

Thought stopping through sustained imagery: Involuntary subvocalizations and the sense of agency

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The interactions among intentional and unintentional conscious contents (e.g., intrusive cognitions) and the sense of 'self' remain under-explored. To investigate these interactions, we conducted two studies.

Study 1 combined a clinically relevant technique (thought stopping) with the Reflexive Imagery Task (RIT; Allen et al., 2013), in which, after being instructed to *not* subvocalize the name of visual objects, participants often fail at suppressing subvocalizations. Does intentionally subvocalizing something else (e.g., da da da...) block this effect? Perhaps intrusions will still occur between syllables. Thus, we also added a condition in which the intentional subvocalization was performed continuously (i.e., daaa...).

In Study 2, participants performed mental acts (including subvocalized humming) while introspecting changes in the conscious contents and in the sense of agency (or in the 'Psychological Doer').