**Full Title of Submission**

Let’s talk structure: the positive consequences of structural representations

**Short Title**

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Positive consequences of structural representations

**Abstract (150/150w)**

How should we represent social categories? Essentialism, which posits an internal category essence, leads to negative consequences such as expectations of homogeneity and normativity. Structural representations, which consider categories as situated in a larger context, could lead to more positive consequences. Adults (n=167) learned that a novel group’s diet had a biological (allergies, digestive ability), cultural (taboo), or structural (food availability) cause. Those who learned a structural cause were more hesitant to generalize outside the structural context, more likely to consider it possible and acceptable for a group member to deviate, and suggested targeting the structural context rather than the group when asked to intervene on the property. Follow-ups with 5-8yo children show similar preliminary results, and with adults, will shift to a more real-life context where a group holds a low-status job. These results differentiate structural representations from other representations, and suggest that structural representations may be positive to promote.