

Making It Happen

Interaction in the Second
Language Classroom

From Theory to Practice

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RELATED READING 5**PROVIDING INPUT FOR ACQUISITION***Stephen Krashen***THE POTENTIAL OF THE SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM**

. . . The classroom is of benefit when it is the major source of comprehensible input. When acquirers have rich sources of input outside the class, and when they are proficient enough to take advantage of it (i.e. understand at least some of it), the classroom does not make an important contribution. . . . If, however, we fill our second language classrooms with input that is optimal for acquisition, it is quite possible that we can actually do better than the informal environment, at least up to the intermediate level. The informal environment is not always willing to supply comprehensible input to the older second language student. As Hatch and her colleagues have pointed out, input to the adult is more complicated grammatically, contains a wider range of vocabulary, deals with more complex topics, and is generally harder to understand. This is simply a reflection of the fact that the adult world is more complex than the world of the child, and our expectations for adult comprehension are much higher.

In the case of the adult beginner, the classroom can do much better than the informal environment. In the second language classroom, we have the potential of supplying a full 40-50 minutes per day of comprehensible input, input that will encourage language acquisition. The true beginner in the informal environment, especially if he or she is not adept at skills of conversational management and negotiation of meaning (see Scarcella & Higa, 1982), may require days or even weeks before he or she can "pick out" that much comprehensible input from the barrage of language heard. The beginning student will simply not understand most of the language around him. It will be noise, unusable for acquisition.

The value of second language classes, then, lies not only in the grammar instruction, but in the simpler "teacher talk", the comprehensible input. It can be an efficient place to achieve at least the intermediate levels rapidly, as long as the focus of the class is on providing input for acquisition.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CLASSROOM

Despite my enthusiasm for the second language classroom, there are several ways in which the outside world clearly excels (or some "modification" of

Stephen Krashen, "Providing Input for Acquisition," from *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1982), pp. 58-73.

the outside world), especially for the intermediate level second language student. First, it is very clear that the outside world can supply *more* input. Living in the country where the language is spoken can result in an all-day second language lesson! As we mentioned earlier, however, for the informal environment to be of any use, the input language has to be comprehensible. The informal environment will therefore be of more and more use as the acquirer progresses and can understand more and more.

Second, as many scholars have pointed out, the range of discourse that the student can be exposed to in a second language classroom is quite limited, no matter how "natural" we make it. There is simply no way the classroom can match the variety of the outside world, although we can certainly expand beyond our current limitations.

The classroom will probably never be able to completely overcome its limitations, nor does it have to. Its goal is not to substitute for the outside world, but to bring students to the point where they can begin to use the outside world for further acquisition, to where they can begin to understand the language used on the outside. It does this in two ways: by supplying input so that students progress in language acquisition, so that they understand "real" language to at least some extent, and by making the student conversationally competent, that is, by giving the student tools to manage conversations despite a less than perfect competence in the second language. We return to both of these important points in the discussion that follows.

THE ROLE OF OUTPUT

A second point that needs to be dealt with before describing the characteristics of optimal input for acquisition is the role of output, most commonly, the role of speech, in language acquisition.¹

The Input Hypothesis makes a claim that may seem quite remarkable to some people—we acquire spoken fluency *not* by practicing talking but by understanding input, by listening and reading. It is, in fact, theoretically possible to acquire language without ever talking. This has been demonstrated for first language acquisition by Lenneberg (1962), who described the case of a boy with congenital dysarthria, a disorder of the peripheral speech organs, who was never able to speak. When Lenneberg tested the boy, he found that the child was able to understand spoken English perfectly. In other words, he had acquired "competence" without ever producing. The child was tested at age eight, and there is no way to tell directly whether his lack of output had slowed down his language acquisition. It is quite possible that if he had been able to speak, he would have acquired language somewhat faster, due to the *indirect* contribution speaking can make to acquisition.

Output has a contribution to make to language acquisition, but it is not a direct one: Simply, the more you talk, the more people will talk to you! Actual

speaking on the part of the language acquirer will thus affect the *quantity* of input people direct at you.

