SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: KRASHEN'S MONITOR MODEL AND THE NATURAL APPROACH

Hafizah Hajimia
School of Languages, Civilisation, and Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia
drhafizah.uum@gmail.com

Manvender Kaur Sarjit Singh
Senior Lecturer, School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia
manvender@uum.edu.my

Saralah Devi Mariamdaran Chethiyar
Senior Lecturer, Psychology & Counselling Program, School of Applied Psychology, Social Work and Policy, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia
devi@uum.edu.my

Abstract

The second language can be defined as any other language which is learned or acquired after their first language or their mother tongue. Learning or acquiring a second language can be a difficult task for anybody that wishes to speak or write in a language other than their first language. Teachers should have the basic knowledge of second language acquisition theories to provide a comprehensive teaching and learning environment to students. One of the most applied and well-accepted theories is Stephen's Krashen's theory of second language acquisition. The present study was carried out as an observation on students to address the importance of

Krashen's Monitor Model and the Natural Approach in the stages of second language development to ensure effective teaching of the second language. The findings show that the cause of the input factor should be taken into consideration when teaching a second language/foreign language. The findings also indicated that cooperative learning can be a good method for students to get comprehensible input from their classmates.

Keywords

1.Introduction

The second language can be defined as any other language which is learned or acquired after their first language or their mother tongue. Learning or acquiring a second language can be a difficult task for anybody that wishes to speak or write in a language other than their first language. The role of teaching a second language to the learners falls heavily on educators than compared to the parents, especially when it is to be learned by adults. The teachers need to know about second language acquisition before they embark on the journey of educating new learners. This study will be looking into Krashen's monitor, second language development stages, and the application of a teaching approach used to have effective teaching of the second language. In this, the theories used are the behaviorist theory, the innate theory, and the interactionist theory. From these theories, came one of the most used theories in classrooms which is the Monitor Model hypothesis by Stephen Krashen.

There were several studies carried out on the importance of the Krashen monitor model in language acquisition. This study covers varieties of languages involving Krashen's model. Some of the studies were of Ismail et al., (2020) incorporated Krashen's model on the Arabic language whereby a model was designed to learn Al-Damir, Indonesia language showing the factors of interference and fall back on Krashen's model for solution students (Kaur & Ahmad, 2019 as cited in Fauzia, 2020) and Latvian language among the preschool age whereby theory of communicative competence and the systemic functional grammar theory was influential (Jukēvica, 2020). Huang & Zhang (2019) carried out a need analysis on China students based on Krashen's monitor theory. The results show that the student's learner's needs were not met when there is a need to improve their knowledge of academic English Language, comprehensible but

insufficient input whereby the students were not given sufficient chances to practice, complex, and extremely high affective filter and finally reflective thinking and discussion. Sari (2019) Second or Foreign discussed and summarised three prominent theories of the second/Foreign Language Learning from the Socio-Psychological Perspective and the Implications in Language Classroom which is Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition of Gardner, Affective Filter Hypothesis of Krashen, and L2 Motivational Self System of Dörnyei. However, there were scarcely any studies globally and in Malaysia which incorporates the 3 theories and reported the students' and teachers' feedback on the application of each of the Natural Approach stages. Thus, this study will be addressing the gap and indicate the importance of the three theories that are important in learning a second language. The principal objective of this study is to report the result of the observation of the students and suggestions on how knowledge on second language acquisition or learning can contribute to a better, effective teaching of second languages.

2. Theories

There are two main approaches discussed in this section namely Stephen Krashen's (1988) theory of second language acquisition (SLA) and 'The Natural Approach' and Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD and stages of second language development to ensure effective teaching of the second language. Figure 1 below shows the framework used in this study.
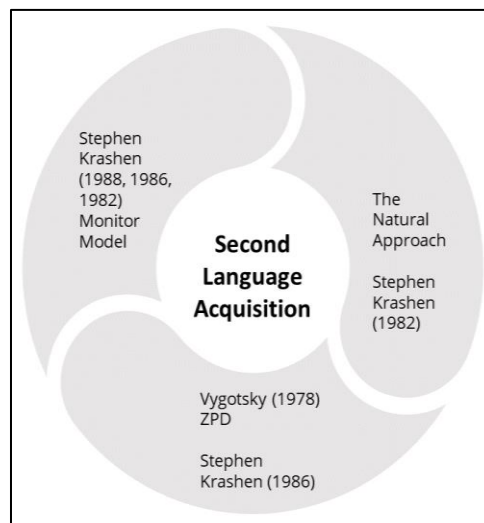

Figure 1: *Triangle Framework for the Current Study*

The next sections below further elaborate in figure 1.

