



Psycholinguistic Implications in Foreign Language Teaching (A Theoretical Review)

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Abstract

Second language learning is the process of a person acquiring another language after first mastering to some extent his first language. The object of linguistics is language and the object of psychology is mental symptoms. The object of psycholinguistics is also language, but language that processes in the human soul which is reflected in mental symptoms, namely language seen from psychological aspects. The focus of psycholinguistics is language and not mental symptoms. Psycholinguistics is a combined approach through psychology and linguistics for the review or study of language knowledge, language in use, and matters related to it that are not easily achieved or approached through either of the two sciences separately or individually. Psycholinguistics in practice tries to apply linguistic and psychological knowledge to solve various problems concerning the process of language acquisition in humans. This article aims to theoretically analyze the benefits of psycholinguistics practically in the field of education, especially language teaching. Psycholinguistics can be used as a theoretical basis for language teaching, including foreign languages. Thus, solutions and improvements can be obtained in the process of learning foreign languages at every level of education both in formal and informal schools.

Keywords: Foreign Language, Psycholinguistics, Language Teaching

1. Introduction

Each scientific discipline can be seen from three approaches, namely ontological, epistemological, and axiological. The ontological approach limits science in its study, discussing what is meant by that knowledge and its scope. The epistemological approach discusses the method, how the science works in obtaining and compiling a theory of knowledge. Meanwhile, the axiological approach discusses the usefulness of knowledge, namely how knowledge can be utilized as much as possible for the benefit and welfare of mankind. This understanding implies that ontologically it discusses the material of science, epistemologically it discusses methods, and axiologically it describes the use of knowledge. Associated with psycholinguistics, of course, it is absolutely necessary to discuss its use in human life. Subsequent developments show the fact that psycholinguistics is more widely used for the benefit of language teaching. That is why psycholinguistic implications will be directed at its relation to language teaching, especially foreign language teaching. However, beforehand it will be discussed in advance about what is meant by psycholinguistics.

2. Literature review

Psycholinguistics

Psycholinguistics, as stated in this term, is a hybrid science which is a combination of two scientific disciplines: psychology and linguistics. Next, we will first explain the meaning of each of these sciences. Etymologically the word psychology comes from the ancient Greek word *psyche* which means soul, spirit or soul. and *logos* which means knowledge. So, literally psychology means "science of the soul". However, the definition of psychology cannot be interpreted as a science that studies the human soul, this is because the soul is abstract so it cannot be observed empirically, even though the object of scientific study must be observable sensorily. (Chaer, 2003) Subsequent developments made psychology a field of science that discusses human behavior and human relationships from an observable perspective.

Linguistics in general can be interpreted as the science of language or science that takes language as its object of study. The word linguistics comes from the Latin word *lingua* which means *language*. This Latin word is still found in many languages that originate from Latin, such as French "langue, language", Italian "lingua", Spanish "lengua", and in the past English also borrowed from French the word which now reads "language". Therefore the science of language is called *linguistics* in English and *linguistics* in French. (JWM Verhar, 1993) Langacker said that linguistics is the study of human language. (Ronald W. Langacker, 1983) According to Lyons, linguistics is the scientific study of language, (Lyons, 1968) thus the object of linguistic study is language while language itself is a phenomenon that is present in all activities of human life. This means that linguistics has a very broad field of study. According to the object of study,



this science can be divided into two major branches, namely micro linguistics and macro linguistics. The object of micro linguistic study is the internal structure of the language itself, which includes phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. Meanwhile, the object of macro linguistic study is language in relation to factors outside language such as sociological, psychological, neurological and anthropological factors. In connection with these factors, fields such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and ethnoinguistics emerged.