It will also affect the *quality* of the input directed at the acquirer. Conversational partners often try to help you understand by modifying their speech ("foreigner talk"). They judge how much to modify by seeing whether you understand what is said, and also *by listening to you talk*. A second language speaker who makes lots of mistakes, has a poor accent, and is hesitant, will most likely receive, in general, more modified input than a speaker who appears competent and fluent.

Engaging in conversation is probably much more effective than "eavesdropping" for language acquisition. In conversation, the second language acquirer has some degree of control of the topic, can signal to the partner that there is a comprehension problem, etc. In other words, he can manage and regulate the input, and make it more comprehensible. There is no such control in eavesdropping! But in order to participate in conversation, there must be at least some talk, some output, from each partner. Hence, the indirect contribution of speech.

1. "Conversation" and Language Acquisition

Some scholars have suggested that "participation in conversation" is responsible for language acquisition. In the light of the above discussion, we can see that this is true, in a sense. "Conversation", however, is not in itself the causative variable in second language acquisition. It is one way, and a very good way, to obtain input. It is theoretically quite possible to acquire without participating in conversation, however.²

Figure 1 illustrates the indirect, but often considerable, contribution output can make to language acquisition.

2. Output and Learning

Output can play a fairly direct role in helping language *learning*, although even here it is not necessary. Output aids learning because it provides a domain for error correction. When a second language user speaks or writes, he

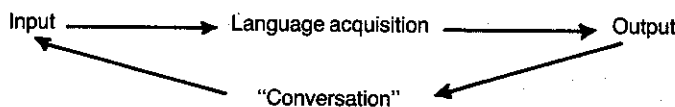


Figure 1. How Output Contributes to Language Acquisition Indirectly

Comprehensible *input* is responsible for progress in language acquisition.

Output is possible as a result of acquired competence.

When performers *speak*, they encourage *input* (people speak to them). This is *conversation*.

or she may make an error. When this error is corrected, this supposedly helps the learner change his or her conscious mental representation of the rule or alter the environment of rule application.

We may thus compare an "output approach" to the input approach promoted here. Could we teach language primarily by encouraging production, with little or no input, and correcting all errors? Such a technique, in addition to being maddening, relies entirely on the students' ability to learn grammar.

This is not to say that error correction is totally useless and that learning is of no value. Learning has a role to play, and error correction may be of use in certain situations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OPTIMAL INPUT FOR ACQUISITION

I will attempt in this section to present a set of requirements that should be met by any activity or set of materials aimed at subconscious language acquisition. The (testable) prediction that this set of characteristics makes is that an activity that fits the characteristics fully will encourage acquisition at the fastest possible rate. An activity that fits none of them could result in zero acquisition, or very little acquisition. (The latter, "very little", is more likely. The "language acquisition device" may be so powerful, even in the adult, that some minimal acquisition may occur as a result of *any* exposure to language.) . . .

We discuss each characteristic separately, showing what predictions each characteristic makes with respect to different aspects of method, materials, and informal input.

1. Optimal Input Is Comprehensible

This is clearly the most important input characteristic. It amounts to the claim that when the acquirer does not understand the message, there will be no acquisition. In other words, incomprehensible input, or "noise", will not help.

Positing *comprehensibility* as a fundamental and necessary (but not sufficient) requirement makes several predictions that appear to be correct. It explains why it is practically impossible for someone to acquire a second or foreign language merely by listening to the radio, unless the acquirer speaks a very closely related language. A monolingual English speaker, for example, hearing Polish on the radio, would acquire nothing because the input would be only "noise".³

This requirement also explains the apparent failure of educational TV programs to teach foreign languages. The input is simply not comprehensible. My own children watched programs such as *Ville Allegre* faithfully for years,

and acquired about as much as I did: They could count from one to ten in Spanish and recognize a few words such as *casa* and *mesa*! The comprehensibility requirement predicts that TV would, in general, be somewhat more successful than radio as a language teacher, but that even TV would be inadequate in beginning stages. Ervin-Tripp (1973) has noted that hearing children of deaf parents do not acquire language from TV or radio, an observation consistent with this requirement.⁴

