Language and Mind

Naturalists' Separating Language and Consciousness

Social structure of Meaning

- Social meaning structure signifies the social institution of intentionality
  - Prelinguistic form of intentionality refers the background
- Linguistic rules are *unconsciously* followed

References

"Linguistic references is a special case of **intentional reference,** and intentional reference is by way of relation fitting or satisfaction. It is not necessary to **postulate any special metaphysical realms** in order to account for communication and shared intentionality. The possibility of shared intentional content does not require any **metaphysical apparatus** any more than the possibility of shared walks**."** **(Searle 1983: 198)**

Noam Chomsky

– "Language serves as instruments for free expression of thought, unbound in scope, uncontrolled by stimulus conditions though appropriate to situations, available for use in whatever contingencies our thought process can comprehend. This *creative aspect* of language use is a characteristic species property of humans." (*Rules and Representation* 1980: 222)

Chomsky's naturalism

"A naturalistic approach to linguistic and mental aspects of the world seeks to construct intelligible explanatory theories, taking as 'real' what we are led to posit in this quest and hoping for eventual unification with the 'core' natural sciences: unification not necessarily reduction."

("Language and Nature, " *Mind*, Vol.104,1995, p.12)

Language Acquisition

- Growth of language
- Constant interaction with linguistic community
- Internalism
  - Language being connected with internal states of the organism.
  - Innate capacity of the organism

Generative Grammar

- **Surface structure**
- **Deep Structure**
- "it seems to me reasonable to propose that in every human language surface structure are generated from structure of a more abstract sort, this will refer to us 'deep structure' by certain formal operation of very special kind called the grammatical transformations."
  - ("Linguistic and Philosophy" *Language and Philosophy* 1969: 53)

Surface and deep structure

- Language at the social level
  - Phonological rules, principles of rule ordering, etc.

  - Deep level
  - Prelinguistic-symbolic-system

Relating the mental and the linguistic

- "We may have to conceive mind as a system of 'mental organs', the language faculty being one each of the organ has specific structure and function, determined by the general outlined by the genetic endowment, interacting in ways that are also biologically determined in large measure to provide the basis of our mental life."
  - (*Rules and Representations* 1980: 241)

Unity of mental organs and grammatical rules

- Naturalization of the theory of language and the mind
- Relationship between mental organs and grammatical rules
- Posting an abstract condition – unknown mechanism

Is this relation accessible to consciousness?

"A language is generated by a system of rules and principles that enter into complex mental computations to determine the form of meaning of sentences. These rules and principles are in large measure unconscious and beyond the reach of the potential consciousness. Our perfect knowledge of language we speak gives us no privileged access to these principles. We cannot hope to determine them by introspection or reflection from within, as it were."

(*Rules and Representations* 1980: 241)

Jerry Fodor

- Language of Thought
- Structure of Linguistic Representation
- Syntactical feature transforms the compositional features of the linguistic representations

Mental Representation

- To specify the intentional content of the mental state
  - *Relationship between propositional attitude and intentional content*
- The symbolic structure of mental states defines the function of mental processes
  - *How semantic content is incorporated in the mental states or the network of mental states?*

Nature of Mental States

- Token mental states
- Symbolic in form
  - Specific mechanism in the brain that transforms the representations into the internal representations.
  - ***Qua language*** *to preserve the syntactic and semantic properties of content of the propositional attitudes.*

Defines the Qua language

- "Qua language is presumably having syntax and semantics; specifying the language involves saying that what properties are in virtue of which its formulae are well informed, and what relation obtain between the formulae and things in the non-linguistic world. I have no idea what an adequate semantics for a system of internal representation will look like; suffice that if propositions come in at all, they come in here. In particular nothing stops specifying a semantics for the IRS by saying that some of its formulae express propositions. They are mediated relations to propositions, with internal representations doing the mediating." (*Representations* 1981: 200)

Cognitive Architecture

- The causal network of the structure of cognitive states

- "Language of thought want to construe propositional attitude tokens as relation to symbol token. (Token of symbols in question are neural objects). Now symbols have intentional contents and the tokens are physical in all the known cases. And qua-physical-symbol-tokens are right sort of things to exhibit causal roles."