



portabam, portabas, portabat: Revolutionising Rote-learning by Utilising Sound and Movement to Introduce the Imperfect and Perfect Tenses

by Lottie Mortimer

Winner of the Roman Society PGCE Research Prize 2016 (Sussex)

*Latin is a language,
Dead as can be,
First it killed the Romans,
Now it's killing me.*

Introduction

Latin teaching is stereotypically associated with rote-learning or as Mount (*Amo, Amas, Amat ... And All That*, 2006, p. 13) summarises the experience: 'learning dreary declensions and conjugations'. When I tell people that I am training to teach Latin, the most common response that I get in reply is something along the lines of 'Oh, I did Latin in school... I wasn't very good at it... but I can still remember *-bo, -bis, -bit...*' and they continue to conjugate in front of me. For many people their only memory of Latin is a joyless experience of grammar by rote, inspiring such rhymes as the one above. Although currently pedagogically unfashionable, there must be some value in rote-learning if people can still recite grammatical paradigms decades later. Inspired by this, I wanted to explore rote-learning in the modern classroom by utilising current research on methods of teaching Latin in the primary sector. Primary Latin teaching often includes sound and movement to engage learners, whilst retaining a heavy emphasis on grammar. I wanted to explore whether such techniques would work at secondary level.

Literature review

Although not referring to specific techniques, Schools Minister Nick Gibb has recently argued that teachers must be allowed to use methods that 'have been out of fashion for up to 50 years' (Barker I., 2016). It could be interpreted that one such technique he is referring to is rote-learning, as one of the key concepts underpinning the Coalition government's examination shake-up was the idea that 'memorisation is a necessary precondition to understanding' (Gove, 2012). The Oxford English Dictionary (2010) defines rote-learning as learning 'in a mechanical or repetitious manner... by memorisation without proper understanding or reflection'. In Latin teaching this method of learning can be seen in the form of grammatical paradigms or vocabulary learning. Whilst Gove has argued that content needs to be memorised to be understood, others have argued that the more meaningful the content, the more rapid the acquisition and the better the retention (Vinacke & Smith, 1959). It is difficult to see how rote-learning could be an effective teaching tool in isolation because at some point students need to develop a meaningful understanding of the content that has been memorised to be able to make use of it. In addition to rote learning of grammatical paradigms, Lister (*Latin in Transition*, 2009, pp. 192-193) points out that, much to universities' dismay, A Level exam boards

have implicitly encouraged the rote-learning of translations of whole passages of complicated Latin over the teaching of the skills to translate them.

Rather than being used in isolation, rote-learning is an integral part of the grammar-translation approach to Latin teaching. Hunt explains that rote-learning is used to memorise grammar rules and vocabulary and only after these have been 'mastered, the student applies their knowledge to practice sentences, from Latin into English and from English into Latin' (Hunt, 2016, p. 34). This approach seems to embody Gove's rationale. Beard (*Confronting the Classics: Traditions, Adventures and Innovations*, 2014, p. 7) refers to this approach as 'the old-fashioned grammar grind', reflecting on the dullness of this style of teaching and the type of reputation that it holds. This is the same view that was held in the 1960s, with Morris (*Viae Novae: New Techniques in Latin Teaching*, 1966, p. 9) concluding that 'the analytical nature of the method is found boring by the majority of the pupils, who give up Latin as quickly as they can'. Although this method gives students a solid understanding of the mechanics of the Latin language, it has been criticised for being so dull that it turns students off the subject. However, for it to be in use for so long, it must have been seen to be effective.

So why did rote-learning and the grammar-translation approach dominate for so long? In the ancient world itself,

Latin was taught by a combination of reading texts with a translation followed by learning grammatical paradigms (Dickey, 2016). By the Victorian period, classical languages dominated the curriculum, serving as ‘an important marker of social status’ (Stray, 2003, p. 1). This was a time when state secondary education did not exist – education had to be paid for. There was also a myth ‘that of the effortless superiority of the classically educated man, able by the virtue of his training, to master any problem in any sphere of life so long as it was amenable to intellectual analysis’ (Sharwood Smith, 1977, p. 1). It was not the language itself, but the grammar-translation method of teaching that gave Latin its place at the heart of the curriculum. This is at the same time as where we see the rise of theories of faculty psychology about how the mind works (Morris, 1966). Morris (*Viae Novae: New Techniques in Latin Teaching*, 1966) explains how ‘the mind, accruing to these theories, consists of separate faculties or powers – reasoning, memory, accuracy, perseverance etc.’ which could be trained and improved. Moreover each one corresponds with a stage of the grammar-translation process – for example memory / rote-learning, perseverance / the study of Latin as a whole. Goldhill (*Love, Sex and Tragedy: Why Classics Matters*, 2004, p. 318) summarises that ‘Greek and Latin provided the furniture of the Victorian mind’. Latin was seen as the ultimate intellectual exercise, with elite universities such as Oxford and Cambridge having O Level Latin as an entry requirement for every undergraduate degree until 1960 (Forrest, 2003, p. 42).