This characteristic also explains why children sometimes fail to pick up family languages. My own case is, I think, quite typical. My parents spoke Yiddish around the house for years, occasionally to each other (to tell secrets), and constantly to my grandparents. Nevertheless, my sister and I failed to acquire Yiddish, with the exception of a few phrases and routines. On the other hand, in many families children do grow up speaking the family language as well as the language of the community. What appears to be crucial is whether the family language is directed at the child, in other words, whether an attempt is made to make the language *comprehensible*. What we heard via eavesdropping was not comprehensible. It dealt with topics that were not easily identified and that were also often beyond our range of experience. Language directed at us in Yiddish would have been simplified, and more relevant to us, and hence more comprehensible.

Another prediction that the comprehensibility requirement makes is that "just talking", or "free conversation", is not language teaching. In other words, simply being a native speaker of a language does not in and of itself qualify one as a teacher of that language. Conscious and extensive knowledge of grammar does not make one a language teacher either. Rather, the defining characteristic of a good teacher is someone who can make input comprehensible to a non-native speaker, regardless of his or her level of competence in the target language. This leads naturally to another topic, how teachers make input comprehensible.

(a) How to Aid Comprehension

If we are correct in positing comprehensibility as a crucial requirement for optimal input for acquisition, the question of how to aid comprehension is a very central one for second language pedagogy. Indeed, the comprehension requirement suggests that *perhaps the main function of the second language teacher is to help make input comprehensible*, to do for the adult what the "outside world" cannot or will not do.

There are basically two ways in which the teacher can aid comprehension, linguistic and non-linguistic. Studies have shown that there are many things speakers do linguistically to make their speech more comprehensible to less competent speakers. Hatch (1979) has summarized the linguistic aspects of simplified input which appear to promote comprehension. Among these characteristics are:

1. slower rate and clearer articulation, which helps acquirers to identify word boundaries more easily, and allows more processing time;
2. more use of high frequency vocabulary, less slang, fewer idioms;
3. syntactic simplification, shorter sentences.

Such characteristics and others appear to be more or less common to different types of simple codes, such as caretaker speech, foreigner-talk, and teacher-talk (see also Krashen, 1980), and clearly help make input language more comprehensible. There is considerable empirical evidence that these codes are significantly "simpler" than native speaker—native speaker language, and there is evidence of some correlation between the linguistic level of the acquirer and the complexity of the input language: more advanced acquirers tend to get more complex input.

Does this mean that teachers should consciously try to simplify their speech when they talk to students? Should they think about slowing down, using more common vocabulary, using shorter sentences, less complex syntax with less embedding, etc.? Consciously referring to these "rules" might be helpful on occasion, but it appears to be the case that we make these adjustments automatically when we focus on trying to make ourselves understood. . . . If we focus on comprehension and communication, we will meet the syntactic requirements for optimal input.

While we free teachers of the responsibility to consciously control the grammar of their output speech, other responsibilities become more important. One is to make sure that the input is indeed comprehensible. I have nothing startling to add to the literature on comprehension checking, other than to underscore and emphasize its importance. Comprehension checking can range from simply asking "Do you understand?" occasionally, to monitoring comprehension via students' verbal and non-verbal responses.

Another main task of the teacher is to provide non-linguistic means of encouraging comprehension. In my view, providing extra-linguistic support in the form of realia and pictures for beginning classes is not a frill, but a very important part of the tools the teacher has to encourage language acquisition. The use of objects and pictures in early second language instruction corresponds to the caretaker's use of the "here and now" in encouraging first language acquisition, in that they all help the acquirer understand messages containing structures that are "a little beyond" them.

