

ANALYZING KRASHEN'S MONITOR MODEL ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: IDEAS, CRITIQUES, AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION

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Abstrak

Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk mengelaborasi teori Krashen, yang dikenal dengan Monitor Model, menganalisis konsep pemikiran di dalamnya, memaparkan kritik-kritik terhadap konsep-konsepnya, dan menjelaskan implikasi pedagogi teori tersebut pada pemerolehan bahasa kedua, baik dari sudut pandang pengajaran maupun dari sudut pembelajarannya untuk melihat kelemahan dan kelebihan teori tersebut. Dalam artikel ini diskusi didasarkan pada berbagai sumber yang relevan dan kredibel. Melalui diskusi mendalam, pembaca dapat memperoleh informasi yang berguna yang dapat meningkatkan ilmu pemerolehan bahasa kedua.

Kata kunci: implikasi pedagogi, kritik, konsep, Monitor Model.

Abstract

This paper aims to elaborate on Krashen's Monitor Model theory, to analyze concepts insight the Model, to discuss critiques against the concepts, and to explain pedagogical implications of the Model to second language acquisition, in order to look at its both positive and negative points. The discussion throughout the paper was based on library research of related sources. Through the elaboration of both the strengths and the weaknesses, readers may gain useful information for the sake of improving knowledge of language acquisition.

Keywords: pedagogical implications, critiques, concepts, Monitor Model.

1. Introduction

In the field of language acquisition, especially second language acquisition, Krashen is one of the most influential thinkers in the modern linguistic era. This is because Krashen has bright ideas in connecting Chomsky's idea of Universal Grammar (UG), which mostly deals with first language acquisition, with second language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Liu, 2015). Because of Krashen's idea on relating UG with second language acquisition process, the link between first language acquisition and second language acquisition can be drawn.

Chomsky initiates the concept of the innate language faculty, and Krashen develops and completes the idea. This can be seen from Krashen's concept of acquisition which is based

on Chomsky's concept of competence. Krashen uses Chomsky's concept of competence to develop five hypotheses which have been widely known as Monitor Model. In this model, his five hypotheses have played a significant role in the development of many pedagogical aspects of language acquisition (second language acquisition). Although Chomsky's generative grammar has an impact on second language acquisition, the impact has not reached the actual implication in pedagogical practices. This is because generative grammar developed by Chomsky deals with general aspects of language knowledge and not pedagogical knowledge. On the contrary, Krashen's ideas, especially *Comprehensible Input Hypothesis* and the *Natural Order Hypothesis*, are very influential in second language teaching and learning. This has given a new frame work for second language teaching especially in providing materials for second language learners. In this respect, Krashen's idea best completes Chomsky's idea of innateness in which Krashen relates the innateness with second language acquisition through his intelligent question on innateness whether or not UG is accessible for adult second language acquisition. Meanwhile, Chomsky has contributed a crucial and basic concept of human internal language capacity. Despite its existing criticisms, Krashen's *Monitor Model* upholds its validity (Block, 2003; Jegerski, 2021). This paper aims at discussing Krashen's hypotheses, criticisms against the hypotheses, and pedagogical implication of each hypothesis on second language teaching.

2. Methodology

Method

This research was a descriptive library research.

Data Collection Technique

The data used in this research is focusing on Krashen's scholarly concepts on second language acquisition called the Monitor Model.

Data Analysis Technique

The research was conducted through a number of steps. First, the writer searched for various scholarly ideas addressing Krashen's five hypotheses from various sources: books, papers, and articles. Second, the writer found out other scholars' criticisms against Krashen's concepts of the five hypotheses. Finally, the writer elaborated on how each of the five hypotheses may be applied in second language teaching settings.

