# The effectiveness of comprehensible input in primary level English language classes: A perspective from Bangladesh

By

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A thesis

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that

- The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.

- The thesis does not contain previously published material or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

- The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.

- I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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**Approval**

The Thesis titled "The effectiveness of comprehensible input in primary level English language classes: A perspective from Bangladesh" submitted by Abdullah Al Mubashshir (16203010) has been acknowledged as acceptable in part completion of the requirements for a bachelor of arts in English degree

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## Ethics statement

I didn't plagiarize any information in this research and didn't use anyone's personal information either. The result of this research came from my own study. I took some help from different articles, books and journals to write this article but I gave proper reference for them. I also maintained the privacy of the participants and the institution I attended to collect data by not revealing their name in my research.

**Abstract**

The main objective of this research was to find the effectiveness of comprehensible input on primary level students' English learning. A quantitative research approach had been followed where two groups of students got two kinds of input: comprehensible and non-comprehensible. The researcher then analysed the results of the groups to find out whether comprehensible input can do any better than non-comprehensible input in primary students' English learning. The research found that the group which got comprehensible input could understand the text better thus got higher marks than the group which got non comprehensible input. Both groups got input through reading text which also reflected the credibility of reading as comprehensible input. The researcher hopes that this study would help National Curriculum of Education Board of Bangladesh (NCTB) and our English teachers to gain the benefits of comprehensible input by implementing it on primary students for their English learning.


**Keywords:** Comprehensible input, non-comprehensible input, language acquisition, language learning, primary school, input hypothesis.

## Dedication

I want to dedicate my work to the almighty, to my parents for their unconditional support in my life and to my supervisor, Asifa Sultana miss, whose guidance and support helped me a lot to complete my thesis.

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This research paper would not have been possible without the help of the Almighty and many people. I am heartily thankful to my respective supervisor, Dr.Asifa Sultana, whose guidance and support helped me a lot to complete my thesis. I am deeply indebted to my supervisor for giving me her valuable time, suggestions, and for supporting me throughout my writing process.

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**The effectiveness of comprehensible input in primary level English language classes: A perspective from Bangladesh**

## Chapter One: Introduction

Stephen Krashen's Monitor Model Hypothesis is considered as one of the detailed hypotheses regarding second language acquisition (SLA) which contains five hypotheses in total: Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, Monitor Hypothesis, Natural Order Hypothesis, Input Hypothesis and Affective-Filter Hypothesis. In Input Hypothesis, Krashen describes about the input which is given to second language learners for their language learning. According to him, if the learners get comprehensible input, they will learn the language effectively. As English is considered as a second language in Bangladesh, students often find difficulties while learning English. Bangla medium students of primary level find it more challenging as they start their education life using their mother tongue, Bangla. Moreover, in Bangladesh, not many people use English for communication or other purposes which make people see English as a foreign language rather than a second language. All those situations make English learning environment a bit more difficult in Bangladeshi context. However, English teachers of Bangladesh are always trying to make better environment for English learners so that they can acquire English effectively. As Bangladeshi primary level students are learning English as a second language, Krashen's comprehensible input theory may have some effects on their English learning.

### 1.1 Research problem

As English is not the first language in Bangladesh, students often struggle learning it. Moreover, learning English is not same for Bangla medium and English medium students in our country. Learning procedures and the rate of progress are different for them. In

Bangladesh, Bangla medium students learn English as a subject rather than a language. This is why, they might have some lacking in their learning. To help the students learn English, our teachers follow several methods in the classroom by giving them input. Teachers try to make the input as easy as possible so that the students understand them and produce reasonable output in response. Getting the input right and producing right amount of output can be the major way of acquiring the language. Stephen Krashen, in his Input Hypothesis, emphasises on the nature and role of input. He stated that, if the given input becomes comprehensible to the learners, they will acquire the language better(1985, pp. 80-81).Giving comprehensible and non-comprehensible input to the primary level students is a way to test whether comprehensible input helps them to learn the language and if the non-comprehensible input can do any better.

## 1.2 Research questions

To conduct this research, it is needed for the researcher to find answers for some questions. The research questions are given below:

- How does comprehensible input affect the language learning of primary level students?

- Which type of input helps the students more in terms of language learning: comprehensible or non-comprehensible?

## 1.3 Research objectives

There are two objectives of the present study. One is to test the effectiveness of comprehensible input: whether it helps primary level students to acquire English language properly. The other one is to test Krashen's input hypothesis by testing learners/students' learning outcomes for each of the inputs: comprehensible and non-comprehensible.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**

**2.1 Monitor Model Hypothesis**

Input hypothesis is one of the five hypotheses of 'Monitor Model Hypothesis' which was proposed by Stephen Krashen in 1977. These five hypotheses are about how language learners acquire their second language. These are discussed briefly in the following section.

**2.1.1 Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis**

Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis is the first hypothesis of Monitor Model Hypothesis which states that there are differences between acquiring a language and learning it (Krashen, 1985, p.79). Acquisition of language takes place when language learners pick up a language subconsciously. For example, a little child picks up his/her mother tongue subconsciously. He/she often imitates or observes what his/her parents are saying. Thus, he/she picks up the language without being aware of it. Language acquisition can be done with second language too. For example, a language learner can be put in such environment where a set of learning procedures is designed in a way that the learner uses them subconsciously. On the other hand, when a person learns a language, he/she picks up the language by capturing the form or the meaning of it. He/she consciously does the processes which is referred as learning.

