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خودآگاهی به مثابه بازتاب زبان از خویشتن: از هگل تا ویتگنشتاین

علیرضا فرمان

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چکیده

اطلاعات مقاله

ماهیت خودآگاهی همچنان پرسشی بنیادین در فلسفه ذهن، پدیدارشناسی و فلسفه زبان باقی مانده است. اگرچه خودآگاهی معمولاً به عنوان آگاهی سوژه از خودش تعریف می‌شود، این مفهوم چالش‌های هستی‌شناختی و مفهومی عمیقی را در خود نهفته دارد که فیلسوفانی از هگل تا ویتگنشتاین را به خود مشغول کرده است. پرسش دیرپا این است که آیا خودآگاهی باید صرفاً نوعی بازتاب ذهنی به شمار آید، یا امری که در درون زبان و بواسطه زبان پدید می‌آید. این مقاله این گزاره را پیش مینهد که خودآگاهی نه صرفاً یک حالت ذهنی، بلکه یک رویداد زبانی است. آنچه خودآگاهی می‌نامیم، در سطحی عمیق‌تر، تجلی ظرفیت بازتابی زبان برای توصیف و تفسیر کارکردهای خودش است. از این منظر، خودآگاهی زمانی ظهور می‌یابد که زبان قادر می‌شود ساختار و کارکرد خود را به محتوای گفتمان تبدیل کند و بدین سان زبان از ابزاری ارتباطی به رسانه‌ای خودبنیان بدل گردد. در حالی که طیف گسترده‌ای از سنت‌های فلسفی - از دیالکتیک هگلی و قصدمندی هوسرلی گرفته تا عرفان اسلامی و نظریه‌های متأخر زبان‌شناختی - خودآگاهی را بررسی کرده‌اند، بیشتر آنها نقش زبان در ساخت خودبازتابی را نادیده گرفته‌اند. این پژوهش می‌کوشد تا از طریق گفت‌وگویی فلسفی و چندصدایی، این بُعد مغفول‌مانده را روشن سازد و نشان دهد که خودآگاهی را می‌توان کنش بازتابی زبان بر خودش تلقی کرد. علاوه بر این، این دیدگاه چارچوبی عینی برای پژوهش تجربی خودآگاهی ترسیم می‌کند و استدلال می‌نماید که با ریشه‌یابی این پدیده در سازوکارهای زبانی، مطالعه هوشیاری می‌تواند از قلمرویی ذهنی به حوزه‌های تجربی آزمون‌پذیر و عینی بدل شود.

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Self-awareness as the Reflection of Language on itself: From Hegel to Wittgenstein

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Abstract

The nature of self-awareness remains a fundamental question in philosophy of mind, phenomenology, and the philosophy of language. Although commonly fff dddd dd eee uuji ttt ss rrrr sssss ss ttll ,, ssss ss iinn nnnlll s rrffuudd conceptual and ontological challenges that have preoccupied philosophers from Hegel to Wittgenstein. The enduring question is whether self-awareness should be viewed as a purely mental reflection or as something that arises within and through language itself. This paper advances the thesis that self-awareness is not merely a mental state but a linguistic event. What we call the awareness of the self is, at a ppprr ee,,, ,, mttttttt ttt ff aeggggss aaævvv iiiiii ii oo rrrrr rrr ddd interpret its own operations. In this view, self-awareness emerges when language becomes capable of turning its own structure and function into the content of discourse, thus transforming language from a communicative tool into a self-reflective medium. While a wide range of philosophical traditions—from Hegelian dialectics and Husserlian intentionality to Islamic mysticism and later linguistic theories—have examined self-awareness, most have overlooked the constitutive role of language in enabling self-reflection. This study seeks to illuminate this neglected dimension through a polyphonic philosophical dialogue, demonstrating that self-awareness can be conceived as the reflexive act of language upon itself. Furthermore, this perspective outlines an objective framework for the experimental investigation of self-awareness, suggesting that by grounding the phenomenon in linguistic mechanisms, the study of consciousness may move from a subjective domain toward an empirically testable and objective field of inquiry.

