teacher briefly introduces 6-10 new words (ideally semantically related, e.g. parts of the house or the natural world, but this approach can also be used for textbook lists, if necessary).
2. As homework, students are required to find a picture, a sound, or a keyword (an English word that sounds like the Latin word but is unrelated) that works as a prompt for them. They send these to the teacher.
3. The teacher selects and arranges submitted memory prompts employing whatever media is appropriate, and uses the prompts to review the new vocabulary, with the Latin word appearing after it is recalled. (e.g. [Ecce Romani I Chapter 12 Vocab](#))
4. As the unit progresses, new word prompts are added, and the teacher can edit the assemblage as needed and make the presentation available to students for review.
5. Such presentations can and should be revisited regularly, and this can be done as a planned activity or spur of the moment, without burdening the teacher.

There are several advantages to this approach: 1) students provide the material, saving time that the teacher simply does not have; 2) because the materials are student-generated, they have skin in the game, and they get excited when their contributions are chosen; 3) connections for remembering new Latin words move beyond an English translation; 4) contributing prompts help students to understand their own learning process; 5) student choices are often compelling, funny, or quirky, and thus memorable.

Activity 2: Quid vides in pictura (1)?

1. The teacher selects a picture whose subject matter suits a substantial portion of the new vocabulary to be introduced, bearing in mind which words will be most difficult to describe (these are generally conjunctions or adverbs, e.g. *enim* or *diu*)
2. Then students are asked, ‘*Quid/quem vides/videtis?*’ They will generally respond with Latin nouns they already know—*puella*, *villa*, *canis*, etc. The teacher or an appointed ‘scribe’ writes each word on the board.
3. The teacher then asks, “*Quid facit ____?*” or “*Quid accidit?*” These questions will prompt Latin verbs; questions with *quo*, *quomodo*, *quando* will prompt adverbs or adverbial phrases.
4. When students have provided all of the familiar vocabulary (a useful review), the teacher then points to parts of the picture that demonstrate new vocabulary, describes what is happening using known vocabulary along with the new word, and writes the words on the board making visual connections (lines or arrows) to the known vocabulary.

In this exercise, preferably conducted entirely in Latin so that students make connections between new and known words, students are given visual and auditory context for new vocabulary. This type of exercise can be used at any level of instruction, with more sophisticated questioning for advanced students; e.g., a class reading the Aeneid might look at a seascape and talk about all of the various words Vergil uses for the sea.

Elaborating vocabulary

Activity 3: Visual and Written Illustration (productive elaboration)

1. Students choose several new words that they have been introduced to and have used already in class, preferably in communicative interaction.
2. They draw an illustration of each word (or find an appropriate picture), labeling items in the drawing/picture with the new Latin word and any other known words that are illustrated, and then they write an accompanying Latin sentence that describes the picture, using the new word and known words only.
3. Illustrations and sentences may be shared with the class or may be used on assessments.

This activity bears clear resemblance to Activity 1 above, but assumes some exposure to and familiarity with the appropriate context for new vocabulary. This exercise can be done in class or for homework, and students should be encouraged to choose words that they are having difficulty remembering. A variation might have students working in pairs, exchanging illustrations and writing sentences based on their partner's work, or exchanging sentences and drawing illustrations. The goal is for the students to create multi-faceted semantic connections for new words within their existing internal lexicon.

Activity 4: Quid vides in pictura (2)?

1. The teacher may use the same picture chosen for Activity 2 above or a new picture with the same theme/elements.
2. First, students point out items in the picture that relate to recently introduced vocabulary. The teacher or scribe writes the words on the board.
3. Then, with a series of questions using *qualis*, *quocum*, *cur*, *estne* etc., the teacher elicits other words (especially adjectives, synonyms, and antonyms) and qualifying phrases/clauses connected to each of the vocabulary words from the students.
4. In pairs, students write the new words at the head of columns or in the center of circles (any graphic organizer will work) and then add as many words or phrases associated with each word as they can, employing what they have just heard and adding their own ideas; e.g.:

gramen, -minis n.

viride

in pratis

pars naturae

pastor, -oris m.

animalia pascunt

syn. herba, herbae

seges, segetis f.

agrum frumenti

agricola, -ae m.

frumentum ipsum

e.g. far, farris

rel. spicifer

syn. messis, -is

arbustum, -i n.

locus colitus
multae arbores
fructus ferentes
poma, -ae f.
persicum, -i n.
citreum, -i n.

horreum, -i n.

aedificium
agricola, -ae m.
in fundo
locus frumenti collecti
locus tutus

5. The students share any new connections they may have discovered with the class.

This exercise in elaboration is designed to embed new words within their appropriate semantic fields, making them not only easier to remember, but also to use appropriately. The teacher should determine how much time to spend priming the activity with the picture. As the students grow accustomed to this type of activity, the teacher should be able to shift the balance toward the paired portion.

Activity 5: Fabula Mea/Fabula Tua/Fabula Nostra

1. Students work in teams of three to create a short story (three or four sentences) using recently-introduced vocabulary (specified by the teacher) and two modern-day celebrities (chosen by the class as a whole³³). Using a dictionary and the teacher as a resource, they may add no more than two unfamiliar words to their story.
2. The groups are then paired, and they create a third story from the original two. They must use every sentence from each original story and may add only conjunctions and interjections.
3. The paired groups may then share their stories with the class, or the teacher may collect the combined stories and create a single story for the class to read together at its next meeting.
4. The class story can be revisited and further elaborated as students learn new vocabulary and syntax. Students can also be asked to reproduce their stories in writing from memory as accurately as possible.

This activity is particularly effective for younger high school students, who get deeply vested in the process and its results. The story is likely to be quirky, even a little disjointed, but it will almost always be an effective vocabulary learning tool (as well as reinforcing syntactical knowledge, as students want to make certain that their stories are understood).

³³ I recently saw a version of this activity in a first year classroom, using Beyoncé and Justin Bieber. The students were wildly enthusiastic, and the resulting story was both riotously funny and quite impressively complex.

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Latin at the Middle School Level: Who Are Our Students? How Do We Reach Them?

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ABSTRACT

“Latin at the Middle School Level: Who Are Our Students? How Do We Reach Them?” is the result of collaboration among three experts in the theory and practice of Latin pedagogy. Barbara Hill, Latin Program Coordinator at the University of Colorado Boulder (now retired), provides explanations of important cognitive factors, which influence language learning, and offers general suggestions for teachers. Phonological processing is the focus of the first section of this article, and memory, especially working memory, takes center stage in the second section. Following the exposition of each cognitive attribute comes models of classroom activities to intrigue and educate middle school students. Rickie Crown, National Louis University, Chicago, contributes a wealth of multisensory classroom activities designed to enhance the phonological and working memory of students. Tyler Leach, Baker Demonstration School, Wilmette, takes the lead in the final section of the article and adds a valuable assortment of digital exercises and assessment measures designed to engage and instruct the active, independent-minded students, who inhabit America’s middle schools.

KEYWORDS

phonological processing, syllabification, multisensory education, categorization, coordination of components, chunking, working memory, automatization, digital assessment

BACKGROUND

Middle school students present to their teachers a continually shifting panorama. They make public statements of their rapidly changing selves via clothes, hairstyles, body modifications, behavior, and conversations as they search for comfortable identities. A survey of people familiar with the “tweenagers”, who populate our middle schools describe them variously as “awkward”, “quirky”, sometimes “desperate”, sometimes “hopeful”, often “needy”, usually “sensitive”, alternately “confused” and “confusing”, and often “overwhelmed” among other terms. Girls tend to be critical of their appearance, and boys are apt to adopt a nonchalant, “cool” attitude intended to demonstrate to others that they don’t care (Heckel). They all, however, do care and are frequently absorbed by their concerns. It is a legitimate question, therefore, to ask “Are middle school students ready for Latin, and our answer is *“Ita, vero!”*”

A characteristic, which makes Latin a particularly good choice for middle school is that all new students start at the same place on the learning curve. Latin classes are not like Spanish classes, for example, populated by students, who have had previous Spanish instruction. Beginning students, moreover, already know the Latin alphabet if they know English, and, when taught properly, can learn Latin pronunciation quite effectively thanks to the facts that Latin consonants and diphthongs produce one consistent sound, vowels produce only two sounds, and there are no silent letters. Despite these advantages, experienced Latin teachers know they face a complicated task. While they can pick out student social groupings with a glance, their initial predictions of Latin learning potential can be erroneous. The blue-haired student with a nose ring in the back row may turn out to be a stellar learner, whereas the quiet, seemingly focused student next to her may struggle to understand sentence structure. The yawning student in the front row may be unable to concentrate due to a family crisis rather than lack of interest. The fashionista in the center of the room may ace every quiz but neglect to turn in her homework. We can, in fact, anticipate that about 20% of our new students will experience problems of noticeable degree.

The purpose of this article is to set forth and explain some important characteristics, which strongly influence the achievement and behavior of individual middle school Latin students but are unobservable to the teacher’s eye. These traits are cognitive, and they come to light primarily through student effort and quality of work. Primary among them is the brain’s ability to process the sounds it hears,

also called phonological processing ability, a topic to be more deeply explored in following paragraphs. In these cognitive processes we witness the basic differences in thinking and remembering, which underlie everyone's processing of language, whether Latin or English.

For most American students, middle school is the time when they first enroll in a truly serious foreign language class, and the "fun and games" of elementary language classes disappear. Their new foreign language class meets daily, all year long, and newly accountable for their performance, students receive grades from their teachers. Some students have been previously diagnosed with learning disabilities and/or ADHD, but others have no idea they will struggle. A few other students have a traumatic brain injury (TBI), which can cause dyslexia-like symptoms when trying to master details of a complicated foreign language. It is common, moreover, that youngsters with a TBI don't know it. They have forgotten about an earlier fall or perhaps a kick to the head, but their brains retain traces. Struggling Latin students, documented and undocumented alike, realize relatively quickly in the first semester that they are not keeping pace with the introduction of new material. While many students master the new content, strugglers see that they can't, but don't know why.

Ideally, middle school classes should be learning labs where students accomplish a lot of their work in ways structured by you, the teacher, so that they learn **how** to learn as they are learning. Classroom activities, which provide practice in organizing, may guide the way to more efficient learning since problems with organization are real deterrents to language acquisition.

In the following article, Barbara Hill is responsible for the introduction and background information on phonological processing, memory, and organization of learning tasks. Rickie Crown is the contributor of sections on multisensory kinesthetic models, and Tyler Leach is the author of the sections on multisensory digital models. The authors suggest that contents of this article are pertinent not only to middle schoolers, but to all levels of Latin instruction. The information provided follows the sequence presented in the following grid:

Challenges of Foreign Language Learning	Teaching Techniques for Managing Learning Challenges	Models: Coordination of Components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonological Processing Difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multisensory approach • Practice identifying phonemes and syllables • Explicit presentation of vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabification with puppets • Individualized oral assessment
Memorization of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Morphology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multisensory approach • Chunking • Morphology grids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ablative Hop • Verb Cantata • Chunking exercises
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing morphemes, words, and phrases in context • Processing Speed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multisensory Assessment: A Digital Approach • Coordination of vocabulary and morphology with text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scriptio continua</i> • Chunking exercises • Oral assessment using interactive technology • Notebook • Coordinating components

PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSING

The purpose of this paper is to set forth and explain some important characteristics which strongly influence the achievement and behavior of individual Latin students but are unobservable to a teacher's eye. These traits are cognitive and come to light primarily through student effort and quality of work, areas where we witness the basic differences in thinking and remembering, which underlie everyone's processing of language, whether Latin or English. Primary among cognitive abilities in language learning is phonological processing, the ability which allows the mind to identify sounds and connect those sounds to meanings. Phonological processing abilities include discrimination among sounds in words (phonemic awareness), discrimination between words in sentences, remembering and applying phonological rules, predicting the spelling of new words presented orally, and remembering and repeating words, phrases, and sentences. Deficits in phonological processing include problems segmenting words into phonemes and syllables, difficulties retaining strings of sounds or letters in short term memory, problems repeating long nonsense words, problems reading writing non-words, even when short, and slow naming. Richard L. Sparks provides a good analysis of the crucial role of phonological processing in second language learning (187-200).

