

THE ROLE OF COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT ON LEARNING LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The integration of Comprehensible Input (CI) method in education has significantly changed language acquisition. Not only does it offer optimal vocabulary uptake but also it assists students to achieve a subconscious grammar and language internalization. This classroom-based action research investigates the practical value of alternative language exposure models among elementary-level learners, relying on the Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985). During the intervention cycle 30 students were divided into two groups with the purpose of observing the natural input. While the A group achieved remarkable gains in communication abilities by devoting time on understandable language immersion, the B group demonstrated speech delays due to conventional form-focused instruction (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Keywords: Language acquisition, comprehensible input, immersion, structural rules, input hypothesis.

Introduction

Аннотация

Интеграция CI method (Comprehensible Input) в образование значительно изменила процесс усвоения языка. Данный подход не только обеспечивает эффективное расширение словарного запаса, но и помогает учащимся подсознательно усваивать грамматические структуры. Настоящее прикладное исследование в классе изучает практическую ценность альтернативных моделей языкового воздействия среди учащихся начального уровня. В ходе эксперимента 30 учащихся были разделены на две группы с целью наблюдения за естественным восприятием языка. В то время как группа А достигла значительных успехов в коммуникативных навыках благодаря погружению в понятную языковую среду, группа В

продемонстрировала задержку в развитии речи из-за традиционного обучения, ориентированного на формальные правила.

Annotatsiya

CI methodining (Comprehensible Input) ta'limga joriy etilishi tilni o'zlashtirish jarayonini sezilarli darajada o'zgartirdi. Ushbu metod nafaqat so'z boyligining samarali o'sishini ta'minlaydi, balki o'quvchilarda grammatika va til tuzilishini tabiiy ravishda anglashga yordam beradi. Ushbu sinfga asoslangan amaliy tadqiqot boshlang'ich darajadagi o'quvchilar o'rtasida muqobil til muhiti modellarining amaliy qiymatini o'rganadi. Tajriba jarayonida tabiiy til muhitini kuzatish maqsadida 30 nafar o'quvchi ikki guruhga bo'lindi. A guruh tushunarli til muhitiga sho'ng'ish orqali muloqot qobiliyatlarida sezilarli yutuqlarga erishgan bo'lsa, B guruh an'anaviy, grammatik shakllarga yo'naltirilgan ta'lim sababli nutqiy rivojlanishda sekinlashuvni ko'rsatdi.

Introduction

Establishing the genuine communication competence for target language learners is still becoming the central issue. As first introduced by Stephen Krashen, his Input Hypothesis model argues that absorbing a second language occurs when the spoken or written content is a bit higher than the learner's initial capability (Krashen, 1985). However, several methods of learning were emerged by scholars, and students still face problems with memorizing rules instead of mastering communication. In this article, we analyze the impact of the Comprehensible Input (CI) method, which provides understandable language data that is just marginally above the student's current proficiency. Rather than enforcing strict structural formulas, this method proposes meaning-focused content using interactive storytelling and visual aids (Loschky, 1994).

Literature Review

Many researchers have conducted extensive studies on this topic over the years, validating how comprehensible language exposure develops linguistic competence. A primary example is Comprehensible Input, a term which was coined in the late 1970s by American linguist Stephen Krashen (Krashen, 1981). He argues that the Input Hypothesis (1985) asserts that acquisition only occurs

when input is slightly beyond the learners' current proficiency level ($i+1$). What does ($i+1$) mean? (i) is the level of language we know now, whereas ($+1$) is a material marginally above our existing ability (Krashen, 1982). Importantly, the content that learners are consuming should be both comprehensible and slightly challenging. If it is higher ($+2$, $+3$) than the students' level, the learning process is more likely to be disrupted due to a lack of understanding (VanPatten, 2004). Krashen also stated that (1982), 'Language acquisition is a subconscious process... we are generally not consciously aware of the rules we have acquired.' He explained the discrepancies between learning a language and mastering the language naturally. Based on this, conscious memorization of grammar rules and structures only serves us as a monitor while we are speaking to address language mistakes, while real language competence is formed with the help of understandable content and language acquisition. On top of that, Loschky (1994) implemented Krashen's theory in his own empirical study. Having carried out research, he realized that solely focusing on comprehensible input is not sufficient to learn the language effectively. He stated that rather than isolating input, instructors should try to create a tandem between verbal interaction and active listening in order to acquire the target language. Therefore, the more equal implementation is used, the higher probability learners possess to internalize a language as they are more likely to start comprehending what they hear and read. Similarly, analyzing real classroom conditions, Lightbown and Spada (2013) confirmed the superior efficiency of comprehensible input over grammar-heavy sessions. That said, they also emphasized that passive immersion alone is not a plausible pathway, as students should still dedicate attention to structural rules at certain milestones of development.

Methods

In order to acquire knowledge on the CI method, we conducted a three-week classroom-based intervention instead of a standard experiment to know the occurrence of organic learning. The study was carried out at a local language center with thirty students who have an elementary level of language aged between 14 and 16. Splitting them into two groups (A and B), we provided them a comprehensible learning environment with the materials and guided them through the tasks step by step. Students of Group A were engaged in a language

absorption driven by exposure to understandable materials during the class, such as reading short passages with pictures, listening to podcasts, and stories narrated by their teachers through the use of gestures as well as intonation patterns. Meanwhile, Group B followed a traditional approach. Each lesson started with a 25-minute lecture on structural formulas and the mechanics of sentences, while the remaining 20 minutes were spent on rote memorization, translating the target words into their native language, and copying them onto worksheets.

Results

Results from the experimental team demonstrated a sharp rise in decoding the meaning, whereas the baseline averages were maintained in the comparison group. The observation indicated that those who were engaged in a natural language environment strengthened their comprehension and communication abilities, catching the meaning of sentences uttered by speakers. Moreover, they facilitated their recalling skills by using new words in context. The second team — having allocated a substantial amount of time to grammar rules and memorizing exact vocabulary translations — struggled with the usage of vocabulary in real-time conversation due to an excessive focus on accuracy and phonology, although they managed to learn the syntax and how to construct correct sentences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, exposure to the language is an effective method to enhance learners' oral proficiency and comprehension capacity, as it is widely known that children learn their first native language by being immersed in a spoken environment, which directly helps them internalize new language structures without even realizing it (MacNamara, 1972). At the same time, the contributions of the aforementioned scholars cannot be overlooked because interaction and structural rules with comprehensible input are core principles of any productive language system.



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