Good teachers also take advantage of the student's knowledge of the world in helping comprehension by discussing topics that are familiar to the student. Certainly, discussing or reading about a topic that is totally unknown will make the message harder to understand. There is a danger, however, in making the input too "familiar". If the message is completely known, it will be of no interest, and the student will probably not attend. We want the student to focus on the message, and there must be some message, some-

thing that the student really wants to hear or read about. This requirement is perhaps the hardest one to meet, and we shall have more to say about it below, in our discussion of characteristic II.⁵

As pointed out just a moment ago, comprehension is a *necessary* condition for language acquisition, but it is not *sufficient*. It is quite possible to understand input language, and yet not acquire. This can happen in several different ways: First, it is quite possible that the input simply does not contain $i + 1$ [see Chapter 3], that it does not include structures that are "a bit beyond" the student. Second, in many cases we do not utilize syntax in understanding—we can often get the message with a combination of vocabulary, or lexical information, plus extra-linguistic information. Finally, the "affective filter" may be "up", which can result in the acquirer understanding input, even input with $i + 1$, but not utilizing it for further acquisition.

2. Optimal Input Is Interesting and/or Relevant

Optimal input focusses the acquirer on the message and not on form. To go a step further, the best input is so interesting and relevant that the acquirer may even "forget" that the message is encoded in a foreign language.

Creating materials and providing input that meet this characteristic may appear to be an easy and obvious task, but my view is that, in reality, this requirement is not easy to meet, nor has the profession considered it obvious. It is very *difficult* to present and discuss topics of interest to a class of people whose goals, interests, and backgrounds differ from the teacher's and from each other's. I also claim that relevance and interest have not been widely perceived as requirements for input, since so many materials fail to meet this requirement!

It is fairly easy to think up examples of input that, while comprehensible, are universally perceived to be uninteresting and irrelevant. Among the most obvious examples are pattern drill, and most dialogue type exercises. Experimental evidence suggests that students pay little or no attention to meaning after the first few repetitions in pattern drill (Lee, McCune, & Patton, 1970), and the same result is most likely true for dialogues that are memorized by rote. Grammatical exercises also fail as input for acquisition on similar grounds. Granted, the goals of these exercises are not "acquisition", and we will have occasion to examine whether these input-types fill other needs in the second language program. Nevertheless, they fail this requirement dismally.

Somewhat less obvious is the failure of "meaningful drill" to qualify as optimal input for acquisition. "Meaningful drill" is distinguished from "mechanical drill", in that the former requires that real meaning be involved (Paulston, 1972). Since meaningful drill is designed to provide practice on particular grammatical structures, however, it is very difficult to also build in the exchange of truly relevant or interesting information, as in:

What time does he get up in the morning?

What time do they get up in the morning?

At best, such information is of only mild interest to members of a language class. I believe that it is an impossible task for teachers to embed truly interesting or relevant information into the form of a meaningful drill on a daily basis!

Some other fairly widespread input types that fall very short of the mark of true relevance are the reading assignments that most foreign language students work through in introductory courses. Generally, these selections bear very little resemblance to the kind of reading the students would do in their first language on their own time. . . .

3. Optimal Input Is Not Grammatically Sequenced

In acquisition-oriented materials, we should not be consciously concerned about including $i + 1$ in the input. The Input Hypothesis claims that when input is comprehensible, when meaning is successfully negotiated, $i + 1$ will be present automatically, in most cases.⁶

This requirement could be stated in a weaker form. It could be rephrased as follows: there is no *need* to deliberately include $i + 1$, since it will occur naturally. The strong form may be called for instead: it may be better not to even attempt to include $i + 1$! The arguments against a deliberate attempt to grammatically sequence will be expanded on here.

1. If we sequence, and each lesson, or group of lessons, focusses on one structure, this assumes that everyone in the class has the same $i + 1$, that everyone is at the same developmental stage in the second language. Because there are individual differences in the rate of acquisition (due to the strength of the affective filter and the amount of comprehensible input obtained), and differences among students as to out of class contact with the language, it is extremely unlikely that all the students in any class are at the same stage. Unsequenced but natural input, it is hypothesized, will contain a rich variety of structure—if it is comprehensible, there will be $i + 1$ for everyone as long as there is *enough* input (we return to the *quantity* question below).

