



CIVIS - Touristscapes in Bucharest Qualitative Methods

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Qualitative Methods

- Observation
- Qualitative interviews
- Critical discourse theory
- Mental maps
- Media content analysis
- Phenomenological walks
- Crisis experiments



Observation

Types of observation techniques according to Diekmann (2009: 564)

1. Participant ↔ non-participant observation
2. Overt ↔ covert observation
3. Field observation ↔ observation in the laboratory
4. Unstructured ↔ structured observation
5. Outside observation ↔ Self-observation



Source: Diekmann, A. (2009): Empirical social research. Fundamentals, methods, application. Reinbek near Hamburg.



Observation

Participatory observation

ethical and moral challenges

- observe and participate without informing counterpart?
- Accountability for counterpart's problems? Social responsibility?



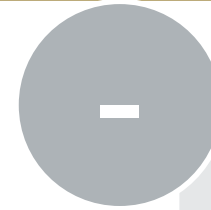
identification of overtly visible courses of action

in-depth contact possible

capture what is done

gain insights that are difficult to capture via a one-time interview

Structuring and decomplexing the facts



time-consuming

not only perceive what is desired

attention may decrease with known facts

access sometimes very complex

familiarity versus distance, possibly loss of critical external perspective



Qualitative interviews

Narrative and episodic interviews

- open and little structured
- programmatic openness as decisive access
- free narration in the center
- **to let the participants tell about events they have experienced themselves**
- connecting point: everyday narration
- enables exploration of previously less known areas
- fundamental: subject, readiness to tell stories



Qualitative approaches

Narrative and episodic interviews

- Episodic interviews with focus on specific experiences or impressions
- Issues:
 - having to restrain yourself as an interviewer
 - **to report freely may lead to irritation**
 - retrospective reporting partly classifies experiences differently
 - high workload due to very large volumes of calls



Qualitative approaches

Guided interviews: **Semi-standardized interviews**

- Interview with preformulated questions
- Questions mostly open, no continuous categorizing standardization
- Sequence and wording of questions adaptable depending on the situation
- certain complexes of topics that are covered



Qualitative approaches

Special case of the guided interview: **Expert interviews**

- **Interviewee not interviewed as a whole person, but as a role bearer**
- Special knowledge in a specific field of action interesting → professional experience, representative(s) of a group/institution/organization
- Problem-centered guides, usually as individual interviews
- Frequent and critical questioning
- Appropriate timing:
 - **Start: get an overview of the content or**
 - **End: Discussion of results**



Qualitative approaches

Special case of the guided interview: **Expert interviews**

- Targets
 - Expand prior knowledge to build upon
 - Generate additional information that can be used to better interpret other interviews
 - Generate theory or typology
 - Discussion of results of previous studies



Qualitative approaches

Special case of the guided interview: **Expert interviews**

Potential Problem Areas:

- Guide too unstructured, too little adapted
- Expert(s) are not expert(s) in the subfield
- Expert(s) talk about internals and intricacies instead of the topic of the interview
- Only very limited, superficial information is presented out of concern for consequences
- Role change between experts and private individuals
- Time pressure
- Expert(s) expect prior knowledge



Fundamentals of Critical Discourse Theory

- According to Foucault (1995: 74), discourses are "practices [...] that systematically form the objects of which they speak"
- Discourses are more than mere "talking," they are "supra-individual, institutionalized and regulated ways of talking that are linked to actions and exercise power" (Bartel et al. 2008: 54)
- Discourses thus have a reality-constitutive effect: "With the help of discursive (thinking and speaking) and non-discursive practices (acting and its manifestations), knowledge is (re)produced and, if it can attain hegemonic validity, functions as truth." (Bartel et al. 2008: 54)
- **Analysis focuses on what is/was or was not sayable by whom at a given point in time.**
- **The central question is not what corresponds to reality, but what certain statements can achieve**



Fundamentals of Critical Discourse Theory

- Discourse strands: discourses consist of different discourse strands (e.g. flood disasters as a discourse strand in the superordinate discourse on climate change impacts)
- Discourse levels: social places where discourses are produced, e.g. politics, media, everyday life
- Discourse fragments: individual texts or parts of texts within a discourse strand
- discursive events: Incidents that generate strong publicity and influence the direction of discourse (e.g., Fukushima for nuclear phase-out).
- Discourse position: ideological position taken.



