

Safeguarding the Space Around Us – the Role of Peripersonal Neurons in Social Imagery

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Abstract

Introduction: *Psychotherapeutic work with the Social Panorama Model shows the crucial role of nearby social imagery in intimate relationships: an intimate relation is created by putting the image of the person with whom the relation is maintained on a close location in one's mental space. In general, the parts of the brain involved in imagining a stimulus are about 90% the same as those activated while actually perceiving such a stimulus. Does this also hold for the class of brain cells called peripersonal neurons? These peripersonal neurons alert a being when its adjacent sphere of space becomes invaded. In case these peripersonal neurons also respond when such threats are imagined, this may have strong implications for intimate social experience and particularly the sense of love and aversion.*

Objectives: *To find a space related to neuroscientific underpinning for intimate social experience. This may pave the way to more precise psychiatric diagnosis and more effective psychotherapeutic interventions.*

Methods: *Comparing the output-levels of single peripersonal neurons during the perception and imagining of close social stimuli is a too invasive paradigm in humans and we are still far from making primates reliably imagine their loved ones. Therefore, alternatively it was chosen to regard the Social Panorama experiments with intimate relations as our main source of information. These data consist of numerous photographs of the spatial spread of the imagined locations of loved ones (and ex loved ones), from large numbers of subjects. This data appears quite consistent. On the base of established neuroscientific research into peripersonal neurons, we interpret the mechanisms involved in the phenomena as Social Panorama experiments. We relate these mechanisms to clinical disorders like depression and Asperger.*

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Results: *Social Panorama* experiments show the spatial placement of loved ones in relation to the self. It is clear that loved ones are represented in locations that vary from inside the body, on the skin, to everything up to arm length away. If peripersonal neurons respond to social images in these regions of space, this must have a great influence on the pleasant feelings raised by loved ones and also on the adverse impulses towards strangers and disliked individuals. Malfunctions of this may have clinical impact.

Conclusions: *The recent paradigm of mental space psychology promotes a transdisciplinary view on the working of the psyche and it is unique in taking space as the primary organizing factor in the mind. For the latter one finds clear evidence in neuroscience and in the practical use of spatial psychotherapeutic tools like the Social Panorama. Several far-reaching hypotheses unfold themselves when probing these connections. The findings are applicable for improving clinical interventions and also as diagnostic tools.*

Keywords: *Social Panorama, peripersonal neurons, neuroscience, mental space, Asperger, Depression*

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The Future of Psychiatric Diagnosis lies in Space: and is so off from the DSM-5 that you probably don't want to know

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Abstract

Introduction: *Mental Spatial Psycho-diagnosis can be an addition to, or even an alternative for symptom-based statistical diagnosis, like the DSM-5. The view that all thought and experience is projected in the imaginary space in and around the body gave way to an analysis of how mental issues appear in the sphere around the patient: where is your psycho-trauma? It takes interviewing techniques and another view on what is happening among patients. The foundation for mental spatial diagnostics was laid in the multidisciplinary field of research called "spatial cognition". However, the link to psychiatry has never been made.*

Objectives: *The purpose of the present article is to propose an alternative model of psycho-diagnosis and intervention to be used both in psychotherapy and in the psychiatric field, a model based on the space occupied by the symptom in the mind of the patient and how spatial interventions can effectively identify and address it. It starts from the premise that space is the primary organizing principle in the mind.*

Methods: *The article uses qualitative methods, specialty literature is reviewed to interconnect multi-sector findings on spatial cognition, interventions, linguistics, as Mental Spatial Psycho-diagnosis, Clean Space, Social Panorama, Time-Line Therapy, and the more recent Wholeness Process, and further link them to psychiatric diagnostic.*

Results: *The article prediction is that, sometime in the future, the concept of mental space will be consolidated in psychiatry.*

Conclusions: *Both psychiatric and psychotherapeutic interventions will explore where in mental space clients place and create their issues, this leading to improved interventions. However, the mental spatial paradigm needs to become more established before studies can be done so that a difference for psycho-diagnostics is made.*

Keywords: *Mental Spatial diagnosis, spatial cognition, mental space, clean space, social panorama, psychiatric diagnosis*

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The Survival-Processing Effect Based on The Richness-of-Encoding Hypothesis

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Abstract

Introduction: *The article is a questionnaire-based experiment that aimed to reproduce the original study of Nairne et al. (2007). As per the original experiment, people were presented with one scenario, either surviving on a foreign land or moving to another country. Afterwards they were presented with a list of words which they had to grade based on their easiness of usage. In the end, the participants were presented with a list of simple equations, which functioned as a distracting task. After completing it, they were asked to write down all the words they could remember.*

Objectives: *The purpose of this paper was to test whether the human memory was involuntarily enhanced when presented with a scenario in which survival is crucial.*

Methods: *The experiment followed a between-subject design. Participants were equally distributed into two groups, one presented with the moving-out scenario and one with the survival scenario.*

Results: *The results were not in concordance with the findings of the original study. The participants had a higher recall rating and easiness of usage rating in the moving out scenario.*

Conclusions: *The results proved that human memory is not affected by scenarios that the individual is in.*