However, even at the height of teaching by rote and grammar-translation, not all were convinced by this pedagogical approach – with Charles Dickens even commenting that this meant literature was viewed as ‘a mere collection of words and grammar, and had no other meaning in the world’ (Richards, 2016). Teachers also criticised the method, with one 19th century handbook remarking ‘little benefit results from these exercises; indeed, in some cases they are prejudicial to the true advancement and improvement of the pupils’ (Northend, 1863, p. 93). The teaching of Latin rapidly declined after the 1960s, when Cambridge and Oxford dropped it from their university entry requirements – after two

world wars and a cold war stirring, scientific education was becoming ever more important (Stray, 2003, p. 2). Suddenly new approaches to teaching the language were adapted in an attempt to revive the teaching of Latin in schools, most notably the development of reading courses such as the *Cambridge Latin Course (CLC)*.

The *CLC* approach focuses on reading Latin, with grammar gently drip-fed in along the way. Whilst the grammar-translation approach initially favoured for training the mind, the reading approach, inspired by cognitive psychology and the theories of Noam Chomsky, ‘aim[s] to promote reading comprehension of Latin’ (Hunt, 2016, p. 38). The *CLC* has been praised for being able to ‘engage and motivate less able students while at the same time challenging and rewarding enough to stretch and inspire the next generation of classics scholars’ (Lister, Exclusively for everyone—to what extent has the *Cambridge Latin Course* widened access to Latin?, 2015, p. 187). It is for this democratisation of Latin that the *CLC* and the reading approach has been praised. A study by Coe (Relative difficulties of examinations at GCSE: an application of the Rasch model, 2006, p. 9) has demonstrated that GCSE Latin is significantly more difficult than other subjects and the Cambridge School Classics Project (CSCP) (Who is Latin for? Access to KS4 Latin qualifications, 2015) argues that more still needs to be done to make Latin an accessible subject for all. However, the *CLC* tends to polarise Latin teachers, with some condemning its lack of grammar content and others praising its accessibility (Story, 2003). Nevertheless, the *CLC* is used by 82% of schools which teach Latin, reflecting the success of the approach (Cambridge School Classics Project, 2008, p. 83). Furthermore, after many years of decline, Latin is currently being offered in more state schools than ever, rising from 100 to 600 in the past 10 years (Woolcock, 2015).

In contrast to the *CLC*’s reading approach at secondary level, many Primary Latin courses have taken a more grammar-focused approach. In the 2013 National Curriculum it is compulsory for students in Key Stage 2 to study either a modern or ancient language (Department for Education, 2013). However, the

document sets out that the focus of modern foreign language study is ‘practical communication’, whilst the focus of an ancient language if chosen is ‘to provide a linguistic foundation for reading comprehension and an appreciation of classical civilisation’ (ibid). Bell (*Minimus*, 2003, p. 63) explains that her *Minimus* course, the most popular primary school Latin course, ‘is about teaching English grammar... through simple Latin.’ Even though the course was first published in 1999, it seems particularly prevalent today with the recent changes to the primary English curriculum which place emphasis on grammatical knowledge (Department for Education, 2013). In addition, the Latin Programme is a project which aims to improve literacy by teaching Latin to students in inner-city London schools. The Latin Programme organisers describe their approach to teaching Latin as ‘fun yet rigorous’ (The Latin Programme, 2016). Wing-Davey (Playing with Pedagogy: A Fresh Approach to Latin at KS2, 2015), the director of the programme, explained that the course is very grammar-focused, but at a young age, students’ brains are very absorbent. The Latin Programme teaches complicated grammar concepts to young students by utilising four key elements: competition, repetition, movement and music / sound (ibid). Using these elements, they are able to successfully teach Latin grammar to students of a young age.

This experience of teaching by the sensory experience of movement and sound is not new – one of the pioneers of a sensory learning approach was Maria Montessori. Although her work mostly relates to the ‘absorbent minds’ of young learners, she argues that ‘movement enhances thinking and learning’ (Bates, 2016, p. 62). She advocated that by learning through the senses, students could learn through discovery, one of the principles of ‘play’ which underpins primary learning. I wanted to see if this would work in the secondary classroom (Briggs & Hansen, 2012).

