



Genesis, development and actuality of the Social Representation theory in more than fifty years (1961-2011 and beyond): the main paradigms and the "modeling approach"



European/International Joint PhD
in Social Representations and Communication
International Summer School 2014



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20th International Summer School on
Social Representations and Communication

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2014



annamaria silvana de rosa

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Aims



European/International Joint Ph.D.
in Social Representations and Communication

**to offer a snapshot of the research environment at the
*European/International Joint Ph.D. in Social Representations and
Communication Research Centre and Multimedia Lab,*
by briefly introducing:**

- a) the “modelling approach” as unifying paradigm in the
polymorphous field inspired by the Social Representation theory**



Aims



European/International Joint Ph.D.
in Social Representations and Communication

b) to present a selection of results from some of the on-going research programs recently developed at our *Lab*,

as an incubator for new generations of young researchers, recently approved as the best project in Europe within the FP 7 Marie Curie action People-ITN for Innovative Doctoral Programs.





SRT paradigmatic approaches

Structural Approach

- So called **Aix-en-Provence School**
- Inspired by **Flament's** seminal work and diffused starting with **Abric's** doctoral thesis and following texts on the structure of Social Representations
- Several generations of researchers have contributed to the development of this approach including: **Abric, Tafani, Deschamps, Guimelli, Flament, Rouquette, Moliner, Rateau** among others

Socio-dynamic Approach

- So called **Geneva School**
- Built on **Doise's** work
- Includes contributions from **Doise, Clémence, Lorenzi-Cioldi, Spini, Staerklé**, among others

Anthropological Approach

- Basically inspired by **Jodelet's** perspective on S.R.
- Includes contributions from **Jodelet, Haas, Kalampalikis** among others
- Also called the **Ethnographic Approach** focused on the analysis of the articulation between **socio, onto and micro genesis**, such as in the developmental approach to Social Representations of gender among children studied in their own interactive contexts (**Duveen and Lloyd**)

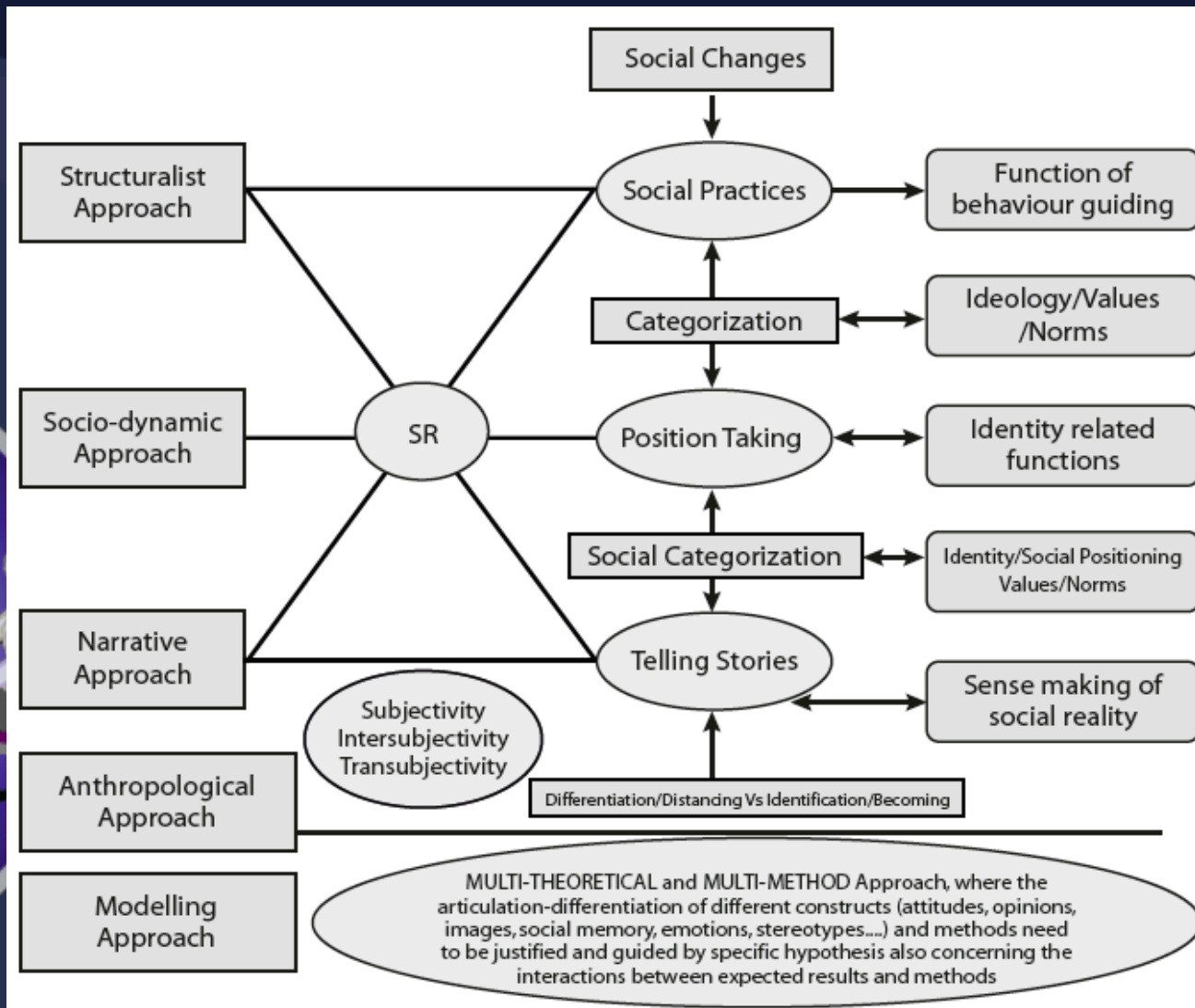
Narrative and Dialogical Approach

- Often integrated with the **Dialogical approach (Markova)**
- Inspired by '**socio-cultural psychology**', including among other perspectives the **semeiotic mediational approach** with its complex conceptual map
- Includes contributions from **Laszlo, Contarello, Volpato, Jovchelovitch, Purkhardt**, among others

Modelling Approach

- Developed by **de Rosa**
- largely orients the research activity carried out at the **European PhD on Social Representations and Communication [S.R. and C.] Research Centre and Multimedia Lab**

Social representation paradigms: one theory, different approaches and methods.





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**European/International Joint Ph.D.
in Social Representations and Communication**

The “modeling approach”

**a unifying paradigm reconciling the
apparent "inconsistency" perceived
between many school's approaches
within the context of SRT and overcoming
the a-theoretical thematic-oriented focus**

Social representation MULTIPLE PARADIGMS: ONE THEORY, ONE CONCEPTION OF THE “SOCIAL”.

