

## Sound Bites for Better Teaching

*Input vs Output: You can't produce what you don't own*

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Because most people would like to speak a foreign language as soon as possible, the tendency in L2 classes is to focus on teaching students to speak the foreign language before they have the skills to do so. One must consider the role of input and output in L2 learning. The input skills, i.e. listening and reading should precede the output skills, i.e. speaking and writing because the input contains the words, structures, pronunciation, and stylistic information of L2 that the students need to know and to own before being able to produce the foreign language. One must consider that the brain of the student in beginning stages of L2 learning is like an empty warehouse that must be filled with the information needed, and that information comes from input. When the warehouse contains the necessary information, then the student can readily access it and produce it by means of the output skills.

### **Self Evaluation** (no right or wrong answers)

- *Of the four language skills, which do you consider the easiest to master and the hardest to master? Why?*
- *Which of the four language skills do you favor in your lesson planning?*
- *How do you evaluate the listening skill? Do you do it by means of other skills?*
- *Are you familiar with Krashen's Input + 1 Hypothesis?*
- *Do you believe in the use of English to assess L2 listening and reading comprehension? Explain.*
- *Are you familiar with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis that states that asking students to speak in L2 before they are ready can have a negative effect in the development of that skill?*
- *Which of the four language skills are said to be receptive and which are said to be productive skills?*
- *Can you explain why it is easier to understand a foreign language than to speak it?*

**TIP:** At the beginning stages of foreign language learning follow this sequence: listening, reading, writing, speaking. Example: Using a color chart:

### 1. Listening Comprehension

- a. Show chart and pronounce names of colors several times in sequence and out of sequence.
  - b. Point to color and ask C'est le rouge? Teacher answers Oui, c'est le rouge or Non, c'est le bleu.
  - c. Say color and student will point to the correct color on the chart.
2. Reading
- a. Show color chart with names revealed.
  - b. Show name of color and student points to correct color.
  - c. Show color and student circles the name of the color.
3. Writing
- a. Show color and have the student write the answer.
4. Speaking
- a. Point to color and ask C'est .....? Student says the correct answer.

