Universität St Gallen

Daniel Diemers

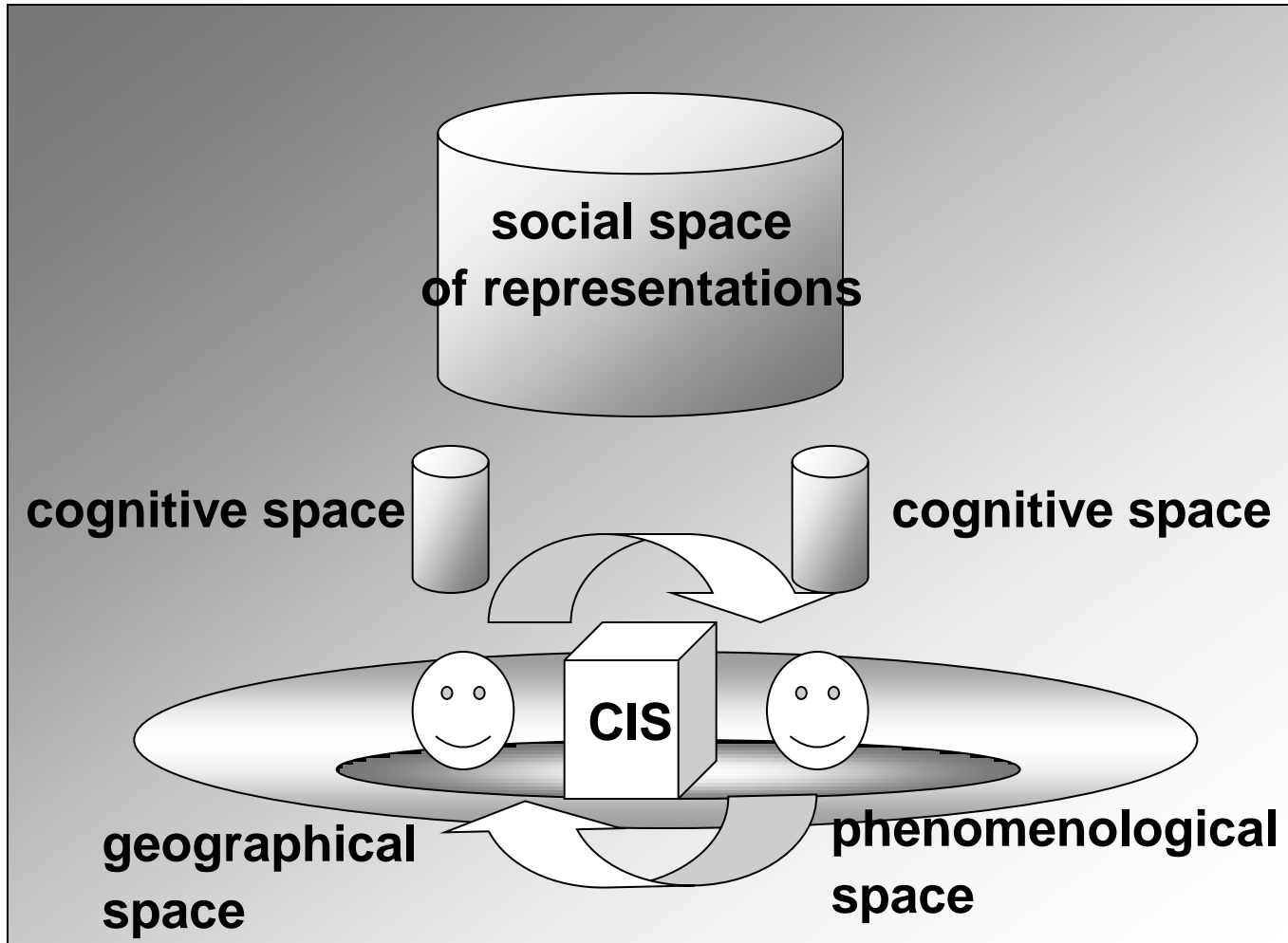a(o).i.r | ASSOCIATION OF INTERNET RESEARCHERS

Interpretative Spaces

How Common Interpretative Spaces constitute Virtual Organizations and Communities

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Common Interpretative Spaces (CIS)

- Focus on social interaction
- Temporal and spatial dimensions
- Social Constructivism & Interpretative Paradigm
- Incorporating:
  - Alred Schütz / Edmund Husserl
  - Peter L. Berger / Thomas Luckmann
  - Erwing Goffman
  - Stuart Hall
  - ...etc.

