



Meaning-making and cognition

- on the relation between ego development and hierarchical complexity according to Loevinger, Kegan and Commons

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Outline

- Describe and shed light on similarities and differences between ego-development according to Loevinger and Kegan,
- Use MHC as a scale in order to compare them
- Discuss limitations of conceptualizations

Ego development according to Jane Loevinger

- Based on measurements: WUSCT, e.g. "I am..."
- First personality types or traits, then milestones
- Jane Loeviner et al, then Bill Torbert and Susanne Cook-Greuter
- What is this ego that develops?
 - "...striving for coherence."
 - "the thing that we are measuring"








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Ego development according to Robert Kegan

- Constructivist developmentalist
- Subject-object theory
- Analytical description of the meaning-making



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Kegan's Subject/Object Schema of Cognitive Development			
Stage	We Are: Subject (structure of knowing)	We Have: Object (content of knowing)	Underlying Structure
1	Perceptions SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS Impulses	Movement Sensation	Single Point/Immediate Atomistic 
2	Concrete POINT OF VIEW Enduring Dispositions	Perceptions SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS Impulses	Durable Category 
3 Traditionalism	Abstractions MUTUALITY/ INTERPERSONALISM Relationship Inner states	Concrete POINT OF VIEW Enduring Dispositions Needs, Preferences	Cross Categorical Trans Categorical 
4 Modernism	Abstract Systems Ideology INSTITUTION Relationship- Regulating Forms Self-authorship	Abstractions MUTUALITY/ INTERPERSONALISM Relationship Inner states Subjectivity Self-consciousness	System/Complex 
5 Post- Modernism	Dialectical INTER- INSTITUTIONAL Self-transformation	Abstract Systems Ideology INSTITUTION Relationship- Regulating Forms Self-authorship Self-regulation Self-formation	Trans-System Trans-Complex 

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Differences between Loevinger and Kegan

Loevinger

Measurement based
Extensive empirical mtrl
Scoring on what is written
Transitions not described
Psychometric




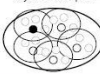
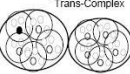
Kegan

Rationale/structure based
More modest empirical mtrl
Scoring on what is *not* said
Transitions explained
Constructivistic

Similarities between Loevinger and Kegan

- Ego = Meaning-making
- Three dimensions: Knowing, being, doing (Cook-Greuter)
Cognitive, affective, behaviour (Kegan, ITC)
- They are both measuring and describing the same thing!

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Loevinger

Opportunist

Conformist

Conscientious

Autonomous

Model of Hierarchical Complexity



- Structure is how information (content) is being organized
- MHC scores the stage of complexity in structure
- 14 orders/stages of increasing complexity
- One level of complexity is attained by successfully coordinating at least two elements from the previous stage.

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MHC Stage
0 - Calculatory
1 - Sensory or motor
2 - Circular sensory-motor
3 - Sensory-motor
4 - Nominal
5 - Sentential
6 - Preoperational
7 - Primary
8 - Concrete
9 - Abstract
10 - Formal
11 - Systematic
12 - Metasystematic
13 - Paradigmatic
14 - Cross paradigmatic

MHC applied on Kegan's structure description

- More rigorous and stringent definition of structure and stage
- More stages
- More extensive description of transition steps
- It does not suffice to take the previous stage as an object – you have to coordinate at least two elements.

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Why can't we see meaning-making as a task that we can score?

- Meaning-making: "The unquestioned assumptions we make about the world, about others, who we are and what we should do... that creates the foundation of how we organise reality"
- This is hard to score since we cannot often formulate it, since we cannot reflect on them.
- ...but what if we (researchers) try to formulate them for each stage?

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Result

MHC	Kegan	Loevinger
8 Concrete	2nd order	Opportunist/ self-protective
9 Abstract	3rd order	Conformist/ Diplomat
10 Formal	-	Self-aware/ Expert
11 Systematic	4th order	Conscientious/ Achiever
-	-	Individualist
12 Metasystematic	5th order	Autonomous/ Strategist

Comments

- Structure is how information (content) is being organized
- MHC scores the stage of complexity in structure
- Kegan models the structure in meaning-making
- Loevinger measures content and structure
- We are always limited to conceptualizations with MHC and Kegan
 - Cook-Greuter tries to capture what happens thereafter...