Furthermore, modern foreign language (MFL) teaching tends to include far more sensory sound and movement than ancient language teaching (Barker K., 2010). This could be because MFL examines 4 key skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening (Department for

Education, 2015). Until recently, Latin has only examined the reading skill, with (basic) writing being added in in the new GCSE qualification (Ofqual, 2015). Latin is rarely spoken. Rouse experimented with spoken Latin (known as the Direct Approach) during the 1920s but for various reasons it never took off (Sharwood Smith, 1977, pp. 32-35). Interestingly, the Direct Approach is growing in popularity in American Latin teaching (Gruber-Miller, 2006). There has long been conflict between grammar teaching and a more direct communicative approach in the MFL classroom (Meiring & Norman, 2001). I knew that my school favoured an immersive communicative approach to MFL teaching, including as little grammar teaching as possible. This meant that far more classroom techniques were used using sound, linking back to the audible nature of MFL examinations (speaking and listening skills). Could sound and movement also be used in the Latin classroom to consolidate and reinforce understanding?

As has already been mentioned, one of the main criticisms of the grammar-translation approach was that it was boring, which meant students didn't wish to study Latin. However, at primary school level, by teaching Latin grammar by using sound and movement, students seem to be far more engaged. One of the reasons that sound and movement work

so well at primary school level is because these activities are seen to be fun and engaging. Griffith and Burns (Engaging Learners, 2012) have utilised Csikszentmihalyi's work on flow – moments of high engagement which the individual learner loses themselves in. They acknowledge these moments appear when high challenge meets high skill (Griffith & Burns, 2012, pp. 10-11). They also identify that fun is a useful motivational trigger which 'positively aid[s] learning and memorising' (Griffith & Burns, 2012, p. 85). I wanted to see if I could make the stereotypical grammar learning fun, thus making it more engaging.

Lesson Sequence

My sequence of lessons was aimed at a set of Year 7 students at an independent girls' school in West Sussex. The school is very small with 300 students aged 3-18. Students in the prep school follow the *Minimus* course in Year 6. Students start the *Cambridge Latin Course (CLC)* in Year 7 with some having done Latin in the prep school, others coming from other schools which have not. They follow the *CLC* course, but much supplementary material is used in conjunction with the course, mostly to make up for the lack of

grammar included within it. This reflects some of the criticisms some teachers have made which have been mentioned by Story (The Development of the Cambridge Latin Course, 2003). Furthermore, MFL teaching at the school includes hardly any grammar teaching at all. The Latin classes have two lessons a week and are of mid- to high-ability as weaker students are taken out of language classes for extra literacy or EAL support. The class size was 9 students.

My students were starting Stage 6 of the *CLC* where the imperfect and perfect tenses are introduced. This can be a difficult topic for students because they often think of the past tense in English as 'the past' rather than learning the nuances of 'the simple past, past progressive, past emphatic and present perfect' (Goldman & Szymanski, 1993). (It will be interesting to see if this changes, when students who have been taught the new primary grammar syllabus have come through the system.) I wanted my sequence of lessons to have a clear grammatical focus so that my students could understand what was going on behind the sentences that they were reading. The lesson sequence is given in Figure 1.

Being taught Latin by a fast-track grammar-heavy course myself, I am sceptical of the level of language understanding the *CLC* provides. I have noticed that students using this approach

Lesson/Enquiry Question	Learning Objectives	Learning Activities	Notes & Resources
The Past	To describe the difference between the present, imperfect and perfect tenses To identify 3 rd person imperfect and perfect verbs so that we can translate the story pugna	Continuous/completed action demonstration Colour code text in English (Harry Potter) Write colour-coded grid in books Colour code Latin text (pugna story – CLC) Exit tickets Fizzbuzz reading activity	Powerpoint, highlighters, green and red board pens, Harry Potter text, pugna text, exit tickets, gluestick, <i>CLC</i> books (remember to enlarge sheets for M)
The Imperfect Tense (What has a sheep got to do with Latin verbs?)	To consolidate understanding of the imperfect and perfect tenses To start to conjugate imperfect verbs	tarsia CLC model sentences on software Hand jive Rap Fill in endings on grid <i>Simon dicit</i>	tarsia recap activity, red and green whiteboard pens, CLC software imperfect rap https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX5WUZ5cvZc
The Perfect Tense	To consolidate understanding of the imperfect and perfect tenses To start to conjugate verbs in the perfect tense	Homework peer assessment Bingo Post-it work out the endings Mexican wave Gap fill exercise	Powerpoint, post-it notes, gap fill sheet
Consolidation Lesson	To consolidate understanding of the imperfect and perfect tenses To apply knowledge of perfect and imperfect tenses	Tarsia Consolidation/summary sheet	Tarsia, worksheet

