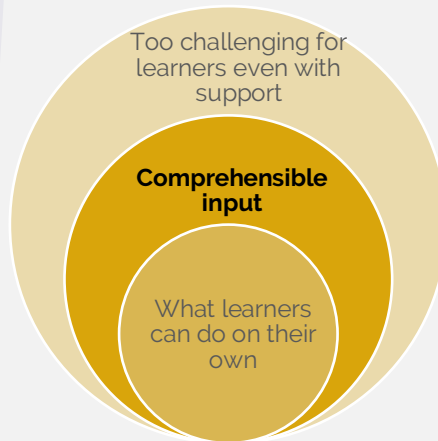




Input is to language acquisition as gas is to a car. An engine needs gas to run; without gas, the car would not move an inch. Likewise, comprehensible input in language learning is what gets the “engine” of acquisition going. Without it, acquisition simply does not happen.

James Lee & Bill VanPatten,  
*Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*, 1995



## COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT

- Language must be *comprehensible*.**  
Learners must understand most of what the speaker is saying.
- Language must be *meaning bearing*.**  
Useful input must contain a message that learners want and need to understand. There must be some ***communicative intent***.
- NOT the same as total comprehension.**

## MAKING INPUT COMPREHENSIBLE

### Visual Support

- images
- manipulatives
- graphics
- realia
- graphic organizers

### Verbal Cues

- paraphrasing
- slowed speech
- repetition
- emphasis
- inflection

### Nonverbal

- gestures
- facial expression
- demonstration
- routines
- pantomime

### When can I use English?

- To convey learning targets or can-do statements for a lesson
- To set and reflect on goals and progress
- Performance assessment prompts
- Interpretive assessment tasks
- Co-construction of grammar rules
- Safety and security of students



## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Check for comprehension by creating interactions that ask learners to demonstrate their understanding.

categorize

identify

find

sequence

sort

choose

recognize

follow

select

order

match



Sample Checks for Understanding in the Interpretive Mode

Strategy Alert

Four Corners

Story Maps

This or That

Three Card Matching

Listen & Draw

Picture Sequence

See, Think, Wonder



## COMMUNITY

Creating

Using a signal to indicate when use of English/native language is OK

Requesting permission to speak English/native language

Pledging to only use target language for a predetermined amount of time

Rewarding risk taking

Playing with language and being OK with ambiguity

**Communicating target language expectations**

