

Titel: Mental Files in Perspective: Implications for Folk Psychology

Content:

The Course gives an introduction to mental files as used in Philosophy (Recanati 2012). We explore the role of mental files in empirical work on perspective taking and our conceptions of folk psychology.

Mental Files are representations of particulars, e.g., physical objects. They track their referent objects and accumulate information about them. Having more than one file for the same object (coreferential files) captures how different perspectives can be had on an object. Basic empirical questions concern when we deploy coreferential files and how we represent their referents' identity by *linking* the files, when one finds out that the files are coreferential.

Development of understanding belief and identity shows a marked simultaneity. This can be explained by an earlier inability to link coreferential files. This can be extended to a wider range of developmental phenomena: understanding the aspectuality of belief coincides with attributing second order beliefs. Information about an object is lost after a name change (re-conceptualization).

Brain imaging of "theory of mind" shows overlapping areas of activation with, e.g., processing linguistic identity statements, mathematical equations, person identification. The overlap points to a region with special expertise in linking coreferential files. Malfunction of this region might underlie delusional misidentification (Capgras, Fregoli syndromes). We explore potential implications on current views of functional brain organization.

Folk Psychology is the way we negotiate our social conduct. A longstanding and yet unresolved question is whether it consists of a "theory of mind" or of "simulation". I argue that it is based on practical reasoning (teleology) and use the empirical evidence from development and brain imaging to argue for this position.