Keywords:

Self-awareness, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, Phenomenology, Islamic Mysticism

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The nature of self-awareness remains one of the most enduring and controversial questions in contemporary philosophy. It lies at the intersection of philosophy of mind, phenomenology, and philosophy of language. In previous work (Farnam, 2025), I proposed tttt hle dddddd bbbbtmmnff nnnuuuuuuuuuuuas iiii aaaadddy dddddd ddddmrrs — how physical brain-processes such as electron movements and chemical interactions give rise to subjective mental experiences — can be addressed by considering language, particularly inner speech, as a mediating mechanism linking material neural activity with mental phenomena through its regulatory effects on memory, arousal and internal narrative formation. Although self-awareness is often nnnnnn iimlly ss eeee eee''''' aaa ssssss sf ss'''''''''''''''' a nnnnnnnm conceals complex conceptual difficulties that have occupied philosophers for centuries (Zahavi, 2018). Central to these difficulties is the question: Can self-awareness be understood merely as a mental reflection, or must it be reconsidered within and through language itself?

From Hegel to Wittgenstein, this issue has been reformulated within markedly different philosophical frameworks. Hegel (1807/1977) conceives of self-awareness as a dialectical process in which the self comes to know itself only through recognition by another. In contrast, Wittgenstein relocates the discussion from metaphysical introspection to linguistic expression, emphasizing that the grammar of our language shapes the very possibility of self-knowledge (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009; Hacker, 2013). More recent Wittgensteinian readings, such as those by Bar-On (2019) and Finkelstein (2003), argue that first-person authority arises not from private access to inner states but from publicly rule-governed linguistic practices.

Phenomenological approaches, beginning with Husserl, provide another dimension by distinguishing between pre-reflective and reflective forms of self-awareness (Husserl, 1950/1999; Zahavi, 2005). According to this view, consciousness is inherently self-aware in its intentional structure, yet capable of turning upon itself in reflective awareness. This distinction underscores that self-awareness may not originate from introspection alone but is embedded in the very structure of experience and meaning.

Despite this philosophical richness, a gap persists in discussions of the linguistic constitution of self-awareness. Language, I argue, is not merely an instrument for expressing inner experiences but the medium through which the self emerges as self-rff..... .. tt ee llll llll ssssss ss hle """"""""""tt a rrrrrr rrrrrr rre mffff aaaaooa ff ggggggge's yyyyyyyoo ee-describe its nnn uggggggggggss nnnnnnnnnnnnlll/// 00))) gggg,,,, ,,, ,ssss ss my ggggggge ee an hle mnnss of my llll .. " nnhlss,,,,, self-awareness appears not as a purely mental phenomenon but as a linguistic event, a turning of language back upon itself (Taylor, 2016).

hhe oorrhh cccooa yyyyyt tt nnn'''''' rroooooomnnnnnn nn ii s
nnnoooooo ff gggggg, pppoonng oow hle oooooa ff hle "ffff" cnn ee

articulated within the framework of language-games. Finally, the fifth section discusses the theoretical and philosophical implications of this approach, including the relation between language and subjectivity and the place of first-person experience within a theory of meaning.

Thus, the present paper seeks to provide a conceptual possibility for rethinking self-awareness—not as a purely mental phenomenon, but as a linguistic manifestation that emerges within the reflexive structures of language itself.

2. Hegel's concept of Selbstbewusstsein: the return of consciousness to itself through the other

Self-awareness—occupies a foundational position. It represents not only the culmination of the dialectical progression of consciousness but also the necessary transition toward the realms of Reason (Vernunft) and Spirit (Geist). In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807/1977), Hegel interprets self-awareness not as a pre-given attribute of the subject but as a historical and dialectical moment in the evolution of consciousness: the moment in which consciousness, through its encounter with the Other, returns to itself and recognizes itself as an autonomous subject (Pippin, 1989; Taylor, 1975).

