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Research Unit Comparative Structural Analysis  
Institute for Social Sciences, Humboldt-University  
Winter 2004/2005  
Wed 10-12

## From Words to Structures

### Idea of the course

In this seminar we will approach the study of social processes by focusing on the narrative constitution of reality. We will thus shift our attention away from sociological models that focus on variable-based conceptions of causality towards models that take actors, networks, and narrative sequences into account. We will come to understand narrative texts not only as temporal orders of events but as meaning-making structures, produced and reproduced in social relations. Finally, we will discuss various strategies for the analysis of texts which arise from such a methodological orientation.

### Requirements

Students share the responsibility for reading the required texts and for raising questions. We expect students to have done the reading and be prepared for class to discuss the materials on the date indicated in the syllabus. Final grades are based on three types of requirements:

#### 1. *Brief memos*

All students are asked to prepare brief memos (2-3 pp.) relating to the readings for each week. Format may vary but it is useful to include:

- a) ideas, concepts, arguments which you found stimulating and worth building on
- b) questions, concern, disagreements with ideas you encountered
- c) connections, linkages, contradictions of one idea or approach with another encountered in the same text or a previous one.

In total, you are expected to turn in three memos: two until November 3, 2004 and one thereafter.

Memos should be uploaded in Moodle (more below) for all participants to read **by 2pm on Tuesdays**, the day before the class meets.

#### 2. *Presentation and class participation*

All students are expected to give one brief overview and interpretation of the read materials. This presentation should be no longer than 10 min. Just like memos, presentations should not, of course, repeat verbatim what is in the texts but rather raise questions, point to interesting ideas and concepts, show connections and generally serve as an introduction for the discussion in class.

### 3. *Final paper*

Participants of the seminar are also expected to turn in a final paper at the end of the course. Further details about the papers in class.

The seminar is open for BGSS doctoral students as well as advanced standing MA students. The seminar will be held entirely in English.

### **Communication**

To enhance communication amongst seminar participants and to simplify the organization of the course, we will be working with the course management software Moodle. Moodle, an Open Source software, is a Learning Management System (LMS) supported by the Humboldt University's Center for Multimedia Learning and Teaching. To access the Moodle course site you will need to open an account. For that you need a valid email address, your name and then register here: <http://lms.cms.hu-berlin.de/moodle/>. Be aware that some email provider may treat the registration email as spam. Check your spam filters as well as your account size in case you fail to get an email after registering. In case of technical problems with registration we advice to contact the people at the Center for Multimedia Learning and Teaching directly ([mlz@cms.hu-berlin.de](mailto:mlz@cms.hu-berlin.de)). They usually respond quickly and are very helpful.

The actual site for the course can be found here

<http://lms.cms.hu-berlin.de/moodle/course/view.php?id=358>

You will need a course-specific password to log on to the course site. We will provide you with the password in the first meeting of the course.

For each of the weeks you will find a forum that allows for memo uploads. We have provided all sorts of other information, such as the link to an online German-English dictionary, information on how to transform word documents into PDFs (much better because less prone to viruses), and of course *all* of the readings are available in digital form. You are welcome to add any other useful information via the forums.

Once you upload a memo in Moodle, an email will be send to all course participants. They can then choose to open your document and read it before the course meeting. The idea is to enhance our discussion by allowing for more collaborative learning before, after, and outside of the course meetings.

### **Readings**

All of the course materials can be found online on the Moodle course site.

There will be also a reader (again, all texts) for purchase at the "Copyhaus" across the street from the Institute for Social Sciences, if students prefer. One copy of all readings can also made available as a course reserve at the Social Sciences library. Books will also be on reserve in the library.

### **Office hours**

Klaus Eder's office hours are Tuesdays, 11am-noon, in office #103. His email is [keder@rz.hu-berlin.de](mailto:keder@rz.hu-berlin.de). Sophie Mützel's office hours are Tuesdays, 2-4 pm, in office #104. Her email is [sophie.muettel@sowi.hu-berlin.de](mailto:sophie.muettel@sowi.hu-berlin.de).

