Rethinking Second Language Vocabulary Instruction: Towards Comprehensible, Compelling, and Optimal Input

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Abstract
Vocabulary knowledge is a fundamental component of both effective second language (L2) comprehension and fluent language production, and the integration of vocabulary instruction into language classroom practices remains indispensable for the successful development of L2 proficiency. Such integration must be carefully designed, pedagogically applicable, and aligned with current research. Recent empirical studies have underscored the efficacy of input-based approaches to vocabulary acquisition, particularly those grounded in the provision of comprehensible, compelling, and optimally structured input, and this paradigm has gained increasing scholarly attention. Building on this growing body of work, the present study aims to examine a range of pedagogically effective strategies for enhancing vocabulary acquisition, with a specific focus on how diverse forms of input can support sustainable lexical development. The study indicates that instruction enriched with well-structured and meaningful input contributes to deeper vocabulary processing, promotes long-term retention, and increases learner engagement. In addition, the study offers insights into the practical implications of comprehensible input and its contribution to fostering enduring vocabulary growth in L2 instructional contexts, thereby informing both classroom practices and future research on comprehensible-input-driven vocabulary development.
Keywords: comprehensible input, compelling and optimal input, L2 vocabulary teaching and learning, second language acquisition, input-based vocabulary teaching

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1. Introduction

For successful second or foreign language (L2) acquisition, vocabulary teaching and learning activities "within language classrooms" are of critical importance and should be systematically and carefully pre-planned. Vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in both efficient second language comprehension and fluent language production. It is evident that learners cannot express themselves properly if they do not have sufficient vocabulary knowledge. Recent research shows that input-based vocabulary teaching, particularly teaching vocabulary through comprehensible input, has gained considerable importance and impetus and should be taken into consideration carefully by foreign or second language researchers and teachers (Krashen, 1989; Barcroft, 2012; Ray, 2014).

Before anything else, it is of crucial value that we need to understand current language acquisition theories. There are various ways to classify L2 acquisition (SLA) theories but the distinction to be used in this study is between "cognitivist" versus "nativist" theories. It is considered that such a distinction could help us, second or foreign language teachers, better understand how L2 vocabulary teaching and learning should be viewed.

Discussions of the distinction between "cognitivism" and "nativism" (and also between "learning" and "acquisition") form not only the basis of second language acquisition theories but also the basis of L2 pedagogy and L2 vocabulary teaching and learning. The doctrine of cognitivism asserts that there is only one (domain-general) cognitive capacity responsible for all types of human learning. From a cognitivist perspective, therefore, language acquisition is fundamentally similar to learning of any other cognitive skill like learning math or learning how to type or drive. Viewed from this perspective; reductionism, constructivism and connectionism and even behaviorism can all be grouped under the umbrella term "cognitivism" as they all converge on the denial of a domain-specific mechanism for language acquisition. This is most clearly stated by Karmiloff-Smith, a former student of Piaget in Geneva School, who confessed that "domain-general learning processes are held to apply across all areas of linguistic and non-linguistic cognition" (Karmiloff-Smith, 1995, p. 7).

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On the other hand, nativism asserts that acquisition of a human language by children in a few years is inexplicable if there is no innate capacity/knowledge in the brain/mind of a child specifically geared to linguistic processing. This is most evident when the immature cognitive capacity of infants is taken into consideration.

Indeed, even cognitivists acknowledge that language acquisition can occur through exposure to input. Accordingly, second language researchers generally agree that input constitutes a fundamental element in the process of second language acquisition (VanPatten, 1996). The key distinction between the two perspectives lies in how incoming information is processed. For cognitivists, a domain-general learning mechanism underpins all types of human learning, whereas nativists attribute this role to the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) (see Kiymazarslan, 2020, for a more comprehensive discussion).

In light of these theoretical considerations, and in recognition of research findings that often challenge mainstream pedagogical intuitions, the present study focuses on comprehensible input as one of the most effective mechanisms for vocabulary development in L2 acquisition. The following section provides a brief overview of existing vocabulary teaching models, techniques, and strategies. The concluding part of the study aims to clarify why and how new vocabulary should be taught through input that is "comprehensible, compelling, and optimally structured"**,** offering pedagogically grounded recommendations for L2 classroom practice.