2.1 Stephen Krashen (1988) Theory of Second Language Acquisition

Teachers should have the basic knowledge of second language acquisition theories to provide a comprehensive teaching and learning environment to students. One of the most applied and well-accepted theory is Stephen's Krashen's theory of second language acquisition which consists of 5 main hypotheses;

(1) The acquisition-learning hypothesis

- The acquisition is referred to as unconscious learning. Learning is a conscious process that happens in the classroom.

(2) The monitor hypothesis

- Information that the acquisition center produces will be monitored. If it doesn't match the correct information changes will be made.

(3) The natural order hypothesis

- There is a natural order to grammatical features of learning the language.

(4) The input hypothesis

- Students receive comprehensible inputs or inputs that are easily understood, student's learning will increase.

(5) The affective filter hypothesis

- A mental screen can be erased to filter information from reaching the acquisition center, which decreases the acquisition of language.

2.2 Key Stages of Vygotsky's (1978) Second Language Development

Another aspect that is important for language teachers to produce effective teaching and learning environment for students is to know about the stages of second language development. Teachers need to teach not only the content but also the academic language of the content. Aside from that, teachers need to know the stages to understand the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), ZPD is defined as the difference between what a student can do without help and what students can do with help. Teachers will be able to know where the students are at their learning level in the acquisition and learning. By knowing about these stages, teachers will be able to identify the proper teaching method/approach and create the right pedagogy for the students based on their differences especially their age levels.

According to Vygotsky's theory, the ZPD is the gap between actual development and potential development, which is between whether a child can do something without adult help

and whether a child can do something with adult direction or cooperation with peers. The purpose of ZPD is to emphasize ZPD on social interaction to facilitate the development of children. When students do their work in their school, their development is likely to be slow. To maximize development, students should work with more skilled peers who can lead systematically in solving more complex problems. Vygotsky's other theory is "scaffolding". Scaffolding is a term in the process used by adults to guide children through their Zone of proximal development. Scaffolding is to give a child a large amount of help during the early stages of learning and then reduce the help and allow the child to take on greater responsibilities as soon as they can do it themselves. The help given by the teacher can be in the form of instructions, warnings, encouragement to solve the problem into other forms that allow students to be independent. Figure 2 below shows the model of ZPD.
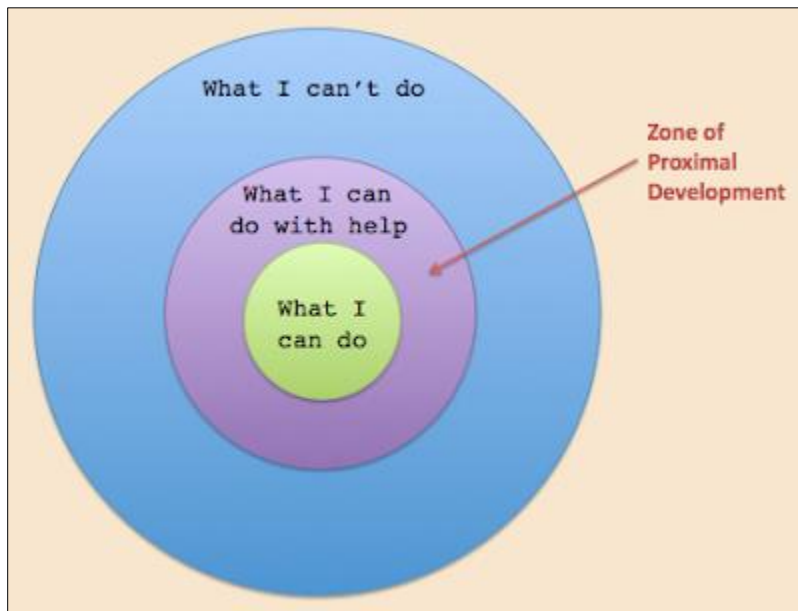

Figure 2: *Zone of Proximal Development Model*

(Source: https://www.instructionaldesign.org/theories/social-development/)

Figure 1 above was adopted from Lev Vygotsky (1978). In the context of teacher and student development, ZPD can be explained based on the ZPD model shown above. the purple color circle indicates a situation where teachers still need guidance and assistance in solving problems or performing tasks assigned to them. For students, those in this zone need guidance and help from teachers and peers for learning and problem-solving. The blue outer circle is the zone where either a teacher or a student is in a zone that needs total guidance and help from a teacher or peer. The green circle in the middle is the potential of teacher or student that has been

developed, that is, the teacher or student can independently perform tasks or problem solving on their own without help from others. According to Jim (1982), "the acquisition of meaning in context-reduced classroom situations requires more knowledge of the language itself than is typically required in the context-embedded face -to -face situation" (Jim, 1982, p.5).