In other words, self-awareness for Hegel is inherently intersubjective—it appears only in relation to another consciousness. The paradigmatic manifestation of this process is found in the master–slave dialectic, where two self-conscious beings struggle for mutual recognition (Anerkennung). In this struggle, one achieves dominance and becomes the master, attaining a limited form of self-awareness through negation, while the other becomes the bondsman, who, through labor and engagement with the material world, attains a deeper and more mediated form of self-awareness (Hegel, 1977; Kojève, 1969). Thus, Selbstbewusstsein is not a static state but a dialectical process that traverses alienation to reach self-recognition.

Yet within this profound dialectical framework, the element of language remains notably absent. Hegel acknowledges language as a medium of return to itself. How does recognition occur in the encounter with the Other? How does the self grasp itself as itself? If recognition is mediated by negation, what is the role of language in this mediation? These questions concern the linguistic conditions of self-awareness.

Even if pre-linguistic—and yet no systematic analysis is offered of how this articulation arises. Thus, groundbreaking, still presupposes a mind-centered model of subjectivity,

overlooking the linguistic ground upon which self-reflection becomes possible (Habermas, 1987).

In the following sections, this conceptual gap will be examined further. The paper aims to reinterpret self-awareness not merely as a mental or dialectical event, but as a linguistic phenomenon—a reflection of language upon itself that constitutes the very possibility of the self.

2.1. Critical reflection: Is Selbstbewusstsein Possible Without Language?

“”””” ’ yyyyyyyff self-awareness, as shown above, relies on the dialectical structure through which the subject attains self-recognition via the Other. However, this process rests on a tacit presupposition: that the subject can recognize itself as itself. Yet how does such recognition occur? Can this return to the self be conceptualized without a system of signs—that is, without language?

From the perspectives of philosophy of language and psychoanalysis, the answer is largely negative. Jacques Lacan, in his psychoanalytic re-reading of Freud and Hegel, argues that the subject is born within language and that selfhood emerges only through entry into the Symbolic Order. As Lacan 1177nn “”””” , ss oonn nn hle llll d ff hle tt h’’’s gggggg”””” cccc ,, self-awareness is not pre-linguistic but linguistically structured.

Similarly, Merleau-Ponty, in *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962) and *The Structure of Behavior* (1963), maintains that language is not a mere instrument of expression but the very form through which consciousness of the world—and of oneself—oooooooo pbbbbbbggggggg,, ee tttt ,, ss eeee eennd ooyy ff tee bbbj””””””””””””””””gggggiidd xnnnnnnnn aaa intersubjectively meaningful.

Even in more recent accounts, such ss sssssss sss od’s ooooo ff tee ffff-interpreting subject, self-awareness entails a form of internal narration—and oooooooss imoosllll e ii hhuut nnncccccæcmoor iii oor 11,,,, ,, ss llly through language that we can make sense of what we experience and ascribe mrr oo p pnnnnnn nennng oo...”

Accordingly, one may argue that Selbstbewusstsein, as Hegel describes it, though appearing to be a purely dialectical and mental event, is in its very foundation dependent upon linguistic structures that enable the stabilization and reflection of selfhood. Without symbolic articulation, the return of consciousness to itself would remain a fleeting and unstable experience.

Thus, from both linguistic and psychoanalytic perspectives, self-awareness without language is not merely difficult but structurally impossible. It is precisely at this juncture—rrrr e H’’’’ ’ ii cccdl llll 1 dd.. falls silent—that a new conceptual possibility opens: to reconceive self-awareness as the reflection of language upon itself, rather than merely the return of awareness to itself.

In semiotics, language is often regarded as the most advanced and organized sign system, because, in addition to producing meaning, it possesses the capacity to represent and interpret other sign systems (Chandler, 2017, pp. 45-47). Thinkers such as Saussure (1916/1983) and Barthes (1964/1988) consider language as a central model for analyzing semiotic processes. Consequently, given the limitations of other semiotic systems, and the fact that within human inner language virtually all these systems are subsumed under language (for instance, when judging the specific abilities of two individuals, we might internally rely solely on the mathematical equals sign), it can therefore be asserted with certainty that among all semiotic systems, only language possesses complex abstract capabilities (such as reflexivity) and can serve as the foundation for a complex intra-psychic phenomenon like self-awareness (Winner, 1988; Vygotsky, 1962/1986).

