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FINAL EXAM

125 points

**Due 7:59am, Tuesday June 11, 2019**

**Instructions**

**Part 1** (50 points): Reread Greenwald (1977) “*The Totalitarian Ego*.” Summarize it as you would any other theoretical review paper in this class as an assignment (do not write out the outline but identify and describe the main points and describe the supporting evidence he cites when arguing these points). Also, explain how the empirical research reports you have read and discussed in this class over the last 10 weeks provide empirical support for his points. I am expecting you to discuss somewhere between 2 and 6 different articles here.

There are 3 main points in the article:

1. egocentricity (self as the focus of knowledge), it’s the inability to untangle subjective schemas from objective reality and an inability to accurately assume or understand any perspective other than one’s own.
2. beneffectance (perception of responsibility for desired, but not undesired outcomes), is the tendency to take credit for success while denying responsibility for failure.
3. conservatism (resistance to cognitive change), is the disposition to preserve that which is already established, it’s a bias in human information processing, which refers to tendency to one’s belief insufficiently when presented with new evidence.

The supporting evidence for argument **egocentricity** contains:

1. the tendency for events to be encoded and recorded in terms of the person’s location at the time of original experience (cf. Tulving, 1972).
2. Rogers^ Kuiper, and Kirker (1977) provided the first of several demonstrations that information is especially well remembered if the person considers the relation of information to self at the time of initial experience.
3. Brenner (1973, 1976) found that in a group setting, subjects focused on their own performance at the expense of retaining information from the just preceding or just following performances of others.
4. In a chapter entitled "Overestimating One's Importance as Influence or Target," Jervis (1976), a political scientist, presents an analysis of egocentric misperceptions in international politics.

Those evidences he cited to argue egocentricity showed that people always focus on their own experience more than others.

The supporting evidence for argument **beneffectance** contains:

1. One of the best established recent findings in social psychology is that people perceive themselves readily as the origin of good effects and reluctantly, as the origin of ill effects (see reviews in support of this conclusion by Bowerman, 1978; Bradley, 1978; Jervis, 1976, chap. 9; Miller & Ross, 197S; Myers & Ridl, 1979; Snyder, Stephan, & Rosenfield, 1978; Wicklund, 1978; Wortman, 1976; Tetlock & Leyi, Note 1)
2. Students who do well are willing to accept credit for success; those who do poorly, however, are unwilling to accept responsibility for failure, instead seeing the exam (or the instructor) as being insensitive to their abilities (cf. Arkin & Maruyama, 1979; Schlenker & Miller, 1977).
3. Some of the earliest relevant experimental evidence comes from variations of Zeigarnik's (1927) finding that people typically recall interrupted tasks, better than they recall completed ones.
4. Johnston (1967) demonstrated just this effect by having subjects believe themselves to be members of two-person teams performing a skilled task (compensatory tracking).

Those evidence he cited to argue beneffectance showed that people usually recall the memory that it’s beneficial for themselves.

The supporting evidence for argument **conservatism** contains:

1. Snyder and Swann (1978) showed that when asked to determine if an interviewee was, say, an introvert, subject-interviewers selected questions that were biased toward the introvert hypothesis.
2. Mischel, Ebbesen, and Zeiss (1973) found that subjects selectively examined available information to confirm experimentally established positive or negative self-expectations.
3. Koriat, Lich\* tenstein, and Fischhoff (1980) have suggested that this overconfidence in memory is due at least in part to a selective search of memory for evidence that confirms what has been recalled.
4. A well-known example is Luchins's (1957) finding that the impression resulting from two somewhat contradictory person-descriptive paragraphs varies sharply as a function of the order in which they are presented, being guided more by the first of the two.

Those evidence he cited to argue conservatism showed that people cannot accept new evidence easily, and sometimes, people even rewrite their memory to meet their self-expectation.

According to Ross, M & Sicoly, F. (1979). Egocentric biases in Availability and attribution. It claims that people always have the egocentricity when they are recalling information, the positive information will always be retrieved easily than negative information. this also supports the first and second point (egocentricity, beneffectance), because people retrieve the beneficial information for themselves easily, the egocentricity bias in availability of judgments of responsibility occurs very often.

According to Wittenbrink, B., Gist, P.L., & Hilton, J.L. (1997) structural properties of stereotypic knowledge and their influences on the construal of social situations. People’s judgement can always be influenced by their stereotypic knowledge, people use this knowledge as the evidence to judgement different people, which usually caused bias. This supports the third point(conservatism), because stereotypic knowledge is being used as “conservative” evidence in people’s mind, they prefer to make judgement based on the information that they can retrieve easily from their memory.

According to Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgement under uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases. Availability is one of the heuristics that are highly economical and usually effective but lead to systematic and predictable errors. It supports the second point(beneffectance), because it states that people rely on the availability of information to judge things, and people can recall the information that’s beneficial to themselves easily, which causes bias.