According to Stephen Krashen (1986), the stages are;

Stage one: The receptive or preproduction stage

This is a stage before a person starts to produce a language. It is also called the "silent period" (Asher, 2000) whereby it learned by listening. They learn by listening to others talk, digest what they hear, and develop a passive sort of vocabulary based on what they hear. It can take up to 2 weeks depending on the person's ability. They will be able to learn about 500 receptive words that they know about but unable to apply it yet.

Stage two: The early production stage

The person begins to speak using short phrases and words. It is from the words that they memorized and listened to during their "silent period." There will be many errors in the early production stage. It can last up to 6 months.

Stage three: The speech emergence stage

The speech will become easier and more comfortable with longer production of words and sentences. Vocabulary can reach up to 3 000 words. The tendency to make errors will reduce.

Stage four: The intermediate language proficiency stage

The speech will be more fluent. Learners will be able to converse more comfortably in any social setting. Errors will be lesser. Learners will be able to use complex sentences as well as show higher-order thinking skills in giving opinions and solving problems.

Stage five: The advanced language proficiency stage

Speech is fluent almost with native-like fluency. Learners will be able to use their second language comfortably in speech and writing both in academic and normal situations. They may still face some problem with the accent and idiomatic expressions at times.

2.3 Krashen's 'The Natural Approach' Theory and Key Stages of Second Language Development of Effective Teaching

The Natural Approach is one of the teaching approaches derived from SLA theories (Krashen, S.D. & Terrell, T.D., 1983) and has been very useful to teachers who teach a foreign

language. It is a language teaching method that focuses on input, comprehension, and conversations that are meaningful and put less emphasis on grammar, and accuracy. (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 190). The theory, as well as the design and procedures in The Natural Approach, are based on Krashen's language acquisition theory which is his *Monitor Model* (1982).

Ismail et al., (2020) developed a framework model by using the monitor model in teaching and learning Al-Ḍamīr based on the sequence of students' acquisition in the Arabic Language Curriculum. The researchers have conducted a test in sentence constructions among 205 UiTM Perlis Malaysia and his initial observation reveals that the students struggled a lot in acquiring Al-Ḍamīr indicating that the existing model did not work. Thus, with the new model created by applying the monitor model and natural approach theory, it is hoped that the students will improve.

3. Methodology

For the present study, the researcher carried out an observation on students in a language learning classroom to address the importance of Krashen's Monitor Model and the Natural Approach in the stages of second language development to ensure effective teaching of the second language. Students were exposed to level 1 until level 7 of the Natural Approach stages for a certain time frame as required by the students. The results from the observations were reported in this qualitative study.

4. Findings and Discussion

This section discusses the results of observation from level 1 until level 7 of the Natural Approach stages.

Level 1 — Preproduction

At this level, students were too shy to respond verbally. They would prefer to listen to the teacher talk. Teachers who don't realize this will try to force students to speak the English language before they are ready. It is very important to make sure students are exposed to listening activities and are given time to absorb the vocabulary before making them speak. Aside from that, according to Jim Cummins (1979, 1982), they will be starting to develop language used for social communication which is Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS).

As second language teachers, we should be doing most of the talking in the class. It is very crucial to use a good command of the second language as the students will be listening attentively. They should be encouraged to respond non-verbally as feedback. If only talking will never work much. Teachers need to find interesting ways to make their speech more comprehensible. The usage of body movements, puppets, facial expressions, hand gestures, photos, pictures, drawings, and real objects could be really useful. Aside from that, it is important to speak in simple and clear language at a slower pace. Teachers can involve students in activities such as answering simple yes/no questions by referring to pictures or actions and evaluate their performance through that.

Level 2 — Early Production

At this level, students have been exposed for about 3 months to 1 year of the English language. The types of verbal or non-verbal activities that teachers can give students are answering yes/no, WH questions, an either/or. At this stage, students were able to produce 1 to 2 words of response to answer the questions in the English language. For example, when asking a WH question "Where is Penang In Malaysia".

Teachers need to ensure that the language used is simple and the questions asked are suitable for this level. Students will be able to talk with their friends simply due to the expressive skills that are developed in this stage. They can be put to discuss and solve small problems in groups or pairs. This will help the students to learn from one another. They will be less scared to ask for help as well as bring out the shy students to talk in the English language. This will be a good opportunity to practice speaking in the English language which could be the starting point to a social conversation experience. One of the ways this activity can be carried out is by the teacher asking a question and students answer it individually. They may also discuss among themselves the meaning of certain words that they may not understand. This can be only achieved if they are involved in group activities and participate in a two-way conversation. In this way, at this stage, students will be able to acquire basic syntax forms and more vocabulary which would further expand rapidly on its own.

