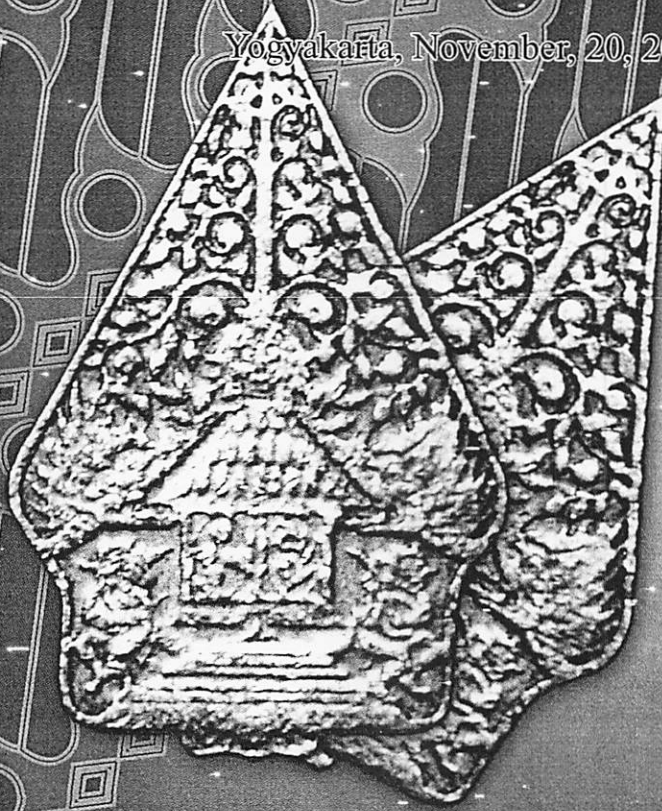


PROCEEDINGS OF  
INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON  
LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

Yogyakarta, November, 20, 2013



IPG Kampus Bahasa Melayu



UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI  
SUNAN KALIJAGA  
YOGYAKARTA

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# CONTRIBUTION OF PSYCHOLINGUISTICS IN THE PROCESS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

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## Abstract

*Language learning cannot be separated from the language activities. Whereas language activities do not only occur mechanically but also mentalistically, which means as a process related to mental (brain). Therefore in relation to the language learning, including the Arabian language learning, linguistics should be completed by interdisciplinary study, especially between linguistics and psychology, which is called psycholinguistics. The question is how the contribution of Psycholinguistics in the process of language learning, including Arabian language.*

*This is a field research, which directly researches the object. The subject of research is the lecturer of Arabian Language subject and the university students having taken the first, second, and third Arabian Language subject at the Faculty of Da'wah. While the object of research is the contribution of psycholinguistics in the process of Arabian language learning at the Faculty of Da'wah.*

*The result of research shows that psycholinguistics has contributed in analyzing the language problems and language learning and some steps to handle those problems, so that a teacher/lecturer will be able to understand the learning process, the problems, and to determine the solution by improving and increasing the quality of learning whether material aspect, method, and conducive language environment.*

**Keywords:** psycholinguistics, Arabian Language, learning method, teacher/lecturer.

## A. Introduction

In many countries, including Indonesia, people speak different languages. In Indonesia for instance, there are three languages spoken by the society, although the usage situation and the amount of speakers are different. The three of them are regional language, national language, and foreign language including Arabian Language.

There is no doubt about the role of Arabian Language in Indonesian people's life as one of foreign languages used in Indonesia, whether from the linguistic or religious view. Viewed from linguistic aspect related to the Indonesian vocabularies which derived from Arabian words, there are more than 600 Indonesian words absorbed from Arabian language. Those words have come into the Indonesian language through some interference events or the speakers' integration.

On the other hand, the role of Arabian Language is important enough because it is a media of the coming of various kinds of knowledge into education world, especially Islamic education. Thus, the increase of Arabian speaking skill of university students hopefully will support their success in education.

As a very popular foreign language which is often learnt by students and university students in Indonesia, frequently teachers/lecturers or students/university students – as the main component in learning process – face some difficulties and problems of learning, whether problems coming from the students or those faced by teachers/lecturers, which may obstruct the achievement of learning purpose. This is understandable, considering there are many differences between Arabian language system as the second language being learnt and Indonesian language system which has been inherent in the students/university students in Indonesia. Some differences are in phonemic aspect, grammatical or language rules, vocabulary system, and language style (*uslub*).

