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## Prayer/“Prayer” Duality applied to English: A theory of English language

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this article is applying the already developed research line of Prayer/“Prayer” Duality, to English language. In order to do this, the concept of praying in English is placed within a context, to then starting some theoretical and logical deductions. It was found a likely subsystem within the mind/brain and specific to English, is similar to and within Prayer/“Prayer” Duality. This potential subsystem is in charge of praying in English, among other operations holding a metaphysical nature. Further research may provide more insights on the matter.*

**Keywords:** English, language, prayer, Prayer/“Prayer” Duality.

### 1. Introduction

Through history, linguistics and cognitive science have seen progress through different stages in which these disciplines have evolved. One of these stages, certainly, has been Chomskian linguistics, together with previous and posterior work, with their corresponding consequences for cognitive science. Our research is in a way, the next step of a historical progression ranging from philosophy to behaviorism, after which a fully scientific discipline had been born, in this case Chomskian linguistics, which has been dominant in language research (Alvarez, 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Chomsky, 1957, 1995, 2009; Rubidge, 1990; Skinner, 1958; Taylor, 2019).

At some point of the Chomskian enterprise, it was noticed a purely rational approach was not enough, but that new insights considering the metaphysical and potentially spiritual aspects of language, had something to say in an equation that seemed to be incomplete. The concept of prayer proved, at some point, that much more could be said about the nature of human language and

cognition, even when the new path found was only an alternative theoretical path to follow. However, the whole idea has proven powerful enough to gain new insights into the functioning of the mind/brain. Additionally, it can be said we have been ambitious enough to believe this whole line of research is able to include (if not giving a metaphysical and deep account of) English, among other languages, for example German, recently analyzed through Prayer/“Prayer” Duality (Alvarez, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2024).

### 2. Literature Review

#### 2.1. Prayer/“Prayer” Duality

Prayer/“Prayer” Duality can be defined as a module in the mind/brain, in charge of prayer and other operations having a metaphysical nature (Alvarez, 2024; Chomsky, 1995). It was initially conceived as a system of interplay mostly between prayer and language. However, recent research has revealed it may provide insights about the interplay between prayer and some

particular languages, for example German and in this case, hopefully English (Alvarez, 2019, 2024).

## 2.2. English language

English language is a West Germanic language belonging to the Indo-European language family. English is closely related to the Frisian, German, and Dutch languages. It originated in England and is the dominant language of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and various island nations in the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean (Britannica, n.d.).

## 2.3. Language

Language is initially conceived as a rational system, whose conceptualization is based on Chomskian tradition. This notion is then to be challenged by a metaphysical approach, mainly based on the relation between language and prayer (Alvarez, 2018a; 2018b; Alvarez, 2019; Chomsky, 1957, 1995), which conceives the idea language is a fuzzy system (Alvarez, 2019) and not a discrete one, as proposed by Rothe et al. (2016) and Haines (2021).

## 3. Discussion

The concept of prayer and the word “prayer”, may have special properties that can provide a deeper understanding of these phenomena and how they interact with language and cognition, thus enriching our understanding of these two realms. We have tried to create theoretically productive connections between the concept and lexicalization of prayer, and linguistic and cognitive insights that can shed light into our understanding of human language and cognition. Thus, we have not only focused on the concept of prayer as phenomenon and potential reality, but also on the word “prayer” and the linguistic and cognitive depth it holds.

Furthermore, going deep into the concept of prayer from a linguistic and cognitive perspective, through theoretical explorations and deductions, has led to deep neurological and organic considerations in the realm of human-centered science. This has led to the discovery (or “discovery”) of a potential system within the mind/brain called Prayer/“Prayer” Duality (Alvarez, 2019, 2024; Chomsky, 1995), in charge of prayer and other activities holding a metaphysical and mysterious nature. However, Prayer/“Prayer” Duality research is not really new.

Our line of research, for that matter, is the next step following research dating back to Chomsky, Skinner and Descartes (Chomsky, 1957; Rubidge, 1990; Skinner, 1958). In that sense, much effort has been devoted to the explanation of language through rational and metaphysical means (Alvarez, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2020; Chomsky, 1957; Skinner, 1958). However, in this case we want to give an account of English. Therefore, the main purpose of this article is giving an account of English language, based on Prayer/“Prayer” Duality line of research.

In order to get into the main ideas of this article, we will show a footnote from the article What “from Chomsky on” means: reflections on language and lexicon (Alvarez, 2019), which is key to the purpose of this research, since it provides an alternative path of investigation, although a similar deviation was already applied in the article Prayer/“Prayer” Duality applied to German (Alvarez, 2024):

“It has to be noted the word “prayer” has different manifestations in many particular languages, for example Spanish (“oración”), French (“prière”), Italian, etc. This is a necessary clarification since we are not discussing English linguistics but linguistics in general.