Level 3 — Speech Emergence

At this stage, students were able to answer "how" and "why" questions which required them to give a more complex response as they have a deeper understanding of the language's context and content. Due to this, students were able to involve in various teaching strategies.

Student-centered activities were including such as scaffolding, music, limericks, problem-solving, charting, and comparing/contrasting but with some support of other materials. Some of the types of other resources are:-

a) Advanced two-answer questions – students were given the choice to choose from two things and repeating one of the answers as a response.

For example, T: "Do you think the best way for me to look good is to try out this red dress or the blue pants and blouse?"

S: "You will look good to try out this red dress"

b) Active Rephasing: Students can say sentences moderately or totally in the English language in a more sufficient way.

Example: S: "This is the best car I buy in my life"

T: "Best car I bought in my life"

S: "Best car I bought in my life!"

c) Transformation: Students were able to say sentences more elaborately according to the proper sentence structure. This is a type of scaffolding the standard of their oral production

Example: S: "Give me the green book, please."

T: "Could you…"

S: "Could you give me the green book, please"

Teachers need to make sure every interaction and activity she creates has something new for the students. As mentioned in Krashen's Input hypothesis (i+1)

Level 4 — Intermediate Fluency

At this level, students were able to synthesize and answer complex questions. They were able to talk confidently about what they like and dislike and support it with reasons. They can understand movies and songs and interpret the main ideas behind the literary items. They can tell stories and recite simple poems and give their opinions based on newspaper reading. Aside from that, they were able to speak with the native speaker with some help. Few strategies were can used at this stage.

a) Expansion – The sentences were expanded by adding missing words to refine the meaning of the word. It is like the process of rephrasing a sentence that may have been influenced by the student's mother tongue.

Example: S: "The exam is difficult. I don't know how to do it. I always can't

do it."

T: "The exam is difficult. I never get a hang on it."

S: "The exam is difficult. I never got a hang on it."

b) Transformation – Students were helped to make a complete sentence and elaborate it properly. Some changes in the sentence occurred.

Example: S: "Mum and dad are planning to go to a movie after dinner."

T: "Have you heard that…"

S: "Have you heard that Mum and dad are planning to go to a movie after

dinner."

c) Retelling – Students retell stories from a different point of view. They pretended to take up the character of snow-white/the stepmother/the dwarfs and tell the story from their perspective by using various verb tenses connecting reasons and effects.

According to Krashen, students who haven't reached the stage that allows them to get comprehensible input from "the real world" or do not have access to native speakers, would benefit from the classroom teaching. Aside from that, when proper communication tools that students can use in their real life and a conscious learning process takes place for optimal monitor users, classroom teaching plays a big role too (Schulz, 1991).

The findings show that the cause of the input factor should be taken into consideration when teaching a second language/foreign language. In this case, the input factor is usually the language teacher whereby their need for language proficiency is a necessity.

Due to this, cooperative learning can be a good method for students to get comprehensible input from their classmates. This is supported by H. Hajimia (2019), that students react the most through cooperative learning and constructivism plays an important role in connection with the monitor model and Vygotsky' ZPD. H (2019) carried out a corpus-based approach in teaching 40 students whereby there were using cooperative learning and hands-on activities.

" Hands-on learning of the English language encourages students to improve their cognitive thinking especially with their naturally inquisitive nature that motivates them to find patterns in authentic language use and make them linguistic researchers" (H. Hajimia, 2019, p 233).

Second, the input factor talks about the time allocation of a language program. An increase in the program hours would benefit students to learn more about the new language.

The pedagogy of our teaching should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also create a situation that promotes a low affective filter. The Input Hypothesis and the definition of the Affective Filter have redefined the effective language teacher as somebody who can offer input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety environment (Wilson, 2000). Teachers need to make sure that the environment in the classroom is stress-free by giving into consideration students' motivation, anxiety levels, and self-images. This can be achieved when teachers show that they respect their students, listen to them when they talk, and cater to their needs and requests. Aside from that, when teachers start correcting the errors made by the students at an early stage, the output won't be as effective as it should be. The effect of correcting students' errors in classrooms is explained in the Affective Filter Hypothesis and the Natural Order Hypothesis. Both this hypothesis suggests that learning should take place in a low anxiety environment as well as teachers, allowing students to make errors and learn in a natural way of improving themselves.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, both the knowledge of Krashen's Monitor Model of the Natural Approach and the stages of second language development is a complete guide for teachers to refer to produce an effective teaching and learning environment of the second language.

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