



PSYCHOLINGUISTICS: TEXT, SPEECH, AND THE HUMAN FACTOR

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Abstract

This article explores the essence of psycholinguistics, its key categories, the object and subject of research, and the interrelation between psychological and linguistic components in the processes of text and speech. It also provides an in-depth analysis of the stages of speech activity and the cognitive-motivational and psychological phases of text perception and comprehension.

Keywords: Psycholinguistics, text analysis, speech activity, recipient, cognitive map, thinking, communication, text completeness, coherence, motivation, language and consciousness.

Introduction

Psycholinguistics stands out as a field within modern linguistic sciences that explains the complex relationship between language, thinking, and speech activity. It considers the individual — the subject of speech, the language user — as its main object of study, distinguishing it from other branches of linguistics. This approach emphasizes the active involvement of psychological processes in language acquisition.

Situated at the intersection of language and thinking, psycholinguistics studies both internal (psychological) and external (linguistic) factors of speech activity in an integrated manner. A.A. Leontiev defines psycholinguistics as a science that explores the relationship between the language system and individual linguistic ability. According to this view, speech creation is rooted in personal linguistic competence and the use of social language. Psycholinguistics offers a



comprehensive view of processes such as language acquisition, speech production, communication, and comprehension.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, text is not merely a set of linguistic units, but a direct product of human thinking, psychological state, communicative needs, and motivation. This approach considers the text as a key component of the act of communication, focusing on the relationship between the author, the text itself, and the recipient.

In text analysis, the triad of individual – text – recipient reflects the emotional and cognitive connections among interacting subjects. The text, being a product of human thought, is a speech unit that acquires external form through the language system and possesses structural and semantic integrity. This approach takes into account the psychological traits, knowledge, and emotions of the text creator, as well as the recipient's personal attitude toward the text.

Key aspects of psycholinguistic text analysis include:

- The psychological and emotional state of the text creator;
- The degree of communicative purpose and recipient orientation;
- Thematic units that form the text's semantic structure;
- The cognitive map formed in the recipient's mind (perception of logical relationships between information);

Personal, social, and cultural factors influencing text reception and comprehension. Moreover, text reception is not uniform. Each recipient interprets the text based on their psychological preparedness, personal experience, and needs. Here, V.P. Belyanin's theory of individual interpretation plays a crucial role.

Thus, psycholinguistic text analysis involves going beyond linguistics to identify the mental and psychological states associated with the text, revealing its communicative and semantic nature through the human factor.

Stages of Speech Activity and Comprehension

Speech activity is the process through which human thought is expressed externally via language. It includes stages of expression, reception, and comprehension. From a psycholinguistic viewpoint, this process comprises internal (psychic), external (verbal), and communicative (interactive) stages.

According to I.A. Zimnaya's concept, speech perception consists of the following hierarchical stages:



Sensory level – detecting incoming sound, letter, or symbol signals and recognizing them. At this stage, the recipient compares the perceived sounds or symbols with existing templates in memory;

Lexical level – identifying lexical units (words) based on recognized signals and understanding their semantic load;

Syntactic level – recognizing relationships between words, understanding sentence structure, and grammatical links;

Semantic level – comprehending the overall idea, emotional tone, and author's intent of the sentence or text and interpreting it.

Comprehension is not a one-way process but rather interactive, with the recipient analyzing the text both from the bottom up (sensory → semantic) and top down — relying on context, prior knowledge, needs, and motives. This analysis involves forming hypotheses, semantic verification, and cognitive updating. The recipient's individuality — including motivation, emotional state, psychological readiness, attention, and memory — determines the effectiveness of speech comprehension. When interacting with a text, recipients rely on their experiences, which is why each individual interprets verbal information uniquely.

Psycholinguistics views speech activity not only as the perception of linguistic units but also as a process of understanding, meaning-making, and mental transformation. Thus, comprehension involves creating a meaningful projection — reconstructing the text's content in the mind.

Completeness and Coherence of the Text

The categories of completeness and coherence are essential in defining the semantic and structural essence of a text. Completeness refers to the finished nature of the ideas or thoughts expressed in the text — semantically conclusive and logically closed. Coherence relates to internal compositional connectivity, consistency, unity, and harmony between sentences and ideas.

A.I. Novikov associates completeness not only with the formal features of a text but also with its semantic core, thematic conclusion, and the degree to which the author's intended message is conveyed. The recipient's role is also important in assessing completeness, as the semantic conclusion is interpreted based on the impression the text leaves.

The concept of coherence is defined by thematic and grammatical connectedness, semantic consistency, stylistic harmony, and compositional unity across the



structural levels of the text (introduction, development, conclusion). These elements make the text coherent and understandable, providing the recipient with logical direction.

Completeness and coherence are complementary concepts: a complete text is always coherent, but coherence alone does not guarantee semantic completeness. Hence, psycholinguistic analysis evaluates both categories from semantic and communicative perspectives.

In studying these categories, psycholinguistics also considers factors such as individual perception, emotional background, and personal interpretation. How a text is perceived and projected in the recipient's mind plays a decisive role in forming a sense of completeness and coherence.

Cognitive Map in Understanding the Text

An important direction in psycholinguistic analysis is the use of a cognitive map in understanding the text. A cognitive map is a semantic model formed in the recipient's mind that represents the content of the text, structured through primary and secondary ideas, concepts, and their interrelations. This approach allows for analyzing text perception not only through linguistic units but also via mental information structures.

Creating a cognitive map of the text includes the following steps:

1. Identifying the main topic – extracting the central idea or thematic core of the text;
2. Defining key concepts – identifying sub-concepts and semantic units related to the topic;
3. Determining interrelations – marking causal, temporal, contrastive, general-to-specific links between ideas;
4. Creating a visual scheme – drawing a network-like graphic model starting from the central idea.

In this process, the “central point” is the text's topic, “connecting elements” are types of semantic links, and “nodes” represent concepts. The recipient uses this cognitive map to comprehend the text, link new information to existing knowledge, classify it, and organize it logically.

- The cognitive map provides the following advantages:
- Facilitates rapid understanding of the text;
- Enables logical analysis by structuring information;



- Enhances memory and information processing;
- Expands opportunities for personal interpretation by the recipient.

In conclusion, the cognitive map of the text is an internal semantic model that emerges in the recipient's mind during psycholinguistic analysis. It visually represents the close connection between language and thought.

The above analysis demonstrates that psycholinguistics is a multifaceted scientific field that studies the interrelation between human thinking, speech activity, and language systems. It provides an approach that allows for analyzing text and speech not only as linguistic structures but also as complexes of psychological, cognitive, emotional, and social factors.

In psycholinguistic text analysis, the communicative process between the author, the text, and the recipient takes central focus. Each text carries an individual semantic projection in the recipient's consciousness and is interpreted based on personal knowledge, needs, and emotional states. The stepwise model of speech activity and comprehension, along with the cognitive map-based understanding, shows that text perception has a complex, multi-level structure. The categories of completeness and coherence serve as essential criteria for the semantic structure and communicative effectiveness of the text. Thus, in modern linguistics, a psycholinguistic approach to deep text analysis holds not only scientific but also practical value. This approach expands the possibility of understanding and interpreting human speech activity based on the triad of language — thought — speech.

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