After explaining the meaning of psychology and linguistics as separate fields of science, we can proceed with the definition of psycholinguistics itself. There are several definitions of psycholinguistics. Experts have provided several definitions which, although different, are essentially the same. Aitchison defines it as "the study of language and mind". (Jean Aitchison, 1998) The term psycholinguistics itself was born in 1954 when the book *Psycholinguistics: A survey of Theory and Research Problems* edited by Charles E. Osgood and Thomas A. Seabeok, in Bloomington, USA, was published. Initially, some people called this term *linguistic psychology* and some also called it *psychology of language*. Harley calls it "the study of mental processes in language use". (Harley, 1995) Clark and Clark stated that psycholinguistics is related to three main things, namely comprehension, production, and language acquisition. (Herbert H. Clark and Eve V. Clark, 1977) According to Slobin, psycholinguistics tries to describe the psychological processes that take place when a person utters the sentences he hears when communicating, and how language skills are acquired by humans. (Dan J. Slobin, 1979) According to Hartley, psycholinguistics discusses the relationship between language and the brain in processing and producing utterances and in language acquisition. (Anthony F Hartley, 1982) Furthermore, according to Robert Lado, psycholinguistics is a combined approach through psychology and linguistics for the study or study of language knowledge, language in use, and things related to it which are not easily achieved or approached through one of these two sciences separately or individually. (Henry Guntur Tarigan, 1985) So, theoretically the main goal of psycholinguistics is to find a theory of language that is linguistically acceptable and psychologically able to explain the nature of language and its acquisition. This means that psycholinguistics tries to explain the nature of language structure, and how this structure is obtained, used when speaking and when understanding the sentences in that speech. Psycholinguistics in practice tries to apply linguistic and psychological knowledge to issues such as teaching and learning languages, teaching early and advanced reading, bilingualism and multilingualism, and speech disorders such as aphasia, stuttering, schizophrenia and so on. (Markel, 1969)

Educational linguistics ¹also includes psycholinguistics as a science needed in the practice of language teaching as shown in the diagram according to the HH Stern model in Figure 1. ²Based on this diagram it can be explained that the basic science needed in language teaching is linguistic history, linguistics is the science of language that teaches theories of analyzing and describing language as an object of study. He teaches linguistic components and language description techniques. Psycholinguistics teaches language learning theories and mental attitudes that accompany language learners. Sociolinguistics teaches how to actually use language in communication. Psychology teaches learning theories and sociology teaches aspirations and attitudes towards teaching a language. This means that teaching and learning in the classroom is expected to be based on the theory or theoretical basis of that science.

Foreign Language Teaching

When exactly language teaching began cannot be known with certainty. It is clear that language teaching begins with interactions between two or more communities that have different languages. Social members of one society will certainly learn the language of another society in order to interact with them. Then it was realized that a language was not only for interaction but also to fulfill other needs such as learning science, so educational institutions emerged that also taught second or foreign languages. According to his understanding, what is meant by learning a second language is the process where a person acquires another language after first mastering to a certain extent his first language. Some experts equate the term second language *with foreign language*.

The process of learning a first language usually takes place naturally or accidentally due to necessity and has been going on since birth. However, in the process of learning a second language there are special characteristics, as revealed by Mansoer Pateda, which are as follows:

1. Learning a particular language intentionally, for example because it is a subject at school, so that it takes place when the learner is already at school and the school environment is very decisive.



2. Students' motivation to learn it is not as strong as learning the first language. For example, this motivation is simply wanting to get good grades on the exam.
3. Time to study is limited so students do not have much time to practice the language they are learning.
4. The first language influences the second language learning process.
5. The critical age for learning a second language has sometimes passed so the learning process takes relatively longer.
6. There are learning aids and people who organize them, namely teachers.

3. Conceptual Framework

Educational linguistics also includes psycholinguistics as a science needed in the practice of language teaching as shown in the diagram according to the HH Stern model in Figure 1. ³Based on this diagram it can be explained that the basic science needed in language teaching is linguistic history, linguistics is the science of language that teaches theories of analyzing and describing language as an object of study. He teaches linguistic components and language description techniques. Psycholinguistics teaches language learning theories and mental attitudes that accompany language learners. Sociolinguistics teaches how to actually use language in communication. Psychology teaches learning theories and sociology teaches aspirations and attitudes towards teaching a language. This means that teaching and learning in the classroom is expected to be based on the theory or theoretical basis of that science. Therefore psycholinguistics as a derivative of language education should be studied more deeply in order to obtain useful theories for language learning. Either mother tongue (first language) or second language (foreign language).

