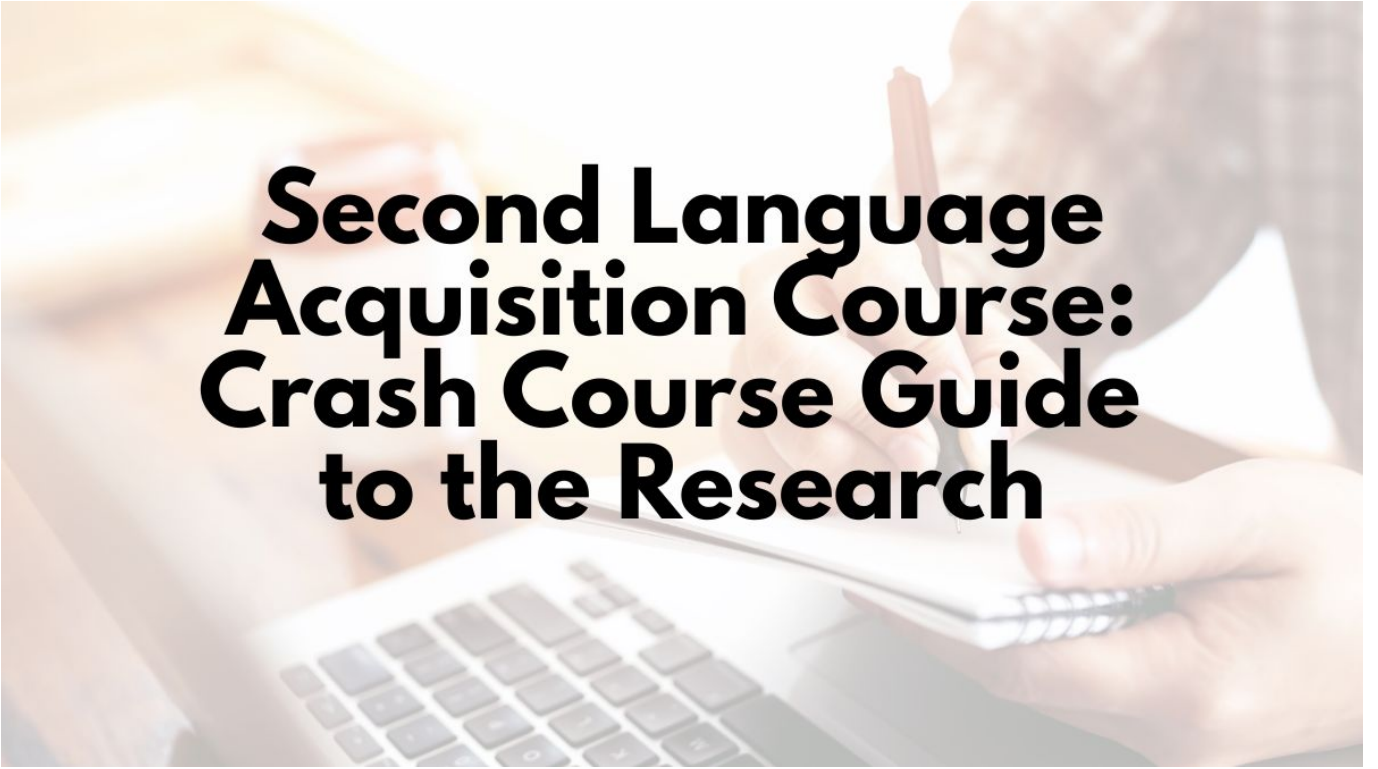


A background image showing a person's hands writing in a spiral notebook. A laptop keyboard is visible in the lower left. The image is slightly blurred and has a warm, orange-toned overlay.

Second Language Acquisition Course: Crash Course Guide to the Research

This post is a summary of the ideas I presented in the original video — a concise second language acquisition course: a crash course guide to the research. If you want practical ways to learn faster, read on. Below I walk through five core ideas, examples from real learners, and clear actions you can apply today.

The five pillars of language acquisition

About forty years ago, Stephen Krashen proposed five influential hypotheses that explain how people learn languages. I'll summarise each and add practical tips drawn from modern polyglots and classroom practice.

