

# A Study on the Krashen's "Affective Filter Hypothesis" in English Teaching

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**Abstract:** The second language acquisition theory has a certain enlightenment effect on English teaching. Teaching is divided into two aspects: teaching and learning. From the perspective of student acquisition, American linguist Krashen (1981) proposed a complete set of second language acquisition models, which provided reference for foreign language teaching. Its theory is based on five hypotheses: input, emotional filtering, acquisition mechanism and output. Among them, the affective filter hypothesis was originally proposed by Dulay and Burt, mainly to explain the influence of affective factors on foreign language learning. Krashen developed this theory, which he described as many affective variables as possible that contribute to second language acquisition. Teachers can take various teaching methods to reduce the emotional filters of students in teaching, just like making visitors feel ease at home, so as to maximize students' enthusiasm for learning and improve teaching effects.

**Key words:** Affective Filter Hypothesis; Acquisition Motivation; Foreign Language Teaching

## 1. Background

With the internationalization of my country's English education system, more and more colleges and universities have established joint training cooperation with foreign institutions, using IELTS to assess English proficiency, integrating with the international assessment system and introducing IELTS courses, which also enriches the college English teaching system. In the process of exploring an increasingly international education system, more and more colleges and universities recognize the IELTS test in flexible and diverse forms and integrate IELTS teaching into the daily teaching and evaluation system. It is an important assessment standard for students going abroad for exchange, application for visiting programs, and teachers' entry and promotion. Some schools even take IELTS as a compulsory English course for students.

IELTS score is not only an important indicator for students to apply for schools, but also affects whether students can effectively use English to read literature and study professional courses. IELTS is one of the most authoritative English tests in the world. It has comprehensive and rich content and can truly reflect a person's English level. However, some students have low English entrance scores, their English proficiency is uneven, and students lack effective learning methods. Taking the Kede College where the author teaches as an example, these problems are common among students who want to study abroad for postgraduate studies. In view of this, in addition to the traditional college English teaching, the school has specially opened the English class for Professional Purposes-IELTS course for students who need to study abroad to help them comprehensively improve their English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation skills and lay a solid language foundation.

## 2. Problems of Art Students in English Learning

Art colleges and universities focus on the inspection of professional courses during the admission examination, and the requirements for English major courses are relatively low. Therefore, the majority of art candidates spend relatively little time in English learning, and their English foundation is relatively weak, which has also led to them lack confidence in English learning. In fact, many students face different problems in English learning, such as difficulty in memorizing vocabulary, short memory storage time, spending a lot of time but the effect is very poor, and after a long time, frustration or even fatigue, anxiety, and other emotional disorders, so they never take the initiative to learn. The key to university study is self-directed learning. Teachers should pay attention to the psychological state of students in teaching, discover their psychological needs, encourage students, cultivate students' self-confidence, and eliminate the fear of English learning. Only when the endogenous motivation is strong enough, all resources can be mobilized to actively explore and learn, with students as the main body, and teachers will give a positive guiding role. Foreign language learning is all-encompassing and is a process of language accumulation. It is impossible for teachers to impart all language knowledge to students. Therefore, the most important thing in foreign language teaching is to teach students how to learn, not only limited foreign language knowledge. Therefore, we believe that the most important thing for teachers in teaching is to mobilize students' enthusiasm for learning.

From the perspective of student acquisition, American linguist Krashen (1981) proposed a complete set of second language acquisition models, which provided a reference for foreign language teaching. Its theory is based on five hypotheses: language input, emotional filtering, language acquisition mechanism, language ability acquisition as well as language output. Among them, the affective filter hypothesis was originally proposed by Dulay and Burt, mainly to explain the influence of affective factors on foreign language learning. Krashen developed this theory, which he described as many affective variables as possible that contribute to second language acquisition. He believes that a