2. Literature: A Brief Look at Existing Vocabulary Teaching Models, Techniques and Strategies

Based on a taxonomy of vocabulary teaching techniques proposed by Oxford and Crookall (as cited in Shen, 2013, p. 191), common instructional strategies for vocabulary in 1990 can be categorized into three main groups: (1) de-contextualising (2) semi-contextualising (3) fully contextualising. Figure 1 indicates a dynamic continuum of various approaches (adapted from Shen, 2013, p. 192). It is believed that contextual, semi-contextual and de-contextual strategies are necessary for learners to learn or acquire words. It is true that using context clues to guess word meanings is important in learning vocabulary.

Figure 1. Common vocabulary learning strategies from *less input* to *more input*.

LESS INPUT	decontextual	semi-contextual	fully contextual	MORE INPUT
	1. word lists	1. bilingual word lists	1. listening (stories)	
	2. monolingual word lists	2. physical response	2. reading (stories, readers)	
	3. flashcards	3. semantic mapping	3. writing	
	4. dictionaries/glosses	4. word grouping	4. speaking	
	5. structure/phrase lists	5. imagery: aural/visual	5. high-freq. words in context	

Shen (2013, p. 202) observes that instructors often rely on a narrow set of approaches when teaching vocabulary in second language (L2) classrooms. For instance, they often make use of decontextualized words when they want to introduce new words by providing their synonyms or dictionary definitions. Some teachers even think that memorization is the most efficient way of learning words. In order to create a better and systematic vocabulary teaching and learning in classroom settings, Shen proposes a model called a 2C (contextual and consolidating) "model for teaching vocabulary". Shen also proposes another model called a 5R (*receiving, recognizing, retaining, retrieving, recycling* in four language skills) "model for learner's vocabulary learning process". Word lists, flashcards or other decontextual tools should not be used on their own. They should be introduced in context as much as possible. If teachers understand the value of the contextual and consolidating model mentioned above, they can benefit from this second five-step model effectively to teach vocabulary in their classrooms. Shen then proposes a third model by combining teaching and learning models in one model called "2C-5R model" for classroom contexts. It is obvious that all these models proposed by Shen can be beneficial to vocabulary teaching and learning. However, teachers should be cautiously attentive before they integrate such models into their lesson plans and classrooms; moreover, they should consider other studies and models as well beforehand ((Folse, 2004; Nation, 2001).

The following techniques are also suggested for successful vocabulary acquisition to occur (Tongpoon-Patanasorn & Patanasorn, 2010): (1) repeating and recycling; (2) noticing; (3) reflection; (4) teaching different aspects of vocabulary knowledge and (5) task-induced involvement. For classroom contexts, these techniques can be clarified as follows (adapted from Tongpoon-Patanasorn, A. & Patanasorn C., 2010, p. 70):

(1) *Repeating and Recycling*: It is important for learners to encounter a new word several times to acquire the word successfully. It is meaningless to see it only once or twice separately. A meaningful course of action is required in retrieving the new word. Otherwise, the acquisition of a word is improbable. As stated by Patanasorn (2010, p. 71), "meaningful retrieval of words engages learners in a deep level of processes". Repeating the target words (teachers repeat) plays a crucial role in helping the student have a chance to acquire them. Words also must be recycled by teachers in the same line with repeating to help learners retain them. In case recycling is ignored, all the effort spent on learning and teaching them can be wasted.

(2) *Noticing*: Another significant issue is that teachers need to make learners aware (conscious) of what they are learning (not acquiring). Students need to convert input to intake. One strategy to make words more noticeable is by means of "input enhancement". For example, displaying the target word in bold or in a concordance format may help learners improve their receptive skills.

Noticing is a typically cognitivist idea as it presupposes that when learners consciously notice something they will be able to acquire it later (Schmidt, 1990; Sharwood Smith, 1993). From a nativist standpoint, however, we can never be sure which input becomes intake since the internalization of input depends on the impenetrable processing of the LAD, not on the teachers' or learners' conscious learning attempts. The only way to help the LAD acquire something new is through making input more comprehensible, according to nativism. When the LAD picks up a rule or a vocabulary item is basically beyond our control.

(3) *Reflection*: This technique refers to the monitoring of a learner's own learning. Reflection results in a process of good quality learning because there is "self-assessment" in it and this is a sort of meaningful learning (Nation, 2001). There are three interrelated strategies to keep track of one's own vocabulary learning. One: a record of how many words a learner has learned. Two: a record of how fast learning occurs. Three: a record of examples of students' language use regularly.