A Model of face-to-face Interaction

**social space
of representations**

cognitive space

cognitive space

CIS

**geographical
space**

**phenomenological
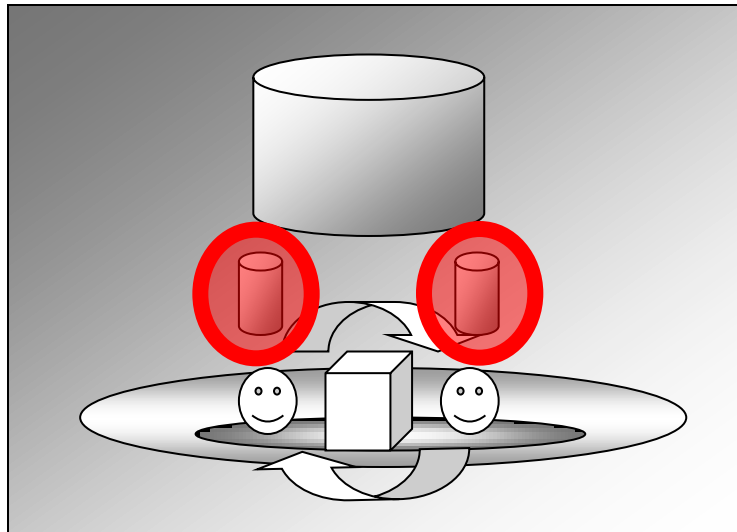space**

Social Space of Representations

- Conceptual map of objectivations
- Culturally specific signs to articulate objectivations and attribute meaning in a social situation
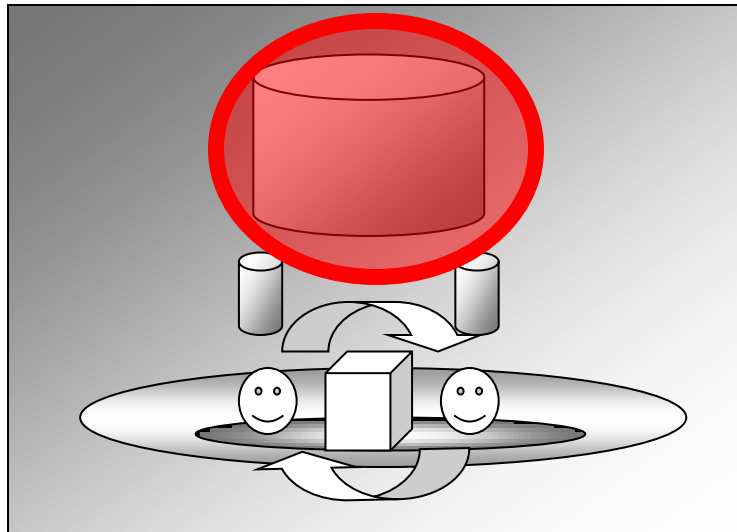
- primary/secondary socialization as a process to internalize conceptual maps and appertaining signs

Interpretative Spaces

Cognitive Spaces

- Individual, biographically articulated stocks of knowledge

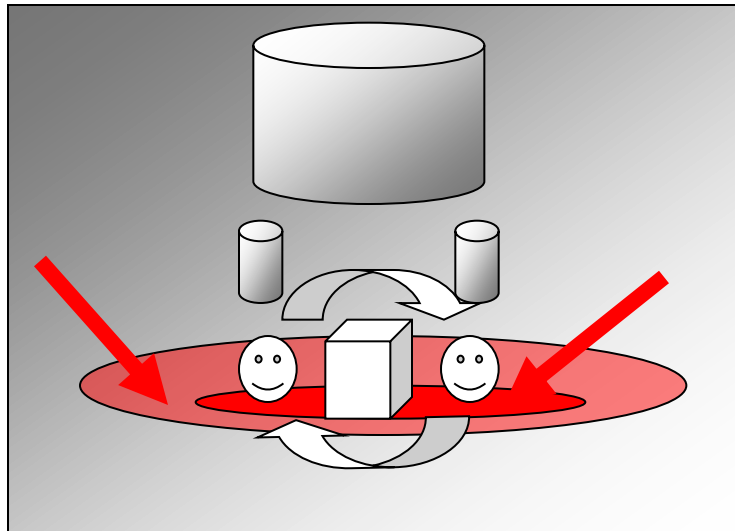- Systems of relevance

- Conceptual maps of typifications/signs

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Geographical Space
Phenomenological Space

