



INTERPLAY OF MONITOR AND AFFECTIVE FILTER HYPOTHESES IN SPEAKING AND WRITING: AN ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI ESL LEARNERS

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the interplay of monitor and affective filter hypothesis in speaking and writing among the Pakistani ESL learners. Although, the previous researches have significantly studied monitor and affective hypothesis but this study provides an understanding of the interdependence of monitor and affective hypothesis in learner's speaking and writing. For this purpose, the research has adopted the qualitative approach and collected the spoken and written data for testing the monitor usage among the Pakistani ESL learners. To analyze the role of affective filter in the monitor usage, the researcher collected the data through semi-structured interviews with participants following an analysis of the speeches and writings of the learners. The spoken and written data were analyzed by applying monitor hypothesis while the interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis. So, the findings revealed the under usage of the monitor in speaking while effective usage in writing among the majority of the participants who had high affective filter. Then, there were the over-users of monitor in speaking and writing because they had a fear of making mistakes. Lastly, the optimal user of monitor who constituted the smallest group and the reasons for his optimal use of monitor were the high motivation and the management of high affective filter. The study suggests broader pedagogical implications for Pakistani ESL classrooms that along with linguistic competence, their performance in the real-life settings should also be emphasized.

Keywords: Monitor hypothesis, Affective filter hypothesis, ESL, Pakistan, SLA

1. Introduction



It is highly emphasized by the researchers in second language acquisition that effective and productive second language acquisition significantly depends on the cognitive and affective factors in addition to linguistic competence. Notably among all of them, Krashen's monitor model (1982) is most influential which consists of five hypotheses. Krashen's monitor hypothesis highlights the role of conscious grammatical competence and the affective filter hypothesis emphasizes the contribution of cognitive factors in affecting the acquisition of a second language. There is significant research on Krashen's five hypotheses, each contributing its own significant knowledge but the interaction between the monitor and affective filter hypotheses is under-explored in the English as a second language context in Pakistan.

English is the second and official language in Pakistan and it is used in every field including media, administration, government and law. It is widely used and taught in Pakistani educational institutions and English grammatical competence is mainly focused on, which engages learners in the conscious grammatical monitoring. Where monitoring helps to produce accurate sentences, affective filters such as anxiety, lack of motivation, and fear of making mistakes can hinder the linguistic progression. Despite linguistic competence, emotional factors play a huge role in the development of L2.

There are many studies on the monitor hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis independently such as Kamal (2022), who critically evaluated the monitor model, highlighting the strengths and inadequacies of the monitor hypothesis. Similarly, Nadeem, Shafqat and Mustafa (2025) analyzed the role of gender and affective filter in the SLA

proficiency of university students. Jiang, Wu and Liang (2024), on the other hand, studied the impact of affective filters on the learner's dictation test. Moreover, the phenomenon of speaking and writing in Pakistani ESL classrooms has long been studied but the interplay of the monitor and affective filter hypotheses is insufficiently explored. So, to combat this gap, this study aims to examine the monitor usage among the Pakistani ESL learners and how the cognitive and emotional factors influence its usage. Through this, the outcomes of this research are expected to contribute pedagogical insights. It has theoretical insight too because it shows the interdependence of two major hypotheses in SLA.

2. Objectives

-  To examine either the monitor hypothesis work equally in speaking and writing or not
-  To examine the role of affective filter in influencing the use of monitor hypothesis in speaking and writing

3. Research Questions

- a) How do the Pakistani ESL learners use monitor in speaking and writing and in what ways its role differs in speaking and writing?
- b) What role does the affective filter hypothesis play in influencing the use of monitor in speaking and writing?

4. Literature Review

Second language acquisition is a widely discussed field in applied linguistics. In applied linguistics, the most important model that widely addresses the phenomenon of second language acquisition is Krashen's (1982) monitor model as Hassan (2022) has confirmed the validity and effectiveness of the monitor model to this time despite many criticisms. Numerous empirical studies have been conducted on this model and each has made a significant contribution. To understand the speaking and listening skills many researchers have employed a monitor model such as Wu (2010) who found the enhancement in speaking and listening skills of the English learners through comprehensible input. Nadeem, Shafqat and Mustafa (2025) found variance in SLA proficiency off male and female students using the affective filter hypothesis as a framework. Similarly, Caratiquit, Caratiquit, and Tamanu (2022) studied on monitor usage and learners' speaking abilities and revealed that monitor usage is a crucial element in enhancing the learners' speaking performance. Bailey (2021) stated that motivation and input in the second language acquisition play a vital role in the development of learner's linguistic skills.

