

Psycholinguistic perspectives on language processing and anxiety among english literature students

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ABSTRAK

Psikolinguistik merupakan bidang interdisipliner yang mengkaji hubungan antara proses kognitif dan penggunaan bahasa. Kajian ini bertujuan menganalisis konsep dasar psikolinguistik, proses pemrosesan bahasa dalam kegiatan membaca dan berbicara, serta pengaruh faktor-faktor psikolinguistik terhadap performa akademik mahasiswa Sastra Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kajian pustaka dengan menelaah berbagai sumber teoretis dan empiris yang relevan, khususnya penelitian yang dilakukan di Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman dan produksi bahasa melibatkan proses kompleks seperti akses leksikal, pemrosesan sintaksis, integrasi semantik, inferensi, serta peran memori kerja. Selain itu, faktor afektif seperti kecemasan

berbicara di depan umum dapat menghambat kelancaran produksi bahasa melalui gangguan pada perencanaan ujaran dan pengambilan kosakata. Kajian ini juga menegaskan pentingnya penerapan prinsip-prinsip psikolinguistik dalam pembelajaran Sastra Inggris untuk mendukung praktik pembelajaran yang lebih inklusif, adaptif, dan berpusat pada kebutuhan mahasiswa. Integrasi perspektif psikolinguistik dalam kurikulum diharapkan mampu meningkatkan kemampuan akademik, keterampilan komunikasi, dan kesejahteraan psikologis mahasiswa.

ABSTRACT

Psycholinguistics is an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationship between cognitive processes and language use. This study aims to analyze the fundamental concepts of psycholinguistics, language processing in reading and speaking activities, and the influence of psycholinguistic factors on the academic performance of English Literature students. The study employs a literature review approach by examining relevant theoretical and empirical sources, particularly research conducted at Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. The findings indicate that language comprehension and production involve complex processes, including lexical access, syntactic processing, semantic integration, inferencing, and the role of working memory. Furthermore, affective factors such as public speaking anxiety may hinder language production by disrupting speech planning and vocabulary retrieval. The study also highlights the importance of applying psycholinguistic principles in English Literature education to support more inclusive, adaptive, and student-centered learning practices. Integrating psycholinguistic perspectives into the curriculum is expected to enhance students' academic achievement, communication skills, and psychological well-being. Consequently, psycholinguistics provides a valuable framework for understanding language use and learning in higher education contexts.



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Pendahuluan

The study of literary genres, literary criticism, and literary theory have generally been associated with English Literature departments. Nevertheless, there is a complicated set of mental processes that enable students to decode, store, and understand linguistic information behind every act of reading a poem, analyzing a novel, or discussing a play in the classroom. These processes are what make it possible for students to do these things. Psycholinguistics is primarily concerned with these processes as its primary focus.

The field of research known as psycholinguistics is typically defined as the investigation of the mental processes that are responsible for the acquisition and utilization of language. An investigation of the ways in which language is stored in the mind, how it is accessed during understanding and production, and the ways in which a variety of elements, including memory, attention, emotion, and neurological disorders, can either help or hinder the use of language is carried out. The fact that students of English Literature are always dealing with language that is complex, multi-layered, and frequently metaphorical makes these processes particularly important in the context of the subject subject.

For a considerable amount of time, students enrolled in language and literature studies at Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang have been exposed to psycholinguistics as an essential learning experience. Psycholinguistics is a field that not only explains how people learn and use language, but also addresses issues such as language disorders, slips of the tongue, disfluencies, and other phenomena that appear in everyday communication. Training materials and research conducted by Indah and other lecturers present psycholinguistics as a field that addresses these issues. Not only are these concerns pertinent for students of linguistics, but they are also pertinent for students of English Literature, who are expected to perform in academic, literary, and public speaking situations.

The purpose of this work is to establish a connection between psycholinguistic theory and the actual experiences of students studying English Literature. It focuses on three questions that serve as leaders: What are the ways in which psycholinguistic theories explain the processing of language, particularly in reading and speaking languages? Which psycholinguistic elements have the potential to influence students of English Literature when they engage with literary texts and carry out academic tasks? What are some ways that English Literature courses might include psycholinguistic principles to assist the learning and well-being of students?

By answering these questions, the purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that psycholinguistics is not an abstract or isolated field of study, but rather a practical framework that can assist both instructors and students in gaining a better understanding of the obstacles and potentials associated with the use of language in academic settings.

Pembahasan

Theoretical structure and plan

The meaning of psycholinguistics and its range of application

Psycholinguistics is a field that explores the relationship between linguistic structures and the mental processes that support them. These mental processes include perception, understanding, production, and acquisition. The introductory resources on psycholinguistics that Indah provides emphasize this relationship. In addition to the following important domains, psycholinguistics encompasses: The process by which listeners and readers interpret sounds or written symbols into meaningful units is referred to as language comprehension. The process by which speakers prepare, formulate, and pronounce their utterances is referred to as language use. The process by which children and adults learn their first or more languages is referred to as language acquisition. Disorders of language refer to the ways in which abnormalities in cognitive or neurological processes influence the use of language. (Indah, n.d.-d)

Further highlighting the fact that psycholinguistics also deals with themes such as human versus animal communication, the mental lexicon, and speech faults is made possible by the instructional resources provided by Wiranegara. When taken as a whole, these points of view demonstrate that psycholinguistics is not only concerned with the functioning of language in a perfect, fluent speaker, but also with the consequences that arise when processing is disrupted, delayed, or altered by emotion and circumstance.

