

## Re: The Identity Theory of Mind

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**From:** Lester Zick ([lesterDELzick\\_at\\_worldnet.att.net](mailto:lesterDELzick_at_worldnet.att.net))

**Date:** 09/28/04

Date: Tue, 28 Sep 2004 20:16:31 GMT

On Tue, 28 Sep 2004 13:15:43 -0500, Paul Bramscher  
<[brams006\\_nospam@tc.umn.edu](mailto:brams006_nospam@tc.umn.edu)> in comp.ai.philosophy wrote:

>Lester Zick wrote:

>

>> On Tue, 28 Sep 2004 10:17:46 -0300, "Sergio Navega"

>> <[snavega@intelliwise.com](mailto:snavega@intelliwise.com)> in comp.ai.philosophy wrote:

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>>

>>> "Lester Zick" <[lesterDELzick@worldnet.att.net](mailto:lesterDELzick@worldnet.att.net)> escreveu na mensagem

>>> [news:4155e080.19588644@netnews.att.net](mailto:news:4155e080.19588644@netnews.att.net)...

>>

>>

>> [...]

>>

>>

>>>> I routinely pose this question once a year so I might as well do it

>>>> here. Can you name any philosopher apart from Aristotle and the

>>>> syllogism who contributed anything to the history of ideas and

>>>> science that was demonstrably true and definitively correct?

>>>>

>>>> That's quite an interesting question. There's obviously those

>>>> philosophers who made "definitively correct" contributions to

>>>> logic, arithmetic and other such things, but they would, in

>>>> this case, be called mathematicians. Or one could cite so many

>>>> philosophers who introduced insightful ideas on the structure

>>>> and evolution of communication among humans, but they would,

>>>> in this case, be called linguists. Or then those who found a

>>>> way to speculate about some things of an empirical nature,

>>>> but they would be called scientists.

>>>>

>>>> That's the problem with philosophers. When they come up with

>>>> something that has an empirically strong side, they aren't

>>>> seen as philosophers anymore, they are scientists or

>>>> mathematicians, or linguists, etc. I believe that philosophers'

>>>> task should be to elaborate their abstract thoughts without

>>>> being "limited" by reality (and that's why I criticize

>>>> philosophies which try to \*restrict\* empirical work, such

>>>as the ones which try to conceive normative practices).  
>>>  
>>>What philosophers do is to provide "abstract thought patterns"  
>>>that can be suggestive or even \*analogically useful\* to  
>>>scientists. A scientist may be positively influenced by such  
>>>thought patterns, up to a point where he/she (the scientist)  
>>>may come up with an interesting hypothesis to be empirically  
>>>tested. The "origins" of this hypothesis may well be the "mental  
>>>diversions" of someone else. But what's really important is not  
>>>the origins, but the nature of the results obtained by its  
>>>serious application. I'm not fond of discussing highly philosophical  
>>>themes, but I really appreciate the vast number of insights that  
>>>often come from the minds of philosophers.  
>>  
>>  
>> Okay, Sergio. Extremely well analyzed. However, I would like to add  
>> that I have yet to see any scientific advance specifically prompted by  
>> some philosopher's philosophy, and I think that is the philosophers'  
>> problem and responsibility. It's not just about problematic daydreams.  
>>  
>> In Aristotle's case the syllogism was prompted by the specific desire  
>> and need to have some way to reason about ideas. In my case the  
>> philosophy was and is intended to produce a vision of a scientific  
>> metaphysics, some specific idea of how reality works in general such  
>> that it could and does yield what we see and know outside and in and  
>> does so in strict mechanical terms.  
>>  
>> Regards – Lester  
>  
>Thank goodness for empirical positivism. ;-)  
>  
>There is one way that philosophers might attempt to advance science,  
>though not theories. And this is following up on Popper's definition of  
>scientific statements as being those which are falsifiable.  
>  
>There are clearly (at least) two ways to falsify any statement. One is  
>to point out a contradiction in terms, an internal contradiction such  
>that the hypothesis as claimed is self-contradictory.

So, why is such a technique not an experimental and hence scientific validation? The assay of self contradiction is as much experimental as bean counting.

> Less strong,  
>philosophers might discuss necessary conclusions from the hypothesis  
>(external to it, but necessarily implied) which are in some way  
>contradictory with one another, or with the original hypothesis.  
>  
>The other, generally the realm of other scientists, is to produce a  
>physical/empirical counter-example to the claim.

sci.cognitive: Re: The Identity Theory of Mind

So, I'm still looking for an empirical counter example to falsify my contention that everything is differences because nothing can be different from differences.

*>This would be philosopher-as-theory-demolitionist. Questioning assumptions is a valid means to advancing science, and perhaps actually the preferred method.*

Regards – Lester