The Role of Psycholinguistics in English Language Learning

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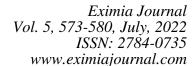
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Abstract. To use the language fluently and communicatively, somebody has to master the rules (grammar) and aspects of the language (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor). Most of these parts are covered in psycholinguistics. This study aims to investigate the role of psycholinguistics in English language learning. It is done through a literature review at Universitas Kristen Indonesia. The result of the study is that psycholinguistics in English language learning is very important. Psycholinguistics can help the teachers understand all of the conditions and context of learning, such as how the students listen, speak, read, and write. So from the perspective of psycholinguistics, a teacher may tackle students' difficulties in learning English.

Keywords. psycholinguistics, language, learning, role, language acquisition

Introduction

Psycholinguistics is a science that describes the psychological processes that occur when a person produces sentences and understands the sentences he hears when communicating and how humans acquire the ability to speak. The limits of psycholinguistics to studying language and the mind (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2019; Nava & Pedrazzini, 2018). Psycholinguistics is a field of study that connects psychology with linguistics (Tatlilioglu & Senchylo-Tatlilioglu, 2020). The main goal is to find the structures and processes that underlie the human ability to speak and understand language (Otter, Medina, & Kalita, 2020; Surber & Stauffacher, 2022). Psycholinguists are not interested in language interaction among speakers of a language. The main focus of their work is to dig into what happens when individuals speak. Psycholinguistics is a science that studies the mental processes that humans go through when they speak (Muñoz, 2013; Traxler, 2015). In detail, psycholinguistics examines four main things, namely a) comprehension (the mental processes that humans go through so that they can catch what people are saying and understand what is meant); b) production (the mental processes in us that make us able to speak as we speak); c) the biological and neurological foundations that make humans able to speak; and d) language acquisition (how a child acquires his or her language).

English language learning has four principles (Wang, 2020; Shelton-Strong, 2020) that include: a) Contextual principles: Contextual learning is learning that relates the material taught to the real world of learners and encourages learners to make connections between the knowledge they have and knowledge in everyday life; b) Functional principles: Functional

principles of language learning are essentially in line with the communicative approach to learning. The concept of the communicative approach implies that teachers are not the rulers in the classroom. Teachers are not the only givers of information and learning resources. Instead, teachers as recipients of the information; c) Integrative principles: English learning must be integrated. For example, teaching vocabulary can be combined with learning to read, write, or speak. Teaching sentences can be combined with listening, speaking, reading, and writing; d) Appreciative principle: The appreciative principle is more emphasized in the study of literature. The term appreciative principle comes from the English verb "appreciate", which means to appreciate, assess, and becomes the adjective "appreciative", which means happy).

Learners are subjects in learning. In this case, students are considered individuals who are active in achieving the realms of psychology, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. A variety of deviant speech (wrong) caused by speaking errors by the speaker, including the load requirements (overloading), namely feelings of anxiety (facing the exam or an encounter with a feared person) or because the speaker lacks mastery of the material, is affected by effective feelings, has difficulty pronouncing words, and lacks mastery of the topic (Xu, Rahman & Sommer, 2021; Preston et al., 2017; Chaaraoui, 2017; Kuk-Chol & Sun-Yong, 2017). From the causes of the above errors, we can classify them based on the realm of psychology. The cause of the offence is a feeling of apprehension related to the affective realm. Lack of material mastery related to the cognitive domain may cause errors in the form of difficulty pronouncing words related to the psychomotor domain.

The examples of errors and causes of errors described earlier show that the role of psycholinguistics in language learning is significant. The general purpose of language learning is for students to use English well and correctly in oral and written language (Levi & Inbar-Lourie, 2020; Chien, Hwang & Jong, 2020; Lemeshchenko-Lagoda, Kryvonos & Kolodii, 2020). For students to speak English well and correctly, knowledge of the language rules is required. By understanding psycholinguistics, a teacher can understand the processes in students when students listen, speak, read, or write (Lumentut & Lengkoan, 2021; Bakhronova, 2020; Naibaho, 2021). While the ability in language skills is problematic, teachers can see it from a psychological point of view as the alternative solution. Thus, it is clear how vital the role of psycholinguistics is in language learning.
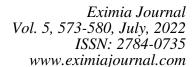
Method

This study is a literature review. The literature review is a research conducted by researchers by collecting several books, articles, and journals provided online in google scholar, PubMed, research gate or other online sources related to the problem and research objectives. This technique is carried out to reveal various theories relevant to the problems being studied as reference material in the discussion of research results.

Findings and Discussion

Psycholinguistic studies have enlightened the relationship between language and mental processes during language reception and production (Jääskeläinen & Lacruz, 2018). The reception process includes listening and reading activities, while the production process includes speaking and writing activities. These four activities are often called the four language skills. The benefits of various findings of Psycholinguistic studies on learning these four activities are presented in this learning activity (Schneider, Dich & Radu, 2020; Ettinger, 2020).

Theory of comprehension: There are two approaches to comprehension: the syntactic and semantic approaches. Through a syntactic approach, the understanding is done by first
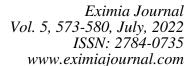
basing oneself on the sentence structure. Comprehension is done by recognizing the sounds, words, and beings found in a sentence to capture the meaning of the statements contained in the sentence (Yu, Jiang, Dong & Feng, 2020; Özge, Küntay & Snedeker, 2019; Rommers, Dell & Benjamin, 2020). Understanding with a semantic approach means that the understanding is done by interpreting the meaning of the sentence statement received based on context, facts, and function, only then identifying the sounds, words, and constituents that support the interpretation (Kearns & Al Ghanem, 2019; Tunmer & Hoover, 2019; Arnulf, Dysvik & Larsen, 2019)). According to this approach, the meaning is not "radiated" from the text but "given" by the listener/reader following his schema. Both approaches can, in practice, be used simultaneously, following the approach used in the English language study curriculum. It means that the teaching of comprehension must be done in natural utterance comprehension, i.e. reading used in actual communication events.

