The generation of descriptive-evaluative responses in scale answering behaviour: A model

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Abstract

A model of subject behaviour in scale answering situations is derived, developed and illustrated empirically. The model allows for the possibility that a subject, faced with a request to describe how much of some attribute an object possesses, may internally represent either that object or some other. Additionally, it allows that he may give honest expression to his internal representation or modify so as to proffer a more 'functional' description. Thus two basic parameters (representation and description) characterise the process whereby a response emitter (S) gives a descriptive-evaluative response to a response elicitor (E).

The parameters of the model are demonstrated by two studies using a psychometrically sophisticated personality scale (Mach. V). In the first, object substitution is shown by contrasting self-referent and other-referent responses using a personating technique. In the second, response modification, due to favourable self-presentation, is found to operate despite a scale-format designed specially to eliminate such biases.

Two major implications of the model are discussed:

a. That the nature of descriptive-evaluative responding is such as to render the construction of non-fakeable descriptive scales impossible.

b. That many experiments using descriptive scales are dubious tests of their stated hypotheses because there are no provisions for the control of the parameters of description and representation.

Social psychology is replete with paradigms in which subjects are required to evaluate the extent to which a provided word or sentence describes some object (e.g., adjective check lists), or to select a position on a scale that describes some judgment e.g., subjective confidence). Instances of such response requirements are found, for
example, in attitude research, risky-shift studies, impression formation and person perception. Similar techniques are to be found in other areas of psychology, such as self-descriptive personality measurement and the assessment of vocational interests.

It seems, then, that we can trace across a wide variety of apparently dissimilar fields of work a common form of subject behaviour – the descriptive-evaluative response (d.e.r.). Having tentatively identified this underlying linkage, it is obviously tempting to ask if the similarity has more than a superficial significance. Some indication that it has may be deduced from the way in which such concepts as ‘demand characteristics’ (Orne, 1959, 1962, 1969), ‘evaluation apprehension’ (Rosenberg, 1969), ‘social desirability’ (Edwards, 1957, 1970) and ‘situated identity’ (Alexander and Knight, 1971) seem applicable to the elicitation of d.e.r.s in general. All these constructs refer to possible modifications of the contract between the response elicer (E) and the response emitter (S) (cf. Holzkamp, 1972, pp. 14-15). For example, in terms of scale answering behaviour, a subject may be thought of as trying to respond ‘appropriately’ on such varying measures as: An attitude inventory, an index of his perception of another, a personality scale or on a repeated measure of ‘risk’.

Once stated, the fact that many of the commonly employed dependent variables in social psychology are of the nature of d.e.r.s becomes patently obvious. However, to the authors’ knowledge, little attempt has been made to exploit the integrative potential of this cross-paradigmatic way of approaching subject behaviour. Obviously, such developments are dependent on the evolution of a general model of d.e.r. behaviour. If it is to be general, such a model should be capable both of illustrating the operation of phenomena like ‘demand characteristics’ and of treating cases where experimentation provides ‘valid’ reflections of cognitive operations. This paper presents an outline of the development of such a model.

The argument

All social interactions may be conceived as incorporating contractual elements. In the case of experimenter/subject or tester/testee relationships, it is usual (for example, in reports of research) to emphasise one particular side of the contract: Namely, the demands which were made by the response elicer to the response giver. These typically specify:

2. An exception being Rotter (1960), who, in contrast to the present writers, treats scale response in positivistic learning theory terms.
i) What aspect of what object the response giver should direct his attention to (e.g. 'How co-operative was your partner?).

ii) The form of the report (e.g., 'Tick the box that best describes him').

iii) The impartiality required (e.g., 'Be as honest as you can; your partner will not see your answers').

These then, are examples of the eliciting stimuli presented to a subject. Our real interest, however (and hence the model), begins to develop when we set about analysing the processes the subject employs in dealing with such requests.