3. Finding and Discussion

This section discusses and elaborates on the five Krashen's hypotheses in detail. In general, the five hypotheses are: acquisition-learning hypothesis, natural order hypothesis, comprehensible input hypothesis, affective filter hypothesis, and monitor hypothesis. Each hypothesis is discussed from three different angles: cognitive perspective, criticisms, and pedagogical implications. The discussion on the cognitive perspective and criticism is based on the sreview of related literature, while the discussion on pedagogical implication is based on the writer's beliefs on the issue derived from experiences as a second/foreign language practitioner.

3.1 The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

Cognitive Perspective

According to Krashen (1982), there are two distinct and independent ways of achieving proficiency in second language development called *acquisition* and *learning*. The term *acquisition* in second language is not exactly the same as how children acquire the first language but it is similar to it. The similarity lies on its two core characteristics that is the naturalness and subconsciousness process of linguistic development. In this hypothesis, it is believed that the acquisition occurs in a meaning based communication or in a normal communication process. The acquisition happens mainly if the learners have experience living in the place or environment where the second language is used in daily communication. Krashen claims that this process will result in second language competence. Acquisition process in this respect is difficult to happen in foreign language settings.

The second way of second language acquisition is called *learning*. The term *learning* is defined as a conscious process and results in knowledge. This type of acquisition process is very common in countries where the second language functions as foreign language. The different between the two ways is that acquisition indicates the knowing of language while learning indicates the knowing about language.

Since *competence* which is the result of acquisition leads to performance and *knowledge* which is the result of learning leads to the knowing about language, it is possible that second language learners may know the knowledge about language as they learn it but may not be able to use it fluently if the learnt knowledge has not been fully acquired. Using second language is not as easy as knowing its rules in this respect. Learned knowledge and acquired knowledge are different (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). This is because learned knowledge is constructed by general cognitive process and therefore it is not specific which means that the acquisition of

this knowledge is the same as the acquisition of other kinds of knowledge such as mathematics, history, and other sciences, while acquired knowledge is specific and is governed by innate language faculty.

Criticisms

In spite of its logical explanation, the separation between acquired and learnt knowledge in such a rigid way, also ignites disagreement. In this case, not all acquired knowledge can be separated from learnt knowledge. There are some objections to this hypothesis. McLaughlin (1987) for example, claims that there is a continuum between acquired and learned knowledge. For McLaughlin, explicit knowledge which is similar to learned knowledge can become implicit knowledge or acquired knowledge. Furthermore, McLaughlin, argued that acquired and learned knowledge in Krashen's term are similar to automatic and controlled knowledge respectively.

Another criticism on the separation between acquisition and learning process is proposed by Bialystok (1978). Bialystok claims that there is connection or interaction between explicit knowledge and implicit knowledge. Bialystok's view is that there is a combination between explicit knowledge and implicit knowledge in the use of high skills and knowledge of language especially for very advanced and fluent second language learners. In addition, memory system in human brains has active, dynamic, and interactive characteristics. Thus, linguistic knowledge is interconnected to central cognitive processes and not separated.

Pedagogical Implication

Although there are objections to Krashen's idea of learned and acquired knowledge distinction, it does not mean that there is no distinction between learned and acquired knowledge at all. In fact, some specific rules of language can be learned very easily but other rules cannot be learnt easily. For example, progressive forms (verb + ing) are generally easy for second language learners to master and use. However, inflection of -s (verb-s) is generally difficult to master and then to use for second language learners. This may indicate that some rules can change from explicit to implicit but other rules may not change and stay non-automatic in learners' brain. Thus, language practitioners have to be careful in determining the objectives of the course and in designing course materials.