**2.1.2 Monitor Hypothesis**

According to Monitor Hypothesis, language learners continuously monitor the correctness of their language output (Krashen, 1985, p. 79). In this way, learners focus more on language form than the meaning of it. For example, while giving presentation in English, a new language learner continuously thinks whether he/she is producing his/her output grammatically correct and error free in front of the audience. To use the monitor hypothesis, three criteria must be met:

- The learner has to know the grammatical structure of the language he/she is using

- He/she must concentrate on the language form while producing the speech.

- All these need to be happened in a conversation.

### 2.1.3 Natural Order Hypothesis:

Krashen in Natural Order Hypothesis says that language learners acquire the language in a universal and fixed sequence (1985, p.79). From childhood, a person starts to acquire the language elements in a pre-determined way where he/she learns one element earlier than others. The sequence in which learners acquire the language elements is common for all languages. For example, a language learner may pick up the words earlier than the sentence structure. This will happen for all the learners and for all the languages. Noam Chomsky (1986) also gives similar idea in his Universal Grammar theory. According to him, each human being has innate grammatical structures in his brain which are applicable for all language (1986, p.3). A language learner starts acquiring language by following Universal Grammar.

### 2.1.4 Input Hypothesis:

According to the Input Hypothesis, learners only acquire or learn a language when they get input which they can understand. Stephen Krashen in his Input hypothesis theory, describes this kind of input as comprehensible input. According to him, learners must need comprehensible input in order to acquire the language properly (1985, pp 80-81). If learners do not get comprehensible input, little or no acquisition will take place. Stephen Krashen describes the comprehensible input in the form of 'i+1' where 'i' is the current knowledge level of the learners and '+1'means the given input is one step higher than learners' current level of knowledge.

**2.1.5 Affective-filter Hypothesis**

Affective-filter Hypothesis states that language acquisition can be harmed by several mental factors such as anxiety, stress, lack of motivation, shyness etc. (Krashen, 1985, p. 81).These mental factors hold the learners backward so that they can't produce their language output properly. Thus, little or no language acquisition takes place. If those affective-filters can be reduced, learners will acquire the language much effectively.

**2.2 Studies Examining Krashen's Five Hypotheses**

Wenquan Wu (2010) talks about the significance of Krashen's Input Hypothesis in his paper. By referring to Krashen's two terms, acquisition and learning, he says that every learners of English should acquire English rather than learning it (2010, p.137). He also believes that Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis is the base of Input Hypothesis as in Natural Order Hypothesis, learners learn the second language in an order which is also the main concern in the Input Hypothesis according to which learners are supposed to learn effectively when they get input which is comprehensible. Wu found that neither too easy, nor too hard inputs were helping learners to acquire the language properly. Based on that, Wu recommended some of the things that could be improved in order to facilitate acquisition. He suggested that the teaching materials should be designed in a comprehensible way so that they can be understandable for the English language learners. Wu also suggested that the anxiety level of the learners must be kept low which also requires comprehensible input in their learning materials. Anxiety, frustration, lack of motivations are the main affective filters which can be reduced significantly if the given input seems easy and understandable to the learners (Wu, 2010, p. 138).

## 2.3 Pre-modified and Interactionally modified Input

The Input Hypothesis was further examined by Patricia Salazar (1996). She referred to Krashen's two ways by which input could be made comprehensible (1996, p.2). One is called pre-modified input where inputs are simplified by adding explanation, context and lexical simplicity before they are presented to the learner. The other way is called interactionally modified input where inputs are simplified by the interaction/communication between the teacher and the students in the classroom. In her paper, Salazar tried to find out which type of input was more effective for language acquisition to take place. To validate the distinction between those two types of input, the writer mentions several researches. T. Pica et. all (1986) did research on pre modified input. The researchers found that language acquisition took place better with interactionally modified input although the pre-modified input were served with less complex syntax, great semantic redundancy and easy paraphrase (1986, pp. 133-137). It also seems that even non-native teachers did better with interactionally modified input rather than pre modified input although they (non-native teachers) came from a different language background. Ellis (1995) also did research about pre modified input – how it helps vocabulary learning compared to the interactionally modified input. It was found from his research that pre modified input did good for vocabulary learning however it should do much better than the found results. On the other hand, interactionally modified input has overall better effect on whole language acquisition. From above discussion and the findings of the researches, it is almost clear that interactionally modified input did better than pre modified input in language acquisition however there is no clear answer for why and how interactionally modified input does better for second language acquisition rather than pre modified input.

**2.4 Comprehensible input and affective-filters**

Moreover, interactionally modified input has a close relation with the Affective Filter Hypothesis where Krashen described several mental factors that interrupt learners' language acquisition such as anxiety, stress, shyness etc. (1985, pp. 81-82). As interactionally modified input needs classroom interaction between students and the teacher, students must produce some output in order to keep the process running. As language learners have several affective filters which interrupt their ability to produce something, the affective filters must be kept low so that they can have their output for the given input which will facilitate language acquisition. Mestre and Pastor (2013) found in their research about how motivation affects second language acquisition. It was seen from their study that the students who interacted more often in the classroom acquired the language better than the students who made less interaction (2013, pp. 242-243). So, it appears that in order for acquisition to take place, students need to make interaction in classroom which needs a mind that is free of stress, anxiety, shyness and full of motivation.

