



培文书系·心理学系列



THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

语言心理学



[美] Timothy B. Jay 著



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS



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Preface

It took me two years to write this book. The first year I spent writing the book *I* wanted to write, and the second year I spent writing the book *my reviewers* wanted to adopt. As anyone who has authored a text knows, writing is an arduous task, painful at times. A textbook cannot be written without some compromises, making decisions about what to include and what to omit. In this text I aimed to cover the classic paradigms and standard issues, but I also wanted to include more than these. I wanted to broaden the scope of psycholinguistics to include more research on the emotional and cultural aspects of language. I wanted to pay closer attention to the idiosyncratic nature of our personal linguistic practices. I wanted to recognize each of us situated in our unique speech communities with our own emotional attachments to words and their meanings. I wanted to pay homage to the foundational studies in psycholinguistics but at the same time invigorate a new generation of students of language with exciting and cutting-edge research. After the second round of revisions, I think I can offer you this text. I breathed a sigh of relief when it became clear from the final round of reviews that students would not find this book boring; in fact, they would probably engage many of the topics very enthusiastically.

By the time I started working on *The Psychology of Language*, I had spent twenty-five years studying emotional language, offensive language, taboo language, and cultural influences on speech. I have become quite familiar with the process of asking questions about little-studied areas of human communication. As I started outlining this textbook, it was clear that most of the emotional aspects of speech I studied had remained outside of the mainstream of psycholinguistic research. It always bothered me to open new textbooks on language acquisition and see no mention of the fact that children readily acquire and use taboo speech. All of us who have raised children know how disturbing, humorous, frustrating, and problematic this aspect of language development can be. It also bothers me to look in the index of important books like Gernsbacher's *Handbook of Psycholinguistics* (1994) or Elman et al.'s *Rethinking Innateness* (1996) and not find an entry for "emotion." Can this be

right? Can we really construct a theory of language, develop a way of studying language, without addressing topics like emotion and culture? Can we really understand language acquisition by ignoring its cultural and emotional contexts? I don't think so, and that is one of the reasons why I wrote this book—to include emotion and culture in the outline of traditional language phenomena. In the end, the book aims to offer something familiar to language scholars and something new to both scholars and students.

Part One is designed to parallel other texts in psycholinguistics with respect to scope and outline. The material is similar to that covered in other books, but much of it is unique. Chapter 1 uses traditional material to set the stage for the rest of the text: What is language? Do animals have language? What is the history of psycholinguistics? And so on. Chapter 2 examines the neurological basis for language. It is positioned early in the text to establish the importance of neuroscience in language studies and to introduce the role of emotion in language into the neuroscience literature. Some instructors may not be comfortable with this early emphasis on neuroscience at first glance; however, neuroscience is becoming more prominent in psychology textbooks, and our students must be properly prepared. Chapter 3 takes a fairly traditional journey through the speech perception literature, with one exception: It covers theories of speech perception that are currently motivating research questions rather than outlining all of the models that have emerged historically. Chapter 4 is a long chapter on words and word recognition. The first part covers traditional material on the nature of reference, semantic meaning, and the organization of the mental lexicon. The second part concentrates on recent research on the topic of lexical access. I have included the connectionist theory (Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989), which has been gaining increasing attention in recent years. Since this is a long chapter, some instructors may wish to cover the material in Chapter 4 as two separate topics. Chapter 5 is dedicated to the topic of sentence processing. It is filled with many examples of parsing problems and the sentence processing models that have been developed to account for parsing research phenomena. I have also addressed the issues of individual differences in processing, emotional involvement, and working memory constraints. Chapter 6 covers speech production and uses errors in the production process to suggest the stages of production. This approach is fairly traditional. I have included research on Freudian slips, which has often been avoided, I suggest, because there is no adequate theory to explain them. Another unique feature of this chapter is the inclusion of speech production models that incorporate gestures. Chapter 7 is dedicated to writing and reading processes. I have developed material on the process of writing and the stages of writing that are not generally detailed in psycholinguistics textbooks as they are here. I am convinced that basic and applied research on the writing process will become more important in the future. Writing research needs more thorough attention from students of language and classroom instruction to make progress in this area. The reading section covers research on deaf reading, reading tongue twisters, and Chinese reading processes. I included a connectionist model of reading with traditional models. These first seven chapters are meant to cover the traditional material and lay the foundation for the rest of the text.

