

Two Takes on the *De Se**

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1. Background

In this article we consider, relying in part upon comparative semantic evidence from English and Romanian, two contrasting dimensions of the sense in which our thoughts, including the contents of imagination and memory, and extending to objects of fear, enjoyment, and other emotions directed toward worldly happenings, may be distinctively first-personal, or "*de se*," to use the terminology introduced in Lewis (1979), and exhibit the phenomenon of immunity to error through misidentification (hereafter: IEM) in the sense of Shoemaker (1968) and elsewhere. Higginbotham (2003) and (2010) had emphasized the sense in which IEM could be said to arise from *cross-reference*; that is, from thinking of oneself as the subject of that very thought (with limitations, as surveyed also in those papers). It was noted, rather by the way, that there were contexts of thought where neither oneself nor anything else was given in the role of (say) the experiencer of a content of imagination; but we now think that these contexts support a distinct conception of IEM, one that in a sense is sympathetic to Anscombe (1975). Finally, there is a question of IEM in contexts where one is given, not as experiencer, but in some other role, a question that was unaddressed in the earlier work cited.

The different dimensions of the *de se*, we will argue, come apart in the following sense: some first-personal propositions, memories, and fears are about oneself as an experiencer of the contents in question, and others not; and some that are about the experiencer are not given as about oneself. Both of these have figured in the extensive literature on the *de se*, but in different ways, as noted below. Their clear separation, on the one hand, and their intimate connection in

many of our thoughts, on the other, support a view of first-personal thought that is closely linked to the proper understanding of the first-person pronoun in human language (which is not to imply that first-personal thought is dependent upon linguistic competence).

We assume that thoughts may contain objects as constituents. The *modal profile* of a thought may track the same object across alternative possible worlds (or, as in counterpart theory, the relevant object may pick up its counterpart in those alternatives; we shall assume the more literal interpretation in what follows). But we do not identify a thought with its modal profile: where *S* and *S'* are sentences, it may happen that the thought expressed by *S* is not the thought expressed by *S'*, even if *S* and *S'* are cointensive; similarly for expressions of other syntactic categories.

Thoughts about all sorts of objects may contain those objects as constituents, and in this sense be *de re*. Thoughts about oneself, whether right or wrong, are generally *de re*. The first case to be made, then, is that thoughts *de se* are not merely *de re*, but have some special feature.

The case is less easy to make out than is often assumed. In examples going back to Castañeda (1966), and exploited in many places, one comes by a merely *de re* thought about oneself because there is a something-or-another that one mistakenly takes not to be oneself, and one takes some propositional stance toward that thought; or one entertains a memory, imaginative episode, or emotional state toward something involving oneself in some role, in the mistaken belief that the role is occupied by something other than oneself. Thus Pavarotti, failing to recognize himself in the mirror, may think (as it were), "What a handsome fellow he is!" We, commenting on the situation, can say (1):

(1) Pavarotti is admiring himself.

But Pavarotti may or may not be willing to say that (as he would say it, using the first person); and if he is it will not be on the grounds upon which we say it. Granted that Pavarotti is

admiring x for x =the man in the mirror=Pavarotti, his state is one of admiring himself, but not (as we might say) self-admiration. Hence the *de re* state that Pavarotti is in is not *de se*.¹

Further, it may be urged that since each of us is in the same frame of mind when we believe in the ordinary first-personal way that we are sitting down, our *de se* beliefs are numerically the same, whereas considered merely as *de re* beliefs they would have to be different, because we are different. In the scenario of Lewis (1979), derived from Perry (1977), crazy Heimson and sane Hume have numerically the same belief (that is, they self-ascribe the same property), that of inhabiting a possible world in which they are David Hume. Hume is right, and Heimson is wrong, but only because of who is doing the ascribing, not because of what is ascribed: were it otherwise, their beliefs would be merely different *de re* beliefs about themselves. And anyway the belief by Heimson that he---that very thing, or its counterpart in each world---is David Hume would be a belief in a necessary falsehood, "unfit to be believed," in Lewis's words (Lewis (1979:525))---but Heimson, however crazily mistaken, has made no errors of logic.