Phonological processing strengths and weaknesses can be assessed as early as preschool. Testers can chart a child's proficiency at repeating correctly and remembering sounds (phonemes) and new combinations or strings of sounds. They can, in addition, count the quantity and complexity of known words (vocabulary or semantics) and the number of words and the ways in which a child makes sentences or is able to analyze them (syntax). The better a child's phonological processing capacity, the greater the potential for learning language and acquiring reading. Phonological processing differences, which have been documented by standardized testing for decades, have also recently been diagnosed in preschoolers by using an EEG to measure directly the response of their brains to sounds in a noisy environment similar to that of most schools, thus predicting which children might need intervention to assist in reading readiness because of their relatively poor phonological processing ability (White-Schwoch et al.).

This area of research is important to middle school Latin teachers because children, who are slow to develop language and experience problems while learning first language, will almost certainly experience similar difficulties when learning a second language (Sparks 194). Since phonological processing ability is such

a significant cognitive variable in second language acquisition, foreign language teachers can, in fact, assess students in a way similar to that used by speech pathologists. Early in the year, after students have practiced Latin's rules of pronunciation, a teacher can create a list of multisyllabic words chosen from upcoming lessons. She can then arrange to meet briefly and individually with each of her students and simply ask the student to repeat the words as she says them. She can assign scores if she wishes. The students who score highest are likely to be the highest achievers, and those who score the lowest are most likely to rank at the bottom.

Why? The weakest students will have trouble with phonemic awareness and struggle to track a teacher's speech. They are likely to have trouble discriminating among words in spoken phrases or sentences uttered in Latin. They will have the similar troubles when teachers try to explain elements of morphology or syntax in English. In fact, the labels describing Latin word forms and/or syntax may seem like a separate foreign language to weaker students. These learners miss part and sometimes all of what is said even if they try very diligently to follow. If a student misses part or all of an explanation, he or she is already behind. Others in the class have successfully decoded the sounds or strings of sounds and connected them to meanings. They may be able to ask or answer questions. They are not saying: "What the heck did she just say? I don't get it."

Learners with phonological processing weaknesses also have trouble connecting the sounds they hear with their written representation. This is termed the phonological/orthographic or sound/symbol link. Weaker students may miss entirely the fact that a word pronounced orally is the same word they see in a book or on a board. They also struggle to remember and apply rules of phonology so they can't easily predict the pronunciation of new words they see in print or the spelling of new words they hear spoken.

Researchers have proved through extensive testing programs that individual second language learning potential exists on a continuum from very good to very poor. That means that most learners fall into the middle ranks (Sparks 192). Our job as teachers is to build inclusive classrooms and bring as many of our students as we can along with us. Not only are we invested in maintaining the strength of our programs, but also we care about individual students. How many times do we see a student, whose language learning potential is weaker than that of peers, begin to believe that he/she is less intelligent, develop a negative self-perception, and perhaps opt out of activities or cause diversionary disruptions? For these students especially,

it is important to note that “good and poor FL learners do equally well on semantic and IQ measures” (Sparks 192).

So how can we help? The following models will define ways in which we can explicitly teach and assess student mastery of Latin’s sound system. “Phonology first” is a motto we can adopt, motivated by positive effects of explicit, systematic instruction in Latin phonology, which bring significant improvement in students’ FL aptitude skills, measures of language phonology and receptive vocabulary measures (Sparks, Ganschow, Fluharty and Little).

MODELS OF TEACHING TECHNIQUES DESIGNED TO IMPROVE PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSING

It is our imperative as teachers to support students’ cognition with the use of techniques which foster adept phonological processing and memorization. What does this look like in a Latin classroom? This section of our article will present models, which illustrate ways of achieving these goals. While not an exhaustive list of methods, it is our hope that teachers may use these methods as “jumping off” points for their own creative thinking. These techniques were developed in conjunction with the Baker Demonstration School Latin faculty from 1985-2009. There is an appendix at the conclusion of this article. It contains further directions and worksheets which teachers may use to adapt these techniques for use in their own classrooms.

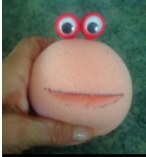
Hearing, seeing, saying, and writing or otherwise working with new words, is, in a nutshell, **multisensory education**, the importance of which is generally accepted by all who analyze effective teaching techniques. The use of a multisensory methodology, combined with practice identifying phonemes and syllables, is essential for success for students experiencing the challenge of phonological processing weaknesses when learning a foreign language. A syllabification exercise provides an almost assured way of accomplishing this goal. This exercise which divides the text being studied into phonemes, provides oral, aural, and kinesthetic input for students. It allows students who might otherwise hear language as a stream of sounds without word demarcations to learn the sounds of a language in the developmental sequence of language learning which infants experience naturally. We often expect our Latin students to jump in and learn at the word level, skipping over the “silent” and “babbling” periods of language development. This is hard enough for individuals with language learning abilities that come naturally; it is extremely difficult for students facing cognitive challenges.

DIRECTIONS FOR SYLLABIFICATION

Infants learn speech by listening to the sounds around them and eventually by replicating these sounds by babbling. When infants create words, they do so by combining the various sounds together to convey meaning (much to the delight of their ecstatic care-givers, who reinforce their new talents).

Traditionally, we have expected that our Latin students develop perfect pronunciation and comprehension without going through the babbling process. A syllabification exercise duplicates the babbling process for students, allowing them to develop the skill of hearing the phonetic construction of the words they will be asked to read and supporting their development of phonemic awareness within the language.

This exercise makes correct pronunciation possible for all students, including those who have problems with phonemic awareness. The overt practice builds automaticity.



Class Activity - Syllabification Directions

[illegible]

ar		se		it									
al		det											
ra		et											
na		le											
fa		te											

ECCE ROMANI CHAPTER II

A	Ā	E	Ē	I	Ī	O	Ō	U	Ū	AE	AU	EU	OE
a		que	ē	di	mī	quo	nōn	sunt	rūs	cae			
am		sed	dē	in	vī	ho		bu					
lant		bre	strē	rit	grīs	po		nu					
sa		tem	tē	ti	vīl			cur					
iam		re		quid				unt					
a		fes		ci				us					
tan		dem						ius					
a		ex											
ad		len											
lam		e											
cam													
fa													

ECCE ROMANI CHAPTER XV

A	Ā	E	Ē	I	Ī	O	Ō	U	Ū	AE	AU	EU	OE
ap	tā	ex	rē	di	trī	lon	tō	gus	ū	tae	plau		
ta	pā	spec	bēs	bis	rī	ro	ō	cul	nū	prae			
tar	ā	re	nēs	bi		pro	bōs	um		ae			

tas		ve		vis		o		pul					
quat		ne		ris		bo		strum					
tan		te		il		for		nus					
		se		lim		or		dus					
				mi		po		lud					
						quot		tu					
						ho		du					
								tum					
								num					

*Syllabification Grids created by Mary Joan Masello – Baker Demonstration School, Evanston, Illinois.

MEMORY AND MEMORIZATION

There's more, of course. Think of memory and memorization. Students with poor phonological processing skills have trouble retaining strings of sounds in their short term memory, and if the representation isn't there for the short term, it certainly won't be around for the long term. Furthermore, even if knowledge does make it into the long term memory of challenged individuals, it is often difficult for them to pull it out. We call this phenomenon of pulling out information from long term memory "naming" or "word retrieval". Basically, building quicker word retrieval is why we spend so much time teaching vocabulary. We are trying to build the automatic recall of pronunciation, form, and meaning. In other words, we are working toward "**automatization.**" Nicholson and Fawcett, in fact, have proposed an Automatization Deficit Hypothesis to explain characteristics of individuals with dyslexia. They believe that "dyslexic children and adults have trouble making their skills automatic, and therefore need to use conscious compensation to perform at normal levels." Only with time and attention are dyslexic children are able to reach the same good levels of performance, which "normally achieving children reach without thinking about it" (89).

Working memory (WM) is the mental capacity we use when we have to hold information briefly so that we can perform a task with it. We are using our working memory to read this article, and we use it whenever we listen, read explanations in English, or try to elicit the meaning of a Latin story. It is related to reading comprehension in both English and Latin and affects individual processing time. Working memory is highly dependent on vocabulary knowledge, and vocabulary

knowledge is in turn highly dependent on phonological processing ability. If, therefore, we don't recall vocabulary terms or we just can't keep the meanings of words or clauses in mind, we miss things, experience slowdowns in processing, or sometimes forget entirely—difficulties we teachers witness frequently, particularly in our weaker students. Miyake and Friedman present evidence that working memory may be the “central component” of foreign language aptitude (339) because the “linearity of language necessitates temporarily storing the intermediate and final products of computations as a reader or listener constructs and integrates ideas from the stream of successive words in a text or spoken discourse” (341).

Establishing word to meaning links is essential to using any language. We should be sure to present new words in contexts which learners can use to assist recall, to model pronunciation as students view these words, and students, in turn, should repeat and write or otherwise work with the words. This is a multisensory approach. We should, furthermore, review frequently. Why? It is because we are trying to help build the students' working memory when using the Latin language.

An early challenge that beginning learners of Latin face is that of memorizing case endings for nouns, adjectives, pronouns and verbs. Grigorenko identifies the most important ways in which languages differ in difficulty of acquisition (101). According to Grigorenko's list, Latin falls into the “hard” category in two of the areas: morphological complexity and grammatical differences.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

The challenges of memorization and organization are often met by activities which combine multi-sensory activities with categorization tasks. These techniques have many incarnations in the Latin classroom. Latin students are faced with memorizing extensive morphology and developing an automatic recall of this morphological information. Two activities which accomplish these ends are embodied by The Ablative Hop and The Verb Cantata. Both activities are easily adaptable to the learning of other Latin, i.e. an Ablative Hop may easily be adapted to a Dative Dance or a Genitive Jump. A Verb Cantata may be used to reinforce subjunctives and conditionals, as well as active and passive systems. A third activity which lessens the load on short-term memory for students is Chunking. Chunking activities which also support reading comprehension may be adapted to all levels of texts, from the most basic level to the most complex. Teachers should look at these models and then use their imagination to create additional activities.

THE ABLATIVE BUNNY HOP

One methodology for facing the challenge of memorizing Latin morphology is embodied in the Ablative Hop, an exercise used to support the automatic recall of ablative case endings. This exercise, once again, provides oral, aural, and kinesthetic input and practice for students. It supports their memorization of morphology and aids in their phonological processing. The Ablative Hop is easily adaptable to the memorization of other case and conjugation information. Read the directions, get up, and see what it feels and sounds like.



Ablative Case Endings Song

Dance: "Ablative Bunny Hop"*

for Noun Declensions I, II, III

-1 st declension	2 nd declension	3 rd declension
-ā (right foot)	-ō (left foot)	-e (right foot)
-īs (hop)	-īs (hop)	-ibus (hop)

*Song/dance originally created by Rickie Crown, Baker Demonstration School

In order to learn the ablative endings for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd declensions, the teacher can teach the students the Ablative “Bunny Hop.” Using the traditional Bunny Hop dance, students should stand in a line with their hands on the shoulders on the person in front of them. For the singular ablative endings, *-ā -ō -e*, the students should kick out right, left, right. Then for the plural endings, *-īs -is -ibus*, the students should hop three steps forward. Then repeat. The Ablative Hop line can move forward with increasing speed.