**2.5 Reading as comprehensible input**

As low affective filters help language learners to acquire their second language better, reading was identified as a good way for the learners who are dealing with anxiety and stress. Stephen Krashen (2003) in his another study, described reading as a special case for comprehensible input. He stated that "Free voluntary reading is an extremely powerful form of a comprehensible input and it is delivered in a low anxiety environment" (2003, p3). Free voluntary reading helps increasing both language development and literacy which help the learners to improve reading comprehension, grammar writing and vocabulary. It also helps language learners with regard to the affective filters. As a result, learners can acquire their target language in a stress free environment which helps them to increase their language

competence in a much efficient way. Referring to characteristics of reading materials, Krashen suggested that the reading materials must be comprehensible and the learners must read them from their willingness (1982, pp. 164-165). It meant that reading materials must be in topics that the learners have personal interests in them.

Marlise Horst (2005), in her study also found the effectiveness of reading as comprehensible input. She says that simplified readers can help language learners acquiring new words thus better language acquisition takes place for them. (2005, pp. 355-382). By simplified readers, she means literary classics, thrillers, biographies, romances and short stories that are written for beginner or intermediate level learners. As reading is a special case for comprehensible input, reading those simplified readers will work as the source of comprehensible input for English language learners. Horst did her study on 21 participants who were immigrants and enrolled in an English learning programme in Montreal, Canada. The participants were from different language background and also had different proficiency level in English. The participants took simplified readers from class library to their home and read them for six weeks. Horst designed vocabulary measures for individual student as each of the participants read different book. She found in her study that participants were acquiring good amount of vocabulary even in reading for short time and as they were reading more, they were learning much more new vocabularies. This represents the effectiveness of reading simplified reader for vocabulary learning which results in effective language acquisition. However, Horst suggested that students must read more than two books in each semester to continue the process. If the students can continue reading in this way, they can realize the benefit of reading and can grab the language better.

**2.6 Audio -Lingual input as comprehensible input**

Another source of comprehensible input is Audio-lingual input. In this approach, learners listen to audio tape according to their proficiency level which works as comprehensible input for them. Pasty Lightbown et. all. did study on how comprehension based audio input help primary school language learners in English language learning (2002, pp. 427-465).There were two language learning programmes created for two groups where one group was served with comprehensible audio input and the other group followed normal approach for their English learning. Both groups had 30 minutes long class per day. From this research, the researchers found after two years of testing that the comprehensive audio based group learned as much English as the other group that followed normal approach for English learning. Not only the other skills, the comprehensive audio based group got a good grab of speaking fluency too. However, the normal approach based group did better in writing section. From this study, it seems that comprehensive audio based group did as good as the normal group which proved the credibility of comprehensive audio-lingual approach in English language learning.

**2.7 Research aim and connection with other research**

In this research, the researcher aims to find the effectiveness of Krashen's comprehensible input using pre-modified text as input. In Salazar's study, she mentions Krashen's two way of making input comprehensible which are: pre-modified and Interactionally modified input (1996, p. 2). The researcher is going to use pre-modified input in reading format as reading is considered as a special case by Krashen for making the input comprehensible (2003, p. 3). As Krashen believes that reading can keep the affective filter low, the researcher finds that the result would be accurate if he can test the students in a relaxed environment. Maestre & Pastor shows in their study that motivation has positive

effect in second language acquisition (2013, pp. 242-243). Keeping the affective filters low is another way to keep the students motivated. The researcher plans to do the research by comparing the results for comprehensible and non-comprehensible input. In order to do that, the researcher tries keeping the affective filters low as per Maestre and Pastor's suggestion. He aims to find the effectiveness of comprehensible input for primary school students' English learning in Bangladeshi context.

**Chapter three: Methodology**

The aim of this study was to find the effectiveness of Stephan Krashen's comprehensible input for primary level students of Bangladesh. To do this, the researcher arranged a test for class 5 students by giving both comprehensible and non-comprehensible input and then compared the responses of the students for both types of input.

**3.1 Research approach**

A quantitative approach was chosen to conduct this research. Bhandari (2020), states as "Quantitative research is the process of collecting and analysing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships and generalize results to wide populations". After converting the research findings in numerical form, the researcher was able to analyse those findings in a straightforward way by using quantitative research approach. As a results, the data could be checked and retested more easily which was a effective way to get accurate results. There are several quantitative methods through which research data can be collected. These are given below:

**Experimen**t: In this method, independent variable is manipulated to check its effect on dependent variable (Bhandari, 2022). Here, independent variable is the variable that can be manipulated or changed to see the effect. On the other hand, dependent variable is the variable that changes or shows different results when the independent variable gets manipulated.

**Survey**: Survey refers setting questions and asking them to the participants either in online or by making phone call.

**Observation**: Observation refers monitoring the participants in their natural setting in order to identify their behaviour.

**Secondary research**: Secondary research refers using previously collected data to conduct the research.

This research, has been conducted using experimental method. As the research is about finding the effectiveness of comprehensible input on primary school students' English learning, input can be addressed as independent variable and English learning can be addressed as the dependent variable. As input can be manipulated by using in comprehensible and non-comprehensible form, input is the independent variable here. On the other hand, the rate of English learning will change, if various types of inputs are used. Thus, it can be said that English learning is the dependent variable in this research. To conduct the research, the researcher found these research questions:

- How does comprehensible input affect the language learning of Bangladeshi primary level students?
- Which type of input does help the students more in terms language learning: comprehensible or non-comprehensible?

## 3.2 Participants

The participants of the research were the students of class 5 of a Primary School. They were learning English as a second language in that Bangla medium primary school. To conduct this research, two groups were formed with 30 students. To keep the research fair, both the groups had comparable number of strong and weak students. There were 9 girls and 6 boys in Group 1, and 10 girls and 5 boys in group 2. One of the teachers of the school had given his precious class time to conduct the class activities. This is how the sampling was done using the help of the class teacher. Students of class 5 were selected because they had a fair level of proficiency in reading. It would have been hard for younger learners to complete these activity within the class time. Class 5 students were also very attentive in class while

giving instructions and eager to answer them as they took it as a preparation for their upcoming PSC board examination.

