
Explicit self-representation and immunity to error through misidentification

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Résumé

This paper examines immunity to error through misidentification (IEM), focusing on self-representation. IEM emerges when tacit representational content is made explicit, which I illustrate by looking at how bats transition between egocentric and allocentric representations. When a bat converts distance information from its sonar (egocentric) into a cognitive map (allocentric), the self-ascription is IEM. The bat makes explicit tacit representational content that is always or necessarily true. The tacit content is true since the bat only puts information from *its* senses into the egocentric representation, and it only uses it for *its* locomotion. When the tacit assumptions on both the input and output side are always (or necessarily) true, then the resulting self-ascription is de facto (or logically) IEM.

Recanati and Ismael have similar ideas but cannot account for introspection. Recanati's focus on modes of experience struggles to explain why *all* experiences can ground IEM self-ascriptions, whereas Ismael's focus on transitions between media falters since in introspection, there is no such transition. We must understand that all representation is rooted in non-representational knowledge-how (Ryle). In introspection, we make explicit the knowledge-how – evident in how we, for instance, integrate disparate thoughts – that all thoughts I experience are *my* thoughts. The proposal offers several advantages. Unlike the simple view, it explains *why* certain self-ascriptions involve no identity judgements. I focus on background assumptions (rather than grounds), enabling me to distinguish between judgements that are *de facto* and logically IEM. I'm not affected by arguments to the effect that certain experiences aren't selfless. Finally, I can explain why the token-reflexive rule applies when it does – namely when true background assumptions are made explicit. This solves an issue that metasemantic accounts are confronted with, namely of explaining why certain experiences serve to fix the reference of 'I', whereas others do not.

Mots-Clés: immunity to error through misidentification, self, representation, egocentric representation, allocentric representation

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