Among all five hypotheses, Krashen's monitor hypothesis is widely discussed in which he has addressed the learner's ability to monitor their own grammatical mistakes and edit them. Numerous empirical studies have been carried out on ESL learners regarding the monitor usage. Van de Guchte (2015) found that intensive monitoring of grammar accuracy while speaking can reduce the fluency among the learners which confirms Krashen's stance that monitor over-users might lack fluency. While, Horner (1987) found the monitor hypothesis impractical and over-restrictive, as it could not be used in spontaneous situations because it requires proper time and focus, so he proposed the communicative trigger as an alternative. In this way, Horner's study challenges Krashen's monitor hypothesis, calling it not suitable for real-life communication

In second language acquisition, higher level of anxiety can hinder one's learning (Krashen, 1982). Empirical studies have confirmed this statement of Krashen such as Horwitz et al (1986) who examined the foreign language classroom and found that the students with higher anxiety levels lack progress in the class which supports Krashen's notion that higher anxiety leads to poor performance. Young (1991) and Philips (1992) also confirmed poor

performance in anxious learners. Moreover, Dewaele, Petrides, and Furnham (2008), and MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997) added that anxious learners tend to under-rate their linguistic competence and the confident and relaxed learners tend to over-rate their linguistic competence which indicates the psychological influence on the language. Similarly, Liu (2023) found the high impacts of affective factors mainly motivation, self-confidence and anxiety on the learners in a foreign language classroom. Moreover, Gregersen (2022) examined the properties of language anxiety and suggested the implications to overcome those issues. All these findings by the researchers show that affective factors can suppress the learner's communicative competence and linguistic development in the second language classroom.

English is the official language in Pakistan and is used in media, administration, government and education and its use is gradually prevailing which leads to more enrollment in ESL classrooms. Multiple scholars in Pakistan have significantly studied the Pakistani ESL learners and addressed the challenges and solutions to the problem in ESL classrooms such as Ali et al (2020) conducted a quantitative study on Pakistani ESL learners and found the psychological, linguistics and social barriers in learners' acquisition of L2 and provided suggestions to overcome these challenges. Similarly, Razzaq (2024) revealed the impact of meta-cognitive writing strategies on the ESL learner's writing style. Moreover, Saddique and Zahid (2025) examined the correlation between teachers' fluency and the effectiveness of the grammar translation method which revealed the positive impacts of teachers' fluency on the learners while GTM is effective for grammar teaching, not for enhancing speaking skills. Building upon this, Kazim et al (2025) examined the strengths and limitations of the grammar translation method of teaching.

4.1 Research Gap

Numerous studies have significantly addressed the monitor hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis, but fewer studies have investigated the interaction between the monitor and affective filter hypotheses. There is insufficient research on what role affective filters play in the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of monitor usage in speaking and writing. Studies on Pakistani the ESL learners are more focused on GTM or other aspects but there are very few studies on the integration of Krashen's monitor and affective filter hypothesis in ESL classrooms. To combat this gap, the study aims to investigate the integration of monitor and affective hypotheses in speaking and writing of Pakistani ESL learners through qualitative and in-depth research from three angles: Speaking, writing and interview. Through this, the research provides a significant contribution and suggestions to the real problems in ESL classroom.

4.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is rooted in Krashen's monitor model (1982). Krashen's perspective in the monitor model of second language acquisition is that linguistic competence and fluency in L2 evolve through acquisition rather than formal learning. The model was more focused on the communicative competence of the learners. Krashen (1982) favored Brown (1973), Dulay and Burt's (1974, 1975) arguments that ESL learners learn certain language patterns before others and argued that almost all the L2 learners learn a language in a predictable natural order, moving from the simple to the complex. One of the most important concepts of Krashen's (1982) is the monitor hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis which play an important role in the competence and performance of L2 learners.