However, none of these considerations in favor of the distinctiveness of the *de se* deserves to be convincing. Our saying (1) is warranted, because *we* know, although Pavarotti does not, that the representation through which he believes what he might express by saying "He [the guy in the mirror] is handsome" is a representation of *him*. What lies behind our gloss is *his* representation, whatever it is, for which we have made a linguistically permissible substitution. The linguistic practice underlying our substitutional license is entirely independent of the first person. If Pavarotti is looking at a picture of Caruso that he takes to be of Placido Domingo he may think, "He's a serious rival;" so he thinks Caruso is a serious rival. Likewise, when in John Perry's story (Perry (1979)) he is trying to catch the shopper spilling sugar in the supermarket, we, observing this, and aware of the situation before Perry is, might offer, "Perry is trying to catch himself."

The object of Perry's quest is thus *de re*, as given by the reflexive pronoun; but our so characterizing it depends upon our having substituted that pronoun for the representation of himself through which Perry conceives of (what turns out to be) himself. When Perry finally realizes that he (or: he himself) is the shopper spilling sugar, he may conclude that he himself was the object of his quest. He thus arrives at a new conception of what he was trying to do. We arrived at it first. There was nothing *de se* about it, so it would appear. But if our belief was about another, and so as it were *de alio*, what is so *de se*-ish about Perry's? The fact that he now happens to believe it doesn't change *its* nature. As for the fact that Heimson and Hume are in like belief-states, why not say that what Heimson believes wrongly is that he, Heimson, is Hume, whereas what Hume believes correctly is that *he* is Hume? Once we have shaken off the idea that the modal spectrum of a thought exhausts its content, we need not follow Lewis in saying that what is attributed to Heimson is "unfit to be believed"---for what bars belief in the metaphysically impossible? Nor need we conclude that Hume and Heimson have the same attitude towards numerically the same thing.

As noted in passing above, Lewis's view was that *de se* belief consisted in the self-attribution of a property. He expressed the view in his own counterpart theory, but it may be translated into Intensional Logic (IL) as illustrated in (2):

(2) Heimson believes (*de se*) that he is David Hume.

Heimson self-attributes $\hat{\lambda}x(E(x) \ \& \ x=\text{David Hume})$.

where '*E*' is Montague's existence predicate, a logical constant of IL, and the "hat" ' $\hat{\lambda}$ ' expresses λ -abstraction over the possible worlds.² (For concreteness, we shall continue to work with the IL formulation in what follows.) Say that a self-attribution of a property *P* by *x* is *correct* just in

case $(\forall P)(x)$ (i.e., P holds of x in the actual world, where the "cup" \forall is the inverse of \wedge , giving the extension of P as value for any intension P as argument). Then, passing from correctness to truth, we can allow that Heimson believes that he is David Hume, but he is mistaken, because $(\forall \lambda x(E(x) \ \& \ x \text{ is David Hume}))(\text{Heimson}) = \lambda x(E(x) \ \& \ x \text{ is David Hume})(\text{Heimson}) = E(\text{Heimson}) \ \& \ \text{Heimson is David Hume} = \text{the False}$. Other *de se* attitudes and epistemic states fall in ranks similarly: a *de se* want, for example, would amount to self-desideration of a property. Semantic postulates would be required to establish, for instance, the validity of the inference in (3):

(3) Mary wants (*de se*) to eat a cookie;

What Mary wants will come true; therefore,

Mary will eat a cookie.

which links the property and the person who has it to what will be the case if her want is satisfied. This inference and many others like it, trivial in the case of propositional objects, will have to proceed by connecting the property object to a proposition, as in the case of Heimson's belief above.

Given that Lewis's path might, at least so far, be taken, why take it? Part of his answer was that the obvious alternative sketched above, for which belief *de se* is simply *de re*, was in his view not viable: belief *de re* is only a manner of speaking of belief that is *de dicto*, and otherwise satisfies various conditions on the representation of the *res* in question. (A number of expositions in linguistics have taken this route as well: see Anand (2006) for recent discussion.) In any case, the locution 'self-attribution' is somewhat misleading, as suggesting that there might be 'other-attribution', whereas in fact there is just a kind of *de dicto* that we speak of as *de re*.