The screenshot shows a presentation slide titled "Crash Course Guide to the Research". The slide content is as follows:

There is much research done on how people learn languages. A lot of it is excellent and useful. With that said, I like to keep things simple. I also believe that the more concise and easy someone can make a concept understood, the more they know what they're talking about. While I say this without disrespect to any of the other research out there, I think there is no better person to present the most important things anybody who is interested in learning and teaching languages needs to know than Dr. Steven Krashen. He has wrapped up everything you need to know about learning and teaching another language in his five theories of language acquisition.

Below you will find Dr. Krashen's five theories in his own words.

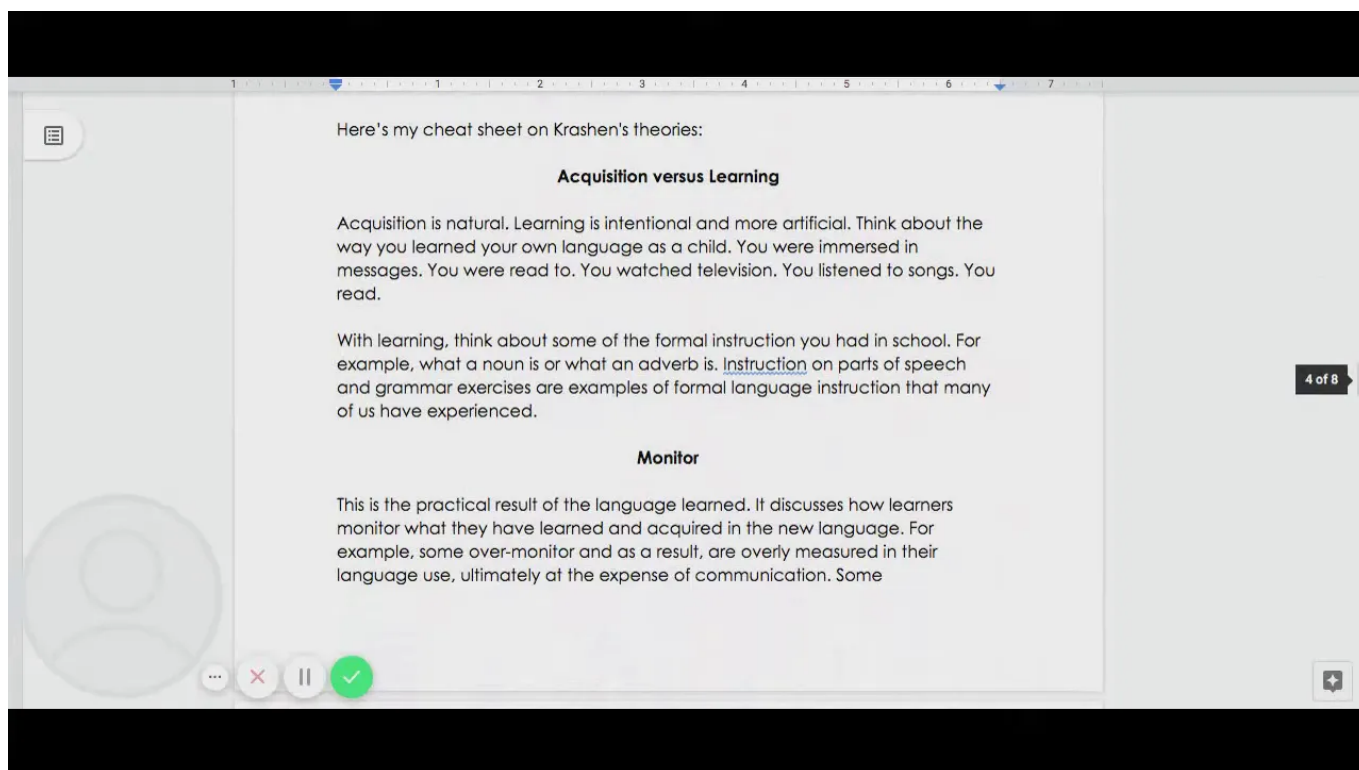
Krashen's theory of second language acquisition consists of five main hypotheses:

- the Acquisition-Learning hypothesis;
- the Monitor hypothesis;
- the Natural Order hypothesis;
- the Input hypothesis;
- and the Affective Filter hypothesis.