Keywords: *human memory, survival effect, richness-of-encoding, scenarios*

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Death Anxiety and Depression in Oncological Diseases. How the Caregivers are Influenced by the Cancer Diagnosis of Their Relatives

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Abstract

Introduction: *This study aims to look at how a diagnosis of cancer influences the mental state of the patients' relatives, but also whether death anxiety can be a predictor of depression among them. Relatives of patients or their legal representatives deal with providing direct care and emotional support to the patient, this resulting in feelings of fear, anxiety, exhaustion, financial problems and/ or a lower quality of life.*

Objectives: *The main purpose of this paper is to assess the level of death anxiety among relatives of cancer patients and whether it differs from the population that does not have a patient in care. We also looked at variables such as age, sex, education, type of kinship with the patient and duration of the disease and how they influence death anxiety and whether death anxiety is a predictor of depression.*

Methods: *Participants were divided into two groups, a group of people who did not have sick people in their care and a group of people who had in their families a patient diagnosed with cancer. Both groups were given a revised Death Anxiety Scale and questions about demographics. The Patient Health Questionnaire was also administered to the caregivers group.*

Results: *Following the application of tests, by use of SPSS software, the results showed that for the first two hypotheses we accept the null hypotheses, namely, death anxiety is not significantly different between caregivers and non-caregivers population and that the independent variables (age, sex, level of education, duration of illness, type of kinship with the patient) do not influence death anxiety. The third hypothesis was statistically significant, namely that death anxiety positively predicts depression among relatives.*

Conclusions: *Even though most of the hypotheses were statistically insignificant, this study helps in the development of the literature, because such a study, as far as we have knowledge, has not been performed on the Romanian population before.*

Keywords: *psycho-oncology, caregiver burden, psychosocial function, psychological health*

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The Effect of the Fear of Missing Out Phenomenon in the Relationship Between Well-being and Social Media Addiction

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Abstract

Introduction: Fear of missing out (FoMO) is described as a generalized fear that others might have rewarding experiences from which someone is absent, along with a desire to be continuously connected with what others are doing. Although FoMO is not necessarily an exclusive phenomenon for social networks users, people with high FoMO levels might feel compelled to check their social networks more frequently in order to be up to date with the plans and activities of their friends.

Objectives: The aim of the present study was to test the effect of the fear of missing out phenomenon in the relationship between well-being and social media addiction, but also to ascertain gender biases in a sample of 94 people (F=74, M=20).

Methods: Their level of social media addiction, well-being and fear of missing out were assessed using three measurement scales – Social Networking Addiction Scale (M. G. Shahnawaz and Usama Rehman, 2020), Psychological Well-Being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), Fear of Missing Out Scale (FoMOs, Przybylski, Murayama, DeHann, & Gladwell, 2013).

Results: The results of the study show that the phenomenon of fear of missing out does not moderate the relationship between well-being and social media addiction, contrary to expectations. In terms of fear of missing out, women and men recorded relatively equal scores. In regards to well-being and social media addiction, there have been significant gender differences.

Conclusions: Along with the unexpected result of an absence of any significant relationship between social media addiction and well-being, a positive correlation has been noticed between social media addiction and the phenomenon of fear of missing out. Thus, according to the results, we conclude that the interaction between the predictor and the criterion is not stronger when people manifest a higher level of fear of missing out.

Keywords: online, social networks, addiction, FoMO

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Demand-Withdraw Communication Pattern and Romantic Satisfaction in Young Couples: an Attachment Perspective

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Abstract

Introduction: *The present study takes a look into a practical dimension of the relationship between attachment styles and romantic relationship satisfaction: the demand-withdraw communication pattern, as previous research confirms that this pattern depicts a set of elements that are potentially specific to certain attachment styles (demand and need are specific to the anxious style, while withdrawal and rejection are specific to the avoidant one).*

Objectives: *The objective was observing the influence of the pattern on the relationship between attachment styles and romantic couple satisfaction. The influence of the pattern on the relationship between anxious attachment and satisfaction, when it is the participant who makes the demands and the influence of the pattern on the relationship between avoidant attachment and satisfaction, when it is his partner who makes the demands were taken into account differently. Thus, it was possible to test the presence of the behavioral loop in which low romantic satisfaction and behaviors specific to this pattern accentuate each other.*

Methods: *A number of 165 young adults aged 18 to 30 completed a one-session set of 3 questionnaires addressing romantic relationship satisfaction, attachment dimensions and the presence of the pattern in their relationship.*

Results: *The results confirmed the attachment has predictor role on romantic relationship satisfaction, but failed to confirm the pattern as a significant moderator.*

Conclusions: *The lack of influence of the pattern can be potentially explained by the sample, which was largely composed of people in short-term relationships, who may relieve its impact through self-censoring due to secondary communication goals. However, the presence of the pattern has been correlated with anxious and avoidant attachment, a result that supports previous research and encourages approaching a preventive practice regarding its development. For future research, it is recommended to study the theme on a sample composed of individuals in long-term relationships, so that the onset of the pattern and its effects are more clearly observable.*

Keywords: *internal working models, anxious attachment, avoidant attachment, romantic relationships*

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