ID: MSCA-19-VanOverwalle05

Discipline: Social and Behavioural Sciences

Title: Metacognition of sequences (languages: EN & NL)

Abstract: When we see someone smile we often assume that this person is happy; when we see someone having a quarrel we expect this person to be unfriendly. But how sure are we about these social judgments? When we make impressions about other people’s mental states and traits, we often need to introspect how confident we are. Person impressions are usually accompanied by a feeling of confidence emerging from the constant monitoring of our own thoughts and actions. The ability to reflect upon our own cognitive processes (e.g. evaluating the quality of our perceptions, memory, thoughts and actions) is known as metacognition, or “thinking about thinking”. Importantly, trying to understand others’ mental states and introspecting on how good we are in making these judgments form the basis for many social behaviors such as empathy, cooperation and affective understanding, but actually refer to two distinct processes. The ability to read the minds of other people is known as “mentalizing” (Frith & Frith, 1999) while the metacognitive ability to monitor our own mentalizing capacities is termed “meta-mentalizing”.

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