Figure 1. | Unit of Work: Introduction to the Imperfect and Perfect Tenses.

alone get the gist of the stories but will not be able to tell you what is going on grammatically in the sentences. This might get them through a GCSE paper but I wonder what impact this might have if students wish to pursue Latin further. I particularly wanted the Year 7 class to establish a clear understanding of the difference between the imperfect and perfect tenses as I had noticed that my Year 8 class were still struggling with the concept a year later. My Year 8s were also struggling to identify the subjects of verbs as they did not have a clear knowledge of verb endings. I also felt it was important to have a more grammatical focus than the *CLC* gives because of the most recent changes to the GCSE qualification. The GCSE is now required to include explicit grammar

questions or English–Latin translation which requires students to have an in-depth knowledge of Latin grammar (Ofqual, 2015). Teachers can no longer hide students from the grammatical maze of the Latin language. I wanted my students to feel comfortable with the grammar whilst learning it at the outset, rather than having to adapt something half-understood at a later stage. But I also wanted my students to enjoy my lessons rather than dread them. The grammar-translation approach has been criticised for being so boring that it put people off, but primary Latin teaches Latin grammar in a fun way. So my scheme of work incorporated the fun element of primary Latin teaching, in particular the methods incorporating sound and movement. A list and description of the specific

activities in my lesson sequence incorporating sound and movement can be seen in Figure 2.

My first lesson was designed to lay the foundation of the difference between the tenses, only focusing on identifying the third person. I wanted my students to have a very clear understanding of the difference between the tenses before adding in the 1st and 2nd person verb endings. After introducing the concept of the past, I used a physical demonstration to distinguish the difference between a continuous action and completed action in the past and how these would be expressed. The lesson continued by identifying the difference in English before introducing how to spot the 3rd person perfect and imperfect tenses in a piece of Latin text. Much colour coding was used throughout the lesson. The lesson finished with a spoken exercise inspired by the maths game ‘fizzbuzz’. Students read through the text as a class, taking one word each, but when they came to a verb they had to say its tense rather than the word itself. This exercise demonstrated that they had made much progress during the lesson. I set translation homework of the Latin text that had been colour-coded earlier, and that we had done the spoken exercise with, which would guide the students to apply their knowledge. Furthermore, this lesson contained a student who was on a taster day at the school and had never done any Latin at all before, who by the end of the lesson demonstrated understanding of the topic.

My second lesson was initially designed to introduce the rest of the perfect and imperfect endings. However, I changed it to just focus on the imperfect ones instead, to avoid an overload of information. The lesson started by consolidating what had been learned the lesson before and reinforced by the homework. One activity used to this was a *tarsia* where students had to match up vocabulary on pieces of card to make shapes. This kinaesthetic activity engaged learners as they wanted to see what shape would be created in the end. Furthermore there was a competition element to the task as the class had been split into two groups which motivated the students further, reinforcing Wing-Davey’s four elements (2015). I chose to introduce the imperfect tense endings with one of the

Lesson 1 (The past)	Continuous & completed action demonstration	During this demonstration I got one student to walk from one side of the room to the other once whilst getting another student to keep walking up and down the room. I asked the students what the difference between the two were.
	Fizzbuzz reading	An activity where the class read the Latin text they had been using to identify the imperfect and perfect verbs using highlighters. We read round the class with each student saying a word each, when they came to a verb they had to say ‘imperfect’ or ‘perfect’ rather than the verb itself.
Lesson 2 (The imperfect tense)	<i>tarsia</i>	The class was divided into two groups. They were given a set of triangles and squares to fit together with the Latin word on one side and the English translation on the other. These were the verbs from the homework and the text they had been working on last lesson.
	Rap	One of the raps used by the Latin programme. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX5WUZ5cvZc) Students listened to the rap and then used this to recall the verb endings.
	Latin Hand Jive	A physical activity. As we conjugate verbs, each person has an action. 1 st person singular – one hand pointing at self (I) 2 nd person singular – one hand pointing directly in front (you singular) 3 rd person singular – one hand pointing to the side (he/she/it) 1 st person plural – two hands pointing at self (we) 2 nd person plural – two hands pointing directly in front (you plural) 3 rd person plural – two hands pointing to the side (they)
	Simon dicit	A version of ‘Simon says’ I read a Latin verb and the students have to do the correct action using the Latin Hand Jive (see above).
Lesson 3 (The perfect)	Bingo	Students select various form of the verb <i>portare</i> in the present, imperfect or perfect and form a grid. I read out the English translation whilst they cross off the corresponding Latin. First student to get a line wins, followed by a full house.
	Post-it note sort	Students have various verb endings on post it notes and have to put them next to the stems on the board in their corresponding places.
	Mexican wave	Split the group into two teams and got them to form two lines. The teams then had to conjugate the perfect tense verb endings in turn, moving their arms as they said the words. (Another activity used by The Latin Programme.)
Lesson 4 (Consolidation)	<i>tarsia</i>	Same as <i>tarsia</i> above, but this time just with various forms of the verb <i>portare</i> .

