

Group Action and Indexical Beliefs

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1 Introduction

I once followed a trail of sugar on a supermarket floor, pushing my cart down the aisle on one side of a tall counter and back the aisle on the other, seeking the shopper with the torn sack to tell him he was making a mess. With each trip around the counter, the trail became thicker. But I seemed unable to catch up. Finally it dawned on me. I was the shopper I was trying to catch[...] I stopped following the trail around the counter, and rearranged the torn sack in my cart. (Perry, 1979, p.3 – *The Messy Shopper Case*)

EITA: Indexical beliefs are essential to motivate and explain action.

2 Indexical Beliefs

- context-sensitive;

	John	Juliana
« <i>I have a headache</i> »	John has a headache	Juliana has a headache

- dependent on perception;

	perceiving Lady Gaga	not perceiving Lady Gaga
« <i>she_{Lady Gaga} is in danger</i> »	✓	✗

- typically expressed by sentences with indexical expressions.

«*this water bottle is special*» ≫≫ ‘this water bottle is special’

3 Self-Locating Beliefs

Self-Locating Beliefs: locate the object of the belief in relation to the believer.

I: who?

This watter bottle: where?

The Messy Shopper Case		Action?
Perry:	« <i>the messy shopper person is making a mess</i> »	✗
	« <i>I am making a mess</i> »	✓

Andrew and I are sitting in front of each other at the cafeteria, when he receives a phone call from his friend telling him that the Brazilian professor is in danger, and that he needs to push her to the floor to save her. We just met and he knows I am Juliana but he doesn't know that I am the Brazilian professor. (*Andrew's Case*)

Andrew's Case		Action?
Andrew:	« <i>the Brazilian professor at Ashoka is in danger</i> »	✗
	« <i>she is in danger</i> »	✓

4 We-Beliefs and Joint Demonstrative Beliefs

- context-sensitive;

	Bear Food Hiking Team	Wolf Food Hiking Team
« <i>we are in danger</i> »	BF is in danger	WF is in danger

- dependent on perception;

	perceiving J's ⚡	not perceiving J's ⚡
« <i>this water bottle is special</i> »	✓	✗

- typically expressed by sentences with indexical expressions.

«*we are in danger*» ⤵ 'we are in danger'
«*this water bottle is special*» ⤵ 'this water bottle is special'

- Essential to motivate and explain action.

We are a hiking team called 'Bear Food Hiking Team' and we are having a meeting to decide where to go for our next hiking excursion. There's a window here from where I can see the entrance of the building. When I look outside, I see a bear entering the building. I know Bear Food Hiking Team is having a meeting in the building and believe that they are in danger and should run to save themselves. I panic and think of ways of let Bear Food Hiking Team know about the danger. After a couple of seconds I realize that *we are Bear Food Hiking Team* and that *we are in danger*, so I run. (*Bear Food Case*)

Bear Food Case		Action?
Juliana:	« <i>Bear Food Hiking Team is in danger</i> »	✗
	« <i>we are in danger</i> »	✓

Andrew and Jasmin are hiking when they hear me yelling ‘Help! Bear!’. They recognize my voice and know that if one of us yells ‘Bear!’ it means that they are being attacked by a bear. For this reason, they believe that Juliana is in danger. They also see a person from afar being attacked by a bear but they are set on trying to save me and will save the other person later. After looking around and not finding me, they walk closer to the person they saw being attacked by a bear when they realize that she is Juliana! So, they coordinate efforts to save me, by giving me a collective hug so we appear a bigger animal to scare the bear away. (*Hug Case*)

Hug Case	Action?
Andrew & Jasmin: « <i>Juliana is in danger</i> »	✗
« <i>she is in danger</i> »	✓

Andrew, a forest ranger, sees me running from a bear through security cameras installed in a national park. He also sees that Jasmin, another forest ranger, is driving a patrol car near me, so he calls her. He gives Jasmin precise directions to find me and they successfully rescue me. (*Security Cameras Case*)

5 Proposal: Practical ways

Practical Ways of Thinking: manipulate/reach the object of the belief by performing basic tasks X, Y, Z.

Person: “extending left arm”, “step forward, then move arm”.

Group: individual actions – “Person A step forward”, “Person B moves to the left”, “Person C says P”, “Person D follow instructions given by C”.

I: manipulate object by moving body in any way.

This water bottle: manipulate object by extending arm, moving hand in a motion of grabbing.

we: manipulate object [group] by performing an action (running).

she: manipulate object by Andrew giving directions to Jasmin, Jasmin following Andrew’s directions.

THANK YOU!