

# Krashen's monitor

17/10/2022

founded by Stephen Krashen. The language is acquired through natural communication with others. Most of us learn languages through this theory. The idea is that we are learning languages through speaking and hearing to others without going to school.

- The five Krashen's hypotheses are:
- The Acquisition-Learning
- The Natural Order
- The Monitor
- The Input and
- The Affective Filter Hypotheses

**1-The Acquisition-Learning distinction hypothesis** the most important of all the hypotheses in Krashen's theory and the most widely known and influential among linguists and language practitioners .

According to Krashen there are two independent systems of second language performance: 'the acquired system' and 'the learned system'. The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language – natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act.

The 'learned system' or 'learning' is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge 'about' the language, for example knowledge of grammar rules.

According to Krashen 'learning' is less important than 'acquisition'

- **2-The Monitor hypothesis** explains the relationship between acquisition and learning and defines the influence of the latter on the former. The monitoring function is the practical result of the learned grammar.
- According to Krashen, the acquisition system is the utterance initiator, while the learning system performs the role of the 'monitor' or the 'editor'. The 'monitor' acts in a planning, editing and correcting function when three specific conditions are met: that is, the second language learner has sufficient time at his/her disposal, he/she focuses on form or thinks about correctness, and he/she knows the rule.
- It appears that the role of conscious learning is somewhat limited in second language performance. According to Krashen, the role of the monitor is - or should be - minor, being used only to correct deviations from 'normal' speech and to give speech a more 'polished' appearance. Krashen also suggests that there is individual variation among language learners with regard to 'monitor' use. He distinguishes those learners that use the 'monitor' all the time (over-users); those learners who have not learned or who prefer not to use their conscious knowledge (under-users); and those learners that use the 'monitor' appropriately (optimal users).
- An evaluation of the person's psychological profile can help to determine to what group they belong. Usually extroverts are under-users, while introverts and perfectionists are over-users. Lack of self-confidence is frequently related to the over-use of the 'monitor'.

- **3-The Input hypothesis** is Krashen's attempt to explain how the learner acquires a second language – how second language acquisition takes place.
- The Input hypothesis is only concerned with 'acquisition', not 'learning'. According to this hypothesis, the learner improves and progresses when he/she receives second language 'input' that is one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence. For example, if a learner is at a stage 'i', then acquisition takes place when he/she is exposed to 'Comprehensible Input' that belongs to level 'i + 1'. We can then define 'Comprehensible Input' as the target language that the learner would not be able to produce but can still understand. It goes beyond the choice of words and involves presentation of context, explanation, rewording of unclear parts, the use of visual cues and meaning negotiation. The meaning successfully conveyed constitutes the learning experience

- **4-The Natural Order hypothesis** is based on research findings (Dulay & Burt, 1974; Fathman, 1975; Makino, 1980 cited in Krashen, 1987) which suggested that the acquisition of grammatical structures follows a 'natural order' which is predictable. For a given language, some grammatical structures tend to be acquired early while others late. This order seemed to be independent of the learners' age, L1 background, conditions of exposure, and although the agreement between individual acquirers was not always 100% in the studies, there were statistically significant similarities that reinforced the existence of a Natural Order of language acquisition.
- Krashen however points out that the implication of the natural order hypothesis is not that a language program syllabus should be based on the order found in the studies. In fact, he rejects grammatical sequencing when the goal is language acquisition.

- **5- the fifth hypothesis, the Affective Filter hypothesis**, embodies Krashen's view that a number of 'affective variables' play a facilitative, but non-causal, role in second language acquisition. These variables include: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In other words, when the filter is 'up' it impedes language acquisition. On the other hand, positive affect is necessary, but not sufficient on its own, for acquisition to take place



# Summary

Krashen's Five Hypotheses are entirely focused on learning situations which would promote better language acquisition. In the acquisition-learning hypothesis, Krashen intends that adult language learners are able to internalize the target language through acquiring a subconscious process and a conscious process. Providing appropriate learning surroundings, fluency in L2 can be acquired through subconscious learning situation, whereas accuracy through the conscious process in which grammatical principles are taught. Alternatively, McLaughlin's attention-processing model proposes learning process, controlled and automatic processing system, as main means in learning L2. Then the third model, Long's interaction hypothesis shows interaction and input as two main characteristics in the acquisition process (Brown, 2001).