Figure 2. | Activities utilising sound and movement.

laps that is used by The Latin programme itself. After listening to it I wanted to see if my students could recall any of the verb endings that were featured in the video. The rhythm of the music seemed to help them recall the endings as I could see some students tapping it out as they tried to remember. We read through the imperfect verb endings as a class as we did the 'Latin hand jive'. I had already used this method when introducing the present tense endings so my students were familiar with it. By assigning an action to each ending it helped the students associate it with the meaning. This became clear in future lessons. When students were stuck I was able to prompt them by using the action and then they could work out the meaning themselves. To consolidate the hand jive we played *Simon dicit* (the children's game 'Simon says'). This also added an element of competition which kept students engaged. This exercise showed their understanding of giving meaning to Latin words.

I had not initially intended to start the third lesson of the sequence with a peer-assessment, but after having a quick look at the homework that was handed in the previous lesson it was clear that the students were struggling to apply the grammar to the translation, despite the colour-coded scaffolding. I once again reinforced the difference between the continuous imperfect and the completed perfect. Through questioning the students seemed to understand the concept but when applying it themselves they struggled. Because I had mentioned we would play *bingo* in the previous lesson but we had not had enough time to play it, we used it as another consolidation activity of what had been learned before. The students had the Latin verbs written in a table; I would call the English meanings, and they would cross off the Latin. This is an exercise in English-Latin translation, one of the new requirements of the GCSE. The students were initially engaged: once again the element of competition hooked them in. However, soon they were very confused. During all of our previous sound / movement and rote-learning exercises they had been able to look at words in the sequence that they were rote-learned in. It was difficult for them to listen to my English, identify what it meant in terms of Latin grammar and then think of the correct Latin verb.

This is a complicated process for them to do in their heads, especially without any written sequential prompting. The confusion was clear at the end of the exercise when students were calling out '*bingo*' including words I had never called, or at the end of the exercise realising I had called words that they had not crossed off correctly. They were better at giving meaning to the Latin (as exemplified during the *Simon dicit* exercise), rather than turning English into the Latin. We moved onto the endings of the perfect tense, once again looking at the verbs in grid form. Using post-it notes I got the class to see if they could discover the endings for themselves by recognising patterns from the present and imperfect endings. Once these were revealed, to help them remember them, I split the class in two groups and we did a Mexican wave through the endings. This is another activity that is used by The Latin Programme, including an element of competition as well as sound and movement.

My final lesson was intended to include the imperfect endings for the irregular verb *esse*. However, I later felt that it would be more beneficial to spend the whole lesson on consolidation of what had already been learnt. In the first part of the lesson the students did another *tarsia* in two teams. The first *tarsia* included a variety of vocabulary from the homework which helped them solve it, whereas this one was just testing knowledge of verbs by having various forms of *portare*. The students became confused at points and it was during this activity in particular where I could refer back to the Latin Hand Jive to prompt them. For the rest of the lesson they worked on a worksheet to consolidate their understanding and that could be used as a reference in future. This was carefully scaffolded, using various activities done over the sequence of lessons, each one building up to the next. The final task on the sheet was a gap fill exercise which included both Latin-English and English-Latin translation.