(4) *Teaching Different Aspects of Vocabulary Knowledge*: Obviously knowing a word does not simply mean knowing the definition of a word. It involves knowing various aspects such as collocations, word parts, and grammatical functions and so on. Learners need to possess such aspects of knowing a word. Using the target word in the right context and time is of great value. Of course, creating chances for exposure for successful acquisition of a word is of crucial value.

(5) *Task-induced involvement*: Such an involvement requires designing language tasks for incidental vocabulary learning. In fact, this is a model proposed by Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) (cited in Patanasorn, 2010). They believe that three components are important for retention of words: the need to know a word (motivation), searching to find the meaning of unknown words (curiosity) and evaluation to find out whether a word fits the context or does not fit it. Tasks increase learners' involvement in a meaningful vocabulary learning setting and result in high levels of vocabulary retention. It is important to note that tasks can also provide compelling, interesting and comprehensible input for learners.

It is widely accepted that the most effective approach to teaching vocabulary involves utilizing a variety of methods within the classroom. However, as mentioned earlier, it has been found that there are certain weaknesses concerning vocabulary teaching in class. This may be because of teachers' false belief that giving the meaning of a word directly is less time-consuming. In addition, teachers tend to use relatively few and ineffective techniques and strategies in class. Then there is a strong argument whether vocabulary should be learned by students or taught by teachers (Folse, 2004; Shen, 2013). The reason why such an argument has appeared is probably that learning a word requires a lot of time and exposure for students and such a difficult activity cannot be carried out in a classroom, or it can just partially be done. To put it another way, trying to teach complicated lexical items in limited class time or presenting vocabulary items in isolation cannot be a solution to the issue of helping students acquire L2 vocabulary. Input-based teaching and using comprehensible input in and out of class time can be a solution to help learners attain a better place in this process.

In addition to the techniques, models, and strategies that have appeared as a result of varying theories of language and language learning, recent advances in information technology have also led to important changes in L2 vocabulary teaching and learning, which is the subject of another chapter.

3. Teaching Vocabulary with Compelling, Comprehensible and Optimal Input

When we consider the popular questions about how successful language acquisition takes place, we often face the following three questions: (1) Do we learn language by producing or receiving it? (2) Do we learn language by building skills? (3) Do we learn language by understanding interesting and compelling messages, that is, by comprehensible input? Teaching vocabulary with comprehensible input can intelligibly answer all of the questions above with its sound theoretical basis based on the Input Hypothesis proposed by Stephen Krashen. In his article, Krashen (1989, p. 441) suggests that "comprehensible input is the essential environmental ingredient – a richly specified internal language acquisition device also makes a significant contribution to language acquisition."

The Natural Approach (NA), probably the first of the CI-based approaches, stresses the importance of vocabulary and views language as a vehicle for 'communicating meanings' and 'messages'. A language is essentially its lexicon. Acquisition (not learning) is the natural assimilation of language rules (and its lexicon) by using language for communication. In the NA classroom, the teacher maintains students' attention on "key lexical items" and "uses context" to help students (Kiymazarslan, 2000, p. 74-80). The teacher is the major source of input that is

understandable to the learner. The teacher also attempts to maintain a constant flow of compelling and comprehensible input. It is very important for teachers to provide "sufficient" comprehensible input through meaningful contexts.

The Comprehension Hypothesis (or the Input Hypothesis) developed by Stephen Krashen can be regarded as the backbone of teaching vocabulary through CI. According to the hypothesis, we acquire language only when we understand messages that include aspects of language (vocabulary and grammar) we have not acquired yet, but language we are ready to acquire (Krashen, 2013, p. 3). Krashen informs us of two amazing facts about language acquisition (or vocabulary acquisition): First, acquisition is easy, which means it requires no energy, no effort. Understanding messages is the only key. Second, L2 acquisition is inevitable, which means you must acquire something each time you are given some input and you understand its meaning; there is no way out.

At beginner levels of CI vocabulary teaching, TPR, the Natural Approach, TPRS, and related CI methods can be used efficiently. At the intermediate level, however, Krashen proposes sheltered subject matter teaching. In a sheltered class, "students and teachers are focused on subject matter, not on language. This emphasis on meaning, not on form, results in more comprehensible input, and thus more language acquisition [and more vocabulary acquisition]" (Krashen, 2013, p. 8). At more advanced levels, self-selected reading (students select what they want to read) is offered as a solution. Self-selected reading can be a bridge between intermediate and advanced levels. Krashen uses the term "recreational reading" for such reading classes/activities which results in better development in reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary (Mason, 2010, p. 10; Krashen, 2013, p. 9; Chew, P. & Krashen, 2017, p. 7).