The distinct meaning of the “social” in

Social Cognition Approach

treats the social world in the same way it addresses the natural world,

as an **object of cognitive operations and categorization**, since invariable forms are considered superior to variable contents

‘by adopting a strictly **individual type of constructivism** which considers **cognitive structure as invariable**, ends up defining social psychology by applying general cognitive psychology to the study of social stimuli’ (Ugazio 1988: 44)

Social Representations Approach

the ‘social’ is an element that **generates knowledge (genesis)**, **orients its goal and functions**, **influences its diffusion and transformation**

‘Thus it is **not the common object or sharing criteria which validate the social nature of representations**, **but the social exchanges that produce them**’ (de Rosa 1992: 125)



A short definition of the Modelling Approach (de Rosa, 1990, 2012, 2013)

- **Multi-theoretical and multi-method approach, where the articulation-differentiation of different constructs (attitudes, opinions, images, myth, social memory, emotions, stereotypes, etc.) and methods (also including different techniques for data collection and various strategies for data analysis) needs to be justified and guided by specific hypotheses also concerning the interactions between expected results and methods”** (de Rosa, 2013)



The Modelling Approach Is more than multiple methods

The option for a “*modeling approach*” is more than a simple summing up of methods or mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative).

In the most of cases the adoption of more than one technique is **even restricted to a single verbal or textual communication channel**, for example in the classical combination of interview, free association and focus group or of questionnaires and content analyses of press (**verbo-centric methodological monotheism!**).



The Modelling Approach more than multiple methods

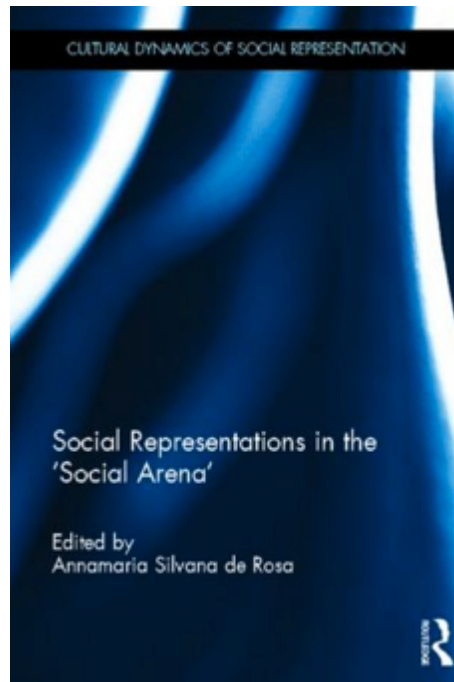


Furthermore **too often multiple techniques are not adopted in one single integrated study**, but are used in **subsequent studies** (frequently on different research participants) according to a **linear cumulative logic of adding data to data (the classical sequential schema: Study I, Study II, Study III... , so familiar in the editorial writing format for publishing in many journals).**

The modelling approach is for **integrated comprehensive studies**, guided by theoretically driven justifications for the choice of the specific methodological tools and by **hypotheses concerning the interaction between the techniques, their communicative channels (oral, verbal, textual, figurative, behavioural, etc.), the data analysis strategies and expected results** – thus shaping their interpretation.



The Modeling Approach as a unifying paradigm for research programs in various thematic areas



For more details about the research programmes carried out in many different thematic areas, see the introduction (***"Taking stock: A theory with more than half a century of history"***) to the book ***Social Representations in the 'Social Arena'*** edited by Annamaria Silvana de Rosa, ROUTLEDGE, 2013



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The European PhD on Social Representations and Communication: A selection of ongoing empirical research programs, as collaborative training opportunities for new generations of young researchers

- * **“La psychanalyse, son image et son public” fifty years later**, by de Rosa, A. S., Fino, E., Bocci, E.
- **S. R. of madness: from first-wave research to follow-up** , by de Rosa, A. S., Bocci, E., Pedreira
- **Place identity and Social Representations of European Capitals in first visitors of different nationalities and expats: most significant imagined versus experienced places** by de Rosa, A. S., d’Ambrosio, M.L. Bocci, E., Dryjanska, L.
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Citizens, Community and Politics face to local/global issues: Social Movements and polemical representations in action in the social arena Occupy Wall Streets

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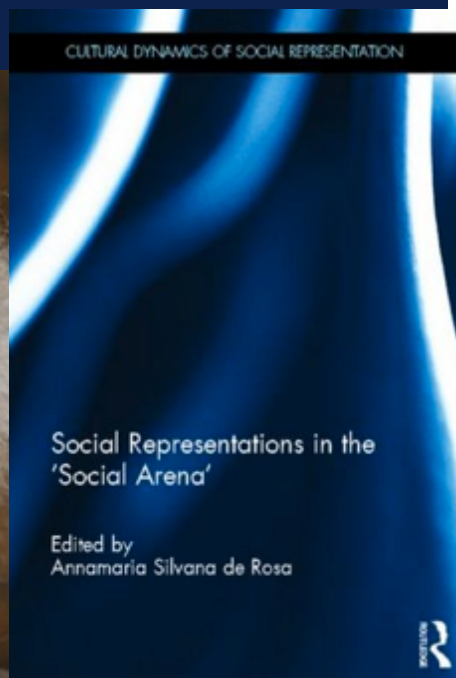
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From the couch of the psychoanalyst
to the social networks:
discussing actuality of the “Opera Prima:
“La psychanalyse, son image et son public”
fifty years later in the era of Facebook.

de Rosa, A. S., Fino, E., Bocci, E.



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La psychanalyse, son image et son public

- **1961-2011:**
50 years of history from an idea to “more than a theory”
- **2011:**
a **birthday and a re-baptism** → *Celebrating Events (in Italy, UK, Brazil...) and Publications.*
The best way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Social Representation Theory has been to announce, at its birthday, new-borns, both on the
 - a) **editorial initiatives:** Italian edition of *La Psychoanalyse*, launch of dedicated book series, edited books in Brasil and in Italy on 50 years, Special Issues of *Journal for the Theory of the Social Behavior* and of *Papers on Social Representations*
 - b) **Research on *Opera Prima*:** the follow-up and extension of the first-wave research

This fertility of the theory allows Denise Jodelet (2008) to qualify it as
“*A Beautiful Invention*”, on the basis of criteria settled by Tarde.

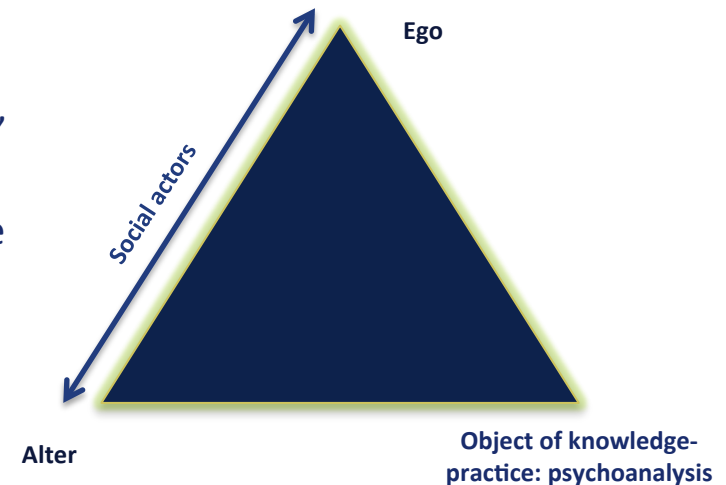


The Follow-up of Moscovici's Opera Prima (1961, 1976) 50 years later in the era of Facebook

It will be presented as a special opportunity to study the **stability and possible transformations of social representations**, given the changes that have occurred not only in the three epistemic apexes of the Subject-Other-Object epistemic triangle, but also in their socio-historical, ideological and communicative contexts.