## SYLLABUS

### **Week 1            October 20, 2004            Introduction**

Requirements, expectations, and structure of the course

### **PART I: Narrative as data**

### **Week 2            October 27, 2004            Narrative analysis**

Franzosi, Roberto. 1998. „Narrative analysis - or why (and how) sociologists should be interested in narrative.“ *Annual Review of Sociology* 24:517-554.

Franzosi, Roberto. 1999. “The return of the actor. Interaction networks among social actors during periods of high mobilization (Italy 1919-1922).” *Mobilization*, 4, 131-150.

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. *From words to numbers: narrative, data, and social science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. excerpt: “Before” pp. 1.-26.

### **Week 3            November 3, 2004            Narrative as data**

Franzosi, Roberto. 1994. „From words to numbers: a set theory framework for the collection, organization, and analysis of narrative data.“ *Sociological Methodology* 24:105-136.

Franzosi, Roberto. 1997. “Mobilization and counter-mobilization processes. From the "Red Years" (1919-1920) to the "Black Years" (1921-1922) in Italy. A New Methodological Approach to the Study of Narrative Data.” *New Directions in Formalization and Historical Analysis* (Special issue of "Theory and Society". Editors: Roberto Franzosi and John Mohr), 26, 275-304.

Franzosi, Roberto. 1998. „Narrative as data: linguistic and statistical tools for the quantitative study of historical events.“ *International Review of Social History* 43:81-104.

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. “Content Analysis.” In Alan Bryman & Melissa Hardy (Eds.), *Handbook of Data Analysis* (pp. 547-566). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

### **Week 4            November 10, 2004            From words to numbers**

Guest speaker: Roberto Franzosi

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. *From words to numbers: narrative, data, and social science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press (Part I).

\*\*\*special computer lab with Roberto Franzosi on Thursday, November 11\*\*\*  
time and room to be announced

### **Week 5            November 17, 2004            Conceptualizing meaning structures**

Swidler, Ann. 1986. „Culture in action: symbols and strategies.“ *American Sociological Review* 51:273-286.

Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Jeff Goodwin. 1994. „Network analysis, culture, and the problem of agency.“ *American Journal of Sociology* 99:1411-1454.

### **Week 6            November 24, 2004            Measuring meaning structures**

Mohr, John. 1998. „Measuring meaning structures.“ *Annual Review of Sociology* 24:345-370.

Jepperson, Ronald L., and Ann Swidler. 1994. „What properties of culture should we measure?“ *Poetics* 22:359-371.

Mohr, John W., and Helene K. Lee. 2000. „From affirmative action to outreach: Discourse shifts at the University of California.“ *Poetics* 28:47-71.

**Week 7            December 1, 2004            Narrative construction of identities**

Somers, Margaret R. 1994. „The narrative constitution of identity: a relational and network approach.“ *Theory & Society* 23:605-649.

White, Harrison. 1992. *Identity and Control: A Structural Theory of Social Action*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. chapter 3.

White, Harrison. 1993. *Careers and Creativity: Social Forces in the Arts*. Boulder: Westview Press. pp. 47-51 (S. 47-51).

**Week 8            December 8, 2005            Narrative Networks**

Bearman, Peter S., and Katherine Stovel. 1999. „Becoming a Nazi: A model for narrative networks.“ *Poetics* 27:69-90.

Bearman, Peter, Robert Faris, and James Moody. 1999. „Blocking the future.“ *Social Science History* 23:501-533.

**Week 9            December 15, 2005            Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

van Dijk, Teun. 2004. „From Text Grammar to Critical Discourse Analysis.“ University of Amsterdam. Program of Discourse Studies. April 1995. (Published on Homepage). New version, 2.0., August 2004.

van Dijk, Teun.. 2004. „Ideology and discourse analysis.“ Paper symposium on ideology, Oxford University, September 2004. (<http://www.discourse-in-society.org/teun.html>)

Wodak, Ruth, Rudolf de Cilia, Martin Reisigl, and Karin Liebhart. 1999. *The discursive construction of national identity*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

Titscher, Stefan, Wodak, Ruth, Meyer, Michael, & Vetter, Eva. (1998). *Methoden der Textanalyse. Leitfaden und Überblick*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.