The transition from theories to models relating to language processing

The work that Indah has done on psycholinguistic theories has resulted in the introduction of a number of models that describe how language is processed. These models include the bottom-up and top-down processing in reading, the role of working memory, and the significance of contextual reminders. In bottom-up processing, comprehension begins with the lowest linguistic units, such as sounds or letters, and then progresses upward to include words, phrases, and the sentences themselves. When processing information from the top down, the interpretation of input is heavily influenced by factors such as prior knowledge, expectations, and context. (Indah, n.d.-c)

Both of these procedures are extremely important for students of English Literature. Bottom-up decoding involves deciphering foreign vocabulary and grammar, while top-down decoding involves relying on literary history, cultural knowledge, and interpretive frameworks. This is necessary when reading a poem that is especially difficult. It is possible that misunderstandings or superficial interpretations will result from a failure in either direction.

Additionally, psycholinguistic models highlight the limitations of working memory, which is a type of memory that briefly stores information as readers integrate it with the context they have previously encountered. Especially for those who are not native speakers, working memory can be overloaded by phrases that are lengthy, confusing, or that make significant use of figurative language. Therefore, students of English

Literature who are working in a second language face a twin challenge: they must process complicated language forms while simultaneously strengthening their linguistic ability.

Language disorders and atypical processing disorders

There are many different kinds of impairments that are discussed in Indah's book on language disorders. Some of these impairments include aphasia, dyslexia, and language difficulties in people who have autism spectrum disorders. The occurrence of these situations is an illustration of what occurs when the regular processing channels are compromised. For instance, dyslexia may involve issues in mapping written symbols to sounds, but some autistic individuals may struggle with pragmatic parts of language, such as comprehending implied meaning or figurative expressions. Both of these individuals may have difficulties in understanding language.

Despite the fact that the majority of students in English Literature classrooms do not have any identified illnesses, the psycholinguistic approach serves to remind teachers that not all students process language in the same manner. It's possible that some people have undiagnosed reading challenges, focus issues, or excessive levels of anxiety, all of which can work as obstacles in a manner that is comparable to that of moderate illnesses. Recognizing this variety is absolutely necessary in order to develop instructional practices that are inclusive. (Indah, n.d.-a)

Students of psycholinguistics and english literature

Analyzing literary texts as a psycholinguistic endeavor

Engaging with literature is frequently regarded as an intellectual and artistic endeavor; nevertheless, from a psycholinguistic perspective, it is also a cognitively taxing activity. When students of English Literature analyze poetry, drama, or prose, they concurrently execute multiple psycholinguistic processes. (Indah, n.d.-b)

1. Lexical access: the retrieval of word meanings from the mental lexicon.
2. Syntactic parsing: attributing grammatical structures to sentences.
3. Semantic integration: amalgamating lexical meanings into coherent propositions.
4. Inferencing: deducing conclusions that are not explicitly articulated.
5. Imagery and emotional engagement: generating mental representations and interacting affectively with the text.

Indah's materials on psycholinguistic coverage suggest that these processes are affected by past information, competency level, and individual cognitive styles. For English Literature students whose primary language is not English, lexical retrieval may be delayed, and syntactic analysis may necessitate increased effort. This may result in a scenario where a significant portion of their cognitive resources is devoted to decoding, so diminishing their potential for higher-level interpretation.

Furthermore, literary works frequently contravene quotidian anticipations: they may employ metaphors, ambiguous conclusions, or unreliable narrators. From a psycholinguistic standpoint, these characteristics elevate processing complexity as readers cannot depend exclusively on conventional processing mechanisms. They must consistently reevaluate interpretations, suppress initial readings, and endure

uncertainty—tasks that impose additional demands on working memory and attention.
Anxiety in public speaking and oral presentation

In addition to reading, English Literature students are often tasked with oral assignments, like delivering literary analyses, engaging in seminars, or performing dramatic scenes. A recent thesis at UIN Malang examined public speaking anxiety among English Literature students from a psycholinguistic viewpoint, demonstrating that elevated anxiety levels can disrupt speech preparation, lexical retrieval, and articulation. From a psycholinguistic perspective, anxiety acts as an emotive filter that contends for cognitive resources. Students experiencing anxiety may: Difficulty in retrieving familiar vocabulary. Generate additional disfluencies, such hesitations, repetitions, or self-revisions. Streamline language constructions to alleviate cognitive burden. Encounter episodes of a "blank mind" where the planning of speech momentarily fails. (Nur Indah, 2018)

These occurrences are intricately linked to investigations of disfluencies and slips of the tongue, which Indah and associates have examined in various contexts, including comedy and classroom encounters. Disfluencies are not solely indicators of incompetence; they provide insight into the real-time mechanisms of speech creation. For worried pupils, these disfluencies frequently escalate, not due to a deficiency in information, but because psychological pressure impedes fluid processing.