We now depart from Lewis's perspective, and from the customary examples of failing to recognize oneself that have been held to motivate the *de se*, in two ways. First, we allow a robust notion of the *de re*, one that is not revealed in contexts of permitted linguistic substitution, but rather based, as in Burge (1977) and subsequent work, upon perceptual encounter with objects that may not, or may not fully, be brought under any individuating concept at all. Second, and correlatively, we say that the *de se* differs from the *de re* in the way in which the subject is *represented* in the proposition that is believed or desired, or the property of events that is imagined, feared, or remembered; and moreover that this representational difference makes for IEM.

2. Semantic Considerations, English

What are the links between the *de se* understood as a phenomenon of thought, on the one hand, and the semantics of language, on the other? Here, we believe, the discussion has been hobbled by a somewhat bloodless conception of context-sensitivity, one that would simply evaluate sentences and expressions of other categories relative to fixed parameters such as possible worlds and times, and contextual indices of various kinds. The sentence-in-a-context then takes the place of the (potential) utterance. In this setting, indeed, the specification of the English first person pronoun is immediate: it refers, in any context, to the speaker of that context. Omitted from this formulation, however, is that when a speaker *uses* the first-person pronoun in an utterance *u* she knowingly and intentionally refers to herself *as* the speaker in the context, by deploying what we will call the *rule of use* for the pronoun; namely, that it is to be used with the intention of thereby referring to oneself. And we shall add: of referring to oneself *as* the speaker *s(u)* of *u*. Our view is that this cross-reference, between the speaker's act of referring with the

word 'I' to herself and the content of what is said, is responsible for one dimension of the *de se*, and for IEM.

Let John assert, "I am a nice fellow." Then John has represented himself as believing that he (*de se*) is a nice fellow, and if he believes what he has represented himself as believing, then he believes (*de se*) that he is a nice fellow. But the *de se* part of this last observation does not at all follow from the mere fact that John is the speaker in the context, and his word 'I' referred to him, the speaker. For, at least following the route taken in Kaplan (1977) and subsequently, there is no difference in what is said as between, "I am a nice fellow" and "That guy is a nice fellow," demonstrating John, although John may not know it, or just be making a lucky guess that it is him. To put it another way: Kaplan's semantics, which certainly allows a robust *de re*, does not deploy any resources to distinguish what, if anything, is represented in the *de se*; but in supposing that in *de se* belief and the like, or *de se* remembering and the like, the subject must somehow be represented in a special way, we have cut ourselves off from any alternative.

Here, then is the tension: if first-personal assertions amount to the self-attribution of a property, then the contents of "I am a nice fellow" and "That guy is a nice fellow" can be distinguished, but then we lose a robust conception of the *de re*; but if they simply amount to assertions of propositions, both of them *de* the same *re*, then they are indistinguishable for at least one level of content.

We propose that what John asserts is (at least: in a moment we shall add further structure) (4):
(4) $s(u)$ is a nice fellow.

where u is John's utterance. So the content is not simply that x is a nice fellow for John as value of ' x '. The *de se* nature of the first-personal utterance is revealed, not in the content viewed as the modal spectrum of what is said, but rather in how it is computed. Such is the advantage of

relativizing indexical reference to the act of utterance, rather than just to an abstract context.

(Note that, on the obvious assumption that individual events have essentially the participants that they do, if indeed $x=s(u)$, then the modal profiles of ' $\dots x \dots$ ' and ' $\dots s(u) \dots$ ' will be identical.)

Speech is self-conscious intentional action. The role taken by the first person might therefore be taken up in spelling out the truth conditions of a sentence 'I am F ' as follows.

(5) If u is an utterance of 'I am F ', and the speaker $s(u)$ of u refers to herself with the utterance of 'I' therein in virtue of intending so to refer following the rule that 'I' is to be used with that intention, then

$$u \text{ is true if and only if } \varphi(s(u))$$

where $\varphi(x)$ is whatever condition in the metalanguage spells out the semantic contribution of ' am F ' with respect to an arbitrary subject x .

There is more. The subject is not *only* given as $s(u)$, but also given as whatever bears the proper participant role in the event or state that is classified by ' F '. Call this role θ . Then the full representation, whether for an action predicate like 'running down the street', or for a predicate of a physical state like 'six feet tall', will have an open place for the event position, marked by ' e ', and will incorporate the relation θ , spelling out the relation of the participant subject, whatever it is. The event position will be existentially quantified, so that the predicate given above as ' $\varphi(x)$ ' is more fully as in (6):

(6) $(\exists e) (\psi(e) \ \& \ \theta(x,e))$.