The developing of language learning requires valid and correct concept. This can be carried out by mix and adopt various branches of science. The theories found then are processed to be the new technique, method and approach or even theory which can be applied in that language learning.

In Indonesia, Arabian Language learning as the second language is very enthused even it has become one of the compulsory subjects in universities especially the Islamic ones. Language material is the analysis object of linguistics.

Language learning is also related to the problems of language activity. While a language activity does not only occur mechanically but also mentalistically, which means relating to mental (brain). Therefore, in relation to the language learning, including the Arabian language learning, linguistics should be completed by interdisciplinary study, especially between linguistics and psychology, which is called psycholinguistics. The question is how the contribution of Psycholinguistics in the process of language learning, including

Arabian language as the second language, as a media of problem identification and a step of problem solving. This writing hopefully can give benefits to the developing of language learning method.

## **B. Theoretical Study**

### **B.1. A Review of Psycholinguistics**

According to etymology, Psycholinguistics is derived from two words, psychology and linguistics, which are two different branches of science and each of them stands alone with different method and procedure. According to literal meaning, psychology means psychic science or the science studying psyche as an object, while linguistics means the literary science or the science taking language as the object of study.

According to etymology, a word psychology is from Ancient Greek Language *psyche* and *logos*. The word *psyche* means spirit or soul, while *logos* means science, so psychology literally means science of psyche or the science studying psyche as an object. Formerly when psychology was a part of philosophy science, the definition of psychology as the science studying psyche was still maintained in our literature, in the fifties the psyche is commonly used as the synonym of psychology, but now the term psyche is no longer used because this science does not research psyche, spirit or soul so that term is not so appropriate (Chaer, 2:2003).

Bruno (Syah, 1995: 8) presented in details the definition of Psychology into three parts which related to each other principally. First, Psychology is the study of spirit. Second, Psychology is the science of mental life. Third, Psychology is the science of organism behavior. The first definition is the most ancient and classical (historical) one related to Plato philosophy (427-347 BC) and Aristoteles (384-322 BC). They thought that human consciousness is related to their soul.

In modern context, the definition of psychology is like presented by Crow & Crow. According to them, Psychology is the science learning human behavior, that is human interaction with their surrounding world (other people, animals, climates, culture, etc.). Such a definition conforms to the real condition all this time, that the psychologists generally emphasize the study of human behavior from the psychomotoric aspect (physical) and the cognitive and affective aspects (spiritual). Psychomotoric behavior (realm of intention) is open, such as speaking, sitting, walking, etc., while cognitive and affective behavior (realm of creation and taste) is closed, such as thinking, believing, feeling, etc. Based on the above definitions, it can

be concluded that Psychology is the science of human behavior whether visible or invisible.

Meanwhile Linguistics is the science learning languages scientifically (Kridalaksana, 1982: 99). Similar to the above opinion, Martinet (1987: 19) stated that linguistics is the scientific study of human language. In Websters New Collegiate Dictionary (Nikelas, 1988: 10) in details it is stated that linguistics is the study of human speech including the units, nature, structure, and modification of language. While in Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary (Nikelas, 1988: 10) it is stated that linguistics is the science of language, e.g. its structure, acquisition, relationship to other forms of communication

From the previous opinions, it can be concluded that Linguistics is the science of language with its characteristics. The language itself is used by human beings, whether in speaking or writing and is understood by them whether in scrutinizing or reading.

Based on the definition of psychology and linguistics discussed previously, it may be concluded that Psycholinguistics is the science learning the language behavior whether visible or invisible. For more details of this definition, the followings are some definitions of Psycholinguistics. Aitchison (Dardjowidjojo, 2003: 7) considered that psycholinguistics is the study of language and mind. Similar to the previous opinion, Field (2003: 2) stated that psycholinguistics explores the relationship between the human mind and language. Mind or brain operates when there is language using. Therefore, Harley (Dardjowidjojo: 2003: 7) considered that psycholinguistics is the study of mental process in language using.