VERB CANTATA

One has long been able to identify Latin students as they walk through life mumbling verb tense endings for practice. O, S, T, MUS, TIS, UNT murmurs one. BAM, BAS, BAT, BAMUS, BATIS, BANT mumbles another. A Verb Cantata allows practice of all six tense endings at one time. A class is divided into six small groups and each group is given a set of verb endings. In other words, one group has present endings, another imperfect, and so on. The groups are given five minutes to create a chant, a song, or a rap of their assigned endings. The teacher then organizes each of the student groups as though they are sections of a choir (alto, soprano, baritone, etc.). The teacher then conducts the choir, bringing in each in each section varying the volume of each section and silencing each section one at a time. The piece lasts as long as the teacher/conductor decides. By the conclusion of the exercise, each group has practiced its one set of endings intensively and has been listening to the other verb endings. Students develop automatic recall the verb tense endings which are embedded in their own song.

The Verb Cantata employs oral, aural, and musical input. It also makes people laugh. These four factors make information easier to learn, and far easier to recall. Try it!

CHUNKING AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

Chunking tasks also support the efficiency of working memory by lowering the load on short term memory. It makes reading comprehension easier for students as it helps them hold information from the beginning of the sentence to the end while they are reading. Read the explanation of Chunking and try the exercises.

What is Chunking?

Chunking may be defined as breaking words into individual morphemes or breaking sentences into syntactic components. Many types of grammatical chunks may be identified. For purposes of this lesson, we will focus on subject chunks and prepositional phrase chunks.

Why is Chunking important?

Chunking helps the efficiency of working memory. Each of us is said to have access to seven bits of working memory. Without chunking, each word of text equals or takes up one bit of memory.

How does Chunking impact Reading Comprehension?

Additionally, Chunking helps readers organize the information in a text to support reading comprehension. Chunking bridges both memory and organization.

Example

<u>Claudius</u>	<u>&</u>	<u>Publius</u>	<u>sit</u>	<u>under</u>	<u>the</u>	<u>tree.</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

With chunking, each bit of working memory can hold more than one word.

English Example:	<u>Claudius&Publius</u>	<u>sit</u>	<u>(under the tree).</u>
	Subject Chunk	Verb	Prepositional Phrase
	1	2	3

Latin Example:	<u>(Claudius et Publius)</u>	<u>(sub arbore)</u>	<u>sedet</u>
-	Subject Chunk	Prep Phrase	Verb
	1	2	3

Chunking Tasks

Given a Latin text, complete these tasks:

Task 1

1. Find a partner.

2. Explain to a partner why each of the words in the parentheses is a Latin Chunk.
 - (Iulia et frater suus) (ad portum) mane festinabant.
 - Aquitania (a Garumna flumine) (ad Pyrenaeos montes) et eam partem Oceani quae est (ad Hispaniam) pertinent . . . (I.I.VII CAESARIS COMMENTARIORVM DE BELLO GALLICO LIBER PRIMVS)

Task 2

1. Read the Latin sentence out loud.
2. Put parentheses around any chunks you see.
3. Label the type of chunk:
 - Subject chunk
 - Prepositional phrase chunk
- Vadit inde (Horatius) (in primam partem pontis) et (ipso miraculo audaciae) obstupescit hostes. (Livy II.10.5)

MULTISENSORY ASSESSMENT: A DIGITAL APPROACH

When it comes time for us to assess a student's phonological processing skills and memory, traditional pencil-and-paper quizzes and tests give us a relatively small set of data. In order to develop a sense of what our students actually know, we must supplement these assessment scores with observation from class and day-to-day conversations with our students.

While it is often easy for our trained ears to hear student success or error in phoneme identification during a read aloud, for middle school student, there is more at stake during this type of assessment than simply mispronouncing a word or botching syllabification. Regardless of whether it is happening or not, all eyes and ears seem to be trained on the individual who is reading, and the simplest of errors opens up the door to ridicule. Even in a properly managed classroom, the fear

of being wrong in such a public way puts many of our middle school students in a state of heightened anxiety before they have even started reading, and in turn, they are already more likely to rush, to speak quietly and swallow their words, or even to sabotage their reading to earn a laugh from their peers.

The following assessment uses the screencasting application Educreations for iPad® to help get closer to the truth of knowing exactly what students know by giving them the chance to record their own work in a safe, inclusive, lower-stakes environment. During the assessments, every student reads text aloud at the same time, and there is less focus on what others are thinking and more focus on getting through the whole passage. Even the soft voices are recorded by the iPads, and when the assessment ends the teacher is left with a full set of valuable information for each student that can be reviewed anywhere an internet connection is available.

For teachers and students who do not have access to iPads, screencasting is still a possibility; however, the process may require adding software to your computer, and there are a few key factors, which I have addressed in the Appendix, that should be considered before starting your first screencasting assessment.

In one 5-10 minute lesson, all students are first tasked with reading through a passage of *scriptio continua* to identify and pronounce each individual word.¹ Next, students are instructed to schematize the text, identifying verbs in green and subjects in yellow. Finally, students are required to return to the beginning and to translate the passage they have just inked in digital pen.

To view the process in action, click [here](#):

Step 1: Read Aloud

Students use the inking feature of the application to record pen strokes and to divide a passage of *scriptio continua* into individual words. This stage of the assessment gives them the chance to process every word in their minds before attempting to read the word aloud. This process of previewing each word before reading it out loud not only gives students a chance to process each phoneme and syllable before attempting to pronounce the word, but it also leads to excellent post-assessment discussions about new vocabulary and the role of morphology and syntax.

Step 2: Schematization

The basic schematization exercise, while seemingly simple, is a useful assessment tool on two levels. First, it shows each student's facility with morphologi-

¹ To convert any text already digitized, one can simply copy and paste it into Wesley Wood's *No-Spaces* and it will render it in *scriptio continua* or as an interpuncted script.

cal analysis by having students identify parts of speech and basic syntax through ending recognition. It is often at this point in the Educreations for iPad® video that you will hear something like “This ending makes this word look pretty verby.” Secondly, when the students finally go back to translate the passage, those who are able to make sense of the information they produced during the schematization exercise often produce the most fluent translations on their first attempt.

Step 3: Translation

“I don’t know this word, so I’m going to look it up . . .” has become one of my favorite phrases when listening to student videos. As a teacher, if the only information I have from an assessment is what has been written on the page, I am often left with only a flick of a pen to identify the error; however, it is rare that this pen mark will motivate a student to learn his or her vocabulary. By allowing students to look up vocabulary in real time, when they are tasked with watching their own video and reflecting on what they would do differently on their final draft, students are better motivated to internalize the words they missed on the first go.

Step 4: Review and self-reflection

The review and self-reflection processes happen, once again, in a safe, inclusive, low-stakes environment: each student watches his or her own video and listens to the narration through a pair of headphones. During the final review, students learn to engage in the process of metacognition by writing down where they would like to improve and by identifying changes they will make for their final translation. For students who are actively engaged in the process, this period of reflection often brings with it groans, feverish note taking, and finally, a well-constructed translation of the text complete with a video and set of notes that demonstrate true progress.

CONCLUSION

A student cannot even begin to achieve if he or she can’t find the paper on which an assignment is written or has forgotten the book or last night’s homework. Problems with organization also delay processing speed, and processing speed is very important to middle school students. Students at this level often seem to be in a race to get their work done so they can socialize. Unfortunately, those who need more time often rush through tasks at hand, unless, of course, those tasks are engaging, enjoyable, and inclusive. One helpful idea is that of making a Latin notebook part of a course requirement. It works well to set guidelines for the inclusion of

materials so students know where to look to find homework and study materials, but allowing students to be creative in other respects. The most memorable notebooks are often hand decorated by budding artists or full of pictures providing context for vocabulary words or stories.

Gathercole, Lamont, and Alloway have studied how differences in working memory affect student achievement. In an effort to achieve learning success for as many as possible, it is important “to identify the learning activities that will place heavy memory demands” (235). They furthermore note that the “most commonly observed memory-related failure” they observed was “an inability to follow instructions from the teacher” (226). They suggest “keeping the instructions as brief and linguistically simple as possible” and breaking those instructions down into smaller steps (235). A step-by-step set of directions for any Latin assignment is an ideal inclusion at the start of each project. Teachers can insert these directions at the top of a handout or a web page or write them on a board. This guide must be in easy view of all and will be of special value to weaker students, who often miss steps explained orally.

Gathercole and her team also advocate assisting students when “complex learning situations . . . place significant processing and storage demands” (236), as is the case when students translate Latin sentences or stories. A productive pedagogical technique in this regard is that of **coordinating components**. The Latin language can be viewed as containing five components: phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax and pragmatics. Beginning students must learn items within each component category at the same time as they learn how individual items work together to create meaning in sentences. Deriving meaning from Latin sentences is typically the most challenging task we ask of our students. If, therefore, they can focus on sentence syntax and not have to look away to flip through pages in their book or on the web to search for vocabulary or check on a word form, their work becomes more manageable, and their processing speed increases. When working on new noun declensions or such words as **is, ille, hic** or **qui, quae, quod** or verb paradigms, it is helpful to print the word forms on the top of a passage so students don’t have to look in another source to see them. Teachers, however, must never think that the coordination of components is a job that falls to them alone. One or two students can create a list of vocabulary words used in a particular story, and copy the list so all students use it. Student teams can also create English introductions to Latin stories and lists of relatively difficult items in those stories accompanied by explanations. We should

always be aware that “learning is based on success” and “errorless learning,” in which errors are prevented, is of much greater benefit, especially for students with deficits in memory, to “errorful learning,” in which students approach problems using the “trial and error” method (Gathercole, 231).

In summation, knowledge gleaned from research combined and models developed by experienced teachers make it possible to modify teaching methodologies to match the cognitive needs of middle school students. Our goal is to assist all our students-- the blue haired student with the nose ring, the studious, focused learner who can’t understand sentence structure, the yawning student with the family crisis, the fashion obsessed teen who doesn’t turn in homework, and all their peers succeed as Latin students. Their success is our success.

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APPENDIX

Syllabification duplicates the babbling process for students, allowing them to develop the skill of hearing the phonetic construction of the words they will be asked to read. This exercise makes correct pronunciation possible for students who have cognitive processing issues with phonemic awareness. This overt practice allows for more rapid phonemic facility for students without cognitive processing issues.

Preliminary Teacher Tasks

Task 1

- Create a syllabification list for vocabulary by chapter of your text for each chapter in the book.
- In order to do this use the syllabification vowel and diphthong list in the syllabification table.
- Turn to a chapter vocabulary list you will be using and break down each word by syllable.
- List the syllables for the vocabulary in the correct list under the vowel or diphthong list they represent.
- By the end of this task you will have created a list of syllables representing each vowel or diphthong used in the chapter. (It looks like random syllables, but when spliced together, these syllables create the vocabulary that your students are responsible for pronouncing and reading.)

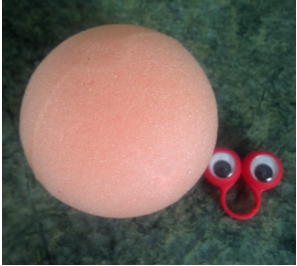



Task 2 – Sponge Ball Puppet

- Project and direction courtesy of Marilyn Price, puppeteer.

TALK TO ME!

A puppet partner for language and literacy development

Marilyn Price: www.marilynprice.com

	<p>Materials: Sponge ball, eyeball puppet, scissors & glue!</p>
	<p>Draw lines and then cut with scissors!</p>
	<p>Insert eyeball ring puppet with a bit of glue!</p>
	<p>Holding ball in your dominant hand squeeze with pressure from your thumb to make the mouth open and close!</p>

Notes:

- Either teacher or students may make puppets.
- If you wish to, students may use the eyes by themselves as puppets.
To do so, slide the eyes onto index finger to create a finger puppet.
To make this puppet talk tap index finger to thumb.