large amount of language input does not mean that students can learn the target language well, and the language acquisition process must overcome the obstacle of emotional filtering. Emotional filters are often described as imaginary walls. When feelings or emotions such as anxiety, fear, or embarrassment are elevated, the student's emotional filter is elevated, it rises in the mind and blocks input, and language acquisition suffers thereby hindering cognition. Conversely, when the affective filter is lowered, security is high, and the more input is allowed through, the higher the positivity and language acquisition will occur. In fact, even current neuroscience research seems to support Krashen's theory that stress affects thinking and learning. How to reduce emotional filtering in the classroom? The answer is similar to how to make visitors feel at home in your home. Often, if we want guests to stay, we can create an inviting, comfortable, friendly, and fun space that caters to their needs, feeds them, and pays attention to them. Similarly, we can lower the emotional filter of students in the classroom, just as we can make visitors feel at home in their homes.

### 3.The Application of Emotional Filter Hypothesis in Foreign Language Teaching

#### 3.1 Motivation

3.1.1 Give students full choices and opportunities to show themselves through presentations before class. Some may think that motivation is entirely up to the individual student. While educators cannot fully control student motivation, they can still influence students. Giving students autonomy to choose what to learn helps them feel motivated to do the work, creating time and space for students to share their voices in learning, when students feel they have a voice or control over their own learning process. When they gain power, they become more engaged. Before class, let students give a speech in groups of about ten to fifteen minutes, share the content they like, and invite several classmates to comment or ask questions after sharing. Having students do presentations plays the role of a teacher, figuring out how to explain what they know when a student has a skill that others don't, enhances that student's learning, and motivates them when they prepare a presentation on a new topic. Really thinking about how to explain the concept to peers, the act of writing material in their own words and then saying it out loud will doubly strengthen their own understanding while helping them build empathy for others. Peer assessment is a way for students to listen to and learn from speeches of others, and students pay more careful attention to what their classmates say when they give comments on the presentations of other students. Asking interesting questions enhances interaction and forces students to think more deeply about what the presenter is presenting, activating critical brain thinking and again enhancing their own learning.

3.1.2 Before class, play small videos and other moisturizing things to silently affect students' thinking and change their cognition. Before the class, a small video related to the theme is played to import the teaching content, which can attract students' attention from the auditory and visual aspects and help to improve students' understanding of foreign cultures and habits. Although students usually watch English movies, videos, etc. by themselves, the effect of watching by themselves is different from that of group watching. As the guide in the middle, the teacher leads the students to give detailed explanations word by word when they encounter a good video and explain the language knowledge points in it. Through this method, deepening the understanding of the students will help them to leave a deep and long-lasting memory. This process can also help students to vividly learn the authentic words, terms and expressions that appear in the videos.

More importantly, through some videos, students can learn culture through language. For example, once when talking about the topic of time management, the students watched a video of a foreign brother's day in college life, and they felt the life of foreign college students more, and they were able to combine the characters in the video with their own situation, so as to carry out cultural activities. Contrast and enhance cross-cultural awareness. In the video, teachers can speak out and tell the students about their overseas related experiences combined with the content in the video, so as to cultivate students' cross-cultural communication skills in a subtle way.

3.1.3 Change teaching methods to improve students' interest in learning.

In the English study of the students at Kede College, the vast majority of students are faced with the dilemma of vocabulary learning. Compared with the boring mechanical vocabulary list, students are more willing to adopt a lively and interesting way of learning. Therefore, the author believes that the boring and boring way of memorizing words should be improved, so that students will have a fresh feeling and no longer get bored: 1) College students vocabulary recitation actually has rules to follow. Through root affixes, synonyms, antonyms, etc. are summarized, the same or similar words are accumulated together at one time, and the words are snowballed, and the simple mechanical jump from one word to another is avoided. a word. Teachers can also help students summarize words and phrases with the same usage, such as which words must be followed by -ing and which must be in to do. 2) After completing each unit, pick out the key words and string them together into a paragraph or short story, and let the students describe them in English. In this process, students can not only test their memorization of words, but also test whether they can use vocabulary. 3) Supplement the various meanings of words and associate some related words. For example, when we talk about earthquakes, we think of natural disasters, and supplement students with other natural disasters related to earthquakes such as tsunamis, landslides, and hurricanes. 4) To improve students' reading ability, start from helping students to read and analyze long and difficult sentences, and integrate grammar into long and difficult sentences to explain.