3. Language as the ground of self-awareness: when language turns upon itself

Up to this point, we have seen that the classical conception of self-awareness—*ennn hhhnn H'''' ' ii cccdl llll ll yyyo* remains largely silent on the role of language. This section proposes an alternative hypothesis: self-awareness is not merely the return of awareness to itself but rather the return of language to itself—the moment in which language becomes capable of describing its own functioning.

In this view, self-awareness may be conceived as a linguistic phenomenon emerging at a certain level of linguistic complexity—one where language reflects upon its own operations and thereby constitutes the conditions for subjectivity. In other words, it is not mind that asks about *ssssssss t gggggge hltt uunnnnnm nnd sssssssss sssssssss hle '''' ss hle* product of this self-reflexive inquiry.

Phenomenological self-awareness, defined in its simplest terms as "a being's experience of its own existence from within" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 15), is uniquely characteristic of human beings (Gallagher, 2000, p. 15). This entails not merely the display of intelligent behavior, but the first-person experience of emotions, perceptions, pain, thoughts, or one's own presence (Legrand, 2006, p. 94). The emergence of this type of self-awareness in children begins around the age of two, when the child starts using the word "I" and first-person pronouns to refer to herself and her actions (Coates, 1985, p. 660; Owens, 1996, p. 288), and continues to develop over the following decades (Kagan, 1991, p. 142).

However, the most rudimentary degree of self-awareness—which is measured by the "mirror test" (or "mark test"), assessing whether a particular being is capable of recognizing itself in a mirror (Gallup, 1970, p. 88)—is observed in children aged 18–24 months as well as in certain evolutionarily

advanced animals such as chimpanzees, orangutans, dolphins, elephants, and magpies (Gallup, 1970, p. 88; Plotnik et al., 2006, p. 217; Prior et al., 2008, p. 937). Nevertheless, it is certain that this degree of self-awareness is insufficient for the emergence of phenomena such as art, aesthetics, spirituality, and the like. Phenomenal self-awareness—the full, lived, first-person experience of the self—emerges only in mature human beings with vvvppppld iiggii cccc cccyyyyy yyyyyyyyyyy,, ,,,,, ,; yy kkkkkk, 1962/1986, p. 126).

Consider the following utterances:

“mmmmiii iii gg tttt eee aatt hltt mmmmaaggge—ttt ’’’’ ’ ... atttt ff ms
sssss s”

“I tttt ttt t t y I ddddh””””

“eeee I edll y urrrr mmmmmmeelf?”

At first glance, these sentences seem trivial, but structurally they reveal something profound: language re-describes its own linguistic acts. This level of reflexivity is akin to what the philosophy of language calls metalanguage (Tarski, 1933/1956), yet there is a crucial difference. In classical metalanguage, a second-order language is used to describe a first-order one. In human self-awareness, however, it is everyday language itself that bends inward, turning upon its own expressive activity.

This recursive linguistic movement, by which language narratively integrates sensory experience with memory and emotional tone, produces a coherent account of the self. In this sense, inner language continuously generates narratives that stabilize experience; and when this inner narrative becomes self-descriptive, the phenomenon of self-awareness arises.

3.1. Inner speech, representation, and the linguistic Phenomenon of the “I”

In cognitive psychology and philosophy of mind, the concept of inner speech has long been regarded as a crucial mechanism for thought and self-uuuwooooo Ccccccoormll nnnnn nreeee eee yy oot... ’s 1l))) theory of)dddddldllll lllll lll aaa m Coomyyy’s 6666, 00))) eevvvvvw model of internal grammar—two approaches that, despite their divergent genealogies, both view language as constitutive of cognition.

