

PLENARY

THE MOTORIC AND COGNITIVE MECHANISMS OF EVOLVING DIALECTICAL DIFFERENCES

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ABSTRACT

Language, like all tools, must evolve and be shaped to fit the need(s) of the user(s) and the demands of the environment in which it is being used. During these “language evolutions”, we observe numerous dialectical shifts and differences within language behaviors. Such differences refer to variations of language and communication across geographic regions, social groups, and cultural backgrounds. They include variations of language behaviors related to articulation/pronunciation, grammar/syntax, lexicon/vocabulary, and the use of nonverbal communication such as gestures and body language. First I will focus on the underlying cognitive mechanisms that support each of these language behaviors and their role in directing and guiding them as they shift to meet both the demands of the linguistic environment and goals of the speaker. Next I will discuss the motor system, within the context of perception and action, as it relates to the social cognitive aspects of language as a synchronized interaction between speakers. Finally, I will explain the role of embodied cognition on these language behaviors as they shift over time and the importance of engaging in it in order for a successful dialectical transition to occur.