## 3.3 Research Instruments

To conduct this study, two texts were selected for two groups. One text is comprehensible and the other text is not comprehensible according to class 5 standards. Two sets of questions were developed based on the texts. The difficulty level for the two texts were different. Students had to read and understand the text and then they needed to complete the tasks by themselves.

**Note**: Texts and tasks are added in the appendices.

## 3.4 Comprehensible and non-comprehensible texts

The texts were the input given to the students so that they were of two difficulty level to see the response of each group of students. The first text was designed following input hypothesis' i+1 theory which is comprehensible for the students as the difficulty level is one step higher from their current level of knowledge. According to Krashen's input hypothesis, language acquisition will take place only if the input is comprehensible (1985, p. 80). Bearing this in mind, the second text is designed as not comprehensible which does not follow the i+1 criteria. That means, the input is more than one step higher from the understanding level of the students thus the input is not comprehensible. The first text which is comprehensible was made comprehensible by following below criteria:

- The sentence structures that were used in the text were similar to the textbook of class 5.
- Text size is selected in a way that students can read, understand and answer within given time. The text was neither too short, nor too long.

- Few new vocabularies were included.

- No extensive use of past tense forms which was also similar with the textbook.

On the other hand, the non-comprehensible text (text 2) had been chosen from class 7's English for Today book. It had difficult sentence structure than participants' text book. The text was also a bit longer than the first text and had more new vocabularies than the participants are used to get in their textbook. The text was written using verbs' past form which was not a match with class 5's text book also.

This is how, the two texts were selected for two groups of students where one text was comprehensible and the other one was not.

## 3.5 Questions/ Tasks

**1st task**: The first type of task had general questions. There were three questions in the first task. The first question of first task was a direct question from the text. The second question needed students' understanding of the passage to answer where the third one was related to their personal life experience with the text.

**2nd task:** 2nd task had three multiple choice questions where options were developed closer so that the students needed their understanding of the text to answer them. There were grammar test and a word meaning where students' assumption or understanding of the context is needed to answer those multiple choice questions.

**3rd Task:** This task had three fill in the gaps where there was a grammar test and the rest two fill in the gaps needed students understanding of the text to answer them properly.

**Note**:  Details of the tasks is given in the appendices section.

**3.6 Data collection procedure**

A total of 30 students of class 5 were divided into two groups with the help of class teacher. The class teacher comforted the students saying that students' grade will not affected by these activities however he also asked the students to take the activities seriously as they could help them prepare for their upcoming PSC examination. The teacher then left saying to the students that they need to complete the tasks within the time limit. After that, the question paper and the answer sheets were distributed to the students. The students were assured by the researcher that they could get extra five minutes if needed which made the students stress free. Students got 35 minutes of time where they used 10/15 minutes of time to read and understand the text and then they started answering the questions. Sometimes, students had trouble understanding the instructions. At that time, the researcher translated the instruction into Bangla so that the students could understand easily. After 35 minutes, almost all the students completed their writing except few. The researcher then collected the answer sheet saying that it is okay if some cannot answer fully in this particular test.

**3.7 Data analysis procedure**

There were two sets of question paper for two groups where each group got one set of questions (details in appendices). The question pattern and mark distribution are given below:

- **Task 1:** WH questions (3 in total) – 3 marks.

- **Task 2:** Multiple choice questions (3 in total) – 3 marks.

- **Task 3:** Fill in the gaps (3 in total) – 3 marks.

**Total**– 9 marks.

At first, the scripts of the students were marked. Then the average was calculated for each group. Then the average scores were compared to identify which group did better in the test. After that, the answer scripts of the students were read by the researcher to examine the errors made by the students. The mistakes done by the students were also grouped separately to evaluate each group's strong and weak points. This is how, a comparative picture could be seen between two groups and two types of inputs which were: comprehensible and non-comprehensible.

## Chapter 4: Findings

The main objective of this research was to find out the effectiveness of comprehensible input as presented in Krashen's Input Hypothesis. To test the effectiveness of comprehensible input, two texts and a set of tasks for each text were developed. Each set of question had three tasks. The difficulty level of the tasks were same for both set of questions. However, the texts had different difficulty levels as the texts worked as input for the students. The first text which belongs to the first question paper was selected following the 'i+1' criteria, and the second text was beyond the i+1 level hence it was incomprehensible.

The Question pattern and the marks distribution of the test are given below:

- 1st Task: 3 General/WH question – 3 marks

- 2nd Task**:** 3 Multiple choice questions – 3 marks

- 3rd Task**:** 3 Fill in the gaps – 3 marks

**Total -**9 marks.

**Note**: The texts as well as the tasks will be found in the appendices.

## 4.1 Results

Students were divided into two groups. The first group got the comprehensible set of question where the second group got the non-comprehensible set of question. Each group had 15 group members. They got different numbers from which an average had been made. The average mark for each group was given below:

- **Group 1** (comprehensible input): 7.4 out of 10

- **Group 2** (non-comprehensible input)**:** 5.8 out of 10.

Group 1, which group got comprehensible input got better marks than group 2, which got non-comprehensible input. The details result for the group were given below:

**Tables:** There are two tables given for two groups, one table for each group. In those tables, type of tasks, items in the tasks and average marks for each group is given. Table 1 is for Group 1 (comprehensible input group) and Table 2 is for group 2 (non-comprehensible input group).