Having introduced the importance of vocabulary, the brief history of L2 vocabulary instruction and existing techniques and strategies, a relatively new term called "*Teaching Vocabulary via Comprehensible Input* (TVCI in short)" can now be suggested. This term simply stresses the fact that one of the language teacher's primary responsibilities is to help learners build on their current understanding of vocabulary in the target language (that is, "i") and to expand their knowledge through compelling, comprehensible and optimal input (CI) (that is, "i+1").

3.1. Teaching Proficiency via Reading & Storytelling (TPRS) Approach to Vocabulary Teaching

Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) was first developed and introduced by Blaine Ray in the 1990s. Its development still continues. To understand TPRS's vocabulary teaching point of view, it is necessary to understand what TPRS really is. It all began with James Asher's "TPR" (Asher, 1977). As explained by Seely (2006, p. 40), a typical (classical) TPR class goes on as in the following order, and can be used to teach vocabulary:

(a) The teacher first gives a command.
(b) The teacher performs the corresponding action to demonstrate the meaning of it.
(c) The teacher gives the command to the learners.
(d) The learners act to respond to it.
(e) The learners are exposed to no more than three words at a time.
(f) When all the learners can respond readily to the first three words, three more are introduced.

The first step of TPRS, "the vocabulary step", aims to establish meaning and is shown in more detail below (adapted from a chart by Susan Gross, 2007, cited in Seely and Romijn, 2006; Ray and Seely, 2014). Here is the first step, the vocabulary step of TPRS:

<u>Introduce the Vocabulary</u>:
(1) Give the meaning (of words and phrases) in the mother tongue. Display it on the board or overhead (or on the smartboard)
(2) Gesture (younger students require gestures)

<u>Personalize the vocabulary</u>:
(3) Ask questions using the new words. *Example: If the word is a noun, ask if a student likes it. If the word is a verb, ask if he does it.*
(4) Show interest by asking follow-up questions.
(5) Ask the entire group about the first student.
(6) Invite reactions by the entire group.
(7) Ask similar questions of another student.
(8) Compare and contrast students.

(9) Always look for confusion (hesitation or no response) and use translation to clear it up.
(10) Make sure that every student understands everything.
(11) Show interest and enthusiasm.
(12) Capitalize on the comparison between students to make a little story about them.

The first step introduced above only shows the vocabulary internalizing step. Our ultimate goal is not just vocabulary. Fluency is the target stop at which we aim. The next two steps are perhaps more important than the first vocabulary step for they help learners continue subconsciously acquiring the target vocabulary. The second step is the story step in which the teacher helps learners dramatize a story and perform after each statement made by the teacher. The third step is the reading step: the teacher gives students a printed story. One person at a time translates the story while the rest of the students follow along.

During the storytelling process, cognates can easily be used to teach vocabulary. Cognates are the words that can be obtained easily by students because they are similar in L1 and L2, thus easier to grasp without teaching them at all and without demonstration. TPRS teachers often make use of cognates in their classrooms to help students hear them over and over and make the story (and the lesson) as comprehensible as possible. For example, the words "*goril*" in Turkish and "*gorilla*" in English are similar and easily understood without translation. The words "*elefante*" in Spanish and "*elephant*" in English are also good cognates and can be used in stories.

The circling technique, one of the core instructional practices within TPRS rather than a standalone method, involves asking a series of simple questions about a statement in the target language (see substeps 3–12 above). Its main purpose is to provide repetition of the target vocabulary or structure of the day in context. This is reminiscent of the cognitivist/communicative principle of "practice makes perfect" even though it is the teacher who repeats, not the student. It aims at helping students acquire grammar as well as phonology in a holistic way. Krashen's Monitor Model, however, suggests that LAD cannot be forced to acquire something unless it is ready to do so.

> [I]nstruction does not appear to influence the order of development. No matter what order grammatical structures are presented and practiced in the classroom, learners will follow their own "built-in" syllabus (Ellis, 1984, p.150).