Reflection

Overall I feel that the sensory activities enlivened my sequence of lessons and

helped to improve engagement and student understanding. The Latin Hand Jive activity was particularly useful, especially where students were familiar with the meanings of each action before. It was a useful guide for students who were stuck without giving them the answer straight away. This links back to the work of Montessori who pioneered the work of sensory discovery, and also advocated that students should discover things for themselves (Bates, 2016). I feel that it could be used later on when introducing more difficult verbal material such as the passive voice or subjunctive mood. I will continue to include such techniques throughout my teaching practice and would like to expand my repertoire. The activities including sound and movement in particular engaged the class. The students seemed to enjoy some of the activities so much that they asked if they could do them again. Also some of them referred to them as 'games' which also reflects their enjoyment of the activities. This reinforces the idea of the importance of fun as a motivator (Griffith & Burns, 2012). Also it shows that rote-learning does not have to be as dull as it is often described. It is an approach with much opportunity to be creative. There are limitations to some of the activities that I used. I was very fortunate to have such a small class to work with, so am sceptical to how some such activities would work in a class triple the size. Furthermore, my class was Year 7, so barely out of primary school. It would be interesting to see if such techniques would still engage students in Years 9 and 10.

By focusing on instruction by rote-learning, I noticed that students seemed to understand the concepts very well in isolation, especially when aided by sensory instruction. The problem came when applying this knowledge to translation. I had heavily scaffolded my lessons, using consistent colour-coding throughout to support my students, a technique I had been using with them previously. For the translation homework, we had spent the lesson colour-coding the verbs according to the tense. However, their knowledge that they had expressed verbally in the lesson did not seem to have been applied to the translation exercise. I felt that the focus on rote-learning helped my students remember the content but more needed to be done to aid

application. I contest Gove's argument that 'memorisation is the precondition to understanding' (Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove gives speech to IAA, 2012). Memorisation is more useful if taught alongside skills. There is no point in knowing information if you cannot make any sense or use out of it.

What also became clear was that Latin to English translation is a different process to English to Latin. It was the English to Latin that students seem to find more difficult which was particularly demonstrated by the *bingo* activity. This is because it contains an

extra step cognitively between converting the input phrase into grammatical understanding when forming the translation. We automatically know how to express our understanding in our native language because we think in that language and understand the world through it. However, when translating into Latin we need to take the extra step to identify how to construct our understanding in that language. Figures 3 and 4 show the extra step required for English-Latin.

This may explain why English-Latin composition was seen to be the pinnacle

of a 19th century Classical education. Commenting on the translation of Tennyson's 'The Lady of Shallot', Beard (*Confronting the Classics: Traditions, Adventures and Innovations*, 2014) remarks the 'exercise [was] as pointless as it was prestigious'. This reflects Victorian attitudes to the grammar-translation approach as a form of brain training. Students translate from Latin to English to be able to read and understand Latin texts. It can be argued that there is no point going the other way. We have already seen how Latin is a difficult subject in comparison to others, and by adding in the extra element of English to Latin translation, the government has made the qualification more difficult and less accessible. However, English to Latin translation can also be seen to be the ultimate demonstration of understanding. After coming to this realisation I have returned to the MFL literature which has confirmed that writing (creating text in the target language) is more difficult than reading (comprehending the target language) (Poole, 2002, p. 211).

Furthermore, the problem with rote-learning verb endings in a particular sequential order is that students tend to only remember them through that order. This is a problem I also face as someone trained by a grammar-translation approach, particularly with declensions of noun cases which contain 12 ending sequences over the verb conjugation's six. The rote-learning certainly aids memory, but I wonder if it is the sequential nature of the rote-learning which acts as a hindrance to application. The reading approach, championed by the *CLC*, teaches students to understand meaning of sentences as a whole. They comprehend meaning by reading Latin from the start of the sentence to the end, taking into account word order. Rather than making students memorise endings, the reading approach encourages the recognition of patterns. However, this may not be suitable for the new GCSE grammar and English-Latin requirement as it lacks the in-depth grammatical knowledge needed to answer the grammar questions or to construct English to Latin. Maybe there is another way to get students effectively to identify verbs and their endings over rote-learning, or the second guessing of reading, and we just have not worked it