The same as the above opinion, Slobin (Chaer, 2003: 5) stated that psycholinguistics is trying to analyze the psychological process occuring when someone utters sentences which he has heard while communicating and how he finds the language skill. For more details, Chaer (2003: 6) considered that psycholinguistics is trying to explain the substance of language structure and how the structure is found, used when uttering, and when understanding sentences in that utterance. Essentially there is a process of producing and understading utterance in communication activity.

In accordance with this Garnham (Musfiroh, 2002: 1) stated that Psycholinguistics is the study of a mental mechanisms that make it possible for people to use language. It is a scientific discipline whose goal is a coherent theory of the way in which language is produce and understood. There is a process of changing the mind to be the code and the code to be the mind in using language.



In relation with this Osgood and Sebeok (Pateda: 1990) stated that psycholinguistics deals directly with the processes of encoding and decoding as they relate states of communicators. Utterance is a synthesis of process of changing concept to be code, whereas message understanding is a recognition as the analysis result. Therefore, Lyons considered that psycholinguistics is the study of production (synthesis) and recognition (analysis). Language as the form or result of process and as something being processed can be oral or written language, as presented by Kempen (Marat, 1983: 5) that Psycholinguistics is the study of human beings as the language users, that is the study of language systems inside the human beings that can explain how they can catch other people's ideas and how they can express their own ideas through language written or orally. If it is related to the language skill, it is related to language skills, those are scrutinizing, speaking, reading, and writing.

The previous opinions explicitly stated that Psycholinguistics also learns the language acquisition by the human beings to make them able to speak. Further they can communicate with other people including some steps passed by a child when he learns language as presented by Palmatier (Tarigan, 1985: 3) that Psycholinguistics is the science learning the development of children language. All languages acquired essentially are required to communicate. Therefore, Slama (Pateda, 1990: 13) stated that psycholinguistics is the study of relations between our needs for expression and communications and the means offered to us by a language learned in our childhood and later.

Based on the experts' opinions above, it can be concluded that Psycholinguistics is the science learning the language behavior, whether visible or invisible, those are perception, process of producing language, and language acquisition. The visible behavior in producing language is human behavior when speaking and writing or when they produce language, while the invisible behavior is when understanding anything they scrutinize or read so those become something belong to them or processing something going to be uttered or written.

Thus it can be concluded that the scope of psycholinguistics covers a). relationship between language and brain, logic and mind, b). language process in communication: production, perception and comprehension, c). problem of meaning, d). perception of utterance and cognition, e). pattern of language behavior, f). acquisition of the first and second languages, g). language process in abnormal individuals. (Musfiroh, 2002: 8)

## B.2. A Review of Arabian Language Learning

A Review of Arabian Language Learning One of important aspects in behavior is an ability to communicate with others. When someone thinks about communication in general, the first aspect showing up is verbal language (Matsumoto, 1996). Language is a collection of structure and utterance used by human beings in particular opportunity and situation (Musthofa, 2000). Language is the essence of social interaction, someone can do something he wants with language, language makes individual relationship solid, language informs something, someone can entertain others with language, and many others (Holtgraves, 1997).

Meanwhile, Libert et.al. (1986), stated that a good communication is not only a linguistic ability, because it still includes other elements, such as what kinds of knowledge should be expressed, how to express something and when the time to express.

In a simple words, language is one aspect of communication which functions to reflect ideas, process capacity, social habits and communication of the language users. Language can be verbal one, that it understanding towards expression of words or sentences.

According to Solso (1998), the study of human language is significant for cognitive psychology because :

- a. Human development in practicing language describes a unique abstraction in cognitive process. Human beings have the highest language abstraction stage compared to animals.
- b. Language process is an important component for information process and storage.
- c. Human process of thinking and problem solving is a process involving language.
- d. Practicing language takes an important role in interhuman communication, as a way of information exchange.
- e. Language affects perception, as a fundamental aspect in cognitive process.
- f. Processing of words, speaking and semantics use particular cerebral area, in order to prove the significant relationship between neuron anatomy and language, as seen in the case of aphasia (brain disorders affecting the language ability).

Learning refers to the definition of an activity (process) of teaching and learning which is systematic and consists of many components. Each component is not partial or standing alone, but it should run regularly, depend on each other, complementary and sustainable (Syaiful Bahri Djamarah dan Aswan Zain, 1996:3).