Wang Wenbin (2022) proposed that the structure of English is often characterized by cohesion and continuity, and has the characteristics of line order, while the structure of Chinese is often characterized by blockings and discreteness and has three-dimensional characteristics.

Because of this, on the whole, English sentences prefer long but not short, while Chinese sentences prefer short than long. Teachers should gradually lead students to understand the differences between English and Chinese, guide them from vocabulary to chapter level, encourage students to read more, accumulate vocabulary from reading, and increase their ability.

### 3.2 Increasing Confidence

Learners who have a sense of belonging, worth, and respect for their individuality are more likely to have lower affective filters. Creating classrooms that warmly welcome all students builds self-confidence. On the other hand, when students feel isolated or forced to “fit in,” their self-confidence erodes. To build confidence, educators can encourage students more. The author found that when students were asked to answer questions at the beginning, there would be a lot of refusal to answer. At this time, the teacher needed to slowly encourage and guide. Take oral language teaching as an example: 1) Encourage students to speak boldly and not be afraid of making mistakes. College speaking classes focus on practice, students will be timid in class, but the teacher must always cheer up. If the teacher can't answer the question, he will demonstrate first, and then let the students follow the gourd and draw the scoop. The students will overcome their timidity if they talk too much. 2) Teachers should carry out classroom interaction and create a relaxed classroom atmosphere, with a high degree of freedom, students can express whatever they want, and teachers should avoid using right or wrong answers for the answers given by students instead of giving feedback, you should look at each answer in an inclusive and open manner, and continue to guide students to develop in depth based on the answers given by them, dig depth, and stimulate their potential. 3) When the students have no clue, the teacher should guide them and lead the students to speak according to their ideas. Sometimes students have ideas but do not know how to express them in English. In response to this situation, the teacher can first ask the students to express themselves in Chinese. Then teach students some of the keywords in English, and slowly guide him to say according to the keywords. 4) In terms of training students' pronunciation, let students record and listen to them, and find their own problems after listening to the recording; in class, let students get up and read the text aloud to help develop the habit of reading aloud and cultivate students' sense of language and interest.

### 3.3 Reducing anxiety

The safest classrooms are those where students are not afraid to make mistakes. Making mistakes part of the learning process is more likely to lower students' emotional filters, helping students to develop a growth mindset that makes them realize that mistakes are part of growing up in the learning process. The way teachers talk to students and body language can also affect their anxiety. Even students who do not yet speak English can understand body language and feel the energy of the classroom. Smiling sends a positive, warm message; sitting next to students and talking to them rather than sitting in front of them is less confrontational. Another way to lower the sentiment filter is to make sure we provide understandable input. The better students understand the language used in teaching, the more focused and relaxed they will become.

Take the listening part as an example: 1) The role of the teacher is to lead the students to analyze and find the key points. Under the guidance of the teacher, the students slowly explore the rules. The listening and speaking are combined. The listening materials can be used as the input of the spoken language. Listening to the content that has been learned can be freely practiced in oral language, which can not only increase the consolidation and application of existing knowledge, but also allow students to innovate and impress them more deeply. 2) The teacher leads the students to do intensive listening. Every time they listen to a sentence or a few sentences, they ask the students to repeat them. If they can't repeat them, they can tell the general meaning. This can not only practice listening, but also exercise students' paraphrase ability. After listening, show the original listening text to the students, and make excerpts and records of the good expressions, which are accumulated as materials for writing and speaking.

### 4. Conclusion

Students are the center and main body of learning, especially in English learning, learners' subjective initiative is particularly important, and the emotional factors that affect their enthusiasm cannot be ignored. Therefore, teachers should play a good guiding role to help students establish positive learning initiative and learning motivation, encourage and guide more, help students overcome psychological obstacles, and really enhance their interest in learning, especially achieving efficient learning.

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