A. First, we propose that it is phenomologically reasonable to speak of subjects describing some inner representation of reality when giving d.e.r.s. This inner representation may be of some object that is being directly perceived or of some memory or impression of reality. In either case, it is possible to set up the contrast between the parameters:

i) Description – what the subject says he 'sees'.

ii) Representation – what the subject actually 'sees'.

Logically, there are two possible relationships that may exist between description and representation:

i) Equivalence – description isomorphic with representation.

ii) Deviance – description is not isomorphic with representation. (These two states may be called fair reports and distorted reports respectively).

Of course, where there is an unambiguous external object, the response elicitor is normally in no real doubt as to the relationship between description and representation: If the subject describes the object accurately there is 'fair report', if not then there is 'distorted report'. In other cases, the response elicitor will usually have low certainty as to the description/representation relationship prevailing in his subject. Although our model applies whatever the status of the object, it is obviously most helpful when analysing the complexities of these latter instances.

B. Next, we note that the provision of d.e.r.s is usually for, and often at the request of, some other (e.g., an experimenter, a tester). Such 'descriptions' may be said (from the point of view of the response elicitor) to be either:

i) Behaviour 'in contract' – with fair report of that object (e.g., 'actual partner') taken to be described by the response elicitor.

ii) Behaviour 'out of contract' – any other response (for example, describing not my 'actual partner' but my 'ideal partner').

4. Obviously there are other levels of analysis where such an approach leads to problems of dualism, 'little men in the head', etc.

5. Logically, we could also allow here for the case where environmental representation is not a valid reflection of reality (e.g. in certain 'thought' and perceptual disorders). Diagnostic importance is often attached to object descriptions that are seen as both 'fair reports' and non-veridical.
There are in fact four states of responding in terms of adherence to contract and the parameters description and representation. These are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of response state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Description/ representation relationship</th>
<th>Description/ request relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>As requested</td>
<td>Fair (equivalence)</td>
<td>In contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>As requested</td>
<td>Distorted (deviance)</td>
<td>Out of contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Not as requested</td>
<td>Fair (equivalence)</td>
<td>Out of contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Not as requested</td>
<td>Distorted (deviance)</td>
<td>Out of contract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. The deviations from ‘honest responding’ that we call behaviour ‘out of contract’ are to be regarded as lawful. Such deviations are due to the fact that the subject utilizes response criteria other than those provided by or understood by the response elicitor. Clearly, various cues in the response situation are being detected by the subject, that, according to his internal ‘plans for responding’, prescribe behaviour different to those consequent on ‘honest responding’. Such cue systems leading to behaviour out of contract include:

i. Demand characteristics.
ii. Evaluation apprehension.
iii. Need for favourable self-presentation (responding in a socially desirable way).
iv. Situated identity.

D. Although the exact operation of alternative response criteria will be dependent on the precise form of report involved, the general case can be proposed that the eventual d.e.r. emitted will constitute a systematic modification of response position consequent on fair report alone. The extent of this modification being a function of:

i. The response position prescribed by the alternative response criteria.
ii. The relative saliences of the cues to fair report and those we have called alternative response criteria.

6. Cf. Rotter (1960): ‘What we call faking is only our recognition of the fact that the S is taking the test with a different purpose or goal than the one the examiner wants him to have.’
The model

In Figure 1, a schematic re-statement of the concepts evolved in this paper is presented. The response task presupposed is that of saying ‘how y is \( x_i \)’ (e.g. ‘How like my view is this statement?’, ‘How extraverted am I?’). This has been chosen as typical of the form of report used in many studies. Other response tasks may be substituted with little change in the overall conceptualisation of the model.

If we now consider a subject faced with a request to say how y he finds \( x_j \), he may be said to adopt one of the following modes of responding:

Mode 1: Acceptance of the contract – Description of \( x_j \) on dimension y (equivalent to state ‘a’ in Table 1).

Mode 2: Rejection of the contract (1): – Description of some alternatively represented object \( x_{AIh} \) on dimension y (equivalent to state ‘c’).