Class Activity Directions

To do this task, students and teacher need the syllabification list for the chapter plus a puppet (see above). If you wish, a puppet can be created by simply using your four fingers to tap up and down vertically on your thumb.

To begin, the teacher models sounds, reading one syllable at a time out loud, using the puppet to speak each sound. The class and its puppets echo each syllable after the teacher. Use approximately three to five minutes of class time to do this exercise on a daily basis. As students become more familiar with the phonemes of the language, you may increase the number of syllables you say in a group (la-ha-tat) and you may compare/contrast long and short vowels by saying them in sequence (la-stā).

After students become proficient in the phonemes teachers may give the leadership role of this task to the class. For many classes this exercise becomes a rapid-fire warm-up for each day's activities. Then the puppets are put away and the lesson proceeds.

[illegible]

Verb Cantata**Materials Needed:**

- Pack of multi-colored 3x5 index cards (six colors needed in total – may use white)
- Markers

To prepare for the Verb Cantata, select one index card of each color:

- Write on one color the PRESENT verb tense person endings (o-s-t/mus-tis-nt)
- Write on another color the IMPERFECT verb tense endings (bam-bas-bat/bamus-batis-bant)
- Write on another color the FUTURE verb tense endings (bo-bis-bit/bimus-bitis-bunt)
- Write on another color the PERFECT verb tense endings (i-isti-it/imus-istis-erunt)
- Write on another color the PLUPERFECT verb tense endings (eram-eras-erat/eramus-eratis-erant)
- Write on another color the FUTURE PERFECT verb tense endings (ero-eris-erit/erimus-eritis-erunt)

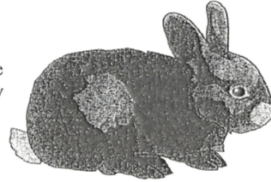
During the Verb Cantata:

- Divide class members into six (6) groups.
- Give one verb tense card to each group along with enough blank cards of the corresponding color for each member.
- Each member of the group should copy the group's verb tense endings on his/her own card.
- Each group is to create a rap, a chant, or a song around its assigned verb tense endings.
- Give them three to five minutes to do so.

- After five minutes, have each group perform their rap, chant, song for the rest of the class.
- Then, arrange the groups to stand together in clumps, as though they were sections in a chorus.
- You, the teacher, become the choral director.
- Bring each group in, in the order you choose, and once a group begins singing, their job is to continue repeating their rap, chant, song.
- Spend about three minutes bringing groups in and changing volume (softer/louder) before you bring the choral work to a conclusion.

*The Ablative Bunny Hop***Ablative Hop**

Students and teachers usually enter Latin class knowing the Bunny Hop. This dance may be used as a kinesthetic memory device to help keep ablative endings under control.

1st 3 steps for singulars

right foot out to side
say "Ā"



left foot out to side
say "Ō"



right foot out to side
say "Ē"

2nd set of 3 steps for plurals

jump with legs together
say "Is"



jump with legs together
say "Is"



jump with legs together
say "Ibus"

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These same six motions of the Ablative Bunny Hop may be used to reinforce memorization and phonological processing for the morphology of Latin case endings.

Chunking at the Middle School Level

What is Chunking?

Chunking may be defined as breaking words into individual morphemes or breaking sentences into syntactic components. Many types of grammatical chunks may be identified. For purposes of this lesson, we will focus on subject chunks and prepositional phrase chunks.

Why is Chunking important?

Chunking helps the efficiency of working memory. Each of us is said to have access to seven bits of working memory. Without chunking, each word of text equals or takes up one bit of memory.

Example

<u>Claudius</u>	<u>&</u>	<u>Publius</u>	<u>sit</u>	<u>under</u>	<u>the</u>	<u>tree.</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

With chunking, each bit of working memory can hold more than one word.

English Example:	<u>Claudius&Publius</u>	<u>sit</u>	<u>(under the tree).</u>
	Subject Chunk	Verb	Prepositional Phrase
	1	2	3

Latin Example:	<u>(Claudius et Publius)</u>	<u>(sub arbore)</u>	<u>sedet</u>
-	Subject Chunk	Prep Phrase	Verb
	1	2	3

Chunking Activity

Materials Needed

- Your Latin Textbook (or Latin text being studied)
- Writing Implement

Task 1

Given a Latin text, bracket the subject chunk and any prepositional phrase chunks.

Ask students to complete Task 1 for the text:

- Find a partner.
- Explain to a partner why each of the words in parenthesis is a Latin chunk.

Task 2

Identify a Latin Text which your students are reading which contains subject and prepositional phrase chunks.

Read the text out loud to your students asking them to:

- Put parenthesis around any chunks they see/hear.
- Label the type of chunk--- subject chunk or prepositional phrase chunk.

Multisensory Assessment: A Digital Approach

A quick search on the internet for “screencasting” will yield several articles and recommendations for screencasting software. While I only use Educreations for iPad®, the following general recommendations aim to help set up a classroom for screencasting without iPads:

- Make sure you have enough hardware for each student to participate at the same time. Each student should be able to complete the exercise on his or her own device at the same time. Each device needs to be equipped with a microphone that can clearly capture the voice of the student sitting directly before it while also cancelling out some of the background noise of the other students in the room. Be sure to test this before you begin.
- Use screencasting software that allows for each student to record his or her own voice while also editing the text on the screen in real time. This software does not have to be costly (Educreations for iPad can be downloaded for free!)
- Develop a plan for how you will gain access to each student’s video. Educreations stores all of the videos in the cloud, which makes it easy for to access all of the videos from one class in a central location. If your sceencasting software does not also come with cloud storage, you may need to have students email you their files.
- Be sure that you are comfortable using the screencasting software that you have chosen for your students. There will certainly be questions about how to navigate the software, and I have found that while there are many applications that have more features than Educreations for iPad®, the simple user interface and limited menu of inking options help to keep my distractible students focused on the task at hand.
- Let your students “play” with the software before actually using it for assessment. When presenting screencasting for the first time to my sixth graders, I show them the absolute basics of the application

and then I tell them to explore. These explorations have led to some wonderful discovery and have also helped me to identify students who will be adept at helping their classmates troubleshoot technology problems in real time.

Veni, Vidi, Vicipaedia: Using the Latin Wikipedia in an Advanced Latin Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Vicipaedia, the Latin Wikipedia, offers instructors an easy and flexible way to integrate composition assignments into a course. The high profile and immediacy of the site makes it uniquely attractive to students while the collaborative nature and complete transparency of the editing process recommend it to instructors. This paper documents the way Vicipaedia was incorporated into one advanced Latin class as a rich learning experience that resulted in better translation and increased understanding of the language. The students' enthusiastic engagement with a broader, digital community also generated significant outcomes beyond those related to Latin language acquisition, ones that benefited not only the students themselves but also the instructor, the department, and the discipline.

KEYWORDS

Latin composition, Wikipedia, Vicipaedia, creative writing, digital humanities, rich learning experience

Numerous recent articles have defended prose composition as a component of Latin instruction.¹ Davisson has reiterated its utility, Dugdale its venerability. The need for a defense has always surprised me, as composition was always a part of my own training, from high school through graduate studies, and one that I found sharpened my skills and profoundly deepened my understanding of the language. My high school creative writing assignments and composition courses in both undergrad and graduate school are fond memories.

As much as I would like to create similar memories for my own students—while similarly honing their skills and deepening their understanding, of course—composition has proven more difficult to incorporate into my own curriculum. Time constraints in the beginning levels leave little room for more than the textbook's English-to-Latin exercises. Due to the small number of students at my institution who take Latin at the advanced level we are unable to offer a dedicated Latin Com-

¹ The foundation for such defenses rests on Saunders (1993).

position course. This past year I attempted to incorporate composition into a regular advanced-level course offering (one normally devoted solely to translation) and ended up with a rich learning experience that produced significant outcomes both in Latin and in broader pedagogical terms. That rich learning experience was turning my students (and myself) into editors of [Vicipaedia](#), the Latin Wikipedia.²

This article will demonstrate the value of engaging with Vicipaedia by relaying my own experience. After outlining the peculiarities of the Latin program at my institution and my own understanding of the value of prose composition, I will discuss how I myself learned to edit Vicipaedia, the ways in which it was incorporated into my classroom, and the effect that it had on the learning outcomes I had designed for my students. Besides the obvious desire to increase my students' facility with Latin and understanding of the language I also had other broader goals that will be discussed separately. These involved engaging my students in the digital world, increasing the visibility of my department and discipline within my institution, and bringing my language teaching more in line with my overall pedagogy and the mission of my university. Some possibilities for further development will be presented and, finally, a short appendix will serve as an introduction to the mechanics of editing Vicipaedia for interested instructors.

BACKGROUND

At Gonzaga University students work through a Latin textbook (*Wheelock*) over the course of three semesters. The fourth semester is given over to building the skill of translation in a transitional course that involves reading a continuous narrative slowly and carefully, with generous amounts of review. After that come 300-level, or Advanced, Latin courses, centered on an author or genre. Enrollments and staffing limitations are such that fourth-year courses are not feasible, so the Advanced Latin courses contain both juniors and seniors. Freshmen and sophomores are also present in these courses, since every year we have students arriving with sufficient high school Latin that they can skip the introductory courses. In the five years that I have taught at Gonzaga this "one room schoolhouse" approach has

² Similar to Mahoney (2015), I will exclusively use "Vicipaedia," or "the Latin site" to refer to the Latin Wikipedia (la.wikipedia.org) and "Wikipedia," or "the English site" to refer to the English version (en.wikipedia.org). Mahoney appeared as I was completing this project and remains an essential introduction to Vicipaedia by an experienced editor. While she does offer suggestions for incorporating the site into Latin courses, the present article, as articulated above, is devoted more to the issues surrounding prose composition in particular, as well as some of the surprising benefits that can result from integrating Vicipaedia in this way.

yielded enrollments ranging from four to fifteen students in a given semester. The content of the Advanced Latin courses is rotated so that students can theoretically take them all four years and not repeat authors or texts. We alternate Republican and Imperial authors every year, with prose in the fall and poetry in the spring.

As can be seen in the above description, our program is a fairly traditional one. In part this is a feature of the program as I inherited it but it also reflects my own training and pedagogy. Thus I had never questioned the value of prose composition as a part of language training, and was disappointed that our enrollments ruled out the possibility of a separate course devoted to it. In a traditional program such as ours the arguments made in defense of composition by Saunders (1993) over twenty years ago still carry weight and I note that they are still cited by the various instructors who have proposed innovative ways of incorporating composition into their classrooms in recent years.³ Nonetheless I recognize that newer approaches such as Comprehensible Input have arisen. As will be discussed below, I think that Vicipaedia can offer something to Latin instructors regardless of their chosen pedagogy.

In the spring of 2015 the one advanced Latin course offered at Gonzaga was Republican Poetry and the chosen author was Lucretius. Five students were enrolled. Besides completing the usual assignments of translation and scansion the class also read and discussed Stephen Greenblatt's *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* and some of its most prominent critiques.⁴ In looking for a means to include composition in the class I thought of Vicipaedia, a site I had included in past courses as an occasional supplement or diversion much as I have used [Nuntii Latini](#) or its imitators.

My original conception of how Vicipaedia would be included in the course revolved around its entry for Lucretius, which at the time was a poorly written stub with clear grammatical errors in its Latin.⁵ My goal was to have students gradually develop their skills and confidence in editing Vicipaedia over the course of the semester and then rework the entry on Lucretius as their summative final project. This meant learning something about Vicipaedia and how it worked.