In language learning, there is differences in assumptions of two groups of learning theory, those are behaviorism and cognitivism. The behaviorism group has ever been very popular among the linguists while adopting structuralism linguistics and trigerring audio lingual method which emphasizes the importance of oral language mastery with practices; this method has five principles, those are a) language is utterances not writings, b) language is a set of habits, c) teach the language not about language, d) language is what being spoken by the native speaker and not what should be uttered, and e) languages are different from one another (Rivers, 1971).

The position of audiolingual method started to be unsteady when Transformation Grammar of Chomsky and the cognitive stream were born. According to Chomsky, process of learning language is the rule formation process, not the habit formation process. He considered that human beings have what people call inner capacity, which is an ability within themselves to understand and create new utterances (Sumardi, 1992).

According to Lado (1979), the traits of learning foreign language are a) Ability mastery in using language structure and b) Common use of vocabularies based on the normal communicative condition and the speaking rate of the native speakers.

According to Jokobovist (1979), the determinants of language learning success moreover foreign language are very complex. There are many factors determining the foreign language teaching success, those are :

- a. The learning factor, that is the individual ability in understanding language subject influenced by intelligence, verbal skills, talent. motivation and learning strategy
- b. The teaching factor, which consists of teaching quality, learning opportunity and transfer effect.
- c. The sosio-cultural factor, which consists of the attitude towards language being learnt, language composition, environment and bilingualism.

Arabic Language is a language with excellent ability in facing any new condition. Arabic Language experienced a movement from simple pre-Islamic life to enter Islamic culture, also a movement from pure Arabian environment as the trait of Umayyah time to be larger environment as Abbasiyah trait. During the movement Arabic Language was not paralyzed in facing the new life aspects and was not overwhelmed in stating its ideal and taste coming up from the aspects of life (Hanafi, 1965).

A study of Arabic Language must be related to religious and al-

Qur'an studies. This is because in reality al-Qur'an has been brought down by Allah in Arabic Language. Arabic term is often used as al-Qur'an language. This term gives basic appraisal that Arabic Language is a religious language, people who talk about Islam must talk about al-Qur'an and al-Qur'an is in Arabic Language (Steenbrink, 1991).

Regardless of Arabic Language teaching with religious motive or not, Arabic Language is important to learn along with the more widespread of Arabic Language effect to be recognized as an international language. It is very important to learn Arabic Language widely and more deeply. So no wonder if Islamic educative institutions whether public or private place Arabic Language on an honoured place and try to teach this more effectively and efficiently to conserve al-Qur'an or conserve the knowledge so that conserving Arabic Language teaching is a must. (Syakur, 1998).

Thus Arabic language learning is a process of teaching and learning through knowledge transfer with Arabic language as the subject of learning. In the context of Arabic Language learning, there are two types of languages, naturalistic and formal. Naturalistic language learning type is natural, without teachers and even without deliberate and it takes place in social environment. Whereas the formal one takes place in a classroom, it is completed with teacher, materials, teaching adds and learning component being prepared.

Viewing the Psycholinguistic subject matter above, and its relation with the language learning context, especially Arabic language, here the writer is trying to analyze and study intensely about the psycholinguistic role in Arabic language learning. This will be carried out by describing some kinds of mistakes and difficulties frequently experienced by the Arabic language learners and afterwards analyzing any factor underlying those mistakes and difficulties to find the solution based on the study of Psycholinguistic theories.

### **C. Method of Research**

This is the field research, which researches the object directly. The subjects of research are the lecturer of Arabic Language subject at Faculty of Da'wah and the university students of that faculty who has taken the first Arabic Language subject at the Center of Language, Culture and Religion (PBBA) and the second and third Arabic Language Bahasa Arab at the faculty, while the object of research is the contribution of psycholinguistic to the Arabic language learning at the Faculty of Da'wah.

#### D. Research Result

The Arabic Language Learning at the Faculty of Da'wah is directed to achieve four skills of speaking Arabic (*al-maharah al-arabiyah*) those are *al-istima'* (listening), *al-kalam* (speaking), *al-qira'ah* (reading) dan *al-kitabah* (writing). This learning is the continuation of Arabic Language learning having been carried out centralistically at PBBA UIN Sunan Kalijaga. The Arabic Language Learning at PBBA is intended for students who take the first Arabic Language subject and then continued by the Arabic Language learning at the faculty by taking the second and third Arabic Language subjects.