4.2.1 Monitor Hypothesis

The monitor hypothesis acts as the editor or the composer of the language. Moreover, according to Krashen (1982) acquisition is good for L2 fluency while learning plays the function of monitor. Whenever we speak or write, the monitor in our mind trained through the learning, activates and edits the grammatical and syntactic issues in our utterances and writings. Krashen (1999) proposed three conditions as the gatekeeper to apply the conscious linguistic rules and meeting the following conditions allows the contribution of conscious grammar:

1. One needs to have enough time to think and consciously apply the rules to their L2 utterances.
2. Time is not an enough condition because sometimes we have time but still make errors. Krashen (1982) supported his second condition with Dulay and Burt's (1978) statement that the L2 learners also need to focus on the correctness of the form, along with time.
3. The performer must have the competence of the rules of L2.

Moreover, Krashen categorized three different types of monitor users: (i) monitor over-users are those who are always very much conscious all the time about applying the correct rules of a second language while speaking (ii) monitor under-users are those who either do not have the knowledge of rules or prefer not to be so conscious about applying them. Stafford and Covitt (1978) added that these people consider applying the rules important but they themselves do not use them. (iii) optimal users are those people who use the monitor depending on the situation. These are the super monitor users (Yorio, 1978)

Krashen's (1982) monitor hypothesis provides the lens for analyzing the monitor use in speaking and writing. This theory contributes to the present research by providing the lens to understand how the students use and edit the grammatical rules while speaking and writing. Krashen emphasized that for effective monitor use learners need to have sufficient time, focus on form and grammatical competence. This perspective helps us to analyze to what extent monitoring impacts the ESL learner's fluency and writing.

4.2.2 Affective Filter Hypothesis

According to Krashen affective factors such as motivation, confidence and anxiety play a crucial role in the advancement of a second language. It cannot only hinder the increase in linguistic competence but can also impede the acquisition of a second language. High affective filter leads (e.g., high anxiety, hesitation, etc.) to lower acquisition and lower affective filter (e.g., high motivation, high confidence and low anxiety, etc.) leads to high acquisition of language.

Affective filter not only influences the quality of language input but also the quantity of language input. Even though a person receives comprehensible input and has grasped the full command of the rules of the second language, high anxiety and lower self-esteem can hinder the progression of the language. According to Filgona and Sakiyo (2020) motivation is an impactful element in the acquisition of a second language. Similarly, Liu (2021) supported Krashen's affective filter hypothesis and stated that our emotional factors play an important role in second language acquisition.

Where the monitor hypothesis guides to explain the overuse, underuse or optimal use of linguistic competence by the ESL learners, this perspective of Krashen's model contributes to this study by providing me with the ground to examine the reasons for adequate or inadequate use of the monitor in speaking or writing. It helps the researcher to analyze why some learners overuse, underuse or misuse the monitor despite sufficient time to talk. Additionally,

it helps to conceptualize the cognitive impact of the learners on the fluency despite being given sufficient knowledge and adequate time to apply it.

5. Methodology

The study aims to examine the effectiveness of the monitor hypothesis in speaking and writing and what role the affective filter plays in the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of it. For this purpose, the study has adopted the qualitative approach, aligning with interpretivists that reality is socially constructed, not fixed. For research, the researcher selected eight Pakistani ESL learners with strong knowledge of English grammar. To ensure that only those learners participate who have sufficient grammatical competence, the researcher took the guidance of the instructor who has been supervising them for a very long time. Moreover, the researcher analyzed the use of the monitor through the speeches and writings of the participants. Participants were given as much time as they wanted to speak and write. For analyzing the monitor usage, the researcher employed the monitor hypothesis. Moreover, the researcher analyzed the role of affective filters in the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of monitor usage through semi-structured interviews. For data analysis, the researcher applied the Krashen's monitor hypothesis for the analysis of the participants' speeches and writings to understand the overuse, under-use and effective use of the monitor hypothesis in any one of them or both. Moreover, the researcher extracted the most recurring themes in the interview responses to analyze the role of the affective filter hypothesis in the usage of the monitor hypothesis.

5.1 Data Collection

The researcher purposively selected 8 Pakistani ESL learners with strong grammatical knowledge because monitor use is possible only by those learners who have strong and correct competence in grammar. For selecting the learners with sufficient knowledge, the research took the guidance of the learner's instructor. Among the 8 Pakistani ESL learners, there were 4 males and 4 females and each was given free time to speak and write. First, the researcher asked the learners to speak on any particular topic and then to write on the same topic on which they had spoken. To elicit a more natural response the researcher offered varying topics such as hobbies, academic, social issues, culture, sports, technology, travel, entertainment and future aspirations and asked the participants to choose the topic on the basis of their interests and personal experiences, so that they have content to speak. The researcher recorded the speeches of the participants by using the Infinix Hot 40i. Then, the researcher asked the learners to write on the same topics and asked them to put a cross on the incorrect word instead of removing it when they realized it, so that the researcher could effectively understand the monitor use in writing too. After, analyzing and re-analyzing the speeches and writings of the participants, the researcher analyzed the efficiency of the monitor hypothesis. Then, the researcher analyzed the role of the affective filter hypothesis in the efficient and inefficient monitor usage. For this purpose, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview to elicit the responses of the participants and the questions were more focused on the reasons for equally better performance in speaking and writing or unequal performance in both.