But $s(u)$ is assigned to x , and so we have ultimately (7):

(7) u is true if and only if $(\exists e) (\psi(e) \ \& \ \theta(s(u),e))$.

We have argued elsewhere that this sort of cross-reference, between the intentions of the speaker and the way she is referred to in the content, are central to IEM in the case of reports of present perceptual experience. A speaker who thinks she is facing a table, and arrives at this belief in the ordinary way, namely by checking her surroundings, and so of seeming to experience facing a table, cannot sensibly ask herself whether it is *she* who is facing a table. She cannot do this, because she is experiencing the subject of that very experiencing's facing a table. More explicitly, in the case in question, we have (8):

(8) $(\exists e)$ Experience(Mary, e , $\wedge \lambda e'$ (facing($s(e)$, a table, e')).³

where in the property of events that Mary is experiencing she is given to herself simply *as* the subject $s(e)$ of e . Likewise, in the case of 'I am F ', where the speaker might well be wrong about the substance, she cannot be mistaken in believing that she *thought* that she herself is F .

Evans (1982) appears to have been partly sympathetic to this way of understanding self-conscious thought. In (1982: 213) he writes:

It is true, as I said earlier, that the essence of self-consciousness is self-reference, that is to say, thinking, by a subject of judgements, about himself, and hence, necessarily, about a subject of judgements. It follows that in a self-conscious thought, the subject must think of an object in a way that permits it to be characterized as the subject of that very thought. But it certainly does not follow that he must think of himself *as* the author of that very thought---if, indeed, such a thing is intelligible;

What Evans in this passage is skeptical about is certainly intelligible (though it might be remarked that what makes it intelligible is the Davidsonian assumption that a concept such as *facing a table* involves a classification of events, events in which another object may participate as their experiencer as well as their subject). We do not take issue with Evan's thesis, expressed further on in the same paragraph, that "our self-conscious thoughts about ourselves also rest upon various ways we have of gaining knowledge of ourselves as physical things." Indeed, to experience oneself as *facing* a table necessarily involves thinking of one's body as oriented in a particular way. But thinking of oneself just *as* the author of the thought that one is facing a table precludes any misidentification, provided at least that we are receiving our sensory information in the usual way.⁴

In speaking, we necessarily experience our speaking. Not so necessarily when we remember or imagine our speaking: for we may remember it *as it might have looked or sounded to someone watching and listening to us*; and similarly, of course, for imagining our speaking. But now comes an observation about English that may be traced back at least as far as Vendler (1984): there are environments in which remembering and imagining *must* be understood from the experiencer's point of view. Such is the case in English for the "understood subject" of a gerundive complement, as in (9):

(9) Mary remembered/imagined walking down the street.

The contrast is with (10), in which the content at least of what is imagined can be given as "from the point of view of an outside spectator:"

(10) Mary remembered/imagined herself walking down the street.

The predicate 'walk' in (9) has no overt subject. But of course the subject (namely 'Mary') must be recovered at some level, because (for instance), if Mary remembered walking down the street,

then she, Mary, did indeed walk down the street. In the account of English anaphora proposed in Chomsky (1981) and elsewhere, the complement does have an unpronounced subject, namely PRO (or "big PRO" as it is called, so as to distinguish it from the unpronounced pronominal subject of a tensed clause, as in the Romance languages apart from French). On this assumption, we have (10):

(10) Mary remembered [PRO walking down the street].

with PRO anaphoric. This thesis is still a matter of debate. But even if the subject should not be present in the underlying form, that would give no comfort to the *de se* conceived of as attribution of a property: for one thing, ordinary pronominals often are used to report thoughts that are to be taken as *de se* (as Chierchia (1986) notes explicitly); and for another reflexive forms can fill the subject role. For ease of exposition, therefore, we shall continue to use PRO subjects.

3. Semantic Considerations, Romanian

There are *de se* triggers in Romanian, but they do not behave as uniformly as PRO does in English. This difference suggests that a contexts' showing IEM or being intrinsically *de se* is to be explained by appeal to different linguistic considerations. Here we identify the specifically Romanian *de se* triggers, and explain the presence of IEM even in their absence by emphasizing the lexical features of the verbs that generate IEM contexts, namely the specific roles that these verbs assign to their subjects and objects.

