

Correlational Study – The Role of Receptive Language Skills in
the Acquisition of Productive Skills;
Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL)

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As Krashen suggests in his “input hypothesis” productive language skills (speaking and writing) evolve from the receptive skills (listening and reading) and, thus, they should be given more attention in the acquisition of a second language (Krashen, 1985). However, there is only limited research-based evidence to prove this correlation between the receptive and productive language skills. The primary question intended to find answers for in the present research was if effective receptive language skills reinforce better productive skills, in learning English as a second language. Thus, in order to explore any possible correlations between these two categories methodically, corresponding test scores of fifty ESL learners were analyzed in the research. Test scores of undergraduates in a placement test conducted for English were recorded for all four skills respectively. In order to avoid significant deviations in the score ranges the marks of students categorized under the same proficiency level; intermediate, were taken in to account. The scores of the two receptive skills; reading, listening and the productive skills; writing, speaking were totaled separately and an average mark for each category of skills was given for every student. Finally, the average scores each student has got for the two varieties of skills were analyzed using Pearson correlation co-efficient measures. A moderate positive correlation was found out between the average scores for the receptive and productive skills in the student sample. Conclusively, it is apparent that the findings of the research solidify the notion, that sound proficiency in the receptive skills paves the way for better writing and speaking skills in learning English a second language.

Key Words: Correlational Study, Productive Skills, Receptive Skills, ESL