

Stephen Krashen

Acquisition vs. learning

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The acquisition/learning hypothesis

There are two ways / modes of L2 development:

- Subconscious language acquisition
- Conscious language learning

The result of language acquisition ... is subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a 'feel' for the correctness. Grammatical sentences 'sound' right, or 'feel' right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated.

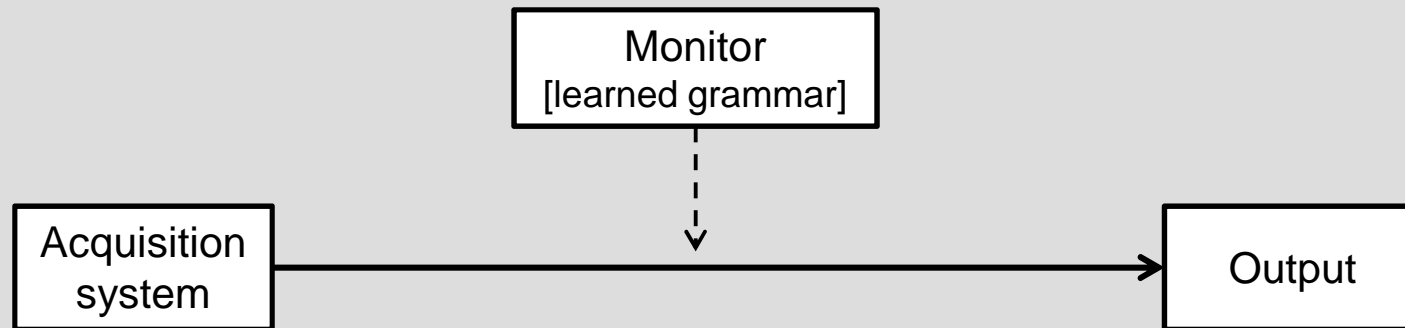
[Krashen 1982: 10]

We will use the term 'learning' henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In nontechnical terms, learning is 'knowing about' a language, known to most people as 'grammar' or 'rules'. Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language or explicit meaning.

[Krashen 1982: 10]

The monitor hypothesis

Language learning involves a ,monitor', i.e. a control system that can alter the output of the acquisition system according to learned rules:



Prerequisites for the monitor:

- Knowledge of rules
- Sufficient time
- Focus on correctness

The monitor hypothesis

Krashen (1981) distinguishes three different types of monitor users:

- Monitor overusers
- Monitor underusers
- Optimal monitor users

The acquisition and learning systems are influenced by ...

- Acquisition is influenced by attitude/motivation
- Learning is influenced by aptitude/ability

The input hypothesis

L2 acquisition is crucially determined by 'input':

Humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input.

[Krashen 1985]

- The ideal input goes just a little bit beyond the learners current knowledge.
- Language comprehension plays a more important role in language acquisition than language production.

The natural order hypothesis

Subconscious L2 learning proceeds in particular orders:

We acquire the rules of language in a predictable order.

[Krashen 1985]

The noun phrase accessibility hierarchy:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| (1) The man who lives next door. | subject |
| (2) The man who I saw. | object |
| (3) The man to whom I gave the book. | indirect object |
| (4) The man about who(m) I spoke. | object of preposition |
| (5) The man whose wife had an accident. | genitive attribute |

The active filter hypothesis

The influence of the input on the acquisition system is affected by the 'active filter', i.e. non-linguistic factors of L2 acquisition:

- Anxiety
- Motivation
- Self confidence