3 Besides [Davisson](#) and [Dugdale](#), mentioned above, see, for example, [Trego](#), Gruber-Miller, [Beneker](#), and [Lord](#).

4 Most notably Jim Hinch's devastating review "[Why Stephen Greenblatt is Wrong—and Why It Matters](#)," *LA Review of Books*, 1 Dec. 2012. Web. 15 Sept. 2015. <<https://lareviewofbooks.org/review/why-stephen-greenblatt-is-wrong-and-why-it-matters>>

5 Thanks to the transparency and archiving discussed below, the page as it stood at the time can be viewed in its entirety [here](#).

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH VICIPAEDIA⁶

Anyone can edit any of the Wikipedias, including Vicipaedia, at any time. While this doesn't require the creation of an account, registration makes it far easier to track edits and changes. One of the advantages of the Wikipedia system is its transparency. All changes are recorded and recoverable. In the event of unregistered accounts the IP address is listed. For this reason I knew that I would be requiring my students to register so that I could track their work. My first step was therefore to register an account of my own, "Dr. Ostorius." Since the transparency would work both ways I also registered a second account under another name to experiment with editing. Registering on either the Latin or English site carries over to the other.

I began small by correcting some of the weaker Latin on certain pages, e.g., changing *tribus* in reference to Native American tribes to *natio* on a number of pages. The user interface is fairly easy to grasp. After only an hour or so I felt comfortable creating my first page. I decided to create a page for Spokane, Washington, the city in which my university is located:

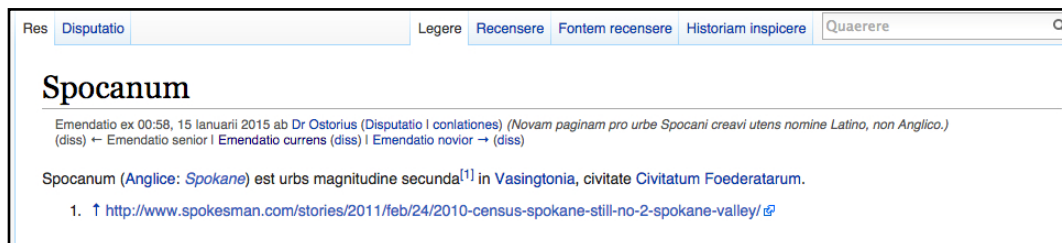


Figure 1. Spocanum, initial draft

Note the transparency mentioned above. All changes are recorded and recoverable by clicking on *Historiam Inspecere*. This image is the result of such a search and therefore shows who produced the edit, the date and time, and any comments made by the editor (which can be made in any language).

One reality of the Wikipedia system became readily apparent. Within an hour the Spokane article I had created had been edited and augmented by someone else:

⁶ As mentioned above, Mahoney (2015), a Vicipaedia editor with many years experience, provides an excellent overview of the site and its history, especially for those unfamiliar with the Wikipedia system. For a more step-by-step guide to getting started as a Vicipaedia editor see the Appendix below.



Figure 2. Spocanum, edited by a Vicipedia editor

Much of this was bringing the page into alignment with some of Vicipedia's standards, of which I was unaware at the time. While this user, Jondel, is an experienced Vicipedia editor, note the improper Genitive in the image caption. A flurry of edits followed over the course of the day, some of them done by automatic programs or "bots" that are designed to maintain uniformity. Among the edits by actual people was the following request for a citation regarding the Latin form of the city's name:



Figure 3. Spocanum, request for citations

Nine hours after I had created it the page had stabilized as follows:



Figure 4. Spocanum, page stabilized

This experience made it clear to me that I had to become more familiar with the workings of Vicipedia, and Wikipedia, before involving my students.

Wikipedia itself is eager to involve academics and their students as editors. The English version of the site has numerous resources geared towards the educator who wants to incorporate Wikipedia into the classroom through the Wiki Education Foundation (<http://wikiedu.org/>). They provide templates and tutorials (both for [instructors](#) and [students](#)) and, once a course is registered on the site, an assigned classroom program manager. Mine contacted me within a few days of my course being registered.

All of this is through the English site, however. Vicipedia has no such infrastructure as of yet. Thus those aspects of the course had to be done through Wikipedia. Nonetheless my classroom program manager was up for the challenge and recruited one of the more prominent Vicipedia editors, Andrew Dalby, to assist in what appeared to be an unprecedented inter-Wiki enterprise. Andrew provided valuable advice in shaping the Vicipedia experience for my students and me. Additionally, once I had created a User page on Vicipedia the following welcome message appeared on the *Disputatio* or “Discussion” portion of that page:



Figure 5. User welcome page

The message alerted me to, respectively:

- [Links and hints for new users](#) (available in a variety of languages, including [English](#))
- An [editing and style guide](#) (also available [in English](#))
- A [translator's guide](#) (in English)
- A [forum for questions](#)
- A link to [Vicipaedia's entry on Neolatin vocabulary](#)
- [Links to online Latin dictionaries](#) in various languages
- A [list of sources](#) for Latin names of places, including both texts and links

Familiarizing myself with these took approximately a weekend, during which I practiced my skills by creating a number of pages and engaging in dialogue with other editors. After this I felt ready to bring Vicipaedia into the classroom.

VICIPAEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM

The course met for fifty minutes three times a week. I allotted half of every Friday class to Vicipaedia, beginning in the fourth week of the semester. The delay allowed the students time to learn about Lucretius, as the first assignment was to read and assess the page devoted to him. As mentioned above, at the time it was a [poorly written stub](#), with very little biography and clear grammatical errors in its Latin. An overly long and superfluous quotation from the *De Rerum Natura* dominated the page. The state of the page surprised and motivated my students.

The next step was to have them learn the basics of editing. While all of my students had used Wikipedia none had experience editing it or much knowledge about its internal workings. Thus the early assignments were geared towards orientation. Most useful were the training tutorials—one for the students and one for me—provided by the English site.⁷ These involved not only the practicalities of editing but also the philosophical underpinnings of the site. These are articulated in what Wikipedia calls its [Five Pillars](#):

1. Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia
2. Wikipedia has a neutral point of view
3. Wikipedia is free content
4. Wikipedians should interact in a respectful and civil manner
5. Wikipedia does not have firm rules

The ramifications of numbers 1 and 4 in particular generated productive discussion in class, since the students had not considered the nature of Wikipedia before. Number 4 would be revisited in class when other Vicipaedia editors would edit the students' creations, sometimes to their chagrin. Other principles that are stressed in the tutorials are verifiability, notability, and avoiding original research.

The basics of editing were then practiced on the Spokane page that I had created. The first assignment after completing the orientation was to produce a list of famous Spokaneites, people who had either been born or lived a significant portion of their lives in Spokane. We focused on notability to winnow this list down to

⁷ Student tutorial: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Training/For_students.

Instructor tutorial: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Training/For_educators.

five in order that each student could be responsible for one. Then, in class, we added them one by one to a template I had created for Spokane's *Cives Illustres*, using Bing Crosby as an example. The result was that each student added a name to the following subsection on the Spocanum page:

Cives Illustres
Apud illustres qui Spocani nati sunt vel diutius habitabant sunt:
Henricus "Bing" Crosby
Tom Foley
Ryan Lewis
Hilaria Swank
Iohannes Stockton
Craig T. Nelson

Figure 6. Famous Spokaneites

The students worked from laptops or smartphones as we viewed the page together on a digital projector. Watching these names appear in real time on the screen in the classroom gave the students an immediate sense of accomplishment, as did the knowledge that this was now live on the Internet. Note that students were at this point still adjusting to one of the stipulations in Vicipaedia's style guide: that a first name with an established Latin form should be given in that form. "Tom" would later be corrected to "Thomas."

This list provided the framework for the next assignment, which involved more advanced editing. Over the next two weeks students were expected to add descriptors (e.g., *actrix*, *cantor*) to their Spokaneite on the Spocanum page and then hotlink their names to individual pages. Most of those pages had to be created by them from scratch, as only Bing Crosby and Hilary Swank had preexisting pages on Vicipaedia.

Two tools highlighted by Andrew Dalby proved especially useful in this. The first was the code `{{in progress}}` that could be added to the top of a page to indicate its status as a work in progress. When entered it generated the following (with the English dropdown activated):

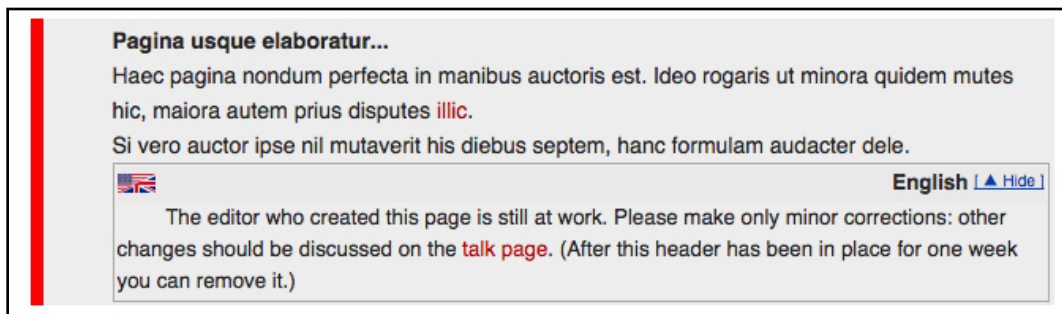


Figure 7. In-progress tool

For the most part this prevented aggressive editing by other Vicipedia users, although it was not a guarantee. Our plans to also edit the Vicipedia page for Gonzaga University had to be dropped after another user began a series of edits even though the `{{in progressu}}` formula had been applied. As will be discussed below, this could have been avoided by using Wikipedia's Sandbox feature.

The other resource that was useful at this stage was the formula that spelled out what elements were necessary for a page to be considered a stub:



Figure 8. Stub requirements tool

This formula served as an outline for assignments and a ready checklist for assessing student performance. It also helped reinforce the lessons from our orientation on what the nature and purpose of an encyclopedia is, particularly through the requirement that students go out and create links on other pages to the one that they were creating. The end result was the following list, with each entry hotlinked to a fully developed stub produced by the students:

Incolae notabiles
Inter illustres qui Spocani nati sunt vel diutius habitabant sunt:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Henricus "Bing" Crosby, cantor et actor• Thomas Foley, politicus Americanus, iurisconsultus• Ryan Lewis, editor musicae• Craig T. Nelson, actor• Ioannes Stockton, lusor canistriludii• Hilaria Swank, actrix

Figure 9. Famous Spokaneites linked to fully developed stubs

We then turned our attention towards editing the Lucretius page. Having read a good deal on Lucretius by this time the students readily saw the deficiencies of the existing page. Their obvious point of comparison was the corresponding [entry on Wikipedia](#), but I also drew their attention to the entries for Lucretius on the [Spanish](#), [French](#), [Italian](#), and [German](#) versions of Wikipedia. It did not require fluency in those languages to see that there were multiple perspectives on Lucretius and different points of concern among the various editors.

Since the Lucretius page was preexisting and of a higher profile than our Spokane page, I decided it was best not to approach it piecemeal. Working on revisions gradually and then making one sweeping edit seemed best, so we availed ourselves of another Wikipedia tool, the [Sandbox](#). This is a space available to any registered user that allows for unfettered experimentation with editing. The results do not leave this particular page, or “sandbox.” We had not used this tool initially in part because it is not available on Vicipaedia; the class used the Sandbox associated with my Dr. Ostorius account on the English site.

As a class we spent one period discussing what we found lacking on the Vicipaedia Lucretius page and arrived at five areas that needed to be addressed, e.g., his Epicureanism, his relationship with Memmius, his later influence, etc. Each student

took responsibility for one of the areas. The plan was for each of them to write one or two short sentences in Latin on their assigned topic. Two weeks would then be spent working on this composition in class, with feedback given by the other students and me. Additionally each student was also assigned a book of the *De Rerum Natura* to summarize briefly in Latin as a replacement for the existing summaries. This was to be similarly workshopped in class. Once a consensus was reached we would move out of the Sandbox and update the Lucretius page on Vicipaedia. That was the extent of my original plans for incorporating Vicipaedia in the course.