According to Schwarz, N., Strack, F., Bless H., Klumpp, G., Ritternauer-Schatka, H., & Simons, A. (1991). Ease of retrieval as information: another looks at the availability Heuristic. This article supports the second and third point (beneffectance and conservatism), because it proved that ease of retrieval of information is directly related to the experience of recall despite the heuristics in communication to disentangle the impact of content of recall and of the subjective experience of ease or difficulty that may accompany recall. People easily retrieval the old and beneficial information as their base knowledge to judgement things.

**Part 2** (50 points): Summarize Darley & Gross (1983) “*A hypothesis-confirming Bias in labeling effects.*” Summarize it as you would any other empirical article as an assignment but this time, make sure you rephrase everything in terms of the theories and principles and phenomena we have been discussing. E.g., I am expecting to see you use and apply correctly terms like schema, heuristics, stages of attribution, attention, encoding, decoding, etc. Remember what I told you in the first week of the class; you are not learning a bunch of different things (e.g., 18 articles). You have learned only one thing. You have learned how one person perceives and judges another person. That is it.  **So, explain it to me in nontechnical terms.**

The objective of this study was to examine the process leading to the confirmation of a perceiver’s expectancies about another when the social label that created the expectancy provides poor or tentative evidence about another’s true dispositions or capabilities. The hypothesis was that people will use the confirmation bias in labeling effects to judge people differently. The independent variable was the different label that they gave on the “target”, more detailed, the label is whether the child came from a high socioeconomic background or came from a low socioeconomic background. The dependent variable is that their judgements about the academic ability of the child.

The experiment design was a 2\*2 factorial one, with two levels of expectancy (positive or negative) and two levels of performance (performance and no performance). In addition, a fifth group (control group) of participants viewed the performance tape but were not given prior information about the child’s background. The participants are assigned to different groups randomly. The first segment provided demographic information about the child and was used to establish either positive or negative expectations for the child's academic potential. Half of the participants viewed a sequence that depicted the child in an urban, low-income area (negative expectancy); the other half were shown the same child in a middle-class, suburban setting (positive expectancy). This schema was used to set the different labels for participants in different groups. Orthogonal to this manipulation was the performance variable. Half of the participants from each expectancy condition were shown a second tape segment in which the child responded to achievement-test problems (performance). The tape was constructed to be inconsistent and relatively uninformative about the child's abilities. The remaining participants were not shown this segment (no performance). After that, all the participants were asked to evaluate the child’s academic ability. The evaluation result was being measured and recorded. The study defined independent variables as the label (positive expectancy, negative expectancy) and performance (performance, no performance). The key dependent variable was the rating they gave to the child.

Their experiment result about “test difficulty” showed that Subjects in the positive-expectancy condition rated the test as significantly more difficult (Mgrade = 4.8) than did those in the negative-expectancy condition (M grade = 3.9). Follow-up analyses revealed that subjects with positive expectancies estimated that the child correctly answered more of the easy (M = 94% vs. 79%) and moderately difficult (M = 69% vs. 53%) problems than did subjects with negative expectancies. Expectancy did not affect estimates of answers to difficult problems (M = 37% vs. 36%). The overall pattern suggests a bias to report more instances of expectancy-consistent than expectancy-inconsistent test responses.

The possible mechanism was that. First, there seems to be a selective recall of evidence: Perceivers who expected the child to do well reported the child as having answered easier and more moderately difficult problems correctly than those expecting the child to do poorly. Second, there seems to be a selective weighting of the evidence such that hypothesis-consistent behaviors are regarded as more "typical" of the child's true capabilities. When people were asked to report what evidence, they found most useful in determining their evaluations, they reported only those test items on which the child's performance was consistent with their initial expectations. Third, perceivers appeared to develop auxilliary hypotheses that would render apparently inconsistent behavior consistent with their hypotheses.

**Part 3** (25 points). Describe and explain three things that you learned in this class about how people perceive and think about others that you did not know before.

The first thing I learned was that people judge others based on the ease of availability of information. For instance, you recall the information easily from your experience of watching TV. It became your availability heuristic, which you tend to heavily weight your judgement toward more recent information, making your opinions biased toward that TV news, so you started to worry about being fired after watched a news about higher unemployment rate.

The second thing I learned was that there are egocentric biases in availability and attribution. For example, people always tend to overestimate their attribution in a group work even though other partners probably have done a lot of work too. People can easily retrieval the information about themselves in the group work so that they have egocentric bias to lead them to believe that they have done a lot of work in the group project.

The third thing I learned was that how we form an impression of a person. There are 3 models:

1. Impression = A + B + C + D, the total impression of a person is the sum of the independent traits.
2. Impression = A + B + C + D + ‘G’, we decide the impression of a person due to some key trait ‘G’.
3. Impression = A B C D mixed, like a soup, we decide the impression based on the mixed trait.