

## Current issues of psycholinguistics in linguistics

Markhabo Farkhod-kizi Akhmedova

Urgench State University named after Abu Rayhan Beruni

**Abstract:** This article analyzes the role of psycholinguistics in modern linguistics, its theoretical and methodological foundations, and current issues. Also, the trends of changes in psycholinguistic processes in the context of digital technologies, artificial intelligence and virtual communication are assessed on a scientific basis. The article also analyzes the significance of psycholinguistics in the education system, particularly its role in teaching foreign languages, developing speech competence, and improving communicative approaches.

**Keywords:** psycholinguistics, language and thinking, speech activity, cognitive processes, linguopsychology, linguistics, pragmatics, discourse, speech mechanisms

### Introduction

Today's globalization and digital communication processes are fundamentally changing the forms of human thinking, speech, and communication through language. Language is now interpreted not only as a means of information exchange but also as a complex psychological and linguistic phenomenon that expresses human consciousness, emotional state, social experience, and cultural worldview. In this regard, psycholinguistics is one of the most important and relevant areas of modern linguistics, which studies the complex relationships between language and thinking, speech and consciousness, perception and communication on a scientific basis. The processes of a person's formation of thought, its expression through language units, and the perception and understanding of speech are not simple mechanical phenomena, but rather complex activities closely linked to mental, cognitive, emotional, and social factors.

The relevance of psycholinguistics is determined, first of all, by the need for a deep understanding of human speech activity. Because in the process of any communication, not only language units, but also meaning, intention, feelings, attitudes and social experience are exchanged between the speaker and the listener. The expression of a thought through language is the result of complex psychological processes occurring in the human mind. For example, a person first formulates a goal and intention, then selects the appropriate linguistic means, grammatically arranges speech units, and expresses them in oral or written form. The listener perceives speech by listening or reading, perceives it, processes it semantically, and understands its content based on context. Consequently, in the process of learning a language, it is not enough to analyze only grammatical structures or lexical units; it is also necessary to conduct in-depth research into the psychological mechanisms behind speech.

The growing need for psycholinguistic research in modern society is directly linked to education, translation, artificial intelligence, neurolinguistics, communication, medicine, and social relations. In particular, knowledge of the mechanisms of language acquisition in the process of teaching foreign languages serves to effectively develop the speech competence of students. The process of each student's perception, memorization, processing, and practical application of language has individual psychological characteristics. Therefore, in language teaching, not only the traditional grammatical approach is important, but also the psycholinguistic approach, which takes into account the level of perception, motivation, emotional state, memory capabilities and communicative needs of the individual.

Today, the widespread use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence tools poses new scientific challenges to psycholinguistics. Virtual communication, social networks, chatbots, automatic translation systems, and voice assistants are creating new forms of human speech. In these processes, questions such as how a person perceives language, how a psychological attitude is formed in communication with artificial intelligence, and how digital communication affects speech culture are emerging as modern research objects of psycholinguistics. In particular, in human-machine communication, the problems of understanding natural language, determining speech intention, understanding emotional meaning, and creating a contextual response are strengthening the integration of psycholinguistics and computer linguistics.

Also, among the topical issues of psycholinguistics, a special place is occupied by the development of children's speech, language acquisition in bilingualism, speech disorders, the influence of stress and emotional states on speech, and the expression of gender and age characteristics in communicative activity. The child's acquisition of the native language, the acquisition of new words, the formation of sentences, and the gradual formation of the level of understanding of meaning are among the most complex manifestations of psycholinguistic processes. Similarly, issues of language choice, code exchange, interference, and language identification among individuals growing up in two or more language environments are of great scientific importance for modern linguistics.

Psycholinguistics differs from other linguistic fields in that it studies not only the external form of human speech but also its internal semantic, psychological, and cognitive foundations. The main directions of psycholinguistic analysis are how language units are stored in the human mind, how words are selected, how sentences are constructed, how the text is understood, and how it is adapted to the communicative situation. Therefore, this field is developing in close connection with linguistics, psychology, pedagogy, neurophysiology, and information technology.

Psycholinguistics and its role in linguistics. Psycholinguistics is a scientific field formed at the intersection of linguistics and psychology that studies human speech activity, as well as the processes of language perception, comprehension, assimilation, and production. Simply put, psycholinguistics studies how language is formed in the human mind, how words and sentences are perceived, how thought is transformed into speech, and how meaning is understood through speech.

While linguistics traditionally studies the sound system, vocabulary, grammatical structure, stylistic and semantic features of language, psycholinguistics interprets these phenomena in connection with the human psyche. That is, he analyzes language not only as a system of external signs, but also as a complex activity that is inextricably linked to human thinking, memory, perception, emotions and communicative needs.

