Depressed subjects are compared to healthy subjects. Every participant is asked to recall six SDMs according to these instructions:

- SDMs should date from less than a year and be clear and familiar
- Participants should be confident discussing the memories

According to the self-concept theory (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000), these memories build a sense of identity and continuity. These memories are particular to each individual and contain memories of significant events and experiences.

Autobiographical memory (AM) is a complex mental system allowing to recover information from past events or experiences (Conway & Palfrey-Pearce, 2000). It contains memories particular to each individual and is based on the self-concept. These memories build a sense of identity and continuity (Pithon, 2004). Indeed, our sense of identity mostly depends on our ability to recall our personal history and to answer the “Who am I?” question. To answer this, it is also needed to have a clear view of ourselves.

Moreover, clarity of self-concept is linked to self-esteem: people with low self-esteem tend to have a less clear and more vague self-concept (Carpenter, Chow & Scratchley, 1990).

Table 1: Sociodemographic data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Exposed subjects</th>
<th>Healthy subjects</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>45.1±0.4 (40-60)</td>
<td>47.7±0.3 (41-51)</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression episode</td>
<td>7% (9)</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experimental design:
Depressed subjects are compared to healthy subjects. Every participant is asked to recall six SDMs according to these instructions:

- SDMs should date from less than a year and be clear and familiar
- Participants should be confident discussing the memories

According to the self-concept theory (Conway & Palfrey-Pearce, 2000), these memories build a sense of identity and continuity. These memories are particular to each individual and contain memories of significant events and experiences.

In both groups, a mood congruence bias will be observed.

METHOD

Mood assessment:
- Depression's severity: Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)-II scores
- SDMs' characteristics

Scales:
- Recalled and current emotions rating: a positive, neutral or negative valence is attributed to events when it is reported and when it is recalled.

Variables:
- Specificity, meaning making, contain, redemption
- Self-concept clarity: Self-concept clarity scale (SCCS)
- Self-esteem: Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSE)

Statistical analyses:
Descriptive analyses, student t-test, repeated ANOVA measures and correlational analyses were conducted.

RESULTS

According to our hypotheses, depressed patients recalled significantly more negative SDMs than healthy subjects (t(35) = 2.35, p < 0.05) and recalled significantly less positive SDMs than healthy subjects (t(35) = -1.73, p < 0.05).

Correspondingly, depressed patients showed a higher score of depression severity than healthy subjects (t(35) = 4.88, p < 0.01).

In both groups, a mood congruence bias will be observed.

DISCUSSION

Our results partially support the hypothesis. Indeed, depressed patients recalled more negative SDMs than healthy subjects. This result is in line with those of Werner-Seidler & Moulds (2012). Even if memories mainly concern recent events, both groups, depressed patients and healthy subjects, recalled several memories concerning life-threatening events; this seems to correspond with the negative emotional valence of their SDMs. Moreover, depressed patients recalled more clear self-concept and more self-esteem than healthy subjects. The analyses revealed that these two dimensions of the self are correlated.

Firstly, results showed that individuals who have a clear self-concept and a high self-esteem report more positive emotions and redemption.

Nevertheless, no significant difference appears for memories' specificity. The SDMs' instructions lead to recall abstract memories supporting a life lesson or a self-orientation. Moreover, it seems that depressed patients showed impairment in the meaning-making processes. However, given the small sample size, this conclusion cannot be interpreted with the greatest precision. Nevertheless, these results already highlight clinical implications of working on recalling positive autobiographical memory for the sense of identity and for the mood.