

Impossible languages

One of the most striking discoveries of contemporary linguistics is that the structure of human languages ignores the only incontrovertible fact that pertains them, i.e. that utterances are produced in linear sequences of words. This fact raises at least two types of questions: first, what is the nature of this neglect? Is it an "arbitrary and cultural convention" to paraphrase Lenneberg's caveat? Or is it due to a biologically determined set of instructions characterizing the children's "stem mind"? It will be shown that artificial flat languages combined with neuroimaging techniques allows us to refute the former hypothesis and refine our understanding of impossible languages. Second, what is the impact of this state of affairs on our understanding of the relationship between reality, experience and the human brain? Eventually, some final consideration on the externalization processes based on electrophysiology will be addressed proving that we can access syntax independently of sound information.