- „World-within-Reach": actual or potential (attainable/restorable) reach

- „World-in-Sight": Phenomenons by active perception, attentive advertence or subsidiary awareness
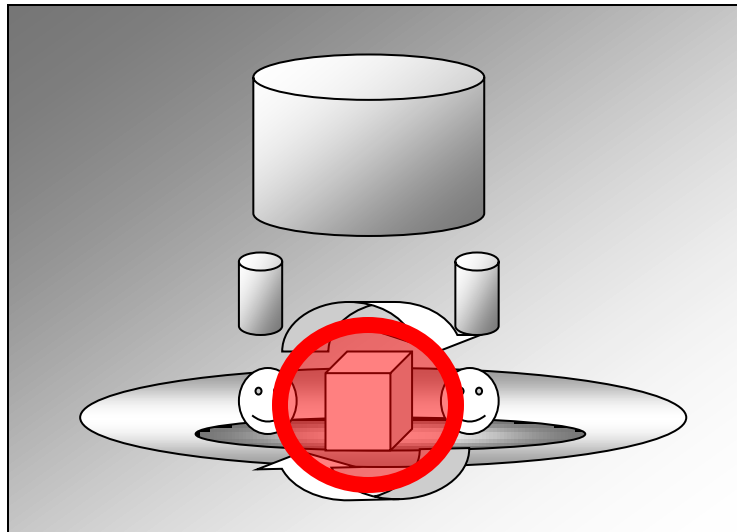

- Dialectic between phenomenological and cognitive space

- Making sense of our sensory perceptions

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Common Interpretative Space

- Specific set of signs, shared meanings, norms and values in social situations

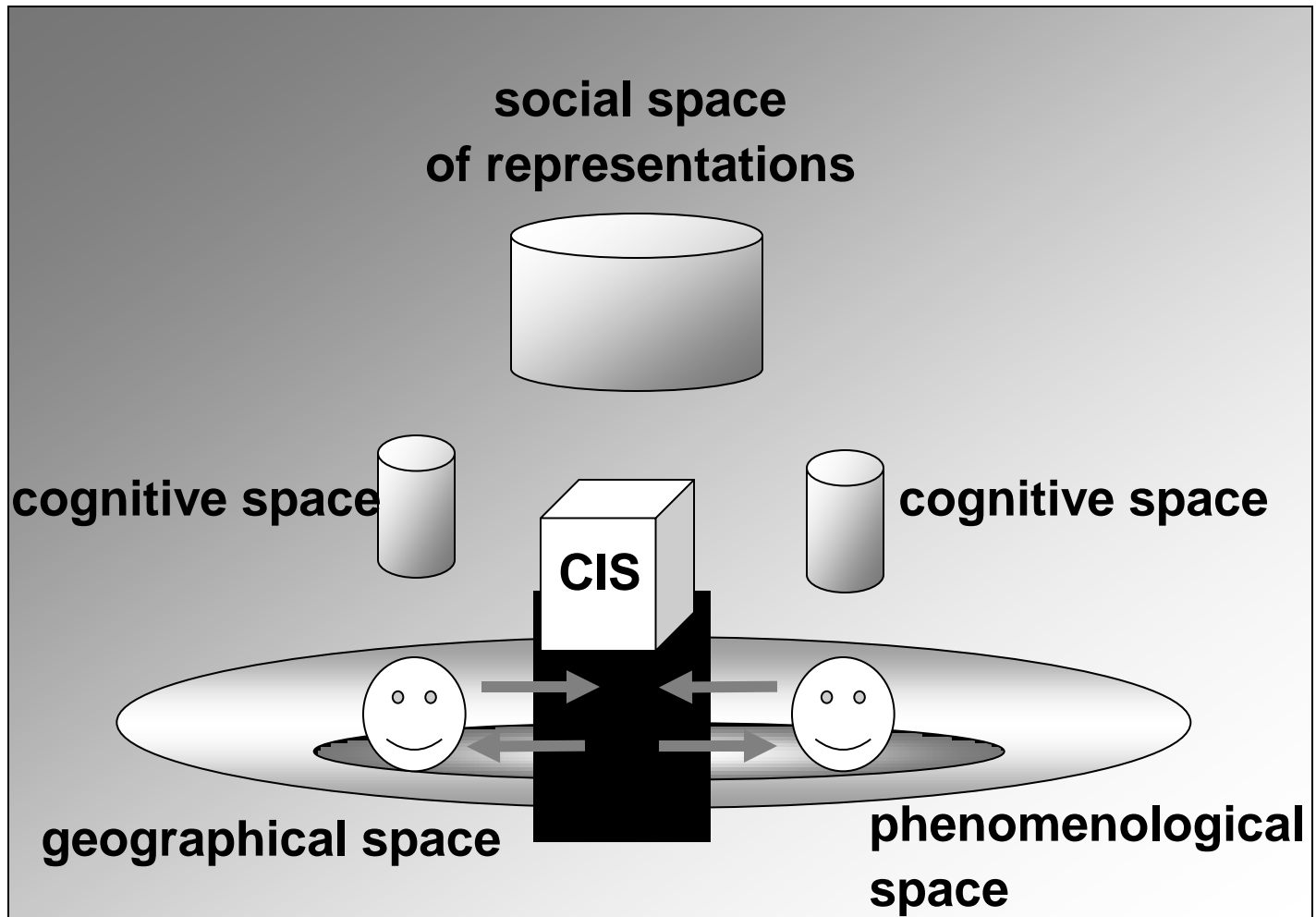- Initially created through congruency of cognitive spaces