What has been said about the first-person pronoun in English applies equally well to Romanian, with the proviso that, since Romanian is a language whose subject pronouns may be omitted, the fact that a context is first-personal is determined by the features of the main verb. However, there

are no surprises here, and anyone using a verb inflected for the first person is knowingly talking or thinking about himself.

The Romanian understood subject, however, is rarely (if at all) of the type of English PRO. This marks a difference from English in the way that *de se* contexts are generated,⁵ and makes Romanian *de se* triggers structurally different from their English counterparts. It turns out that it is the Romanian subjunctive, embedded within the scope of an IEM verb, that is the bearer of the *de se* phenomenon.⁶ This departure from English reflects a feature common to Balkan languages, whose historical evolution has seen the gradual replacement of infinitival clauses by subjunctives ones (Dobrovie-Sorin (1994: 112)).

There are two types of subjunctive constructions in Romanian, which we identify for present purposes as Subjunctive I and Subjunctive II.⁷ The first type is identified by the conjunction “*să*”, whereas the second is constructed by prefixing to the subordinate verb the conjunctions “*ca să*”. Only the first triggers the *de se* in Romanian, as seen in (11):

(11) *Maria vrea [să mănânce fursecul]*

Maria wants-3sg [eat-3sg cookie-the]

Maria wants to eat the cookie.

The subject of the Romanian subordinate clause in (11) is null. But the subordinate subjunctive verb shows third-person features, so it is understood as the third-person pronoun. The example (11) is a *de se* context; the embedded subject may not be anyone else but Maria, and the construction indicates that if Maria would express this desire, she would do so from the first-personal perspective. Furthermore, the construction in (11) does not allow for the possibility of different reference between the subject of the main clause and that of the subordinate; nor does it permit the case where Maria does not realize it is her own eating of the cookie that she wants.⁸

The case is different with the Subjunctive II, as illustrated in (12):

- (12) *Maria vrea* [*ca ea să mănânce fursecul*]
Maria want-3sg she eat-3sg cookie-the
Maria wants herself to eat the cookie

The Subjunctive II is often used when the speaker wants to highlight the fact that the subject of the main clause is different from the subject of the subordinate clause; however, the expressed subject '*ea*' of the subordinate may also be understood as anaphoric to the main clause subject. But in this case, unlike (11), the *de se* interpretation is not forced.

Subjunctive I is a *de se* trigger only when embedded under a verb of the appropriate class, such as '*a vrea*' (want), '*a intenționa*' (intend), '*a încerca*' (try), '*a începe*' (start, in the sense of beginning to act): these allow for constructions like (11), all of which are obligatorily *de se*.⁹

There are other verbs that cannot be used with Subjunctive I but do give rise to *de se* and IEM, such as '*a se/-și imagina*' (imagine) and '*a-și aminti*' (remember). Their being IEM and their giving rise to *de se* contexts is determined by something else. Our suggestion will be that their lexical features can assign specific cross-referential roles to the arguments of what is embedded under them, and that these roles cannot be filled in the absence of IEM. The semantics of IEM will then be the same for both languages, even if expressed differently.

The verbs '*a se/-și imagina*' and '*a-și aminti*' are also interesting from another point of view: while the complements to their English counterparts can indicate a particular *internal* or *external* perspective over the content of the imagining/memory, in Romanian there is pervasive ambiguity. (The case of memory is somewhat special, because memory of one's experiences is of course always internal.)

In Romanian, '*a se/-și imagina*' and '*a-și aminti*' are inherently reflexive: the constructions containing them always include a reflexive pronoun, often cliticized. If we take the case of memory as paradigmatic for bringing an internal perspective to the fore, then we are concerned with contexts where the reflexive is in the dative, because '*a-și aminti*' requires the dative form of the reflexive. To emphasize that the internal perspective is not tied to a particular form, we may compare remembering with imagining. In (13), Maria's perspective on herself is necessarily internal:

(13) *Maria își amintește [că a prezentat bine lucrarea]*

Maria self-dative remember-3sg that (she) have-3sg present well paper-the

Maria remembers that (she) presented the paper well.

This is not so, however, with imaginings:

(14) *Maria își imaginează [că a prezentat bine lucrarea]*

Maria self-dative imagine-3sg that have-3sg present well paper-the

Maria imagines that (she) presented the paper well.