The present argument takes a further step: language is not merely the medium for thought but the very horizon within which the subject emerges. In other words, self-awareness is hlt ott eeee ee aaggge’s yyyyyyyoe describe its own functioning. Inner speech, while constantly shaping thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, can itself become the object of linguistic reflection—a higher-rrrrr “maaa-nrrrr ’’’’’’’’’’ ”’t ssssssss sse nnooigg linguistic processes within the mind (Morin, 2005; Fernyhough, 2016).

hhhhnnrhlss aaamekkkk, hle II'' ss oot nn nrpppendent substance but a linguistic event that manifests in structures such as: self-reference, self-evaluation, and hlo ooooooooooooooff nn''o onn mttt

The subject is thus born where language becomes entangled with itself. This perspective radically departs from mentalist traditions of analyzing self-awareness, situating it instead within the reflexive operations of language. From this standpoint, mentality is not the cause of language but its product; and self-awareness marks the moment when language attains the capacity for self-analysis and self-reflection.

Moreover, this perspective may open new avenues for experimental research on self-awareness, since no specific location or definitive mechanism for the emergence of self-awareness has yet been identified in contemporary neuroscience. However, if self-awareness is reconceptualized at the level of language, the vast body of knowledge regarding linguistic structures and their formation mechanisms would allow for experience-based objective experimentation, thereby transforming the study of self-awareness from a subjective discipline into one grounded in empirical objectivity.

4. Phenomenology and mysticism — inner awareness, language of the self

The central idea of this paper. that self-awareness is not merely the return of awareness to itself, but the return of language to itself—invites a rethinking of those philosophical and mystical traditions that grounded self-awareness in immediate experience, silence, or inner intuition. These traditions, though not denying the linguistic nature of awareness, have tended to treat language as secondary or external. Yet even within such frameworks, language implicitly structures the very horizon of self-awareness. To illustrate this claim, three parallel perspectives will be aaamnn:: '''''''' ' hheoomoooooy ff itt yyyyyyyyyyyl ll uuu-oo''' s emooii pp peeoo'' ooii nnn nm bb 's nnodggcdl mysssss .

In phenomenological philosophy, pre-linguistic intentionality is a kind of orientation, meaning, or "aboutness" of the mind that exists prior to the formation of language and words, and encompasses all of our automatic behaviors and unconscious dispositions (including skills or phobias, among others) (Husserl, 1901/2001, p. 105; Gallagher & Zahavi, 2021, p. 78). It is obvious that an individual's being conscious does not mean that human beings are always and everywhere conscious. Sigmund Freud emphasized the existence of unconscious processes in humans (Freud, 1915/1957, p. 172), and the discovery of non-declarative or procedural memory (which underlies skills and phobias) and unconscious processes are facts that attest to the existence of unconscious processes—the psychological equivalent of pre-linguistic intentionality—in the conscious human being (Schacter, 1987, p. 501; Squire, 2004, p. 174).

4.1. Husserl: the silence of consciousness or a hidden language?

However, this very assumption raises a paradox: can consciousness truly intuit itself without being, at least potentially, expressible in language? Even if awareness occurs in silence, its very structure presupposes differentiation, reference, and self-reflection—all linguistic functions (Zahavi, 2014). Thus, consciousness is neither fully linguistic nor non-linguistic but proto-linguistic: a suspended form of language that still carries its semantic potential. In this sense, silence is meaningful only within the horizon of language; it is, paradoxically, the inverse form of speech.

The very act of epoché—the bracketing of presuppositions to return to pure phenomena—is itself a linguistic act, a performative move of consciousness that depends on the internal logic of meaning (Derrida, 1967).

Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012), he argues that language is not a mere instrument of thought but the very becoming of

For Merleau-Ponty, the body is not simply the locus of perception—it is the first language of the subject. Gestures, movements, silences, and gazes are linguistic in structure, forming a pre-reflective discourse between the self and the world (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012). Thus, self-awareness emerges only eeeee emooii mttt add gggggge nccccchhe nnnnnniff uggggge oo "~~~~~" ee ruuuuoo''' s aaamekkkk oooomes hle s'''s ooooooood through its bodily expression.

nn aaamccc ll mmmmmmmmmiiiiiii Inn '''''' ' meyyyyyyyssooq, ffff-
awareness is grounded in the divine reflection within the human being. In al-
Futuhat al-Makkiyya and Fusus al-Hikam, Ibn Arabi (1205/1980) describes
uumyyyyysss tee mooooohhoggh hhhhhh ddd nnnmmmpsssss ss ss fff: dddd eeeii
ii msnnnn nnnnn oooo ch hmrr rrrr rrtt ''''''''

ppuuuuuu nnnnnrrr mnnnnnn nn bbb iiii is aaamekkkkk, nnoodd hlrhhhhh hle
progressive realization of divine Names within the self—each a linguistic-
ontological event that reveals consciousness as a dialogical process between
God and man.

All three traditions—“”””” ’ ccccccclllll ll oooooooy, uuuuuu-uu””’ s mnbdddddpppsssvtty, ddd bbn ””””’ ’ myllllll ll ooy—appear to distance themselves from language. Yet, upon closer examination, each presupposes it as the condition of possibility for self-awareness. Even in silence and intuition, consciousness depends on the reflective potential of language.

5. Wittgenstein — from the limits of language to the games of the self

5.1. The tractatus: language, world, and the silence of the subject

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein begins with his famous assertion:

From within the dynamics of language games, a phenomenon traditionally

but not as an inner metaphysical entity. Rather, it is a grammatical function, a linguistic role embedded in the logic of our practices. As Hacker succinctly puts it:

“... a meta-linguistic function.” (Hacker, 1990, p. 147)

where it can make itself its own topic. To be self-aware, then, is to be capable of participating in those games where language mirrors its own use. The self is an order effect.

5.4. Synthesis: Boundary, Silence, and Reflection

From the silence of the *Tractatus* to the dialogical multiplicity of the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein traverses a path from the limits of language to its self-reflective play. The subject, once silent and external to the world, reappears as a participant in the grammar of experience.

In this view, self-awareness is not a metaphysical essence but a linguistic event—an emergent property of our capacity to speak about speaking. The form of selfhood.

Language is not a mere instrument of thought; it is the medium in which thought and self alike occur.

6. Reflective Language and the Redefinition of Self-awareness

The comparative analysis presented in Table 1 highlights the evolution of philosophical perspectives on the interrelation between self-awareness and language, tracing a conceptual trajectory from Hegelian dialectics to contemporary linguistic and phenomenological thought. As shown, each mode of mediation. For Hegel (1807/1977), *Selbstbewusstsein* emerges through recognition by the Other, implying that selfhood is fundamentally intersubjective. Phenomenology, particularly in Husserl (1913/1982) and Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012), grounds self-awareness in pre-linguistic experience, where language merely articulates intentional consciousness rather than constituting it. In contrast, Islamic mysticism (Ibn Arabi; Chittick, 1989) interprets self-awareness as a divine reflection — the unveiling of the unity of being through symbolic and spiritual language.

by identifying self-reference as a grammatical function within language-games, dissolving the metaphysical notion of an inner self. Habermas (1987, 2003) extends this turn by embedding self-understanding within the framework of communicative rationality, where language is no longer a mere instrument for transmitting information but a medium for

intersubjective understanding. Building on this communicative paradigm, the present article proposes that language functions not only as a means of understanding others but as a medium for self-understanding — a reflexive structure through which consciousness returns to itself. Thus, the self is reconceived as a linguistic event, an occurrence in which language becomes aware of itself through reflective articulation.

This comparative overview underscores the continuity and transformation of the problem of self-awareness from metaphysical and phenomenological traditions to a distinctly linguistic conception of subjectivity. As summarized in Table 1, the transition from recognition (Hegel) to expression (phenomenology), revelation (mysticism), and reflexivity (Wittgenstein and Habermas) culminates in the present thesis: that self-awareness is the reflexivity of language itself, rather than a mental representation of an inner subject.