2. When we attempt to present a "finely-tuned" sequence, we generally present each structure or rule once. (There is the "review" lesson and there are attempts at recycling, but review does not usually work through the entire sequence of activities—its goal is generally to "remind" and provide some additional practice for a rule that is supposedly already "internalized".⁷ What happens to the student who misses the rule the first time around? Traditional review, meant as a reminder, will often not help. In traditional foreign language learning, as done in the United States, the student may even have to wait until next year, when the rule is presented again! Unsequenced communicative input contains built-in review. We don't have to worry if we miss the progressive tense today, it will be part of the input again . . . and again!

Comprehensible input thus guarantees us natural review and recycling, assuming, as mentioned above, that there is enough of it.

Some readers may feel that I am setting up and attacking a straw man. It can be argued that some grammatically-based courses, despite a lockstep structural orientation, do provide input at $i + 1$ as well. While there may be a "structure of the day", not every utterance contains the target structure. For example, if the lesson's focus is the progressive tense marker, other tenses will be used as well in both classroom input and in the readings.

This may appear to be the case, but there is, nevertheless, a real problem with this approach. With a grammatical focus, communication will *always* suffer, there will always be less genuinely interesting input. The teacher's mind, and the materials writer's mind, is focussed on "contextualizing" a particular structure, and not on communicating ideas.

As my colleague Steven Sternfeld has pointed out to me, what is proposed here is fundamentally different from "contextualization". Contextualization involves inventing a *realistic* context for the presentation of a grammatical rule or vocabulary item. The goal in the mind of the teacher is the learning or acquisition of the rule or word. What is proposed here is that the goal, in the mind of both the teacher and the students, is the idea, the message.

This objection can be summarized as follows:

3. The very orientation of the grammatically-based syllabus reduces the quality of comprehensible input and distorts the communicative focus. Teachers will be concerned with *how* they are speaking, reading selections will be aimed at including x number of examples of structure y along with a certain vocabulary sample, a sure guarantee of boring and wooden language.

4. Still another problem is that the grammatical sequence attempts to guess the order of acquisition. Several years ago, I suggested (Krashen, Madden, & Bailey, 1975) that an application of the Natural Order Hypothesis was the construction of "natural syllabi" following the natural order. My position has changed. As Fathman (1979) has pointed out, the practical implication of the Natural Order Hypothesis may lie in what it has taught us about the underlying process of language acquisition.

Comprehensible input, it is claimed, will automatically follow a natural order insofar as $i + 1$ will be provided (along with many other structures).

4. Optimal Input Must Be in Sufficient Quantity

It is difficult to say just how much comprehensible/low filter input is necessary to achieve a given level of proficiency in second language acquisition, due to a lack of data. We know enough now, however, to be able to state with some confidence that the profession has seriously underestimated the

amount of comprehensible input necessary to achieve even moderate, or "intermediate" levels of proficiency in second language acquisition.

Theoretical arguments for quantity derive from the immediately preceding discussion. I hypothesized that natural communicative input could supply $i + 1$ for all students if two conditions were met:

1. The input was not artificially constrained (limited range of discourse types)
2. It was supplied in sufficient quantity.

Clearly, five minutes of talk, or a single paragraph of reading, has little chance of including a given student's $i + 1$. Rather than take a more careful aim at that student's needs, rather than "overindividualizing" instruction, it is far easier, I am suggesting, to increase the amount of comprehensible input. Again, if there is enough, $i + 1$ will be provided, and will be provided over and over!

As mentioned above, we do not have enough data to state, with confidence, how much input is necessary to reach a given stage. The literature does provide us with enough to state some initial hypotheses, however. Below, we briefly examine what the literature implies about reaching the initial "readiness to speak" stage, and more advanced levels.

(a) Quantity Requirements for Initial Readiness to Speak

How much input is needed to end the "silent period"? How much input is necessary so that second language acquirers can produce utterances using acquired competence?