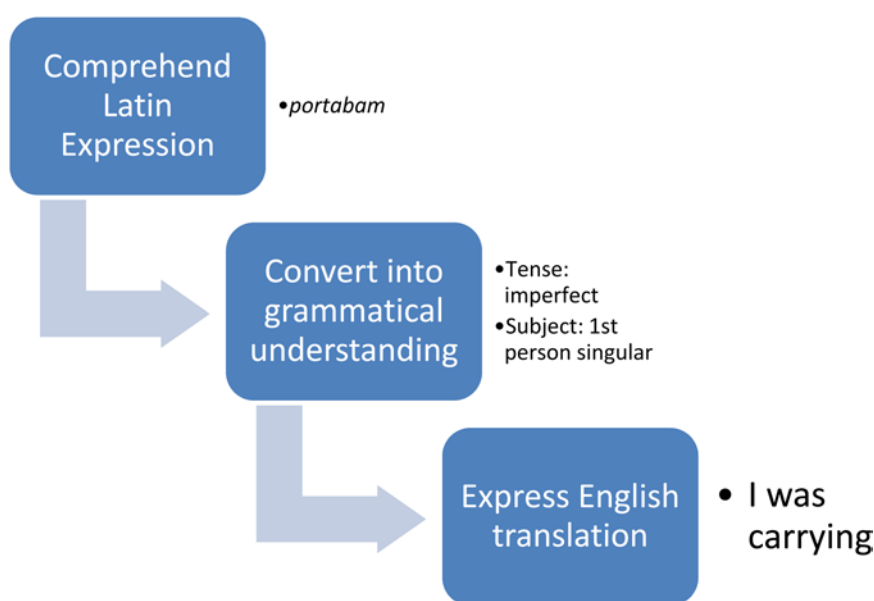


Figure 3. | Steps for writing Latin-English.

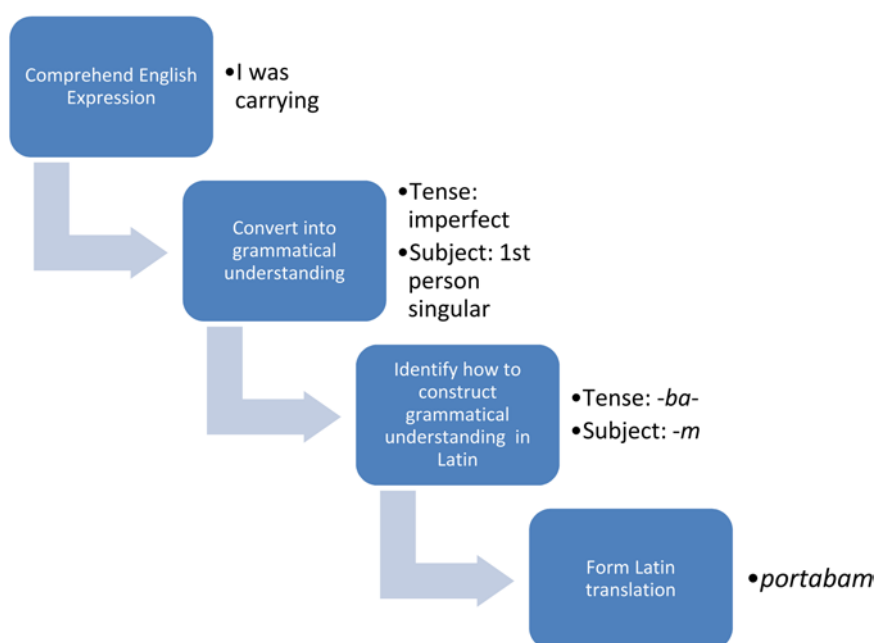


Figure 4. | Steps for writing English- Latin.

out yet. Nevertheless, to get students to succeed in Latin I still feel that grammar is important, and teaching it using engaging methods utilising sound and movement can greatly enhance the learning experience of students. However, I have also learned that whilst rote-learning is useful in getting students to recognise endings and remember them, it needs to be taught alongside application and translation skills as students struggle to apply their memorised knowledge without clear guidance.

Lottie Morimer recently graduated from the University of Sussex with a PGCE in Classics
lottie.mort@gmail.com