“Prayer” in that sense, is just an example appropriate to the conventions of scientific communication but it does not have properties other than could be found in its translation to different particular languages. We state the word “prayer” has special properties but considering the content of this footnote” (Alvarez, 2019)

From this footnote we can infer that, the initial purpose of Prayer/“Prayer” Duality line of research, was giving an account of language. Therefore, the methods were to be driven focusing on general linguistics. In the case of this article in specific, the purpose is giving an account of English based on Prayer/“Prayer” Duality line of research. Therefore, the methodology will be driven with a focus on English linguistics. For that matter, the word “prayer” may have the potential to be a sample proving the metaphysical depth of English language. For this idea to work, the word “prayer” has to be taken as part of English language, and not as a translatable concept proving insights for general linguistics (Alvarez, 2019). At this point, we have the initial conditions to build a theory of English language, based on Prayer/“Prayer” Duality line of research. If we focus again on the sample word “prayer”, we will notice among other aspects, it has a phonological representation and a grammatical category. However, beyond that, it has a meaning beyond the scrutable, rationally speaking. What we need now is some kind of device, a mechanism, allowing us to go deeper into the world of the word “prayer”, as belonging to English, only to English and no other language. A possibility for that matter, is placing this special word within a sentence, but at the same time including the English-belonging variable. A likely idea for this purpose is the following sentence:

Flavorless salty ideas pray in English unconsciously, in which we have come up with the same type of grammatical and meaningless sentence we used almost at the beginning of Prayer/“Prayer” Duality line of research (Alvarez, 2018b), based on Chomskian grammatical and meaningless sample “colorless green ideas sleep furiously” (Chomsky, 1957). However, in that moment, the sample sentence did not have the addition “in English” it has now (Alvarez, 2018b). This additional linguistic element is the key to start the discussion on the application of the concept of prayer and Prayer/“Prayer” Duality, to English language. A key point of this sample is the phrase “in English”. Therefore, “praying in English” is one of the key concepts to pay attention to from now on and part of the central conceptualization we aim at proposing. Additionally, we cannot ignore the comparison established in previous research between praying in English and “praying in English”, in which deductions on the relation between language and reality are established (Alvarez, 2019). One of them, is the matter of whether “praying in English” is a linguistic sample to be analyzed or simply a metalinguistic mention of praying in English with a fake or ironic connotation through the quotation marks. In that sense, the ambiguity of language reveals, as it is not a question to be answered introspectively. This is contrary to what has been suggested in previous research, *i. e.* that the question should be directly answered by the theoretical reasoning in the scientific metalanguage (Alvarez, 2019). All this leads us to additional considerations from the same previous research we have been mentioning and citing.

- i)  $p_E$  is praying in English
- ii) “ $p_E$ ” is “praying in English”

However, contrary to the aforementioned research on Prayer/“Prayer” Duality, in this case a syntactic analysis does not

seem appropriate (Alvarez, 2019). Instead, a semantic analysis seems to be more aligned with the spirit of the praying-in-English concept. If we make a small adjustment to i) and ii) and replace “is” by “means”, we will have the following sentences:

- iii)  $p_E$  means praying in English
- iv) “ $p_E$ ” means “praying in English”

If we start the analysis, we will soon notice that iii) and iv) are radically different between them, in relation to the state of signifier and signified. Both examples point at a semantic statement connecting A and B, respectively. While iii) points at a rather conceptual way of looking at the issue, iv) belongs to the metalinguistic realm of analysis. We will explore them together. First, in iii) we have an algebraic expression ( $p_E$ ) having a semantic representation (praying in English). Secondly, in iv) we have the linguistic sample of an algebraic expression (“ $p_E$ ”), having a semantic representation (“praying in English”). We can see that *praying in English* is a semantic representation at the conceptual level while “praying in English” is a semantic representation at the linguistic level. Therefore, we are in front of a duality which can be labeled with the following name:

CL-Prayer-E Duality, in which CL is the Conceptual-Linguistic component of the Duality, while Prayer-E is a short way to express Prayer-in-English (Duality). Actually the whole name could have been Prayer-in-English/“Prayer-in- English” Duality. However, for the sake of presentation, we believe the name proposed is the best fit to label this system with precision. There is enough room to believe this duality, or system, is placed in the cognitive system, specifically within Prayer/“Prayer” Duality. Therefore, we may be in front of a previously unknown cognitive system or subsystem, which is the one we are presenting here. This subsystem may not only operate at the cognitive level but the neurological level as well. If this is true, it may have a neurobiological foundation and structure.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this article, we discussed the possibility a more specific version of Prayer/“Prayer” Duality could be found. It was found a subsystem specific to English within that duality is likely to exist, being its name CL-Prayer-E Duality, a neurocognitive subsystem in charge of praying in English, among other operations holding a metaphysical and mysterious nature, specific and/or related to English.

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