3.2 The Natural Order Hypothesis

Cognitive Perspective

The natural order hypothesis is defined the assumption of the similar order in stages of the acquisition of grammatical structures (Krashen, 1981; 1982) . For Krashen, this acquisition of grammatical order is predictable in nature which means one aspect is best acquired before another aspect. For example, in learning negation, most second language learners will acquire and use simple forms of negation before they know and use more complex forms of negation. Language acquirers seem to pass through several predictable stages in the acquisition of negation or negative marker. In the first stage, a learner puts a negative marker outside of a sentence such as in the sentence *No the sun is shining*. The next stage is they put the negative marker between the subject and the verb such as in the sentence *I no want the money*. Finally, learners arrive at the final stage of constructing or putting negative marker in the right position in a sentence such as in the sentence *You don't want some water to drink*. Thus, it can be assumed that it is easier for second language learners to know the form of *no* before knowing the form of *hasn't*. This is because the form of *no* is simple than the form of *hasn't*. This phenomenon has significant impact on how teachers should provide materials for their class. This suggests that teaching materials should be arranged in line with the sequential order that is from simple to complex and from what can be acquired easily to what can be acquired with some difficulties.

The natural order hypothesis plays an important role for supporting the distinction between acquisition and learning since this hypothesis is not influenced by instruction which is an important means of learning. Most of the evidence for the natural order hypothesis comes from the study of morpheme acquisition (Brown, 1973; Dulay & Burt, 1974; and Krashen, 1982).

Criticisms

One of criticisms of this hypothesis is proposed by Gass & Selinker (1994). They argue that there is a difficulty in extending the results of the morpheme studies to acquisition in general since they only cover part of language. Some morphemes such as an inflection of *-s* for third person singular such as in the sentence *she makes some cakes* and plural noun such as in the phrase *two boys* are easy to study. However, other structures such as relative pronoun and indirect object replacement are difficult to study through morpheme study. Another criticism is proposed by Gregg (1984). Gregg claims that a weaknesses of the natural order hypothesis is associated with the choice of the morpheme studies where the focus is mainly

only for the correct morpheme produced in sentences but not how learners use the grammatical morphemes in the development of their language.

Pedagogical Implication

With regard to Krashen's view on the natural order hypothesis, second language teachers and learners have to be aware of what aspects of language may proceed predictable stages to be learned and acquired by learners. For aspects that are very predictable, it is suggested that the materials to be taught and learnt be arranged accordingly because one aspect may become prerequisite for other aspects. For this reason, it is also important to consider whether teaching materials should be given or taught periodically on the basis of their level of difficulty and complexity or should it be given at once. Some language aspects such as verb forms and adjectives are very complicated that they cannot be given at once. Also, teachers must be careful in determining whether specific materials are learnable or non-learnable to learners.

3.3 The Input Hypothesis

Cognitive Perspective

This hypothesis literally proposes that acquired linguistic knowledge requires comprehensible input (Krashen 1981; 1982). Comprehensible input, as Krashen argues, refers to the input that includes ' $i + 1$ ' where ' i ' refers to the current level of linguistic knowledge and ' $i + 1$ ' refers to the level that slightly beyond the current linguistic knowledge or the ' i '. This level (' $i+1$ ') can be acquired not only from the form-based instruction, in classroom for example, but can also be acquired from meaning-based communication. This hypothesis contains the notion that performance or production is separated from knowledge (an idea which is very close with Chomsky's idea of performance and competence). This can be seen from Krashen's view that speaking cannot be taught because instruction and practice do not help learners' knowledge development. Rather, speaking will emerge automatically as the result of knowledge via comprehensible input.

Criticisms

The input hypothesis is acknowledged for its important position in Krashen's Monitor Model. However, it also has some crucial problems. First, the concept of ' $i+1$ ', is problematic because it is difficult to define. With regards to this concept, Krashen uses quantity scale to classify the level of linguistic knowledge. This has aroused some criticisms from other linguists as to how the actual linguistic knowledge of each learners can be defined (Gregg, 1984). Gregg

claims that such a scale is too rigid. Before 'i+1', there can be a series of input sub-scales such as 'i+0.2', 'i+0.3', and so forth. A similar criticism is also proposed by Gass & Selinker (1994). Gass & Selinker point out that the concept of 'i+1', is vague. They claim that the input hypothesis does not provide enough explanation of how to define a particular level. The criteria for determining the current level of linguistic knowledge of learners is not clear. Thus, there isn't any clear-cut boundary between the scales.