Regarding the three epistemic apexes of the Epistemic Triangle, changes have occurred:

- a) In the development of the '**object**' of knowledge-practice itself: psychoanalysis
- b) In the **social actors** (Subjects-Alter)
- c) In the **socio-historical and communicative context**





why to study the Social Representations of Psychoanalysis?



in the three epistemic apexes of the
Subject-Other-Object epistemic triangle

The dynamics of change and its effects on
the transformation of SR is **not meant by**
a deterministic, binary perspective
(individuals-environment), but rather as a
co-evolution of symbolic systems
and social relationships

in the social context:

significant changes in
the **historical,**
communicative and
technological context



Changes in the “object”

- due to the **internal evolution of the psychoanalytical thought and practices and of the wider field of psychotherapies;**
- due to the **evolution in the field of the psychiatry:**
 - from one side given the radical changes of the nosography and asylums under the pressure of the radical **anti-psychiatry;**
 - from the other side given the impressive development of the **neurosciences.**



Co-evolution of changes in the Epistemic Triangle

Moving from the observation of an Epistemic Triangle (S-O-A) along a temporal dimension (S-O-P-S, see the “Toblerone Model” by Bauer & Gaskell, 1999)

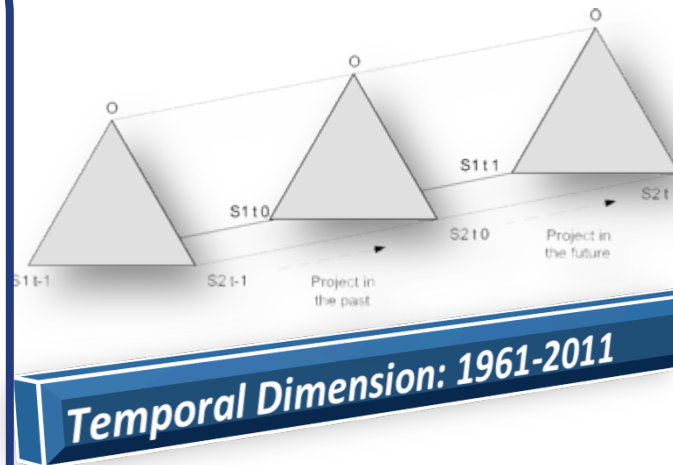
it is possible to identify:

EGO-ALTER:
social actors

**LAYPEOPLE, EXPERTS,
EXPERTS IN TRAINING**

Changes in:

- **socio-cultural *milieu***
- **lifestyles**
- **practices** related to health, illness, mental disease and related therapies,
- **exposition to scientific knowledge** and personal and professional environments in which they operate



OBJECT:

**PSYCHOANALYSIS,
PSYCHIATRY**

Both

- **Internal evolution** (new paradigms, schools, clinical applications)
- **external changes** (new psychotherapies, confrontation with the anti-psychiatric movement and the explosion of neurosciences)



Contextual Changes

Deep changes in the international political scenario:

- end of the Cold War
- fall of the communism
- globalization
- system of values
- communication channels

Historical and ideological changes

From the **Gutenberg era** of **press media** (Castells, 2000), integrated by the **radio** and **c i n e m a**, a s m e d i a complementary to school,

to the **digital era** of TV running forward to the ICT, and **Web revolution** and the appearance of **Social Networks** on the public scene

Communicational changes



Following-up the Moscovici's seminal study

Given the hypothesized co-evolution of social representations and the above-mentioned fundamental axe of changes, **the follow-up cannot consist in the mere cloning of the baseline research,**

but must necessarily consider the **compatibility between the “replicability” of the seminal study and the introduction of innovative elements** (new techniques besides the original interview-questionnaire)

and **its extension** (in terms of **tools, populations, countries, media system, objects of representations: psychoanalysis and psychiatry; psychoanalysts and psychiatrists**).

Moscovici himself, in 1976, highlights the importance of a Follow-Up in validating the results of Propaganda in the communist press.

The structure of the Follow-Up

Extension of the study by
Objects: psychoanalysis & psychiatry
Geo-cultural contexts: France & Italy
Target populations: lay & professionals
New Techniques, besides the original interview

Traditional Media Study

Analysis of the
content of the online
Italian and French
Press

Field Study

on the
Italian
and French
population

New Media Study

Analysis of
spontaneous
conversations on
Social Networks

Extension to the **communicative system:**
integration of traditional print media and
New Media (Social Networks)



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Part I

The Field Study



The Notebook-Questionnaire



Extracting accurately by comparative analysis of several book-editions the instrument employed by Moscovici in his First-Wave Research (Moscovici, 1961, 1976; see de Rosa, 2011a), a **semi-structured interview was elaborated and included in the final track of the notebook-questionnaire.**

It also included **other techniques**, like:

- **the associative networks** (stimulus words: psychoanalysis, psychiatry, illness, mental illness, normality, deviance)
- **the semantic conceptual self-identification network**
- **the semantic conceptual identification network** (stimulus words: psychoanalysis, psychiatry, psychoanalyst, psychiatrist)

Interviews were administrated by interviewers specifically trained in the context of the European PhD on Social Representations and Communications,
from January 2011 and January 2012,
in two cultural contexts: Italy and France.



Target Objects, Dimesnions investigated, Techniques, Data Analysis, Softwares

Research Lines	Target Objects	Variables	Method	Analytic tools	Software
Field Study	SR of psychoanalysis and psychiatry	Definition of the disciplines	Lexical Correspondence Analysis	Associative network	SPAD-T
			Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions	SPAD-T
			Descriptive statistics and One-way ANOVA	Semantic network	SPSS
			Hierarchical Text Classification	Semi-structured interview	Alceste
		Diffusion of the disciplines	Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions	SPAD-T
			Factorial analysis	Likert scale (0-5)	SPSS
		Sources and levels of knowledge	Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions and ranking	SPAD-T
			Hierarchical evocation	Free association task	EVOC
			Hierarchical Text Classification	Semi-structured interview	Alceste
			Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions and ranking	SPAD-T
			Factorial analysis	Likert scale (0-5)	SPSS
		Attitude toward the disciplines	Hierarchical Text Classification	Semi-structured interview	Alceste
			Factorial analysis	Likert scale (0-5)	SPSS
	Image of the psychoanalyst and the psychiatrist	Description of the specialists and their relationship with patients	Hierarchical Text Classification	Semi-structured interview	Alceste
			Descriptive statistics and One-way ANOVA	Semantic network	SPSS
			Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions and ranking	SPAD-T
	Psychoanalysis, Psychiatry and their publics	Demand and public of the disciplines	Factorial analysis	Likert scale (0-5)	SPSS
			Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions	SPAD-T
			Factorial analysis	Likert scale (0-5)	SPSS
			Multiple Correspondence Analysis	Multiple choice questions	SPAD-T
			Factorial analysis	Likert scale (0-5)	SPSS
			Hierarchical Text Classification	Semi-structured interview	Alceste
	SR of mental health and mental illness	Definition and perception of the field of mental health/illness	Lexical Correspondence Analysis	Associative network	SPAD-T



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Part II

The content analysis of online press



About the relevance of the online press in the Web 2.0 era

The online press is different from the traditional to some salient aspects. Under the influence of the Web 2.0 revolution, a new "many-to-many" dimension of communication has progressively emerged, giving rise to new forms of information whose identity, functions and roles are still being defined.