Mode 3: Rejection of the contract (2): – Modification of represented object (\( x_j \) or \( x_{AIh} \)). The description takes into account not only the actual position of the represented object on dimension y (\( y_{OR} \)) but also the dimensional position prescribed by the prevailing alternative response criteria (\( y_{ARC} \)). This process is shown in terms of an Integrator which generates a compromise response (\( y_i \)) according to the evaluations fed into it and their relative saliences (equivalent to states ‘b’ and ‘d’).

Comment

Clearly, the model assumes an ‘active’ view of the subject in d.e.r. generating situations. It proposes an organism that accepts or rejects instructions, that can ‘internally display’ objects other than those understood to be represented by outsiders and can take into account situational demands in the translation of representation into description. If accepted, the model leads to some very interesting reflections on studies with d.e.r.s as dependent or independent variables. Mode 1 responding, for example, seems to correspond to the experimenter’s ‘ideal subject’ with report always in contract. In such a case, where dependent variables taken at different points in time or after different experimental manipulations deviate from one another, a change in ‘object representation’ (e.g., attitude change, shift to risk) can be unambiguously concluded. Equally, attitudinal or personality mediators inferred from Mode 1 d.e.r.s and used as independent variables will give valid tests of predictive hypotheses. Responses in Modes 2 and 3, on the other hand, merely encompass those ‘artifactual’ types of behaviour that constitute the subject end of ‘the social psychology of the psychology experiment’. Where such modes operate, any given d.e.r. may be ‘out of contract’ with the response eliciting request and little can be concluded from the study.
Figure 1.

Key:

$Y_{or}$  - Level of $Y$ in object represented
$Y_{arc}$ - Level of $Y$ defined by alternative response criteria
$Y_{f}$   - Level of $Y$ determined by magnitudes and saliences of $Y_{or}$ and $Y_{arc}$
$X_{i}$   - Requested object in representation
$X_{alt}$ - Alternative object in representation
Studies based on the model

The forms or report used in most studies generating d.e.r.s (e.g. seven-point attitude items) lack psychometric sophistication and, therefore, are likely to be particularly open to artifacts of one kind or another. It was felt that much more interesting data would result from considering the applicability of our model to subject behaviour under conditions which had been specially evolved to minimise 'subject effects'. The chosen report form was a personality scale, Mach. V (Christie and Geis, 1970). This scale employs a triadic choice format consisting of one item which taps Machiavellianism, a second item which is matched to the first in perceived social desirability and a third item of higher or lower social desirability. The trait-tapping item may have a positive or a negative ‘loading’ on the characteristic. In this way the designers of the scale have aimed at a measure which is complex in content (with only one-third of the items relating to the trait and these being half positively loaded and half negatively) and resistant to attempts at favourable self-presentation (cf. Christie and Geis, 1970, pp. 19-20).

Study 1A and Study 1B

In both these studies, a test is made of a basic tenet of the model of d.e.r generation namely, that subjects are able to switch object representation (i.e., $x_j$ to $x_{A1}$) and so produce mutually independent object descriptions. In terms of a personality scale, this amounts to the hypothesis that subjects cannot only answer an inventory by responses that reflect their image of themselves or their views on life but also that they can do the same for their internal representation of some other. The methodology used in both studies was to elicit self-descriptive responses on Mach. V and to contrast these with responses obtained when subjects were ‘personating’ a provided stereotypic character.7

Study 1A

Forty-four male and female American students, attending a London term social psychology course participated in this study. They were second and third year undergraduates and evinced no previous knowledge of Mach. V. Mach. V in its

7. The methodology is an instance of what Mixon (1971) calls C-I role-playing – i.e., where the ‘Investigator writes scenario for . . . a delineated character . . . and (S is) asked to imagine the outcome’.
original form was administered to the subjects initially. The group was subsequently divided into two groups of 22, pair matched in terms of their overall Mach. scores. The scoring of Mach. V was done on an empirically derived scoring system for Mach. V developed by Rogers and Semin (1973). One week after the first administration of Mach. V both groups were given the same scale with additional ‘personating’ instructions. These were respectively for groups 1 and 2:

G1. ‘Please fill in the questionnaire below as you think it would be completed by a 35-year-old door-to-door salesman who specializes in hard selling techniques’, and

G2. ‘Please fill in the questionnaire below as you think it would be completed by a 35-year-old nurse working with retarded children in a small country town’.