Another criticism for this hypothesis deals with the meaning of comprehensible input. The idea is ambiguous and needs explanation on what is comprehensible or what is not comprehensible (Cook, 1993). When input is called *comprehensible*, does it mean that all the information in the input is understandable to learners? Or is it only part of the input that is comprehensible? These are basic questions for the term *comprehensible*.

The third problem deals with speaking acquisition. For Krashen, speaking is the emergence of acquisition. Speaking is not the causes of the acquisition but it is the result of acquisition. He claims that speaking can naturally emerge after the acquirer has built up competence through comprehensible input by listening. This indicates that there is no particular reason for predicting output or speaking. The underlying reason is that Krashen believes that only acquired knowledge is associated with spontaneous production. This means that learnt knowledge will not in any way support the ability of spontaneous speaking. Thus, second language learners will not be able to speak using the target language fluently unless they have already acquired. However, this idea may not always be acceptable. Many second language learners can improve their speaking ability by practicing. Learners may be engaged in speaking exercises using specific structure formula.

Pedagogical Implication

Although there are a number objections to Krashen's hypothesis- *input hypothesis*-it does not mean that this hypothesis has no significant value in second language acquisition. This is because both Krashen's input hypothesis and its objections are partial in nature. From input hypothesis we can see that at least at the beginning, learnt knowledge and acquired knowledge are perhaps separated but as the learnt knowledge becomes automatic knowledge it will become a part of acquired knowledge, an idea that supports the objections for Krashen's claim. This suggests that second language teachers should not hope that what have been taught will automatically be used by learners to produce language being learnt. The use of newly taught aspects will not be fluent until the aspects become implicit knowledge.

Comprehensible output may in turn become comprehensible input. This means that comprehensible output resulted from learnt knowledge may function as comprehensible input which means that in fact, learnt knowledge will not always be separated from acquired knowledge as Krashen claims. Learnt knowledge may become acquired knowledge depending on how well the learners master the learnt knowledge (Swain, 1985; Gregg, 1984).

3.4 The Affective Filter Hypothesis

Cognitive Perspective

This hypothesis says that affective filter is a subconscious screening of input processing based on a learner's motivation, self-confidence, needs, attitudes, and emotional states (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982). Of these factors, motivation and self-confidence are the most influential ones. Input hypothesis works in a series. First, learners get the input, then filtered (screened) before it reaches the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). If the filter is too high, it prevents the input from passing through to the LAD and if the filter is low, it becomes intake to the acquired system. This indicates that not all input can become learners' knowledge. Finally, from the LAD, the input is acquired and becomes the learners' competence.

According to this hypothesis, the works of filtering processor for second language learners apply differently between children and adults. In children language acquisition, there is only a slight, if not none, filtering process while in adults language acquisition the filtering process works fully. This is the reason why children acquire second language faster than adults do.

The affective filter works in regular order. The input receive by learners will determine the knowledge that learners will acquire. The amount of knowledge learners get depends on the amount of input can go through the filtering processor before it becomes knowledge and then competence. How much competence learners have will become an important aspect that determines the ability of learners to produce language output such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Criticisms

At least, there are two main problems with this affective filter hypothesis. First, this idea lacks explanation of the understanding the mechanism of the affective filter. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), it is believed that the affective filter has the ability to filter a grammatical structure so that unmotivated learners will lack certain grammatical structures. They claim that the affective filter will determine what parts of the language will be attended

to as well as in what order the parts of language will be attended. However, Gass and Selinker (1994) point out that Krashen does not provide any discussion or idea of how the selective filtering of grammatical structure can occur through the affective filter. Gregg (1984) also holds the same position, namely, that there are no explanations of what kind of mental structure is involved in the affective filter. As a result, it is problematic to determine parts of the language to be attended.