The slide is part of a presentation with 8 slides in total, as indicated by the "1 of 8" label in the top right corner. The interface includes a progress bar at the top, a list icon in the top left, a large circular logo on the left, and navigation controls (back, forward, search, etc.) at the bottom.

Acquisition vs learning

Acquisition is a natural, subconscious process (think childhood exposure). Learning is the deliberate study of rules and grammar. Both matter—memorise some useful phrases early, but prioritise meaningful input and interaction.



The Monitor Hypothesis

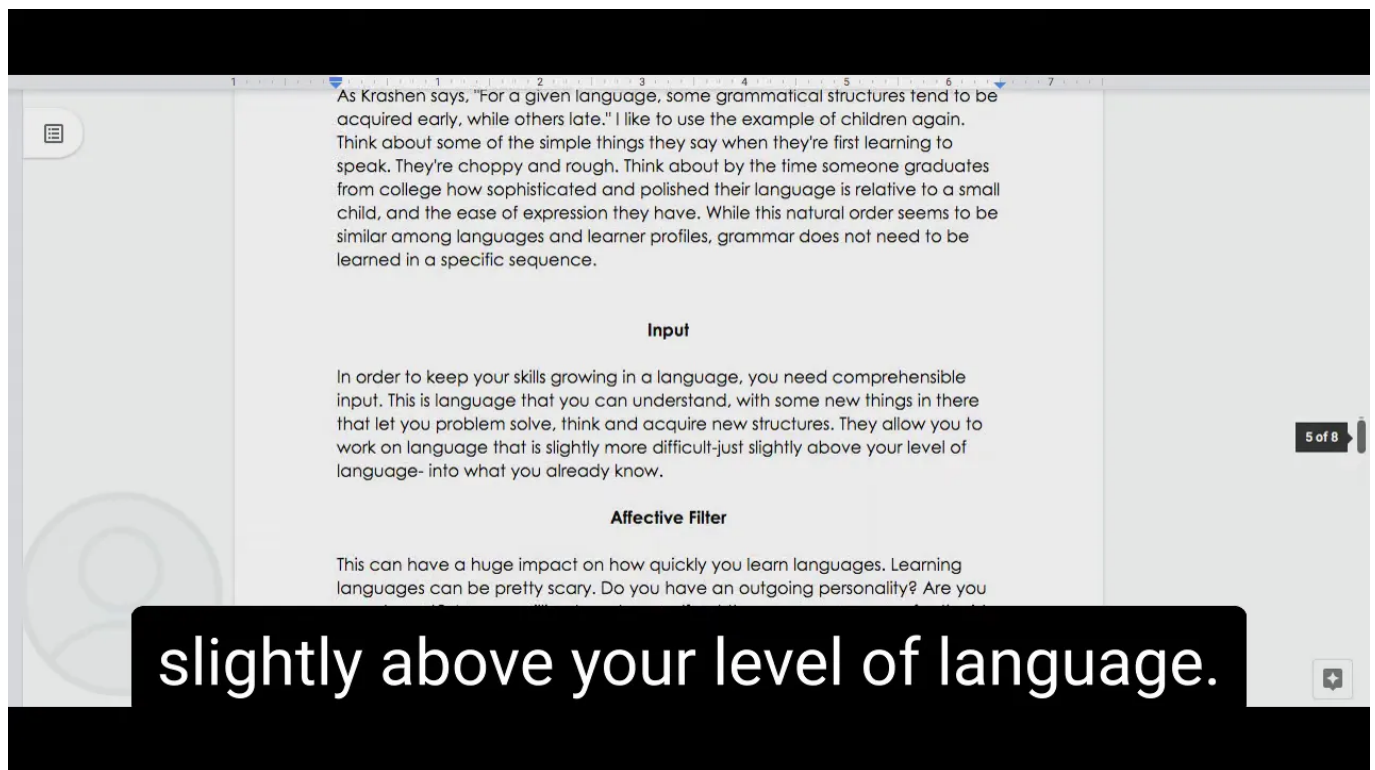
Monitoring is how we check our output. Some people over-monitor (hurting fluency); others under-monitor (sacrificing accuracy). Aim to communicate first, refine later — monitor just enough to improve without stopping conversation.

