

Intentions and motor representations: the interface challenge

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Abstract

A full account of purposive action must appeal not only to propositional attitude states like beliefs, desires, and intentions, but also to motor representations, i.e., non-propositional states that are thought to represent, among other things, action outcomes as well as detailed kinematic features of bodily movements. This raises the puzzle of how it is that these two distinct types of state successfully coordinate. This is what Butterfill and Sinigaglia have called the "Interface Problem". I point out some limitations of the solution they offer to this problem and propose an alternative two-tiered solution, appealing to motor schemas to explain how intentional goal states can hook up with motor representations and to structured action representations to explain the dynamic and situation-sensitive nature of this interface.