

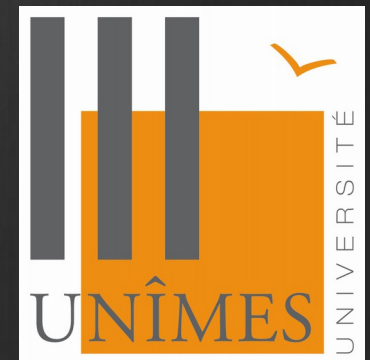
The structural approach of social representations

Genesis, development, current status and perspective

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Introduction

The structural approach of SR:
Four reasons for a success

An accessible theory

Effective in vivid social and societal issues

Concerned with methodological developments

1. Formulation and validation of the central core theory

The formulation of the theory

Abric (1976) proposes to go beyond the Moscovici's genetic perspective.

He considers all social models as being governed by an organization structured around a few significant elements.

These elements manage the signification and the consistency of the vision of the object for a given group.

1. Formulation and validation of the central core theory

The formulation of the theory

Abric (1976) proposes to consider the representational field as consisting of a **central core**, of representational elements gravitating around it and called **peripheral elements**, and of a **categorization system**.

1. Formulation and validation of the central core theory

*Properties and functions of the central core
and*

Central elements: *the peripheral system*

- Generate the signification of the representation
- Determine its organization

Peripheral elements:

- Allow adaptation to concrete reality
- Allow content differentiation
- Protect the central core

1. Formulation and validation of the central core theory

The categorization system

Analogy

Inference

Anticipation

Compensation

1. Formulation and validation of the central core theory

The first empirical studies

Research on craft (Abric, 1976)

Social representations are made of stable and organizing core elements that shape memory, help to retain the most important, and therefore allow to react quickly and/or effectively face to the object.

1. Formulation and validation of the central core theory

The first empirical studies

The validation of the theory (Moliner, 1988)

Double negation

If a substance that it is not addictive (questioning of the dependency element) is not recognized by a large majority of participants as a drug (second negation, of the object this time), it means that addiction is a central element of this representation as it is essential to the recognition of the object "drugs"

2. The major theoretical developments

Representational dynamic

Environment is changing...

Emergence of new practises for the group which may be imposed by the event itself or that the group is required to adapt to the new circumstances

2. The major theoretical developments

Representational dynamic

The thesis of Guimelli (1988) and the model of Flament (1994)

Two conditions for a transformation:

1. Implication
2. Perceived reversibility and contradiction

2. The major theoretical developments

Representational dynamic

The thesis of Guimelli (1988) and the model of Flament (1994)

Four cases:

1. Non-contradiction and perceived reversibility
2. Contradiction and perceived reversibility
3. Non-contradiction and perceived irreversibility
4. Contradiction and perceived irreversibility
 - *Resisting transformation*
 - *Sudden transformation*

2. The major theoretical developments

From the core to the central system

The work of Moliner (1992)

Central elements are less unconditionnal than normative. They don't reflect what **is** the object but what **it should be**.

2. The major theoretical developments

From the core to the central system

A theoretical extension:

The thesis of Rateau (1994)

The central core is itself hierarchical: **Priority** central elements express the certainty and **Adjunct** central elements express the normality.

2. The major theoretical developments

From the core to the central system

Structural and intra-core negotiability

Katerelos (2003): the confirmation of a central element can compensate the questioning of another one.

Lheureux & Lo Monaco (2011): this is true but only when this confirmation concerns a Priority central element.

2. The major theoretical developments

The integration of the concept of attitude

The two-dimensional model (Moliner, 1994)

Social representations can be analyzed from two distinct dimensions: Centrality and Evaluation

Four separated fields:

1. The field of **definitions**
2. The field of **norms**
3. The field of **descriptions**
4. The field of **expectations**

2. The major theoretical developments

The integration of the concept of attitude

Research on attitudes

If attitudes depends on representations (Rateau, 2000), representations depend only superficially on attitudes (Tafari, 2001)

If the commitment in a problematic acts or the exposure to a persuasive influence have a significant impact on attitudes, they have a very little one on SR and only on the peripheral system

2. The major theoretical developments

The integration of the concept of attitude

The bridge with the Geneva school

Integration of the central core theory and the socio-dynamic model

We can observe cross organizing principles within groups and, at the same time, differences between these them on terms of central elements (Tafari & Bellon, 2001 ; Rateau, 2004)

3. Theoretical extensions

The mute zone and its sociocognitive issues

Effect a **normative pressure**

(Deschamps & Guimelli, 2002, 2004)

Transparency of SR

(Flament & Rouquette, 2003)

Implicit **social comparison**

(Chokier & Rateau, 2009)

Flament, Guimelli & Abric, 2006) :

subjects select expressible aspects of the representation depending on the normative issue they perceive in the situation they are

3. Theoretical extensions

The interconnection with sociocognitive

processes

Connections of the structural approach of SR with

Social influence (Roussiau, 2001 ; Mugny *et al.*, 2000)

Cognitive dissonance (Eyssartier, Joule & Guimelli, 2007)

Social emotions (Guimelli & Rimé, 2009)

Social attributions (Moliner & Deschamps, 2009)

Categorization and stereotypes (Vidal & Brissaud,

2009)
Social comparison (Chokier & Rateau, 2009)

Social identity (Zouhri & Rateau, 2015)



The SR Structure-Effect

(Skandrani, Lo Monaco & Marzouki, 2015)

4. An epistemological position

Karl Popper 'on Clouds and Clocks' (1966)

'Clouds' = disordered, emerging systems

'Clocks' = mechanism and determinism

Are SR clouds of meanings
or structures of shapes?

Central core theory proposes to work
on the **clocks** of the **clouds**

To introduce the study of SR in the field
of the 'normal' science

Thanks for your attention

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