This knowledge is crucial for English Literature programs. Oral literary critique and presentation are essential skills, but they may be compromised if psycholinguistic factors are overlooked. Educators who comprehend the impact of anxiety on language processing can provide more conducive speaking environments, including progressive introduction to public speaking, peer feedback, and reflection exercises on students' emotional experiences.

Inclusive classroom practices and concealed linguistic challenges

Psycholinguistic investigations into language problems and abnormal language development, encompassing studies on children with autism spectrum disorders and other conditions, reveal that language processing is acutely influenced by neurological and environmental factors. Although these studies concentrate on early childhood or clinical populations, their ramifications transcend to higher education. In a conventional English Literature classroom, certain students may: Read at a reduced pace owing to nuanced decoding challenges. Experience difficulty comprehending rapid discussions. Misinterpret metaphorical language or irony. Encounter weariness when perusing extensive materials in a foreign language. These challenges may remain undiagnosed yet nonetheless impact academic achievement. A psycholinguistically informed inclusive pedagogy urges educators to offer: Diverse input modalities (verbal elucidation, graphic representations, textual synopses). Adjustable deadlines or reading requirements for exceptionally complex texts. Opportunities for students to engage in pre-reading activities and enhance their prior knowledge. Direct instruction on techniques for managing foreign terminology and metaphorical language. Recognizing that language processing speed and style differ among students, the English Literature curriculum can eliminate unnecessary obstacles and enable learners to connect more profoundly with literary material. (Indah, n.d.-b)

Consequences for the english literature curriculum at UIN Malang

The incorporation of psycholinguistics into English Literature curricula in Islamic universities such as UIN Malang has significant ramifications.

Fortifying theoretical foundations

Students should receive a comprehensive theoretical foundation in psycholinguistics that extends beyond a singular introductory course. The materials created by Indah and Wiranegara establish a robust foundation on the concepts, theories, and evolution of psycholinguistics as a discipline. These can be systematically linked with literature courses, for instance:

Students studying narrative voice might be taught to psycholinguistic concepts about perspective-taking and theory of mind. In the analysis of stream-of-consciousness books, educators can associate them with frameworks of inner dialogue and cognitive processing. In the examination of bilingual or multilingual characters, one may integrate concepts from second language processing and code-switching. This interdisciplinary approach enables students to understand that literary texts are not isolated from human cognition; instead, they are both products and catalysts of intricate mental processes.

Mitigating anxiety and emotional influences

Secondly, psycholinguistic knowledge regarding anxiety and affective filters ought to guide the development of speaking and presentation courses. The dissertation on public speaking anxiety in English Literature students illustrates that emotional conditions directly affect linguistic performance. In light of these facts, curriculum designers and educators may: Structure speaking activities from low-stakes settings (small groups, informal sharing) to high-stakes environments (seminars, conferences). Incorporate a thorough examination of students' emotions with speaking, encouraging them to recognize their personal triggers and coping mechanisms. Instruct on basic psycholinguistic strategies, such as reducing speech tempo to facilitate lexical retrieval, or employing formulaic language to simplify complex explanations. These techniques enhance linguistic proficiency and promote students' psychological well-being, aligning with the overarching Islamic educational principles of equilibrium and comprehensive development. (HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PSYCHOLINGUISTICS, n.d.)

Promoting research in psycholinguistic domains

The extensive psycholinguistic research and educational resources at UIN Malang—encompassing language disorders, human-animal communication, developmental challenges, and classroom disfluencies—provides numerous chances for English Literature students to do their own research projects. Potential subjects encompass: Psycholinguistic examination of characters exhibiting language deficits in literature. The function of internal dialogue in students' preparation of literary presentations. Impact of poetry reading on working memory and emotional control. Disfluencies and corrective tactics in students' literary classroom discussions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Psycholinguistics offers a robust framework for comprehending the cognitive processes of English literature students as they read, interpret, and discuss literary texts. Research conducted by researchers at UIN Malang, notably Indah and her associates, has established a robust framework by delineating essential ideas, charting the historical evolution of the discipline, and investigating topics such as language disorders and speech disfluencies. Recent research on public speaking anxiety in English literature students emphasizes the interaction between affective components and cognitive processing during academic performance.

In English literature programs, particularly within Islamic colleges, the use of psycholinguistic concepts can enhance both theoretical and practical dimensions. It urges lecturers to perceive students not merely as readers and critics of texts, but also as language users possessing distinct cognitive profiles, emotional backgrounds, and processing strengths or weaknesses. It also creates new avenues for interdisciplinary research that integrates literature, linguistics, psychology, and education.

An English literature curriculum influenced by psycholinguistics can enhance students' abilities to be introspective readers and confident speakers, enabling them to engage with complicated texts while recognizing their own cognitive processes. This insight is not only academically beneficial but also coincides with overarching educational objectives of self-awareness and ongoing human growth.

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