Example: Environmental changes, climate change and socio-spatial consequences on the Isle de Jean Charles (Baum 2021)

- Settlement dates back to the 1840s
- During the Indian Removal Era, many indigenous people (predominantly Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw) fled to the wetlands in the coastal foothills
- Descendants live there until today mainly from subsistence-based fishing, hunting and extensive agriculture and livestock farming
- Have developed adaptation strategies that made a space considered uninhabitable habitable
- Dense network of pipelines and canals of the oil and gas industry → **Saltwater intrusion into the freshwater areas of the swamps → Soils salinized, flora dying**
- Excavation of land for oil and gas infrastructure + Containment of Mississippi River → erosion + Prevention of sediment deposition → **from 1955 to present, the island has shrunk by 98% (!), from 22,400ha to 320ha, and the number of residents has shrunk to 70**
- loss of surrounding barrier islands increases the destructive effect of hurricanes



Example: Environmental changes, climate change and socio-spatial consequences on the Isle de Jean Charles (Baum 2021)

- first step: creating the data corpus (using Google News)
- second step: definition of the data corpus (selection of regional and national newspapers, e.g. The Advocate and New York Times) → 28 articles
- third step: preparation of the discourse fragments in MaxQDA → coding
- fourth step: coding loops → identify links in discourse, identify trends
- fifth step: fine analysis of individual discourse fragments (e.g. narrative style)



Example: Environmental changes, climate change and socio-spatial consequences on the Isle de Jean Charles (Baum 2021)

- only from the year 2016 there are repeated reports about the Isle de Jean Charles
- Indigenous people had been planning for collective resettlement for decades
- only after this process has been managed and financed by the state, the discourse picks up speed (discursive event!)
- Reporting focuses on dramatic climate change impacts and how to deal with climate threats
- Criticism of the prolonged focus on technical measures
- **Resettlement of entire communities is normalized**, which seemed absurd in the decades before
- Situation is attributed to climate change and interventions of the gas and oil industry, but **fossil energy consumption is only questioned in one (!) article**
- **Indigenous community is ascribed a passive role, disempowering them as they appear as complaining, unable to act (disempowerment)**



Where is the treasure? (Holzapfel, Fischer 2022)

- Orientation competence is already in geography lessons one of the competences that the pupils should develop
- Nevertheless, we know from perception-oriented social geography that **spatial perception is very subjective and distances are misjudged, etc.**
- in the course of ero-epic conversations about the perception of certain places, it is useful to link them with cognitive maps
- outline maps: highly reduced maps without labeling
- Task: Passers-by were asked to draw four places:
 - City Hall
 - Castle
 - Hölderlinplatz
 - Geographical Institute



Wo ist der Schatz?

Wo Tübinger Passanten die bedeutendsten Orte der Stadt verorten



Source: Holzapfel, Fischer 2022:
150



Tübingen's islands of female street names (Ebersbach, Streif 2022)

- Example of a creative implementation of a quantitative as well as qualitative analysis
- The proportion of female street names on all streets in Tübingen was recorded and their spatial distribution implemented in a cartogram
- In addition, an analysis of the street names was carried out and the time of naming was determined
- Result: out of 850 street names in 2020, **29 were named after women and 188 were named after men** (histor. personalities)
- Concentration of female street names in 3 places: Herrlesberg (eastern part of Lustnau), Südstadt, Innere Weststadt.
- Conclusion: for a long time, female street names were only given according to the status of the respective spouse (e.g. Württemberg queens); only since the 1980s has there been an increased allocation of female street names



Tübingens Inseln der weiblichen Straßennamen



Source: Ebersbach, Streif 2022: 95



Media content analysis - online group discussions

- in the last two decades, internet-based communication has experienced enormous growth, generating - for example via forums, chat and threads - an unmanageable amount of qualitative data
- important characteristic of online group discussions: **Alocality → density of interaction, spontaneity and mutual reference is lower than in co-present discussions**
- Discussions in publicly accessible internet forums and threads etc. **usually not initiated by the researchers themselves and also not moderated**
- Composition of the discussion group not controlled and often characterized by a pronounced fluctuation
- Anonymity also lowers the inhibition threshold to express oneself polemically and provocatively or to intimidate other discussants.
- Anonymity has a positive effect on the willingness to tell stories and the degree of openness
- nonverbal aspects of communication are missing



The Controversy About Colonialism in Board Games - Illustrated by the Example of Santa Maria (Sedelmeier, Baum 2022)

- classic eurogame
- Goal: Establish and develop colony
- Winner: Colony with the highest satisfaction
- Ranking on Boardgamegeek: Rank 372 (out of over 100,000!)
- no other board game has so many forum entries about colonialism
- one of the authors takes part in the discussion



Image source:
boardgamegeek.com



The Controversy About Colonialism in Board Games - Illustrated by the Example of Santa Maria (Sedelmeier, Baum 2022)