The main object of research in psycholinguistics is speech activity. Speech activity, on the other hand, includes processes such as the formation of a person's thought, its expression through linguistic means, and the perception and understanding of another person's speech. For example, before saying something, a person first forms a certain idea in their mind, then chooses the words corresponding to this idea, arranges them grammatically and expresses them in oral or written form. The listener hears this speech, distinguishes sounds, determines the meaning of words, understands the structure of the sentence, and understands the general content. All these stages are psycholinguistic processes.

Psycholinguistics is of particular importance in studying the relationship between language and thinking. This is because thought and speech are inextricably linked. In the process of thinking, a person uses language units, and language serves as a means of expressing, clarifying, and conveying thoughts to others. For this reason, psycholinguistics reveals how human thinking manifests through language, how meaning is formed, and what psychological mechanisms operate in the process of

word selection. In terms of its place in linguistics, psycholinguistics is important because it studies language phenomena in connection with the human factor. For example, phonetics studies sounds, while psycholinguistics analyzes how a person hears and distinguishes these sounds. While lexicology studies vocabulary, psycholinguistics studies how words are stored in memory and how they are selected during the speech process. While grammar analyzes sentence construction, psycholinguistics explains the mechanisms of sentence formation and understanding within the human mind. Consequently, psycholinguistics enriches other fields of linguistics with human mental activity.

Psycholinguistics is also of great scientific importance in the issue of language acquisition. How a child acquires their native language, how they learn new words, how they understand grammatical rules, and what difficulties they face in learning a foreign language are all fundamental issues of psycholinguistics. In particular, the psycholinguistic approach in teaching foreign languages allows for the consideration of the student's age characteristics, memory, attention, motivation, and communicative needs.

In the modern era, the importance of psycholinguistics is increasing. Digital technologies, artificial intelligence, automatic translation systems, voice assistants, and chatbots are based on understanding and processing human language. In these processes, it is very important to know the psychological characteristics of human speech. Because issues such as understanding natural language, correct interpretation of meaning and context, and determining speech intention are directly related to psycholinguistics. Psycholinguistics also plays an important role in the study of speech disorders. A psycholinguistic approach is of great importance in identifying and analyzing conditions such as aphasia, stuttering, pronunciation defects, and speech development delays in children. This shows that psycholinguistics is a necessary science not only theoretically, but also practically. Psycholinguistics is a crucial scientific field in linguistics that reveals the internal mechanisms of human speech. It studies language not only as a grammatical or lexical system, but also as a complex phenomenon that forms in the human mind, is related to thinking, and develops under the influence of social and psychological factors. Therefore, psycholinguistics is of great importance in deepening the theoretical foundations of modern linguistics, improving language teaching methodology, developing communicative competence, and scientifically analyzing digital communication processes.

#### Discussion

The relevance of psycholinguistics in modern linguistics is explained, first of all, by the fact that the phenomenon of language cannot be separated from the human mind. While traditional linguistics mostly studies the structure, meaning, and usage characteristics of language units, psycholinguistics analyzes how these units are formed in human thinking, how they are stored in memory, how they are selected during the speech process, and how they are perceived by the listener. In this regard, psycholinguistics studies language not only as a grammatical system but also as a complex communicative activity inextricably linked to consciousness, thinking, perception, memory, and emotional states. One of the most important issues in the research topic is the relationship between language and thinking. Human thinking is expressed directly through language, but the transformation of thought into speech is not a simple and direct process. A person first forms a thought at the level of internal speech, then transforms it into external speech through words, grammatical forms, and speech units appropriate for the communicative purpose. Memory, attention, perception, experience, emotional state, and the social environment play an important role in this process. Thus, speech manifests as the external manifestation of complex mental activity in the human mind.

Another pressing issue in psycholinguistics is the process of speech perception and understanding. When a listener or reader receives speech, they not only recognize sounds or letters but also associate them with meaning, interpret them in context, and try to understand the speaker's intention. For example, the same word can have different meanings in different situations. This shows that along with linguistic knowledge, psychological and social experience is also important in understanding speech. Therefore, psycholinguistics is developing in close connection with semantics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis.

The issue of language acquisition is also one of the central directions of psycholinguistics. In the process of mastering the native language, the child listens to speech patterns in the environment, perceives them, repeats them, and gradually moves toward forming independent speech. In this process, biological maturation, the social environment, family communication, emotional support, and educational influences are of great importance. Also, when learning a foreign language, the student's age, motivation, memory capabilities, psychological readiness, and communicative needs determine the effectiveness of language acquisition. Therefore, the psycholinguistic approach strengthens the person-oriented and communicative approaches in the methodology of language teaching.