The imagined content reported in (14) can be internal or external: thus Maria can imagine what her presentation looked like to a member of the audience, and how her bodily movements would be perceived by someone else.

In Romanian, then, there is no unequivocal counterpart of English (or Italian) PRO: the options for the *de se* and IEM are governed by the nature of the higher, embedding, verb, and the possibility of alternation in the subjunctive. The difference observed between Romanian '*a se/-și imagina*' and '*a-și aminti*' is a result of the nature of the faculties involved, and not the properties of the expression referring to what is remembered or imagined.

4. Extensions and Classification

We have seen that the linguistic parameters of the *de se* are variable, and that elements of thought as reported in language may be *de se*, and so subject to IEM, where they are taken from other points of view than that of the experiencer. The point is important cross-linguistically, because there are languages in which speech reports are sensitive to whether in the original the addressee was or was not addressed with the second person---whether they were, so to speak, "*de te*."¹⁰ This extension will apply to many other cases of a sort of embedded indexicality, and for brevity we concentrate on it here.

Evans (1982) held that there are no distinctively second-person thoughts: the word 'you', used to refer to the person one is addressing, may be said to refer, through a rule of use, to the addressee in the context, but unlike the first person it does not, when so used, bear any distinctive sense, or represent a novel way of getting at the object; rather, it is simply the polite and customary thing to say. We agree with Evans in part, but only in part. Of course, in an utterance, say, of 'I'll see you tomorrow' there is no question of our being in a position to use the word 'you' to refer to our friend K. in virtue of some special representation of K. But that does not prevent K.'s being referred to *as* the addressee in the speech act, and therefore does not prevent that content from being represented in what is expressed. Thus $a(u)$, the addressee of u , can well take its place alongside $s(u)$. The English second person, like the other indexicals, is rigid: it refers to $a(u)$ no matter how deeply embedded. But this provision (ignoring the tedious nicety of having occasionally to accommodate various differently-referring 'you's' in the same sentence) is accommodated as well, along the lines sketched by Burge and adopted here and elsewhere in the work cited above.

To illustrate, suppose (as a brief guide to the properties of the languages in question) we extend the second-person pronoun to a form *Y* having the property that (15) is true only if John addressed Bill using the second person:

(15) John said (to Bill) that *Y* are a Yankee fan.

Agreeing with Evans that there is no special perspective John had on Bill in virtue of which the thought he expressed is distinct from what he might have expressed, say, by using Bill's name, there would nevertheless be linguistic material that would distinguish (15) from (16):

(16) John said (to Bill) that he (Bill) was a Yankee fan.

(he might have said it to Bill without realizing it was Bill he was addressing, and so have referred to him as 'he' or 'Bill'.) The distinction would be that in (16), the pronoun 'he' can pick up its reference as either the reference of its antecedent 'Bill' (whose name may not occur in the sentence, but elsewhere in the discourse), or through the role that the addressee participant played in John's utterance, namely that of $a(u)$ in John's utterance u . The difference between (15) and (16) would be that in (15) the latter is the only alternative. The embedded indexicality hypothesized in (15), and actually illustrated in English by at least experiencer PRO subjects, would be a species of anaphoric phenomenon.¹¹

The hypothetical *Y*, or the ordinary case of imagining or remembering oneself "from the outside" show that we can have anaphora without the experiencer. Can we also have the experiencer without anaphora? We think that there is in fact a full cross-classification here, perhaps most easily brought out by considering imagination. I can imagine someone (or: the so-and-so) talking to my mother, and be surprised to learn that it is myself I am imagining (for I describe the "someone" to you, and you point out that it couldn't be anyone but me); I can also

describe myself talking to my mother, but I might figure in the imaginative representation either as experiencer (doing the talking) or as witness; but if I imagine talking to my mother, then the representation of the subject is necessarily *as* the experiencer. Finally, there would seem to be (though we sometimes debate the point) a fourth possibility, that when I imagine talking to my mother, and there is indeed an experiencer, but that experiencer is not identified with me. A point urged in different ways by Bernard Williams (1966) and David Velleman (1996) is that in cases like *imagining being Napoleon (at the battle of Austerlitz)* the content has an experiencer (looking over the battlefield, and the like), but the experiencer is not identified with the subject of imagination.