**Table 1**

*Group 1's result for comprehensible input*

| Tasks | Items in the tasks | Average marks |
|---|---|---|
| Task 1 (3 WH questions) | Direct question | 0.9/1 |
| | Understanding from passage | 0.7/1 |
| | Real life experience | 0.7/1 |
| Task 2 (3 Multiple choice questions) | Word meaning from context | 0.8/1 |
| | Grammar | 0.7/1 |
| | Understanding from passage | 0.8/1 |
| Task 3 (3 Fill in the gaps | Direct question | 1/1 |
| | Understanding from passage | 1/1 |
| | Grammar | 0.8/1 |

Average for Task 1 – 2.3 out of 3

Average for Task 2 – 2.3 out of 3

Average for Task 3 – 2.8 out of 3

**Total average for group 1**-7.4 out of 9

**Table 2**

*Group 2's result for non-comprehensible input*

| Tasks | Items of tasks | Average for each item |
|---|---|---|
| Task 1 (WH questions) | Direct question | 1/1 |
| | Understanding from passage | 0.5/1 |
| | Real life experience | 0.6/1 |
| Task 2 (3 multiple choice questions) | Word meaning from context | 0.6/1 |
| | Grammar | 0.7/1 |
| | Understanding from passage | 0.2/1 |
| Task3 (fill in the gaps) | Direct question | 1/1 |
| | Understanding from passage | 0.5/1 |
| | Grammar | 0.7/1 |

Average for Task 1 – 2.1 out of 3

Average for Task 2 – 1.5 out of 3

Average for task 3 – 2.2 out of 3

**Total average for group 2** – 5.8 out of 9.

**4.2 Comparison of overall marks and tasks' marks**

Group 1's total average was 7.4 out of 9 which was higher than Group 2's 5.8 out of 9.

There were three tasks for each groups. The tasks were WH questions, multiple choice questions and fill in the gaps.

Group 1's average for those three tasks were 2.3, 2.3 and 2.8 out of 3 respectively.

On the other hand, Group 2's averages were 2.1, 1.5 and 2.2 out of 3 respectively.

In WH question tasks, Group 1 got 2.4 out of 3 where Group 2 got 2.1 out of 3.

In multiple choice questions, Group 1 got 2.3 out of 3 and the Group 2 got 1.5 out of 3.

In fill in the gaps, Group 1 got 2.8 out of 3 where Group 2 got 2.2 out of 3.

So, it can be said that Group 1 got higher marks than Group 2 in all three tasks.

## 4.3 Items in the tasks

The tasks that were provided with the question paper had several items through which students' performance could be measured further more details. The name and the details of the items are given below:

1. **Direct questions**: Direct questions were set directly from the passage. The answers of the questions can be find within the passage very easily.

2. **Understanding from the passage**: Students' understanding of the passage is needed to answer these type of questions.

3. **Real life experience**: Students need to understand the passage and then have to share their real life experience in the answer.

4. **Grammar tests**: Simple grammatical tests using passage quotations.

5. **Word meaning from the context**: It is another type of question like 'Understanding from passage' as students need their understanding of the passage to answer this type

of question. Here, students have to assume the meaning of a word from the context of the passage.

Each group's average marks for the above items are given below:

**Table 3**

*Average marks for the items*

| Items | Group 1 average | Group 2 average |
|---|---|---|
| 1.Direct question | 1.9 out of 2 | 2 out of 2 |
| 2. Understanding from passage | 2.5 out of 3 | 1.2 out of 3 |
| 3. Real life experience | 0.7 out of 1 | 0.6 out of 1 |
| 4. Grammar text | 1.5 out of 2 | 1.4 out of 2 |
| 5. Word meaning from context | 0.8 out of 1 | 0.6 out of 1. |

**4.4 Comparison of marks for the items**

From the above section and table, it can be seen that there were five items organized in the given tasks. The items were, 'Direct question', 'Understanding from passage', 'Real life experience', 'Grammar test' and 'Word meaning form the context'.

Group 1 got 1.9 out of 2 where Group 2 got 2 out of 2 in 'Direct questions'.

Group 1 got 2.5 out of 3 where Group 2 got 1.2 out of 3 in 'Understanding the passage'.

Group 1 got 0.7 out of 1 where Group 2 got 0.6 out of 1 in 'Real life experience'.

Group 1 got 1.5 out of 2 where Group 2 got 1.4 out of 2 in 'Grammar test'.

Group 1 got 0.8 out of 1 where Group 2 got 0.6 out of 1 in 'Word meaning from the context'.

From the above, it can be seen that Group 2 only got higher marks than Group 1 in 'Direct question' while in the rest of the items, Group 1 got higher marks than Group 2.

**4.5 Strong and weak points for each group**

Each group of students showed some strong and weak points in the test. Group 1, which group got comprehensible text as input, got good marks in 'understanding the passage' sector. 'Word meaning from context' is an item where students need to answer from their understanding of the text also. Group 1 also did good on that sector. Both group 1 and group 2 did excellent in 'Direct question' by getting almost full marks however in this sector, group 2 did slightly better than group 1. Group 2 did not do any better than group 1 in 'understanding the text' and 'Word meaning from context' rather they got average marks in those sector. Both groups got almost similar results in 'Real life experience' and 'Grammar test' sectors where Group 1 did slightly better marks than group 2. Both the group did some mistakes such as spelling, bad sentence structure, unorganized answers etc. In short, it can be said that, Group 1 did good in 'Understanding from passage', 'Direct question', 'Word meaning from context' and 'Real life experience' sectors where Group 2 did good in in 'Direct question', 'Real life experience' and 'grammar test' sectors.

