

SKEPTICAL
LINGUISTIC
ESSAYS

PAUL M. POSTAL

Skeptical Linguistic Essays By Postal

Randy Allen Harris



Skeptical Linguistic Essays By Postal:

Skeptical Linguistic Essays Paul Martin Postal, 2004 This volume consists of an introduction and two groups of essays by Paul M Postal each with a connecting theme The first positive group of papers contains five previously unpublished studies of English syntax These include a long study of so called locative inversion two investigations related to raising to non subject status an argument for the existence of a hitherto ignored nominal grammatical category and a study of vulgar negative polarity items Each investigation of specific English details is argued to have significant theoretical consequences The second negative group of papers contains seven essays each of which seeks to show that aspects of contemporary linguistic activity are in part contaminated by elements of what is called junk linguistics Postal uses the term to denote work which advances proposals puts forward claims and asserts deep results which he argues can only be accepted by ignoring serious standards of inquiry and scholarship Postal claims that much of this work is nonetheless currently considered not only serious but prestigious reveals the problem to exist at the core of the field not its periphery These chapters include documentation of junk linguistic aspects in National Science Foundation refereeing work on the foundations of linguistics and even in widespread terminological usages The final chapter briefly lists personal suggestions for dealing with this problem

Essays on Linguistic Realism Christina Behme, Martin Neef, 2018-07-26 This book contains new articles by leading philosophers and linguists discussing a promising philosophical framework distinct from currently dominant ones Linguistic Realism As opposed to Nominalism and Chomskyian Conceptualism this approach distinguishes between use of language knowledge of language and language as such The latter is conceived as part of the realm of abstract objects The authors show how adopting Linguistic Realism overcomes entrenched problems with other frameworks and suggest that Linguistic Realism will best serve those interested in formal linguistics the cognitive dimension of natural language and linguistic philosophy The essays offer different perspectives on Linguistic Realism either supporting this paradigm or taking it as a starting point for developing modified conceptions of linguistics and for further tying linguistics to the kind of formal theories of sensory cognition that were pioneered in visual perception by David Marr whose work is predicated on exactly the object knowledge distinction made by Linguistic Realists The Historiography of Generative Linguistics András

Kertész, 2017-08-14 Although the past decades have seen a great diversity of approaches to the history of generative linguistics there has been no systematic analysis of the state of the art The aim of the book is to fill this gap Part I provides an unbiased balanced and impartial overview of numerous approaches to the history of generative linguistics In addition it evaluates the approaches thus discussed against a set of evaluation criteria Part II demonstrates in a case study the workability of a model of plausible argumentation that goes beyond the limits of current historiographical approaches Due to the comprehensive analysis of the state of the art the book may be useful for graduate and undergraduate students However since it is also intended to enrich the historiography of linguistics in a novel way the book may also attract the attention of

both linguists interested in the history of science and historians of science interested in linguistics **The Linguistics Wars** Randy Allen Harris, 2021-09-13 An updated and expanded history of the field of linguistics from the 1950s to the current day The Linguistics Wars tells the tumultuous history of language and cognition studies from the rise of Noam Chomsky's Transformational Grammar to the current day Focusing on the rupture that split the field between Chomsky's structuralist vision and George Lakoff's meaning driven theories Randy Allen Harris portrays the extraordinary personalities that were central to the dispute and its aftermath alongside the data technical developments and social currents that fueled the unfolding and expanding schism This new edition updated to cover the more than twenty five years since its original publication and to trace the impact of that schism on the shape of linguistics in the twenty first century is essential reading for all those interested in the study of language the making of knowledge and some of the most brilliant minds of our era