6. Data Analysis

This study has adopted the Krashen's monitor hypothesis for the analysis of speeches and writings of the participants. The research analyzed the interview data through thematic analysis, by extracting the recurring themes.

Participant 1 Speaking:

“Sports is very crucial part of our life and I love to play cricket whenever I am free because it help people to stay active and healthy..... Multiple students wastes time on mobiles but I think sports is the best option for everyone.”

Writing: “Sports are very important in our life and it is my hobby to play cricket whenever I am free because it helps me to stay energetic and healthy. Sports not only give us physical fitness but develop teamwork, discipline and confidence. Many students waste their free time on using mobile phones but I believe sports are the better choice to spend the leisure time.”

Analysis

The participant has employed the same idea and almost the same narrative structure in both speaking and writing. Despite this, there are noticeable grammatical accuracy differences in both such as in speaking the participant made subject-verb agreement (e.g ‘Sports is’, ‘it help’ and ‘Multiple students wastes’) and didn’t correct these mistakes. On the other hand, while writing participant correctly employed the grammatical rules. It shows the monitor under-use in speaking despite the grammatical competence. The speaker seems to be more focused on conveying the meaning rather than corrections.

Participant 2

Speaking: “I travelled to Lahore last time and I really enjoyed there but the thing that I didn’t liked is the smog which made our trip so frustrated. We went to the park there and our father give us the money to purchase a ride on the swings in park.... Overall, it were a good experience.”

Writing: “I travelled to the Lahore last month and really enjoyed it there. It was so fun. We went to the park there and our father gave us money which we spent on swings in the park but I didn’t like the smog there because it made our trip so frustrating and made us sick at the end.....To sum up, I would say it was a great experience”.

Analysis

There is an inconsistency in the use of monitor in speaking and writing. The participant has used the monitor effectively in writing but omitted its usage in speaking. Correct written structures such as ‘I didn’t like’, ‘father gave’ and ‘it was’ show that the speaker had the grammatical competence but under-used in speaking such as ‘I didn’t liked’, ‘father give’ and ‘it were’. There are consistent subject-verb agreement mistakes in the past tense in speeches, highlighting the emphasis on meaning rather than grammar.

Participant 3

Speaking: “Social media platforms has...(no) have ...so much negative impacts on the youth’s education because they spent....spend their most of the time on playing games and scrolling social media. Empirical studies on social media have widely address.... I mean addressed...this issue and...uh.....suggested the solutions such as reduce...reducing the screen time and...uh...empowering the positive usage of social media such as looking for educational material etc...”

Writing: “Social media platforms have so many negative impacts on the young generation’s education because students spend their precious time playing online games and scrolling through reels which reduces the attention towards education. Many researchers through empirical studies have revealed the negative impacts of social media and suggested reducing the screen time and empowering positive usage of social media such as looking for the educational material, Islamic content, skills-oriented videos, online work etc can really work out....”

Analysis



The speaker has made a lot of pauses and corrections while speaking which shows too much focus on grammatical accuracy. While writing, the participant actively used monitor and made fewer grammatical errors which shows his struggle to apply the correct grammatical rules in his speeches and writings. The speaker constantly interrupted the communication to correct the grammar such as “social media platforms has...(no) have...”, “Empirical studies on social media have widely addressed (I mean) addressed ...”, etc. This constant interruption delayed the meaning by dominating accuracy over fluency. So, all this lead to monitor over-use in speeches where the speaker frequently made self-corrections and produced disrupted speeches.

Participant 4

Speaking: “In Pakistan, unemployment rate is rising day by day because many graduates or other skill persons not getting jobs because the government not providing jobs to the skilled people and neglecting this issue constantly. The types of social situation create a lot criminals and mentally sufferers”

Writing: “The unemployment rate in Pakistan is increasing gradually because most of the graduates and skilled laborers are not getting proper jobs. This issue is prevailing day by day because government is neglecting it. This type of ignorance to this much bigger issue creates a lot of criminals and mentally diseased people....”