It became apparent early on, however, that I had failed to take into account my students' enthusiasm and their desire for self-expression. As soon as I outlined the original assignment for them they began to ask when they would be working on pages of their own choosing. Hence I added one final project to the course: the creation of a Vicipaedia page of their choosing. The only stipulation was that it had to be a completely new page on the site. By the end of the term, therefore, Vicipaedia had pages for [Snoop Dogg](#), [Dave Grohl](#), [Felicity Jones](#), [Janelle Monáe](#), and [Pat Summitt](#). Each had to meet the same basic requirements for a stub as listed above. This was completed one week before the end of the semester and it was interesting to watch their reactions following the completion of the assignment as other editors or bots touched up their pages. Some took offense at changes being made while others lamented that no one was paying any attention to their creation.

To make room for this added assignment I decided to focus on the summaries of the *De Rerum Natura* and to shortchange the other additions we had planned for the Lucretius page. Their initial drafts on their assigned topics had been as follows:

His relationship to Memmius [edit]
Memmius erat amicus Lucretii. Carmen Lucretii, <i>De Rerum Natura</i> , dedicavit Memmio.
His Epicureanism [edit]
Propositum rationis Epicureae est voluptatem conficere et dolorem evitare. Epicurus doceat bonum est moderate vivere.
His influence on Latin writers [edit]
Postquam mortem Lucretii, poetas multos Romanos adfecit, hoc est Vergilium, Horatium, Ovidiumque.
His influence on later, non-Roman writers [edit]
Multos annos postquam vitam Lucretii, Stephen Greenblatt, scriptor, adficetur a Lucretio in suo libro. Potes legere in The Swerve.
His rediscovery [edit]
Liberi anno 1417 Poggio Bracciolino reperiabant. Anno 1473 primum imprimebant.

Figure 10. Planned additions to the Vicipaedia Lucretius page

While we wouldn't be able to devote the weeks we had planned to revising these, nonetheless, having read *The Swerve*, my students were keen that something be included about Lucretius' influence and Poggio Bracciolini's recovery of the text in particular. So we spent one class period combining and reworking three of the sentences above (with a little stronger guidance from me than in our other assignments) into the following:

Post mortem [[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

Post mortem multi poetae Romani Lucretium aemulati sunt, inter quos [Vergilius](#) in primis, sed etiam [Horatius](#), [Ovidius](#), et alii. Multis post saeculis tamen philosophia Lucretii posterioribus, praesertim Christianis, tam displicuit ut exempla operum quasi evanuerunt. Anno 1417 [Poggio Bracciolino](#) ultimum [manuscriptum](#) invenit et poema *De rerum natura* in lumen reddidit.

Figure 11. Actual addition to the Vicipaedia Lucretius page

I will discuss the work that we did focus on, the summaries of the books of the *De Rerum Natura*, and the outcomes that resulted below.

Our schedule thus ended up as follows. Except for the tenth week approximately half an hour of class time was devoted to the Vicipaedia project:

Week	Assignment
3	Introduction.
4	Read and assess Lucretius page on Vicipaedia.
5	Complete student tutorials, discuss nature of Wikipedia.
6	List notable Spokaneites, add to Spocanum page.
7	Create viable stub pages for said Spokaneites.
8	Finalize those stubs.
9	Discuss deficiencies of Vicipaedia page on Lucretius, assign topics and books.
10	Rushed workshopping and finalization of section on Lucretius' legacy. (Full period)
11	Work on summaries of <i>De Rerum Natura</i> books.
12	Work on summaries of <i>De Rerum Natura</i> books.
13	Finalize summaries of <i>De Rerum Natura</i> books.
14	Workshop personal pages.
15	Finalize personal pages.

LATIN OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Of course the Vicipaedia assignments were no substitute for a dedicated Latin Composition course. They did, however, provide an opportunity for students to stretch themselves and engage with the language in a uniquely rewarding way. As Saunders (p. 392) remarks, “The goal of prose composition depends on the level of the students.” My goals were relatively modest. Knowing that I did not have the time for comprehension instruction in this area, I made it my goal to stress certain aspects of Latin.

These were aspects that I thought would benefit my students’ understanding of the language, but also ones I thought were lacking on Vicipaedia. As I prepared for the course by reading extensively on the site, I noticed that, unlike [Nuntii Latini](#), the Latinity of the various editors varied widely. Much of it read exactly like translated English. Thus I thought it would benefit both my students and the website to stress certain ways that Classical Latin and English differ in expression. My hope was that this would assist them in translating Lucretius as well as in their composition efforts. I wanted to encourage my students to write in as Latin a manner as possible. To that end I drew up an admittedly subjective list of priorities that was based on my own reading of Vicipaedia and the deficiencies I perceived there. It was also aimed at some of the aspects of Lucretius’ Latin that were proving difficult for my students in their regular translation assignments. That list was composed of the following:

- Verbs over nouns. E.g., *the book praises Venus* instead of *the book contains praise of Venus*.
- Ablative absolutes and participles in general. E.g., *with Epicurus praised* instead of *he praised Epicurus and then . . .*
- Less common case uses. E.g., *Epicurus outstrips Hercules*. Constructions such as the Dative with compound verbs or Ablative of specification are largely avoided on Vicipaedia. Instead a lot of prepositions are used, sometimes resulting in Latin that looks more medieval.
- More complex syntax. E.g., Indirect Statement and Question. Vicipaedia editors avoid the subjunctive mood in general.

- Finally, when writing about Lucretius and the *De Rerum Natura* I encouraged them to incorporate Lucretius' own vocabulary and phrasing.

This required a good deal of time and effort, which we were only able to bring to bear fully on the summaries of the *De Rerum Natura*, due to time constraints. The three weeks we spent on those, however, demonstrate real progress.

As mentioned above, the summaries as we found them were nearly incomprehensible:

Partes
[edit | edit source]

Poema Lucretii mittitur ad **Gaium Memmum** et scribantur sex liber in quibus exponetur disciplina Epicurea seminum.

Liber primus: NIHIL GERITUR EX NIHILO in exordio laus Veneris (Aenaidum genetrix) est, hominum deorumque voluptas. Venus invocata est quod Marti roget pacem Romanis. Praeterea laus Epicuro est. Lucretius tandem exponet disciplinam Epicurea: nihil geritur ex nihilo, sed omnia mutant. Semina (corpuscula minima) aeterna, individua, immutabilia est.

Liber secundus: MOTUS ET PROPRIETAS SEMINUM

Liber tertius: ANIMUS RES MORTALEM

Liber quartus: DE SENSIBUS

Liber quintus: ORBS MORTALEM FORTUITUMQUE

Liber sextus: DEFINITIO DE RERUM NATURA

Figure 12. Initial summaries of *De rerum natura*, books 1-6

The students' first drafts were improvements, but largely lacked the characteristics listed above, as seen in this snapshot of our Sandbox page:

Summaries of the Books of the *De Rerum Natura*
[edit]

1 (I will write)

2 Liber duo res primordiorum describit et fides Omnia esse fortuita. Quae etiam "the swerve" appellavit.

3 Lucretius Epicurum laudat. Animum mortalem esse et quomodo animum situm sit exponet. Genum humanum mortem non metuere hortatur.

4 Lucretius pericula amoris describet. Amor voluptatem promittit sed dolorem dat.

5 Liber quintus est laudationem of Epicurii. Lucretius scribet de initium of mundi, humanitatis, and religionis.

6 Liber sex describit naturam deosque. Lucretius incipit explicare causas tonitrus, fulminis, concussionum.

Figure 13. Summaries of *De rerum natura*, students' first drafts

The students' work in the Sandbox could easily be tracked by clicking on the "View History" tab of the Sandbox, as seen in the following sample:

- (cur | prev) 18:36, 13 April 2015 **Rklohe** (talk | contribs) .. (2,691 bytes) (+106) .. (→Summaries of the Books of the *De Rerum Natura*) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) 00:13, 13 April 2015 2601:8:aa80:1098:a8c3:20f8:fdd8:7bbf (talk) .. (2,585 bytes) (-6) .. (→His influence on Latin writers) (undo)
- (cur | prev) 23:18, 12 April 2015 **MJosephine10** (talk | contribs) .. (2,591 bytes) (+79) .. (→Summaries of the Books of the *De Rerum Natura*) (undo | thank)

Figure 14. View history of student work

Note that the middle entry is by a student who forgot to log on, hence her work, as mentioned above, was recorded only under her IP address.

After the first drafts were posted we worked mostly in class on revising and elaborating them. The translation of Lucretius that occupied the majority of our class time helped with the composition. Students became much more aware of the aspects of Latin outlined above when they occurred in Lucretius (as they did quite frequently). Their familiarity with Lucretian language naturally increased as the semester progressed as well. I also modeled good practices as I wrote the summary of the first book myself. Three weeks of lively feedback and workshopping yielded the following:

De rerum natura [edit | edit source]

Solum opus Lucretii quod exstat vulgo *De rerum natura* appellatur. Lucretius poema **Gaio Memmio** dedicat. In sex libris disciplinam **Epicuream** explicat.

I. Venerem laudat et genetricem omnium appellat. Epicuro etiam laudato duo principia disciplinae Epicureanae explicat: nil ex nilo gigni posse et nil ad nilum disolvere. Ergo omnis natura duabus in rebus constitit quae corpora innumera et inane sunt.

II. Explicat quomodo disciplina Epicurea sola homines feliciores faciat, dein motum et naturam caecorum corporum, vel seminum, e quibus omnia constant. Fortuita sunt omnia propter clinamen seminum. Sunt alii orbes terrarum praeter nostrum.

III. Epicuro iterum laudato, naturam animi exponit, in primis animum esse mortalem. Perit nobiscum. Homines ne mortem metuant hortatur. Iste metus fons malorum est. At mors ad nos nil est.

III. Confitetur quomodo mel versuum medicamen amarum philosophiae celet. Multa multumque de sensibus et corpore exponit, dein pericula amoris. Amor voluptatem promittit sed dolorem dat.

V. Epicurum laudat et cum caelestibus confert. Epicurus Herculi et aliis deis longe praestat. Dein initium mundi et hominum et sermonis et religionis explicat. Quorum omnia forte facta sunt, sine auxilio deorum. Mundus creatus olim item peribit.

VI. Epicuro iam iterum laudato, pietatem veram discit. Dei, tranquilli et longe remoti a nobis, imitandi sunt. Natura rerum et clinamen seminum tonitrus, fulmina, nubes, imbres, motus terrae, morbos, et cetera creant, non dei. Denique illam pestilentiam Athenis explicat.

Figure 15. Final summaries of *De rerum natura*, books 1-6

This was then posted to the actual Lucretius page on Vicipaedia.

The final project, in which the students created Vicipaedia pages of their own choosing, was assessed in two ways. The first was as a Vicipaedia page. The rubric for this was simply the requirements for a stub, as seen in Figure 8 above.

The other assessment focused on the student's Latinity. They were encouraged to incorporate the aspects of Latin that we had stressed in the *De Rerum Natura* summaries into their own pages. Since we spent less time in class workshopping these pages the resulting Latin was not as highly developed, but each student managed to incorporate at least one of the points mentioned above (e.g., less common case uses, ablative absolutes, etc.) into their text.⁸ Anecdotally all of the students expressed to me that their understanding of Latin had been significantly increased

⁸ As can be seen on the aforementioned pages for [Snoop Dogg](#), [Dave Grohl](#), [Felicity Jones](#), [Janelle Monáe](#), and [Pat Summitt](#).

and deepened.⁹ The time devoted to the project may have meant that we read less of Lucretius but I believe we read it better.

