

Group Metamemory: does collaborative remembering imply group metacognition?

The idea of group memory has gotten widespread acceptance among researchers (Sutton, Harris, Keil, & Barnier, 2010; Theiner, 2013; Theiner, Allen, & Goldstone, 2010), after Daniel Wegner's work on transactive memory systems (henceforth "TMS"). TMS "involves the operation of the memory systems of the individuals and the processes of communication that occur within the group" (Wegner, 1987, p. 191) giving place to the emergent phenomenon of group memory. Although it seems unlikely that this type of emergence also happens in wide social groups or collectives given their lack of cohesion and coherence (Wegner, 1987), TMS seems to be at work in long-standing couples and small task-oriented groups (Wegner et al., 1985). Evidence for group memory comes from studies in collaborative inhibition, collaborative facilitation and retrieval induced-forgetting; all these are real effects of the interaction between two or more subjects in collaborative memory interactions (Theiner, 2013; Theiner et al., 2010). Key to Wegner's TMS framework is the inclusion of a metacognitive level which includes the information of who knows what in a group (Wegner et al., 1985; Wegner, 1987). In this talk, I would like to address the question concerning what kind of metamemory is involved in Wegner's TMS. Is the metamemory involved in TMS the metamemory of each individual involved in the task, or is it an emergent group mental capacity? In other words, is there a group metamemory?