Analysis

Speaker has under-used the monitor like many other under-users of the monitor but he produced no hedges and pauses like over-users and spoke so fluently. The speaker made errors such as ‘persons not getting jobs... government not providing jobs.....and neglecting this issue.....social situation create....’. He constantly skipped the helping verbs of the continuous tense and omitted the subject-verb agreement which is the most common error throughout the speech. While he wrote the same idea correctly with fewer grammatical mistakes and a smooth flow.

Participant 5

Speaking: “Gender inequality exist in every patriarchal society which male is the head of the family. In these society, women aren’t given equal educational and career opportunities. This type of mindset prevail injustice in the society and stop the development of the society by marginalizing the females.....”

Writing: “Gender inequality exists everywhere and its roots are much stronger in the patriarchal society where male dominates the family. This patriarchy has prevailed this mindset that women have no right to education and should stay at home and busy themselves with domestic chores. This mindset prevails injustice in the society and prevents the social development.....”

Analysis

Writing is effective and the monitor is optimally active. While speaking, the speaker made subject-verb agreement and struggled to apply s/es after the subject such as “Gender inequality exist.....This type of mindset prevail....stop the development.....”. Like participant 4, participant 5 also spoke fluently. Consequently, the monitor is under used in speech. His linguistic structures and word choices are much better in writing than speaking. Fluency and meaning dominate the grammatical accuracy. Despite knowing the grammatical rules, the speaker struggled to apply the grammatical rules while speaking as the accurate written data shows his grammatical competence.

Participant 6



Speaking: “As a female, I doesn’tuh....don’t have much future plans because my family.... expect... expects from me to complete my education and than marry. That’s why I didn’t took....take any interest in the education...moreover...uh...I will says...say....”

Writing: “As a female, I don’t have much future plans because I belong to the patriarchal family where women are expected to complete basic education and than marry in the well-settled family. Due to this, I didn’t take any interest in the education”

Analysis

Pauses and interruptions in the communication to correct the grammatical mistakes indicate the overuse of the monitor. While speaking, the speaker preferred grammatical accuracy such as “I doesn’tuh.... don’t have...”, “my family.... expect Expects”, “I didn’t took..... take any...”, etc. On the other hand, in writing the speaker made fewer grammatical errors and even modified his structure and vocabulary as well. So under-user of monitor in speaking shows the gap between the monitor’s effectiveness in speaking and writing.

Participant 7

Speaking: “My future aspiration is to pass the CSS exam and then become a police officer. So, I have decided that after completing my higher education, I’ll start the preparation for the CSS exam. And ...uh...I want to pass the exam because CSS jobs give better financial stability as compared to other jobs.....”

Writing: “My future aspirations is to pass the CSS exam and then become the police officer. So, I have decided after completing my higher education, I’ll start the preparation of CSS exam. And I want to pass the exam because jobs through CSS give better financial stability as compared to other jobs.....”

Analysis

Participant 7 has effectively used monitor in speech and writing and made less grammatical errors, produced the idea fluently and smoothly which shows that conscious grammatical knowledge was applied appropriately, not excessively. The participant made strategic pauses in speaking just to organize his idea. It shows that conscious grammatical knowledge can produce the accurate grammatical sentences without any disruption. Similarly, in writing the participant has used the correct grammatical structures and maintained the coherence as well. Overall, participant 7 successfully implied the monitor use in speaking and writing.

Participant 8

Speaking: “I want to explain my opinion environmental....that environmental pollution need to be... needs to be resolved earlier because if it is keep neglecting.....kept neglected, it can cause severe issues that will make man’s survival so difficult...”

Writing: “I would like to share my opinion on environmental pollution. I think that this issue should have be resolved (added ‘ed’ after rechecking) as soon as possible because if this issue is kept neglected, it ~~shoud~~can make human’s survival so difficult in this world.”

Analysis

Frequent pauses and interruptions in the communication to correct the grammatical mistakes indicate the over use of monitor. While speaking, the speaker preferred grammatical accuracy such as “my opinion environmental....that environmental pollution need to be.....needs to be resolved.....keep neglecting.... kept neglected...”, etc. The participant also consistently over-used the monitor while writing and frequently paused to correct the mistakes. The speaker produced disrupted speeches and preferred grammatical accuracy over fluency and delayed the meaning as well.