Although the Arabic Language lecture at PBBA and at the Faculty of Da'wah have been programmed with adequate materials and conducive environment, there can be found some mistakes and weaknesses in the implementation. This research will study the psycholinguistic aspect in Arabic Language learning including the language acquisition, the language usage, the process of producing language, the language process, the coding process, the interrelation of language and human behavior.

The problems of acquiring and using language in some cases for instance are often found when the students begin to talk and speak Arabic. The background of this problem is internal and external factors like no self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, unsupportive environment and learning motivation. These problems cover:

1. Problem of phonetics, that is inability to distinguish the sound of closed alphabets, for example, distinguishing a word وشيم with منضدة, وسيم with منضدة
2. Problem of word form diversity and its influence to the diversity of meanings, A vocabulary in Arabic language may have more than one alternative of reading. The meaning of a word determines its reading, and vice versa, a reading determines the meaning of a word. Arabic language knows what is called *wazan*, *wazan* is used to distinguish one form from another. This should be noted by anyone who will read Arabic texts, related to the adjective form, for example, including a form *isim fa'il*, *isim maf'ul* and *sifah musyabbahah*, occasionally these words have development of meaning, not only as an adjective but changes to be not an adjective (*isim zat*), like كاتب, دقيق, موضوع in particular context is not an adjective as seen in the following context :

1. كتب الأستاذ كتابا تحت موضوع "القرآن وأثره في اللغة العربية"
2. اشترى أحمد دقيقا في السوق
3. هو كاتب منتج

1. The professor writes a book entitled “al-Qur’an and Its Influence in Arabic language”
2. Ahmad buys some flour in the market
3. He is a productive writer

Compare with these sentences:

1. كتابي موضوع على المكتب
2. هذا الأمر دقيق في الغاية
3. يشرح المدرس الدرس كاتباً على السبورة

1. My book is put on the table
  2. This matter is very complicated
  3. The teacher is explaining the subject while writing on the board
3. Lexical Problem, that is inability to understand the meaning and the use of words having adjacent meaning, for examples :

نحن مطالبون أن ندرس بجد  
نحن مطالبون أن يدرسنا الأستاذ بجد

From the context of the sentence it can be determined that the underlined word in the first sentence is a form of *isim maf'ul* which means being required, so it should be read *muthalabuna* because that sentence means *we are required to study seriously*, while the underlined word in the second sentence is a form of *isim fa'il* which means require *muthalibuna* because the sentence means *we require our religious teacher to teach us seriously*.

4. Grammatical Problem, that is inability to understand the language rules correctly, for examples :

قراءة الكتب العلمية مفيدة في حياتنا اليومي  
زين الرجل بأخلاق الكريمة  
هذا كتب جديدة

The use of a word *اليومي* at the first example is incorrect because she is an adjective for the previous word that is *muannats* (feminine), while *الكريمة أخلاق* at the second example is incorrect because the word is not *idhafah* (compound word) but a form of *na'at man'ut* and the use of *هذا* at the third example should be *هذه* because *كتب* is the form of *jama'* (plural) which rule is *muannats* (feminine)

5. Problem of language style (*uslub*), for example:

قد أعطيته الدرس، نكتفي إلى هنا، شاهدنا البيت البيت

The above language styles are not found in Arabic language because the language style should be in sequence as follows:

قد ألقيته الدرس، نكتفي بهذا، شاهدنا البيوت

Problems experienced by the university students are caused by:

1. Inability to distinguish an alphabet *makhrāj* because of the lack of reading Arabic writings or texts
2. Inability to understand the context of sentences, because it has an important role in an understanding, therefore an utterance may have various interpretations of meaning, the context should be considered to find out a meaning of an utterance (including sentence).
3. Errors in selecting the learning strategy, that is only focusing on the memorization of vocabularies and language rules without considering the word function and usage in oral or written.
4. Interversion of language, that is an influence of the first language on the second language (Arabic), whether in aspects of sound, intonation, language style and structure of sentence.
5. Mastery of active vocabularies in Arabic language is very limited, so it frequently causes the jumble and the use of some words or terms of the first language when using Arabic as the second language.
6. Psychological Problem, such as a fear of making mistakes, the lack of learning motivation, doubt, the lack of material mastery.

