

Peer Review

Review of: "Inner Speech, Self-Regulation, and the Modular-with-Feedback Theory of Free Will"

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Overall, I have to say that being a basic cognitive psychologist working in action control might not be the best choice as a reviewer for this topic, but I agree that free will and its importance for many fields of psychology of action, intentions, goal-directed behavior, and society are best tackled by the exchange of ideas between disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, and cognitive neuroscience; consciousness might just be a nice gimmick.

When I did my PhD in Wolfgang Prinz's lab (Prinz, 2004), Libet and his work were all over the place, and many colleagues were trying to replicate and further understand its work and its implications for free will and the underlying role of intentions for actions (i.e., works by Marcel Brass, (Brass & Haggard, 2007; Rigoni et al., 2011), Veronika Krieghoff (Krieghoff et al., 2009, 2009), Simone Kühn (Kühn & Brass, 2009; Walsh et al., 2010), and Wolfgang himself, amongst many others), all of which in some manner address the notion brought up by the Libet experiment of determination and are nicely summed up in the work of Elisabeth Pacherie (Pacherie, 2008). Those works tried to find out when intention comes into play (being a marker of consciousness) and which neural correlates are involved, in close collaboration with the UCL for the time being.

Beside the realm of intentional actions, there are many other not included works about the brain and consciousness which I think require at least mentioning. I think of people like guests such as Victor Lamme (Lamme, 2004, 2006), Dehaene (Dehaene et al., 1998, 2006; Kouider & Dehaene, 2007), Gerhard Roth (Roth, 2004), Thomas Metzinger (Metzinger, 2000, and the works in the ASSC <https://theassc.org/>), who also seem to be largely ignored. Thus, I would like to invite the authors to relate their work and their model to ongoing scientific discussions unless my knowledge is really outdated, but I do not think so.

Why all this name-dropping? I think that the paper does not credit former work enough. Not only does it ignore many ways and ideas that have been around for a while (I left Wolfgang's lab in 2008), but also works on inner speech (Grandchamp et al., 2019, Alderson-Day & Fernyhough, 2015; Fernyhough & Borghi, 2023; Hurlburt et al., 2016; Luria, 1961; Vygotskij, 1962) are hardly mentioned. Thus, I think that my upbringing as an empirical scientist taught me to credit the ideas of others, and I missed this credit a lot in the present work. Also, one might argue that this is all about action-related stuff, in which case I would be interested to see the argument for consciousness unbound to actions. Likewise, I could not really figure out any new contributions by the authors. My apologies for this devastating review. I hope this helps further shape the ideas. Thus, I feel all parts of the paper would benefit from the mentioned references, and I think specific new insights are overall missing.

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Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.