Study 1B

The second study was conducted as a replication of the first and rectified some minor shortcomings. The order of presentation of self-referent and other-referent response instructions was randomised and a third character was added to the salesman and the nurse: ‘Please fill in the questionnaire below as you think it would be completed by a 35-year-old shepherd living in mid-Wales in a small cottage with his wife and old aunt’.

The failure of Study 1A to find from the nurse role a lower than sample mean level of Mach. led to the evolution of this alternative low Mach. stereotype. The subjects were 51 first-year psychology undergraduates, this time of U.K. origin.

Results

As can be seen in Table 2, the subjects in both studies proved able to respond to Mach. V in non-self referent ways. The differences between self and other scores (particularly in the case of the salesman role) leave little doubt that, however subtle the format for obtaining d.e.r.s, mode 2 responding is open to the subject. Of course, in order to demonstrate the switch from Mode 1 to Mode 2 responding we have had to externalise the two states $x_j$ and $x_{Alt}$.

It will be noted that the mean Mach. V score (Rogers/Semin scoring) of the U.S. students in Study 1A was markedly lower than that of the U.K. students in Study 1B. In view of the remarkably close agreement between the two samples in the ‘personating’ Mach. scores, the failure of the nurse role to differ significantly

8. These character sketches were evolved by the authors on the basis of the descriptions and discussion of the Machiavellian personality given by Christie and Geis (1970).
Table 2.

Study 1A: | Personating condition |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salesman</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N = 22</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-referent score on Mach. V</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other-referent score on Mach. V</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean difference</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>t-value of difference</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***

Study 1B: | Personating condition |
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salesman</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N = 18</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-referent score on Mach. V</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other-referent score on Mach. V</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean difference</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>t-value of difference</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Significant beyond the 0.001 level (2 tailed).
** Significant beyond the 0.01 level (2 tailed).
* Significant beyond the 0.05 level (2 tailed).

from the self scores for the U.S. sample seems attributable to their average Mach. score being too close to that of the role for significant differences to emerge rather than to an inability to attribute to the nurse a low Mach. profile.

In order to provide some check that the self-other differentiation was not resultant on some idiosyncrasy of Mach. V, a pilot study was conducted with an alternative scale – the Eysenck Personality Inventory. Twelve undergraduate subjects were used, and the contrast was drawn between self and salesman responses. The results are given in Table 3, and it is clear that the phenomenon was operative here also. We conclude, therefore, that subjects have access to a mechanism that makes it possible for them to provide a variety of d.e.r.s to any given report form by employing different objects in internal representation. Sub-analyses of Study 1B indicated that this skill was not a result of instrument familiarity, as Mach. scores for the three characters did not differ by order of presentation.

Study 2

Amongst ‘subject effects’ perhaps the best known is that of ‘faking good’ (i.e., selecting responses that have high social desirability, cf. Edwards, 1957, 1970). Implicitly, if not explicitly, writers concerned with social desirability effects tend to assume (as does our own model) that responding to scale items can be mediated by:
a. Honest self-description
b. Modification of the presented self-image in the direction of favourability.

