

Krashen's Monitor Model

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Stephen Krashen who is a linguist and educational researcher has developed a model of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) that is known as the monitor model.

Monitor Model: The Monitor Model is a theory made by Stephen Krashen, a language expert. It explains how people learn a second language (like learning English if your first language is something else).

What is the Monitor Model?

It's a theory with 5 big ideas (called hypotheses) about how we learn languages. Krashen says we don't just learn by studying grammar — we learn best when we use the language naturally in real-life situations.

The monitor model is an interesting set of five central hypotheses developed in the late 1970s but accepted in the 1980s. This is the most comprehensive model of SLA. Each of the hypotheses is summarized here so that Krashen's views on motivative or causative variables can be considered.

The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

This hypothesis or theory of Krashen claims that there are two ways of second language development which are acquisition and learning. He differentiates between acquiring and learning Language. He asserts that learning language is not really similar to spoken language. According to him, teachers must focus on using natural, authentic, and meaningful activities in the classroom in order to improve communicative skills for the real world.

Feature	Acquisition	Learning
Meaning	Picking up a language naturally	Studying a language in a formal way
Process Type	Subconscious / Unconscious	Conscious / Aware
Where it Happens	In real-life situations (like talking with people)	In classroom or while studying books

Focus	On meaning and communication	On grammar rules and structure
Example	Learning to say “I’m hungry” from a friend	Studying the past tense of “to be” in a textbook
Goal	To speak and understand naturally	To know about the language
Fluency or Accuracy	Helps with fluency (speaking smoothly)	Helps with accuracy (speaking correctly)
Long-lasting	Yes, usually long-term memory	Yes, but more effort needed to remember
Used for Monitoring	No	Yes, used to check or correct mistakes
Classroom Dependence	No (can happen outside classroom)	Yes (usually needs classroom or formal study)

Important point: Krashen says that just studying (learning) doesn’t help you acquire a language. Real understanding comes from acquisition.

The Natural Order Hypothesis

Krashen says that when people learn a second language (like English), they don’t learn grammar rules randomly. Instead, they learn them in a natural, predictable order — just like babies learning their first language.

He has two main ideas in this:

- We learn grammar in a set order, step by step — just like how children learn their first language.
- Learning a second language also goes through a natural process — not all at once.

This means:

Even if you're learning a new language, your brain will pick up grammar slowly and in a natural way, just like how babies learn to speak.

Monitor model Hypothesis

Here in this hypothesis, monitor is synonymous to edit. The monitor model means the process of editing in case of using second language for communication. Some aspects of monitor theory:

- Self-correct or repair.
- Conscious knowledge of what is told and written.
- Learning the required rules and the proper application of these rules.

For example:

“I goed home” that is a wrong sentence but because of monitoring power it will be rectified as
“I went home”

Therefore, Krashen does assert that learning is important so that people can monitor the language that they produce.

The Input Hypothesis

Krashen says we learn best when we understand the language we hear or read, but it should be a little bit harder than what we already know.

This is called **i + 1**:

- **“i” = your current level**
- **“+1” = just a little more difficult**

Example:

If you understand “I eat apples,” you might learn “I am eating apples” next.

The Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen says that our **feelings and emotions** can help or block us from learning a new language.

- If we feel **happy, confident, and relaxed**, we learn **better and faster**.
- If we feel **nervous, shy, or scared**, we learn **less**.

This is called the

"affective filter."

When the filter is

low

(you feel good), language goes into your brain easily. When the filter is

high

(you feel bad), it blocks learning.

Conclusion: Stephen Krashen's Monitor Model is a very important theory for understanding how people learn a second language. It explains that we learn best by using the language naturally, not just by studying grammar. His five ideas show that:

- Acquisition (natural learning) is more powerful than learning (studying rules),
- We learn grammar in a natural order,
- We can monitor or check our language using grammar rules,
- We need input that is just a little harder than what we know ($i+1$),
- And most importantly, our feelings (like confidence and low anxiety) play a big role in how well we learn.

So, to learn a language well, we need real communication, a positive attitude, and a little challenge!