The specific features that separate web and print media, traditional and online press, do not take place in an antagonist framework, calling contemporary information agencies to "juggle" among the paper and the web, to master several languages, in order to process information adapt it to different media.

About the relevance of the online press in the Web 2.0 era (ii)

In a phase called "1.0", publishers were trying to adapt the model of traditional press to new virtual spaces, establishing consultation fees, which did match the traditional product offered for sale, so that it resulted "the electronic version of the printed newspaper" (Carelli, 2004, p. 93). The progressive failure of this model referred to the affirmation of a new phase of the web (2.0), in which the role of users in the creation and structuring of content (using a "user-generated" approach) and the new frontiers of interactivity and free access to information, opened up by the advent of social networks and syndication technologies (RSS, Atom, tagging), ensured open access to online content, not only on newspaper websites, blog or forum, but also through different channels as well as disparate media (PCs, tablets, mobile devices).

Although it is difficult to determine whether this structural change is made in a uniform way among national and cultural contexts (Carelli, 2004), characterized by different levels of contribution and access to information (Iannone, 2007), it is certain that these flows mark the boundaries of an irreversible passage.



Research goals

- Analyze uniformity and differences, based on the results obtained, with respect to the first-wave research (Moscovici, 1976), in particular, referring to different communication systems (eg, examining the vocabulary used in defining the role of the analyst and the the psychiatrist) then different communication styles associated with specific groups of interest (see Moscovici, 1976)
- Verify the occurrence of production and dissemination of an instrumental representation of the two disciplines (psychoanalysis and psychiatry) in the communication context of online newspapers and magazines, expecting to confirm Moscovici's (1976) outcomes providing psychoanalysis as as a system of interpretation and only incidentally as a specialised discipline - theory and technique - specialists



Hypotheses



- Similarly to the Opera Prima, we expected that the figure of the psychoanalyst should be discredited compared to the assimilation of the psychiatrist to the figure of "doctor", as well as its place in the professional field of medical science, "official", effective and institutionalized
- We expect variations in the representational field of the objects of study, less influenced by the “big ideologies” of the two blocks of the 60th (american capitalism vs communism) and more in the light of the lively discussions on new paradigm of mind functioning, arising from literature that considers psychoanalysis as a philosophy without scientific foundation (see the recent debate in the French media about the "affabulation" by Onfray, 2010), following its scientific and cultural failure and of its theoretical postulates, particularly in France, where the debate has recently emerged (de Rosa, 2011)



The online newspapers and magazines investigated in Italy and France, selected and listed by political and religious orientations

Online Newspapers				Online Magazines		
<i>Orientamento politico</i>			<i>Cattolico</i>	<i>Orientamento politico</i>		<i>Cattolico</i>
<i>Sinistra</i>	<i>Generalista</i>	<i>Destra</i>		<i>Sinistra</i>	<i>Destra</i>	
						
						



The content analysis of online press

Variables		
Objects	Variables	Keywords for web search
SR of psychoanalysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition and goals • Level of knowledge of the discipline and its thematic language • Attitude toward the discipline • Diffusion • Efficacy • Fields of application and intervention • Relations with ideologies and religion • Image of the expert • Relationship between expert and patient 	Psychoanalysis
SR of psychiatry		Psychiatry/ies
SR of the psychoanalyst		Psychoanalyst/s
SR of the psychiatrist		Psychiatrist/s
SR of the common field of mental health/illness		Mental health/illness



Methods

- **Data collection:** collection of online articles from Italian and French newspapers and magazines, through Google's advanced search function, according to the following criteria:
 - a) Time range (1/3/2010-1/3/2011);
 - b) Country (Italy-France);
 - c) Pre-defined keywords (in two versions, Italian vs. French)
- **Data analysis:** submission of the obtained text corpus to a Descending Hierarcical Classification (HDC) by the Software Alceste (Image, V. 4.5).



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Part III

The Social Networks Research line






The Social Networks research line

Content Analysis of spontaneous conversations on Social Networks

Social Networks analysed		
Yahoo! Answers	Facebook	Twitter
		



The Content Analysis of spontaneous conversations on Social Networks

Variables Illustrative		
		
Year (2010, 2011)	Year (2010, 2011)	Year (2010, 2011)
Gender (man, woman, not available)	Gender (man, woman, not available)	Gender (man, woman, not available)
Online environment (profiles, groups, pages)	Hashtags	Type of answer (best answer, answer)
		Users' expertise (frequent, i.e. YA levels 5-7, non frequent, i.e. YA levels 1-4)



The Research lines on SOCIAL NETWORKS

Content Analysis of spontaneous conversations on Social Networks

Variables in analysis

Objects of study:	Level of analysis:	Selected keywords for data collection via Google:
SR of Psychoanalysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of each discipline and its goals • Level of knowledge of the discipline and its thematic language • Attitude towards the discipline • Diffusion of the discipline • Efficiency as a therapy/theory • Domains of application • Relations with ideologies • Image of the experts • Relationship expert/patient 	Psychoanalysis
SR of Psychiatry		Psychiatry
SR of the Psychoanalyst		Psychoanalyst/s
SR of the Psychiatrist		Psychiatrist/s
SR of Mental Illness and Disease		Mental Health, Mental Illness



Methods (Social Network research line)

Data collection:

- **implementation of a ad hoc methodology** by the collection of a text corpus of public, spontaneous conversations extracted from the SN **through Google's advanced search function**, according to the following criteria:
 - a) Time range (1/3/2010-1/3/2011);
 - b) Country (Italy-France);
 - c) Pre-defined keywords (in two versions, Italian vs French)

Data analysis:

- **submission of the obtained text corpus to a Descending Hierarcical Classification (HDC) by the Software Alceste (Image, V. 4.5).** This method carries out successive splits of the text, looking for the strongest vocabulary oppositions in the text and then extracts some categories of representative terms (see Reiner, 1993)