References

- Barker, I. (2016, March 9). *Schools Minister Nick Gibb: 'Teachers should be free to use 50-year-old teaching techniques'*. Retrieved March 14, 2016, from TES: <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/schools-minister-nick-gibb-teachers-should-be-free-use-50-year-old>
- Barker, K. (2010). A critical evaluation into whether rote learning of verb principal parts has any perceptible effect on accuracy of translation of Latin to English for a Year 9 class. University of Cambridge: Unpublished PGCE Assignment.
- Bates, B. (2016). *Learning Theories Simplified*. London: Sage Publications.
- Beard, M. (2014). *Confronting the Classics: Traditions, Adventures and Innovations*. London: Profile Books.
- Bell, B. (1999). *Minimus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bell, B. (2003). Minimus. In J. Morwood (Ed.), *The Teaching of Classics* (pp. 61-66). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Briggs, M., & Hansen, A. (2012). *Play-based Learning in the Primary School*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Cambridge School Classics Project. (2008). *A Statistical Report on Latin in UK Secondary Schools*. Cambridge: Cambridge School Classics Project.
- Cambridge School Classics Project. (2015). *Who is Latin for? Access to KS4 Latin qualifications*. Cambridge: Cambridge School Classics Project.
- Cambridge School Classics Project. (2012). *Engaging Learners*. Bancyfelin: Crown House Publishing.
- Gruber-Miller, J. (2006). *When Dead Tongues Speak: Teaching Beginning Greek and Latin*. (J. Gruber-Miller, Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hunt, S. (2016). *Starting to Teach Latin*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Lister, B. (2009). Latin in Transition. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 8(2), 191-200.
- Lister, B. (2015). Exclusively for everyone - to what extent has the Cambridge Latin Course widened access to Latin? In E. P. Archibald, W. Brockliss, & J. Gnoza (Eds.), *Learning Latin and Greek from Antiquity to the Present* (pp. 184-197). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meiring, L., & Norman, N. (2001). Grammar in MFL teaching revisited. *The Language Learning Journal*, 23(1), 58-66.
- Morris, S. (1966). *Viae Novae: New Techniques in Latin Teaching*. London: Hulton Education Publications.
- Mount, H. (2006). *Amo, Amas, Amat ... And All That*. London: Short Books.
- Northend, C. (1863). *The Teacher's Assistant or Hints and Methods in School Discipline and Instruction*. Boston: Crosby and Nichols.
- Ofqual. (2015). GCSE (9 to 1) Subject-level Conditions and Requirements for Ancient Languages. London: Ofqual. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-ancient-languages>
- Oxford English Dictionary. (2010). Retrieved March 27, 2016, from <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/167725?redirectedFrom=rote-learning#eid24978803>
- Poole, B. (2002). The Potential Impact of the National Literacy Strategy on MFL learning. In A. Swarbrick (Ed.), *Teaching Modern Foreign Languages in Secondary Schools: A Reader* (pp. 203-222). London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Richards, C. (2016, March 4). *The schools minister must understand - as Dickens did - that grammar-by-rote will ruin a love of words*. Retrieved March 4, 2016, from TES: <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-views/schools-minister-must-understand-dickens-did-grammar-rote-will-ruin>
- Coe, R. (2006). Relative difficulties of examinations at GCSE: an application of the Rasch model. Durham: Curriculum, Evaluation and Management (CEM) Centre, University of Durham. Retrieved from <http://www.cambridgescp.com/downloads/subjectdifficultiesbyrasch.pdf>
- Department for Education. (2013). English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 national curriculum in England. London: Department for Education. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335186/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_English_220714.pdf
- Department for Education. (2013). Languages programmes of study: key stage 2 national curriculum in England. London: Department for Education. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239042/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Languages.pdf
- Department for Education. (2015). Modern foreign languages GCSE subject content. London: Department for Education. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485567/GCSE_subject_content_modern_foreign_langs.pdf
- Dickey, E. (2016). *Learning Latin the Ancient Way: Latin Textbooks from the Ancient World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fisher, J. (2015). Out of the mouth of babes and Englishmen: the invention of the vernacular grammar in Anglo-Saxon England. In E. P. Archibald, W. Brockliss, & J. Gnoza (Eds.), *Learning Latin and Greek from Antiquity to the Present* (pp. 83-98). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Forrest, M. (2003). The Abolition of Compulsory Latin and its Consequences. *Greece & Rome*, 50, 42-66.
- Goldhill, S. (2004). *Love, Sex and Tragedy: Why Classics Matters*. London: John Murray.
- Goldman, N., & Szymanski, L. (1993). *English Grammar for Students of Latin*. Ann Arbor: The Olivia and Hill Press.
- Gove, M. (2012, November 14). *Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove gives speech to LAA*. Retrieved March 27, 2016, from <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/secretary-of-state-for-education-michael-gove-gives-speech-to-iaa>

Sharwood Smith, J. E. (1977). *On Teaching Classics*. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul.

Story, P. (2003). The Development of the Cambridge Latin Course. In J. Morwood (Ed.), *The Teaching of Classics* (pp. 85-91). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stray, C. (2003). Classics in the Curriculum up to the 1960s. In J. Morwood (Ed.),

The Teaching of Classics (pp. 1-5). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Latin Programme. (2016). *About Us*. Retrieved April 5, 2016, from <http://www.thelatinprogramme.co.uk/about-us-2/>

Vinacke, W. E., & Smith, E. M. (1959). Meaningfulness and Position in Rote Learning. *Psychological Reports*, 5, 441-447.

Wing-Davey, Z. (2015, September 19). Playing with Pedagogy: A Fresh Approach to Latin at KS2. Cambridge: Classics in Communities.

Woolcock, N. (2015, February 23). *The Times: Latin under threat in state schools*. Retrieved April 5, 2016, from <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/education/article4362216.ece>