When applied in a form-focused manner, the circling technique presents an important limitation: it tends to become monotonous over time. When students notice that the teacher is trying to instill a specific grammar structure in their minds rather than dealing with the meaningful story, it is highly likely that their affective filter goes up. Even though the circling technique is somehow violating nativist principles, it is still an effective tool as it provides an ample amount of input and it is not forcing students to respond in full sentences. The following question types are used in this technique.

* *yes* / *no* questions AND *either* / *or* questions
* questions that require negative responses
* questions that require one-word answers (*wh-* or *question words*)
* an open-ended and detail-oriented question that requires students to add to the story

Figure 2. A circling example to teach vocabulary and structure.

	SUBJECT	*VERB*	*OBJECT*	*COMMENTS*
	Mary	reads	a book.	Students (SS): Ohh.
Class,	Does Mary	read	a book?	SS: YES. T: That's correct, class. Mary reads a book.
	Does Jane Does Eda Does Joseph Does the teacher	read	a book?	SS: NO. T: That's correct, class. Jane does not read a book. Mary reads a book. + EITHER / OR QS like: Does Eda or Mary read a book?
Class,	Does Mary	eat write sell	a book?	SS: NO. T: That's correct, class. Mary does not eat a book. Mary reads a book. + EITHER / OR QS like: Does Mary eat or read a book?
	Does Mary	read	a magazine? a newspaper? a letter?	SS: NO. T: That's correct, class. Mary does not read a magazine. She reads a book. + EITHER / OR QS like: Does Mary read a book or a magazine?

	SUBJECT	*VERB*	*OBJECT*	*COMMENTS*
	WHO reads a book?	What does Mary DO?	WHAT does Mary read?	SS ANSWER open-ended qs. T: That's correct, class. MARY reads a book. T: That's correct, class. Mary READS a book. T: That's correct, class. Mary reads A BOOK.

In the circling example in Figure 2 above, it can be clearly seen that the teacher's questions circle around a new word or phrase in context. Such a circling technique aims to help students "acquire" and eventually "produce" the target word (adapted from Ben Slavic, 2008). It is important to note that the teacher also makes use of gestures and commands skillfully while presenting the below statement.

According to Ray (2014, p. 8), when a teacher uses a new word or phrase that his or her students do not know, students will certainly not understand anything. When such a thing happens, that word or phrase can be written on the board with its L1 translation. It is important to leave that word on the board because students might forget it throughout the class. The teacher's task is to repeat that new word to help students hear the word several times. The teacher needs to practice the word by using it in context over and over. Similarly, in an interview conducted by Karen Rowan with Blaine Ray (2017, p. 38), providing "massive amounts of comprehensible input" using "high-frequency vocabulary" is stressed. Therefore, the circling technique is one of the techniques that helps students become familiar with (and exposed to) new words or phrases. Other techniques such as embedded-reading, free voluntary reading, movie-talk, and story listening can also be of great value for vocabulary teaching (Seely, 2006; Slavic, 2008; Hedstrom, 2012; Ray, 2014).

3.2. The Role of Optimal Input in Vocabulary Acquisition

As the previous sections have emphasized the centrality of comprehensible and compelling input in approaches such as NA, TPR, and TPRS, it is essential to turn to the notion of optimal input to clarify how such input actually facilitates sustained vocabulary acquisition. In many countries, proficiency in a foreign language is often regarded as a reflection of one's command of grammar and vocabulary. However, as research has indicated, the primary focus should not be on teaching or memorizing rules and vocabulary. Although direct or indirect instruction of grammar and vocabulary has often been found to be insufficient for developing communicative competence, many foreign language teachers continue to rely on it. This raises an important question: how should teachers conceptualize the role of vocabulary in language teaching—should it be explicitly taught, and if so, in what ways? How can teachers then help their students acquire lexical items? Recent SLA research says acquisition is facilitated better *through providing optimal input*. The answer to such questions can therefore be found in the "optimal input", which is an umbrella term for comprehensible, compelling, rich and ample input. According to Krashen and Mason (2020), this kind of input has four features:

Firstly, optimal input is "*comprehensible*" for language acquisition does not require understanding every word. Secondly, optimal input is notably "*compelling and interesting*". We may thus temporarily forget that we are acquiring new words in an L2. Thirdly, optimal input is rich in vocabulary that contributes to the message and to the flow of the story or the text. And fourthly, language acquisition is a gradual process. So optimal input must be ample. It must provide opportunities for acquisition of new words (Krashen & Mason, 2020). To put it another way, when there is no comprehensibility, of course, we cannot talk about optimality and successful vocabulary acquisition.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Contextualization and task-induced involvement facilitate second language vocabulary acquisition considerably (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2008). Therefore, the more learners face lexical items in context, the more input they gain. The more optimal input they have, the more fluent they gradually become. We have also seen that "exposure to compelling, comprehensible and optimal input" is the key to lexical acquisition. As Krashen emphasizes in his article (2013: 110), "students should be provided with many exposures in different contexts if students do not get the entire meaning of a vocabulary item through one exposure."