Part Two extends beyond traditional topics to include important research on the emotional and social aspects of language use. Chapter 8 addresses the topic of discourse in conversations and narratives. I have drawn on a lot of material from Gernsbacher's influential *Handbook* (1994) and the work of H. Clark (1996) on conversation. What will be new for many readers here is the material on storytelling, joking, and humor. Chapter 9 provides extensive and up-to-date coverage of figurative speech, including metaphors, irony, idioms, and name-calling. Chapter 10 is the first of two chapters on language development. It concentrates on phonological, lexical, and grammatical development. Chapter 11 is probably the most controversial chapter, covering the topics of emergence, emotion, and embodiment. I look back at the literature demonstrating how a word's affective components are classically conditioned. I look forward to cutting-edge research on less well known concepts such as emergence and embodiment of language because they are helpful in understanding the emotional and cultural aspects of language acquisition. Chapter 12 examines the nature of language and thought, linguistic relativity, bilingualism, and categorical language. Readers will find the material on slang, sex talk, taboo words, and language standards both informative and provocative. Chapter 13 covers what I call applied psycholinguistics—the application of psycholinguistic research to everyday problems and settings. These contexts include classroom instruction, law, forensic linguistics, doctor-patient dialogues, mass communication, and human factors (ergonomics).

3/10 The pedagogical features of each chapter are similar to those employed in other textbooks. Each chapter opens with a set of critical thinking questions. These are meant to stimulate inquiry into what lies ahead and to expose the content and structure of the chapter. Students probably will not use these questions unless the instructor develops their pedagogical or functional utility. For example, I use these kinds of questions in review sessions prior to examinations. The content of each chapter is meant to expose central issues on the topic and the experimental methods designed to address those issues. Each chapter contains exercises designed to stimulate interest in the topic at hand. There are also throughout each chapter a number of boxed features in the form of discussion questions, special topics, and review questions. These boxed materials are designed as points of departure that push the reader to integrate the material in the box with text material. Like the critical thinking questions, instructors have to make the material in boxed sections prominent in classroom discussion to persuade students to use and think about them. Each chapter ends with a list of recommended Web sites.

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First I have to thank the people at Prentice Hall who encouraged me to write this text and supported me throughout the many phases of its production. Before I started this project, I had several conversations about language with my sales representative, Ed Weisman. Ed was the one who originally asked me to submit a prospectus. From there, editor Jennifer Gilliland helped me outline and flesh out the initial draft of the text. When Jennifer moved on, Jayme Heffler took over and helped me redesign the nature and scope of this book. I have many thanks to offer to Jayme. It was her faith and encouragement that kept me working to improve the quality of the book. I will forever be grateful for her guidance and support. I also thank Prentice Hall assistants April Dawn Klemm and Lauralee Lubrano for helping me with the day-to-day chores involved in publishing a textbook.

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I am deeply indebted to my reviewers for their critical and insightful comments. It is abundantly clear to me that I could never have written the final draft of this book without my reviewers' input. They helped me make this book what it needed to be. I hope that each reviewer will see that I have incorporated his or her suggestions in this book, sometimes to the letter. I hope they all realize how important their comments were to me.

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Matthew J. Traxler	University of South Carolina

简 明 目 录

前言 III

致谢 VI

第 1 部分 语言心理学概述

第 1 章	语言心理学简介	1
第 2 章	脑与语言	29
第 3 章	语音知觉	59
第 4 章	词语与词语再认	98
第 5 章	句子的加工	142
第 6 章	言语的产生	180
第 7 章	读写过程	227

第 2 部分 应用心理语言学

第 8 章	语篇:文本和对话	269
第 9 章	语言和思想的比喻	312
第 10 章	语言的发展一:音韵学、字典和语法	350
第 11 章	语言的发展二:发生、情绪和表现	394
第 12 章	社会环境下的语言和思想	431
第 13 章	心理语言学的应用	482

