Script Theory

General

Script theory was first introduced and presented by Silvan Tomkins in 1954[1] as an extension of his affect theory, but was further developed in late 1970s by Roger Schank[2]. Script theory is an extension of schema theory, orientated on explaining of the structure of knowledge, especially on **representation of complex event sequences**.

What is script theory?

The concept of a script was introduced by Schank and Abelson[3] and later further developed by Schank[4][5]. There are several **definitions** of scripts such as:

- "*a set of expectations about what will happen next in a well-understood situation*"[6],
- "*a **coherent sequence of events expected by an individual** in a particular context, involving him either as participant or as an observer*"[7], or
- "*a **mental picture plus caption** representing the action sequences, participants, and physical objects found in a situation*"[8].

Scripts consist of a **sequence of actions or events necessary to achieve a goal**. They also if necessary include relevant people, locations or objects.

Schank[9] often uses an example of a restaurant script. When in a restaurant, one behaves according to *restaurant script*: he finds a free place, sits, waits for the waiter to take his order and finally eats his meal. He does not have to convince the waiter and the cook to feed him every time he comes to the restaurant since they are all behaving in accordance with the restaurant schema and assigned roles. The same can be said if one reads about a situation in a restaurant. Knowing the particular script which is to be used in a situation results in less required thinking and mental activity.

According to Schank, scripts are just like schemata, also a **memory construct**, yet he believes that **memory is** organized around one's personal experiences (**episodic**) rather than categories of meaning.

Criticisms

Keywords and most important names

Bibliography

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Read more

[1)]

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[2)]

Source: TIP: Script Theory (Schank). Retrieved 15. March 2011.

[3)]

Schank, R.C. & Abelson, R. Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding. Hillsdale, NJ: Earlbaum Assoc, 1977.

[4)]

Schank, R.C. Reading and Understanding. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. 1982.

[5)]

Schank, R.C. Explanation Patterns: Understanding Mechanically and Creatively. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1986.

[6)] , [9)]

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[7)]

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