Thematic Analysis of Interview Data

The study has employed the thematic analysis for the analysis of interview data. It guides the study in understanding the recurring affective and cognitive themes that have influenced the effectiveness of monitor usage among the ESL learners despite the sufficient time and grammatical competence.

High Affective Filter → Monitor Under-Users

The interview responses by the monitor under-users revealed that anxiety, lack of confidence, low motivation and stress are the main reasons for monitor under-use in speaking. On the other hand, they revealed that while writing they have less stress and feel less anxiety which leads to better performance in writing. Such as the Participant 1:

“I couldn’t produce grammatically correct sentences because I feel anxiety when speaking. I don’t possess enough confidence to articulate the idea accurately publically. On the hand, while writing, I feel less pressure on my mind.”

Participant 2:

“While speaking, high anxiety level blocks my thinking and I cannot concentrate on my grammatical accuracy despite knowing the grammatical rules.”

Thus, the speakers show the direct interference of Krashen’s (1982) affective filter hypothesis in the usage of monitor hypothesis. The response revealed that cognitive overload, fear of being judged as less fluent and hesitation to speak up in front of anyone hindered the learner’s speaking skills despite sufficient command of grammatical knowledge. High affective filter ‘blocks’ the learner’s conscious knowledge, even though they know the grammatical rules. Moreover, the speakers showed the direct contrast between speaking and writing and placed writing as the safer and comfortable option for him because there’s no immediate audience response and less cognitive load.

Fear of Mistakes → Monitor Over-Users

Interviews from the monitor over users revealed the fear of mistakes as the biggest element that encourages them to constantly take pauses and edit their grammatical mistakes. Due to this, they correct their errors and focus on grammatical accuracy rather than fluency. But one thing to note in this theme is that fear of making mistakes doesn’t act as a weakening force but as the motivating force that makes the learners more conscious of their flaws and enables them to correct them.

For example, the participant 12:

“I frequently paused to correct my mistakes because I felt the pressure of being judged for making mistakes because people would think despite the knowing rules, still I cannot speak appropriately.”

Participant 10:

“I was afraid of mistakes because the grammatical mistakes by the ESL doesn’t leave a good impression on the listener and reader. Similarly, while writing I constantly re-read the written material to avoid mistakes.”

Responses of both participants revealed a similar theme. Societal pressure and fear of being negatively perceived as the ESL learners motivate them to apply conscious grammatical knowledge. However, the written and especially the spoken data of monitor over users show that they are heightened with metacognition because they can identify and correct their errors while speaking or writing the sentences. In this way, fear of mistakes becomes an effective cognitive trigger leading to a more accurate grammatical structure.

Lower Affective Filter → Optimal Users of Monitor

The recurring theme among the effective monitor users, even though they are fewer in numbers, revealed that low affective filter and high confidence are the keys to effectively use



the monitor which again enforces the interdependence of monitor hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis of Krashen. Instrumental motivation, constant practice and management of cognitive load are the driving factors towards accurate production of sentences while speaking and writing. As participant 7 has responded in the interview:

“I want to become the CSS officer and CSS exam requires a good command on English. So, this thing keeps me motivated and allows me to be more concerned about my grammatical accuracy in speaking and listening both. I also managed my anxiety and fear over-time.”

Participant’s response reinforces the powerful notion in second language acquisition that a lower affective filter promotes better learning. Optimal users of the monitor are more advanced than all others because they maintain fluency, accuracy, and coherence at the same time.

7. Findings and Discussion

The findings of the research on the interplay of the monitor and affective filter hypotheses in speaking and writing on Pakistani ESL learners revealed that among L2 participants 4 were the under-user of monitor, the 3 were the over-user and 1 was the optimal and effective user. Under-users of the monitor struggled to speak accurately with correct grammar despite their conscious grammatical knowledge, but their writing structure was more grammatically accurate and ideas were expressed with better structure and vocabulary as compared to speaking. They were fluent speakers, focusing more on the meaning. Secondly, the over-users monitor consistently took pauses to correct the mistakes which affected their fluency. Thirdly, there were optimal or effective monitor users who maintained fluency and application of conscious grammatical knowledge in both speaking and writing.

