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LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

V. Pandimeena¹

¹Nadar Saraswathi College of Arts and
Science,
Theni, Tamil Nadu, India

P.Pavithra²

²Nadar Saraswathi College of Arts and
Science,
Theni, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

Language is the ability to acquire and use complex systems of communications particularly the human ability to do so, and a language is any specific example of such a system. The scientific study of language is called linguistics. Questions concerning the philosophy language, such as whether words can represent experience, have been debated since Gorgias and Plato in Ancient Greece. Thinkers such as Rousseau, have argued that language originated from emotions while others like Kant have held that it originated from rational and logical thought. 20th-century philosophers such as Wittgenstein argued that philosophy is really the study of language. Major figures in linguistics include fried am and Noam Chomsky. The English word language derives ultimately from, speech, language" through Latin lingua, "language; tongue", and old language..The word is sometimes used to refer to codes, cipher and other kinds of constructed communication system such as formally defined computer languages used for computer programming. Unlike conventional human languages, a formal language in this sense is a system of signs for encoding and decoding information. This article specifically concerns the properties of natural human language as it is studied in the discipline of linguistics.

KEYWORDS: language, computer programming, language faculty

HISTORY OF LANGUAGE

The study of the process of comprehension, from signal to understanding, does not suffer from the problems of identifying and manipulating the input. If anything it is the output understanding that is the problem in this case. For the time being we will leave the issue of the nature of understanding at the

intuitive we level, and we will begin our review with the input to speech comprehension, the speech signal itself. It is generally assumed that the speech recognition capacity identifies as much about the speech sounds as it can from the sound wave. The synaptic parsing capacity identifies the words by their sounds and analyses the structure of the sentence,

and the semantic interpretation capacity puts the meaning of the words together in accordance with these synaptic relations. The pragmatic interpretation capacity selects a particular speech act or communicative intent as the most likely. If the hearer is right, communication is successful, if not, there has been a breakdown. It should not be assumed that these different processes are carried out either by different *areas of the brain* or necessarily one after the other. Many of them can overlap both in time and in brain activity.

MODULARITY

When the cognitive perspective replaced behaviorisms in the 1960s, it brought with it a conception of mental functioning as mental computing. The most persuasive example of computational devices at the time was the standard stored program von Neumann machine, the kind of machine your pc is. This traditional model, sometimes called a unitary architecture, represents minds as constructed out of two principal components. The input and output processes and central processing unit. First, such special purpose computational systems are fast. Typically, perceptual processes are completed within a few tenths of a second. Secondly, there seems to be neural circuitry devoted to the various perceptual processes. Thirdly, perceptual processes systems are sensitive to specific domains of information.

This raises the question of the general architectural structure of the language processing mechanisms and their relation to the rest of cognitive. First, there is the strong, autonomy claim each component of the language processor functions like a little module, it works mutinously on its input. Second there is the claim that there can be interaction between components within a language faculty, but there can be no influences on the module from central systems. Since this second position allows for interaction inside the module, it is important where such a theory draws the line between language processing and general cognition. Some, such as prophets of cohort theory, draw the line quite early and include only lexical access. The process of contacting lexical information in memory.

LEXICAL ACCESS AND SPEECH RECOGNITION CAPACITY

The output of the speech recognition capacity is a representation of as much information as it can obtain about the speech sounds of the utterance, based on the sound wave alone. In most cases information about some of the segments will be missing. As will information concerning aspects of intonation and word or phrase boundaries. It is the job of the syntactic parsing capacity to identify the relevant words and relate them syntactically. It is the

job of the semantic interpretation capacity to produce a representation of the meaning of the sentence to meaning as best we can, though current research shows that little is known about many of these operations.

LEXICAL ACCESS AND WORD RECOGNITION

If we are to understand what speakers are saying, we must understand the sentences they utter, and to do this, we must recognize the words that make up these sentences. The psycholinguistic literature often distinguishes two processes here lexical access, in which the language processor unconsciously accesses or makes contact with the information stored at an address in the mental lexicon, and word recognition, in which one of the accessed is selected and made available to introspection. There are at least two prominent experimental techniques for investigating lexical access and word recognition.

Semantic interpretation: mental representation of meaning:

These are central questions in this area of research, and although much interesting work has been done, we are only beginning to glimpse what the answers might look like.

Word and phrase meaning: concepts:

The problem of word meaning for psychology is finding a psychological state that could plausibly be the state of knowing the meaning of a word. The most popular and influential theory in psychology at present is that the mental representation of meaning involves concepts. Probably, the most pervasive role for concepts to play in thought is categorization. Concepts allow us to group things that are similar in some respect into classes. We are able to abstract away from irrelevant details to the properties that are important for thought and action. The stability of our everyday mental life depends to a great extent on our capacity to categorize and conceptualize particular objects and events.

Concepts also combine to form complex concepts and ultimately complete thoughts. For example, we might have the concepts MISCHIEVOUS and BOYS, and form the complex concept MISCHIEVOUS BOYS or we might form the thought that BOYS ARE MISCHIEVOUS, the wish that BOYS NOT BE MISCHIEVOUS, and soon. From the point of view of semantics, some concepts are taken to be the mental representation of the meaning of words, we call these lexical concepts, some concepts are taken to be the mental representation of the phrases phrasal concepts and thoughts are taken to be the mental representation of the meaning of declarative sentences.

Sentence meaning and pragmatic Interpretation:

Psychology of language is still grappling with, here we will look briefly at three sentence level phenomena: given new information, nonliteral interpretations and indirection and politeness.

Pre supposition and given new information

It may be helpful for a speaker to distinguish information that is presupposed, unfocused, or given from information that is asserted, focused, or new. Languages make available a number of different devices that can be used to mark this distinction. English speakers often use the definite article (the), passive voice, repeating adverbs (again), cleft constructions, and various topicalization constructions to make the focus of their thoughts clear:

- a: A friend of ours met sam at the airport.
- b: sam was met at the airport by a friend of ours.

Thus, in the speaker may take the identity of the boy as known. In sam is already the focus or a topic of conversation.

Non literal communication:

The development of linguistic abilities suggests that children up to the age of about 10 have considerable difficulty giving the figurative meaning of even the most common proverbs. Since these children obviously have their literal linguistic abilities, we might suppose that understanding novel no literality is an additional layer of processing and as such takes additional time, even in adults.

Indirection and politeness:

We speak indirectly, we mean more than we say, and we expect our audience to infer what we mean on the basis of what we have said plus contextual information.

CONCLUSION

This completes our brief survey of some of the main areas of current work on the psychology of language. We have followed the flow of information from thoughts to sounds to words, phrases, and sentences, and from sentences to the communicative intentions of speakers. Along the way we have found not only alternative conceptions of the right answer to crucial questions, but also huge gaps in our understanding of them. The psychology of language has all the signs of being a vital and active area of scientific research.

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