

Questions are in red and they were organized by category. Feel free to contribute your answers to any or all of the questions. Please add your name and your school name first and link them to your name to your Twitter handle if you have one.

E-world

In a time of video games, how can stories be relevant to all kids?

François from AIS Budapest

Krashen mentioned in his presentation that he's not against video games. Video games are not a problem. It is the addiction to video games that is the problem, like any other addiction. Video games are not a distraction that prevents people from reading and sometimes young learners need monitoring. We have sustained silent reading at my school and students do get into a habit of reading. This is an important program.

What about diglossic languages where literature is written in a language that is different from the spoken one?

François from AIS Budapest

An interesting question. Like Schyzerdütsch for example? [Wikipedia](#) provides a list of regions where diglossic languages are used. Supposedly, people with an affiliation to those languages would want to learn how to read them and would do the necessary research.

Ebooks and electronic book libraries? Positive or negative effect?

François from AIS Budapest

I only read ebooks. None of my students do and neither do my children. Krashen recently shared [z-lib.org](#) where you can download almost any book you want. It's been amazing!

Does it make a difference, when it comes to acquiring a language, whether we listen to audio books or we read hard copies ?

François from AIS Budapest

I think it does. Naturally, reading and listening are two different skills and they complement each other. When I was learning Spanish I listened to Ben and Marina on [notesinspanish.com](#). And more recently I listened to Steven and Györgyi on [letslearnhungarian.net](#) to pick up Hungarian vocabulary and pronunciation. But of course I did not stop here, but instead used other methods and of course I read in those languages. In fact, I read and wrote a lot in Spanish and I had a teacher to guide me because I knew that I wanted to become proficient enough to be able to teach the language one day as I do now.

Grading

Given the individual progress when it comes to language acquisition (e.g. through storytelling), how does grading need to change if language classes are more and more standard-driven?

François from AIS Budapest

Krashen says that the whole approach to language education needs to be revamped. But he didn't give a solution. Simply because the solution is too complicated to be summarized in a few words. One thing is sure though, a greater focus on reading and especially reading

for pleasure is necessary. Students also enjoy watching films and attending cultural events, including cooking classes!

You mentioned that vocabulary lists are not helpful after reading the story. What activities would you suggest to improve students' language skills? Retelling? Answering questions about the story?

François from AIS Budapest

Again, lots of options here. From experience I can say that whatever the students enjoy, do that. I survey my students on a regular basis to ask them to evaluate my lessons and give suggestions. Students love being given choices and being heard. Giving them ownership of their own learning is a great way to gain their confidence and keep them engaged.

We have the 4 skills to include. How is that possible if we only focus on reading?

This is possible provided it is done in stress free conduction. If you explain the reason for grades, students understand that both we teachers and they are accountable to themselves as well as their parents for their progress. They have to work to improve. All four skills have to be developed, but it is true that in the early stages of learning a new language, input should be given greater focus.

Methods

Jake in the audience shared [this video](#) where McMillan, a former student of Krashen's, supports the idea that the fastest way to acquire macabre is by reading for pleasure, an approach that Krashen himself promoted in his presentation. But one question remains: Can we, teachers, afford to use 'reading for pleasure' to help our students improve their language abilities and develop their fluency? What are all the ways that can be used for the same purpose? The questions below were raised...

What advice could we give to people learning languages independently? (you have mentioned graded readers and listening to stories) Any other tips for these students?

François from AIS Budapest

Reading is obviously a very good method provided that it is comprehensible. Living in a community and speaking native speakers is another very effective method. I have found that drills are also an effective way of making vocabulary. With students, whatever method that provides fun and effective results (faster fluency) is the method that should be used.

I have this fear that if I always stick with comprehensible input, it can somehow prevent the learner from going further. What do you think?

François from AIS Budapest

Not true. Comprehensible input varies according to the level of comprehension. It is different for beginners then for intermediate or advanced students.

What ratio of reading to listening is ideal in terms of input?

François from AIS Budapest

I asked Krashen this question. He replied and said that there's no research that was done

on this topic. I have found that listening to native speakers is an effective way of improving language comprehension, hence the ability to use the language later on. If the learner enjoys listening to the language spoken as much as they enjoy reading it, one should not exclude the other. In fact, both should be done on a daily basis, if possible, and the internet gives us ample choice to choose from.

Do you think we should encourage beginner students to read aloud even if they're reading at home for pleasure?

François from AIS Budapest

I do. But I'm not sure all of my students practice reading aloud. It is an excellent way to improve pronunciation as well as comprehension. And it can be fun too.

Do we need to teach all the reading rules to students before giving them to read?

François from AIS Budapest

Techniques, in every area of learning, can help develop understanding and mastery faster. For example I teach my beginners to look for cognates, focus on words they understand and ignore those they don't and read through the whole text without looking up words. McMillan talks about this in his video. However, those techniques must not be used to the detriment of student enjoyment and they should not cause stress or extreme boredom.

What to read

How can we encourage self selection with our beginner learners? Would it be worthwhile instead of having a 'class-reader' that we invest in a selection of easy readers for students to choose from?

François from AIS Budapest

Definitely. Krashen answered this question. In fact, if your students use iPads, it's easy to download books using z-lib.org for example. Claudia from my school shared [FVR: The ins and outs of free voluntary reading](#) by [@lamaestraloca](#). Some great ideas there... and I'm going to start the buckets in my classroom very soon. :)

What do you think about showing students classic short stories for children in the target language (la caperucita roja, el lobo y los 7 cabritos, los tres cerditos) with subtitles in the target language so they hear and see the words? These are middle school students.

François from AIS Budapest

I would personally not do that. Comprehensible books for their level are better in my opinion.

Is then comprehensible input sufficient in and of itself? No need for +1?

François from AIS Budapest

That's what comprehensible input is about: L+1.