Asher's work on Total Physical Response teaching, a method that requires students to obey commands given in the second language, often with a "total physical response" (e.g. standing up), gives us some idea as to how much input is necessary for initial speaking readiness. The chief virtue of Total Physical Response may be its ability to supply concentrated comprehensible input. Asher has noted in several papers that TPR students are generally ready to start production in the target language after about ten hours of Total Physical Response input.⁸

Informal language acquisition research presents what at first may seem to be a different picture. The "silent period" seen in informal child second language acquisition may last as long as six months! During this time, the child may produce very little in the second language, other than routines and a few patterns. The greater length of the "natural" silent period, as compared to Asher's observation that ten hours may suffice may be due to the fact that a great deal of the input that the child in the natural environment receives may be incomprehensible. As stated earlier in this reading, the main advantage of "formal instruction" may be its potential for providing comprehen-

sible input in early stages, bringing the acquirer to the point where he or she can begin to take advantage of the natural environment. The long silent period in informal child second language acquisition may be further evidence that the informal environment is inefficient in early stages.⁹

*(b) Quantity Requirements
for Higher Levels of Proficiency*

We know even less about the amount of low filter/comprehensible input necessary for progress to higher levels for competence. We can get some idea from the United States Foreign Service Institute chart, an estimate of the amount of class time necessary to achieve a FSI 2+ rating in different foreign languages (2+ is defined as "halfway between minimal professional proficiency and working professional proficiency", Diller, 1978, p. 100) for adult English speakers. According to the Foreign Service Institute estimates (reproduced in Diller, 1978), European languages such as German, French, and Italian require approximately 720 hours of classtime for the "average" student to attain the 2+ level, while more "exotic" languages (such as Arabic, Korean, and Chinese) require 1950 hours of classtime.¹⁰

These figures may, however, represent an upper bound. They are based on "classroom hours", which, if traditional methods are employed, may not entail optimal input. In other words, we can do better!

"How much input?" remains an empirical question, one that can probably be adequately answered by research. To be more precise, we would like to know: "How much low filter/comprehensible input is necessary for students to acquire enough competence in the second language, so that they can use the informal environment to continue improving?" Despite our current paucity of data, what seems clear to me now is that we are not using enough of the available instruction time for supplying comprehensible input, and that we will be able to stimulate more rapid (and more comfortable) second language acquisition if we put greater focus on input.

NOTES

¹Speech production can come from any of three different sources. First, we can use our acquired competence as illustrated in the Monitor model. According to the input hypothesis, this sort of production takes some time to develop. Another way is via memorized patterns and routines (see Krashen & Scarcella, 1978). A third way is by extensive use of first language structures. The latter two methods of speech production are ways of "performing without competence" (borrowing R. Clark's terminology). A second language performer can "learn to speak" very quickly using these methods, and they are explicitly encouraged by some techniques. They are severely limited modes, however. (Krashen & Scarcella, 1978; Krashen, 1981b)

²This raises the interesting question of whether participation in conversation is even *practically* necessary for truly successful second language acquisition. It probably is. In addition to being an effective means of obtaining comprehensible input, conversation offers some other real advantages that will become clearer as we proceed. Scarcella (forthcoming) points out that there are many aspects of "communicative competence" that are probably not acquirable by observa-

tion and input alone. Also, Scarcella points out that real conversation entails "a high degree of personal involvement", what Stevick (1976a) terms "depth" and a lowered affective filter.

³In a review of the science fiction literature, Hatch (1976) points out several examples in which authors assume that it is possible to acquire human languages by listening to radio broadcasts. Even these authors seem to understand, however, that acquiring language by listening to incomprehensible input is an ability possessed only by certain aliens with different, and apparently superior "language acquisition devices".

⁴There are anecdotal cases of people who have picked up second languages via television. Larsen-Freeman (1979), for example, cited a case of a German speaker who acquired Dutch via TV. This is not at all strange, as much input in Dutch would be comprehensible to a speaker of such a closely related language. Note that I am not claiming that it is *impossible* to acquire language from TV. I am only saying that comprehensible input is necessary for acquisition and that television provides little comprehensible input for a beginner. Intermediate level students may profit quite a bit from television and even radio.