**4.6 Conclusion:**

In the test, Group 1 who got comprehensible text as input got 7.4 out of 9 and Group 2 with non-comprehensible input got 5.8 out of 9 which means Group 1's average is better than Group 2's average. There were five items given through three test. Group 2 only get better marks than Group 1 in 'Direct question' sector although the mark difference is not so

significant. On the other hand, Group 1 got higher marks in rest of the items which were 'Understanding the passage', 'Real life experience', 'Grammar test' and 'Word meaning from the context'. Although Group 1 got better marks in those items, marks differences in 'Real life experience' and 'Grammar test' items for the groups were not much. However, 'Understanding from the passage' and 'Word meaning from context' portrayed some big differences in marks for the groups. Both groups did some common mistakes such as spelling mistakes, grammatical error, unorganized and incomplete sentence etc. Moreover, students from both groups often take lines from the texts to answer which means they didn't use enough own words to answer the given questions.

**Chapter 5: Discussion**

In this research, the researcher tried to find out the effectiveness of Krashen's 'Comprehensible input' theory for Bangladeshi primary level students in their English language learning. The results showed that Group 1, who got comprehensible input got the average of 7.4 out of 9 and Group 2, which got the non-comprehensible input, got 5.8 out of 9. From this average, it can be seen that the group which got comprehensible input got more marks than the group which got the non-comprehensible input. There were several test items which were placed through three types of tasks which were: 'Direct question', 'Understanding from passage', 'Real life experience', 'Grammar test and 'Word meaning from the context'. The findings from each section are discussed below.

**5.1 Direct question**

Group 1's average for 'Direct question' was 1.9 out of 2 where Group 2 got 2 out of 2 which is slightly better than Group 1. Direct questions were set in a way that students could find the answers easily from the text. The results for the direct question reflected that comprehensible input did not have much impact on these types of questions. It was an easy task for the students to find out the answer of direct questions whether they got comprehensible input or not.

**5.2 Understanding from passage**

The second item was 'Understanding from passage'. In this sector, Group 1 got 2.5 out of 3 where Group 2 got 1.2 out of 3 which was very less than Group 1's average. In this section, students needed their understanding of the passage to answer the questions. Group 1's average for three questions in this section were 0.7, 0.8 and 1 out of 1. Group 2's average were 0.5, 0.2 and 0.5 out of 1 respectively. Group 2 got less marks than Group 1 in every question. As Group 1 got comprehensible text as input and got better marks than Group 2, it

proved that they understood the passage better than Group 2 as these type of questions needed students' understanding of the passage. This reflects that comprehensible input could be understood by the learners easily thus their output gets better which results in better language acquisition. The scenario turned reverse when learners get non-comprehensible input as non-comprehensible input causes the problem of not understanding the context. Thus, no effective output comes which results in little or no acquisition. An example can be provided from the question to see how Group 2's students could not understand the input just because it was not comprehensible.

**Example**: There was a multiple choice question for Group 2in task 2 which is given below:

- Paul didn't like_____

    1. Fresh onion.          3. Both 1 and  2

    2. Dried fish vorta.     4. Hot chillies

In the passage, it was stated that Paul doesn't like eating fresh onion which means 'fresh onion' was an option for the above multiple choice question. However, it was also stated in the text that 'Paul likes the taste of all delicious items except the dried fish vorta' which meant that Paul doesn't like dried fish vorta also. Therefore, the correct answer would be option 3: both 1 and 2. However, the students could not understand the meaning of the word 'except' which is why all of them chose 'Fresh onion' as the answer. The word 'except' was unknown to them thus not comprehensible which is why they could not get the input properly which resulted in wrong output for them. Above findings confirmed the hypothesis regarding comprehensible input by Krashen which was: 'with comprehensible input, learners acquire the language better'.

**5.3 Real life experience**

In 'Real life experience' sector, Group 1 got 0.7 out of 1 where Group 2 got 0.6 out of 1.For this question, students needed to relate their real-life experience to the passage in order to answer. From the result, it can be seen that students who did not get comprehensible input got less marks than Group 1 however the marks are similar. So, it can be said that students answered this type of question equally good whether they got comprehensible input or not.

**5.4 Grammar test**

In the 'Grammar test', there were simple grammatical questions based on the passage where Group 1 got 1.5 out of 2 and Group 2 got 1.4 out of 2 which means both groups got almost similar marks. So it can be said that comprehensible input didn't have much impact on grammar learning. However, there is a limitation found for this particular research regarding grammar test for which the results for the grammar test may not be so accurate. This and other limitations will be discussed in 'limitation and room for further research' paragraph which will be found later in this section.

**5.5 Word meaning from context**

In the last sector, students needed to answer some vocabulary questions from the context. To answer this type of question it was needed for the students to understand the text which made this test similar to 'Understanding from the passage'. In this sector, Group 1 got 0.8 out of 1 and Group 2 got 0.6 out of 1. Group 1 got better marks than Group 2 which reflects that Group 1 could find the meaning of the word from the context better than Group 2. This also means that Group 1 could understand the context of the text better than Group 2. As Group 1 got comprehensible text as input, it can be said that comprehensible input helped Group 1 to understand the context of the text better.