The thematic analysis of the interview data collected from the participants revealed the reason for inefficient or efficient use of the monitor hypothesis. Among the under-users, the recurring theme is high anxiety, lack of confidence and motivation and stress which hinder their use of monitor while speaking. Moreover, they revealed that writing causes less pressure and anxiety, so they can write well and accurately. Among the over-users, the recurring theme was the fear of mistakes because they do not want to be perceived as incompetent. Lastly, management of high affective filter and higher instrumental motivation were the reasons for effective monitor usage in speaking and writing both. Overall, the findings revealed that despite the high and effective input and ability to use the monitor, the participants failed to maintain grammatical accuracy and fluency because of the less management of the affective filter. The participants who maintained fluency and accuracy, maintained the affective filter and positive motivation.

The findings revealed that monitoring works best in writing as compared to speaking. Throughout the data analysis, monitor under-users emphasize the meaning rather than accuracy, which strengthens the ‘communicative instruction’ in which little attention is paid to error correction and the focus is on fluency and form (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). Despite the sufficient time, some students couldn’t speak well as Hulstijn and Hulstijn (1984) claimed that time has no impact on the monitor. Kormos (1999) found that fluency-centered learners pay less attention to grammar while accuracy-centered learners pay less attention to the fluency. Additionally, Van de Guchte (2015) expanded this idea in his research and proved that focus on the complex grammatical rules reduces the fluency of the speakers which confirms Skehan’s (1996a, 1996b) statement that people lack attentional resources. In this study reduced fluency among the monitor under-user reinforces the Krashen’s (1982) claim that people who over-use monitor while speaking struggle with fluent articulations and under-users struggle with accuracy. Another important and less frequently occurring monitor user is



the optimal monitor user who can balance between fluency and accuracy as Caratiquit, Caratiquit, and Tamanu (2022) found, learners with optimal monitor use have a firm grasp of vocabulary, pronunciation and discourse management which leads to linguistic development. Monitor under-users expressed anxiety and lack of confidence in speaking as the main reasons for unequal use of the monitor in speaking and writing which hindered their progress as Horwitz et al (1986) argued that students with high anxiety levels in a foreign language classroom avoid participation in learning-based tasks in class. Similarly, monitor over-user experience fear of making mistakes as the main psychological reason and motivation which triggered the excessive use of monitor at the expense of fluency and optimal users lowered their affective filter which supports Krashen's (1982) idea that a high affective filter can hinder one's progression, especially communication and a low affective filter can promote learning.

This study confirms the accuracy of the Krashen's (1982) monitor hypothesis that under-users lack accuracy, over-users lack fluency and optimal users maintain fluency and accuracy. It also highly supports the affective filter hypothesis which emphasizes that the management of the affective filter leads to better learning. Moreover, this study has broader pedagogical implications and suggests that the teachers need to help the students in building their confidence and lowering their anxiety along with providing grammatical competence so that they feel motivated and stress-free whenever they speak. Moreover, teachers should design activities for the psychological betterment of the students and he/she should consider errors as part of the acquisition and should correct them politely so that students do not hesitate to ask any question next time. Moreover, they should try to foster optimal monitor use.

8. Conclusion

The present study is focused on examining the inter-relationship between Krashen's monitor and affective filter hypothesis in speaking and writing of the Pakistani ESL learners. The data collected through speaking and writing on any topic and interviews from the participants to understand the reason for effective or ineffective usage of the monitor, revealed that most of the ESL learners are monitor under-users, especially in speaking and they prefer meaning over grammar and don't apply the grammatical rules despite knowing them because of the high anxiety and stress. Monitor over-user were the most non-fluent speakers because they constantly paused to correct their grammar due to the fear of being judged for making mistakes. Lastly the monitor optimal users who maintained fluency and accuracy by maintaining the affective filter and higher motivation.

The study provided evidence of the interdependence of the monitor and affective hypotheses. Consequently, the study suggests that when learners experience higher anxiety and stress, fear and lack of confidence, then comprehensible input or competence of grammatical rules is not sufficient for effective second language acquisition because the learners struggle to effectively communicate in the real-world. The affective filter becomes the real gatekeeper of regulating the grammatical knowledge during the output. In Pakistan, where speaking English has become the symbol of social evaluation, maintaining accurate English speaking skills is compulsory for ESL learners. For this they are required to lower the affective filter as the findings of the study revealed that optimal monitor users successfully maintained their affective filter.

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