In one sense, this last case is also a case of IEM, namely the peculiar case in which the experience is not ascribed to any particular thing at all. When in this sense we imagine flying through space, or learning we have won the Nobel Prize, there is no answer to the question whose flying through space, or winning the Nobel Prize, we imagined. In this sense, perhaps, Anscombe (1975) was right to suggest that there is a use of the first person that does not refer to anything at all, but merely stands in for the experiencer.¹²

If this is right, then we can have an *internal* (experiencer) perspective, or an *external* one; and the content of our imagining can be *first-personal* (identified with ourselves), or *impersonal* (not identified with the subject). Subjectless gerundive complements to 'imagine' and the like in English are always internal, but (in English at least) may be first-personal or impersonal. In Romanian, however, they may be internal or external (perhaps reflecting the absence of PRO), and appear to be strongly first-personal. Pronominal and reflexive forms versatile in both

languages. Indeed, in English the gerundive may be combined with a pronominal in a single complement in examples like those in (17):

(17.1) I imagined being afraid of myself.

(17.2) I imagined speaking badly about people like myself.

In (17.1) I can imagine (a) my feeling afraid of what I myself might do; but also (b) someone's feeling afraid of me; similarly for (17.2) (where for some speakers we have consulted the (b) interpretation is easier to grasp than it is in (17.1), presumably because the locality conditions on the binding of reflexives are weaker for complex nominals such as 'people like myself'). The subject of the complement is internal, but may be first-personal or not.

Finally, consider again poor Pavarotti. This time he mistakenly thinks that it is himself that he sees in the mirror, and he thinks (what he would express by saying, in English), "What a handsome fellow I am." Then in a sense he is admiring himself, even if his admiration is based upon a false identification, of the man in the mirror with himself; in another sense, however, he is not admiring himself, but just the man in the mirror. However, he is unequivocally engaged in an act of self-admiration, and whereas he can raise to himself the question, once he begins to wonder whether it is himself that he sees, whether he is in fact admiring himself or someone else, there is no sense in which he can wonder whether he is, or was, engaged in self-admiration. To put it another way: he can withdraw the statement, "I was admiring myself," but not the statement, "I was engaged in self-admiration." In that sense, his state shows IEM, and it is like the case of quasi-perception, discussed above: the causal background shows that the self-ascription may be based on a mistake of identification; but it does not touch IEM insofar as that state simply reflects self-consciousness.

We remarked above that although (1), repeated here, is ambiguous, corresponding examples with *self*-incorporation, as in (18), were not:

(1) Pavarotti is admiring himself.

(18) Pavarotti is engaged in self-admiration

(The same holds for 'punishing/depriving oneself' versus 'engaged in self-punishment/self-deprivation', etc., even if many cases of *self*-incorporation, such as 'self-seeking', have idiomatic meanings.) We are now in a position to explain why. The reflexive pronoun can have for its antecedent either (i) the subject 'Pavarotti', in which case it inherits its reference from the reference of the subject, and is therefore *de re* with respect to the object position; or (ii) the role that the antecedent plays with respect to the predicate 'admire', namely that of the experiencer $s(e)$ of the state e' of admiration. In the latter case, the reflexive operation is carried out within the predicate, and the interpretation is *de se*. But *self*-incorporation is a lexicon-internal process, and can only operate in the manner of (ii): thus we have (19):

(19) $(\exists e)$ Experience(Pavarotti, e , $\lambda e'$ admire($s(e)$, $s(e)$, e')).

The case is therefore the same as for inherently reflexive, self-conscious, states or actions, such as feeling ashamed, or perjuring oneself; see further the distinctive use of short reflexive forms in Norwegian, as noted in Higginbotham (2010).

Notes

* This article emerged from discussions arising from Higginbotham's USC seminar in the fall of 2009. The perpetrators of the semantic judgements in English and Romanian are disjoint; but we both take responsibility for all of them. The basic outline of the semantics reflects material advanced by Higginbotham as an invited speaker at the annual conference of the Italian

Linguistics Society, held at the Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, Italy, in 2008; most of the present contribution will appear independently in the *Proceedings* of that meeting (Rome: Bulzoni Editore), edited by Pier Marco Bertinetto.

1. We take this example from Higginbotham (2010). In our judgement, *self*-incorporation, as opposed to the full reflexive form 'himself', forces the alleged *de se* interpretation, a fact that we exploit below in our positive account of the phenomenon.