OTHER OUTCOMES

I had other goals besides improving my students' understanding of Latin. My second goal was to change their relationship to Wikipedia. I also quickly realized that there were potential benefits in this project for my department and discipline, as well as myself and my pedagogy. Third, the Vicipaedia project brought my language teaching into alignment with the outcomes of my other, non-language, courses. And fourth, it increased the visibility and relevance of Classics at Gonzaga among my colleagues and administrators.

"Want to stir up a room full of college faculty and librarians? Mention *Wikipedia*." Head and Eisenberg began their recent study of Wikipedia usage among American college students with a quote that may ring familiar to many educators ([Head and Eisenberg](#)). University websites are rife with warnings about the pitfalls of using Wikipedia.¹⁰ Nonetheless, only 9% of students participating in Head and Eisenberg's study declared that they "never" used the site. All of the students in my class had used Wikipedia. None had previously edited it.

Attitudes among academics are changing, however, as evidenced by the title of Avi Wolfman-Arent's recent article, "Academics Continue Flirting With a Former Foe: Wikipedia." He notes that "Where there once was skepticism, even outright hostility, there is now a tacit embrace of Wikipedia's power to amplify ideas" ([Wolfman-Arent](#)). In preparing for this project I found myself agreeing with the work of Adeline Koh, an Assistant Professor of Literature at Richard Stockton College, who identifies herself as

part of a growing movement of teachers who integrates student editing of Wikipedia pages into our pedagogy. There are many pedagogical reasons for this; integrating Wikipedia editing into your courses teaches students to navigate the rules and social

⁹ I would add parenthetically that the process benefited me as well. I certainly enjoyed the challenge of editing Vicipaedia myself. As mentioned above, composition was a regular part of my own training and I greatly value the ways in which it hones my skills as it brings them to bear in a new environment.

¹⁰ See, for example, those offered by the libraries at [Harvard](#), which offers a fairly blanket dismissal, or [Williams](#), which contains a more nuanced discussion.

norms of an online community of knowledge creation, trains them in developing responsible public-facing research, and introduces them to ways of dealing with a variety of responses to their work. ([Koh "Integrating"](#))

Koh's points translated to our work well. Students learned to navigate the world of Vicipaedia, they knew that their work would be in the public eye, and they dealt with a variety of responses to it. The public nature of this work, combined with the complete transparency of the Wikipedia system, ensured that they took their assignments seriously, as well as their new roles as members of a knowledge-creating community. This meant that the project benefited not only my students but also Wikipedia itself.

Wikipedia is designed to be democratic and open but in recent years there has been concern over the decreasing number of editors involved in the site ([Lih](#)). From 2007 to 2013 the number shrank by a third ([Simonite](#)). Of even greater concern is the fact that the overwhelming majority of those editors are male ([Potter](#)). This has prompted the formation of numerous Wikipedia "Edit-A-Thons" designed to encourage women to become involved in Wikipedia as editors, as well as to increase the amount of woman-centered content on the site ([Koh "Edit-a-Thon"](#), [McGurran](#)). My Lucretius class consisted of three women and two men, a fairly typical ratio in my Latin courses. One student in fact, minoring in Women and Gender Studies in addition to her Classics major, was well aware of the phenomenon of Edit-A-Thons and welcomed the opportunity to become a Wikipedia editor.

The project also benefited my department and discipline. Editing Vicipaedia refutes some of the commonly made complaints about the teaching of Latin and Classics. I'm sure everyone who teaches Latin has heard versions of the same criticisms: Latin is a dead language, Latin is useless, it's "ivory-tower stuff," etc. Students who have worked on Vicipaedia are able to rebut many of those criticisms. Is Latin dead? While the grammatical rules may be fixed (a common definition of a "dead" language) nonetheless here is a living community of writers using Latin in the modern world. Does Latin have no relevance to contemporary life? Here are articles on everything from [LeBron James](#) to [ISIS](#). What application can Latin have? Here there are people applying Latin every day in order to communicate across national and linguistic borders.

The international aspect of Vicipaedia is of particular interest at my home institution. Because Gonzaga is a Jesuit university one of the key components of its mission is global engagement.¹¹ This can be difficult to incorporate into a Latin classroom. Contributors to Vicipaedia, however, come from all over the world. My students were surprised to find their Vicipaedia contributions being edited by people from places such as Italy and the Philippines. The collaborative nature of the site means that students are interacting with people all over the globe.

Local engagement is also valued by my institution and the dean of my college, Arts and Sciences, in particular.¹² Although they are strongly encouraged to do so, Gonzaga students do not always engage with the local community. My students not only had to research Spokane but also represent it to the worldwide community of Vicipaedia. Each of them learned new facts about Spokane through this project, as did I. All of this aligns with my university's mission statement that it "educates students for lives of leadership and service for the common good" ([Mission](#)). That they "apply [their] skills for the benefit of others" ([Mermann-Jozwiak](#)).

The benefits also extended to the medium in which my students were working. As mentioned above, the project benefited Vicipaedia, by adding content and improving its Latinity, and the Wikipedia system, by bringing in new editors. Over the course of the semester I came to realize that this was in keeping with my university's mission as well. This was also part of the common good. We were simply extending our ideas about citizenship and service to the digital world. "Digital citizenship" is a topic of growing concern for educators.¹³ For me it simply means expanding my definition of service and engagement to the increasingly pervasive and influential digital world.

Among academics the default conversation about Wikipedia is still often whether or not it should be cited in scholarly work.¹⁴ Simply decrying the most widely used reference work in the world, however, achieves little, especially since it is designed to be corrected when wrong. What seems to be lacking is a willingness

11 "The Gonzaga experience fosters a mature commitment to dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and care for the planet" ([Mission](#)).

12 "I am proud to be the Dean of a college faculty that demonstrates, on a daily basis, its dedication to students, and to the broader Spokane community" ([Mermann-Jozwiak](#)).

13 Note discussions at such popular educational forums as [Edutopia](#) and [teachthought](#), and the efforts of Mike Ribble's [Digital Citizenship Institute](#).

14 Hence warnings such as [Harvard's](#), which discourages students from using Wikipedia in general, or [Williams's](#), which discusses the matter with more nuance.

to engage, i.e., to be a responsible digital citizen. That was the habit I intended to inculcate in my students through their Vicipaedia assignments. I am not alone in thinking that working with Wikipedia is good training for digital citizenship ([Collier](#)).

My dean was also pleased to hear of the project due to an increasing emphasis in our college on digital humanities. There may not yet be complete consensus regarding the term (see e.g., Schnapp), but I favor the fairly simple definition offered by Elijah Meeks, the digital humanities specialist at Stanford University: “The use of computational methods and tools for the study of traditional humanities questions” ([Meeks](#)). The work my students performed over the course of the semester—translation and composition—was in its essence completely traditional. The digital context required new tools and methods and so transformed their experience.

As to my own pedagogy, it has been influenced over the last few years by L. Dee Fink’s work, particularly his *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*. This is a book that is promoted heavily at my university via course design workshops and seminars. Fink encourages instructors to create “rich learning experiences”—rich in that they “enable students to achieve multiple kinds of significant learning all at the same time.” (Fink, p. 123) For Fink there are six kinds of significant learning (Fink pp. 43-61):

1. Foundational Knowledge, or the basics of understanding and remembering.
2. Application, or developing the skills to use foundational knowledge.
3. Integration, or making connections. Fink includes in this interdisciplinary learning, working within a learning community, and connecting academic work with other areas of life.
4. Human Dimension, or addressing the relationships and interaction we have with ourselves and with others.
5. Caring, or developing enthusiasm for a topic.
6. Learning How to Learn.

Editing Vicipaedia was a remarkably rich learning experience because it involved all six of these to a degree. Students learned how to apply their understanding of Latin grammar and vocabulary in a way that integrated them into a worldwide community of editors. They collaborated with those editors and with their classmates and reflected on those collaborations. The overall project definitely generated enthusiasm among the students that was only heightened by the opportunity to create Vicipaedia pages of their own choosing. Finally, my own inexperience allowed them to learn how to learn. Numerous questions came up throughout the project, whether related to Latin vocabulary for modern concepts or the particulars of the Wikipedia system, that I could not answer readily. This meant that we had to work together as a class to answer them and so students were given a model of how to seek out knowledge.

POTENTIAL

It should be clear that Vicipaedia offers innumerable opportunities for the Latin instructor. This article documents its use in a small, advanced-level course, but there is no reason it could not also be used in other types of courses in other ways, even in the earliest stages of instruction. Projects can be large or small. My own project ended up more scaled back than I had planned. Instructors with more time could do much more. Students could even develop with Vicipaedia, moving from simple assignments in their first years, perhaps largely involving reading, to fully developed editing by graduation.

In one way my project is not repeatable: the summaries of *De Rerum Natura* are done. Nonetheless, I can see the value in having a future Lucretius class review them. As to other subjects, Vicipaedia is very underdeveloped when compared to other Wikipedias. It comprises only 125,000 individual pages at present, compared to over five million on the English Wikipedia. There are many fallow fields. Allowing students to build their own pages in particular involves infinite possibilities.

I have mentioned the ways in which this project aligned with the goals and mission of my institution. There are other opportunities here as well. In discussing this project with colleagues in Modern Languages the possibility of interdisciplinary collaboration was raised. Could courses in different languages work together on the same topic but different Wikipedias? A university-wide Edit-A-Thon, organized around disciplines? The ancient historian in my own department is also interested. Wikipedia would offer his students a venue for their own research, as would Vici-

paedia if we linked a history and a Latin course. Student research and interdisciplinary studies are other subjects highly valued by my university and, I suspect, many other institutions.

For Latin instructors using less traditional approaches Vicipaedia can also be of benefit. In her recent defense of Oral Latin [Rasmussen](#) repeatedly conjoins the skill of speaking and writing. Vicipaedia offers the opportunity for such students to express themselves to the widest possible audience. The same is true for those advocating a Latin pedagogy more in line with the teaching of modern languages, such as [Carlon](#). My Wikipedia classroom program manager knew of numerous modern language instructors involved in projects on their respective languages' sites, but, to his knowledge, I was the first Latin instructor to do so. My own understanding of the Comprehensible Input method is limited, but Vicipaedia certainly offers the sort of "understandable and compelling messages in the language" ([Patrick](#) 110) that the method requires. When students taught by this method are ready for output as well, Vicipaedia ought to be an attractive forum.

CONCLUSION

For me this project was an attempt to incorporate, even in a small way, prose composition into a curriculum where it is otherwise impossible. Editing Vicipaedia will never be a substitute for a dedicated Latin Prose Composition course in a traditional Classics curriculum. Nonetheless it is a rich learning experience that generates numerous beneficial outcomes, both for the students and the instructor. I will continue incorporating it into future Advanced Latin courses and am currently developing ways to bring it into my beginning and intermediate courses as well. The Wiki Education Foundation wants to work with educators to improve Wikipedia and its related sites. I encourage my fellow Latin instructors to reach out to them.¹⁵

¹⁵ This article has benefited greatly from the help of *TCL*'s editor, John Gruber-Miller, and the comments of its referees. My gratitude goes out to them and—most importantly—to the students of my spring 2015 LATN 303 course, without whom this project would not have been possible.

APPENDIX

As mentioned above, the English Wikipedia has numerous resources geared towards the educator who wants to incorporate the site into the classroom through the Wiki Education Foundation (<http://wikiedu.org/>). They provide templates and tutorials (both for instructors and students) and, once a course is registered on the site, an assigned classroom program manager. While their tutorials on creating and editing Wikipedia pages are thorough, this appendix is intended to walk interested instructors through the basics and to give a sense of the time needed to become familiar with the system.