Deconstructing Syntactic Theory Peter W. Culicover, Giuseppe Varaschin, 2025-05-28 Deconstructing Syntactic Theory is a critical examination of the assumptions and methodologies of contemporary derivational syntactic theory The study ranges from the earliest work inspired by Chomsky's Syntactic Structures and Aspects of the Theory of Syntax to the present day Minimalist Program The book begins with an examination of the relationship between syntactic structure linear order and meaning and the role of uniformity in motivating derivational analysis that assume movement and invisible structure A central property of such analyses is that they are cryptoconstructional construction specific stipulations are assumed in order to derive the form and meaning of expressions The second part looks at a range of technical and empirical problems of derivational syntax which require theoretical stipulations and devices to properly constrain cryptoconstructional analyses The focus is particularly on problems relating to movement and problems of invisibility In Part III the authors turn to the question of the independent justification of syntactic structure arguing that much hierarchical structure is not only unnecessary but also does not yield optimal analyses for a number of grammatical phenomena Part IV focuses on the use of syntax to account for phenomena that are arguably not syntactic it concludes that using syntax to model semantic phenomena is at best not necessary and at worse empirically inadequate Similarly using syntax to model morphological relations works only for a narrow subset of cases and cannot be sustained more generally without causing significant internal problems The book concludes with a review of minimalism laying out aspects of the logic of the Minimalist Program its assumptions and their motivations and consequences The authors argue that minimalism is best achieved by a leaner theory of linguistic representations along the lines of the constructional architecture of Simpler Syntax as proposed by Culicover and Jackendoff 2005 **Minimalist Essays** Cedric Boeckx, 2006-05-09 The Minimalism Program is many things to many researchers and there are by now many alternative versions of it Central to all is the fundamental question to what extent is the human language faculty an optimal solution to minimal design specifications Taken as a whole the volume outlines the main features of Minimalism its historical and conceptual sources and provides an illustration of minimalist theorizing by

looking at several properties of the syntactic component of grammar Some contributions concentrate on what kind of computational tools are made available in a minimalist syntactic component and how the computational system interacts with external and interface domains of the mind brain Other contributions specifically focus on direct empirical gains that emerge from adopting minimalist guidelines *The Oxford Handbook of Negation* Viviane Déprez, Viviane M. Déprez, M. Teresa Espinal, Maria Teresa Espinal i Farré, 2020 This volume offers reviews of cross linguistic research on the major classic issues in negation as well as accounts of more recent results from experimental linguistics psycholinguistics and neuroscience The volume will be an essential reference on the topic of negation for students and researchers across a wide range of disciplines

The Self-Organizing Social Mind John Bolender, 2023-09-19 A proposal that the basic mental models used to structure social interaction result from self organization in brain activity In *The Self Organizing Social Mind* John Bolender proposes a new explanation for the forms of social relations He argues that the core of social relational cognition exhibits beauty in the physicist s sense of the word associated with symmetry Bolender describes a fundamental set of patterns in interpersonal cognition which account for the resulting structures of social life in terms of their symmetries and the breaking of those symmetries He further describes the symmetries of the four fundamental social relations as ordered in a nested series akin to what one finds in the formation of a snowflake or spiral galaxy Symmetry breaking organizes the neural activity generating the cognitive models that structure our social relationships Bolender s primary claim is that there exists a social pattern generator analogous to the central pattern generators associated with locomotion in many animal species Spontaneous symmetry breaking structures the activity of the social pattern generator just as it does in central pattern generators Bolender s hypothesis that relational cognition results from self organization is entirely novel distinct from other theories that describe sociality in terms of evolution or environment It presents a picture of social relational cognition as resembling something inorganic In doing so it reveals deep connections among cognition biology and the inorganic world One can go too far he acknowledges in taking a solely dynamical view of the mind the mind s innate functional complexity must be due to natural selection But this does not mean that every simple mental feature is the result of natural selection By noting a descending symmetry subgroup chain at the core of relational cognition Bolender takes the first step in an important investigation Bradford Books imprint The Lexical Typology of Semantic Shifts Päivi Juvonen, Maria

Koptjevskaja-Tamm, 2016-08-08 The volume focuses on semantic shifts and motivation patterns in the lexicon Its key feature is its lexico typological orientation i e a heavy emphasis on systematic cross linguistic comparison The book presents current theoretical and methodological trends in the study of semantic shifts and motivational patterns based on an abundance of empirical findings across genetically areally and typologically diverse languages Language and Reality from a Naturalistic Perspective Andrea Bianchi, 2020-10-19 This book celebrates the many important contributions to philosophy by one of the leading philosophers in the analytic field Michael Devitt It collects seventeen original essays by renowned

philosophers from all over the world. They all develop themes from Devitt's work, thus discussing many fundamental issues in philosophy of linguistics, theory of reference, theory of meaning, methodology, and metaphysics. In a long final chapter, Devitt himself replies to the contributors. In so doing, he further elaborates his views on various of these issues, for example, defending his claim in opposition to Chomskyan orthodoxy that languages are external rather than internal, his well-known causal theory of reference, his shocking idea that meanings can be causal, non-descriptive modes of presentation, his methodological naturalism, his commitment to scientific realism, and his version of biological essentialism. The volume will appeal to all scholars and students interested in contemporary theoretical analytic philosophy and will be a must-read for any serious researcher in philosophy of language. It provides a deep insight into the work of one of the most important living philosophers and will help readers to better understand language and reality from a naturalistic perspective.

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