Furthermore, the teacher explains the process of understanding the syntactic and semantic approach in detail, the process and the results obtained to find the meaning of a particular proposition (Jiao & Qu, 2019; Janík, Slavík, Najvar & Janíková, 2019; Phillips Galloway, Uccelli, Aguilar & Barr, 2020). These two approaches are further combined to convince the truth of the propositions obtained. If the results are the same, we are more convinced of the truth of the meaning of the statements found. If the results are different, discuss further why they are different. So on so that a suitable approach is found according to the students. The following teaching stage is an assignment to support the process skills approach and active student learning methods desired in the curriculum. The assignment begins with finding an oral or written "text" with a specific theme. Then, students are assigned to understand the propositions contained in it with their accepted approach. This task can be done individually or in groups. The task results are then reported and discussed in class discussions involving some aspects of writing or composing skills.

In contrast, the implementation of discussions in the course class involves aspects of listening and speaking skills. The teaching of such comprehension shows the contribution of Psycholinguistics to the teaching of English comprehension. However, in the English language study curriculum, the contribution of Psycholinguistics is not explicitly mentioned.

Selective listening theory: A phenomenon that is an extraordinary exploration of the theory of speech perception is the cocktail party phenomenon. In this theory, it is imagined that someone speaks to another person in a party situation. which is very crowded, and it turns out that the person being talked to can still understand the sentences used by his partner. It happens because the listener performs a selective listening activity. The above theory is helpful in the teaching of speaking and listening that is done in an integrated manner. Therefore, teaching English with a communicative approach must create teaching that reflects the actual use of the language in society (Mancilla-Martinez, Hwang, Oh & McClain, 2020; Su & Liu, 2020). It is necessary for learners because learners 'listening skills need to be trained, including selective listening skills or selective listening skills, to improve learners' listening skills.

Production theory: Production theory is helpful in teaching speaking and writing. This theory states that language production involves two main activities, namely planning and implementation (Sagre et al., 2021; Clayman & Raymond, 2021; Karpovich, Sheredekina, Krepkaia & Voronova, 2021). In speaking, for example, a speaker first plans how he speaks to affect the mentality of his listener. Then, it executes it. The steps of speech production need to be taught to students to produce the ideal speech production as required by the curriculum of the field of English studies.

Denial Theory: Denial is a form of a particular statement. A denial such as a supposition with its repeal is a union. Denial leaves out old information and confirms new information (Cohen, 2013).

Theory of Ambiguity: In the use of language, ambiguous sentences are often found. Thus, teaching English guided by a communicative approach curriculum must also raise teaching materials (Richards, 2013; Richards & Schmidt, 2013; Rodd, 2020). Many of them are in the form of ambiguous sentences. Furthermore, the teacher tries to invite learners to understand and practice making these ambiguous sentences to be accustomed to using them when needed. It is said when needed because, indeed, those ambiguous sentences at certain times must be used and should not be avoided. Because English learners will later plunge into society and are likely to face similar situations, good English teaching must also provide several resources, including mastery of these ambiguous sentences.

Theory of sound distinguisher features: This theory states that each sound has several features as a sound differentiator. Is the sound consonantal, is the sound vocal, is the sound anterior, is the sound coronal, is the sound voiced, is the sound nasal, is the sound strident, and is the sound contonuart? (Johansson, Anikin, Carling & Holmer, 2020; Yule, 2020; Gass, Behney & Plonsky, 2020). The analysis will produce the sound feature [b] different from other sounds. The theory is useful for teaching the sounds of the English language. Some sounds in English are very similar, so they sound the same even though the sound is different.

Continuity Theory: Continuity theory states that the mastery of a language segment is directly related to the language segment that has been mastered (McCauley & Christiansen, 2019; Boutin-Charles, 2019). This theory helps teach English following the curriculum. This theory is also the basis for using the spiral approach and abandoning the block approach since the implemented curriculum.
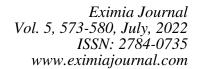
A five-year-old can already ask, order, and forbid someone to do something. However, it is still difficult to allow someone or make a commission statement. By the age of seven, children can use the actions of asking, commanding, forbidding, and allowing, but it is still difficult to make promises (Naibaho, 2016; McLeod et al., 2017). From the study, the child obtains the directive action earlier than the commission action because the commission action places the obligation on the speaker himself. Teaching English based on the curriculum requires teachers to teach and invite learners to understand and use sentences as utterances. In teaching such a language, it is necessary to think of what utterances need to be taught first and what utterances need to be taught later. Directive action should be taught first, while commission action should be taught later.

Conclusion

The writer concludes that psycholinguistics is very important in learning English from the above discussion. Psycholinguistics can help the teachers understand all of the conditions and context of learning, such as how the students listen, speak, read and write. So from the perspective of psycholinguistics, a teacher may tackle students' difficulties in learning English.
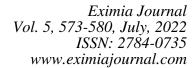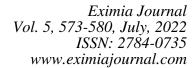
Acknowledgment

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