Natural Order

Grammar elements appear in predictable sequences across learners. You don't need to force a strict syllabus—expose yourself to lots of examples and patterns will emerge naturally.

Input ($i + 1$)

Comprehensible input slightly above your level ($i + 1$) drives progress. Choose audio, texts or conversations that stretch you a little so you must think and solve meaning.



As Krashen says, "For a given language, some grammatical structures tend to be acquired early, while others late." I like to use the example of children again. Think about some of the simple things they say when they're first learning to speak. They're choppy and rough. Think about by the time someone graduates from college how sophisticated and polished their language is relative to a small child, and the ease of expression they have. While this natural order seems to be similar among languages and learner profiles, grammar does not need to be learned in a specific sequence.

Input

In order to keep your skills growing in a language, you need comprehensible input. This is language that you can understand, with some new things in there that let you problem solve, think and acquire new structures. They allow you to work on language that is slightly more difficult-just slightly above your level of language- into what you already know.

Affective Filter

This can have a huge impact on how quickly you learn languages. Learning languages can be pretty scary. Do you have an outgoing personality? Are you

slightly above your level of language.

Affective Filter

Emotions matter. Anxiety blocks learning; confidence boosts it. Lower the filter by using safe spaces to speak, starting small, and accepting mistakes as part of progress.

the time that you're with other people to communicate. You'll learn a lot of grammar and structure and context, saving you hours and hours of time on difficult exercises that won't make you a better speaker. Listening to people, reading and then having some context to use that language is the greatest way to master language and structures- not explanations.

Natural order: We all tend to go through the same phases. For example, intermediate/B- level speakers create with language by speaking in sentences. Their grammar is understandable, yet a bit choppy. With time comes refinement. The more time you invest in input and practice-that natural communicative input- the more your skills will improve.

Affective Filter. We're all not extroverts. With that said, remember that the more you put yourself out there, the better your skills will become more quickly.

Don't worry about perfection. Get talking. If that means talking to yourself for a long time before you feel comfortable talking to somebody else, do it. |

Most importantly- be kind to yourself. Treat yourself with the kind of compassion you would a child learning a language. It can be difficult to put yourself out there, but **you're** doing it. Remember that!

is to be kind to yourself.

8 of 8

Practical routines that work

- Speak from day one — find conversation partners (italki is a great option).
- Record yourself and journal to track progress.
- Use audio courses (Pimsleur-style) and commute time for output practice.
- Mix three communication modes: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational.

The screenshot shows a presentation slide with a dark header and footer. The slide content is as follows:

acquiring and learning. When the person speaks back to him, he's getting more input and using that to refine his skills. In short, he pays enough attention to keep improving, but does not let a lack of knowledge of grammatical structures hinder his progress.

3. Natural order. We all go through the same stages as we develop our languages. For example, our grammar early on might be rough and choppy and difficult to understand. Do we all move through all these stages perfectly, like a textbook? Do we master the present tense early on? No. It's constant growth that happens through engaging in communication and keeping it the main focus. All that refinement comes later. Benny moves through these phases by keeping the focus on communication and naturally polishing as he continues to practice.

4. Input. The input Benny gets is where he's acquiring all of his new language. He focuses on getting into meaningful communication in context. The more you engage in speaking to others, the more language you will acquire.

5. Affective Filter. I think Benny will tell you that he's an extrovert. He likes talking to people.

What this means for you: **Acquisition.** Speak with native speakers early on. It's ideal. It can also be perfectly tailored and personalized just for you. Get input, produce output. This helps you test yourself and refine constantly as you go.

Navigation icons are visible at the bottom: a list icon, a back arrow, a close button (X), a pause button, a green checkmark button, and a share icon. A '7 of 8' indicator is in the bottom right corner.

Final takeaway

Use this second language acquisition course: a crash course guide to the research as a framework — prioritise comprehensible input, meaningful communication, and a low affective filter. Be kind to yourself: practice, make mistakes, and refine over time. Start small today: say a few sentences aloud, record them, and schedule one short conversation this week.

5 Weeks of No and Low Prep Fun

Need quick, engaging activities for your class? This free guide includes **25 no-prep and low-prep ideas** to save time while keeping students excited about learning.

[Download your free copy now.](#)

[Second Language Acquisition: Grammar](#)