* Data from Twitter are available, but still in progress of analysis



some Key transversal results as

elements of continuity/distinction compared to the Opera Prima

- From the FIELD STUDY, it emerges that the **Psychoanalysis** is anchored into a **more diffused lay knowledge system (very rarely psychoanalyst is still anchored into “priest” or “magical healer” of occultism).**
- However - in line with our preliminary hypothesis following the recent international debate of its scientific status and validity - **psychoanalysis appears as a discipline in decline.** In fact, we found **it is recognized as a theory, a current of thought, a historical cultural movement more than a practice or therapy, especially in the Italian vs. the French context**
- In France the influence of Lacan clearly emerges from our results, despite the controversial debate stimulated “in” and “by” the media by Onfray (2010) about the “affabulation” of the psychoanalysis.
- Differently, **psychiatry is perceived as a medical, natural science delegated to intervene in case of mental illness**, providing pharmacologic and clinical solutions, as driven and **legitimated by recent development of neurosciences**, according to the advancement of a **new image of mind and its functioning by means of an integration between psychodynamic study of the unconscious and neurobiological instances.**

Final Remarks:



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elements of continuity/distinction compared to the Opera Prima

The field of **mental health**, is nevertheless differentiated, according to each cultural context explored:

- **in France**, depicted as a **condition of individual deviance potentially attempting social security and order, to be contained in specialized hospitals and controlled by the psychiatry as tool of forensic law system to protect society;**
- **while in Italy**, intended as a **condition of suffering to be overcome by insertion in the context of community and socialized institutions,**

as an **outcome of different historical and cultural development in the public management and control of psychopathology**, according to the main effects of the so-called **Italian Basaglia Law (1978)** and the more recent reform on psychiatric hospitals approved by the **French Sarkozy government (2011)**.

Final Remarks:



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elements of continuity/distinction compared to the Opera Prima

From the MEDIA STUDIES on the press, as regards the systems of communication investigated, in comparison with Moscovici's fundamental classification, we found an evident decline in propaganda and propagation.

The decline of propaganda and propagation is likely to be explained at the light of our preliminary hypothesis regarding the decline of influence by the great ideologies prevalent in the twentieth century (including, mainly, the communist one, and the role of the Catholic church), replaced by the affirmation of socio-cultural milieus and lifestyles in guiding attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups and by the emergence of the subjectivity especially in the realm of the social networks.

Final Remarks:



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some Key transversal results as

elements of continuity/distinction compared to the Opera Prima

On the contrary, in regard to the **communication systems** Moscovici (1976, 1961), the **diffusion** is still substantially active and prevalent in contemporary media communication from our results from media studies research lines.

As argued by Moscovici, such system is not aiming to address and orientate attitudes, being **more inclined to confirm the reader's expectations**, according to a framework of equal relationship between broadcasting agency and receiver of the message.

We observe as **the contemporary press is characterized by a constant and specific proposal of images related to the domains of psychoanalysis, psychiatry and mental illness** that trace back representations which are commonly shared in society and especially lay environments, **operating within the boundaries of an apparently consensual universe**.

Final Remarks:



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some Key transversal results as elements of continuity/distinction compared to the Opera Prima

As regards from the social networks research lines, the main results show **the demand for mutual-help based on an intense exchange of subjective experiences among users, perceived as “friend’s community”**, in which the sharing of psychological, emotional and relational experiences serves to establish a fundamental dimension of socialization in the dynamics of communication implied.

We detect the emergence of a **specific style of communication characterizing the Web 2.0**, leading to the **substantial replacement of health tools and rehabilitation paths, as well as the institutional roles of professionals themselves** (such as, for example, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts and psychotherapists), with a specific form of informal, mutual support, based on emotional and experiential sharing: **“from the coach of the psychoanalyst to the psychiatric – aid of the imagined friends in the social networks”**.



elements of continuity/distinction compared to the Opera Prima

In conclusion, the results obtained from the three research lines implemented in the context of the present study, allowed us to identify **the advent of a new “naive theory of mind” and to trace its boundaries.**

The three integrated research lines have detected **the complex interrelated systems of representations which characterize the objects of knowledge considered:** psychoanalysis, psychiatry, mental health and their practices in two geo-cultural and normative contexts .

Fifty years away from the historic and seminal research by Moscovici on the “level of penetration of psychoanalysis in French society” (ibid.), we have tried to shed light on the **emerging fragmentation of knowledge and the further articulation of communication systems in different styles and objectives.**

The results highlight the existing delimitation of theories, methods and scientific practices, as dominated by a **substantial and extended cognitive polyphasia**, remarking the centrality of social representations as a powerful tool for the exploration and interpretation of the social world, to which the modeling approach applied sought to pursue.



Final Remarks



- Aware of the temerity of the intellectual enterprise, our hope in this audacious attempt to have at least understood the **desire for continuity** with which Moscovici says his own work in post-fiction *"The work of science is never done and its virtue lies in its start."*
- Our research aims to honor the fertility inspiring the *Opera Prima*, that rightly Gerard Duveen (2008) valued as follows: **"It is a classic text, but not the kind of store shelves of a library (...)** Rather, it is a text that should be of interest to contemporary social psychologists and attract their attention".

Social Representations of the Stock Market in Financial Advisors, Investors and Media:

A Field Study Carried Out in Europe and China



European/International Joint Ph.D.
in Social Representations and Communication

Annamaria Silvana de Rosa, Siyu Sun, Elena Bocci

European/International Joint PhD in
Social Representations and Communication
Sapienza University of Rome



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General Introduction

This contribution presents some results from a large research project, inspired by the **THEORY OF SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS**, entitled:

“Mass Psychology and Stock Market:

Heterogeneous Agents, Media, Traders and Investors”

launched by Prof. Annamaria de Rosa in 2008, involving a **cross-continental perspective**: Europe (Italy, UK, France) and Asia (China), **integrating qualitative and quantitative methods** and carried out on **special target groups**, like **professional financial advisors and lay investors**, and **analyzing different media** (generalist and specialized journals and social networks).



General Introduction: multiple interrelated research lines

Geo-Cultural Context Background Analysis

This research line **anchors the research program into the different geo-economic contexts (Europe and China)** and gives an understanding of how different institutions in different countries (with **different history of the stock market**) interact with the dynamics of financial markets and with massive self-fulfilling events.

Media Analysis

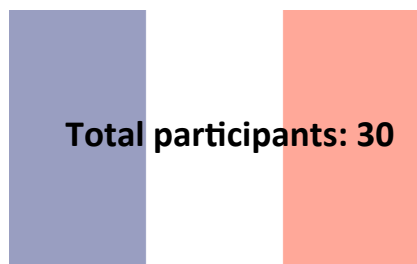
This research line investigates the role of the **traditional media** (generalized and specialized press) and **new media** (social networks) in elaborating, diffusion and transforming the social representations of the stock market.

Field study

This research line is aimed to detect the social psychology of the stock market in **special target groups** (financial advisors, investors through financial advisors and autonomous online investors), investigating the relations between individual **socio-demographic profiles**, the **financial profile** of each target group, **a set of psychological dimensions** (**time perspective, risk propensity and tolerance, trust, perceived influence of critical events in the media during this worldwide financial crisis in 2008**) assumed as **mediational variables**, and the **social representations of the stock market** (with their implicit **metaphors**). The latter ones are supposed to be shaped by and lead to the **financial practices**, also regarding the financial crisis in **the double temporal perspective (before and after the financial crisis)**.