The practical significance of psycholinguistics is particularly evident in the modern educational process. In teaching foreign languages, the activation of the student's speech activity, the development of oral and written speech, text comprehension, listening comprehension, the strengthening of vocabulary, and the formation of communicative competence are effectively carried out based on psycholinguistic laws. For example, a student learns a new word more deeply not only by memorizing it, but also by using it in a real communicative situation, linking it with imagination, emotions, and experience. Consequently, psycholinguistics justifies the priority of meaningful, active, and contextual learning over mechanical memorization in language education. The digital age is posing new scientific challenges to psycholinguistics. Social networks, messengers, blogs, virtual communication, chatbots, and artificial intelligence-based translation tools have created new forms of human speech. In digital communication, short texts, emojis, abbreviations, visual symbols, and multimodal means of expression are widely used. This shows that the processes of creating meaning and understanding meaning are not limited only to oral or written text. From this point of view, modern psycholinguistics faces the need to analyze text, image, sound, sign and emotional expressions together.

Artificial intelligence and natural language processing technologies are shaping a new research field in psycholinguistics. Automatic translation, voice assistants, text generators, and chatbots strive to process human language. However, in human speech, meaning is determined not only by the lexical content of words; context, intention, tone, cultural experience, and emotional attitude also play an important role in it. Therefore, the problem of deep understanding of natural language in artificial intelligence systems requires psycholinguistic knowledge. This situation strengthens the integration of psycholinguistics, computer linguistics, and cognitive sciences.

Another relevant aspect of psycholinguistics is related to the study of speech disorders. Conditions such as stuttering, aphasia, pronunciation defects, and speech development delays in children require not only medical or speech therapy but also linguistic-psychological analysis. In such cases, the individual's ability to distinguish sounds, remember words, construct sentences, understand meaning, and communicate is studied separately. Consequently, psycholinguistics is of practical importance in the development of methods for identifying, diagnosing, and correcting speech defects.

During the discussion, special attention should be paid to the issues of bilingualism and multilingualism. In today's globalized world, many people are living in a bilingual or multilingual

environment. In this case, the individual's choice of language, code exchange, interference, language identification, and communicative adaptation require psycholinguistic analysis. In the speech of a bilingual person, the influence of one language on another language, word choice delays, grammatical shifts, or forms of expression depending on the cultural context may be observed. This confirms that the process of language acquisition is not only a linguistic but also a psychological and social phenomenon.

Also, psycholinguistics plays an important role in the study of the relationship between speech and emotion. A person's mental state is directly reflected in their speech. Emotional states such as joy, fear, anxiety, confidence, hesitation, or excitement are manifested in word choice, sentence structure, speech speed, tone, and pauses. Therefore, through psycholinguistic analysis, it is possible to draw certain conclusions about emotional signs, communicative intention and psychological state in a person's speech. This aspect is also important in forensic linguistics, political speech analysis, advertising texts, mass media, and psychological counseling practice.

The role of psycholinguistics in linguistics is that it introduces the human factor into the language. Language units are not an abstract system that exists by itself, but an active tool that is perceived, processed, and used in communication by a person. Therefore, psycholinguistics develops in integration with phonetics, lexicology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, and linguodidactics. It serves to explain the activity of each linguistic unit in the human mind.

Analysis of the topic shows that psycholinguistics is an important field not only theoretically but also practically. It creates broad opportunities for the effective organization of language education, speech development for children, foreign language teaching, speech disorder detection, improvement of artificial intelligence systems, the formation of communicative competence, and the study of digital communication culture. In particular, in modern linguistics, there is a growing need to analyze human speech not only as a text, but also as a complex phenomenon related to mental, cognitive, social and cultural factors.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, psycholinguistics, as one of the most important and promising areas of modern linguistics, serves to deeply study the psychological, cognitive and communicative aspects of human speech activity. This science analyzes the organic connection between language and thinking on a scientific basis, revealing the complex mechanisms of the processes of speech formation, perception, and comprehension. It has been established that one of the main research objects of psycholinguistics is how language units are stored in the human mind, processed, and used in accordance with the communicative situation. The relationship between language and thinking, speech perception, language acquisition, bilingualism, speech disorders, the impact of emotional states on speech, and digital communication processes were analyzed as topical issues in psycholinguistics. Especially in the current era of globalization and the development of information technologies, it has been found that virtual communication, social networks, artificial intelligence and natural language processing systems pose new scientific tasks for psycholinguistics. This reinforces the need for a deeper study of the communicative relationship between humans and technology.

The practical significance of psycholinguistics in the education system was also separately substantiated. It was noted that in the process of language teaching, psycholinguistic knowledge serves as an important methodological basis for taking into account the age and individual psychological characteristics of students, applying communicative approaches, developing speech competence, and effectively teaching foreign languages. In particular, it has been scientifically

substantiated that the effectiveness of meaningful and contextual language acquisition is further strengthened through a psycholinguistic approach.

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