术语表 516

参考书目 538

索引 583

Table of Contents

Preface	iii
Acknowledgments	vi
<i>Part 1: Introduction to the Psychology of Language</i>	xix
Chapter 1 An Introduction to the Psychology of Language	1
What is Human Language?	2
Language is Communicative	3
Language is Arbitrary	3
Language is Structured	3
Language is Multilayered	4
Language is Productive	4
Language is Evolutionary	5
Do Animals Have Language?	5
Nonhuman Primate Communication	6
Metalinguistic Awareness	7
Why Study Language?	8
Components of Language	8
Phonemes	9
Morphemes	9
Syntax	10
Discourse	11
The Scope of Psycholinguistic Research	12
Language Acquisition	12
Language Comprehension	13
Language Production	14
A Sample of Research Methods in Psycholinguistics	15
Question: When Do Children Learn to Use Negations?	16
Question: How Do We Comprehend Metaphorical Language?	17
Question: What Do "Slips of the Tongue" Reveal about Speech Production?	17

Question: How Do Speakers Take Turns in Conversations?	17
Question: How Does Brain Damage Affect Speech Processing?	17
Question: How Does the Language One is Learning Affect How it is Learned?	18
Theoretical Issues	18
Nature Versus Nurture	18
Psychological Versus Biological Models of Language	19
Autonomous Versus Interdependent Processes	19
Language Rules Versus Statistical Regularities	20
Antecedents of Psycholinguistics	20
Structuralist and Functionalist Views of Language	21
Behaviorism	21
Linguistics: The Skinner-Chomsky Debate	22
Cognitive Psychology	23
Cognitive Science	23
Linguistics	23
Philosophy	26
Anthropology and Ethology	26
Neuroscience	26
Computer Science and Speech Technologies	26
Speech and Hearing Disorders	27
Communication Studies	27
Key Terms	27
What Lies Ahead	28
Suggested Web Sites	28
 Chapter 2 Brain and Language	 29
The Human Brain	31
Subcortical Involvement in Speech	34
Language Localization	34
Broca and Leborgne	35
Aphasiology	36
The Geschwind Model	36
Broca's Aphasia	38
Wernicke's Aphasia	39
Other Forms of Aphasia	40
Problems with the Geschwind Model	41
An Alternative: Processing Impairment	42
Brain Imaging and Electrophysiological Studies of Language	43
Event-Related Potentials	45

Lateralization	47
Sex Differences and Language Lateralization	48
Lateralization of Sign Language and Bilingualism	49
Split Brain Studies	51
Right Hemisphere Speech and Subcortical Involvement in Emotional Speech	55
Key Terms	58
What Lies Ahead	58
Suggested Web Sites	58
 Chapter 3 Speech Perception	 59
Components of Speech	61
Prosody	61
Phonemes	62
Cross-Linguistic Phonetics	63
Articulatory Phonetics	64
Consonants	66
Vowels	68
Distinctive Features	69
Phonemic Confusions	70
Acoustic Phonetics	70
The Speech Spectrograph	70
Vowels	72
Consonants	73
Perception of Speech Segments	73
Speech Synthesis	74
Vowel Identification	75
Consonant Identification	77
Parallel Transmission: A Segmentation Problem	77
Contextual Variation: The Problem of Invariance	78
Voice Onset Time	79
Categorical Perception	80
Phoneme Prototypes	82
Perception of Continuous Speech	83
Top-Down Versus Bottom-Up Speech Processing	83
Phonemic Restoration	84
Theories of Speech Perception and Word Recognition	87
Models and Modularity	87
Motor Theory	88
Auditory Models of Speech Perception	89
Cohort Theory	92

The Trace Model	93
Future Directions in Speech Perception	95
Key Terms	96
What Lies Ahead	97
Suggested Web Sites	97
Chapter 4 Words and Word Recognition	98
Words	99
Phonology and Orthography	99
Grammatical Class	100
Morphology	101
Words and References	101
Subjective Aspects of Meaning	103
Word Association	104
The Semantic Differential	106
Models of the Internal Lexicon	107
The Hierarchical Network Model	108
The Spreading Activation Model	111
The Semantic Feature Model	113
The Act Model of Complex Cognition	114
Wordnet: An Electronic Lexical Database	117
Conclusions about the Mental Lexicon	118
Lexical Access	120
Lexical Frequency	120
Semantic Priming Effects	123
Morphological Complexity	124
Word Concreteness and Imagery	125
Emotional Connotation and Lexical Access	126
Gestures and Lexical Access	128
Lexical Ambiguity	128
Exhaustive Access Versus Selective Access of Meaning	129
Accessing Dominant and Subordinate Meaning	130
Tasks Demands and the Time Course of Meaning Activation	132
Support for the Selective Access Model	133
Conclusions about Lexical Ambiguity	134
Models of Lexical Access	134
The Autonomous Search Model	135
The Logogen Model	136
The Connectionist Model	138
Key Terms	140
What Lies Ahead	141
Suggested Web Sites	141