2. See Gallin (1975) for an elegant textbook presentation of IL.

3. More fully, breaking up the predicate so as to spell out the roles of the participants in the event, we would have (i) for the object in (8):

(i) $\lambda e' (\text{facing}(e') \ \& \ \theta(s(e), e') \ \& \ \theta'(a \text{ table}, e'))$.

We shall continue to use the shorter form, as in (8), where possible, resorting to the longer form (i) only when relations such as θ and θ' above are in the picture.

4. What if we were receiving someone else's visual information, so that things look to us just as they would if we ourselves were facing a table? (This is H.G. Wells's "Davidson's Eyes" example, discussed in Higginbotham (2010).) Then we might indeed know that someone is facing a table, and wonder whether that person is ourselves. But that should not set aside the fact that in the experience we are given as the subject of the quasi-perception of a table. For the subject does not first identify her own eyes as the ones receiving the visual information, and then conclude that it is she who is facing a table.

But what if such experiences were commonplace, so that tests had to be devised to determine whose eyes were the source of one's visual input? Then errors of identification would indeed be possible; but also, "I am facing a table" would not be volunteered just on the basis of how things

looked. One might compare the point in Dummett (1970), that the sharpening of many of our vague predicates, color terms for instance, would deprive them of their observationality, and in this sense change a fundamental aspect of their meaning, namely the conditions under which they could warrantedly be asserted of things.

5. The existence of PRO in Romanian grammar is debated amongst contemporary syntacticians, and it may be the case that there is room for PRO in the syntax: see, for instance, Alboiu (to appear). We believe, however, that even if PRO is postulated, this form does not figure in the cases that are relevant for understanding the structure (and hence the triggers) of *de se* contexts.

6. To be an IEM verb is to have the lexical features that allow for the specific roles, which ensure that the respective context has IEM.

7. As far as we know, no such distinction is made in the literature on the Romanian subjunctive, but it is convenient to do so, in order to keep track of the specific *de se* triggers. (For more on the Romanian subjunctive, see Dobrovie-Sorin (1994).)

8. The simple test for the fact that sentence (11) is necessarily *de se* (and that this type of construction is always *de se*) is to ask whether one can assert (11), while also claiming that Maria doesn't realize that it is she herself the one supposed to eat the cookie. Indeed, (i) in Romanian sounds as contradictory as its English gloss below:

(i) *Maria vrea [să mănânce fursecul], dar nu-și dă seama*

Maria want-3sg eat-3sg cookie-the but not-self realize-3sg

[*că ea este cea care l-ar mânca*]

she is who would-it eat

Maria wants to eat the cookie, but she doesn't realize it would be herself eating it.

9. The counterparts of these verbs in English are all verbs of what is sometimes called *obligatory control*; i.e., cases where the understood subject PRO of the infinitival complement must be anaphoric to the subject, as in 'intend [PRO to eat the cookie]'. We conjecture that outside this class only Subjunctive II is allowed, as in (i):

(i) *Maria a alergat [*să/ca să o prindă din urma]*

Maria ran her catch from behind

Maria ran so as to catch her from behind.

If true, this conjecture would provide further evidence that there is a marked semantic difference between the two types of subjunctive constructions, and that type I is the bearer of *de se*.

10. See the discussion in Anand (2006) and literature cited there.

11. We think that our gloss on this made-up case underlies much, and perhaps all, of the current discussion of embedded indexicals, sometimes regarded as "monsters" in the technical sense of Kaplan (1977); see Schlenker (2003) for such a view. If, contrary to Schlenker, embedded indexicals are simply anaphoric (within the utterance, not its context, which is taken as fixed), then there is no need so to accommodate any monsters, which anyhow the general account of indexical reference proposed here, as reflecting the reference by a speaker to an object with a word, would make impossible. For some further remarks, see Higginbotham (2010).

12. In Anscombe's view, the only plausible description that could play the role of the interpretation of 'I' was 'the sayer of this' or 'thinker of this thought'. But she believed that even that expedient failed, because the thinkers might be "legion" (Anscombe (1975: 58-59). What if they were? Then the rule of use could not get a grip on the utterance, owing to falsehood of antecedent. Formally, the case is like that of a definite description 'the *F*', deployed in a referential attempt that fails because there is more than one *F*.

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