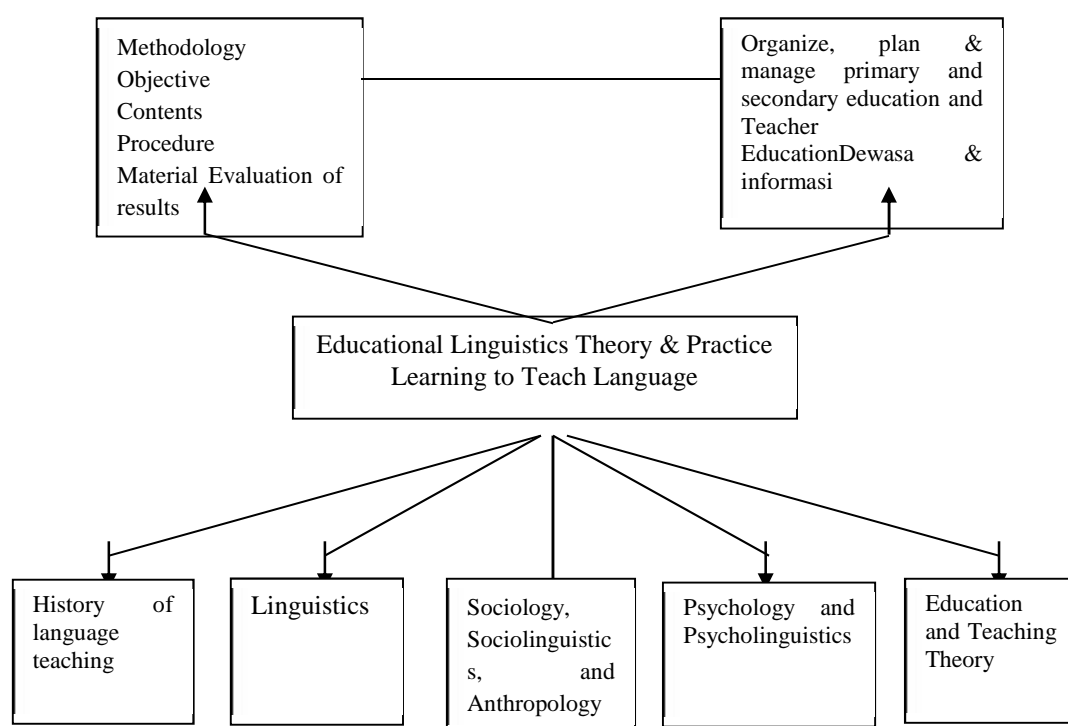


Figure 1.
HH Stern Model: A General Model for Processes
Second Language Teaching (Stern, 1983; p. 44)



4. Research Questions

This literature research is included in the social humanities scheme with the theme of education. This research is a theoretical study that aims to:

- a) analyze various theories related to language learning
- b) find various theories that can strengthen the importance of psycholinguistic studies in foreign language learning
- c) become a basis for teachers in learning foreign languages

5. Significance of Study

The significance of the implications of this research is expected to help educators and students in the process of learning foreign languages. This research is a literature study which is ultimately hoped to be continued with more applicable field research, carrying out further research to determine the effectiveness of several theories that have been studied in this article.

6. Research Methodology

The design of this research is library research. The purpose of this design is to provide several comparisons of several existing theories. The method used in this research is descriptive comparative learning. This method is to help researchers make their research reports quite easy to do. The process of collecting data is done in many ways, the first is to look for some references and some literature. Comparing things is the last thing to do. From this method the results or data can be searched. Next, several theories are concluded to answer previous research questions. The analysis technique used in this study is dialogue analysis and data analysis through existing sources and the data obtained is explained and compared with existing theories.

7. Findings and Discussions

The results achieved by language learning experts to date cannot be called theory, for the reason that they have not been firmly tested. Therefore it is still more commonly referred to as a hypothesis. Based on Walbarg Klein's writings,⁴ there are several hypotheses that deserve discussion, namely, among others: the similarity hypothesis between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2); contrastive hypothesis; intermediate language hypothesis; Krashen's hypothesis. The emergence of several of these hypotheses actually began with the study of language acquisition in humans based on various psychological theories. Furthermore, this study became a topic of discussion in the field of psycholinguistics.

a) Hypothesis of Similarities between First and Second Languages

This hypothesis states that there are similarities in the process of learning a first language and learning a second language. The similarity lies in the sequence of acquisition of language structures, such as interrogation mode, negation and grammatical morphemes. Language elements are acquired in a predictable order. Certain linguistic elements will be acquired first, while other linguistic elements will be acquired later. The second characteristic that marks the difference between the acquisition of L1 and L2 is that L1 can be mastered by children with perfect pronunciation and in a natural way, while L2 can be mastered but with less than perfect pronunciation by learning.

b) Contrastive Hypothesis

This hypothesis was developed by Charles Fries (1945) and Robert Lado (1957), who stated that mistakes made in learning a second language were due to differences between the first and second languages. Meanwhile, the ease of learning a second language is caused by the similarities between the first language and the second language, or in other words, the differences between the two cause difficulties and the similarities between the two make it easier to learn the second language. This hypothesis further states that a language learner often transfers in the form of using first language structures to express ideas in a second language. This transfer may occur at all linguistic levels, both in terms of sound system, word form, sentence structure, or word structure or lexicon. Based on this idea, experts try to describe the languages of the world in the hope that teachers or practitioners will be able to predict the difficulties and ease that will be experienced in learning a second language, according to their first language background.