- two threads dominate the discussion: choice of setting (colonialism) and implementation
- Lack of understanding about the choice of topics:
 - *"The one thing I don't get is the choice to go with a South American colonial theme. Especially considering the game mechanisms don't seem to require such a theme."*
- Justification/Whataboutism:
 - *"As someone said above, this sort of thing is at the basis of pretty much every game if we care to look and I don't know that the treatment Colonialism here is worse than, say, killing natives in Cry Havoc or animal cruelty in Snow Tails or labor exploitation in Snowdownia"*
- Implementation trivializing and historically incorrect:
 - *"This game sanitises/abstracts the true nature of colonialism to the point where it trivialises the issue. It removes any kind of representation of the indigenous people. Relegating them to a stereotypical and historically inaccurate 'tepee' icon."*



The Controversy About Colonialism in Board Games - Illustrated by the Example of Santa Maria (Sedelmeier, Baum 2022)

- Justification of the author for the choice of symbols
 - *"These teepees are merely intended to work as symbols (there are limited space on the game board). Symbols are often most effective in the form of well-known simplifications (a.k.a. "stereotypes"), just like the symbols on toilet doors often either shows an abled-body woman in a dress or a man in trousers. It might not be ideal, but these are really effective symbols. No symbol can ever make justice to all aspects of the Native American cultures. As you suggest, we could have chosen other buildings, like Aztek constructions. Maybe it would have been better, but I'm not sure."*





Wurst Case - a crisis experiment

Tübinger Wurstsalat





Zutaten für

4



Portionen

mit Maultaschen und Camembert

Für den Salat:

300 g Fleischwurst

4 große Maultasche(n)

150 g Gewürzgurke(n)

2 große Zwiebel(n)

100 g Ananas

200 g Camembert(s)

Für die Marinade:

3 EL Brantweinessig

3 EL Wasser

4 EL Öl

2 TL Tabasco

3 EL Mayonnaise

1 TL Salz

¼ TL Pfeffer

★★★★☆ 3.75 (2 Bewertungen)

🕒 30 Min.

📊 normal

📅 04.01.2022

💬 Kommentare

Zubereitung

🕒 Arbeitszeit ca. 30 Minuten

🕒 Ruhezeit ca. 1 Stunde

🕒 Koch-/Backzeit ca. 15 Minuten

🕒 Gesamtzeit ca. 1 Stunde 45 Minuten

Zuerst die Zwiebeln abziehen, würfeln und die Hälfte davon in der Pfanne anschwitzen. Die andere Hälfte der Zwiebelwürfel noch feiner hacken, sie kommen roh in den Wurstsalat.

Die Maultaschen in feine Scheiben schneiden, zu den Zwiebeln geben und beides goldbraun braten (je nach Belieben kürzer oder länger anbraten).

Die Fleischwurst erst in Scheiben und dann in feine Streifen schneiden. Die Ananas so klein wie möglich in sehr kleine Stückchen hacken, damit sich der Geschmack gut entfaltet. Den Käse würfeln (so gut es eben bei einem Weichkäse geht) und zuletzt die Gurken in Scheibchen schneiden.

Alle Zutaten in eine Marinade aus Brantweinessig, Wasser, Öl, Tabasco, Mayonnaise, Salz und Pfeffer geben und 1 Stunde durchziehen lassen.

🖨️ Drucken/PDF

➔ Teilen

❤️ Rezept speichern



Everything sausage (salad) -to regionalize sausage salad on chefkoch.de (Gerstlauer, Fischer 2023)

- the media representations of food and the social practices associated with them can be enacted as part of medialized foodscapes
- "Consider the spaces and places where you acquire food, prepare food, talk about food and gather some sort of meaning from food. This is your foodscape." (MacKendrick 2014: 1)
- "Digital and online spaces are another component of foodscapes that deserve more attention."(ibid.)
- The study illustrates how communicative regionalizations reproduce the mental representations of regions and how these representations are constitutively inscribed in the dishes
- Food as one of the most important factors to mark, delimit and consolidate cultural identities (ethnic, regional as well as national)
- Authenticity builds on the essentialist idea of a true being or the genuineness of an entity, e.g., a dish



Everything sausage (salad) -to regionalize sausage salad on chefkoch.de (Gerstlauer, Fischer 2023)

- because of the many variations of the dish, the sausage salad is well suited to examine different possible references to regions in contrast and to examine the negotiation and production of regionality in a comparative way.

Name of the sausage salad:	Number of recipes on Chef:	Ranking:
Swiss sausage salad	25 (110)	1
Bavarian/Bavarian sausage salad	21 (30)	2
Alsatian sausage salad	8 (8)	3
Swabian sausage salad	6 (14)	4
Nuremberg sausage salad	5 (20)	5
Baden sausage salad	4 (14)	6
Appenzell sausage salad	3 (7)	7
Strasbourg sausage salad	3 (5)	7
Allgäu sausage salad	2 (7)	8
Thuringian sausage salad	1 (13)	9
Austrian sausage salad	1 (10)	9