Second criticism for this hypothesis deals with the absence of affective filter in children where Krashen (1981, 1982) argued that affective filter does not influence children acquisition process as the affective filter develops after puberty. However, according to Gregg (1984), this argument lacks clarity, as Krashen does not give clear explanation as to the reasons why the affective filter develops only after this period. There also needs explanation whether adults experience more difficulties than children do when learning second language because they lack motivation and because they have more fear, feelings, and so forth. Gregg (1984) also concludes that children may have affective filter but it may operate differently from adults.

Pedagogical Implication

The application of this hypothesis is that the successful language learning environment should not only include comprehensible input, but also should create a situation that encourages a low filter. This can be done by giving input that is culturally acceptable for learners, by creating or providing materials that are not too difficult for students so that input can go through the LAD, and by making friendly teaching situations, just to mention few.

3.5 The Monitor Hypothesis

Cognitive Perspective

In Krashen's monitor hypothesis, the term *monitor* is understood as a way of processing learning input (Krashen, 1982). The monitor manipulates the utterance after being produced in either speaking or writing. In this process, learners can formulate or manipulate knowledge they get to construct sentences in writing as well as in speaking. According to this hypothesis, the comprehensible input goes to LAD through affective filter, then it goes to another stage as acquired knowledge. The acquired knowledge then is screened or monitored before becoming output (in this case speaking or writing).

In this hypothesis, monitor users are classified into three types: over user, optimal user, and under user. Over user is a learner who uses his/her monitor too high. They are very careful, and sometimes even too careful, in speaking and in writing because he/she is often too afraid

of making mistakes. Optimal user is the one that uses monitor effectively and can adjust when to monitor and aspects to be monitored and this triggers his/her motivation to produce language production. Minimal user makes use of monitor in a very minimum way. As a result, the learners produce too many errors in his/her language production.

Criticisms

One of the criticisms for this hypothesis comes from Mclaughlin (1990). Mclaughlin argues this hypothesis lacks explanation on the connection between the operation of affective filter and that of monitor. Another criticism is proposed by Kasap and Paterson (2018) saying that this hypothesis fails to account for the role of certain language aspect such as certain morphological, syntactic, semantic, phonetic and/or contextual rules in helping learner's acquisition.

Pedagogical Implication

Krashen has contributed a cognitive process of how monitor influences the acquisition process. His thought in this respect has given us valuable information of the role of the monitor. However, second language practitioners, especially second language teachers, must be able to incorporate learning strategies that involve how far learners should monitor their language production. Language learning strategies, especially cognitive strategies, may have important roles in this regards. Besides, EFL/ESL teachers must be able to identify ways that may increase learners motivations to produce language output while maintaining awareness of balancing use of monitor.

4. Conclusion

The writer has tried to discuss the five Krashen's hypotheses. These hypotheses are very informative for second language teachers and learners. Like other theories, Krashen's idea is not free from criticisms. Criticisms are needed in any scientific discourses including the discourse of applied language sciences. Based on the criticisms discussed in each hypothesis, the writer now comes up with several concluding statements. First, Krashen's Monitor Model, to some extent, seems to be problematic since it does not have a firm methodological base. The theory lacks explanation on its definitions and concepts. Second, Krashen does not provide further explanation of how the acquired knowledge is actually processed. He only states that acquired knowledge and learned knowledge are separated.

The above problems do not mean that Krashen's idea is not compatible to the development of second language acquisition. Regardless of the many problematic aspects of Krashen's five hypotheses, it is undeniable that Krashen's idea has provided valuable insights on a broad range of issues related to second language acquisition and pedagogy.

The fact is that many applied linguists and practitioners have agreed that acquiring second language involves unconsciousness, comprehensible input is vital for language learning, teachers need to provide suitable input, affective filter is used by learners, and teachers need to promote optimal use of monitor.

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