EUROPE: Italy, UK, France



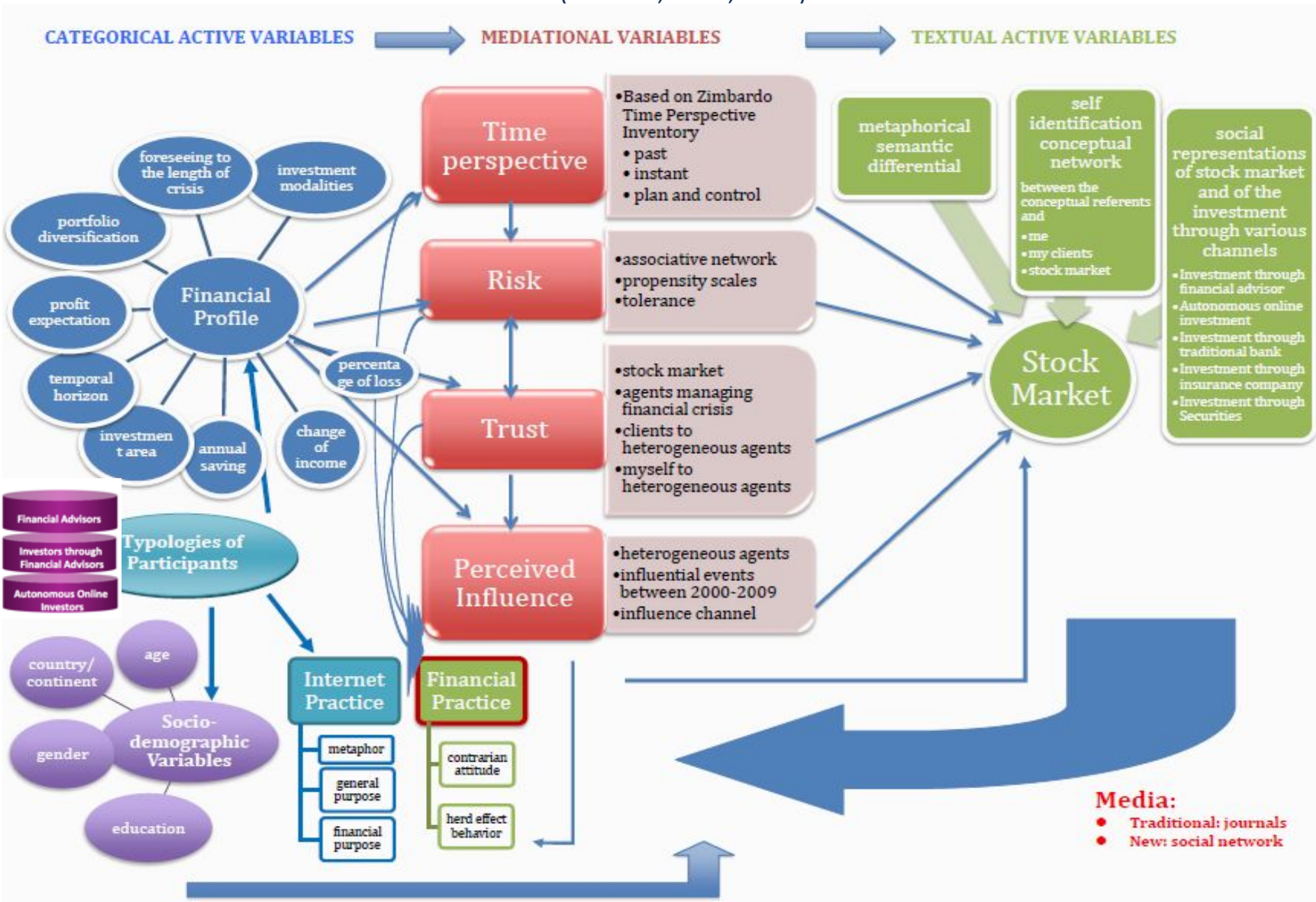
CHINA



Italian sample: 95 (F.A.);100 (I.); 87 (A.I.)
UK sample: 119 (A.I.)
French sample: 21(F.A.); 7(I.); 2(A.I.)
Chinese sample: 104(F.A.);130(I.);138(A.I.)

Research Design: Multi-Method Modeling Approach

(de Rosa, 1990, 2013)