c) Intermediate Language Hypothesis

Interlanguage is the language or speech used by someone who is learning a second language at a certain stage. This intermediate language has characteristics of the first language and characteristics of the second language or target



language. This language is unique and has its own characteristics that are not the same as the first language or second language. In general, this is a transfer from the first language to the second language. This intermediate language is a product of one's strategy in learning a second language. This means that this language is a collection or continuous accumulation of the process of forming mastery of a language.

d) Krashen's hypothesis

With regard to language learning, Stephen Krashen proposed nine interrelated hypotheses, which are better known as monitor theory. The nine hypotheses are: *acquisition and learning hypothesis*, *natural sequence hypothesis*, *monitor hypothesis*, *input hypothesis*, *affective hypothesis*, *innate or talent hypothesis*, *filter hypothesis*, *first language hypothesis*, and *individual variation hypothesis in monitor use*. *The Acquisition and Learning Hypothesis* assumes that in mastering a language there is a difference between what is called *learning* and *acquisition*. Learning is a conscious effort to formally and explicitly master the language being studied, especially those related to rules. This generally occurs in language classes. Meanwhile, acquisition is mastery of a language through subconscious or natural means and occurs without planned will. This process does not involve formal or explicit learning efforts. According to *the Natural Sequence Hypothesis*, in the process of language acquisition children acquire language elements in a certain predictable order. This sequence is natural. The research results show that there is a relatively stable pattern of acquisition of language elements for the first language, second language or foreign language.

The Monitor Hypothesis states that there is a relationship between conscious processes in language acquisition. Conscious processes produce learning outcomes, and subconscious processes produce acquisition. Humans can speak a certain language because the system they have is the result of acquisition and not the result of learning. All the grammatical rules that are memorized do not always help fluency in speaking. This rule only functions as a monitor in language implementation or performance. *The Input Hypothesis* states that a person masters language through input that can be understood, namely by focusing on the message or content, and not on the form. This applies to all adults and children who are learning languages. This hypothesis also states that listening activities to understand the content of discourse are very important in language teaching, and that active language mastery will come in time. *The Affective (Attitude) Hypothesis* pays attention to aspects of personality and motivation in learning a language. Someone with a certain personality and motivation can acquire a second language better than someone with another personality and attitude. Someone with a warm and open personality will be more successful in learning than those with a somewhat closed personality.

The Innate or Talent Hypothesis states that language talent has a clear relationship with the success of learning a second language. Krashen says that attitude is directly related to acquiring a second language, while talent is related to learning. Students who score high on language aptitude tests generally do well on grammar tests. So this aspect has a lot to do with learning, and not with acquisition. *The Affective Filter Hypothesis* states that an affective filter can prevent input so that a person is less successful in their efforts to acquire a second language. This filter can be in the form of lack of self-confidence, stressful situations, defensive attitudes, and so on which can reduce the opportunity for input to enter a person's language system. *The First Language Hypothesis* states that children will use their first language to initiate speech in a second language, while mastery of the second language is not yet apparent. If a child at the beginning of learning a second language is forced to use or speak in the second language, then he will use the vocabulary and grammar rules of his first language. Therefore, teachers should not overly force their students to use the second language they are learning. Give the child the opportunity to get meaningful input and to reduce the affective filter. Thus mastery of the second language will naturally develop in time. *The Monitor Use Individual Variation Hypothesis*, which is closely related to the monitor hypothesis, states that the way a person monitors their use of the language they are learning varies. There are those who continue to use it systematically, but there are also those who never use it. Between the two, there are also those who use the monitor according to their needs or opportunities to use it.

There are people who don't care about grammatical rules when using their language, meaning people like this never use their monitor. He doesn't care whether the sentences he uses are right or wrong, the important thing is that he can express his ideas in the language he is learning. Language learners with a mood like this are generally faster at learning languages. In particular, they will quickly have active language skills, namely the ability to speak or speak a foreign language.



9. Conclusion

Basically, language is universal, but the history of civilization and geographical location have resulted in the emergence of various forms of language. Learning "other people's languages" actually stems from the interest of humans as social creatures to be able to interact and communicate with each other. Subsequent developments showed the need for scientific studies in learning a language, so that various theories in language learning were born. As in learning theory, where knowledge of psychology or psychology is very necessary, so is the case with language learning. Various kinds of hypotheses have been expressed by linguists and psychologists or both, indicating that there are efforts to produce a theory that can be used as a basis for studying a language and ultimately can be practically implemented in the language learning process itself.

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