Table 1. Comparative Overview of Theories of Self-Awareness and Language

Philosophical Tradition / Thinker	Core View of Self-Awareness	Role of Language	Relation Between Self and Other	Implication for the Concept of “Self”
Hegel (1807)	Selbstbewusstsein to itself through the recognition of the Other.	Implicit medium of recognition and mediation of Spirit.	The self becomes itself only through the dialectical relation with the Other.	The self is intersubjectively constituted.
Phenomenology (Husserl, Merleau-Ponty)	Consciousness as intentionality directed toward phenomena.	Language expresses but does not constitute experience.	The Other is a horizon within lived experience.	The self is embodied and experiential.
Islamic Mysticism (Ibn Arabi)	Self-awareness as divine reflection knowing oneself through knowing God.	Language is symbolic and revelatory (logos-like).	The Other is the mirror of divine manifestation.	The self dissolves into the unity of Being (wahdat al-wjīd).
Wittgenstein (1953, 2009)	Self-awareness as linguistic reflexivity—the self reflects on itself through language.	Language constitutes meaning and the boundaries of sense.	Understanding the Other occurs within shared linguistic practices.	The self is a linguistic position within rule-governed practices.
Habermas (1987, 2003)	Self-understanding emerges through communicative rationality.	Language is a medium for intersubjective understanding, not a tool for transmission.	The Other is a participant in discourse aimed at mutual comprehension.	The self is dialogically formed.
Thesis	Self-awareness as linguistic reflexivity—the self reflects on itself through language.	Language is not a tool for expression but the very medium of self-reflection.	The Other (and the self) emerge within the reflexive loops of linguistic activity.	The self is the event of language becoming self-aware.

6.1. Language as Reflexive Mediation

From this standpoint, the I is not a pre-linguistic given but a linguistic event. The act of self-reflection unfolds through the dialogical nature of language, wherein the self appears simultaneously as speaker and listener. Hegel (1009997) ddd llyyyy mmmndddddddd tcnuuuuuuuuuuuuuu es or ffffff ff yyhboogh ttt "''''' '''. 11)), a rrrreeeeett ssssss ss nnnucccc interaction: meaning arises through difference, and selfhood is constituted in its self-differentiation through linguistic mediation (Pippin, 2019).

If consciousness is always already linguistic, then Being itself must be conceived within the horizon of language. Heidegger (1959/2025) famously described language as the house of Being, where Being is disclosed. Language does not merely represent an external world but rather opens a space of manifestation where phenomena acquire meaning. The world as we experience it is not a collection of isolated objects but a meaningful whole that is disclosed through language. As Heidegger (1959/2025) states, "Language is the house of Being; in its dwelling we may dwell." (p. 55). This idea is central to Heidegger's philosophy, as it suggests that language is not just a tool for communication but a way of being in the world. It is through language that we understand and experience the world around us. The world is not a collection of isolated objects but a meaningful whole that is disclosed through language. As Heidegger (1959/2025) states, "Language is the house of Being; in its dwelling we may dwell." (p. 55). This idea is central to Heidegger's philosophy, as it suggests that language is not just a tool for communication but a way of being in the world. It is through language that we understand and experience the world around us.

6.3. Inner Speech and the First-Person Perspective

A key question is whether self-awareness can exist apart from language.

oo vvvv,, eesssss sss nnnmrq uuuee tggggtt ” mnhhsseeehlht eeessss ss
 separate cognition from linguistic form neglect how deeply linguistic
 structures permeate self-related awareness. The Review of Philosophy and
 Psychology article Inner Speech ddd rrrr ”” hhuuhht – Do We Think in
 Language? (2024) concludes that the boundaries between thought and
 language are porous, making inner speech a constitutive element of self-
 aaa r..... . ee nnnrrr ooi”””” ss hhs hhhha oonniiee ddd ooodllllll l dde
 through which language reflects upon itself and gives rise to the I.

