Sampajañña and *comprehension*

The Pali word and the English word are built from the same three kinds of piece, in the same order:

	together / fully	forward	the core act	noun ending
sam·pa·jañ·ña	sam-	pa-	jñā, “know”	-ya
com·pre·hen·sion	com-	pre-	hend, “grasp”	-sion

- **sam- / com-:** they aren’t historically the same word, but each carries the same two meanings. One is “together”, the other is “completely” when used as an intensifier (Pali *sambodhi*, “full awakening”; Latin *complere*, “to fill up completely”). That double meaning covers both the whole context and completeness.
- **pa- / pre-:** these are related prefixes, and both mean “forward”. Each turns a plain act into an active, directed one. The Digital Pali Dictionary glosses *pajānāti* as “lit. actively knows”, and Latin *prehendere* means “to seize”.
- **jñā / hend:** this is the one real difference. The Pali says “know” and the Latin says “grasp”. Still, English uses the same metaphor in “I grasp it” and “I get it”, and *hend* is in fact related to English *get*.

So *sampajañña* is roughly “knowing it all together”, and *comprehension* is “grasping it all together”.

The catch: modern readers don’t hear the “together” in *com-*. *Comprehension* reads as plain “understanding”, as in “reading comprehension”, which is probably why translators add “clear”. The match justifies the word, but readers won’t notice it.