⁵Another way teachers help students understand messages containing structures that are "beyond" them is by emphasizing vocabulary. Both Evelyn Hatch and I have stated the argument for increased vocabulary work in recent years (Hatch, 1978b, Krashen, 1981b), and our argumentation is, I think, similar. While knowledge of vocabulary may not be sufficient for understanding all messages, there is little doubt that an increased vocabulary helps the acquirer understand more of what is heard or read (see e.g. Ulijn & Kempen, 1976; Macha, 1979, on the role of vocabulary in reading comprehension). Thus, more vocabulary should mean more comprehension of input, and more acquisition of grammar. This "new view" is quite different from earlier positions. Language teachers had been told to restrict introduction of new vocabulary in order to focus on syntax. Now we are saying that vocabulary learning will actually contribute to the acquisition of syntax.

The practical implications of this position are not clear to me, however. Should we teach vocabulary in isolation in an effort to boost the amount of input that is comprehensible? Unfortunately, there is little research that speaks directly to the question of how vocabulary is best acquired, and, most important, retained. There is some agreement among teachers that vocabulary should be taught in context, rather than by rote memorization of lists (see Celce-Murcia & Rosenzweig, 1979, for several techniques), but it may even be the case that vocabulary should not be directly taught at all! It may be the case that if we supply enough comprehensible input, vocabulary acquisition will in fact take care of itself.

Let me restate this suggestion in the form of an informal experiment: Given ten minutes of study time (waiting for a bus, etc.), which activity would be more useful for the language acquirer interested in long-term retention of vocabulary?

- (1) Rote learning of a list, using flash cards or some equivalent technique.
- (2) Reviewing a story that has "new words" carefully included (Contextualization).
- (3) Reading for pleasure, trying only to understand the message and looking up new words only when they seem to be essential to the meaning or when the acquirer is curious as to their meaning.

Method (3) relies on comprehensible input to supply new vocabulary in enough frequency, and to help the acquirer determine the meaning. In method (3) there is no conscious focus on vocabulary, only on meaning. The prediction (hope?) is that really important words will reoccur naturally and their meanings will be made increasingly obvious by the context. It does not exclude the possibility that the acquirer may be helped by occasional glances at the dictionary or occasional definitions by a teacher.

⁶There are exceptions, examples of comprehensible input in which $i + 1$ may not be present. These include situations in which the discourse is limited, as in many classrooms, where the possibilities for discourse variation are limited, and in many instrumental uses of language in which familiarity with a few routines and patterns may suffice for successful communication (e.g. dealing with gas station attendants, clerks, etc.).

⁷"Internalization", in my interpretation, seems to mean the acquisition of a rule that was first learned, where learning is assumed to have *caused* the subsequent acquisition. According to the theory of second language acquisition presented in Chapter II [of *Principles and Practice in Second*

Language Acquisition], this does not occur. I have discussed this in several technical papers (Krashen, 1977).

⁸Varvel (1979) describes a silent period in formal instruction (Silent Way methodology) that lasted considerably longer, indicating that there may be a fair amount of individual variation in the duration of the silent period for adults in language classes:

"There was a woman from Taiwan who after several weeks was still conspicuously silent in class. She never talked, and when called upon would only answer in a whisper, saying only what was required. It was clear, however, that she was one of the most attentive students in the class, had a clear understanding of what was being done, and seemingly enjoyed the class. She also had a positive attitude towards what and how she was learning. At no time was she coerced into active participation.

Then one day in the ninth week of school she sat in the front row and actively participated throughout the whole hour. From that point on, she continued to participate actively in a more limited way and at times helped others and was helped by others . . ." (p. 491)

While there may have been other reasons for this student's silence, this example suggests that the silent period should be respected, and that some students develop speaking readiness later than others.

⁹Given the same amount of comprehensible input, the child's silent period in second language acquisition may turn out to be longer than the average adult silent period for other reasons. What I am suggesting here is that the silent period in child second language acquisition would not be as long if more of the input the child hears is comprehensible.

¹⁰Note that if we assume that an acquirer in the natural environment receives about two hours per day of comprehensible input, 720 hours translates into about one year "abroad". This assumes that classtime = comprehensible input, which may not be true with the traditional methods the FSI chart is based on. It is, however, in accord with the informally accepted idea that a year abroad will result in a fair degree of fluency in the case of European languages.