



Beyond biolinguistics: An interactional theory of language

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Abstract

This presentation will introduce the state-of-the-art in Biolinguistics, and the philosophical, theoretical, and descriptive issues that challenge Biolinguistics's foundations will be mentioned. The current study will benefit from the author's published articles both in English and Persian and his books published and in press in Persian to discuss the following topics : (a) Left periphery in the Minimalist Program and its implications for the theory of language in general and syntax- pragmatics interface in particular, (b) Word order/ constituent order peculiarities of Ancient, Middle, and Modern Iranian Languages undermine the current assumptions in Biolinguistics, and (c) Split alignment is a hallmark of the majority of the Iranian Languages (past and present). The most common grammatical tool to encode some grammatical functions in these languages is Indexation/agreement. In these languages, three syntactic domains have been grammaticalized (the CP- domain, the VP- domain, and the PP+ V- domain) to host the pronominal clitics, which index the grammatical subject of past tense (transitive) verbs. This topic is interesting because the pronominal clitics are mobile within the relevant syntactic domain, which is grammaticalized by a particular language. Their mobility is sensitive to Information Structure, most specifically focus marking. This study will argue that these observations suggest a strong interdependence (not merely interface) between the syntax module and the information structure, namely the pragmatics module. This presentation will benefit from the findings in items (a)-(c) to argue in favor of a model of language with philosophical, theoretical, and analytic underpinnings which the Biolinguistics Program is not equipped with.

Keywords: Cognitive revolution, Biolinguistics program, Beyond biolinguistics, Interdependence of modules, Interactional model of language

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