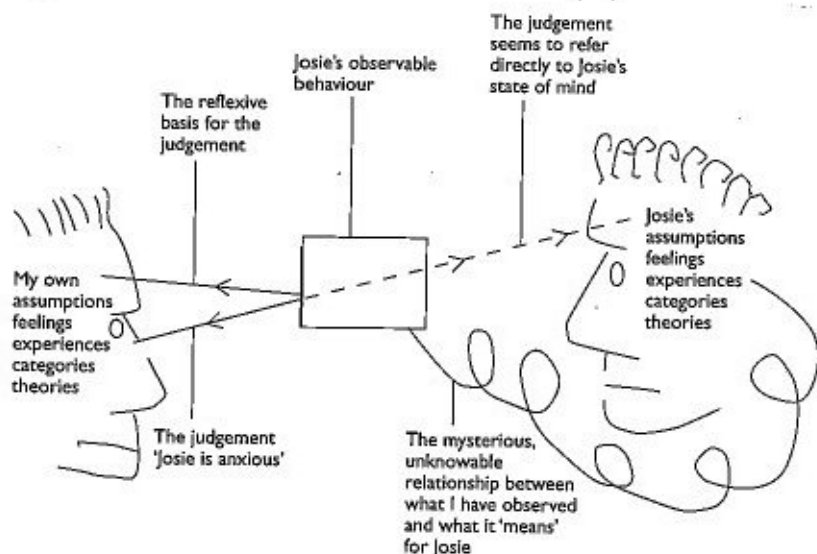


***Supporting Documents***

**3) The Problem of Making 'Reflexive' Judgements (p.247)**



**Explanation**

When I make a judgement, such as 'Josie is anxious', based on how I observe her respond during a conversation, I am actually and inevitably referring in part to my own assumptions, feelings, experiences, categories and theories. In other words, it is a 'reflexive' statement (the continuous line in the diagram, which is 'bent back' ['re'- 'flex'-ed] into my own mind). But it is very easy to forget this and to be misled (by the broken line in the diagram) into thinking that we have made a statement that refers directly to Josie's experience. But the principle of reflexivity (as a general theory of language) suggests that the relationship between what we observe other people do and say and those people's own experience is fundamentally unknowable (the looped line in the diagram).

This is only a 'problem' if we think that our judgement about other people ought to aim at being objective, accurate and final. But the principle of reflexivity suggests that we don't need to aim at this, and indeed that it is a quite mistaken aim. Instead, as soon as we recognise that our judgements are indeed reflexive, then we need to make our judgements in a tentative, exploratory fashion that leaves them open to question and revision. In this way, when we compare our judgements with other people's judgements of the same events, they do not need to become the basis for disputes but opportunities for learning from each other.