7. Implications and Open Horizons

The findings indicate that conceptualizing self-awareness at the linguistic level provides an objective basis for experimental inquiry, enabling measurable and reproducible approaches that bridge the gap between subjective experience and empirical and objective analysis.

The inquiry that guided this paper—What is self-awareness?—finds a revised answer in the idea that self-awareness is not merely the awareness of a self but the reflexive activity of language itself. When language becomes capable of describing its own operation, the phenomenon of selfhood arises. This move shifts the ontological burden from a metaphysical subject to a

This reconceptualization thus aligns with contemporary thought in phenomenology and philosophy of mind: consciousness is not an isolated Cartesian domain but a dialogical and interpretive field structured by linguistic mediation (Zahavi, 2014). Consequently, self-awareness becomes a linguistic reflexivity phenomenon, appearing whenever language turns toward itself to re-describe its own functioning.

ggggggghle hhhhooon H'''''' , ii cccccc oo tttt nnn'''''' , ggggaee aaee s
clarifies the conceptual shift. For Hegel (1807/1977), Selbstbewusstsein

emerges through recognition—consciousness finds itself through the
 ee ii nnnnnff ooohh.. nn tttt nnnssssss ss55//))))))),, nnnn nrg ss ;;;
 thus, selfhood arises not from metaphysical introspection but from
 participation in rule-governed linguistic practices. As Brandom (2019)
 ppp,,,,, ooooo a ffff ff oooo a ll yrr in hle mmm of ii ii gg ddd nnnnm ocr
 ssssn” pp 22.. ggggeeee eeyyyysssssss ss hhhle eeeee ddd tee rrrrr rr
 reflexivity.

nn hls rr ggrsssoq, hle ooooo ff eeee ffff ffft eee””””””””””ms into
 eeee eeeeggge hltt eesss ”””””””””” e hhoodlllll ll sss hls mvves ooon
 the subject of consciousness to the medium of articulation that gives rise to
 that subject.

7.3. Defending the Linguistic View of Self-Awareness

The proposed model situates self-awareness entirely within linguistic and
 social frameworks. McDowell (1994) has emphasized that our conceptual
 eeeeeeee eee nnnoodddddd dd hle ii ee,, ” ee nnnrg hltt gggggge ee ii ees
 even our perceptual experience. This view supports the idea that
 consciousness and language are coextensive phenomena—each presupposes
 and sustains the other.

Empirical and theoretical studies in cognitive science reinforce this
 philosophical claim. Carruthers (2023) argues that self-knowledge depends
 on internal linguistic models that simulate external dialogue. Similarly, Clark
 (2022) ggggeesss hltt hle ddddddld midd” nrdsss nnnccccccccccccc ss
 constitutive scaffolding for reflective awareness. Thus, self-awareness arises
 wherever language loops back upon itself through communicative or
 introspective articulation.

7.4. Interdisciplinary Extensions

The conception of self-awareness as linguistic reflexivity opens new
 pathways for research across several domains:

a. Psychoanalysis

In Freudian and Lacanian traditions, speech already mediates the
 nnnnnuuuuuccc nn 1177)) ii eee d hle nnnnnuuuuu as “uuuuuuuu kkk a
 gggggg”””” mrl ynrg tttt ffff-aeeee eess sssss ss ly nnmoe tt s nnnn nsss
 speech rearticulates its own prior narrative. The therapeutic act, therefore,
 involves enabling language to reflect upon its repressed layers (Fink, 2023).

b. Cognitive Linguistics

Recent studies explore how meta-linguistic verbs—such as say, think, hear
 oneself—enable higher-order linguistic representation (Langacker, 2021).
 These verbs delineate the linguistic architecture that makes self-reference

c. Artificial Intelligence

7.5. Toward an Open Conclusion

In this light, the self is not the origin of speech but its consequence. Consciousness is not a substance but a linguistic relation: the ongoing dialogue through which language interrogates itself and, in doing so, creates the space of subjectivity.

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