

A View of Language from Somewhere in Particular

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Abstract: There are many ways of representing language as a physical organ that are made available by the human and the natural sciences. Shaping our understanding, such representations generate views of language that are simultaneously abstract and physical. These views are mediated both by theoretical accounts and imaging tools which both implicitly and explicitly localize and imagine language as an internal component of the mind/brain (e.g., Hauser, Chomsky & Fitch, 2002). This discussion attempts to extend existent representations of language as a physical structure by focusing on how and where language is localized in the neurosciences, philosophy, and linguistics. Viewed as a natural element of the world (Chomsky, 1995), hence also emerging from within the natural environment, language could be understood as not bound to a particular scale of representation. Blending theoretical with physical depictions of language, a perceptual model of language as a structure in the physical environment is explored.