DIFFE/RENCES INEQUA/LITIES AND SOCIO/LOGICAL IMAGI/NATION

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ABSTRACT BOOK

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three additional sources of information had surplus value but only one of them could be used as an actual bridge in the analyzes. We will discuss implications of this finding on mixed methods designs.

The Study of Social Representations by Vignette Method: Qualitative Methods in Quantitative Interpretation

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Social representations are not only found in the minds of people, but also affect their behavior. They exist on the border between psychological and social fields and reflect the way people perceive and understand events of their life. Sociologists rely on rather wide range of techniques and tools to gather information about the world, but at the same time try to attract a number of specific methods of data collection. One of such methods is vignette method. Originally, vignettes have been understood and developed as short stories that describe characteristics and hypothetical situations to which the respondent should express his reaction. The main advantages of this method are: the ability to avoid shared thinking answers; variation of characteristics in vignettes reveals changes in attitudes or judgment gives the opportunity to study relation between social processes and reality perception. In western tradition in psychology, pedagogy, education, sociology, using analysis of vignettes-stories refers more to the qualitative paradigm. However, we are interested in possibility of converting received information into quantitative indicators. We attempted to develop and test tools for the study of social representations by the vignette method. Vignettes design requires careful working. The basis for its composition can be data resulting from the study with incomplete sentences method. We had aim to evaluate the cognitive capabilities of the vignette method in the study of social representations (with an estimate of the difficulties and constraints) as well as to use logic-combinatorial methods for the data processing received with the use of vignettes.

Numbers and Words: Reflecting on Quantitizing Processes in Computer-assisted Text Analysis

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The paper presents some methodological considerations on the use of computer-based text analysis to integrate qualitative and quantitative methods in social research, towards the adoption of mixed methods approach. The contribution focuses on the quantitizing processes related to coding procedures of textual data. Showing how the advent of computerized software programs to manage both qualitative and quantitative data have promoted a largely technical view of quantitizing, a plurality of dimensions (theoretical, methodological, practical) are taken into account.
The challenges of quantitizing within computer-based text analysis are to decide which textual data (unstructured and qualitative data) will be the objects of conversion in numerical data (structured and quantitative data), which coding procedures have to be implemented, for what purpose and what are the software roles in such processes. Potential risks connected to improper use of software are presented, to guarantee methodological accuracy and the quality of analysis: among them, the paper underlines the propensity to "forced quantifications" according to the "myth of the measurement", till the excessive simplification of the words count

as the main criterion for defining inferences about the texts meanings and the senders intentions.
The quantitizing requires a continuous cycling between assigning numbers to meaning and meaning to numbers, between measurement and interpretation. Thus, the conception of quantitizing as unidirectional as moving from qualitative to quantitative data is critically analyzed, as well as the conditions under which mixed methods approach can be implemented in computer-based text analysis.

Analysing Vocational Rehabilitation in Germany - A Multi-Method Approach

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The Federal Employment Agency is one of the main providers of vocational rehabilitation in Germany. A variety of measures are implemented to enable disabled people and those threatened by disability to participate in the labour market. We make use of a multi-method approach to analyse these measures and their impact on labour market participation, individual employability and social participation. On the one hand administrative data of the Federal Employment Agency is prepared for analysis. As the administrative data covers the entirety of all persons in rehabilitation since 2006 (n= approx. 280,000), it is possible to make meaningful analysis based on these data. However, only information important for the process of vocational rehabilitation is covered in the administrative data. Information on social contexts, individual health status or individual expectations is not included. Therefore, an additional explorative qualitative study gathers these information conducting biographical personal interviews with 80 - 100 rehabilitants. Based on the qualitative interviews a representative survey will be prepared. This contribution gives an overview of the study approach and some examples how the different methods contribute to the overarching aims of the study.

RN21S13 - Big Data, Machine Learning and Text Analysis

Evaluating the Reliability of Coding for Qualitative Data through the Use of Social Network Analysis and Exponential Random Graph Models

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In mixed methods research, it is sometimes the case that researchers may include open-ended questions in structured questionnaires so that the respondents can express themselves in free speech. This, has the advantage that rich qualitative data are collected which can be used for triangulation purposes etc.Sometimes, the researchers wish to quantify (code) the qualitative data in order to include them in quantitative models, e.g. in a regression model. This, however, is cumbersome, costly and time consuming. The procedure of the coding large volumes of qualitative data usually includes a large number of coders, who often exercise subjective judgments in order to code the responses. This procedure has been "accused" of providing low-reliability data (i.e. low between-coders reliability).
This study uses an innovative approach where Social Network Analysis and Exponential Random Graph Models are used in order to monitor the reliability of coding of qualitative data.
A large group of coders were trained to code a large volume of qualitative data which were part of a quantitative study. During the training phase, the researcher employed SNA and ERGMs in order to monitor the agreement between the coders. Groups of coders seemed to "cluster together" forming "cliques" and "triangles". Using SNA made it easy to identify coders who were out of tune with the rest of the groups. These coders needed to be re-trained or to be removed