

PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

An Introduction

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PREFACE

Language can be studied in a number of ways-as a corpus of data in descriptive linguistics, as a social phenomenon in sociolinguistics, and as an abstract system of knowledge in theoretical linguistics. In psycholinguistics language is basically studied as a psychological phenomenon. As its term suggests, psycholinguistics is a marriage of psychology and linguistics. It is the study of language behavior-how listeners recognize words in the stream of speech or in patterns on the page and understand them and how generally people acquire or learn and use language to communicate ideas. Thus, the common aim of psycholinguists is to find out how language is produced, comprehended, and remembered. They also try to find out how language is acquired, how it goes wrong, and how it is represented in the mind. In other words, psycholinguistics is concerned with three major aspects: speech comprehension, speech production, and language development.

Introduction to Psycholinguistics is a compilation of articles written as complete handouts specifically prepared for teaching materials in psycholinguistics course. This is intended to serve as an introduction to the discipline of psycholinguistics for undergraduate students at the senior levels. All these articles are compiled in order to be accessible in one place-as a textbook for students of English Department. This book is particularly designed to provide students with some knowledge needed by foreign language teachers or teacher-trainees to establish a set of basic principles on how language is produced, comprehended, and remembered. They also can find out how language is acquired, how it goes wrong, and how it is represented in the mind. Such knowledge is badly needed by foreign language teachers as well as language program designers.

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