While it is possible to edit Vicipaedia without creating an account, registration makes it far easier to track edits and changes. Registering on either the Latin or English site carries over to the other, as well as many of the Wikipedias in other languages. [Registration](#) simply involves choosing a screen name and a password and takes seconds:

Sibi nomen imponere

Lingua: Deutsch | English | Esperanto | français | español | italiano | Nederlands

Nomen usoris (help me choose)


Tessera

Tesseractem confirmare

Inscriptio electronica (non necesse)

Ut automata arceantur a nominibus sibi imponendis, verba infra visa inserere velis (ad [explanationem](#)):

CAPTCHA Security check




[Refresh](#)


Can't see the image? [Request an account](#)

Nomen tibi impone


Vicipaedia is made by people like you.



3 131 061
recensiones



125 126
paginae



194
recent contributors

Figure 16. User registration page

Editing

There are multiple ways to begin editing. At the top of every page is the option to edit the page as a whole:



Figure 17. Choice to edit the entire page

Most subsections present the option as well:

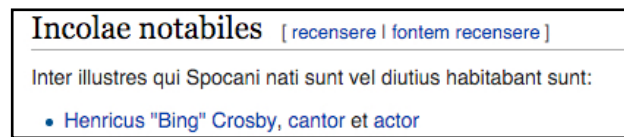


Figure 18. Choice to edit a subsection

The difference between *Recensere* and *Fontem Recensere* is the interface. Clicking on *Fontem Recensere* brings up an html-coded interface:



Figure 19. Fontem Recensere: editing the source code

By clicking on *Prospectum ostendere* at the bottom one can preview changes before publishing them.

Users familiar with coding may find this the most attractive option, but others will want to click on *Recensere*, which brings up a newer and more user-friendly graphical interface, similar to that of word-processing programs such as Word:

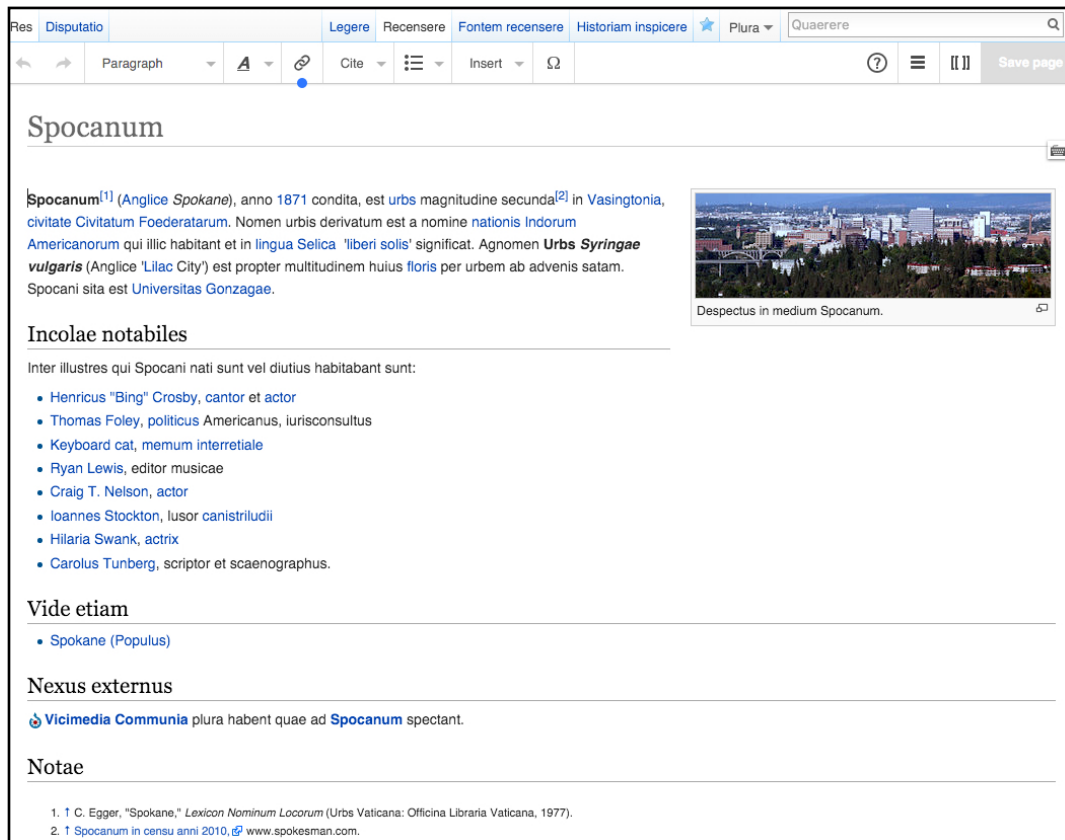


Figure 20. Recensere: WYSIWYG editing

Input here is similar to editing any document. The toolbar is in English regardless of the user's selected language preferences. Clicking on "Save page" brings up the option of previewing changes before publishing as well.

The best way to become accustomed to either editing interface is by working inside a Sandbox. These are only available to registered users so it's another advantage to registering. Since this feature is only available through the English Wikipedia be sure to access it through there. The option appears at the top right of any open page.



Figure 21. Accessing the Sandbox feature

The Sandbox looks like any Wikipedia page. Once inside it, though, you can experiment with formatting, linking, etc. in either editing interface without worrying about publishing or other editors.

Page Creation

Creating a page is straightforward. When a search turns up empty Vicipaedia asks if you would like to create a page on that topic. There is no page devoted to my name, for example, so a search for “Oosterhuis” produces the following:

The screenshot shows the Vicipaedia search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with 'oosterhuis' entered and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, the title 'Eventum investigationis' is displayed. Underneath, there is another search bar with 'oosterhuis' and a blue button labeled 'Quaerere'. To the right of the button, it says 'Result 1 of 1'. Below this, there is a horizontal bar with links: 'Paginae contentorum', 'Multimedia', 'Omnia', and 'Callidissime'. The main content area shows a prompt 'Create paginam "Oosterhuis"' in red. Below this, there is a list of links: 'Socialismus Christianus', 'College Jürgen Moltmann Brian P. Moore Reinholdus Niebuhr, theologus Huub', and 'Oosterhuis Carolus Polanyi Iosephus Smith (filius) Dorothea Sölle Donaldus Soper'. At the bottom, there is a timestamp: '11 chilioceti (670 verba) - 14:43, 13 Martii 2015'.

Figure 22. Blank page

Surprisingly my surname does occur in the text of an article on Christian Socialism, as that includes a reference to the Dutch theologian and poet Huub Oosterhuis (no relation, to my knowledge).

Another noteworthy advantage of registration is that it allows users to view the editing tools in other languages. This was something my students found immensely helpful, as the meanings of the Latin coinages were not always clear. Altering the settings to display the editing text in English would produce the following version of the above page:

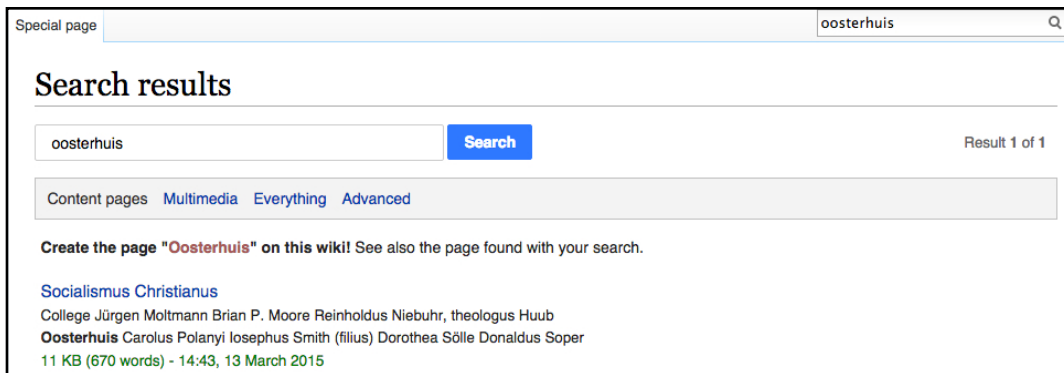


Figure 23. Accessing the editing tools in English

Clicking on the red text (and returning to the Latin) opens the editing box:

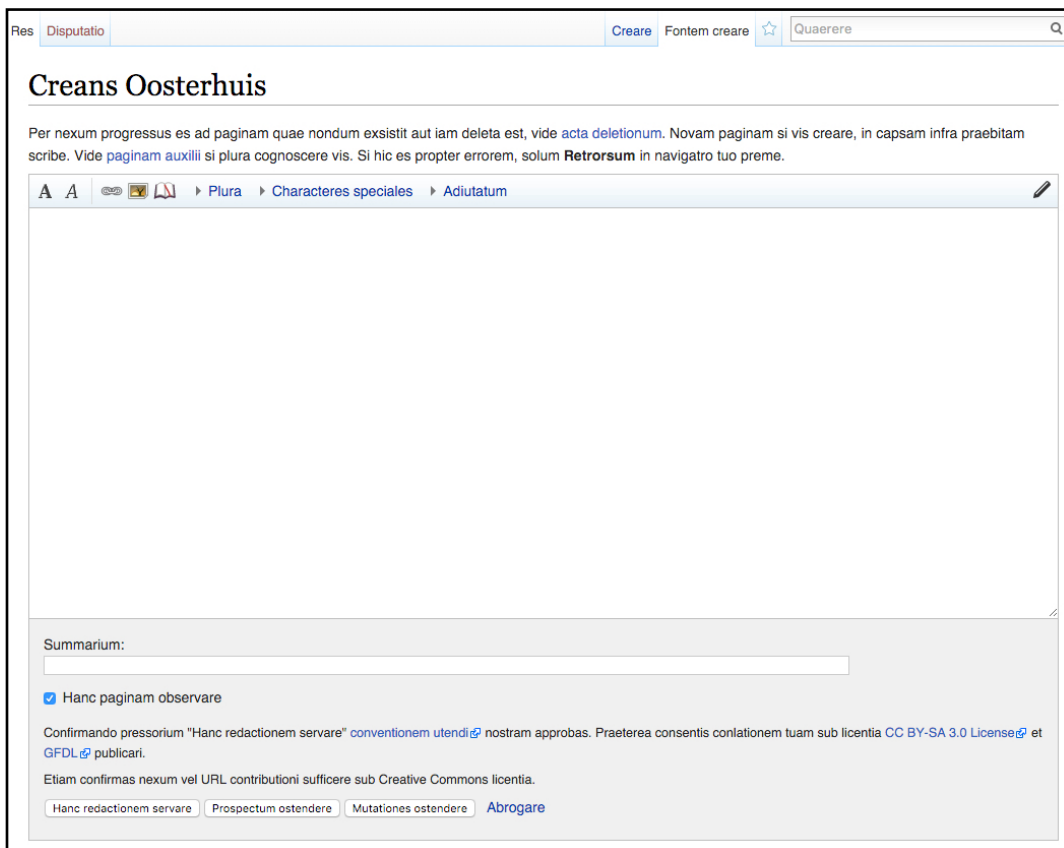


Figure 24. Creating a new page

Click on *Servare hanc rem* and the page is live. Note that the creation process defaults to the code-based *Fontem Recensere* setting. Clicking on the icon of the pencil on the right switches the page to the graphic-based *Recensere* option.

A Note For the Instructor

Wikipedia's [tutorial for instructors](#) offers numerous guides and instructional videos to help you design a Wikipedia project for your course. You can design an assignment using [this template](#) or "[wizard](#)," which also gives you the option of registering your course with their education program. This program is continually developing, however, so it's best to begin simply with the homepage of the Wiki Education Foundation (<http://wikiedu.org/>).

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