- Sustained and developed through repeated interaction

- socioemotional content

- finite provinces of meaning

A Model of mediated Interaction

**social space
of representations**

cognitive space

cognitive space

CIS

geographical space

**phenomenological
space**

Virtual Organizations

- Virtual, heterarchic networks, where mediated forms of interaction have substituted face-to-face communication to a significant extent

- H1: Efficiently working organizations are held together by emotional bonds and networks

- H2: trust, sense of mutuality and reciprocal loyalty are crucial for virtual organizations

- IF H1/H2=TRUE, then CIS have to provide the requested socioemotional contents

Empirical Argumentation

- ***In general: two opposing discourses***

- E-Mail Studies (Stegbauer, Markus et al.)

- Trust in Virtual Teams (Coutu)

- Virtual Conferences (Brill/de Vries)

- Virtual Organization (Charam)

- Networks of Learning (Powell et al.)

Empirical Argumentation (II)

- *Studies on virtual forms of community:*
- Usenet Discussion Groups (McLaughlin et al., Aycock et al., Bart/Lehn)
- MUD/MOO (Turkle, Bruckman, Rosenberg)

- *Studies on virtual pathologies:*
- Social network study (Kraut et al.)
- Flow, RSI, ADD, Simulator Disease, Electrosmog...etc.

Empirical Argumentation (III)

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FROM OTTO        CITIBANK SINGAPORE    * 0802GMT 101296 */1178          CNV
Our terminal : CSZI    Our user   : patrick HOFMANN
      DM 10
#  PAT> 73 78
    MINE
#  10 MIO AGREED
#  VAL 12DEC96
#  MY DEM TO DEUTSCHE BANK FFT
#  THANKS AND BYE
    TO CONFIRM AT 1.5578 I BUY 10 MIO USD
    VAL 12DEC96
    MY USD TO CITI NYK A/C CITI SPORE A/C NO. 10991581
    THANKS AND BYE
    #END REMOTE#

( 266 CHARS)
```

- Ethnographic study of foreign exchange brokers (Brügger)

Conclusions and Open Questions

- CIS = „specific set of signs, shared meanings, norms and values in social situations, which are constituted through processes of socialization and patterns of repeated interaction "

- CIS as a problematic dimension within virtual modes of organizing and virtual communities

- Open Question: What is the role/importance of face time in the establishment of CIS ?