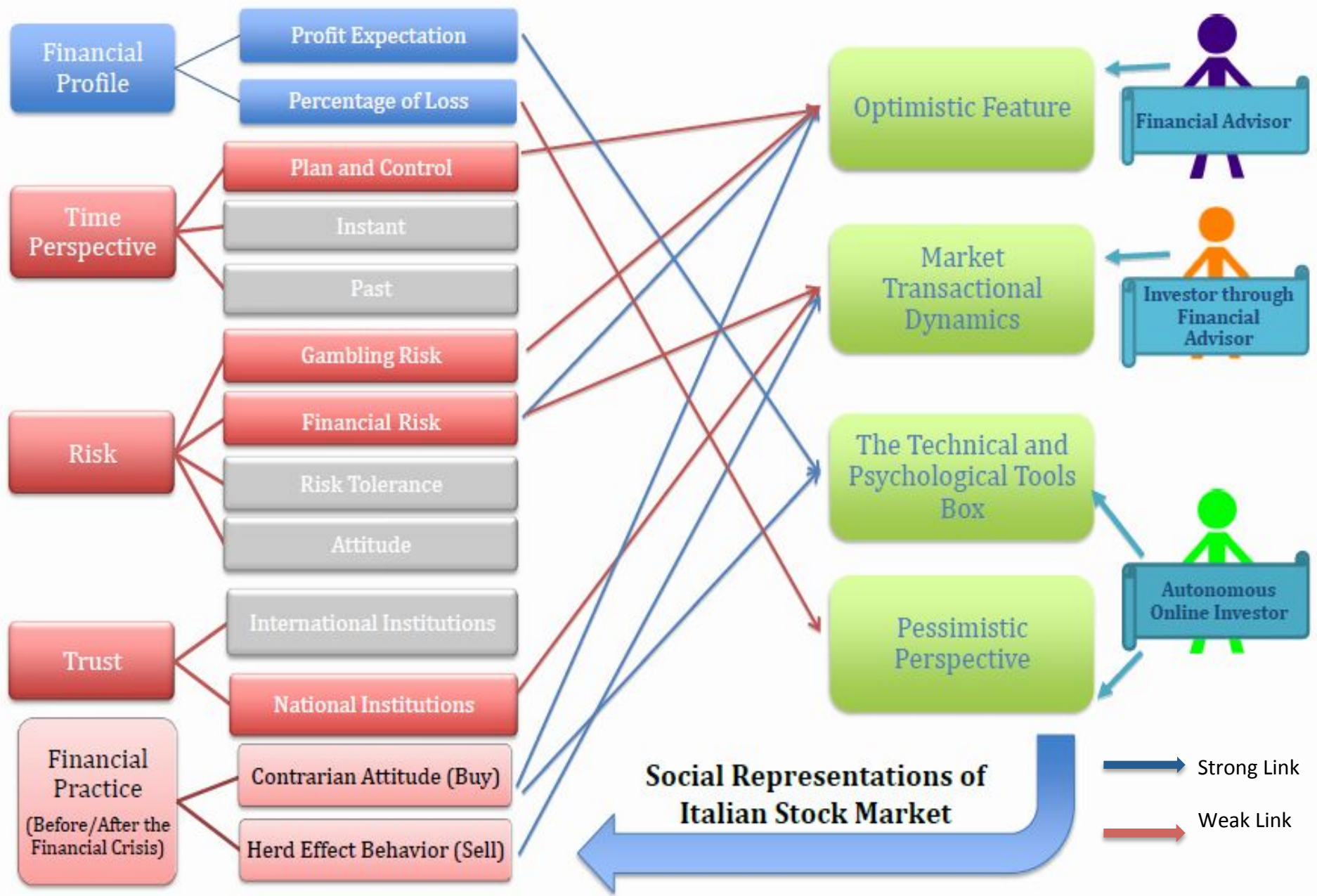




CATEGORICAL ACTIVE VARIABLES



TEXTUAL ACTIVE VARIABLES



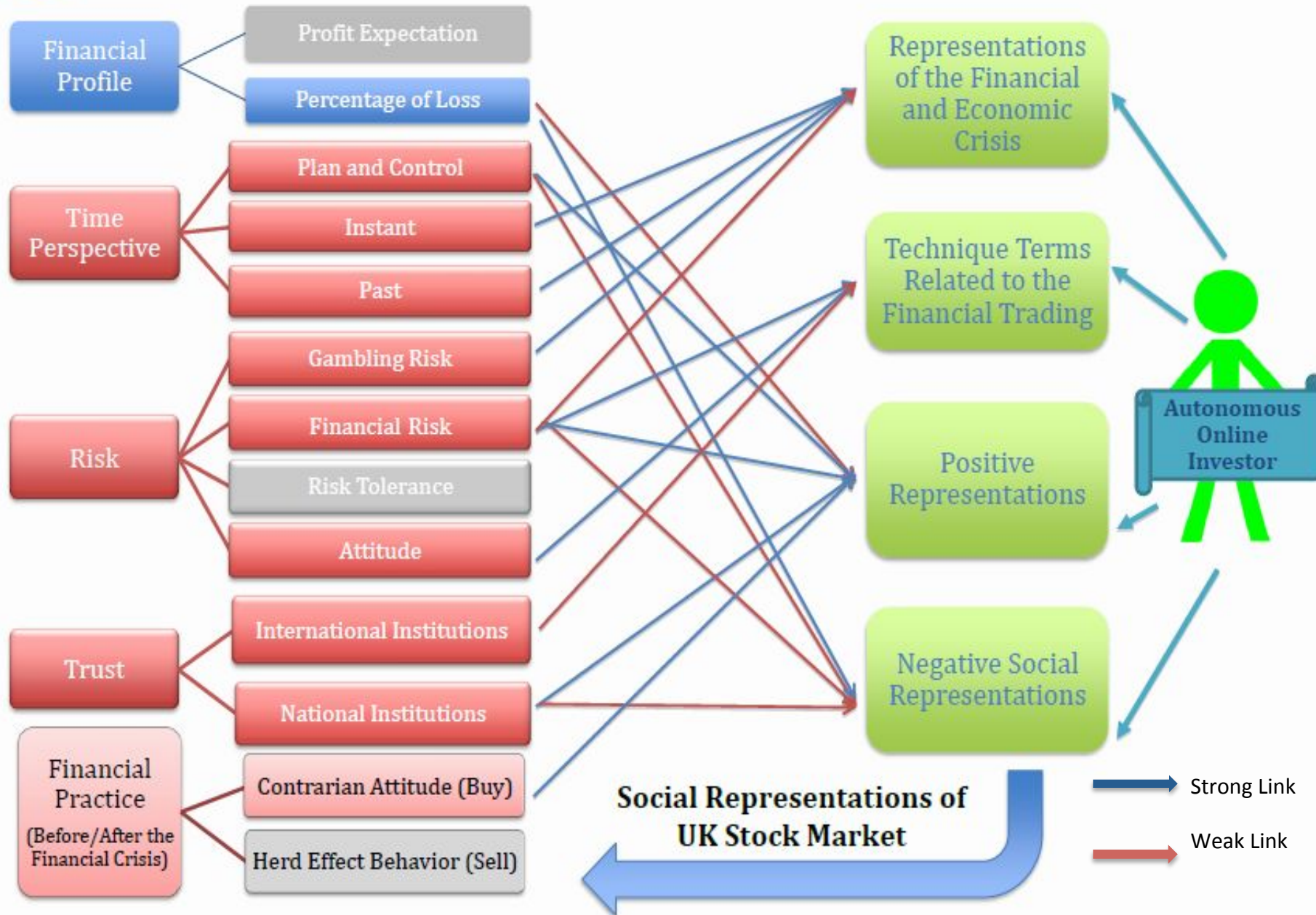
Strong Link
Weak Link



CATEGORICAL ACTIVE VARIABLES

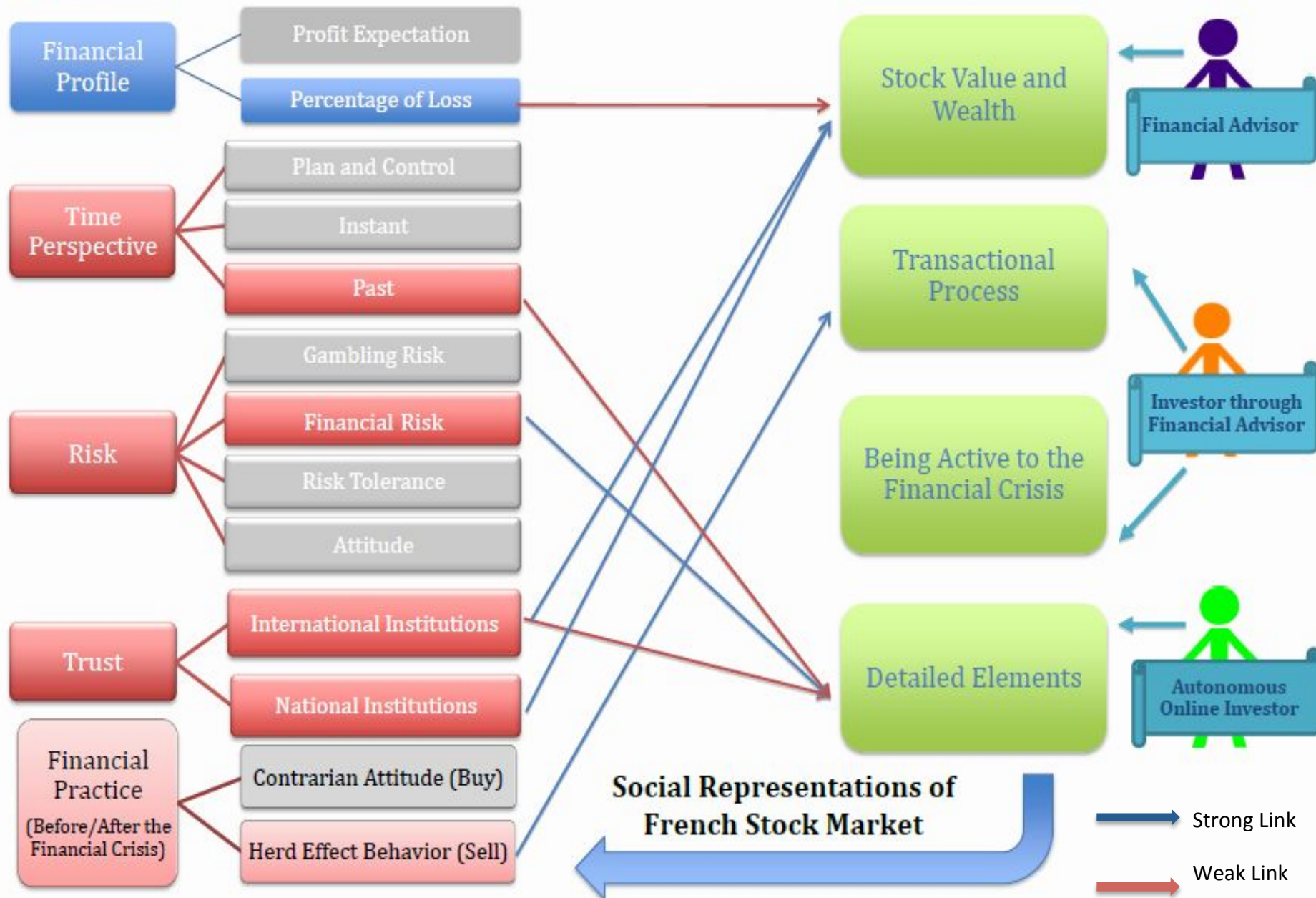


TEXTUAL ACTIVE VARIABLES



CATEGORICAL ACTIVE VARIABLES

TEXTUAL ACTIVE VARIABLES

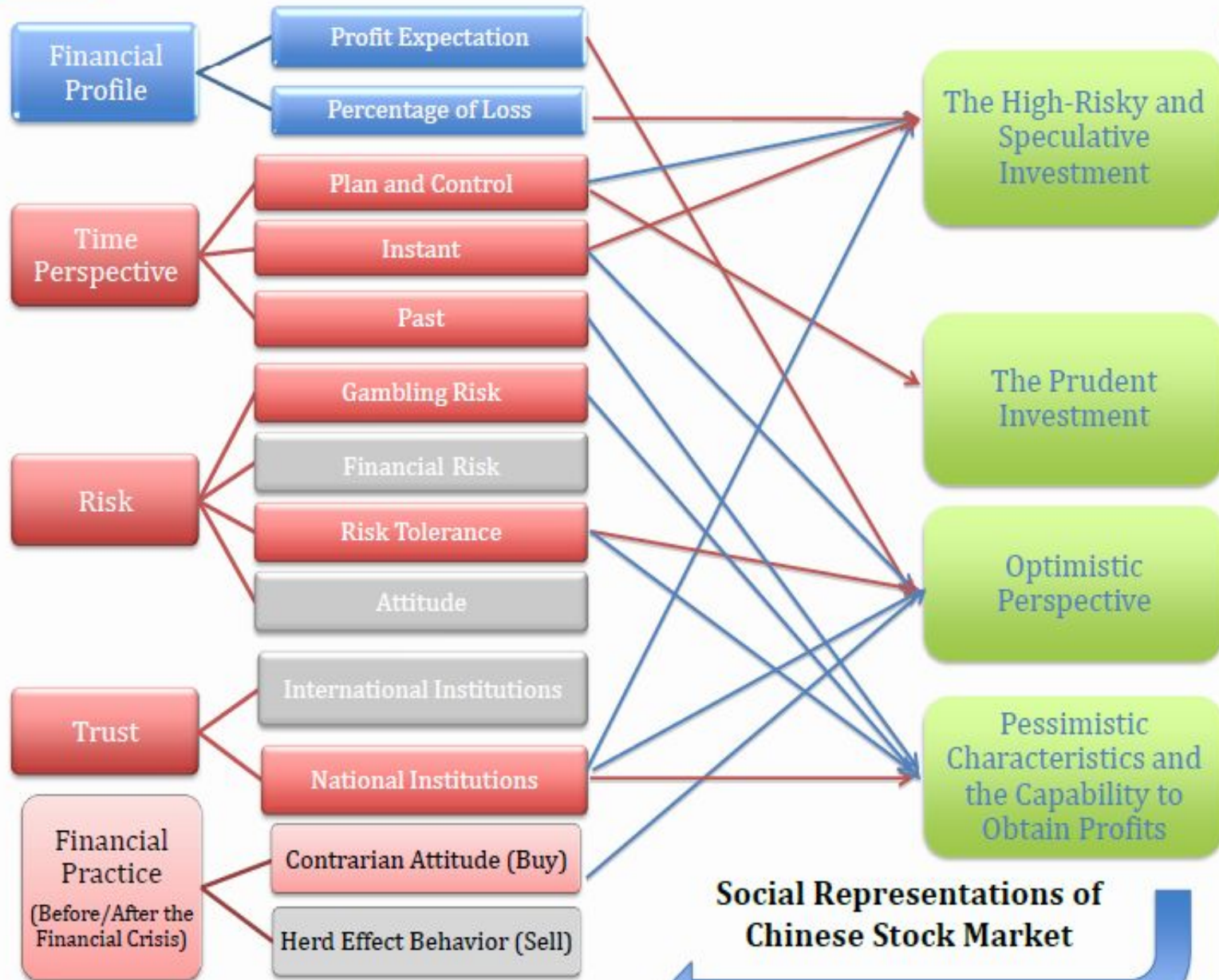




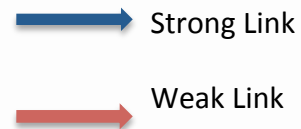
CATEGORICAL ACTIVE VARIABLES



TEXTUAL ACTIVE VARIABLES



Social Representations of Chinese Stock Market



Main Conclusions(1)



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A comparison among different countries



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in Social Representations and Communication

TRUST

 : shows more trust to the international institutions, compared to other countries.

 : has strong confidence mainly to the national and local economic and political institutions.

TIME PERSPECTIVE

 and  participants are mostly future and present oriented in the investment, while  participants are inclined to past memories and experiences towards the stock market.

RISK

 and  participants have a propensity of high-risky investment, however,  and  investors usually make financial transactions in a prudent and cautious way.