Chapter 5 Sentence Processing	142
Sentences and Syntax	143
Sentence Structure and Tree Diagrams: The Traditional View	144
Transformational Rules	146
Sentences: Surface Structure and Deep Structure	147
Semantic and Lexical-Based Grammars	150
Lexical Frame Analysis	151
Thematic Structure Analysis	152
Optimality Theory	153
Parsing Strategies and Models	155
Garden Path Sentences	156
The Garden Path Model: Minimal Attachment and Late Closure	157
Constraint Satisfaction Models	159
Cross-Linguistic Studies: The Universality of Parsing Strategies	161
Comparing Parsing Strategies	162
Working Memory and Sentence Comprehension	163
Individual Differences with Syntactic Complexity	165
Individual Differences with Linguistic Ambiguity	166
Working Memory and Modularity	168
Factors That Influence Sentence Comprehension	169
Affective Prosody and Emotional Expression	169
Emotional Involvement During the Comprehension Process	171
Event-Related Potentials During the Comprehension Process	172
Inferences	174
Comprehension and Long-Term Retention	177
Key Terms	178
What Lies Ahead	179
Suggested Web Sites	179
Chapter 6 Speech Production	180
Conceptualizing an Intended Message	181
Eye Movements During Speech Planning	182
Formulating a Linguistic Plan	185
Finding Words	186
Picture Naming	186
Not Finding a Word: The Tip-of-the-Tongue Phenomenon	187
Implementing the Plan	190
Speech Hesitations, Pauses, and Fillers	190

Errors in Speech Production	192
Types of Speech Errors	192
Distinctive Feature Errors	193
Phoneme Errors	194
Laboratory-Induced Phoneme Exchanges	195
Syllable Errors	196
Word and Morpheme Errors	196
Freudian Slips	197
Slips of the Hand	199
Conclusions about Speech Errors	202
Production Monitoring and Editing	203
Models of Speech Production	206
The Fromkin Model	206
The Garrett Model	207
The Bock and Levelt Model	209
The Dell Model	212
Gesture-Inclusive Models	217
The McNeill Integrated Model	218
The Krauss Autonomous Model	223
Key Terms	225
What Lies Ahead	226
Suggested Web Sites	226
 Chapter 7 Writing and Reading Processes	 227
Literacy	228
Speaking and Writing	229
Writing Systems	230
Graphics	230
Words	230
Syllables	231
Phonemes	232
Writing Process	232
The Flower and Hayes Model	233
Individual Differences in Writing	235
Writing and Emotions	237
The Time Course of Writing	238
Learning to Read	243
Phonological Awareness	244
Individual Differences in Reading	246
Reading Processes	247
Eye Movement During Reading	248

Reading Tongue Twisters	250
Deaf Reading and Chinese Reading	252
Models of Reading	253
Dual-Route Model of Word Recognition	254
Connectionist Model of Reading	257
Just and Carpenter Model	260
Rayner and Pollatsek Model	262
Key Terms	265
What Lies Ahead	265
Suggested Web Sites	265
<i>Part 2: Applied Psycholinguistics</i>	267
Chapter 8 Discourse: Text and Conversation	269
Discourse	270
Is Discourse a Product or a Process?	270
Text Structure and Comprehension	271
Macrostructure, Microstructure, and Mental Model	273
Inferences	274
Bridging Inferences	274
Causal Inferences	276
Partial Processing	278
The Story Grammar	280
Schema and Scripts	282
Situational Mental Models	284
Spatial Models	285
Conversation	287
Conversational Maxims	288
Speech Acts	289
Discourse as a Joint Project	290
Personnel	292
Common Ground	292
Action Sequences and Adjacency Pairs	293
Grounding and Contributions	294
Conversational Turn Taking	295
Turn Taking and Cohesive Gestures	297
Opening a Conversation	298
Closing a Conversation	299
Conversational Layers	299
Topics	300
Unsafe Topics	300