The above problems are related to the language behavior whether visible or invisible and this shows that the contribution of psycholinguistics in Arabic Language learning is very important because psycholinguistics is the science learning visible or invisible language behavior. The visible behavior in practicing language is human behavior when speaking and writing or when he produces language, while the invisible one is human behavior when understanding what he scrutinizes or reads to be something belong to him or processing something will be spoken or written.

The contribution of psycholinguistics seems to identify some efforts in problem solving to make the university students able to use oral and written Arabic language well and correctly, therefore they need a knowledge of good Arabic language rules. The Arabic language rules can be learnt in Nahwu and Sharaf. However, to be able to use Arabic language fluently and communicatively, they not only have to understand the Arabic language rules but also need cognitive readiness (mastery of Arabic language rules and the delivered materials), the affectives (calm, sure, self-confident, able to eliminate anxiety, doubt, and other feelings), and psychomotorics (fluent pronunciation, ability to select words, phrases, clauses and sentences).

Another factor playing an important role in reaching the purpose of Arabic language learning is the teachers/lecturers. As the

facilitator and preceptor, their contribution determines a lot the success of teaching and learning process. They have to arrange the subject and deliver it appropriately, understand the physical condition and environment, be able to develop the communicative, linguistic and personal competences in order to make the students confident and capable to communicate using Arabic language with their friends or the native speaker (Arabian) receptively or productively.

The success in Arabic language learning is also determined by attitude factor and social appreciation to Arabic Language. The problem of Arabic language learning is not on the aspects of structure and method but also on the attitude and social appreciation in the society. If an individual respects a language positively, he will accept that language with all strengths and weaknesses, have high loyalty to that language, have a pride because he can master that language and there will be a consciousness in himself of the language norms or rules. The positive attitude of a language user will encourage him to try as far as possible to reduce the colour of his regional language or dialect.

In phonology, Indonesian society is multicultural, has various dialects with different phonological pattern, intonation and reading tone with Arabic language. So in copying from Indonesian to Arabic language, most use pattern existing in Indonesian language pattern. For example, sound of *د* (*ḍal*) is similar to “d”, *ع* (*‘ain*) is similar to “a”, *ش* (*shin*) is similar to “s”, and many others. Such a phonetic pattern mistake may affect mistakes in pronouncing language, even more sometimes it will cause a change in the lexical meaning and the blurring in meaning.

To overcome the above problem, there are some efforts to do as follows:

- a. Contrastive Analysis, by comparing the pattern of the first language with the other one of the second language. The different pattern should be practiced frequently, while the similar or the same pattern only have to be practiced a little. Contrastive linguistics consider that the mastery of a language is not different from the habit forming, so it needs continuous practice to form a habit as when learning the first language.
- b. Selecting the appropriate and the right learning method with language material. Some methods can be used in language teaching, such as direct, natural, psychological, phonetic, reading, grammar, translation, grammar-translation methods, and many others. There is an Audiolingual and Audio visual method which



shows up using linguistic approach. This method is very good because it can raise the students' stimulus-response, and creativity in developing language process, and also can raise the operation of all parts of brain.

- c. Giving motivation, a positive result can be related to a strategy that facilitate the intrinsic or extrinsic motivation creation in individuals. Extrinsic motivation is showed by an individual when his motivation increases to reach what he wants, any duty he faces will be a media to reach something he wishes. Whereas intrinsic motivation is showed by the individual participation in the duty not only as a media but also an expected final destination. Motivation to learn Arabic Language can be an extrinsic motivation when Arabic language skill is used as a media to learn other knowledge and it can be an intrinsic motivation when Arabic language skill is not only as a media but also a knowledge that must be learnt.

## **E. Conclusion**

Based on the previous analysis, it can be concluded that psycholinguistics study the interrelation of language and human behavior, language acquisition and usage, and process of producing language. The subject matter of this science is about the language substance, the language component, the language history, the process of composing sentences in language, and how to find the good result in language learning.

In relation with Arabic Language learning, psycholinguistics contributes in analyzing the language problems and language learning and some steps to handle the problems, so that a teacher/lecturer will be able to understand the learning process, the problems, and to determine the solution by improving and increasing the quality of learning whether material aspect, methods and conducive language environment.

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