In other words, the extent of item endorsement is a function both of descriptive relevance and perceived social desirability. This process can be most easily illustrated by considering an item whose descriptive relevance is held constant (e.g., ... enjoy brass bands) but whose social desirability is varied (e.g., by the prefixes: In common with Charles Manson I . . . ; In common with Howard Hughes I . . . ; In common with John F. Kennedy I . . . ). In this situation (cf. Figure 2) endorsement varies with perceived social desirability, but each version orders subjects similarly in terms of their attitude. A similar result would, in fact, be expected for any set of statements tapping a single trait or attitude. Mean social desirability ranking, that is, is operationally identical with average endorsement. This result is obtained

Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extroversion/introversion scale</th>
<th>Neuroticism/stability scale</th>
<th>Lie scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-referent scores ( \bar{x} = )</td>
<td>9.64</td>
<td>11.27</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-referent scores ( \bar{x} = )</td>
<td>19.36</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean difference</td>
<td>+9.72</td>
<td>-5.91</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-value of difference</td>
<td>9.16</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Significant beyond the 0.001 level (2 tailed).
* Significant beyond the 0.05 level (2 tailed).

in practice; Edwards, for example, has reported correlations between these parameters of the order of .9 (Edwards, 1953, 1957, 1970). Paradoxically, as Norman (1967) has pointed out, this does not mean that for an individual subject the contribution of perceived social desirability to final response is large. In fact, Norman offers data suggesting that the average correlation of item endorsement with item social desirability for the same judges is in the order of .30. Nevertheless, even this lower figure remains of significance and raises the question as to whether manipulation of response in terms of criteria such as favourable self-presentation is so ubiquitous as to merit attention as a matter of course.
In the study about to be reported, the use of Mach. V in an investigation of social desirability rating and item endorsement was seen as allowing a test between two hypotheses:

a. That social desirability effects are a result of poor scale design (of the kind that led Christie and Geis to turn the Likert scale Mach. IV into the social desirability matched, forced choice Mach. V).

b. That scale 'fakeability' is not an objective, controllable property of an instrument but is a subject effect whose mediation lies in the 'construction' of the actor responding to the scale.

Under the former hypothesis, the sophisticated design of the Mach. V scale would be expected to prevent perceived social desirability affecting item endorsement; under the latter, the expectation is that social desirability will continue to be salient to item endorsement.
Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mach. item from triad No.</th>
<th>Item's trait loading</th>
<th>Correlation between endorsement and judged social desirability *</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>08</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>03</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>28</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-eight psychology undergraduates 9 participated in the study. They completed Mach. V and assessed the social desirability of its constituent items at an interval of one week and in randomised order. As may be seen from Table 4, the average product moment correlation between perceived social desirability and endorsement in our study closely paralleled that obtained in the studies quoted by Norman. This result, obtained with a scale as complex as Mach. V, suggests that the phenomena of elements of self-presentation entering self-description is a general one.10 Further, it is in line with the hypothesis that such results are due to a property

* Social desirability was indexed by a five-point scale scored so that increasing values indicate decreasing desirability. Item endorsement was scored on a three-point scale according to the triadic ordering made and the Mach-loading (positive or negative of the item) (cf. Rogers and Semin 1973). Thus the quoted correlations vary in sign by trait-loading. When the negatively loaded items are reflected, the mean endorsement/desirability correlation by z-transformation is −0.340. This indicates that endorsement was positively related to perceived social desirability.
9. The authors would like to express their gratitude to Valerie Kent, Goldsmiths College (University of London) for collecting this data.
10. Cf. Eysenck (1964) '... where people are motivated to try and give as good an account of themselves as possible, questionnaires are almost useless'.


of the responding organism and, as such, are not a function only of mode of response elicitation (e.g. of experimenter mediated variables).

**Discussion and conclusions**

Having developed a tentative model of descriptive-evaluative responding and adduced some data relevant to it, it remains to discuss some implications of our thinking and to propose how a more detailed picture of the workings of the model could be built up.

**Implications**

Two major conclusions can be drawn from our model. Firstly, an immediate one from our empirical studies: This is that the notion of constructing 'non-fakeable' scales represents a search for the non-existent and relies on assumptions about subjects that are not tenable. Mach. V, which represents a psychometrically refined form of personality scale, has been found neither to present a barrier to responding mediated by favourable self-presentation (an instance of our mode 3 d.e.r.) nor to responding in terms of non self-referent objects (mode 2 d.e.r.). These results integrate well with the 'paradox' that 'good' scales also have the characteristic of containing items which are easily detectable by subjects as belonging to the trait category concerned (Power and MacRae, 1971) and with the general observation that scales are, in practice, very susceptible to bias through 'response sets' (Cronbach, 1946; Radcliffe, 1966; Power, 1968; Brown and LaFaro, 1968, etc.).