It is important that teachers place "vocabulary and TVCI in particular" at the heart of teaching. Teachers need to know how to present vocabulary properly and intelligently in their classrooms for their students. One of the major roles of the language teacher in the classroom (and outside the classroom) is to provide students with "sufficient and compelling comprehensible input" in the presentation of new vocabulary. This can be done in various ways as suggested in the previous parts of the study.

Although there are earlier discussions that "vocabulary cannot be left to grow organically and it benefits from direct testing and instruction" (Folse, 2004), such testing and instruction should not be focused solely on forms or on improving conscious retaining of vocabulary items. Research has shown that the power of CI-based techniques in helping students acquire the target vocabulary should not be underestimated no matter how different the target languages are (Seely, 2006; Krashen 2013; Ray, 2014).

Contrary to some myths, that the first and second languages are different or that they do not have any relationship or similarity in terms of language families or cognates does not stop or slow down the acquisition of target vocabulary items as long as the input provided is interesting, comprehensible and compelling. This can be achieved through various techniques such as contextualized vocabulary activities, story listening, sustained silent reading, storytelling and so on. The circling technique, for instance, and other CI-based techniques can achieve this goal of providing comprehensible input.

Therefore, CI is fundamental to effective vocabulary acquisition, as learners need sustained and varied exposure to new lexical items beyond limited classroom interactions to internalize and retain vocabulary. Teaching complex vocabulary in isolation presents significant challenges, making it essential to embed lexical instruction within meaningful, context-rich input that promotes deeper understanding and longer-lasting retention. Advances in information technology have further transformed L2 vocabulary learning by providing innovative tools and immersive environments that enhance access to comprehensible, compelling and optimal input and support input-based teaching methodologies.

In recent years, the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in language education, in particular, has been opening new doors for vocabulary learning. AI-powered systems can personalize input, adapt content difficulty in real time, and offer learners rich, interactive environments that sustain motivation and promote deeper engagement. When used intelligently by human teachers, these technologies can complement comprehensible input practices by expanding exposure beyond the classroom and cater to diverse learner needs.

At the same time, classroom management remains a critical factor in the success of TVCI-based approaches. Without a well-managed and supportive classroom environment, even "the most compelling" content can lose its impact—especially with new students from Gen Z or Gen Alpha. Teachers must create structured, respectful, and inclusive spaces that allow all students to engage with input meaningfully. Classroom routines, behavior expectations, and student-teacher rapport are therefore not peripheral concerns but central to the effectiveness of CI-based vocabulary teaching—provided, of course, that this can be achieved.

The role of language teachers has, therefore, evolved toward facilitating vocabulary growth by delivering optimal, contextually grounded input, consistent with the principles of Teaching Vocabulary via Comprehensible Input (TVCI). Looking ahead, further research is needed to identify the most effective types of input and technological applications for vocabulary learning, as well as to explore how TVCI can be adapted across diverse learner populations and educational settings. These directions emphasize the ongoing importance of input-based approaches in fostering successful second language vocabulary acquisition.

In conclusion, at a time when language teaching is undergoing continual pedagogical renewal and researchers are placing increasing emphasis on how learners acquire vocabulary, L2 teachers continue to bear a responsibility that is both significant and far-reaching. Their work fundamentally shapes the path of language acquisition. What remains essential is the teacher's ability to provide learners with rich, meaningful, and comprehensible input that supports sustained vocabulary development. The key question is how to guide learners toward true fluency. Students are unlikely to reach this goal if teachers rely on decontextualized vocabulary exercises that fail to provide meaningful, comprehensible input. The more such input teachers provide, the more likely learners are to internalize new vocabulary in a durable and meaningful way, thereby fostering higher levels of proficiency and enduring vocabulary mastery.

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