**5.6 Errors committed by the students**

Students made several mistakes such as spelling mistakes, grammatical error, unorganized or incomplete sentence, copying sentences directly from the text for their answers etc. A question from task 1 was: 'Why should you use sandals in the toilet?' One of the students wrote the answer as 'I should <u>using</u> the sandals in the toilet because <u>he </u>can catch germs'. The answer should be like, 'I should use sandals in toilet because germs can attack me if I don't'. Here, the student made grammatical mistakes by writing 'using' instead of 'use'. The sentence that the student wrote represents another kind of mistake. As the question asked students' opinion, the students should have had written the answer from first person view. The student started the answer with 'I' but later he wrote as 'he can catch germs' which means he used 'he' instead of 'I' or 'me'. One reason of the mistake can be that the student tried to copy sentence from the text instead of answering in his own words. In the text, there was a boy named Babul whose uncle suggested him to use sandals in toilet otherwise germs could easily attack him. The student followed the text and ended up using 'he' instead of 'I'. Same kind of mistakes were done by other students where they use 'yours' instead of 'my' etc. There was another question as 'What should you do to keep your body fit?' Most of the students wrote only the points such as wash my hands, take bath regularly, wash hands before eating etc. which means that they didn't use complete sentence rather they only wrote the points. Because of that, the sentence remains incomplete. Those were the mistakes that both groups made. These mistakes reflected that students of that class lack grammatical knowledge which results in grammatical error, incomplete and unorganized sentence etc.

**5.7 Reading as input for the students**

Group 1 and Group 2 were given comprehensible and non-comprehensible text respectively from which they had to produce output as answers. As the students had to read and then understand the given texts, it can be seen that they got the input through reading

materials. Krashen in the Input hypothesis described reading as a special case for comprehensible input (2003, p.3). According to him, both written and aural input can be designed as comprehensible input and can serve the purpose of delivering it. It was also believed by Krashen that reading text can keep the affective filters low as learners don't need to make any interaction if they get reading input. Thus, reading can be very beneficial for the language learners as a source of comprehensible input. Reading can keep those mental factors at a low level as the learners hardly need to produce any aural output. As the students of the primary school were unknown to the researcher, interaction with them could make them nervous. As the students got reading text as input, the mental factors had been kept low thus they could produce their output in a stress and anxiety free environment. This is how, reading as comprehensible input helped the researcher to collect data in a clean and effective way.

## 5.8 Limitations &Room for further research

As the students got input as a text, they got pre-modified input. Patricia Salazar (1996) in her paper, refers Stephan Krashen's two ways by which input can be made comprehensible which were pre-modified and interactionally modified input. While collecting data for this research, the researcher did not make any interactions with the students except giving instructions thus no interactionally modified inputs were offered. It was done because the researcher wanted to keep the affective filter low so that the students could produce their output in a stress and anxiety free environment. He rather supplied question papers containing text which worked as input for the students. Easy context, lexical simplicity and easy sentence structures were used to make the text comprehensible which can be addressed as pre-modified unit. So, it can be said that students got pre-modified input rather than interactionally modified input. As the students got pre-modified input only, this paper could test pre-modified input only in order to test the effectiveness of comprehensible input. Further research can be done using interactionally modified input or both pre-modified

and interactionally modified input at the same time. Comparison between the effectiveness of pre-modified and interactionally modified input can be done in a research too.

Another limitation of this research is related to grammar-test. As the participants of this research were the students of class 5 and they didn't have any separate grammar book, the grammar tasks of this research couldn't be designed in a more integrated way for the participants as it would seem harder to them. As a result, the findings for the grammar test may not be much accurate. That's why, the accurate relation between comprehensible input and grammar acquisition could not be found properly. Further research can be done using higher level students to find out the proper relation between comprehensible input and grammar acquisition. In that case, grammar tests can be integrated with given input in a better way so that the effectiveness of comprehensible input on grammar acquisition can be measured accurately.

**Chapter 6: Conclusion**

This study aimed to find out the effectiveness of Stephen Krashen' Comprehensible Input theory on primary school students in Bangladeshi context. Data had been collected from a primary school which is located in Dinajpur, Bangladesh. Quantitative research approach was used to collect and analyse the data. This study found that comprehensible input did significantly better job at gaining correct language output than non-comprehensible input. Different types of items were given through three tasks which showed that students who got comprehensible text as input could understand the input better which helped them to produce better output. Thus better language acquisition took place for the students. As per the suggestions of previous researchers, affective filters had been kept low by giving reading text as input. As a result, students could participate in the test in a stress free environment. This helped the researcher to collect the data properly. Although, one group got easy and comprehensible input, both groups did some common mistakes such as spelling mistakes, grammatical error, incomplete or unorganized sentence etc. These mistakes mostly reflected their lack of knowledge in English Grammar. There were some limitations found for this study. As the students didn't have any separate grammar book, the tasks could not be designed using advance level grammar test. Thus, the relationship between comprehensible input and grammar acquisition was not accurately found. Further research can be done on that using higher level students as participants.

**6.1 Implications of the findings**

As students did better with comprehensible input, comprehensible input has been proved to be effective for better language acquisition. From this, it can be said that if the 'English for Today' book can be designed in more comprehensible way, it will lead to better language acquisition for primary level students. To do that, our government should take

necessary steps so that the National Education Board of Bangladesh (NCTB) can provide comprehensible texts and tasks in English for Today book. Not only that, the syllabus can be designed in a comprehensible way where the lessons will be designed from easy to hard manner. If the teaching materials (text book, syllabus) can be designed in comprehensible way, teachers can be benefitted directly as they can make the lesson plan and teach the students in classroom accordingly. Teachers have some other responsibilities too. Firstly, they have to be sincere while checking students' outputs/performances. As primary school students don't have separate grammar book and they often make grammatical mistakes as a result, English teachers can give effective feedback after script checking which may help the students to learn the grammar more correctly. Secondly, teachers have to keep the affective filters low for the students so that they can acquire English in a relaxed and stress free environment. Better classroom management and encouraging students to participate in class may help the teachers to keep the affective-filters low. If teachers can keep the affective-filters low, students will acquire the language more effectively.