In the authors' view, the conclusion that meaningful scales will be inevitably fakeable (though not invariably faked!) is not totally a negative one. For example, the mode 2 responding demonstrated in personating studies could prove an interesting technique for validating scales. In other words, the criteria for 'good' instruments could include sensitivity to personated stereotypes where these have been specifically created to yield particular levels of the trait or attitude complex under consideration. For example, a scale of neuroticism might (depending on its precise conceptualisation) be expected to differentiate in personating terms between:

11. Despite these established findings one has the impression (e.g. from Cattell, 1965, p. 91) that some psychometrists cling to the idea that this is a fault of the scales concerned and that items can be found that make enough sense to the subject to be discriminatory but not enough to be 'seen through' and therefore faked.
a. A 35-year-old spinster, recently convicted for shop-lifting, who works as a librarian and gives her interests as: Thinking, spiritualism and looking after my cats, and

b. A 35-year-old mother of two, recently convicted of speeding, who works as a part-time hospital almoner and gives her interests as: People, cooking and gliding (when I have the time).

These correspond to a high and low neuroticism stereotype respectively.

The second conclusion we have drawn from the model is that in a large number of studies in experimental social psychology a problem of 'control' exists. By this, we are not talking about design artifacts (cf. Campbell and Stanley, 1963) but that (in our terms) the mode of responding employed by the subject is not controlled. We therefore have two alternative explanations awaiting any study contrasting either the same subjects before and after some manipulation, or two groups of subjects exposed to different manipulations. These are:

a. That the way some object-state is conceptualised has been affected by the manipulation(s). In other words, that subjects remain in mode 1 but the internally represented object is changing (e.g. attitude change, shift to risk).

b. That the manipulations affect the extent to which subjects respond 'in contract' or the modality of response (e.g. subjects may see the attitude object identically across manipulations but detect different alternative response criteria in terms of extent and type of demand characteristics).

Further developments

The authors see their model as presenting the possibility of leading social psychology away from an obsession with specific paradigms (e.g. risky shift, counter-attitudinal advocacy, selective exposure) towards a greater emphasis on the common response situations that such formats impose on subjects. As descriptive-evaluative response is a very usual form of human behaviour, research into its determinants seems more likely to yield broadly applicable insights than does an emphasis on particular aspects of specific, artificial and atypical response generating paradigms. The present studies offer some contribution towards this end, but further progress demands the creation of new methodologies. One currently developing approach (although not always employed or interpreted in the authors' terms) is that of 'replication' in which mimetic versions of experimental situations are presented to 'observers' who may be asked to estimate subject behaviour or cue interpretation. Both verbal accounts (e.g., Bem, 1965) and video-taped ones (e.g., Kaufmann, 1971) have been employed. Again, the post-experimental questionnaire technique (cf. Orne, 1969) seems to offer possibilities. However, the full potential
of such methodologies has not yet been realised as the emphasis remains on situation-specific explanation.

In looking to the future, the kind of approach exampled by our model seems to lead to two distinct branches of further study. These may be called the 'works' and the 'rules'. The former is concerned with the model *qua* model, posing such questions and issues as:

- Is the model an adequate one?
- What are the limits of its applicability?
- What does it tell us of the capacities and limitations of cognitive operations?

The latter branch, uses the model as a way of discovering what rules are used by subjects to tell them the degree to which they should behave in contract and how to respond otherwise than in contract. Its orientation is towards such things as:

- Typologising response eliciting situations in terms of their capacity for producing 'honest responding'.
- The implicit theories of personality involved in personating.

