SENTENCE COMPREHENSION AMONG MALAY SPEAKERS WITH APHASIA

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Within the last three decades, individuals with aphasia have been observed to have difficulty in understanding sentences despite having good understanding in single word comprehension. The difficulty observed, will to some extent limit their ability to communicate and participate in daily exchanges effectively, so the common sequel would, for these individuals, to be inadvertently isolated from their social circles. This study was conducted with the aim to describe and outline factors affecting sentence comprehension in Malay native speakers with aphasia. The factors include the reversibility of sentences, the type of sentences—active & passive reversible, the verb classes used as well as the complexity of the sentences based on the number of arguments presented in a given sentence. Six normal individuals and six individuals with aphasia were recruited for the study and they were being aged, education and L1-matched. These two groups were given sentence-picture matching test as the chosen procedure employed to test on the factors mentioned above. Findings of this study revealed that individuals with aphasia have poorer understanding of active and passive reversible sentences than that of normals ($p<0.05$) In addition, the understanding of reversible passive sentences among the subjects with aphasia is found to be lower than that of active sentences ($p<0.05$). In terms of sentence complexity, it was observed that the comprehension level in individuals with aphasia is significantly lower compared to their normal counterparts ($p<0.05$) as the number of argument increases. However, based on *Bonferroni post-hoc* analysis, a sub-test of ANOVA, significant differences between the mean score of sentences with one (1), two (2) and three (3) arguments in comparison to those sentences containing four (4) arguments were then observed. The verb classes that are found to pose difficulty for the group with aphasia are of *kata kerja 'aktiviti', kata kerja 'keadaan', kata kerja 'gerak'* and *kata kerja 'kausatif'* for complexity and reversibility parts respectively. In conclusion, individuals with aphasia have documented lower understanding of active and passive sentences compared to that of normals. Second conclusion to be drawn in, the active voice is proven to be less difficult compared to the passives and thirdly, the level of comprehension is significantly lower than of normals' as the number of argument increases.

Hassan, M, 2008. Sentence Comprehension Among Malay Speakers with Aphasia. Bachelor of Speech Science thesis. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.