**Week 10            January 5, 2005            no class**

**PART II: From analyzing narratives to narratives as forms of explanation**

**Week 11            January 12, 2004            Narrative as Explanation**

Sewell Jr., William H. 1999. „Three temporalities. Toward an eventful sociology.“ In Terence J. McDonald (Ed.), *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (pp. 245-280). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Griffin, Larry J. 1993. „Narrative, event-structure analysis, and causal interpretation in historical sociology.“ *American Journal of Sociology* 98:1094-1133.

Bates, Robert, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry Weingast. 2000. „Analytic narratives revisited.“ *Social Science History* 24:685-696.

Bates, Robert, Avner Greif, Margeret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry Weingast. 1998. *Analytic Narratives*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. excerpts

Levi, Margaret. 2002. „Modeling complex historical processes with analytic narratives.“ Pp. 108-127 in *Akteure-Mechanismen-Modelle*, edited by Renate Mayntz. Frankfurt/ Main: Campus.

**Week 12                                      January 19, 2004                                      Sequence analysis**

Abbott, Andrew. 2001. „Time matters.“ In Andrew Abbott (Ed.), *Time Matters* (pp. 280-289). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Abbott, Andrew. 1995. „Sequence analysis: new methods for old ideas.“ *Annual Review of Sociology* 21:93-113.

Abbott, Andrew. 1992. „What do cases do? Some notes on activity in sociological analysis.“ In Charles C. Ragin & Howard S. Becker (Eds.), *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry* (pp. 53-82). New York: Cambridge University Press (= Abbott 2001, chap. 4).

**Week 13                                      January 26, 2005                                      Time and events**

Abbott, Andrew. 1990. „Conceptions of time and events in social science methods: Causal and narrative approaches.“ *Historical methods* 23:140-150 (= Abbott 2001, chap. 5).

Abbott, Andrew. 1992. „From causes to events. Notes on narrative positivism.“ *Sociological methods and research* 20:428-455 (= Abbott 2001, chap. 6).

<http://home.uchicago.edu/~aabbott/om.html>

Abbott, Andrew. 2001. „On the concept of turning point.“ In Andrew Abbott (Ed.), *Time Matters* (pp. 240-260). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Week 14                                      February 2, 2005                                      Optimal matching I**

Abbott, Andrew, and John Forrest. 1986. „Optimal matching methods for historical sequences.“ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 16, 471-494.

Abbott, Andrew, and Alexandra Hrycak. 1990. „Measuring resemblance in sequence data: an optimal matching analysis of musicians' careers.“ *American Journal of Sociology* 96:144-185.

Aisenbrey, Silke. 2000. *Optimal Matching Analyse. Anwendungen in den Sozialwissenschaften*. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.

**Week 15                                      February 9, 2005                                      Optimal matching II**

Stovel, Katherine, Michael Savage, and Peter S. Bearman. 1996. „Ascription into achievement: models of career systems at Lloyds Bank, 1890-1970.“ *American Journal of Sociology* 102:358-99.

Blair-Loy, Mary. 1999. „Career patterns of executive women in finance: an optimal matching analysis.“ *American Journal of Sociology* 104:1346-1397.]

Stark, David, and Balázs Vedres. 2002. „The social times of network spaces: sequence analysis of network formation and foreign investment in Hungary, 1987-2000.“ unpublished Ms.

**Week 16                                      February 16, 2005                                      Narrative analysis – what is it all about?**

Riessman, Catherine. 2004. „Narrative analysis.“ In *Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*, edited by M.S. Lewis-Beck, A. Bryman, T. Futing Liao. London UK and Newbury Park CA: Sage Publications, pp. 217-270. <http://www2.bc.edu/~riessman/papers.html>

Czarniawska, Barbara. 2004. *Narratives in Social Science Research*. London: Sage (excerpts)