Interestingly, this bifurcation corresponds to the general division of interests between cognitive psychology on the one hand and social psychology on the other. This suggests that, in a paradoxical way, the acceptance of an active view of our subject matter (however much it adds vast complications over a simple positivistic methodology), actually has an integrative role for psychology precisely because it forces us to ask both 'How' and 'Why'.

Finally, it will be observed that the integrative line of argument just developed may be contrasted with present trends in the study of the 'social psychology of the psychology experiment'. This threatens to peter out into yet another 'sub-culture' with its own data-language and a set of disputed paradigms (e.g. the 'conditioning' of attitudes) to occupy its attention for as long as they retain credibility and interest in the eyes of researchers and reviewers. (Or, to put it more bluntly, remain fashionable!) The alternative strategy is clear, we need to develop in social psychology a broad new orientation in which, to quote Page (1970), '... we attribute to him [the subject] the intelligence and complex capacities he has ...'. The model of scale response presented in this paper is offered as an initial step in this direction.

REFERENCES


(1962) On the social psychology of the psychological experiment: With particular references to demand characteristics and their implications. Amer. Psychol., 17, 776-783.


Résumé

Un modèle de comportement d'un sujet dans des situations d'où émanent des réponses échelonnées est élaboré, développé et illustré de façon empirique, dans le cadre de cette étude. Le modèle est ainsi conçu qu'il permet au sujet auquel on demande de décrire à quel degré tel objet possède telle qualité, d'avoir la possibilité de se représenter intérieurement l'objet qu'on lui demande ou un autre quelconque. En plus, le modèle lui permet soit de donner une 'expression honnête' de sa représentation intérieure soit de la modifier afin de lui préférer une description plus 'fonctionnelle'. Par conséquent, deux paramètres de base (représentation et description) caractérisent le processus au moyen duquel un émetteur de réponse (S) apporte une réponse descripto-évaluative à un récepteur de réponse (E).

Les paramètres du modèle sont démontrés à l'aide de deux études qui utilisent une échelle de personnalité sophistiquée du point de vue psychométrique (Mach V). Dans la première, la substitution de l'objet est montrée en établissant un contraste entre les réponses qui se réfèrent au sujet et celles se référant à autrui, ceci en utilisant une technique de personification. Dans la seconde étude, la modification de la réponse, qui est due à une auto-présentation favorable, se trouve opérer malgré un format d'échelle spécialement conçu pour éliminer de telles déviations.

Dans cette étude la discussion tourne autour de deux implications majeures du modèle:

a) Que la nature de la réponse descripto-évaluative est telle qu'elle rend impossible la construction d'échelles descriptives non truquées.

b) Que de nombreuses expériences utilisant des échelles descriptives ne constituent que des tests douteux des hypothèses avancées, étant donné qu'il n'existe pas de prévisions pour le contrôle des paramètres de description et de représentation.

Zusammenfassung


Die Parameter des Modells werden an zwei Studien mit einer psychometrisch ausgefeilten Persönlichkeitsskala (Mach V) demonstriert. In der ersten wird die Objektsubstitution gezeigt, indem auf die eigene Person bezogene und auf einen anderen bezogene Antworten, durch ein Rollenspielverfahren erzeugt, miteinander kontrastiert werden. In der zweiten zeigt sich, daß Antwortmodifikation aufgrund günstiger Selbstdarstellung trotz eines Skalenaufbaus wirksam wird, der speziell auf die Elimination solcher Verzerrungen gerichtet ist.

Zwei wesentliche Implikationen des Modells werden diskutiert:
a) daß die Natur des beschreibend-auswertenden Antwortens derart beschaffen ist, daß sie die Konstruktion gegen bewußte Verfälschung abgesicherter deskriptiver Skalen unmöglich macht;
b) daß viele Versuche, die sich deskriptiver Skalen bedienen, zweifelhafte Tests der angegebenen Hypothesen sind, da Kontrollmöglichkeiten für die Parameter der Beschreibung und der Repräsentation nicht vorgesehen wurden.