To conclude, it can be said that if our government, national education board and English teachers can work in harmony in order to implement comprehensible input in classroom, our primary school students can be benefitted by comprehensible input in their English learning properly.

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Bhandari, P. (2022, February 3). *Independent vs. Dependent Variables| Definition and*

*Example.*SCRIBBR.https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/independent-and-

dependent-variables/

**Appendix 1, (Comprehensible text):**

Nihal, J. (2020, October 3). *Class 5 English Sample Question Paper: PSC Model Q.*

Wikilogy. https://www.wikilogy.com/class-5-five-english-sample-question-paper/

**Appendix 2 (Non comprehensible text):**

Hoque, M. S., Shams, R., Haider, M. Z., Roy, G., Razzaque, M. A. &Parvin, R. (2013).

English for Today (Class7). Unit: 8. Lesson: 3,4. 88-90. National Curriculum and

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**Appendix 1**

**Question set: 1, (Comprehensible input)**

**Read the passage and answer the following questions.**

Babul is a student of class five. He is ten years old. One day, he gets sick and cannot go to school. His parents become very much worried about Babul's illness. Babul's mother talks about this matter with Babul's uncle, Mr. Ratan. Mr. Ratan is a doctor and lives in Dhaka. Mr. Ratan comes to see Babul. He sees Babul is on the bed. Babul becomes very happy to see him. Babul and his uncle sit for lunch. But Babul starts his lunch without washing his hands. His uncle stops him at once.

He tells him to wash his hands properly with soap. His uncle also gives some advice after lunch. These are: use sandals in the toilet, wash your hands properly after using the toilet, take a bath every day. He also says that if he does not follow the advice, the germs can easily attack him. He will become sick again. Mr. Ratan prescribes him some medicines. Before leaving, he tells Babul to follow the advice to remain fit and healthy.

1. **Answer the following questions.**

   a. Why does Babul become very happy?

   b. Why should you use sandals in the toilet?

   c. What should you do to keep your body fit?

**2. Select the right option for the questions below.**

a. How to wash hands properly?

      1. With water           3. With water and soap

      2. With soap           4. With hand towel.

b. What does 'Prescribe' mean?

      1. To give          3. To take

      2. To follow advice    4. Written advice about medicines

c. How germs can attack Babul?

      1. If he doesn't follow his parents    3. If he doesn't follow the advice

      2. If he doesn't follow the doctor.    4. If he doesn't eat properly.

**3. Fill in the gaps with appropriate words.**

**a.** Everyone should follow _____ advice during illness.

**b.** Mr. Ratan _____ to see Babul.

**c.** Babul's uncle gives some _____ to Babul.

**Appendix 2**

**Question set: 2 (Non comprehensible input)**

**Read the passage and answer the following questions**

Paul is a young volunteer of an international NGO in Bangladesh. He visits Sundarpur to talk to the villagers about arsenic poisoning. He went to Sundarpur High School to meet with the teachers and the students where he was warmly greeted by all. After the meeting, the principle of the school introduced Paul with Kobita, the scout leader of the school. Kobita was also involved in various humanitarian works so she assured Paul to make a visit in the village with Paul so that Paul can talk with the villagers about arsenic poisoning. Kobita also asked Paul to visit him to Kobita's house.

Paul went to meet Kobita and her family the next day. He was in his blue trousers and a grey T-shirt. Kobita's mother Mrs Shahana was a shy woman and she was reluctant to come to Paul. But Paul greeted her warmly in his newly learnt Bangla, "Kemon achen?" Mrs Shahana loved hearing a foreigner speak Bangla. She welcomed Paul to her house. Kobita started talking to Paul. She wanted him to write something for her school magazine. As they were talking, Mrs Shahana prepared quite a number of Bangladeshi dishes. She served him lunch at noon. Paul had plain rice, chicken curry, fish bhuna, dal & salad for lunch. He liked the taste of all the delicious items except dried fish vorta. He is afraid of hot chilies. He also does not like eating fresh onions. So he skipped the mashed potato which had chopped fresh onions in it. But Paul became very fond of the desert made of rice, gur, milk and coconut. He also enjoyed drinking tea made of fresh cow milk. Paul thanked Kobita and Mrs Shahana for

the lunch. In fact, he was tired of having vegetables and fried eggs for the last few weeks. He hates eating same food for weeks. So he enjoyed the taste of the variety of Bangladeshi food.

**1. Answer the following questions**

    a. Who is Paul and why he is working in Bangladesh?

    b. Why did Paul like to eat Bangladeshi dishes very much?

    c. What can you do to stop arsenic poisoning in your area?

**2. Select the right options for the questions below.**

    a. Arsenic is caused by

        1. River.    3. By not washing hands

        2. Water.    4. Pond

    b. What does 'Greet' mean?

        1. To ask    3. To order

        2. To welcome    4. Doing something

    c. Paul didn't like

        1. Fresh onion.    3. Both 1. & 2

        2. Dried fish vorta    4. Hot chilies

**3. Fill in the gaps with suitable words.**

    a. Paul found Bangladeshi food _____

    b. Paul liked all food except _____

    c. Kobita _____ Paul to give a writing for her school's magazine.